



Province of Alberta

The 28th Legislature
First Session

Alberta Hansard

Wednesday evening, December 4, 2013

Issue 79

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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Amery, Moe, Calgary-East (PC)
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Anglin, Joe, Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House-Sundre (W),
 Official Opposition Whip
Barnes, Drew, Cypress-Medicine Hat (W)
Bhardwaj, Naresh, Edmonton-Ellerslie (PC)
Bhullar, Hon. Manmeet Singh, Calgary-Greenway (PC)
Bikman, Gary, Cardston-Taber-Warner (W)
Bilous, Deron, Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview (ND)
Blakeman, Laurie, Edmonton-Centre (AL),
 Liberal Opposition House Leader
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Calahasen, Pearl, Lesser Slave Lake (PC)
Campbell, Hon. Robin, West Yellowhead (PC),
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Dallas, Hon. Cal, Red Deer-South (PC)
DeLong, Alana, Calgary-Bow (PC)
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 New Democrat Opposition Whip
Fawcett, Hon. Kyle, Calgary-Klein (PC)
Fenske, Jacquie, Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville (PC)
Forsyth, Heather, Calgary-Fish Creek (W)
Fox, Rodney M., Lacombe-Ponoka (W)
Fraser, Hon. Rick, Calgary-South East (PC)
Fritz, Yvonne, Calgary-Cross (PC)
Goudreau, Hector G., Dunvegan-Central Peace-Notley (PC)
Griffiths, Hon. Doug, Battle River-Wainwright (PC)
Hale, Jason W., Strathmore-Brooks (W)
Hancock, Hon. Dave, QC, Edmonton-Whitemud (PC),
 Government House Leader
Hehr, Kent, Calgary-Buffalo (AL)
Horne, Hon. Fred, Edmonton-Rutherford (PC)
Horner, Hon. Doug, Spruce Grove-St. Albert (PC)
Hughes, Hon. Ken, Calgary-West (PC)
Jansen, Hon. Sandra, Calgary-North West (PC)
Jeneroux, Matt, Edmonton-South West (PC)
Johnson, Hon. Jeff, Athabasca-Sturgeon-Redwater (PC)
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Kang, Darshan S., Calgary-McCall (AL),
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Khan, Stephen, St. Albert (PC)
Klimchuk, Hon. Heather, Edmonton-Glenora (PC)
Kubinec, Maureen, Barrhead-Morinville-Westlock (PC)
Lemke, Ken, Stony Plain (PC)
Leskiw, Genia, Bonnyville-Cold Lake (PC)
Luan, Jason, Calgary-Hawkwood (PC)
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Mason, Brian, Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood (ND),
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McAllister, Bruce, Chestermere-Rocky View (W)
McDonald, Everett, Grande Prairie-Smoky (PC)
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McQueen, Hon. Diana, Drayton Valley-Devon (PC)
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Quadri, Sohail, Edmonton-Mill Woods (PC)
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Redford, Hon. Alison M., QC, Calgary-Elbow (PC),
 Premier
Rodney, Hon. Dave, Calgary-Lougheed (PC)
Rowe, Bruce, Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills (W)
Sandhu, Peter, Edmonton-Manning (Ind)
Sarich, Janice, Edmonton-Decore (PC)
Saskiw, Shayne, Lac La Biche-St. Paul-Two Hills (W),
 Official Opposition Deputy House Leader
Scott, Hon. Donald, QC, Fort McMurray-Conklin (PC)
Sherman, Dr. Raj, Edmonton-Meadowlark (AL),
 Leader of the Liberal Opposition
Smith, Danielle, Highwood (W),
 Leader of the Official Opposition
Starke, Hon. Dr. Richard, Vermilion-Lloydminster (PC)
Stier, Pat, Livingstone-Macleod (W)
Strankman, Rick, Drumheller-Stettler (W)
Swann, Dr. David, Calgary-Mountain View (AL)
Towle, Kerry, Innisfail-Sylvan Lake (W),
 Official Opposition Deputy Whip
VanderBurg, Hon. George, Whitecourt-St. Anne (PC)
Weadick, Hon. Greg, Lethbridge-West (PC)
Webber, Len, Calgary-Foothills (PC)
Wilson, Jeff, Calgary-Shaw (W)
Woo-Paw, Hon. Teresa, Calgary-Northern Hills (PC)
Xiao, David H., Edmonton-McClung (PC)
Young, Steve, Edmonton-Riverview (PC),
 Government Whip

