



Province of Alberta

The 28th Legislature
First Session

Alberta Hansard

Thursday, May 9, 2013

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The Honourable Gene Zwozdesky, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of Alberta
The 28th Legislature

First Session

Zwozdesky, Hon. Gene, Edmonton-Mill Creek (PC), Speaker
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Jablonski, Mary Anne, Red Deer-North (PC), Deputy Chair of Committees

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Anglin, Joe, Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House-Sundre (W), Official Opposition Whip	Kubinec, Maureen, Barrhead-Morinville-Westlock (PC)
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Bhardwaj, Naresh, Edmonton-Ellerslie (PC)	Leskiw, Genia, Bonnyville-Cold Lake (PC)
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Calahasen, Pearl, Lesser Slave Lake (PC)	McIver, Hon. Ric, Calgary-Hays (PC), Deputy Government House Leader
Campbell, Hon. Robin, West Yellowhead (PC), Deputy Government House Leader	McQueen, Hon. Diana, Drayton Valley-Devon (PC)
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Dallas, Hon. Cal, Red Deer-South (PC)	Olson, Hon. Verlyn, QC, Wetaskiwin-Camrose (PC)
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Denis, Hon. Jonathan, QC, Calgary-Acadia (PC), Deputy Government House Leader	Pedersen, Blake, Medicine Hat (W)
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Forsyth, Heather, Calgary-Fish Creek (W)	Sarich, Janice, Edmonton-Decore (PC)
Fox, Rodney M., Lacombe-Ponoka (W)	Saskiw, Shayne, Lac La Biche-St. Paul-Two Hills (W), Official Opposition Deputy House Leader
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Hancock, Hon. Dave, QC, Edmonton-Whitemud (PC), Government House Leader	Strankman, Rick, Drumheller-Stettler (W)
Hehr, Kent, Calgary-Buffalo (AL)	Swann, Dr. David, Calgary-Mountain View (AL)
Horne, Hon. Fred, Edmonton-Rutherford (PC)	Towle, Kerry, Innisfail-Sylvan Lake (W), Official Opposition Deputy Whip
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Hughes, Hon. Ken, Calgary-West (PC)	Weadick, Hon. Greg, Lethbridge-West (PC)
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Jeneroux, Matt, Edmonton-South West (PC)	Wilson, Jeff, Calgary-Shaw (W)
Johnson, Hon. Jeff, Athabasca-Sturgeon-Redwater (PC)	Woo-Paw, Hon. Teresa, Calgary-Northern Hills (PC)
Johnson, Linda, Calgary-Glenmore (PC)	Xiao, David H., Edmonton-McClung (PC)
Kang, Darshan S., Calgary-McCall (AL), Liberal Opposition Whip	Young, Steve, Edmonton-Riverview (PC), Government Whip

Party standings:

Progressive Conservative: 61

Wildrose: 17

Alberta Liberal: 5

New Democrat: 4

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		Liz Sim, Managing Editor of <i>Alberta Hansard</i>

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STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future

Chair: Mr. Amery
Deputy Chair: Mr. Fox

Bhardwaj	Olesen
Cao	Pastoor
Donovan	Quadri
Dorward	Rogers
Eggen	Rowe
Hehr	Sarich
Luan	Strankman
McDonald	Xiao

Standing Committee on the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund

Chair: Mr. Khan
Deputy Chair: Mrs. Jablonski

Anderson
Casey
Dorward
Eggen
Kubinec
Sandhu
Sherman

Select Special Chief Electoral Officer Search Committee

Chair: Mr. Rogers
Deputy Chair: Mr. Quadri

Blakeman	Leskiw
Eggen	McDonald
Goudreau	Saskiw
Lemke	

Select Special Conflicts of Interest Act Review Committee

Chair: Mr. Allen
Deputy Chair: Mr. Luan

Blakeman	Notley
Dorward	Saskiw
Fenske	Wilson
Johnson, L.	Young
McDonald	

Standing Committee on Families and Communities

Chair: Mr. Quest
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Brown	Jeneroux
Cusanelli	Leskiw
DeLong	Notley
Fraser	Pedersen
Fritz	Swann
Goudreau	Towle
Jablonski	Wilson
Jansen	Young

Standing Committee on Legislative Offices

Chair: Mr. Cao
Deputy Chair: Mr. McDonald

Bikman	Leskiw
Blakeman	Quadri
Brown	Rogers
DeLong	Wilson
Eggen	

Special Standing Committee on Members' Services

Chair: Mr. Zwozdesky
Deputy Chair: Mr. Rogers

Casey	Mason
Forsyth	McDonald
Fraser	Quest
Kennedy-Glans	Sherman
Glans	Smith

Standing Committee on Private Bills

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Deputy Chair: Ms L. Johnson

Barnes	Jablonski
Bhardwaj	Leskiw
Brown	Notley
Cusanelli	Olesen
DeLong	Rowe
Fox	Strankman
Fritz	Swann
Goudreau	Webber

Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections, Standing Orders and Printing

Chair: Ms Olesen
Deputy Chair: Mr. Lemke

Calahasen	McAllister
Cao	Notley
Casey	Pedersen
Hehr	Rogers
Jansen	Sandhu
Kennedy-Glans	Saskiw
Kubinec	Towle
Luan	Young

Standing Committee on Public Accounts

Chair: Mr. Anderson
Deputy Chair: Mr. Dorward

Allen	Hehr
Amery	Jeneroux
Anglin	Khan
Bilous	Pastoor
Donovan	Quadri
Fenske	Quest
Goudreau	Sarich
Hale	Stier

Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship

Chair: Ms Kennedy-Glans
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Allen	Hale
Barnes	Johnson, L.
Bikman	Khan
Bilous	Kubinec
Blakeman	Lemke
Calahasen	Sandhu
Casey	Stier
Fenske	Webber

Legislative Assembly of Alberta

1:30 p.m.

Thursday, May 9, 2013

[The Speaker in the chair]

Prayers

The Speaker: Hon. members and guests, let us pray. Dear Lord, our God and author of all wisdom, today we pray for those individuals whose circumstances are less fortunate than our own for it is they who truly need our help. Let us also pray for our friends and families, from whom we have been separated this week in order to fulfill our duties and obligations in this Assembly. Amen.

Please be seated.

Introduction of Visitors

The Speaker: Hon. members, today I'm pleased to recognize two special guests who are seated in my Speaker's gallery. Dr. David Carter was first elected to the Legislative Assembly of Alberta on March 14, 1979, for the constituency of Calgary-Millican. He was subsequently elected as the Member for Calgary-Egmont in 1982, 1986, and 1989. On June 12, 1986, Dr. Carter was elected Speaker of this Assembly and was re-elected to the position on June 1, 1989. Many books on the Legislative Assembly of Alberta were published during his tenure, including some he has written himself, and this Chamber in which we sit today was refurbished and modernized during his tenure to help to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the Legislative Assembly. Welcome, Dr. Carter. [applause]

Hon. members, with Dr. Carter is former Sergeant-at-Arms Oscar Lacombe. Mr. Lacombe commenced his service as Sergeant-at-Arms in 1981 and was the first Métis Sergeant-at-Arms appointed in the province of Alberta and in all of Canada. After his retirement in 1993 he was recognized with the lifetime title of honorary Sergeant-at-Arms. Mr. Lacombe is a highly decorated Korean War veteran. He is also the great-grandnephew of Father Lacombe. Please welcome Mr. Oscar Lacombe. [applause]

Introduction of Guests

The Speaker: Hon. members, let us begin with some school groups. Edmonton-Meadowlark, the hon. leader of the Liberal opposition, I believe you have an intro.

Dr. Sherman: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to all members of this Assembly a class of elementary students from the Centre for Learning@Home located in my constituency of Edmonton-Meadowlark. Accompanying their class is Samantha Quantz, recreation co-ordinator, and parent helpers. I'd ask Samantha, her students, and parents to please rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

Thank you.

The Speaker: Thank you.

Hon. Member for Medicine Hat, I believe you have a school group.

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly 65 absolutely brilliant and politically engaged grade 6 students from Crestwood elementary school in Medicine Hat. This is the

school's 24th consecutive yearly visit to this Legislature. Would the students and staff and parents now please rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of this Assembly?

The Speaker: Are there any other school groups?

Let us proceed with guests. Hon. Minister of Education, you have some introductions.

Mr. J. Johnson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour to rise and introduce to you and through you to members of this Assembly five individuals seated in the Speaker's gallery who are here to help us celebrate World Catholic Education Day. One of the reasons Alberta has such a world-class education system is because it's built on a range of educational choice, and the separate school system is an example of this. The Member for Edmonton-South West will be making a member's statement later this afternoon, but for now I would like to introduce – and I would ask them to stand as I introduce them – the Most Reverend Gerry Pettipas, Archbishop of Grouard-McLennan; the Most Reverend David Motiuk, Bishop of the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Edmonton; the Most Reverend Greg Bittman, Auxiliary Bishop of Edmonton; Mr. Tony Sykora, president of the Alberta Catholic School Trustees' Association; and Mr. Dean Sarnecki, executive director of the Alberta Catholic School Trustees' Association. I'd ask the House to join me in giving them the traditional warm welcome.

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development.

Mr. Olson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour today to introduce to you and through you to members of the Assembly four members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Foundation. The RCMP Foundation was formed in 1994, and it supports the voluntary efforts of members from across the country to work in their communities, particularly with youth at risk. Our guests are in Alberta to raise awareness as to what they do and how they raise money. Their community programs support things like child safety, drug awareness, crime prevention, literacy, Internet safety, antibullying, victim assistance programs. They work with the corporate sector, Canadians from all walks of life, and their own members. If they would rise and remain standing as I introduce them, the members are Marie Delorme, foundation board member from Calgary; from Ottawa Mr. Fred Semerjian, foundation president and CEO; RCMP superintendent Greg Peters; and Kelly Ledingham, foundation marketing and program co-ordinator. I know Albertans are grateful for the work that they do, and I ask the House to give them our traditional warm welcome.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Lesser Slave Lake, followed by Calgary-Mountain View.

Ms Calahasen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What a pleasure it is to introduce to you and through you to members of this Assembly council members and staff from the Northern Alberta Development Council. We had a very interesting session this morning and, as a matter of fact, last night as well. I'm really pleased that they are here today. They are seated in the members' gallery, and I ask that they stand as I call their names. Williard Strebchuck is vice-chair, and he's also from Whitecourt-Ste. Anne and one of the greatest vice-chairs I've had. Brian Allen, member from Grimshaw, Berwyn, and Fairview: he's also an individual who makes no bones about what his position is. John Brodrick is a member from Manning-High Level. Now, there's an individual who I think always says what he thinks. Ken Noskey, member

from Peavine-High Prairie-Grouard-Sucker Creek-Driftpile First Nation, is another individual who stands strong. Pat O'Neill is a member from St. Paul-Lac La Biche. He's a very staunch member of this august committee. Eva Urlacher, member from Bonnyville-Cold Lake: she's short, but she's mighty.

Mr. Speaker, I also have staff members, and I ask that they stand: Cathy Goulet, executive director; Allen Geary, director of projects and research – and he's in the back there – Audrey DeWit, manager of programs and co-ordination; Chelsea Ferguson, executive assistant to council. These are the backbone of the council and the chair, and I know that we want to say a special thanks to them for all the work they do.

I'd ask this Assembly to give a wonderful group of go-getters a raucous warm welcome from this Assembly.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-Mountain View, followed by Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood.

Dr. Swann: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. An honour and a pleasure for me to introduce Brenda to you and to all Members of the Legislative Assembly. Brenda is the mother of a son totally dependent on PDD supports and is deeply troubled by the cuts both to day programs and group home services, his only opportunity to get out and recreate and find a quality of life. She's also concerned about the inappropriate pressure on her and her son to get him out to work. Brenda is particularly concerned about broken promises of this government that will create more suffering for the most vulnerable in Alberta. Hon. members, she's standing already. Let's give her a warm welcome in the Legislature.

The Speaker: The hon. leader of the New Democrat opposition, followed by Lac La Biche-St. Paul-Two Hills.

Mr. Mason: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise today to introduce to you and through you my guests Navtej Singh Brar, Nachhattar Singh Mann, and Harpreet Singh Gill. Nachhattar Singh Mann came to Canada at a young age. He's worked hard and has become a successful entrepreneur and small-business owner. He's known for his philanthropy and his community service in the Punjabi community and is the proud father of two children. Navtej Singh Brar belongs to a well-known family back in Punjab. He came to Canada to realize his dreams and is now also a successful small-business owner. Accompanying both of them is Harpreet Singh Gill, the political editor at *Asian Vision*. I would now ask my guests to rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of this Assembly.

1:40

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Lac La Biche-St. Paul-Two Hills, followed by Edmonton-Centre.

Mr. Saskiw: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is a pleasure to rise and introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly a constituent of mine, Pat O'Neill. Pat has experience as a municipal councillor and significant experience in the agricultural and recreational sectors. He's worked with the St. Paul Municipal Seed Cleaning Association as director and chairman of the board. He's a former director of the Alberta development corporation appeal board and was instrumental in developing the St. Paul breeders' co-op. He also has a very strong passion for hockey both as a player and a coach, and he's one that you would want on your side. I'd ask that he rise and that all members give him the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

The Speaker: Hon. Member for Edmonton-Centre, your first of two introductions, followed by Edmonton-Strathcona.

Ms Blakeman: Thank you very much. Mr. Speaker, I'm really delighted to be able to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly a very proud big sister. I'd like to introduce to you Laura Winton, who is sitting in the public gallery. She's here to watch her younger sister, Elizabeth Winton, who is one of our pages. You can just see the pride from Laura for what Liz is doing. Laura has a degree in sociology and a master's degree in library and information studies, both from the University of Alberta. She lives in the fabulous constituency of Edmonton-Centre. I would ask you all to please welcome Laura to the Assembly.

I have a second introduction, Mr. Speaker. I know that the leader of the Liberal opposition is going to do a statement later on women in Alberta and on mothers, so I would to introduce a couple of women. First of all, Louise McBain is a constituent of the fabulous constituency of Edmonton-Centre. Stand up, Louise. Louise is a botanist who, God bless her, ran the labs for the sort of 100 series of biology at the university for a long time and is now retired. She's been a neighbour of mine for over 25 years, a supporter, and a friend. She is a mother to Faye McBain, who will rise beside her mother. Faye is one of those amazing people who can talk to anybody, anywhere, any time, so she's particularly good at sales and swinging deals and making people feel really comfortable. Faye attended Vic school in my riding and was one of those little ballerina people with many costumes and blue eyeshadow. Also with them is another daughter, Amy McBain, who, of course, is the amazing director of communications for the Alberta Liberal caucus.

Thank you very much for coming today.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Strathcona, followed by Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville.

Ms Notley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have two sets of introductions. First of all, it's a pleasure to introduce to you and through you my guest, Judy Cabral, and her two sons, Jeff and Jaret. Judy is very concerned about the cuts being made by this PC government to PDD services across the province as both Jaret's and Jeff's quality of life depend heavily on these services. Jeff is part of SCAN, a supported community access program which is an adult day program that provides employment support and recreation opportunities, and Jaret receives support from the Elves Special Needs Society. Both of these programs are absolutely crucial in providing Jaret and Jeff with the support they need. I would now like to ask Judy, Jeff, and Jaret to receive the traditional warm welcome of this Assembly.

My second introduction, Mr. Speaker. I'm very pleased to introduce to you and through you to this Assembly my guest, Trudy Grebenstein. Trudy worked for over 35 years as an accountant for Edmonton public schools and is also a long-time labour activist. For almost a decade she served as the president of the Canadian Union of Public Employees, local 3550. In the 2012 election Trudy was a candidate for the Alberta NDP, running in the constituency of Barrhead-Morinville-Westlock, and she is now enjoying a well-deserved retirement with plenty of travel. I would now ask Trudy to rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of this Assembly.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville, followed by Edmonton-Meadowlark.

Ms Fenske: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to introduce two individuals to you today. The first is Ambere Rosborough, who is the executive director of the Edmonton and northern Alberta Crime Stoppers. It is the largest Crime Stoppers organization of its kind in the world. With her today is Mary Lynne Campbell, who many of us will know is the executive director of the Public School Boards' Association, but what we may not know is that she is also a board member of Crime Stoppers. I would ask the House to please provide them with the traditional warm greeting.

The Speaker: The hon. leader of the Liberal opposition.

Dr. Sherman: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have two introductions. It's my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly John Buhler, Angeles Espinaco-Virseda, and their son Karsten Buhler-Espinaco. Karsten is a grade 1 German bilingual student at Forest Heights elementary. I met Karsten at Chinese New Year. He has brought along a special guest, Cuddly Dudley, who had to wait with security. Dudley is a penguin puppet that each child in Karsten's class takes home for several days, during which they write about Dudley's adventures, and coming to the Legislature is one of those adventures. I would ask Karsten and his family to rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

It's also my pleasure to introduce to you and through you four special women in my life. First, my mother, Santosh Sherman. Mom, thank you for giving me the gift of life and three wonderful brothers and for being a loving wife to my late father. Thank you for sewing all of the Edmonton Oilers jerseys when they won all those Stanley Cups. Also with my mother is my mother-in-law, Rita McCrary, who I thank for raising such a loving and nurturing daughter. She also happens to be a constituent of mine, and her daughter is my better half, my much better half, Sharon MacLean, who is also the mother of two beautiful daughters. To all three of you, happy Mother's Day. Last but not least, my pride and joy – it's her first visit to the Legislature – is my daughter, Sameena Sherman. She's a student at the University of Alberta. She got me into politics at the age of 14 when she was one of the youngest delegates at a federal Liberal convention in 2006. I'm here because of her. Thank you. I'd ask them all to rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

The Speaker: Are there others? Edmonton-McClung, did you have an intro?