Party standings:

Progressive Conservative: 59 Wildrose: 17 Alberta Liberal: 5 New Democrat: 4 Independent: 2

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		Janet Schwegel, Managing Editor of <i>Alberta Hansard</i>

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Cal Dallas	Minister of International and Intergovernmental Relations
Jonathan Denis	Minister of Justice and Solicitor General
Wayne Drysdale	Minister of Infrastructure
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Rick Fraser	Associate Minister of Regional Recovery and Reconstruction for High River
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Dave Hancock	Minister of Human Services
Fred Horne	Minister of Health
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Ken Hughes	Minister of Energy
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Dave Rodney	Associate Minister of Wellness
Donald Scott	Associate Minister of Accountability, Transparency and Transformation
Richard Starke	Minister of Tourism, Parks and Recreation
George VanderBurg	Associate Minister of Seniors
Greg Weadick	Associate Minister of Regional Recovery and Reconstruction for Southeast Alberta
Teresa Woo-Paw	Associate Minister of International and Intergovernmental Relations

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

Amery	Eggen
Anderson	Kubinec
Casey	Sherman
Dorward	

Select Special Ethics Commissioner Search Committee

Chair: Mr. Rogers

Deputy Chair: Mr. Quadri

Blakeman	Leskiw
Eggen	McDonald
Goudreau	Saskiw
Lemke	

Standing Committee on Families and Communities

Chair: Mr. Quest

Deputy Chair: Mrs. Forsyth

Brown	Leskiw
Cusanelli	Notley
DeLong	Pedersen
Fritz	Swann
Goudreau	Towle
Jablonski	Wilson
Jeneroux	Xiao
Khan	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. Young

Casey	McDonald
Forsyth	Quest
Fritz	Sherman
Kennedy-Glans	Smith
Mason	

Standing Committee on Private Bills

Chair: Mr. Xiao

Deputy Chair: Ms L. Johnson

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

Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections, Standing Orders and Printing

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Deputy Chair: Mr. Lemke

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

Standing Committee on Public Accounts

Chair: Mr. Anderson

Deputy Chair: Mr. Dorward

Amery	Khan
Anglin	Luan
Bilous	Pastoor
Donovan	Quadri
Fenske	Quest
Hale	Sarich
Hehr	Stier
Jeneroux	Webber

Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship

Chair: Ms Kennedy-Glans

Deputy Chair: Mr. Anglin

Allen	Hale
Barnes	Johnson, L.
Bikman	Khan
Bilous	Kubinec
Blakeman	Lemke
Calahasen	Sandhu
Casey	Stier
Fenske	Webber

Legislative Assembly of Alberta

7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, December 4, 2013

[The Speaker in the chair]

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. members. Please be seated.

Government Motions

The Speaker: The hon. Government House Leader.

Time Allocation on Bill 45

51. Mr. Hancock moved:

Be it resolved that when further consideration of Bill 45, Public Sector Services Continuation Act, is resumed, not more than two hours shall be allotted to any further consideration of the bill in third reading, at which time every question necessary for the disposal of the bill at this stage shall be put forthwith.

Mr. Hancock: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my duty to move Government Motion 51.

The Speaker: The rules allow five minutes for the government side to speak to this motion, followed by five minutes for the Official Opposition to speak to this.

The hon. Government House Leader.

Mr. Hancock: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've spoken previously to the motions, but might I take this opportunity to ask for unanimous consent of the House that in the event there are bells during the evening, we shorten the bells to an interval of one minute?

[Unanimous consent granted]

The Speaker: The bell shall be shortened, and there will be a one-minute recess between the two ringings.

We've heard from the mover. Now, according to Standing Order 21(3) I can go to the Official Opposition only on this motion. I'll recognize the House leader from the Official Opposition at this time.

Mr. Anderson: Mr. Speaker, again, here we are for the sixth time. I believe it's the sixth time now. Are we only on number five? Oh. I'll have to stand again and do the same thing. For the fifth time – and the sixth is probably coming soon – I have to stand and explain to you why I feel that what is happening here is a gross abuse of process.

Mr. Speaker, we have standing orders in this House. The standing orders are the rules of the House, as you've pointed out. They are rules that are made by the government side. Let us not pretend for a second that the House leaders over here, other than for very small things, have any – any – say whatsoever in any substantive rules of this House and standing orders. We don't. The majority has that ability. The majority has decided to make a standing order that allows for time allocation. As we have talked about repeatedly in this House, they could use that rule as it's written in the Standing Orders today to limit debate in this House to anything from two hours, as is the case here, to an hour on each bill to 30 minutes to 15 minutes to 10 minutes to five minutes to one second. That's what the standing order allows for.

We as the Wildrose caucus will be writing to you, Mr. Speaker, in the new year to ask you to intervene or at the very least give us

clarity with regard to: what is the limit of that standing order? Can the government say, "We will limit debate on any one stage of the bill to one hour"? Thirty minutes? Fifteen minutes? Ten minutes? Five minutes? One second? What are the limits of time allocation?

I think the proper reading of it is that time allocation is a tool in the standing orders but that it shouldn't be allowed to overrule parliamentary precedent. Certainly, standing orders shouldn't interfere with the basic free-speech rights of members of this Assembly.

Now, I'm not saying that every member has to have time. I think that should be what happens. Perhaps there are other jurisdictions out there, you know, that don't allow for every member to have his say on a particular bill or what have you. Fine. I don't agree with that, but it is what it is. However, I doubt highly that there's any precedent for a government being able to limit debate to five minutes on a bill or 10 minutes or an hour or, frankly, two hours.

I think that this is an abuse of process. I think it calls into question the integrity of the Legislature, and I feel very strongly about that. I can promise you on the record that if the Wildrose is lucky enough to form the government in 2016, we will as one of the first things get together with the House leaders and immediately put an end to this abuse of process. That's what it is. It's an abuse of the democratic process. It's using the government's power and majority to limit debate in a way that is unreasonable and goes way beyond what the standing orders contemplated when they were created.

Certainly, I don't think anyone thinks that debate should be limited to half an hour or to 15 minutes on every stage of a bill, but that's what our standing orders allow. If we adhere to them, why wouldn't they be able to do that? If we were to adhere and say, "Look, the government can cut off debate whenever they want and allow only a small amount of time on debating of the bills," if we take that to its extent, what's the difference between two hours and one hour? What's the difference between one hour and 30 minutes? What's the difference between 30 minutes and 15? We continue to allow this process to erode to the point that our free speech is completely thrown out the window, and the government can put bills on the Order Paper two days before they want to pass them or a day before they want to pass them. Actually, not even. A sitting. You could do it in the afternoon sitting, bring them forward, and then pass them in the night sitting.

That's not democracy, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. Member for Airdrie. Let me take a moment to perhaps save you the time writing me a letter. It may be helpful for all members to visit Standing Order 21, where the heading is Time Allocation. Here's what it states under 21(1):

A member of the Executive Council may, on at least one day's notice, propose a motion for the purpose of allotting a specified number of hours . . .

In the plural: hours.

. . . for consideration and disposal of proceedings on a Government motion or a Government Bill and the motion shall not be subject to debate or amendment except as provided in suborder (3).

What it in effect is talking about here is a specified number of hours; not minutes, not seconds. That may be helpful. I'm not saying don't write to me if you wish, but I just thought, for the purposes of people who are listening, including some members who might be new, that they should know what that time allocation motion really is all about.

Mr. Anderson: Mr. Speaker, I thank you for that. Under 13(2) . . .

The Speaker: Hon. Member for Airdrie, are you asking for clarification?

Mr. Anderson: Point of clarification, 13(2). To save me having to write over the Christmas holidays, is your reading, then, that the limit of this rule is essentially two hours? That's the least amount; that's the minimum. They can't go shorter than that: is that your reading of the standing orders?

The Speaker: Hon. member, I'm not here to have a debate with you. They are your rules. I can only clarify for you what the order says, and I can't tell you if it's a minimum of this or a minimum of that. All I'm trying to clarify is that it's not a matter of minutes or seconds, and that might be helpful to you in your writing. Thank you.