Mr. Xiao: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to introduce to you and through you to the members of the Assembly the parents of Melina Sinclair, one of our current pages. Charlene and Steven Sinclair are here today to observe Melina in her role as a page. My constituents Charlene and Steven have lived in the community of Lymburn for the past 20 years. They enjoy watching question period on TV, but this is their first time watching the session live. I would like to ask them to rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

The Speaker: Are there others?

Seeing none, let me just commend members. Today's introductions took an average of 30 to 40 seconds only. They were well done. As a result, we got them all in. I would ask House leaders to perhaps consider that as a possible benchmark for the future.

Thank you, all.

Members' Statements

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

Northern Alberta Development Council Anniversary

Ms Calahasen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to pay tribute to an organization that has had a tremendous impact on northern Albertans for the past 50 years. The Northern Alberta Development Council recently celebrated its 50th anniversary, half a century of working to enhance the lives of northern Albertans. In fact, on March 28, 1963, the Northern Alberta Development Council Act was passed. The council was given a mandate to investigate, plan, promote, and co-ordinate practical measures to foster and advance development in northern Alberta. The first chair of the NADC was the hon. Ira McLaughlin, a seven-term MLA, just like myself, from Grande Prairie, who also served in the provincial cabinet.

Mr. Speaker, economic and social development in a region that encompasses 60 per cent of our province but is home to only 9 per cent of our population presents unique challenges. In the past 50 years members of this council have dedicated themselves to encouraging economic development in 207,000 square kilometres of the province's north while also providing a voice for northern communities on issues like industrial development, agriculture, and transportation.

Over time those issues have evolved, and new issues have emerged such as education, health care delivery, economic diversification, and transportation. The NADC has developed and implemented creative, practical solutions to address those challenges over the last 50 years.

1:50

Mr. Speaker, I've had the pleasure of being the minister responsible for this council, and I'm proud to be the current chair of the NADC. Of course, I thank our Premier for that. The one constant in the work of this council throughout its 50-year existence is, of course, people. The passion, commitment, and love for this province demonstrated by NADC members, whom I have also introduced today and who have come to this organization from all walks of life, has generated opportunities while maintaining a vision focused on building healthy and strong communities for future generations.

Mr. Speaker, as chair of the NADC I would like to pay tribute to all of the past chairs and the hard-working council members and staff members over the past 50 years. I wish the Northern Alberta Development Council every success as we begin the next 50 years with a new and energized vision of the north.

Oral Question Period

The Speaker: The Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition. First main set of questions.

Generic Drug Pricing

Ms Smith: Mr. Speaker, the Health minister has managed to stumble his way into a pretty good news story on pharmaceuticals. It was reported last week that even though 115 drugs went up in price and 535 stayed the same, 2,150 generic drugs have been reduced down to 25 per cent of brand name prices. That's what other provinces are doing, and that's what we've been saying that Alberta should be doing all along. It's true. He even got 80 medicines down to the 18 per cent, and that's pretty good, but what an ordeal to get there: protests, closures, service

interruptions. Will the minister just accept this success and give up his ill-advised fight with pharmacists?

Mr. Horne: Well, Mr. Speaker, we're indeed very proud of the fact that generic drug prices have come down in Alberta. Just to complete the hon. member's account of this success for this House, that has resulted in an annualized savings of \$80 million to the taxpayers of this province, a fact she failed to convey. As well, we're continuing to invest in pharmacies and pharmacists across the province. We added \$40 million in additional support to pharmacists recently on top of \$80 million in transitional support over the last few years. As a result pharmacists are now full members of the health care team in this province, and Albertans are paying less for drugs.

Ms Smith: Here's the problem, Mr. Speaker. If the minister continues to press ahead for an across-the-board cut to 18 per cent on all generic drugs, it's creating a big mess in the real world that pharmacists operate in, pharmacists like Debbie Boyle. Now, you may remember her. She's been operating the Britannia Pharmacy in the Premier's riding for two decades, and she's been asking for a meeting with her MLA for months, without success, to describe the specific problems the minister's changes are creating. The Premier told the Assembly that she would be glad to meet with Debbie, but she won't. So what's the problem?

Ms Redford: Well, in fact, Mr. Speaker, I know for a fact that Ms Boyle has had the opportunity to meet with her MLA, who is the MLA for Calgary-Glenmore, a number of times and has also had the opportunity to meet with a number of people in my office. My understanding is that those are discussions that perhaps Ms Boyle isn't satisfied with, but certainly that constituent has had an opportunity to meet with her MLA. I have certainly met with constituents in my riding, where her pharmacy is located, who do not share the same concerns as Ms Boyle, but I'm certainly glad that she had an opportunity to bring her concerns forward.

Ms Smith: I'll table the letter so the Premier can read it, but here is what Debbie wants to explain to the Premier. The drug benefit list keeps on changing, and here's what that means. Suppliers don't have some low-cost drugs available. Other supplies are delayed. Pharmacies risk losing money trying to clear out their old inventory. Procedures for reimbursement involve double and sometimes triple filing, with no compensation for the waste of time. Unless the minister accepts where we're at, the drug list is going to change again radically in August, so the confusion is going to start all over again. Why doesn't the minister see the problem?

Mr. Horne: Mr. Speaker, the problem here is that the Leader of the Opposition clearly does not know which side of this issue she is on. This government is on all sides of the issue with respect to lowering generic drug prices in the province, and a sophisticated understanding of the facts would tell any hon. member of this House that they need to be on more than one side of the issue. These changes have resulted in lower generic costs for Albertans. They have resulted in increased support for pharmacists. The hon. member might be interested to know that the drug prices list changes on a regular basis in Alberta, and she might care to take a look and see the history of those prices, especially over the last year.

The Speaker: The hon. Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition. Second main set of questions.

Ms Smith: The minister just doesn't know when to accept victory. Quit while you're ahead.

Breast Cancer Diagnostic Test

Ms Smith: Mr. Speaker, we got some disturbing health news last week from a former political colleague. Sue Huff, the former leader of the Alberta Party, revealed that she has breast cancer. They've caught it early, so there is every reason to be hopeful, and I'm sure that we all wish Sue the very best. It's an appropriate time to raise the issue of a medical test that helps determine if chemotherapy is the appropriate course of treatment for a breast cancer patient. It's called Oncotype DX, and it's been reviewed and recommended by the Alberta breast cancer group and has also been approved for funding in Ontario, Quebec, Newfoundland, Saskatchewan, and Nova Scotia. Why isn't it available here?

Mr. Horne: Mr. Speaker, Ms Huff is a very good friend of many members on this side of the House as well, and we certainly wish her the very best with the challenge that she is facing.

Mr. Speaker, we make decisions about the use and listing of drugs in this province based on two things, the results of common drug reviews that are presented to us by CADTH, the Canadian Agency for Drugs and Technologies in Health, and also on the basis of the expert committee in Alberta that takes those recommendations and investigates them further and their appropriateness for use in our province.

Ms Smith: Mr. Speaker, up to 30 per cent of breast cancer patients get needless, expensive, and potentially damaging chemotherapy. This test could prevent that, yet the approval is being delayed, and oncologists want to know why. Earlier this year in a letter to AHS Dr. Alexander Paterson, a professor of medicine at the University of Calgary, wrote: "we are beginning to despair at the inordinate time [it takes to make] decisions regarding the well-being of our patients." Oncologists want to know: why is it taking so long to approve this test?

Mr. Horne: Well, Mr. Speaker, I don't know if the Leader of the Opposition is applying for the position of manager of the drug plan in Alberta, but I can tell her very, very clearly that this government relies on evidence provided by experts to make such critical decisions. The budget for drug coverage in this province now exceeds \$1.1 billion. We have a very sophisticated process in place, that is used in conjunction with other provinces across the country, to use the best evidence and apply that evidence when making these decisions. They are not political decisions.

Ms Smith: Mr. Speaker, the Alberta breast cancer group reviewed this test three years ago. Ontario agreed to cover the cost of Oncotype DX for breast cancer patients also more than three years ago and have reported a success rate of 97 per cent. Here in Alberta the decision seems to be lost in the vast AHS bureaucracy. Patients who have received the terrifying diagnosis of breast cancer need to know the best course of treatment. When will the government stop foot-dragging and fund this important test?

Mr. Horne: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is seriously misguided if she thinks that decisions around the application of specific drugs for specific patients are decisions that are made by politicians. These decisions are made by clinicians on the basis of the appropriateness for a particular patient. They are based on best evidence. That's best practice. That's what high-performing health systems do, and that's what Alberta does.

The Speaker: The hon. Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition. Third main set of questions.

Ms Smith: I'm just asking the minister to look into it. Would you do that, please?

Youth Addiction Treatment Services

Ms Smith: Mr. Speaker, in 2007 a young man named Taylor Argent, who struggled with a drug addiction, was at a private treatment centre, the central Alberta recovery centre. He had previously received a five-week course of treatment there. He had relapsed and was there to attend AA meetings and see about getting back in. Sometime overnight Taylor drank a lot of antifreeze, and despite the best efforts of medical personnel, he died. A fatality inquiry three years later made a number of recommendations about staff training, standards of care, and government oversight. Have the recommendations been put in place, and is the government providing any funding to help?

Mr. Horne: Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member is going to continue to ask specific questions about individual circumstances, she could get her answers a lot more easily by simply approaching my office, unlike the approach that was taken yesterday in response to some other concerns. [interjections] If the hon. member cares to . . . [interjections]

The Speaker: Hon. members, the minister is trying to answer a question about a very serious issue. Please. We gave the courtesy of silence to the person asking the question. Let's give some silence so that he can respond.

Continue, Mr. Minister.

Mr. Horne: Well, Mr. Speaker, as we've said before, the quality of the answer will depend directly on the quality of the question that's put forward. If this hon. member is truly interested in the welfare of this individual and in the circumstances surrounding this very unfortunate death, she'll forward the particulars to me along with some specific questions, and I will get back to her.

2:00

Ms Smith: Mr. Speaker, I was just asking if the recommendations had been put in place.

The Alberta Adolescent Recovery Centre treats 12- to 17-year-olds with addictions. They often have severe addiction issues that other facilities haven't been able to solve. Carly was drinking daily by age 16. She graduated from AARC in 2007 and is now succeeding in university. Keegan was smoking dope in grade 7, drinking in grade 8. He graduated from AARC in 2010, has repaired his relationship with his family, and is pursuing a career in acting. Hundreds of others have been helped by AARC. What's the government's position on supporting successful addiction treatment centres like the Adolescent Recovery Centre?

Mr. Horne: Of course, Mr. Speaker, the government's position is that we continue to improve and expand upon the very successful addiction treatment and recovery program we have across the province. We are working to open a new detox facility in Medicine Hat. Plans are under way for other facilities across the province. It's wonderful that the leader will acknowledge so many of the success stories that we hear about each and every day as a result of the addiction treatment services we're able to provide.

Ms Smith: Mr. Speaker, of course, when a child gets clean, it's a blessing for the parents. One parent says this: AARC saved our family and our son's life. Most of their funding is private.

AARC's only government funding in the last few years has been a contract for \$323,000 per year, but this year that funding has been cut from \$323,000 to nothing with just 90 days' notice. Wouldn't it be better to treat kids with serious addiction issues rather than waste \$350,000?

Mr. Horne: Mr. Speaker, as I said in my answer to the last question, we provide a wide range of addiction treatment services across the province. Alberta Health Services makes decisions about where those services are allocated in response to patient need. They have a budget to do that. They're allocating it appropriately. Again, if the hon. member wants to continue to use question period to ask about specific instances in specific facilities, she can get that information very easily by contacting my office.

The Speaker: The hon. leader of the Alberta Liberal opposition.

Municipal Sustainability Initiative Funding

Dr. Sherman: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Edmonton's mayor seems convinced that the government promised more money for the downtown arena, and he's right. This Premier did promise to increase MSI funding but has only managed to deliver a fraction of it. She's about half a billion dollars short. Another promise made, another promise broken. As a result, council had to postpone the arena vote, hoping the Premier would find the courage to keep her word. To the Premier. You made a promise to Edmonton. When are you going to keep it?

Mr. Griffiths: Mr. Speaker, we made a commitment in the last election and through this budget to continue secure, stable funding to municipalities, knowing full well that they have obligations to build infrastructure for the population increase of about a hundred thousand people per year that we have in this province. We managed to keep that secure, stable funding, the same amount of funding this year as we did last year. Every municipality I've talked to has said that that's a blessing so that they continue to deliver on the services and the infrastructure that people in their communities need.

Dr. Sherman: Mr. Speaker, I asked the Premier, not the wannabe Premier.

Today the city of Edmonton, which is starved for funds, had to go cap in hand to the Capital Region Board to secure \$25 million for the downtown arena project that the Premier failed to deliver. Alberta Liberals have been asking this PC government to fund cities as promised and address the gross inequality in tax revenue between municipalities and rural districts and counties. Again to the Premier: if you're not going to keep your MSI promise, when will you find the courage to fix this tax inequality?

Ms Redford: Mr. Speaker, today the Minister of Municipal Affairs and I had a very productive meeting with the Capital Region Board, and I was really gratified to hear their thanks to this government for maintaining our support to MSI. Funnily enough, they also gave us complete support with respect to the decisions we've taken to build infrastructure long term in this province. We have made a commitment to local decision-makers that if they want to use infrastructure funds to support infrastructure priorities, we are fully there behind them, but those will be their decisions, and we've been consistent on that for more than two years.

The Speaker: The hon. leader.

Dr. Sherman: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. While the Minister of Municipal Affairs claims that 87 per cent of Albertans are high-rise condo dwellers who don't carry their weight and his Premier breaks promise after promise to municipalities, cities like Edmonton and Calgary are being forced to come up with creative ways to pay the bills, and while the Premier waits for the smoke to clear from the Katz affair, costs continue to rise. To the Premier. You promised a big-city charter that included granting increased taxation power to the government closest to the people. Why have you not kept your promise to Edmonton and Calgary? Why, Premier?

Mr. Griffiths: Mr. Speaker, the cities, the municipalities, small and large, continue to have exceptional funding, the best funding in the entire country to help support the priorities of people in those communities. We continue to work with the two largest cities on the charter that we had promised. It may be a little more complex. That member should be the first to realize that it is not my sole discretion to write it, sign it, and make it happen. It's a partnership between municipalities. We have more work than we thought we needed to do, and it's going to take us through to the fall, but we're going to continue to work on it. It's our commitment that it's a partnership to build a better Alberta.

The Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Alberta New Democrat opposition, followed by Calgary-Shaw.

Mr. Mason: Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. Edmontonians don't want their tax dollars to go to hockey billionaires.

Alberta Energy Regulator

Mr. Mason: Yesterday we asked the Minister of Energy about the PCs' latest industry insider appointment, Gerry Protti. Mr. Protti, aside from being a donor to both the Premier's leadership campaign and the most recent Tory campaign, most recently represented a group of oil and gas companies and lobbyists that donated nearly \$200,000 to the Tories during the last election year. The all-too-cozy relationship between the Tories and their corporate donors is far too obvious with this appointment. Will the Premier step in and direct the Energy minister to find someone neutral and objective for this job?

Ms Redford: Well, Mr. Speaker, we as a government are very proud of the fact that we have a close working relationship with business leaders across this province to drive the economy as opposed to this party on the other side, whose federal leader goes down to Washington and claims that what we're doing in Alberta is somehow hurting the environment. When they do that, they hurt the economy. We will continue to work in partnership with industry leaders, with environmental groups, with community stakeholders to put in place a single regulator that allows us to continue to be competitive, to open markets, and to build this economy.

The Speaker: The hon. leader.

Mr. Mason: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Only a government in power for more than 40 years could say that to disagree with them is to hurt the province.

Not only is Mr. Protti obviously a long-time Tory insider, but he also has a record of misrepresenting the environmental impact of large energy projects. While at EnCana Mr. Protti publicly took a position that drilling over 1,200 wells in a protected wildlife area was a sustainable practice. The regulatory board didn't agree, Mr.

Speaker. Will the Premier take action to remove Mr. Protti and put in someone who can properly balance development and the environment when considering energy developments in Alberta?

Mr. Hughes: Mr. Speaker, I've asked for all Albertans, including the hon. member opposite, to be fair about this. What we're building is a world-class, next generation regulator that's going to ensure that we get the right balance between economic development and environmental sustainability and landowner concerns. Actually, we're well on our way to accomplishing that. We've got top, world-class leaders for this organization and the chair of the board. That's the governance board, that we'll be filling out with other world-class leaders as well. We have an exceptional chief executive officer as well, who has broad experience.

The Speaker: Hon. members, while I have the floor, let's be careful, again, to not malign individuals who are not here and able to defend themselves.

Calgary-Shaw.

Mr. Mason: Mr. Speaker, my second supplemental.

The Speaker: You're done. [interjections] Did you have one more?

Mr. Mason: Yes.

The Speaker: Oh. My apologies, hon. member. I thought you were done.

Mr. Mason: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I can understand, given the answers, that we could all get confused.

Leadership, Mr. Speaker, is not this government's strong suit. They would much prefer to appoint Tory friends and insiders to important positions and then claim that their biased chair won't make day-to-day decisions, as is their excuse. That lame excuse doesn't fly. It's obvious that Mr. Protti's role involves setting the overall direction for energy regulation in our province. He's not the right person for the job. Will the Premier prove that she's right for hers, take leadership, and remove Mr. Protti from that position?

2:10

Ms Redford: Mr. Speaker, leadership is putting in place a structure that allows us to balance energy development and environmental sustainability and to do that in a way that allows us to be competitive. Once again we see this opposition party leader stand up and malign systems and structures. If anyone actually believed what he said, it would hurt economic growth and development in this province. I expect nothing less from him, and that's all I've got to say.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-Shaw, followed by Bonnyville-Cold Lake.

PDD Funding

Mr. Wilson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the alternate reality this PC government operates in, a tax is not a tax, a raise is not a raise, a decision is not a decision, and now we learn that a cut is not a cut. In Calgary last week, despite cutting \$42 million from community access programs, the minister of PDD suggested that he, quote, will not take services away from people that need them. I'm sure the minister can understand the confusion amongst many Albertans. Will the minister please explain how he can possibly

guarantee that everyone who needs support will still receive it after he personally signed off on a \$42 million cut to front-line services?

Mr. Oberle: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for being in Calgary last week and for meeting with many of the concerned citizens there. I imagine that while he was there, he didn't share any discussions about \$2 billion that they would plan to cut out of their budget.

Nonetheless, that member was present when we did estimates, and it's pretty clear, I thought, that my budget went up by 3 and a half million dollars to a total, I believe, of \$694 million. I was also very clear in the budget discussion that we plan to transition from community access services to community engagement services, including employment. I stand by that promise. I also said that people that need services will get services.

Mr. Wilson: This is nothing short of a broken promise from a Premier who promised no service cuts.

Minister, given that you continue to insist the \$42 million gap in funding will not take services away from our most vulnerable, are you actually suggesting that there are people in the system today that are receiving services who do not require them?

Mr. Oberle: Well, we are currently doing needs assessment, Mr. Speaker, and that could well be an outcome of the needs assessment. We'll have to wait and see. But people that need services will get services. End of story.

Mr. Wilson: This minister has insisted that he will fill the \$42 million gap with an additional \$2 million out of his employment budget. Can't the minister see that \$42 million and \$2 million just don't quite add up?

Mr. Oberle: Mr. Speaker, I can't say it more clearly. We are going to do a transition from community access supports to supports that provide for inclusion and engagement in the community, including employment supports. We do have budgetary money on the Human Services side for employment supports, and we will focus on employment supports. But I'll say it again. People who need supports will get supports.

Online Student Learning Assessment

Mrs. Leskiw: Mr. Speaker, I have stood in this House on many occasions to speak about the challenges with the provincial achievement test. As a parent and a former teacher this is an issue that is very dear and near to my heart. Earlier today I participated in the Minister of Education's announcement of the province's new assessments that replace PATs. My question is to the Minister of Education. Can this minister guarantee that the new student assessments will be more focused on student success?

Mr. J. Johnson: Mr. Speaker, this member certainly has been a strong advocate for changing the assessment of Alberta students, and I commend her for this. I announced this morning that under the Premier's leadership we are eliminating the PATs and phasing in a new assessment model, the student learning assessments. These new digital assessments will be administered at the start of grades 3, 6, and 9 as just one of the changes, very positive changes. Alberta parents, students, and educators asked for these changes, and under the Premier's leadership we are putting the student at the centre of these efforts.

Mrs. Leskiw: To the Minister of Education: how soon can we expect students to start using these new online assessments in the Alberta classrooms?

Mr. J. Johnson: Mr. Speaker, soon. This will be the last year for grade 3 PATs. We will be starting pilots for the grade 3s in the fall of 2014, and we will be rolling out pilots for the digital fall student learning assessments: grade 3 in 2014, grade 6 in 2015, and grade 9 in 2016. This comes on the heels of our commitments, the Premier's commitments. Promise made, promise kept.

Mrs. Leskiw: Again to the same minister. You sort of answered my last question. We are starting with grade 3, which is a great start, but how long do we really have to wait for changes to occur in grade 6 and grade 9? Hopefully, not as long as we did with the grade 3s.

Mr. J. Johnson: No. Mr. Speaker, as I said, these are going to be phased in over three years. That's strictly to make sure that we're doing them right, and it's strictly to make sure that we've got the capacity and we've got the funds. We're going to do this right. The concept has been developed in partnership with the ATA, the Alberta School Councils' Association, the parents, the Alberta School Boards Association. Everyone standing with us today was there when we announced this, a very positive announcement for parents, for teachers, for school boards, but most importantly for students.

Health Facilities Infrastructure

Mrs. Forsyth: Mr. Speaker, the kitchen at the Foothills hospital, which serves a thousand patients, has been identified as a public health risk. In fact, it is so serious that it has been issued several public health citations. It has mould and asbestos and has been ignored by this government for over six years. Meanwhile this government has somehow come up with \$350 million to get rid of mould and asbestos in the new federal building when building plush new offices for themselves. To the Infrastructure minister: why are the new MLA offices more important than fixing the hospitals?

Mr. Drysdale: Mr. Speaker, my department works together with our colleagues from Alberta Health and Alberta Health Services. We have an infrastructure maintenance program. Alberta Health Services brings their requests to Alberta Health, and they send them on to Infrastructure. For anything over \$5 million Infrastructure grants the money; anything under is in the budget in the infrastructure maintenance program. They have money in the budget to fix those.

Mrs. Forsyth: It's Alberta Health Services' priority. We FOIPed records from the department.

The MLAs' office building is more important to this government than hospitals. Why, Minister?

Mr. Drysdale: Mr. Speaker, our government was elected to build Alberta, and that's just what we're doing. We continue to build public infrastructure that Albertans require to have quality of life. We've got five major hospital projects on the go right now all over Alberta, and we continue to meet the needs that Alberta Health Services and Alberta Health bring to Infrastructure.

Mrs. Forsyth: Honestly, Minister, that answer is embarrassing.

Given that mould is also a problem at the Rockyview hospital, why have three mould projects been put on hold? Is the Minister

of Infrastructure using the money to build the private PC rooftop garden on the federal building instead of fixing the mould problems?

Mr. Drysdale: Mr. Speaker, I won't go through it again. I just described the process for maintenance. They have money for their maintenance.

Mr. Speaker, this is really rich coming from a party that during estimates – the amendment they made in my estimates when they were debated in this House was to take a million dollars out of maintenance for infrastructure in the province. So I'm not really sure . . .

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Stony Plain, followed by Calgary-Buffalo.

Capital Region Municipal Planning

Mr. Lemke: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Ever since the city of Edmonton refused to support industrial expansion in the Acheson area of Parkland county, the Capital Region Board has experienced noticeable tension. My first question is to the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs. Given the veto power that large municipalities like Edmonton have, does your ministry plan to review voting rules to help mitigate disputes on the Capital Region Board?

Mr. Griffiths: Well, Mr. Speaker, the Premier and I had the pleasure of visiting the Capital Region Board this morning and having a great discussion. We always draw the same conclusion. The Capital Region Board is like a family. They work out solutions together. They have challenges, and sometimes they have arguments or impasses, but I'm proud of the Capital Region Board because of the work that they've done to overcome most of those things and make some tremendous decisions that make the Capital Region Board and the entire capital region a real network, drawing people in from around the world. I know that they can continue to find ways to work together, and they'll continue to do that in the future. If they ever come up with ways to work better and they need my assistance, I'll be there to help them.

2:20

Mr. Lemke: To the same minister: given that the city of Edmonton has this veto power with over 70 per cent of the population, how can my constituents and other constituents of Parkland county and Stony Plain be assured that their wishes for growth are seen through?

Mr. Griffiths: Mr. Speaker, the Capital Region Board will have some of the same challenges as the country of Canada. You try and balance a population with political regions that are represented. They have a double majority vote type of system. The question suggests that it has to be us versus them. We've always indicated in this department and in this government that there is no us versus them. It's not about one political jurisdiction succeeding and the other one failing. It's about how they're going to work together to make sure all of the capital region and every single person that lives in every one of those municipalities benefits, grows, and is prosperous for an entire generation to come.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Lemke: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the same minister: given that the Calgary region has eight governments for 1.2 million people and the capital region has 24 governments for 1.1

million people, do you see a need for a reduction in the amount of government in the CRB?

Mr. Griffiths: Well, Mr. Speaker, that's a good question. I know that I've had suggestions from other places that perhaps if some municipalities amalgamated, that would be better. I don't conclude that that would be the way to make it work better. We've seen that 98 per cent of the time all the members of the Capital Region Board come together. They work on trying to come up with a solution together that's good for the entire region. Ninety-eight per cent of the time they make decisions that have constantly made the capital region a draw for people from around the world to move to because they know this is the place to be if you want prosperity.

Education Funding

Mr. Hehr: Talk about conversion on the road to Damascus. Congratulations to the government on cancelling the provincial achievement tests for grades 3, 6, and 9. Parents, teachers, students, and the Alberta Liberals have been calling for this for 25 years, but I guess it's better than spending 40 years in the wilderness like Moses.

Even with this good news there are still big problems in our education system. Due to budget cuts our Calgary high schools will have an average of 38 kids per classroom. To the Minister of Education: does the minister not recognize that this far exceeds the recommendations in the Learning Commission report of a decade ago?

Mr. J. Johnson: Mr. Speaker, I'm glad the hon. member agrees with the direction of the government. We've made some incredible announcements this week and last week. Obviously, Calgary was a very happy city when we announced nine capital projects there last week. We've had announcements throughout this week that are transforming the education system, from dual crediting to high school flexibility programs to digital diploma exams to the great announcement today of student learning assessments to modernize the standardized assessments, that are so important. That's something that our Premier promised to do, and now we've delivered.

Mr. Hehr: Things are so bad in Edmonton's public system that they're facing a \$53 million shortfall from what they would need just to keep services as they are. Instead, they're going to have to cut educational assistance for special-needs students and have fewer teachers in their classrooms. That means larger class sizes. They've even cut music programs. Is this really what the government promised just one year ago in the election campaign?

Mr. J. Johnson: Mr. Speaker, there's no question that this is a tough budget. No one has ever said that it isn't. We've also pointed out that Education is one of those ministries that the Premier has gone out of her way to protect. It's obvious to anyone that actually looks at the budget and compares the different ministries that that's the case. We've gone to great lengths to look elsewhere first to make sure classrooms are not impacted and to make sure that the base instructional grant for every student is going to be the same next year and that every new student coming into the system gets funding. So we've looked at it. We've eliminated administration. We've eliminated some of the funding in maintenance, in transportation, and the AISI programs, that are important things, but they are not instruction in the classroom. We

think that Alberta has the great tools and the funding to deliver fantastic education.

Mr. Hehr: Looks like I was getting fed a baloney sandwich for lunch there, Mr. Speaker.

Given the lack of predictable, sustainable funding for our K through 12 system, Edmonton public is considering putting a specialty tax on the next civic election ballot because this government breaks its promises. If this government is too gutless to raise revenue despite all evidence that it's necessary – see comments by Ted Morton if you don't believe me – will this minister return full taxation powers back to the school boards so they can properly do his job?

Mr. J. Johnson: Mr. Speaker, school boards do have the ability and they always have had the ability to requisition dollars from their constituents if they go to plebiscites, so the Edmonton public school board is certainly welcome to do that, and if the parents and the citizens of Edmonton wish to do that, then of course they have that local power to do so.

There are other things and other places we can look at. I know that in Edmonton one of the areas is the capital. We've got a tremendous amount of excess capacity in capital in Edmonton. There are 35 schools that are under 50 per cent capacity. There is literally enough space in the Edmonton public school division to fit the entire Edmonton Catholic school division. There are a lot of places to look to make the system more efficient.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Strathcona, followed by Airdrie.

PDD Northeast Region Funding

Ms Notley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We knew the Premier had broken her promises to Alberta's most vulnerable citizens, but we didn't know the full extent of the damage. Now service providers in the northeast PDD region have been notified of a 40 per cent cut overall, a deeper cut than anyone could have imagined. In the north, at least, this is about far more than day programs. This is about basic life supports. So will the associate minister admit that his terrible cuts are jeopardizing the basic safety and well-being of persons with disabilities in Alberta?

Mr. Oberle: Mr. Speaker, the member was present during the estimates, six hours of estimates in front of committee, and during the votes on the budget in this House, so the member is very well aware of what my budget is going forward, and she's well aware that it actually took a 3 and a half million dollar increase. She's also well aware that we were crystal clear that we are going to transition from community access supports to supports that provide better inclusion, better engagement with the community. We are working collaboratively with the providers in the northeast, and we are discussing numbers. Nobody has a contract. Nobody is aware of any cuts. I most certainly will not admit that we are doing anything to jeopardize the health and safety . . .

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

Ms Notley: Well, Mr. Speaker, given that there is a memo out there that says that the overall northeast PDD budget of \$23 million has been slashed by \$9 million, not the \$2 million that you suggested would be the case during estimates, and given that service providers have told us that they are going to be forced to cut 24-hour supports, eliminate one-to-one aides, and move people

from group homes into unsupervised apartments in that area, will the minister tell us how his decision to cut 40 per cent of funding to northern Albertans with disabilities is not a complete betrayal of his responsibilities and a dereliction of duty?

Mr. Oberle: First of all, I never said any such thing in estimates. I didn't know then and I don't actually know now what the actual regional budget allocation to the northeast PDD will be, Mr. Speaker. I can tell this hon. member that her fearmongering here is not going to be helpful in the discussion. Across this province service provider PDD organizations are in support of what we're going to do. [interjection] I would like to state an answer, hon. member, if you would allow me to. Across this province there are service providers in PDD communities that agree with the transition that we want to go through. The difficulty here is the speed of the transition. I am absolutely sensitive to that, and we're going to try to work with them.

Ms Notley: Mr. Speaker, it's not fearmongering when there is documented evidence of what the cuts are.

Now, given that funding to one particular Barrhead PDD service provider is being cut by nearly 50 per cent, putting supports for all 68 individuals under their current care at risk, and given that the CEO of that agency has told us that 65 front-line workers will lose their jobs if this PC government doesn't come to its senses immediately, will the minister admit that he's created utter chaos for disabled Albertans, their families, and front-line staff? Or is he so out of touch that he can't see or won't let himself know what his decisions are doing to people on the ground?

Mr. Oberle: Well, I know very well, Mr. Speaker, what impact the spending by my department has on people on the ground because I've been out there listening to the people on the ground, not watching phantom e-mails come over the system. And I will continue to do that. In the next two weeks I'm in 20 communities across this province listening to what Albertans have to say.

I'll say again that the service provider that she indicated does not know exactly what their budget will be. They do not have a contract at this point, and they're dealing with half of the equation. They don't know what other services we are planning to provide. We'll get there.

The Speaker: Hon. Member for Edmonton-Strathcona, your point of order was noted at 2:30 during that last exchange.

2:30 Investigations into Commercial Crimes

Mr. Anderson: Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday I asked what is being done to address a barrage of alleged real estate scams that have cost roughly 25,000 Albertans over \$2.2 billion. As *Maclean's* magazine put it, Alberta is fast becoming "a wild west for small investors." Yesterday we received a tip from an individual in the RCMP commercial crimes unit stating that they have literally hundreds of such files that warrant a full criminal investigation but haven't the staff needed to do so. To the Finance minister: are you aware of the severe shortage of resources to investigate commercial crimes, and what are you doing to address it?

Mr. Horner: Mr. Speaker, the Alberta Securities Commission is performing enforcement activities as we speak. As I mentioned in my answer to the hon. member previously, there are a number of these things that are currently in court. There are a number of things that are being presented to the RCMP. I'm sure the RCMP will be very interested in the tip that the hon. member received.

In 2011 the Alberta Securities Commission completed just over 400 investigations, Mr. Speaker. They do have a very large and robust investigation piece. They imposed over 9 and a half million dollars in administrative penalties. There were six criminal prosecutions and 18 court proceedings that year as well. We are going aggressively after what we can in the process.

Mr. Anderson: With respect, Minister, clean out your ears. We're talking about the RCMP, not the ASC. Come on. Listen.

Minister, we were also informed that this shortage of case officers for commercial crimes is a huge problem in the Edmonton Police Service as well. This is, of course, a provincially funded organization. To the minister: how are you planning on ensuring that victims of commercial frauds, including these kinds of real estate scams, get their money returned to them when our police forces lack the resources needed to conduct the necessary investigations?

Mr. Horner: Mr. Speaker, I heard him very well. My ears don't need to be cleaned out. Perhaps the hon. member would like to clean out his eyes so that he can read what we put into the budget of Justice and Solicitor General, so that he can see that we're adding prosecutors, and so that he can actually listen to what I have to say.

I'm telling him that a portion of what he's talking about is an Alberta Securities Commission investigation, of which we did 400 last year. They're doing investigations this year as we speak. Not all of them are criminal, and not all of the ones that the hon. member refers to, where Albertans lost their money, are actually on the criminal side. There are many of them that are on the civil side, and we are assisting the investigation.

Mr. Anderson: I've never cleaned out my eyes before. I'd welcome some instruction on how to clean one's eyes out. That's interesting.

Minister, given that these 25,000 investors have now formed an organization called the Alberta Investors Protection group and have several proposals this House could implement to help protect Albertans from being victimized by such real estate scams in the future, would the minister be willing to meet with this group as soon as possible to begin that discussion?

Mr. Horner: Mr. Speaker, I was simply referring to the Wildrose-coloured glasses that the hon. member likes to look at things through. [interjections] It's Thursday.

Mr. Speaker, I'm not familiar with an invitation to me to meet with the group as yet, and I'd be more than happy to entertain that invitation to meet. My office is always open to those sorts of things, and if the schedule permits, I'd be more than happy to meet with them.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Banff-Cochrane, followed by Drumheller-Stettler.

Tourism Funding

Mr. Casey: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Alberta is blessed with a vibrant and growing economy supported by many sectors. One of these, tourism, generates \$7.9 billion annually and employs over 139,000 Albertans. To the Minister of Finance: given that tourism is ranked third as an economic driver in Alberta, can the minister explain why there is no reference to tourism in the 2013 fiscal plan economic outlook, yet agriculture, energy, forestry, and others are referenced?