Let's move on, then. We've played by the rules up to this point. Two members have spoken, as allowed by our standing orders and our rules, and I must now put the question to you.

[The voice vote indicated that Government Motion 51 carried]

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 7:39 p.m.]

[One minute having elapsed, the Assembly divided]

[The Speaker in the chair]

For the motion:

Amery	Fritz	McDonald
Bhardwaj	Goudreau	McIver
Brown	Griffiths	Olson
Cao	Hancock	Pastoor
Casey	Horner	Quadri
Cusanelli	Jansen	Quest
DeLong	Johnson, J.	Sarich
Dorward	Johnson, L.	Weadick
Drysdale	Kubinec	Woo-Paw
Fawcett	Lemke	Xiao
Fraser	Luan	

Against the motion:

Anderson	Bilous	Strankman
Anglin	Mason	Swann
Bikman	Pedersen	Towle

Totals: For – 32 Against – 9

[Government Motion 51 carried]

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Human Services.

Time Allocation on Bill 46

54. Mr. Hancock moved:

Be it resolved that when further consideration of Bill 46, Public Service Salary Restraint Act, is resumed, not more than two hours shall be allotted to any further consideration of the bill in third reading, at which time every question necessary for the disposal of the bill at this stage shall be put forthwith.

Mr. Hancock: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's also my duty to move Government Motion 54.

I haven't said a lot about these motions over the course of the last few days, but I have heard a number of arguments put that democracy as we know it will end, that that doesn't give enough time for people to speak, and all those sorts of things. In fact, as we witnessed last night, a number of members of the opposition

were able to speak multiple times to the bill in committee. There was no shortage of opportunities for people to get on the record if they wanted to. We observed that.

As well, again, I would just say for the record that time allocation is an important way to deal with the business of the House, not on every bill by any stretch of the imagination but on some bills at the committee stage. On a few bills, very few bills actually, at more than just the committee stage, at other stages of the bill, there are times when the House manages its time well, and those motions are left on the Order Paper. As we can see on the Order Paper, there are some left from last spring. It is one of the ways in which government business can be managed, brought before the House for appropriate discussion, timely discussion, and timely implementation.

Mr. Speaker, it's not closure as we used to have. About 10 years ago – I think it's almost exactly 10 years ago – we changed the standing orders after significant discussion with all parties' House leaders and removed one of the provisions. That was the previous provision in many parliaments around the Commonwealth where closure was allowed on bills, but that provision has been taken out.

There are two provisions in the standing orders for managing the time in appropriate circumstances. One of those is time allocation, and the other is putting the previous question, moving the previous question. That's not the end of democracy. It's a way in which one can ensure that there is an opportunity for fulsome debate on a bill, but our parliamentary traditions and our parliamentary procedures do not presume that every member will speak to every bill. We would not have time to deal with more than, say, 10 bills a year if that was the case.

We do delegate our opportunities. We do choose critics from the opposition side or people to bring forward bills, and not every member speaks. We work together as caucuses so that we can develop common positions. We sometimes recognize that there are positions outside the caucus position that need to be expressed or that somebody will be putting a specific provision coming from their particular background or their particular constituency. But for the most part the parliamentary system works because members gather together in caucuses, determine the position, move forward in that way. It wouldn't work at all if we all operated entirely as independent members, with each member then having to speak from their own position, duplicating the positions. There is no issue, no matter how significant or important, that cannot be fully discussed in the period of time that's allotted.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, I would ask the House for support on this particular motion.

The Speaker: We can recognize one member on this motion. Innisfail-Sylvan Lake on behalf of the Official Opposition.

Mrs. Towle: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the hon. House leader's comments there, but I would like to take this a little bit further. You're absolutely right. Every bill should be given fulsome discussion. There's no question about that. That is democracy. But the reality of it is that this session started October 28. The government has had since October 28 to drop these bills on the floor. What they did was to produce the bills late in session, and they did it for one reason and one reason only. They weren't getting the results they wanted from the union.