Mr. Horner: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is absolutely correct. Tourism is an extremely important industry to our province. The numbers that he quotes are absolutely accurate. We do have almost an 8 per cent increase in the budget for Tourism, Parks and Recreation over the next three years. The tourism levy brought in over \$70 million last year. It's one of the pillars of Alberta's economy. Like other sectors – financial services, nanotech, ICT – it is a critical piece and is actually found across all sectors of our economy in terms of agriculture, in terms of oil and gas. We do very much understand the importance of tourism.

Obviously, I know the Minister of Tourism, Parks and Recreation will be more than happy to help us out.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Casey: Thank you. To the minister of tourism: given that tourism is one of the fastest growing sectors world-wide, what is being done to ensure that Albertans remain competitive?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Dr. Starke: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. To my hon. friend: certainly, representing the constituency of Banff-Cochrane, he certainly is aware of just how critical tourism is to the Alberta economy. Our government understands that, and our government has had a sustainable funding model in place that is, in fact, the envy of all other jurisdictions. It provides for a way to have sustainable, predictable funding going forward to fund not only tourism promotion but, in fact, tourism product development as well. We're proud of that. We're proud of the fact that we talk about that on a regular basis. That plus the fact that Alberta has got the most beautiful landscapes in the world and tourism infrastructure to offer to our visitors: we think we're in a very good position in tourism in this province.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Casey: Thank you. All that said, given that capital is essential to grow any industry, what is being done to attract investment into Alberta's tourism industry?

Dr. Starke: Well, Mr. Speaker, I call this a division into specific and nonspecific measures. The specific measures include measures within my ministry to go out and seek and encourage investors from around the world and from around Canada and, indeed, within Alberta to invest in the tourism sector. Beyond that, we have the nonspecific, and that is the positive business environment that we have in this province, the fact that we have a low tax structure, the fact that we have an excellent labour force, the fact that we have infrastructure that is grown and maintained on a regular basis. That's the Alberta advantage that grows not only tourism in this province but all of our industries, indeed, to help the Alberta economy.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Drumheller-Stettler, followed by Edmonton-Gold Bar.

Acute-care Services in Consort

Mr. Strankman: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In 2011 the government temporarily shut down acute-care beds in Consort because of lack of physician services. The bed closure was only supposed to be temporary, but months turned into years. It looks like another broken government promise. I raised this issue in March, and the Associate Minister of Seniors assured me that the government

would work with the community to get this facility reopened. To the minister: what has been done since March to make sure Consort will get back those acute-care beds they deserve?

Mr. Horne: Well, Mr. Speaker, what Alberta Health Services is doing in Consort is what they are doing with many communities across the province that face similar challenges in recruiting physicians. As the hon. member would know, it is a challenge in some communities to provide physicians with sufficient work to interest them in full-time practice and, ideally, full-time residence in those communities. That work will continue as it continues in other parts of the province.

Mr. Strankman: Mr. Speaker, given that the reason for the temporary closure was a lack of doctors and given that the people of Consort went out and successfully found these physicians who want to work and live in the community and succeeded where this government has failed, why does the minister continue to stonewall the people and leave them in the dark instead of giving them these acute-care beds?

Mr. Horne: Well, Mr. Speaker, the decision around matching physician supply with the ability to open acute-care beds is more complex, of course, than simply the availability of physicians. There are many other support staff that are needed. Of course, there are considerations around quality and safety. I know that this is a priority, as it is in many other communities across the province. We have to do our best to match the services that are required with the resources that are available both in terms of facilities and physicians, and we'll continue to work with the people of Consort.

Mr. Strankman: Mr. Minister, will you commit today for the people of Consort to a clear and acute timeline for when these acute-care beds could be reopened?

Mr. Horne: Well, Mr. Speaker, what I will do is that I will look into the matter with Alberta Health Services and see if I can get any further update on the status of this. But as the hon. member would understand, there are a number of factors to be considered. It is heartening to hear, as I've heard before, about the willingness and the interest and the hard work of the people in the community to have those acute-care beds open and to have physicians to staff them. We'll continue to work with them to try to make that happen.

2:40

Support for the Film Industry

Mr. Dorward: Mr. Speaker, there has been much discussion in the film industry this week. It was good to see recognition by all parties for support to an industry that contributes to Alberta's cultural persona and to our economy. Looking for progressive and sustainable ways to protect and bolster this industry is worthy of careful consideration. Other provinces, including Ontario, Quebec, and British Columbia, make use of tax credits. Alberta currently doesn't have a film tax credit but instead offers incentives to producers in this sector through the Alberta multimedia development fund. My question is to the Minister of Culture. Why haven't you already made a move to introduce these tax credits to our industry along with the rest of the country?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mrs. Klimchuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very happy to see the interest in this important sector, but everyone needs to recognize the pros and cons between a film tax credit and the approach that we take. We know that this grant system we have is tailored to fit Alberta's industry, provides up to 30 per cent return on all Alberta production costs, and directly benefits Alberta filmmakers. That's from money spent here in Alberta – creative personnel, film crews, studios, jobs in Alberta – and it's equivalent to a labour-based tax credit of 55 per cent.

Mr. Dorward: Minister, don't you want to get out of the business of picking winners and losers? Grants allow you to do that.

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mrs. Klimchuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let me make it very clear. I certainly do not pick which productions get grants. Grants are based on very specific criteria of the program, and I do not censor any grant application. All applications meeting program criteria are indeed funded. Production grants are not subjective. Grants are based on the amount of money spent in Alberta, not just for labour costs but for any production expenses such as hotels, transportation, construction. It's about buying in Alberta.

Mr. Dorward: To the same minister: will your ministry get out there and find some other options for Alberta?

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mrs. Klimchuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let's remember that this grant system was designed with input from the Alberta film, television, and digital media. There's always room for growth and change. Producers tell us what they like about it. They like the quick payout times. They like that the administration to process the application is easy, and its flexibility adjusts to the needs of a production on a set. What I will do is to continue to work with the Alberta Film Advisory Council and other industry members to keep our production alive and well so that jobs stay in Alberta.

The Speaker: Thank you.

Thank you, hon. Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar, for demonstrating that supplementary questions can be brought forward without any preamble whatsoever. Bonnyville-Cold Lake had one of two as well. Well done.

In 30 seconds from now we will continue with Members' Statements.

Members' Statements

(continued)

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark, followed by Edmonton-South West.

Affordable Child Care

Dr. Sherman: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Sunday is Mother's Day, one of my favourite days of the year. I think it's great that we set aside an entire day to celebrate and honour the women who have given us so many gifts: the gifts of life, love, and sacrifice on our behalf. On Mother's Day we show our appreciation for these great gifts by giving gifts of our own, but no matter how expensive or heartfelt those gifts, they are small compared to what we have received.

This Mother's Day let's also remember that a price is paid because as a society we do not involve women as full and equal participants in the life of this province. A price is paid because as a society we make it very difficult for women to return to the workplace and reap the same benefits as men. A price is paid because the workplace is missing the intelligence, energy, and creativity of so many great women who would go back to work if only they could afford to.

This is due largely to the shortage of quality, affordable child care spaces close to home or close to work. The result is that when our mothers retire, they have less money even though they can expect to live longer than men. Far too often what happens is that we have a poor senior. Mr. Speaker, this is wrong. Today on behalf of the Alberta Liberals I want to suggest that we give a truly meaningful gift to the mothers of Alberta, quality child care that is affordable to all, \$10 a day child care. It pays for itself in the long run, it is socially just, and in a province as rich and wealthy as Alberta, we certainly have the money to set it up. This would be a truly meaningful Mother's Day gift to Alberta's mothers. Let's give it.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-South West, followed by Banff-Cochrane.

World Catholic Education Day

Mr. Jeneroux: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise today and speak about World Catholic Education Day, which is being celebrated world-wide. The Minister of Education had introduced guests earlier this afternoon, and I would like to acknowledge them as well and thank them for joining us here today.

Mr. Speaker, this day is a time for Catholics around the world to take a moment to reflect on the importance of Catholic education and its values of peace, justice, and respect. It's also an opportunity to reflect on how Catholic education has served students and parents over the years. This year's theme, You Will Be My Witness, will be celebrated by Catholic schools, boards, and parishes across Canada.

Mr. Speaker, Alberta's world-class education system is built on a range of educational choices, including separate, public, charter, francophone, and private schools. The availability of choice strengthens our education system and supports the rights of students and parents to have the options that meet the objectives of the School Act. This range of choice continues to bring new ideas and innovative approaches to learning that ultimately benefit all our students and help them to perform amongst the best in Canada and around the world. I'm personally proud of our Catholic education system, including the two schools in my constituency, Monsignor Fee Otterson and Sister Annata Brockman.

I would like to wish everyone a very happy World Catholic Education Day, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to our guests for being here today to celebrate this important day.

The Speaker: Thank you.

The hon. Member for Banff-Cochrane, followed by Cardston-Taber-Warner.

Tourism Industry

Mr. Casey: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to speak to the Assembly today about an industry that I feel has huge untapped potential and with the appropriate support will become an important driver of economic diversification in Alberta. Tourism

has been and continues to be one of the major economic generators in the province of Alberta. It may surprise hon. members to learn that the tourism industry employs 139,000 Albertans and generates \$7.9 billion annually. Tax revenues to various levels of government amount to \$2.4 billion federally, \$1.17 billion provincially, and \$430 million municipally.

With this huge impact tourism should be regarded as more than a nice-to-have. It needs to be perceived as an essential part of our economy and industry, no different than forestry, agriculture, or manufacturing. In virtually every other industry important to Alberta's economic future incentive programs exist to encourage investment and reinvestment in order to grow and reach the full potential of those sectors. We need to develop similar programs for the tourism industry. If tourism is ever to recognize its true potential as a major economic force in Alberta, then it is important that we as government invest in the development of this industry, as we have with others.

Mr. Speaker, we need to begin to appreciate the value of tourism as an industry essential to Alberta's future. None of this is to suggest that the current minister or past ministers have not done an amazing job keeping this industry alive and vibrant given the tools at its disposal. However, if we want to realize the future potential of tourism, the members of this Assembly must start to treat tourism as an industry, in the same context as we do energy, agriculture, and forestry, and afford it the same opportunity.

Thank you.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Cardston-Taber-Warner, followed by St. Albert.

Parent Preschool Program of Southern Alberta

Mr. Bikman: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to speak about an important matter affecting families in southwestern Alberta. Due to cuts in the Advanced Education budget an important preschool program may be eliminated or severely reduced.

The parent preschool program is nonprofit, operates in seven rural communities, offering 14 classes for young children. It does not have money to pay all staff but has been able to use second-year students from the early childhood education diploma course at Lethbridge College. The program has offered practicum placements for early childhood education students, enabling them to directly apply what they've learned in school. It's a great opportunity for both the students and the parent preschool program. One letter I received from a parent in need of child care stated that she would always choose someone who has experience with children over someone who doesn't.

2:50

It's the kind of hands-on opportunity that can't be equalled sitting in a classroom or through an online course. This is a priority not only for the families that have children in the program but also for the students, who get priceless teaching experience. However, due to the government's fiscal mismanagement the budget cuts may force Lethbridge College to cancel the course. This puts the parent preschool program's existence at serious risk.

Mr. Speaker, the government finds money for all sorts of unnecessary pet projects, whether it's hundreds of millions of dollars for fancy offices or \$350,000 for partisan, party-coloured propaganda. This government is demonstrably unable to set priorities and keep promises. With cuts to postsecondary education it has caused college administrators to slice front-line programs while being forced to keep staff filling out government forms instead. It's time for the government to clean up its act,

balance the books, and stop placing colleges and universities under the knife to make up for its own fiscal follies.

Thank you.

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

International Offices

Mr. Khan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The world's marketplace is becoming much more competitive, and our government is facing new economic realities. In the wake of these realities, increasing market access and ties with jurisdictions around the globe is at the top of Alberta's list of priorities. We must be well equipped to respond to recent economic and geopolitical shifts. We have a choice to lead internationally and prosper or follow and fall behind.

Over the years Alberta's international offices have become and I know will remain critical to Alberta's continued economic productivity. Whether it's advocacy, trade, or investment, our 10 international offices give Alberta a key edge in an extremely competitive marketplace by having an on-the-ground presence that can quickly tap into policy development that impacts Alberta. For example, our Washington office has been instrumental in helping Alberta overcome the BSE crisis and more recently in helping Alberta's advocacy efforts on market access, specifically the Keystone XL pipeline. The offices also serve to help facilitate important introductions for businesses into a foreign marketplace. Last year alone our offices helped assist 640 Alberta companies as they explored international opportunities.

The Alberta-Korea office has supported a number of Korean heavy-industry companies in establishing their presence in Alberta that saw investment in energy-related projects. The Alberta-Mexico office co-ordinated a mission to Mexico for a delegation that included five Alberta agrifood companies. As a result of this mission, three of these companies started negotiations with local buyers to enter the market. Additionally, the Alberta-Japan office arranged discussions that led to an MOU between an Alberta company and a Japanese company with the Advanced Scientific Technology & Management Research Institute of Kyoto. This allowed for joint research and business collaboration between Alberta and Kyoto nanotech companies and academia.

These examples are merely a snapshot of the vital link Alberta's international offices create between our province and the world. It's a link I know Albertans want to see fortified and a link we're ready to take advantage of.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you.

Presenting Petitions

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Sherwood Park.

Ms Olesen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition to the Legislative Assembly brought forth by nursing students from the U of A. This petition was signed by over 200 people from the Sherwood Park and Edmonton areas urging the government "to introduce legislation that will require all drivers and passengers of All-Terrain Vehicles (ATVs) to wear Canadian Standards Association (CSA) approved helmets while operating an ATV."

Thank you.

The Speaker: Thank you. Hon. member, can we assume that it was approved as to form by Parliamentary Counsel?

Ms Olesen: Yes, it was.

The Speaker: Thank you. Let's be reminded to say that at the beginning. It saves the House time.

Ms Olesen: I'm sorry. Thank you.

Notices of Motions

The Speaker: The hon. Government House Leader.

Mr. Hancock: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is a great pleasure that I rise on behalf of the Premier to give oral notice of a motion: "Be it resolved that Bill 207, Human Tissue and Organ Donation Amendment Act, 2013, be moved to Government Bills and Orders on the Order Paper."

Tabling Returns and Reports

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Service Alberta or someone on behalf of.

Mr. Drysdale: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of my colleague the Minister of Service Alberta today I'm pleased to table five copies of the Alberta vital statistics annual review 2011. This report summarizes all vital events that occurred in Alberta during the 2011 calendar year: live births, marriages, deaths, infant deaths, stillbirths, adoptions, and legal changes of name. Finalizing the report can take up to one year. The data provided by hospitals, municipalities, and other organizations must first be compiled and verified. This report fulfills Service Alberta's mandate under the Vital Statistics Act and provides the public and health care professionals with a resource document of provincial vital events statistics data. After the report has been tabled in the Legislature, Service Alberta sends the report to universities and libraries who have requested copies.

Thank you.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Strathcona on behalf of.

Ms Notley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have two tablings today on behalf of the hon. Member for Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview. I'd like to table a letter to the Minister of Human Services sent by a mother raising her concerns about her daughter's future in light of this government's substantial cuts to the persons with developmental disabilities community access program. The letter closes by stating:

I appreciate that we are in difficult . . . times. I ask that more consideration be given to the implementation of the current course of action that has been chosen for people who cannot make decisions for themselves.

The second set of tablings, Mr. Speaker, comes from a community resource worker and is also directed to the Minister of Human Services. It is raising her concerns about this government's cuts to programs serving persons with developmental disabilities, cuts which she believes will bring about transformational changes. The letter closes by stating:

I ask you to reflect on how cutting funding to community access programs might displace many individuals who rely heavily on the support that they receive while attending programs and how it will impact their lives when they are no longer able to attend [these programs].

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House-Sundre, followed by Edmonton-Centre.

Mr. Anglin: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Either today or at the beginning of next week this House will take up the business of the Aboriginal Consultation Levy Act. I have two documents I want to table today. One is a statement letter from Treaty 6 First Nations given to me by Chief Darren Whitford, and the other is the speaking point letters that the 17 nations of Treaty 6 also sent out with regard to this proposed bill. I have the requisite copies right here.

Thanks.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Centre, followed by Cardston-Taber-Warner.

Ms Blakeman: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Actually, the tablings I'm doing today are on behalf of my colleague the Member for Calgary-Buffalo. The first is an e-mail from people actually currently in California, Joni and Brad Stenning, but writing through people in Cochrane, care of Ernie and Marie Evans. They are concerned about the cuts to PDD because their brother, Mark Evans, is cognitively impaired, and they feel that he benefits very much under the programs under community access. So I'll table that.

I also have an e-mail to Calgary-Buffalo from Gary Simpson, which was CCed to me, which is expressing great disappointment in the 56 per cent cut in funding for students taking courses from Alberta Distance Learning, which he feels is defeatist.

The next is to Calgary-Buffalo from Tammy Johnson regarding cutting support programs for people with disabilities. She is a person with a disability working and contributing to the community and appreciates that she's very fortunate in what she's had but doesn't want to see other people subjected to poverty and difficulty.

To Calgary-Buffalo from B. Kerley, also raising concerns about seniors and the proposed pharmacare program. This person is afraid that as seniors they will have to provide for the likelihood of a worst-case scenario. It's quite distressing to her to think that she could be looking at a possible decrease in benefits.

To Calgary-Buffalo from Jason Walker, with concerns about the PDD cutbacks. He has worked with persons with disabilities and is really struggling to understand why those supports would be taken away from individuals like those he's worked with.

3:00

Finally, an e-mail directed to members of the Legislative Assembly from a Ben Graham in Calgary. He has also worked in the field of disability services and is bringing concerns about the proposed cuts affecting services.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. members. I'll just interrupt proceedings to acknowledge the Government House Leader given the hour.