What they said is: we don't like how you're playing in the sandbox, so we're going to end the sandbox. What they did is they created the bills. They actually wanted to drop them last week, but they couldn't do that because of that unfortunate little

mess in Human Services. What they had to do is change the channel somehow. They dropped them this week so that they can literally get the unions forced back into negotiation, and they can force their hand. That's what this is about. This is not about fulsome discussion and democracy. This is about the government trying to force the unions to come back to the table and do what they want.

Fulsome discussion? Absolutely. Six hours is not fulsome discussion. We gave more time to Bill 206. We gave more time to Bill 33. We gave more time to Bill 28. We gave way more time to Bill 27, and we – a hundred per cent – should have done that. We absolutely should have done that. That was fulsome discussion. On this bill they don't want fulsome discussion because they know exactly what's going to happen: filibuster, filibuster, filibuster, filibuster. They don't want the unions protesting on their front steps, and they don't want the unions in this House right now causing a ruckus. They don't want the media on these bills. What they really want to do is jam these two bills down the throats of Albertans, and by doing that – that's why they instituted time allocation.

They could easily have put this bill on the floor of the House last week. We could have had all week. Or, gosh darn, we could sit longer. Hmm. Shocker. We could all come back next week, but no. What do they do? They make us sit till 1 and 2:30 in the morning because they need to do time allocation, and they want to push through second reading in one night of both bills. They want to push through Committee of the Whole in one night on both bills: gosh darn it, we're going to be out of here on the third night, and we'll make sure those bills are done.

That's the power of a majority government. That's not democracy. They're not listening to Albertans, and I hope every single Albertan understands what you're seeing here tonight. This is majority power at its best, and this is majority power making sure Albertans do not have a voice.

Further, if you actually consulted with everyday Albertans, if you actually created this bill in the proper way, you wouldn't need to institute time allocation. If you worked with the opposition parties to talk about what was wrong with these bills, if you actually sat down and had open consultation and collaboration on these bills, you wouldn't have to institute time allocation, and you wouldn't be in this mess in the first place, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Accordingly, I will now put the question forward.

[The voice vote indicated that Government Motion 54 carried]

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 7:50 p.m.]

[One minute having elapsed, the Assembly divided]

[The Speaker in the chair]

For the motion:

Amery	Goudreau	McDonald
Bhardwaj	Griffiths	McIver
Brown	Hancock	Olson
Cao	Horner	Pastoor
Casey	Jansen	Quadri
Cusanelli	Johnson, J.	Quest
DeLong	Johnson, L.	Sarich
Dorward	Khan	VanderBurg
Drysdale	Kubinec	Weadick
Fawcett	Lemke	Woo-Paw
Fraser	Luan	Xiao

Against the motion:

Anglin	Pedersen	Swann
Bilous	Strankman	Towle
Mason		

Totals: For – 33 Against – 7

[Government Motion 54 carried]

The Speaker: Just before we proceed with the next item of business, could we have unanimous consent to revert briefly to Introduction of Guests?

[Unanimous consent granted]

Introduction of Guests

The Speaker: I'll recognize Edmonton-Decore for your introduction.

Mrs. Sarich: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour and privilege to rise to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly two constituents from Edmonton-Decore. I would ask that when I mention their names, they please rise. They are seated in the members' gallery. This evening we are joined by Sheila Hogan and Stephen Hogan, both of whom are psychiatric nurses. I appreciate that they have taken their time to be in attendance this evening to watch and hear the debates in the House. On behalf of Sheila and Stephen the Assembly needs to know that they are opposed to Bill 45, which is the Public Sector Services Continuation Act, and Bill 46, the Public Service Salary Restraint Act. I would like to say thank you to both of them for keeping yours truly and the Assembly informed about their views.

Thank you.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview. Again, briefly if you could, please, because we are reverting to an earlier Routine.

Mr. Bilous: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour to rise and introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly representatives that are here tonight from several unions. We have HSAA, UNA, AUPE, and the AFL all in attendance, that are here to show their strong opposition to both bills 45 and 46. I just want to acknowledge that they have been here every day and every evening that we've been fast-tracking these bills through the House. I really wish the government would get the message and yank these bills. I'd ask them to rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

Thank you.

Government Bills and Orders Third Reading

Bill 45

Public Sector Services Continuation Act

[Adjourned debate December 4: Mr. Lukaszuk]

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Medicine Hat.

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my first opportunity to speak to Bill 45, and I'm going to take a little bit of a different approach maybe. My background is coming from a family farm in Gull Lake, Saskatchewan. It was a small community, and everybody sort of did what they had to to make ends meet. I don't recall ever running into a union member when I was growing up, so

unions, to me, were something that I was not aware of and didn't grow up with and, to be honest with you, didn't understand. As life plays out, the values that I got by growing up in a rural community were that you just get out there, and you do things on your own. You make the best of it. If you find a job that isn't to your liking, you make a decision, and you move on to another job. Sometimes that meant that you had to change where you live to get a job. Sometimes you had to change companies to get a job. Sometimes you had to do all of those to advance within any company that you're working for.

That's what I've done for 27 years in the oil and gas supply industry. It served me well, and I have no regrets. Obviously, there was a bit of luck involved, and obviously there was a bit of good fortune, and there were some missteps along the way. I certainly didn't make every decision along the way that was beneficial to me in the short term, but the long-term goal was to better position myself for the future, and that future includes having, you know, secure employment until I'm ready to retire, also to prepare for my retirement by putting money aside myself and making sure that I have sufficient monetary value to fall back on when I do hit retirement.

8:00

I'm not done with that. I'm still working my way through life. Like I say, I've spent 27 years in the oil and gas industry deciding not to, you know, do farming for various reasons, but it has served me well. The transition into this job is just another part of my journey along my work-life plan. It is very rewarding. I certainly enjoy it. It is certainly fulfilling. It's, honestly, a job that I didn't think I was going to get the first time out, but I do appreciate the fact that I was given the opportunity to represent the constituents of Medicine Hat, and I thank them for that every day.

In my work career in the oil and gas industry we ended up dealing with customers that did work for unions, and you know what? They were just regular people, just like I was. You know, they were individuals who were out working for a living, doing the best that they could for themselves and their families, looking to build a future, looking to build a nest egg for their retirement, doing whatever they had to to make sure that they were giving back to their employer, and they were delivering fantastic results in whatever capacity they were asked to do. They were just like me.

[The Deputy Speaker in the chair]

When we were sitting across the counter, I was on this side wanting to sell them something, and they were on this side wanting to buy something. We're no different at the end of it. It's the ability to choose what you want to do in your life for gainful employment for yourself, for your family, for your future. Your future is based a lot upon what promises are given to you, whether that's from your employer or from the government, and you make decisions based upon those, whether they're promises in writing, whether they're promises in negotiations, contracts. I know you might find this a little unbelievable, but sometimes deals and promises and commitments are still done by a handshake, Mr. Speaker. It doesn't happen as much as it used to, as much as I remember that it used to happen, but it does still happen. Sometimes, you know, people actually stand by their word.

In looking at this legislation, it struck me because this is talking about taking away rights and freedoms, and as an individual who chose my own destiny, using my own rights and my own freedoms and my own choices, I would never want to have anybody tell me: "You know what? You can't do that anymore. You know what I told you last week? It's no longer on the table.

You know what we agreed to in writing? I'm just going to tear that up." I have a problem with that.

In looking at Bill 45 and Bill 46 – I'll stand up and I will speak to that as well along the same lines. I have huge issues with the way the government, who has – for sure, they've been given a majority government. There's no doubt about that. But they do not speak for the majority of Albertans. If you look at the way the election went, they do not have the majority on their side. We have the majority of the voting public; they have the majority of seats.

But the way our system works, they do have the power. The way they're using their power is disappointing. They may hide behind the term "democracy," they may hide behind the terms of, "You know, we were the ones that were voted in, so we're the government," but it still doesn't make it right. Again, I take issue with that but not because we're sitting in opposition and we're supposed to oppose all the time. I don't believe in that.

I do think that in this case our side did bring forward amendments. Even with that, I was still having trouble supporting this bill with amendments, but it was something where I possibly could have said: "Yeah. I accept the amendments. It puts things in perspective." I think that even some of the union people could look at it and go: "Okay. They've softened some of the language and reduced some of the major burs in the bill." They might have looked at it and said: yeah. You know, nobody wants to do anything illegally. I don't support anything illegal, but at the same time infringing upon people's rights and freedoms is, in my mind, illegal. I may be wrong, but that's just my personal opinion.