Mr. Hancock: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If we might have unanimous consent of the House to extend past 3 o'clock pursuant to the standing orders.

The Speaker: Hon. members, the Government House Leader has requested unanimous consent so that we can complete the

Routine. It requires your unanimous consent. Does anyone object to giving it?

[Unanimous consent granted]

The Speaker: Let us continue on, then, with Cardston-Taber-Warner, followed by the Minister of Human Services, and then Highwood.

Mr. Bikman: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The law of physics that states that nature abhors a vacuum is also true of human nature. When programs or changes are announced, people without enough sufficient information fill in the blanks. Sometimes they're drawing conclusions, according to the government, that aren't justified. Nevertheless, because of the lack of information regarding PDD and how it's going to impact people, I continue to receive many letters and calls, two examples of which I will table today in addition to the many others I've already tabled.

One is from a concerned mother who describes the help that her son is currently getting and hopes that it will be allowed to continue. She desperately hopes that.

Another is from the principal of Magrath elementary school, commenting about the programs that are currently run by SASH, the Southern Alberta Society for the Handicapped, the good work that they're doing in the school, and the esteem the workers are receiving for being able to do this work from the people that are being helped. I have the requisite number of copies and would like to table them with you today.

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Human Services.

Mr. Hancock: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to table the requisite number of copies today of two letters which were earlier delivered to the hon. Member for Calgary-Shaw, responding to Written Question 37 and Written Question 39.

The Speaker: The hon. Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition.

Ms Smith: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm a bit backlogged on my tablings. I've got a few from earlier in the week. I had made reference to a letter that I received from Justice Vertes in response to my inquiry about whether or not they could expand the timeline for the inquiry. I just would like to table his response to me with the five copies required.

I also have a tabling of the letter received from the Minister of Health regarding the couple in Crowsnest Pass that were satisfied with the resolution that was proposed and that he's intervened on and that I thanked him for, so five copies of that.

I also have five copies of an e-mail from the owner of Britannia Pharmacy, Debbie Boyle, and some of the concerns that she wanted to express to the government about the impact the pharmacy changes are having on her business.

In addition, I want to file five copies of the letter that was written to Alberta Health Services from Dr. Paterson with regard to the breast cancer test, to be able to determine the course of treatment; five copies of that.

In addition to that, five copies of an article which is in the latest version of one of the docs' magazines about, also, the impact of delaying the decision on the approval of this drug test and the impact it has on patients. Five copies of that as well.

The Speaker: Calgary-Fish Creek, did you have a tabling as well?

Mrs. Forsyth: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much. I am tabling from Alberta Health Services on their priority list the project named Foothills Medical Centre Kitchen Renovation and the urgency with which they have asked this government to remove the asbestos and the length of time that they've been waiting. It also includes several public health citations and the environmental issues. I would hope that the government will pay attention to this.

Thank you.

The Speaker: Are there others? The hon. Member for Innisfail-Sylvan Lake.

Mrs. Towle: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm tabling on behalf of the hon. Member for Calgary-Shaw an article with regard to his question today, Calgary Crowd Vents about Disability Program Cuts. He referenced it in his question and wanted to make sure you had it.

Thank you.

The Speaker: Are there any others? Edmonton-Strathcona, one more tabling.

Ms Notley: I'd just like to table the appropriate number of copies of an e-mail that I referred to in my question today to the associate minister of Human Services from the Alberta Council of Disability Services. Within that e-mail it says:

The total NE Regional target reduction is almost \$9 million out of a [full] \$23 million budget, with Agencies reporting cuts ranging from a low of 18% to a high of over 50%, this will translate to about 260 FTE positions in the . . . Region [being lost]. Individual service reductions range from 1% to 75% for July 1.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Tablings to the Clerk

The Clerk: I wish to advise the House that the following documents were deposited with the office of the Clerk. On behalf of the hon. Mr. Griffiths, Municipal of Municipal Affairs, a response to Written Question 4, asked for by Mr. Barnes on December 3, 2012.

Have all the applications to the 2010 Southern Alberta Disaster Recovery Program and the 2010 Spring South Eastern Alberta Disaster Recovery Program been finalized, and how long did it take applicants to receive a first assistance payment once they had provided all required information?

On behalf of the hon. Mr. Horne, Minister of Health, response to Written Question 11, asked for by Mrs. Forsyth on December 3, 2012.

Which physicians, psychiatrists, or pharmacists were consulted on the Creating Connections: Alberta's Addiction and Mental Health Strategy dated September 2011?

On behalf of the hon. Mr. Bhullar, Minister of Service Alberta, response to Written Question 12, asked for by Mr. Fox on December 3, 2012.

What are the criteria for determining the location of new registry offices in Alberta and do the communities of Blackfalds, Chestermere and Redcliff meet these criteria?

Response to Written Question 13, asked for by Mr. Pedersen on December 3, 2012.

What Government of Alberta infrastructure projects are currently scheduled for Medicine Hat, and what are the projected costs and completion dates for each infrastructure project?

The Speaker: Hon. members, before we go on with the point of order, I too have a tabling. I rise to table five copies of a memo from the Member for Edmonton-South West, who would like to request early consideration of Bill 203 to proceed to third reading directly after Committee of the Whole on Monday, May 13. Thank you.

Hon. Member for Edmonton-Strathcona, I believe you have the point of order today?

Mr. Campbell: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Associate Minister for PPD, while the budget is as it was presented in the House, the member is prepared to withdraw his remarks if the member found it offensive or unparliamentary.

The Speaker: Thank you.

Hon. Member for Edmonton-Strathcona, I assume you're acknowledging that that is acceptable to you, are you?

Ms Notley: That is acceptable to me. Thank you.

The Speaker: Thank you very much.

That concludes our Routine for the day.

Orders of the Day

Government Bills and Orders Third Reading

Bill 24

Statutes Amendment Act, 2013

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Service Alberta, to move third reading of Bill 24.

Mr. Bhullar: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a privilege to move third reading of this bill. I think we've had a very robust and fascinating discussion on this bill. I enjoy the support that all three parties have offered to this bill; therefore, I move third reading.

The Speaker: Are there others? The hon. Member for Lac La Biche-St. Paul-Two Hills.

Mr. Saskiw: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour here to rise today to speak to third reading on Bill 24. I will be very brief.

What is great about this bill is the work that was done to initiate some of the changes by the Member for Lacombe-Ponoka, particularly on the issues dealing with the condominiums act and the bare-land titles. We've seen in this Legislature in the past year that as the Official Opposition we've driven issues like that. We saw that we advocated on things like parent choice in education. We succeeded in that. We succeeded in home-cooked meals and two showers per week for seniors. We succeeded in getting a faster twinning of highway 63. We succeeded in getting some stronger government expense rules. We succeeded in getting free parking for veterans. We succeeded in getting some transparency on illegal donations. We succeeded in demonstrating the debt that this government is putting on future generations, and we succeeded in poking holes through this government's whole budgetary process. Then recently we succeeded on the film tax credit, getting that motion passed and putting the pressure on the government to actually initiate it.

3:10

Here, again, the Member for Lacombe-Ponoka, through his hard work, through his consultation really pushed forward this issue

that has been lagging for years and years and years. As a result of him working hard, putting the initiative in, demanding answers here in the Legislature, demanding answers from the minister, the minister finally saw the light and put forward this bill which rectified some of the very serious issues that were in the condominium area that created a load of uncertainty in the industry.

Again, this is just another feather in the cap for the Official Opposition. We've succeeded in multiple, multiple changes both in government policy as well as government legislation. Again I have to commend the Member for Lacombe-Ponoka for driving this forward but also the minister for finally reacting to our steadfast work on this to try and get these necessary changes done.

With that, Mr. Speaker, given the bill as a whole, the only issues that you have when you have these types of miscellaneous pieces of legislation: preferably some of those, if they're substantive in their material, should be in some respect kept as stand-alone pieces of legislation. Miscellaneous acts are good for minor changes. You know, the change to the Perpetuities Act may be considered a minor change. Some would consider it material, and if it is material, those types of changes should in fact be put in a separate bill for a separate discussion instead of amalgamating everything into one entire bill.

The other thing that we saw with this bill, Mr. Speaker, was with respect to the Perpetuities Act. There was some concern in terms of the interpretation from a professor from the University of Calgary, Professor Nigel Bankes. What this has done is, I would say, clarify any type of potential misinterpretation that could be formulated at the court level if someone wanted to litigate on this. It's one of these things where that type of amendment as well as the condominiums act amendment may be considered to be material. If they are, let's have those in separate bills so that we could have wholesome debates on it rather than having it in an entire amalgamated act like that.

Other than those minor issues, Mr. Speaker, I will be supporting this bill. Thank you.

The Speaker: Thank you.

Are there others? The hon. Member for Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview.

Mr. Bilous: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my privilege to rise and speak to Bill 24, the Statutes Amendment Act, 2013. As outlined previously, there has been a precedent in the past among all parties in the House here where the miscellaneous statutes amendment bill is introduced only after each amendment included in the bill has been informally approved by all parties in the House, and in the past if any critic rejected a proposed amendment, it was not included in the bill. At that point, then, the bill proceeded through the House with no or very limited debate because consensus had been reached beforehand.

I feel compelled to get up and speak to this bill because of the different pieces that are put into this. It's unfortunate, but it needs to be noted, Mr. Speaker, that this PC government has broken this precedent. There was not unanimous consent. The Minister of Service Alberta is and was well aware of our concerns, the Alberta NDP's concerns, with including a significant piece to this legislation, speaking specifically about the bare-land condominiums changes.

Now, at the onset, Mr. Speaker, we agree. As the minister well knows, I was in attendance at several condominium meetings throughout the city. I can appreciate the fact that there are many Albertans who are part of bare-land condominiums who have tens of thousands if not hundreds of thousands of dollars that are tied

up, that are inaccessible to the condo boards, stopping them from doing what they need to do, whether it's repairs or to improve their common property, and I do acknowledge the fact that that wasn't an issue until one court case, which occurred a few years ago and set the precedent for these funds. So there is a need for that piece of Bill 24, Mr. Speaker.

However, you know, the concern, again, is the fact that this is really an omnibus bill, where we've got several pieces of legislation that are all thrown into one bill, which, I would argue, Mr. Speaker, detracts from the ability to speak to and give the due attention that the pieces need. Normally the miscellaneous is for more housekeeping types of aspects. Looking at the Perpetuities Act and the Emblems of Alberta Act that are part of it, they do seem to fit within the spirit of this miscellaneous statutes bill.

However, as I've stated regarding the bare-land condominiums, the Alberta New Democrats would have preferred – and we did not provide consent to the Minister of Service Alberta because we wanted to debate this bill on its own. We felt that it's important enough to be its own bill as opposed to clumped together with a few other miscellaneous statutes.

As well, Mr. Speaker, another concern that I have with this bill is the change, or the amended piece, in the Surveys Act. The fact that the director of surveys is no longer required to be a government employee begs the question: why are we contracting this out? I haven't heard any logical or rational explanation from the government as to why this needs to be a private contractor. The position has been filled by a public employee for a significant amount of time. The fact that we're trying to again privatize certain services without any explanation leaves me questioning the logic behind this. I'm not really comfortable with that piece being in this miscellaneous bill.

As I've said, Mr. Speaker, I do agree with the changes that the minister would like to bring to the condominium act. This is something that many Albertans have been pushing for. I can appreciate the fact that the minister is bringing this in now as opposed to waiting for the review of the MGA. I think this will be well received around the province. I know that the minister and I have spoken on numerous occasions, and he knows that my position and the position of the Alberta New Democrats is that this is something Albertans have been calling for. So I applaud the minister for listening to Albertans and responding in a timely fashion and, as well, on that end, respecting the opinions of, I believe, all opposition parties, who agree that this needs to be amended, that this needs to be done not just judiciously but at a very expedient rate. For that reason, I'm satisfied with the minister.

But, as I've said, the fact is that this should have been a stand-alone piece, given its own attention. As I've outlined, Mr. Speaker, there are other elements of this omnibus bill that I'm not comfortable with and where I do not like the amendments proposed.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Hon. members, 29(2)(a) is available.

Seeing none, are there any other speakers to this bill at this stage? None?

Do you wish to conclude debate, then, hon. minister?

3:20

Mr. Bhullar: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would like to move that we vote on Bill 24. This is a very important piece of legislation that brings relief to thousands of Albertans living in bare-land condominiums.

This piece of legislation has actually enlightened me a lot about the workings of the House. I have learned that when you go to hon. colleagues and discuss certain ideas with them, sometimes they like to take credit for it. That's okay, Mr. Speaker. That's okay. Why? Because we want to bring results for the people of Alberta. So if other people feel good about work we're doing, that's just fine. If they feel good that we're bringing relief to nearly 40,000 Albertans living in bare-land condominiums, I'm fine with that. There are enough good ideas and great things that the Progressive Conservative government is doing for all members of the House to take credit for the greatness of the PC government. We've gotten results for bare-land condominium owners, we've moved swiftly, and we're doing a complete, comprehensive review of the Condominium Property Act.

At this point I would ask us to vote on this. I thank all members for their very, very positive comments and their support. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

[Motion carried; Bill 24 read a third time]

Government Bills and Orders Second Reading

Bill 22 Aboriginal Consultation Levy Act

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Aboriginal Relations.

Mr. Campbell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise today and move second reading of Bill 22, the Aboriginal Consultation Levy Act.

Alberta has a duty to consult with aboriginal people when land management and resource development decisions may adversely impact their existing treaty or other constitutional rights. Bill 22 respects the treaty rights of First Nations people and provides them an opportunity to be more engaged in Alberta's consultation process. The focus of the bill is allowing Aboriginal Relations to implement a mandatory levy that would help First Nations participate in consultation in a meaningful way. The bill also supports alignment with the Alberta energy regulator.

Let me give you an overview of the bill and how it would support an improved, fair, open, and transparent consultation process. The idea for a levy came up during discussions with First Nations and industry as part of the development of the draft consultation policy. Under the bill a levy would be paid by industry proponents for resource development projects and land management activities when there is a duty to consult with First Nations. The levy amounts received from industry proponents would be paid into a fund which would be managed and administered by the government. In fact, government may also pay into the fund for Crown-led projects. Mr. Speaker, revenues from the levy would only be used to support Alberta's consultation initiative. The funds would be redistributed to First Nations so that they have adequate resources to engage in a full and meaningful way in the consultation process. This process provides greater resources to support the consultation capacity of First Nations.

An information disclosure mechanism on financial arrangements between First Nations and industry proponents resulting from consultation would also be set up. This disclosure mechanism would allow Alberta to determine gaps in funding and give us the opportunity to bridge those gaps. Bill 22 requires an annual report summarizing the operation of the fund, including audited financial statements of the fund, to help ensure an open and transparent consultation process.

As Minister of Aboriginal Relations I would also be authorized to require disclosure of information from proponents arising out of the consultation process. While we would protect people's privacy, we would publish aggregated information derived from these arrangements. This would only apply to agreements arising out of the consultation process and would not include other business agreements that industry and First Nations enter into.

In conclusion, First Nations, industry, municipal associations, and other stakeholders have all asked for more clarity and consistency in the current consultation process. This bill will enable us to address their requests in an effort to build stronger and more sustainable First Nations communities.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: The Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition.

Ms Smith: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thanks to the minister for yesterday giving me a briefing on Bill 22 and what it sets out and intends to do. I think there is a potential for us in the Official Opposition to be able to support the general approach being taken in Bill 22, but I have to say that I'm increasingly alarmed by some of the press releases and e-mails and letters I'm getting from First Nations communities over the course of the last couple of hours. As a result, I will be putting forward a motion to refer this to committee so that we can have a full and proper consultation with our First Nations.

I think I misunderstood the nature of the consultation the minister says that he has done with First Nations communities. I have to tell you that I find it quite troubling that in a bill which is called the Aboriginal Consultation Levy Act, there has been virtually no meaningful consultation with any of the First Nations. I am quite happy to read to the minister some of the comments that I am receiving today from Treaty 8 representatives. One, for instance, says that they are shocked to learn about it and that considering the protocol renewal agreement was given a 30-day extension and is up for renewal, Bill 22 breaches the protocol agreement and that the minister met directly with all of the chiefs, but with the introduction of this, it is a slap in the face to the consultation process. Treaty 8 also feels this violates article 33 of the United Nations, that it causes a lot of concern, and chiefs in the area are outraged. The protocol agreement does not acknowledge a government-to-government relationship; it's completely disregarded. That's Treaty 8.

We also have additional alarming comments from Treaty 6, who are also shocked to learn about the introduction of the act. They're claiming that it has completely disregarded constitutionally protected rights by providing no notice to First Nations regarding the legislation, regarding that it was imminent at all, and that it has not consulted with First Nations on the act whatsoever, again, kind of alarming considering the name of this bill is the Aboriginal Consultation Levy Act. Treaty 6 has indicated to the minister that they're opposed to a levy on First Nations consulting. They're also opposed to the requirement to disclose agreements between First Nations and natural resources companies. They claim that the minister has failed to explain how these measures are going to work for First Nations communities and also failed to explain how they will work for the resource sector as a whole, the benefits to either.

Instead, what they are saying is that they want to actually have meaningful consultation. They say that there has been no meaningful consultation on this act whatsoever, and what they fear, by reading through what they have now seen in this act, is that it looks like the minister does not even understand the scope or breadth of the constitutionally protected treaty and aboriginal

rights. They say that it shows that Alberta is demonstrating a complete lack of respect in proceeding without their basic engagement. Now, they have also indicated that they're going to be holding a meeting of Treaty 6 chiefs very soon and that – I'm quoting here – they're going to be considering a co-ordinated and forceful opposition to this act.

Now, it does seem to me that if you're going to try to create a new environment for aboriginal consultation, you would think that the individuals named in that consultation act would be brought fully onboard with what is being proposed. That does not appear to be the case. I have to wonder where the minister was during the Idle No More movements, when highway 2 was shut down. When you actually hear First Nations talking about co-ordinated and forceful opposition, what you're doing is that you're creating a situation where you're going to have more conflict, and you're making things more confrontational as opposed to what this is supposed to be trying to do, which is to resolve the issues that we're facing in resource development.

Let me explain a couple of the reasons why Treaty 6 believes that this has to be pulled back so that we do not end up making a mistake in passing a consultation bill without proper consultation with the stakeholders. There are three main reasons. I had mentioned one of these in my briefing with the minister yesterday, and at the time he didn't seem to indicate that it was a problem, but the Treaty 6 First Nations chiefs think it is real problem. For instance, they believe that the Aboriginal Consultation Levy Act is discriminatory. What they are saying is that the act would require the disclosure of details of First Nations private agreements and relationships with natural resource companies solely on the basis of whether or not they're aboriginal.

Now, of course, we know that there are all kinds of agreements that are being negotiated for access between energy companies and landowners, but the reason this is discriminatory is that it would be saying that only aboriginal agreements have to be subject to disclosure and not nonaboriginal agreements. I have to wonder. How do you get away with putting forward a bill that has one set of rules for disclosure on aboriginal citizens and not the same set of rules on those who are not aboriginal? The other issue, of course, that they're wondering about is: how on earth would this be enforced? How do you enforce the disclosure of these agreements, once again, on one group of individuals and not another?

3:30

They also believe that in this legislation Alberta has overstepped its constitutional authority, that provincial governments do not have the authority under the Constitution to legislate regarding aboriginal identity. There is a section in this act where the minister makes it clear that he would make a determination of who qualifies under this levy proposal and who does not.

What the Treaty 6 chiefs say is that they have an inherent right to govern their own identity and membership. The right is protected by Treaty 6 and the Constitution, and it's acknowledged by the United Nations. They go one step further in their analysis of the bill, saying that it violates the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. There are a couple of points I would note here. The United Nations declaration prohibits discrimination against indigenous communities and nations, requires government to consult in good faith on matters that affect their rights, to obtain free, prior, and informed consent before adopting and implementing legislative measures that may affect them.

Well, I can tell you that if I'm getting this kind of feedback from Treaty 6 chiefs and from Treaty 8 chiefs – and I've got a call out to see how Treaty 7 is responding to this – I would say that

that provision has not been met in bringing this bill forward. It also says, as I mentioned before, that indigenous people have the right to determine their own identity in accordance with their customs and traditions. They're wondering why it is that the Alberta government, through this legislation, is choosing to disregard international standards in the treatment of aboriginal people.

I can tell you what the request of the Treaty 6 chiefs is. They're demanding that the government immediately withdraw the proposed Aboriginal Consultation Levy Act from the legislative process and take immediate steps to respect the treaty, aboriginal rights, the Constitution, and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

I'm framing my comments in this regard because I have to say that I'm a bit taken by surprise that there is such vehement opposition to a bill that is supposed to be designed to improve our relationship with our First Nations people. It's supposed to be designed to ease the way for additional communication, consultation, transparency, openness in regard to our natural resource development. I have to say that it doesn't sound like the minister has done the background work that he needed to do on this bill whatsoever. The notion that we should be proceeding with passing a piece of significant legislation like this in the face of what is quite clear opposition I think would send a terrible message to our First Nations leaders and our First Nations communities.

On the content of the bill itself I think there probably is a way for the minister to be able to salvage this but certainly not by trying to press this through not only in second reading today but then Committee of the Whole amendments, third reading, and proclamation by – when? Tuesday? Is that when the government wants to end session? I mean, how on earth could you pass a substantive piece of legislation like this in the face of the concerns that they have about its constitutional validity as well as in the face of such opposition over the issue of consultation in a matter of a few days without doing a thorough and proper review?

I have to say that I am personally shocked at the difference in the process the minister took in passing the Metis Settlements Amendment Act versus the approach that he is taking with our First Nations community. Those who were here for that debate for the Metis Settlements Amendment Act may remember that I attempted to put forward seven fairly modest and reasonable proposals about how we might be able to actually empower the general council on Métis settlements even more, give them more oversight over the administrator that was receiving new powers. What did the minister say? He said that there wasn't possibly any way any of those amendments could go forward because he wouldn't be comfortable making any decision to make even modest changes to the act without going back and talking to all eight of the representatives from the Métis settlements because it had been a negotiated agreement, because they spent hours and hours, days and days, months and months coming to a deal, and there was no way that he was going to even change one word in what they had come to an agreement on without going back and consulting with them.

Meanwhile, we've got a bill in front of us that fundamentally rewrites the relationship that Alberta has with our First Nations people on the issue of consultation, and Treaty 7 chiefs and Treaty 8 chiefs say: "We didn't even know it was coming. You didn't ask us. We don't agree with the provisions that are in here. We don't think that you can do this." I have to say that I'm a little concerned and confused about how it is we could have two such entirely different approaches to aboriginal peoples in this province. I think both of them should start from the same level of respect. I fail to

understand why it is the minister would not have taken the same approach in developing this piece of legislation to get the First Nations community buy-in that he took when he was developing the Metis Settlements Amendment Act legislation.

Let me go through in a little more detail some of the additional concerns that we have from the perspective of the First Nations community. Here's the thing. Regardless of whether the minister has got some industry buy-in on this, there are two players in developing this legislation. It's not just a matter of passing legislation that the energy sector wants. We know it's important for our public-private partnership with the energy sector for them to be able to develop our resources on our behalf so that we can achieve full value. We know that there was a hole in Bill 2, the act that created the single energy regulator, because it missed this piece of what happens with aboriginal consultation. But that is no excuse to rush through a piece of legislation in the last couple of days of spring session without evidence of proper consultation with the people being impacted by it and, in fact, with a clear indication that there's going to be massive opposition to it if we proceed on it. I think that we've put ourselves in a very dangerous position by thinking that this is the kind of legislation that you can force through without doing the proper amount of consultation.

The concerns that they have in particular are on the issue of the levy itself. I think that there are a number of things that they have raised here. The issue with the levy is that it's supposed to be used to support the aboriginal consultation initiative. I can tell you that the comment by the First Nations community in the document that my colleague from Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House-Sundre tabled earlier today is that "the levy on industry is so vague we can't meaningfully comment on this. No one, except perhaps Alberta, [even] knows how [it's going to] work."

I have to say that I would love to have some confidence, giving enabling legislation to the minister, that he had done some of this initial consultation and groundwork in being able to propose this new type of approach to raising revenue for the purpose of aboriginal consultation. But I have to tell you that when the Treaty 6 chiefs are saying that it's so vague that they have no idea what the minister is talking about, I have to wonder what this levy is going to look like at the end when it ultimately comes out through the process of regulation.

The other thing I would point out from the perspective of the First Nations communities – and I think this is an unfortunate indictment of the government and the approach that they have taken over the last number of years – is:

It is the common and frequent experience of Treaty 6 First Nations that Alberta disregards the requirements of its own Consultation Policy and guidelines whenever those requirements are an inconvenience. Many of Alberta's decisions on consultation have been inconsistent and arbitrary.

Sadly, here we have another example of this. In a piece of legislation that was supposed to be a landmark first step towards creating a new environment and a new relationship with our First Nations community, I have to say, Mr. Speaker, that it looks to me like the minister kind of blew it. I think that that has to be taken under advisement, and I think that as a Legislative Assembly we have to listen to what the stakeholders are telling us.

One of the other things that they're telling us is that the consultation that they're having right now between First Nations and industry is actually working not badly, from their perspective. The way they put it is that it's "working better than consultation with the Crown." What you have is the Crown, the provincial government, inserting itself in a relationship between First Nations and industry at a time when First Nations have lost complete

confidence in their ability to be able to have meaningful negotiation with the province that is now passing this legislation.

3:40

Keep in mind that this is only the first part of what the minister's plan is for a comprehensive framework for aboriginal consultation. If you can't get the first step right, how on earth are you going to be able to get step 2 and step 3 and step 4 and step 5 right? I think that this has been a major misstep, and I think that it is important for us to let the minister know that he's got to do a bit more work on this. So when I put forward a motion later on to put this forward to committee, I would ask for the members to support that.

The new policy, also according to Treaty 6, "is not an honest and accurate representation of the Crown's constitutional duty to consult and accommodate." The notion in the bill that Alberta says the Crown should consult before making decisions is, I think, in the opinion of Treaty 6, at odds with what we have seen in case law being established. What the courts have ruled on this is that it's not just that they should; it's that they've got a constitutional duty to consult. The fact that they have not recognized that through the language that they have used has left the treaty chiefs wondering whether or not the government understands its obligation under section 35 of the Constitution and its limitations under section 35 of the Constitution.

They do acknowledge that First Nations may not have a veto, but the courts have been equally clear that the province cannot act unilaterally, especially in changing fundamentally the relationship that we have with First Nations. So any statement about First Nations having no veto in the policy has to be accompanied by a statement that the Crown cannot act unilaterally and must substantially address the concerns of the First Nations. I think that in this first step we haven't substantially seen the concerns of First Nations being addressed.

We also know that the nature of the consultation cannot be done in a vacuum. The nature of the consultation has to be informed by the particular nature of the treaty rights at issue, and not all treaties are written in the same fashion. Again, that is one of the other concerns that has been put forward.

The recognition in here as well from the treaty chiefs' point of view is that Alberta has to recognize and acknowledge that the ability to take Crown lands for development under the treaty is limited by aboriginal rights to hunt, fish, and trap as before the treaty. My understanding of the resource transfer act makes this quite clear. We have rights to use provincial land. They are lands that are Crown lands under provincial management, but within that context is that if there are unmet treaty obligations and land claims that do end up getting met through negotiation, Alberta has to accommodate with its land base to be able to ensure that we're not violating the rights as they've been determined through negotiation and through the courts. I think the fact that the bill doesn't recognize that is another red flag for the First Nation chiefs in Alberta.

The other issue that they have is the blurred lines between procedural and substantial aspects of consultation. They're quite concerned that it appears to be "left to industry to assess the potential impacts of industry projects on our rights." I mean, we wouldn't be in the situation that we're in today, where we do have conflicts, if the relationship was working perfectly. We do recognize that. But there's a balancing act that has to be done here. There has to be a balance of rights between what industry is allowed to do when we sell mineral leases and what we're required to do in our obligation to First Nations.

Also, I think it's of particular note that one of the things that is a source of frustration for First Nations in consultation is that they don't believe that the government lives up to the standards that they're imposing on First Nations communities. They first of all say that they're "tired of demands from Alberta to respond in 21 days" to the Crown. That's the existing policy, but the province for its part fails to respond to First Nations or does so after months. It's not responding in the same period of time. This is, again, one more indication that the relationship between First Nations and the minister and the government is not at a level where they can proceed with this substantial overhaul of the consultation framework without doing a lot more consultation.

The other issue that I think is important to make note of is that the Treaty 6 First Nations say that there is a minimal amount of requirements set out in one of the court decisions that we've already had about the Crown's duty to consult, principles set out in Mikisew as a starting point. I think that that is something we should take under advisement. I do think that that may be something for the second stage. The issue that we have is that we can't even really get to the starting point of talking about what it is that the government is trying to do if we have First Nations communities that haven't been convinced that they know what it is the government is trying to do, that were completely blindsided by a piece of legislation, and clearly are not supportive of the approach that the government is trying to take.

Now, once again, as I say, I think we can probably get to some level of resolution because I support the notion of what the minister is trying to do. What the minister is trying to do is to create more transparency, more openness, more understanding on a broad-base level of what the industry agreements are that are out there, of what the requirements of aboriginal communities are when it comes to the issue of consultation.

I think that by going through and building the capacity in First Nations communities, we'll be able to slowly build that capacity with all of the First Nations communities in the province, which will then, once we've built that capacity, improve the relationship between First Nations and industry in their consultations. But you can't get to that stage if you end up stumbling out of the block and you end up creating a lot of distrust and uncertainty and you don't have buy-in. I think that that is the question that we're facing today, whether or not, by proceeding with a bill that clearly has more work that we need to do on it, we end up setting back the cause that the government is trying to achieve.

I know that industry needs some certainty around here. I know that this is one of the big issues that industry has raised as a piece that is unfinished business in the legislative framework that we have right now. I understand why the minister is interested in being able to have a parallel process going alongside the development of the single regulator. We have said, though, that the timeline that was proposed for establishing the single regulator was too short. We tried to slow that bill down as well, if you recall, Mr. Speaker, because we knew that there were some key, important pieces that needed to have more consultation before they could be implemented.

We think now it's probably more realistic to be looking at a June 2014 timeline for the single regulator to be fully operational. I think that that's a reasonable time frame to be able to consider for this major piece of work, that needs to be accomplished now. You can't make up for years of inaction by trying to cram a hasty response into a couple of days of legislative debate or a couple of weeks or months of trying to cobble something together without the buy-in of the major stakeholders who are going to be a part of this. If this is set up for the benefit of First Nations, they surely

don't realize that, based on the correspondence that we've received today.

I understand that the minister is attempting to set up a fund that will allow for First Nations communities to be able to access those resources so that they could do the proper consultations. I think that there is a way for him to be able to salvage what he's begun, but you can't do that by having the conversation in these walls. You have to do that by going to the First Nations communities and talking to them.

I'll be doing exactly that over the summer. I plan to visit at least 15 to 20 First Nations in the Treaty 6, Treaty 7, and Treaty 8 areas, mostly the Treaty 8 areas, and I have to say that I welcome the opportunity to have this bill to take with me as I go to understand what it is that their concerns are. Then we could come back in the fall, and we would be able to do a more thorough and fully informed debate on an issue that is quite clearly causing concern among our chiefs.

The other option is for us to task the Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship to do this work over the summer. We know that we're not going to be back until – I think the standing orders suggest we're not back until the last Monday in October – October 28. We've got a huge opportunity over the summer to do some of this really important work.

I hope that I've convinced the hon. members of the concerns that are raised by the individuals who are going to be impacted by this, the fact that they want to be engaged. They want to have the discussion. They want to be part of it. I think they're open minded about being able to move forward. The chiefs that I have met with in this province want to be fully participating partners in the prosperity and in the economic growth of Alberta. They want better opportunities for their people. They want to be able to have job opportunities and education opportunities for their people. They want to be able to be contributing members to the Alberta economy. As a result, you've got a lot of goodwill there.

3:50

We have a lot of goodwill there. Let's not blow it by passing a piece of legislation that is misunderstood, that has not been properly consulted on, that is missing elements, that does not fully lay out the mechanisms by which this will work, that potentially violates the constitutional rights of our aboriginal peoples and on its surface appears discriminatory. I don't think that's what we want to be known for in Alberta, bulldozing ahead because we've run out of time and we're feeling a hasty rush on an arbitrary timeline that the government has set, that the government can stretch out so that we can do this right.

We have just seen this so many times. When rights get in the way, the government just bulldozes ahead anyway, and they alienate people. They create problems. What happens after a year or two? Well, then they end up coming back. They say: "Well, gee, maybe we shouldn't have passed that so quickly last time. Let's maybe make some amendments and see if we can get this right." We have an opportunity not to make the same mistake, and in this case the levers and the constitutional protections that our aboriginal people have over their land base, their access to resources, and other aboriginal rights have that much higher a bar.

Perhaps the government felt they could get away with taking draconian actions against private landowners because property rights are not protected in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, but aboriginal rights, section 35, are protected in the Constitution. I, frankly, think that we end up creating more problems by passing a bill that doesn't have the buy-in, potentially facing a constitutional challenge and then actually derailing the efforts that the government is trying to put in place to provide certainty for our

industry. I think we may end up delaying all of that. The point is that we have to take the time to do this right.

I would like now to put forward an amendment if I may, Mr. Speaker. You'll have to tell me if I'm in order in doing this. I would move that the motion for second reading of Bill 22, Aboriginal Consultation Levy Act, be amended by striking out all of the words after "that" and substituting the following:

Bill 22, Aboriginal Consultation Levy Act, be not now read a second time but that the subject matter of the bill be referred to the Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship in accordance with Standing Order 74.2.

Can I continue to speak to that?

The Speaker: Let me have a look.

Hon. members, what we have here is essentially a referral motion by way of a notice of amendment, which is in order.

If you'd like to continue with your reasons behind the notice, please do so.

Ms Smith: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have to say that it goes to the issue. I sat in on the debate yesterday evening, listening to my colleagues in the NDP opposition talking about their extreme frustration with some of the process issues that they're facing, and I face this as well.

When I met with the minister, we talked about when the timing for this might be, and he did indicate that it was likely to come forward next week on Monday. I thought that would be great because that would have given me an opportunity to be able to consult with First Nations communities. I initially indicated to him when I met with him that, to me, the provisions that he put in the legislation seemed to be reasonable, that they seemed to be something that our caucus might be able to support but that I wanted to consult with First Nations leaders just to be able to ensure that they, too, were onboard with this.

Imagine how surprised I am about how quickly business is moving along, that we had to speak on this today. But I am grateful for the fact that our First Nations communities did take the 24 hours or so in which the bill had been on the paper to go through it with their lawyers and put together a briefing document so that we didn't race ahead and pass this without having some understanding of how the main players were going to be impacted by it.

It goes to the broader point about the process that we're using in this Legislature to pass legislation. It goes to the broader point. The Premier had talked numerous times throughout her campaign about slowing legislation down, giving more time between readings so that you could actually take the time to do it right. This is an opportunity for the Premier and the government to show that they intend to live up to that commitment, to show that they intend to actually make good on that promise and understand that the way that this Legislature often passes legislation is not in the interest of the people that we're trying to serve.

We're all trying to do the best for Albertans, and I recognize the government is, too, but the government doesn't have a monopoly on good ideas. Sometimes the opposition parties have a point or two to raise that ought to be worked into legislation. We're listening to the people as well. We're listening to stakeholders as well. We're getting feedback and e-mails as well. We're making the phone calls, too. When we hear about these kinds of significant concerns, that are being raised by members of the community that are going to be severely impacted by a piece of legislation, hearing that they're going to have a co-ordinated approach to defeating it, we have to take that seriously and bring the temperature down. We have to bring the temperature down by

making sure that we do this right, by making sure we have a process.

If the minister wants to proceed, as I'm suggesting here, with the all-party committee process, I think it will go much more smoothly. We will all hear the same information from the same people at the same time. We will all be able to assess what we're being told by the individuals who are being impacted by this. We can also call in members from the energy sector, from CAPP, from the other large industrial associations who are impacted and who are pressing for legislative change. We would be able to get both sides on the table. All four parties would be able to listen to that.

We would be able in the process to educate every stakeholder about what this legislation is trying to achieve, plus be able to take the time to see what the regulation should be, get some feedback on that. What should the levy look like? How should it be implemented? Is it really right that you've got legislation that applies to one group of individuals on the basis of their race that doesn't apply to others? How do we rectify that? How do we create disclosure? How do we create buy-in for disclosure? I recognize that these are important elements to being able to provide certainty to industry, to the energy sector, but we can't just bulldoze ahead with this kind of legislation.

I'm pleading with the minister now, and I'm pleading with my other colleagues in this Chamber. We have already seen what happens when a relationship with our First Nations communities becomes damaged. The reason I made myself aboriginal critic for our party when I got elected is because I recognized the approach that Premier Ralph Klein took with our First Nations communities. He recognized that it's a relationship, that you have to begin with trust. You have to begin with friendship. Once you begin from those starting points, you could have these kinds of negotiations about tough things that need to be done, but if you already start off saying, "We know better, and we're just going to foist this on you," you're going to end up tearing the relationship, and it will take years and years and years to be able to repair. I'm urging the minister not to make that mistake.

I'm urging the other members of the Assembly to support this motion to put this over to committee. Let's take the time over the summer to debate this, to do this right, to bring it back in the fall and hopefully have all-party support and, more important than that, not just all-party support but energy industry support and the support of treaties 6, 7, and 8 First Nations members as well so that we can make sure that we're able to put forward an aboriginal consultation policy that will be the envy of the country. We already have that with our Métis settlements legislation. It's the envy of the country. Why can't we do things right in developing a new relationship with First Nations on consultation that takes place at the provincial level so that this becomes a model for what other provinces should do? I think the minister has a huge opportunity to be able to do that. I would urge other members to support this motion.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview on the amendment.

Mr. Bilous: Yes. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise today and speak in favour of this motion. I would like to thank the Member for Highwood for proposing this referral motion. I think there are numerous reasons, which I plan to outline in detail, as to why Bill 22, the Aboriginal Consultation Levy Act, is problematic and needs to be referred to the Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship, which, I think, is a very applicable and

appropriate choice. Also, I'm excited at the thought because that's one of the committees that I sit on.

I just want to give some reasons as to why this needs to go back. I mean, you know, first and foremost, Mr. Speaker, that if we're drafting legislation in this House that directly affects specific groups of Albertans, they need to be consulted and included. I was extremely surprised to learn from Treaty 6 and Treaty 8 that they were not consulted.

4:00

You know, it frustrates me, Mr. Speaker, because there is a great deal of mistrust in this PC government from all Albertans across the province because of a failure to live up to promises that were made, that are continually being broken. It's quite disheartening. I mean, I've had the opportunity to speak with quite a number of chiefs around the province, including grand chiefs and members of council. You know, the number one thing I'm hearing is that they want to be included. They want a seat at the table. They want to be a part of developing Alberta and moving forward.

When we're looking at rights that deserve to be respected, I mean, first and foremost, treaty rights are at the core of this. You know, the fact that aboriginal groups and leaders that I've spoken with have been asking for meaningful consultation – in fact, there's been clear definitions of what consultation is and what it constitutes – and the fact that they're told that they're going to be a part of something and then they're not, again, promises made by this government that have been continually broken.

So where to begin in detail, Mr. Speaker? You know, I think the biggest flag that I hope the government pays attention to is the fact that this bill has been – I believe first reading was yesterday or maybe two days ago, sometime within the last 24 hours. Sorry. The days and evenings and mornings are blending together. [interjections] Well, you know, I'm being asked by hon. members as to why that is, and that's a great question. We do sit the fewest number of days out of most jurisdictions, and that is a choice made by our PC government. Many Albertans have said: "Why don't you sit more days. Sit in the afternoons. Have adequate time for debate, for opposition to put forward amendments and ideas, as our parliamentary system was designed for."

Ms Blakeman: Because that would challenge them.

Mr. Bilous: Well, I can appreciate the fact that this government doesn't like to be questioned and likes to run roughshod over many things.

Coming back to this motion, this is a great example of running roughshod over our First Nations and over people that deserve and that have a right to be consulted with and be included. As has been stated, the chiefs from Treaty 8 are not only opposed to this legislation, you know, they are shocked and dismayed at the introduction of this bill. Quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, they were blindsided. I'm still waiting to hear back from other bands and from Treaty 7 to find out their response and reaction to this bill.

Part of the challenge, which I spoke to at great length last night, or this morning, I should say, is the fact that when the government tries to put forward legislation at breakneck speed, it does nobody any service, Mr. Speaker. It doesn't provide the opposition the opportunity to do our job, to thoroughly go through a bill, to draft amendments, and, most importantly, to consult and critically and meaningfully engage with the different groups and people that the legislation is going to be affecting. This is both direct and indirect.

Mr. Speaker, similar to, I'm sure, my colleagues from the other opposition parties, we are all in the midst of trying to talk to the

different leaders in the First Nations communities as quickly as possible because of, you know, how fast this government wants to put through legislation. I'm sure when we reconvene next week, we'll have even more information directly coming from the groups that are going to be affected by this.

Again, Mr. Speaker, this motion to refer – honestly, we're doing the government here a favour by referring this to committee. You know, the government talks about wanting to build trust with First Nations and aboriginal groups. You'd think that after being in government for 40 years, they would have learned a thing or two, but clearly not. It begins with trust. It begins with developing relationships. And trust isn't: hey, we're going to write something up and ram it down your throats, and maybe we'll talk to you once it's already been passed.

By sending this to committee, the Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship, I honestly think it will give an opportunity for that committee, which is an all-party committee, to engage with the different First Nations groups, to invite them to come speak with the committee. It will give time to rewrite this piece of legislation so that it is appropriate and acceptable to our First Nations peoples, whom this is going to be directly affecting.

You know, the other thing, Mr. Speaker, is that this really is a piece of legislation that affects three different bodies, not just the Crown and their relationship with our First Nations peoples. This is also affecting and impacting industry. I find it interesting that Treaty 6 has talked about how the consultation between First Nations and industry is working better than First Nations and the Crown. That tells me that there is a willingness on the end of industry to work with First Nations groups. They want to sit down at the same table and look at ways to include them, to respect their treaty rights, to consult with them. But I find it ironic and somewhat hypocritical that the government can't get it right.

Yet, unfortunately, even after many assurances I've had from the minister and from members of the government that they are consulting and speaking with the different groups, the e-mails and conversations that I've had with different members of Treaty 8 and Treaty 6 clearly show that that is not the case. Again, this is only going to continue to hurt an already damaged relationship between the government and the different bands.

It makes me want to ask the minister, and I will: how can he possibly do something that would imperil that relationship, the relationship that needs to be built on mutual trust, honour of the Crown, you know, and the inviolable treaty rights of First Nations? I mean, there are different aspects of this bill – quite honestly, Mr. Speaker, I think what I've heard and learned in communication with different treaties is that they find parts of this bill quite offensive. The fact that you've got the minister having the power to declare and decide who is aboriginal and who is not seems quite absurd to me, and that issue is from section 2 of this bill. Well, first of all, the province does not have that right, and it could very well be in – what's the word I'm looking for here? – violation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

4:10

You know, Mr. Speaker, I've been a member of this House for a little over a year and have been advocating that this government adopt and accept the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. I know the Alberta New Democrats and, in fact, our federal cousins have adopted that policy officially. That guides us in our decisions, in conversations, in consultations with aboriginal peoples, and I've been a strong advocate. I would love to see, in fact, all parties of the House adopt that document and keep that as

a guiding piece when parties are developing their own policies, especially when the government is drafting legislation.

Other concerns that I have with this bill. You know, there's talk of – well, obviously this is a levies act, so they talk about levying dollars, yet we don't know the costs associated. They are not outlined in the act itself. We don't know the costs associated with administering this act. But there are other concerns. Section 9 provides no way for us to review or question the minister's decisions. Again, this is a blank cheque for the minister to have the power to do what he wants, when he wants. I think there's a danger in that. Section 10(k) allows the cabinet to make regulations exempting a proponent or class of proponents from requirements of all or part of this act and its regulations. Mr. Speaker, it's quite unacceptable to give cabinet the power to let some companies or some proponents avoid paying the consultation levy altogether and base that decision on whatever they choose to.

I'm concerned with the fact that funding for consultations may actually decrease. Some members in the House may not be aware of this, but there are monies that industry does give to some First Nations bands for consultation. I can appreciate the fact that this bill would like to level the playing field so that it's done equitably and for all First Nations bands around the province. That belief or philosophy behind this bill I agree with a hundred per cent. However, it's interesting, Mr. Speaker, because during my briefing with the minister it was discussed that the new levy may collect about \$70 million to go toward First Nations abilities to consult.

Now, that may seem quite significant and good except when one is aware of the fact that that's less than half the current funding for consultations that are currently provided by industry and the government. This could be a step backwards, Mr. Speaker, not a step forwards. You know, I'm not sure what assurances there are. I don't have any assurances at the moment that this is not a means to further reduce funding to First Nations for consultations. I'm not sure if the minister can give me any assurances that that funding won't decrease.

Mr. Speaker, something that troubles me greatly – and I see that I'm going to have to bring this to a close shortly – is that the government's new consultation policy will never be introduced in this House.

The Speaker: Hon. members, 29(2)(a) is available.

Seeing none, are there other speakers? The hon. Minister of Energy was next on the list, followed by Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House-Sundre.

Ms Blakeman: For 29(2)(a)? That's what I was trying for. I'm sorry. My knees are bad.

The Speaker: Okay. Proceed quickly with 29(2)(a), then.

Ms Blakeman: I don't have the ice today. I had the ice last night.

Mr. Speaker, the member stopped talking mid-way through his final sentence, so if he could just complete that, I'd appreciate it.

Mr. Bilous: Thank you very much, hon. Member for Edmonton-Centre. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will conclude shortly here. My biggest concern – no. I have multiple concerns, but one of them is just that I've learned that the consultation policy will never be introduced nor debated in this House. Well, first of all, the PC government believed they could just introduce this policy without attaining agreement from First Nations and without bringing it forward for public debate or giving the opposition the opportunity

to debate that policy, which really will be the guiding policy from here moving forward and likely for some time.

You know, Mr. Speaker, Treaty 6 outlined in a 21-page letter written back in December that they had numerous concerns about the government's proposed consultation policy and unanswered questions regarding that. In April of this year Treaty 6 made additional comments, in fact another 14 pages of comments, on the new draft of the consultation policy.

The grand chief of Treaty 6 wrote that any new policy to disclose agreements between First Nations and industry will result in the rejection of the policy by First Nations, and this is a major – thorn doesn't even cut it as far as a metaphor – issue that many of the First Nations bands have, the fact that this government is trying to force First Nations to make public their agreements with industry, which is problematic and, as the Member for Highwood outlined, is creating two classes of Albertans. You've got the one class, where they don't have to publicly disclose, and then you've got your First Nations groups, that are forced to disclose. That's creating two classes of citizens in this province, Mr. Speaker, and that is extremely problematic.

I'll continue. You know, the grand chief went on to talk about how the Crown has a responsibility and a duty to consult and to have meaningful consultation and accommodation with our First Nations members. If anything, the Crown should be consulting before it drafts any type of legislation or bill, not afterwards and leave it up to the opposition, who are doing their best to engage in conversations with the different treaty chiefs and different chiefs and band councils around the province in an attempt to get feedback, which clearly this government failed to do.

Mr. Speaker, this goes beyond a government shirking its responsibilities to First Nations and First Peoples of this province. I mean, this is beyond neglect. This is a failure to live up to their duties, their responsibilities, and for that reason, again, I think this motion of referral is the right thing to do. It gives us all time in this House to go back and speak with the different First Nations communities. It gives us time to draft amendments, to rethink this bill as it sits, and I strongly encourage all members of this House to support this motion.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you.

Hon. members, there are a few seconds left. Is there anyone else under 29(2)(a)? Okay.

Well, I'll take those few seconds very briefly just to review the purpose of 29(2)(a). It says:

Subject to clause (b), following each speech on the items in debate referred to in suborder (1), a period not exceeding 5 minutes shall be made available, if required, to allow Members to ask questions and comment briefly on matters relevant to the speech and to allow responses to each Member's questions and comments.

As such, it should not be viewed as an opportunity for a member to conclude their comments. That is not what the spirit – the spirit – of 29(2)(a) is all about. I know it well because I was here when we created it. So, please, let's just keep that in mind in the future. It's meant to engage us in a healthy discussion back and forth in Q and A style.

The hon. Minister of Energy.

4:20

Mr. Hughes: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. You know, I'm delighted to have a chance to participate in this discussion today as somebody who has a long history working with First Nations communities. It goes back to the fact that my family had probably almost a century of experience working with First Nations

communities in the ranching business in southern Alberta and with particular families as well. You know, I grew up near Eden Valley reserve. I grew up in the community and went to school with the kids from Eden Valley. I saw the opportunities and the challenges that those kids faced relative to the challenges that other kids faced in our community.

When I got elected in 1988, I actually volunteered to serve on the Aboriginal Affairs Committee in the House of Commons, and I ended up shortly thereafter as the chair. I was very proud of the fact that we accomplished five all-party unanimous reports under that committee over the course of two years, including the report on Oka, which was, as you can imagine, a bit of a challenge. So I come to this topic with some deep experience and deep commitment to building relationships with First Nations communities. I'm happy to shed some light here because some things have been said where it's clear that people don't know what they don't know, and it would be helpful for everybody to know what some of us know.

I'll share with you that there has been a very deep engagement with First Nations communities in this province. Here we are now, one year plus one day since this cabinet was sworn in. The hon. Minister of Aboriginal Relations – and this is on the amendment, to ensure that we're on topic – has worked hard travelling throughout the province to work with First Nations communities to develop those relationships. We know that relationships are not built overnight. They're not built without a great deal of work and time and commitment on the part of all parties.

I have also been part of many discussions as well. Right from what would be an unprecedented meeting of First Nations leadership – all of the chiefs of the 48 First Nations in the province met with the cabinet back in December over the course of a day and a half – I've been in additional meetings since then with all of the First Nations leadership and several others.

This amendment speaks to the fact that a great deal of engagement has already been undertaken, a great deal of work has been undertaken, and referring the subject matter of the bill to a standing committee actually would delay important work that needs to be done. An immense amount of work has been done by the hon. minister and supported by people like me and supported by work with industry as well. All people who are affected by this legislation have been deeply engaged.

You know, First Nations communities are just like every other community. There's a diversity of opinion. I'm sure that members opposite are hearing from some members of the leadership of some First Nations across this province. It would be a shock to me if that was not the case. It should not be a shock that they actually do hear from some leadership in the First Nations communities across the province, as has the minister, I'm sure.

What is important is that we're moving forward in order to ensure that there is a constructive relationship between the First Nations and the government of Alberta and industry, that we create the groundwork to ensure that First Nations have the opportunity to fully and in a constructive way share in the benefits of the wealth that is created by the energy industry in this province, that they continue to be full participants in the leadership and providing leadership in their own communities on their own terms in ways that are constructive for those communities. This bill takes us in that direction. Deferring this bill does not help take us in that direction, Mr. Speaker.

With that, I'd just like to make that small contribution. Thank you.

The Speaker: Hon. members, 29(2)(a) is available. The hon. Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition.

Ms Smith: Thank you. I appreciate that the Energy minister has had many meetings and probably some very constructive discussions over the last year and indeed, it seems, in his previous life also. I wonder if he can shed some light, then. It's not just a chief. It is Grand Chief Craig Makinaw, Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations, who had written this letter expressing extreme concern on behalf of his other member chiefs in that treaty. I just wonder if he could shed some light on why they would have such extreme opposition if indeed what the minister is saying is the case, that there has been sufficient consultation.

Mr. Hughes: Well, Mr. Speaker, it would appear that the chief and perhaps other chiefs for whom he may be speaking – I haven't seen the letter, but I believe the suggestion is that he speaks for the group as well or a majority of the tribal council. It would appear that they have a difference of opinion with where this is going or the speed at which it's going or the direction it's going, but that doesn't mean, as I alluded to earlier, that one or two chiefs or a group of chiefs speak for all chiefs. There are 48 First Nations in this province. We need to respect the diversity of those 48 communities.

Just as the nonaboriginal community is immensely diverse, you know, no one political party speaks for all Albertans in a consistent or coherent way, nor should we expect First Nations to speak in a consistent or coherent way. They have alignment of interests, but not always are they aligned in terms of their expression of their ambition for public policy.

Ms Smith: I still am a bit confused, though, about why it is that this grand chief would say that they were provided no notice to First Nations that this legislation was imminent and that you have not consulted with First Nations regarding this particular act whatsoever. I mean, I think there's a problem here in trying to reconcile what the minister has said with what we're hearing from the members of this community.

The Speaker: Hon. members, 29(2)(a) is available.

Mr. Campbell: Mr. Speaker, I can say that I met with the grand chief personally. We met about three weeks ago. He was made aware of this bill. He agreed to this going forward. I explained to him why it had to go forward at this time. One of the situations they had talked about was that they wanted more time on the consultation policy itself for their draft, and I agreed to that, but they said that they understood why this bill would go forward at this time. For the grand chief to say that he wasn't aware, I have an issue with that, but the grand chief and I are meeting tomorrow, and hopefully I can resolve that matter with him tomorrow and the grand chief from Treaty 8.

Ms Smith: I also appreciate what the Energy minister had said, that perhaps one chief does not speak for all, but I think that goes to the point of why we actually need to defer this to a committee, to be able to have the broader consultation, to be able to hear from all of the chiefs so that we are actually making sure that we're proceeding. Again, if the Energy minister could clarify how his comment that we do have this diversity in the community and that therefore that means we would consult less seems to wash with what this bill is trying to achieve, which is to have more consultation and more buy-in.

Mr. Hughes: Mr. Speaker, the hon. leader would of course not try to impute comments to me that would never come out of my mouth. I would never suggest that because there's greater

diversity, we should consult less. That's an absurd thing to say and irresponsible.

In fact, we have done extensive consultation. Members of industry have done extensive consultation and continue to. I have as the Energy minister. Our Minister of Aboriginal Affairs has been tireless in his commitment to this engagement and the consultation. This is a bold and important initiative that helps serve the interests of all Albertans and, particularly, First Nations communities to help ensure that they are able to participate in a really constructive way with the wealth-creation capacity that this province has.

The Speaker: We have about 10 seconds.

Ms Smith: I would like to acknowledge that, but I have to say that I think we would have greater certainty that we had broad-based buy-in, as he's claiming, if we actually did the full range of consultation through the course of this summer with this committee.

The Speaker: Thank you.

Hon. members, the clock has hit 4:30 p.m., and I am obliged under Standing Order 4(2) to declare the Assembly adjourned until 1:30 p.m. Monday next.

[The Assembly adjourned at 4:30 p.m. to Monday, May 13, at 1:30 p.m.]

Bill Status Report for the 28th Legislature - 1st Session (2012-2013)

Activity to May 09, 2013

The Bill sponsor's name is in brackets following the Bill title. If it is a money Bill, (\$) will appear between the title and the sponsor's name. Numbers following each Reading refer to Hansard pages where the text of debates is found; dates for each Reading are in brackets following the page numbers. Bills numbered 1 to 199 are Government Bills. Bills numbered 200 or higher are Private Members' Public Bills. Bills numbered with a "Pr" prefix are Private Bills.

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

The date a Bill comes into force is indicated in square brackets after the date of Royal Assent. If a Bill comes into force "on proclamation," "with exceptions," or "on various dates," please contact Legislative Counsel, Alberta Justice, for details at (780) 427-2217. The chapter number assigned to the Bill is entered immediately following the date the Bill comes into force. SA indicates Statutes of Alberta; this is followed by the year in which it is included in the statutes, and its chapter number. Please note, Private Bills are not assigned chapter numbers until the conclusion of the Fall Sitings.

1* Workers' Compensation Amendment Act, 2012 (Redford)

First Reading -- 8 (May 24, 2012 aft., passed)

Second Reading -- 177 (Oct. 23, 2012 eve.), 193-96 (Oct. 23, 2012 eve.), 233 (Oct. 24, 2012 eve., passed)

Committee of the Whole -- 336-39 (Oct. 29, 2012 eve.), 354-71 (Oct. 30, 2012 aft.), 373-80 (Oct. 30, 2012 eve., passed with amendments)

Third Reading -- 476-84 (Nov. 1, 2012 aft., passed on division)

Royal Assent -- (Dec. 10, 2012 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force December 10, 2012; SA 2012 c8]

2* Responsible Energy Development Act (Hughes)

First Reading -- 207 (Oct. 24, 2012 aft., passed)

Second Reading -- 263 (Oct. 25, 2012 aft.), 424-43 (Oct. 31, 2012 aft.), 445-57 (Oct. 31, 2012 eve.), 526-46 (Nov. 5, 2012 eve., passed)

Committee of the Whole -- 563-71 (Nov. 6, 2012 aft.), 593 (Nov. 6, 2012 eve.), 644-48 (Nov. 7, 2012 aft.), 649-69 (Nov. 7, 2012 eve.), 731-53 (Nov. 19, 2012 eve.), 777-94 (Nov. 20, 2012 aft.), 795-853 (Nov. 20, 2012 eve.), 902-05 (Nov. 20, 2012 eve., passed on division, with amendments)

Third Reading -- 921-41 (Nov. 21, 2012 aft., passed on division)

Royal Assent -- (Dec. 10, 2012 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on proclamation, with exceptions; SA 2012 cR-17.3]

3* Education Act (J. Johnson)

First Reading -- 155 (Oct. 23, 2012 aft., passed)

Second Reading -- 219-31 (Oct. 24, 2012 aft.), 238 (Oct. 24, 2012 eve., passed)

Committee of the Whole -- 380-407 (Oct. 30, 2012 eve., passed with amendments)

Third Reading -- 669 (Nov. 7, 2012 eve.), 688-94 (Nov. 8, 2012 aft.), 753-63 (Nov. 19, 2012 eve., passed on division)

Royal Assent -- (Dec. 10, 2012 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2012 cE-0.3]

4 Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblower Protection) Act (Scott)

First Reading -- 352-53 (Oct. 30, 2012 aft., passed)

Second Reading -- 423-24 (Oct. 31, 2012 aft.), 593-614 (Nov. 6, 2012 eve.), 627-44 (Nov. 7, 2012 aft., passed on division)

Committee of the Whole -- 975-80 (Nov. 22, 2012 aft.), 1057-74 (Nov. 27, 2012 aft.), 1075-101 (Nov. 27, 2012 eve.), 1127-137 (Nov. 28, 2012 aft.), 1139-161 (Nov. 28, 2012 eve., passed)

Third Reading -- 1161-166 (Nov. 28, 2012 eve., passed on division)

Royal Assent -- (Dec. 10, 2012 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2012 cP-39.5]

5 New Home Buyer Protection Act (Griffiths)

First Reading -- 261 (Oct. 25, 2012 aft., passed)

Second Reading -- 354 (Oct. 30, 2012 aft.), 457-59 (Oct. 31, 2012 eve., passed)

Committee of the Whole -- 546-49 (Nov. 5, 2012 eve.), 571-83 (Nov. 6, 2012 aft.), 585-93 (Nov. 6, 2012 eve., passed)

Third Reading -- 853-55 (Nov. 20, 2012 eve., passed)

Royal Assent -- (Dec. 10, 2012 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2012 cN-3.2]

6 Protection and Compliance Statutes Amendment Act, 2012 (Jeneroux)

First Reading -- 155 (Oct. 23, 2012 aft., passed)

Second Reading -- 209 (Oct. 24, 2012 aft.), 264 (Oct. 25, 2012 aft., passed)

Committee of the Whole -- 459-62 (Oct. 31, 2012 eve., passed)

Third Reading -- 855-56 (Nov. 20, 2012 eve., passed)

Royal Assent -- (Dec. 10, 2012 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on various dates; SA 2012 c7]

- 7*** **Election Accountability Amendment Act, 2012 (Denis)**
First Reading -- 774 (Nov. 20, 2012 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 972-75 (Nov. 22, 2012 aft.), 1015-41 (Nov. 26, 2012 eve., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 1166-167 (Nov. 28, 2012 eve.), 1191-92 (Nov. 29, 2012 aft.), 1221-43 (Dec. 3, 2012 eve.), 1261-79 (Dec. 4, 2012 aft.), 1281-1300 (Dec. 4, 2012 eve., passed, with amendments)
Third Reading -- 1315-37 (Dec. 5, 2012 aft., passed on division)
Royal Assent -- (Dec. 10, 2012 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on various dates; SA 2012 c5]
- 8** **Electric Utilities Amendment Act, 2012 (Hughes)**
First Reading -- 156 (Oct. 23, 2012 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 233 (Oct. 24, 2012 eve.), 316-36 (Oct. 29, 2012 eve, passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 857-902 (Nov. 20, 2012 eve.), 943-53 (Nov. 21, 2012 eve., passed)
Third Reading -- 953-56 (Nov. 21, 2012 eve., passed)
Royal Assent -- (Dec. 10, 2012 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force December 10, 2012; SA 2012 c6]
- 9** **Alberta Corporate Tax Amendment Act, 2012 (\$) (Horner)**
First Reading -- 156 (Oct. 23, 2012 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 209-10 (Oct. 24, 2012 aft.), 272 (Oct. 25, 2012 aft.), 311-16 (Oct. 29, 2012 eve., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 462 (Oct. 31, 2012 eve., passed)
Third Reading -- 856-57 (Nov. 20, 2012 eve., passed)
Royal Assent -- (Dec. 10, 2012 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on various dates, SA 2012 c4]
- 10** **Employment Pension Plans Act (Kennedy-Glans)**
First Reading -- 261 (Oct. 25, 2012 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 521-26 (Nov. 5, 2012 eve., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 668-69 (Nov. 7, 2012 eve., passed)
Third Reading -- 857 (Nov. 20, 2012 eve., passed)
Royal Assent -- (Dec. 10, 2012 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2012 cE-8.1]
- 11** **Appropriation (Supplementary Supply) Act, 2013 (\$) (Horner)**
First Reading -- 1424 (Mar. 6, 2013 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 1480-86 (Mar. 11, 2013 eve., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 1534-41 (Mar. 12, 2013 eve., passed)
Third Reading -- 1583 (Mar. 13, 2013 aft.), 1559-60 (Mar. 13, 2013 eve., passed)
Royal Assent -- (Mar. 21, 2013 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force March 21, 2013; SA 2013 c2]
- 12** **Fiscal Management Act (\$) (Horner)**
First Reading -- 1438 (Mar. 7, 2013 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 1479-80 (Mar. 11, 2013 eve.), 1560-78 (Mar. 13, 2013 aft.), 1579-83 (Mar. 13, 2013 eve.), 1785-90 (Apr. 11, 2013 aft.), 1877-85 (Apr. 18, 2013 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 1967-78 (Apr. 23, 2013 eve), 1981-86 (Apr. 23, 2013 eve, passed), 2007-15 (Apr. 24, 2013 aft.)
Third Reading -- 2027-35 (Apr. 24, 2013 eve., passed on division)
Royal Assent -- (Apr. 29, 2013 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force April 29, 2013; SA 2013 cF-14.5]
- 13** **Appropriation (Interim Supply) Act, 2013 (\$) (Horner)**
First Reading -- 1456 (Mar. 11, 2013 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 1527-34 (Mar. 12, 2013 eve.), 1556 (Mar. 13, 2013 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 1583 (Mar. 13, 2013 eve., passed)
Third Reading -- 1695-1700 (Mar. 21, 2013 aft.), 1695-1700 (Mar. 21, 2013 aft., passed)
Royal Assent -- (Mar. 21, 2013 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force March 21, 2013; SA 2013 c1]
- 14** **RCMP Health Coverage Statutes Amendment Act, 2013 (VanderBurg)**
First Reading -- 1690 (Mar. 21, 2013 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 1875 (Apr. 18, 2013 aft.), 1925-27 (Apr. 22, 2013 eve., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 1966-67 (Apr. 23, 2013 eve., passed)
Third Reading -- 1986 (Apr. 23, 2013 eve., passed)
Royal Assent -- (Apr. 29, 2013 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force April 1, 2013; SA 2013 c4]
- 15** **Emergency 911 Act (\$) (Weadick)**
First Reading -- 1762 (Apr. 10, 2013 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 1875-76 (Apr. 18, 2013 aft.), 1953-58 (Apr. 23, 2013 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 2040 (Apr. 24, 2013 eve., passed)
Third Reading -- 2130-31 (May 6, 2013 eve., passed)

- 16 Victims Statutes Amendment Act, 2013 (\$) (Denis)**
First Reading -- 1762-63 (Apr. 10, 2013 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 1958-61 (Apr. 23, 2013 aft.), 1963-67 (Apr. 23, 2013 eve., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 2040 (Apr. 24, 2013 eve., passed)
Third Reading -- 2063-65 (Apr. 25, 2013 aft., passed)
Royal Assent -- (Apr. 29, 2013 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2013 c5]
- 17 Municipal Government Amendment Act, 2013 (Kubinec)**
First Reading -- 1779 (Apr. 11, 2013 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 2123-25 (May 6, 2013 eve., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 2161-64 (May 7, 2013 aft.), 2172-76 (May 7, 2013 eve., passed)
Third Reading -- 2176 (May 7, 2013 eve., passed)
- 18 Pooled Registered Pension Plans Act (Fawcett)**
First Reading -- 1873 (Apr. 18, 2013 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 2125-30 (May 6, 2013 eve., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 2151-57 (May 7, 2013 aft., passed)
Third Reading -- 2169-71 (May 7, 2013 eve., passed)
- 19 Metis Settlements Amendment Act, 2013 (Campbell)**
First Reading -- 1803 (Apr. 15, 2013 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 1876-77 (Apr. 18, 2013 aft.), 2021-27 (Apr. 24, 2013 eve., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 2101-23 (May 6, 2013 eve., passed)
Third Reading -- 2131-32 (May 6, 2013 eve., passed)
- 20 Appropriation Act, 2013 (\$) (Horner)**
First Reading -- 1925 (Apr. 22, 2013 eve., passed)
Second Reading -- 1943-52 (Apr. 23, 2013 aft.), 1978-81 (Apr. 23, 2013 eve., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 2015-19 (Apr. 24, 2013 aft.), 2035-39 (Apr. 24, 2013 eve., passed)
Third Reading -- 2057-63 (Apr. 25, 2013 aft., passed)
Royal Assent -- (Apr. 29, 2013 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force April 29, 2013; SA 2013 c3]
- 21 Environmental Protection and Enhancement Amendment Act, 2013 (Jansen)**
First Reading -- 2055 (Apr. 25, 2013 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 2123 (May 6, 2013 eve.), 2157-61 (May 7, 2013 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 2165-68 (May 7, 2013 eve., passed)
Third Reading -- 2229-34 (May 8, 2013 eve.), 2238-55 (May 8, 2013 eve., passed)
- 22 Aboriginal Consultation Levy Act (\$) (Campbell)**
First Reading -- 2191-92 (May 8, 2013 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 2275-83 (May 9, 2013 aft., adjourned)
- 23 Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2013 (Horner)**
First Reading -- 2080 (May 6, 2013 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 2150 (May 7, 2013 aft.), 2165 (May 7, 2013 eve., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 2168 (May 7, 2013 eve., passed)
Third Reading -- 2172 (May 7, 2013 eve., passed)
- 24 Statutes Amendment Act, 2013 (Bhullar)**
First Reading -- 2080 (May 6, 2013 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 2150-51 (May 7, 2013 aft.), 2171-72 (May 7, 2013 eve.), 2157-61 (May 7, 2013 eve.), 2234-38 (May 8, 2013 eve., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 2255-58 (May 8, 2013 eve., passed)
Third Reading -- 2273-75 (May 9, 2013 aft., passed)
- 25 Children First Act (\$) (Hancock)**
First Reading -- 2145 (May 7, 2013 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 2194-2212 (May 8, 2013 aft.), 2213-29 (May 8, 2013 eve., passed on division)

- 201*** **Scrap Metal Dealers and Recyclers Identification Act (Quest)**
First Reading -- 92 (May 30, 2012 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 291-301 (Oct. 29, 2012 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 716-22 (Nov. 19, 2012 aft.), 1725-26 (Apr. 8, 2013 aft., passed with amendments)
Third Reading -- 1726-27 (Apr. 8, 2013 aft., passed)
Royal Assent -- (Apr. 29, 2013 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2013 cS-3.5]
- 202** **Public Lands (Grasslands Preservation) Amendment Act, 2012 (Brown)**
First Reading -- 130 (May 31, 2012 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 501-13 (Nov. 5, 2012 aft.), 1723-25 (Apr. 8, 2013 aft., defeated on division)
- 203** **Employment Standards (Compassionate Care Leave) Amendment Act, 2012 (Jeneroux)**
First Reading -- 473 (Nov. 1, 2012 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 1900 (Apr. 22, 2013 aft., passed)
- 204** **Irlen Syndrome Testing Act (Jablonski)**
First Reading -- 968 (Nov. 22, 2012 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 1912 (Apr. 22, 2013 aft., referred to Standing Committee on Families and Communities)
- 205** **Fisheries (Alberta) Amendment Act, 2012 (Calahasen)**
First Reading -- 1117 (Nov. 28, 2012 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 1913 (Apr. 22, 2013 aft., referred to Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship)
- 206** **Tobacco Reduction (Flavoured Tobacco Products) Amendment Act, 2012 (Fraser)**
First Reading -- 1350-51 (Dec. 6, 2012 aft., passed)
- 207** **Human Tissue and Organ Donation Amendment Act, 2013 (Webber)**
First Reading -- 1690 (Mar. 21, 2013 aft., passed)
- 208** **Seniors' Advocate Act (Towle)**
First Reading -- 1315 (Dec. 5, 2012 aft., passed)
- Pr1** **Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Canada Act (Dorward)**
First Reading -- 1999 (Apr. 24, 2013 aft., passed)
- Pr2** **Wild Rose Agricultural Producers Amendment Act, 2013 (McDonald)**
First Reading -- 1999 (Apr. 24, 2013 aft., passed)

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