I've received lots of e-mails, lots of contact from constituents in Medicine Hat. They're very concerned about both bills, 45 and 46, and it's for that reason: who do you trust? I think "trust" is a word that gets used a lot, and a lot of people just don't follow through on what that actually means. Accountable: how about that for a word? You know, that's an interesting word. The government actually created a whole Ministry of Accountability, Transparency and Transformation. I see no accountability in either one of these bills. I see a government with its tail between its legs, unfortunately, and they're just looking for the first foxhole to duck into. We're seeing that tonight. Our voices are being quelled. We are being muffled. We're being muzzled.

We don't have the time to debate this, we don't have the time to represent, and honestly I find that disgusting. I don't usually use words like that in here. I'm not that type of person when I'm standing. Maybe when I'm yelling across the floor.

This is very worrisome. I don't blame unions for coming here en masse to protest this. If the weather was more conducive, I don't think that we would have as small of a gallery as we have tonight. I think it would be quite busy, quite filled. There'd be standing room only.

An Hon. Member: Kudos to the folks that came.

Mr. Pedersen: Yeah. Thank you to the folks that did come. I really appreciate that.

Again, in talking on this bill, I just can't express enough disappointment at it. It is frustrating to no end. The chances that all of us cannot express how our constituents feel in a fulsome manner is frustrating, and the reason it's being shut down, honestly, is that this government is in retreat, big time, not only on these bills but on recent events of the last week or so. The best thing for them is: let's pack up, and let's get out of Dodge because it's getting pretty hot in here. I guess that's what they can do. They can leave the party early, and they can leave everybody

standing and wondering what the heck happened. I'm sure that's what's going to happen here. There's no doubt about it.

Again, I stand here. I do not support this bill. I was concerned at the start after hearing debate. I certainly don't support it, and it's not because I'm a union hugger or a union lover. That's not it at all. But I do respect the rights of unions and union members to get out there and do their business in the fashion and the manner that they were granted the rights to do that.

In saying that, Mr. Speaker, I will just let you know that I will not be supporting this bill, and with Bill 46 it will be probably pretty much the same. Thank you very much.

8:10

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

Standing Order 29(2)(a) is available.

Seeing none, I'll recognize the Member for Calgary-Mountain View.

Dr. Swann: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. A pleasure to rise in third even under the constraints that have been imposed upon us with the late tabling and now closure, time closure, on what, to me, have become the most important bills for Albertans, forced through in the last few days with no chance for Albertans to even understand these bills, let alone raise questions, meet with their MLAs, meet with some of the unions affected, and raise reasonable questions about what I think is touching the heart of Albertans, and that is: what are fundamental human rights about, and what does fairness mean in relation to government and public servant relationships?

This is a 42-year government, Mr. Speaker. I would have expected more self-confidence. I would have expected more of a sense of the seriousness with which this job has to be faced and the long-term implications of decisions made in this House, always going, of course, in the favour of this majority PC government. It has been so, as I say, for 42 years. Again, instead of confidence and a real desire to learn, to grow, to change, to open up the doors and the ears and the minds to what Albertans really want in the long term, I see an increasing attitude of pride, arrogance, self-interest, party interest. I see a party that is becoming mean-spirited. I think any government – and, dare I say, even a Liberal government – might become more self-interested and more proud and more arrogant after 42 years. That is the nature of power, and that's what we've seen happening progressively over 42 years.

I'm in this House because 11 years ago I had the temerity to speak out against a government that didn't respect free speech, didn't respect science, didn't respect professional opinion. They decided to shut me down because I dared to speak truth to power. This government had no idea about what was happening in our environment, with climate change in particular and our need to start moving to other energy forms in this province. That's what awakened me to the truth about a government that's been in too long, that it's all about power, that it's all about suppressing dissent, that it's all about masking their insecurity. Not good enough, Mr. Speaker. Not good enough for me, not good enough for my children, not good enough for my province.

I think many of us here, in all parties in the opposition, are experiencing the same thing, the longest sitting government in, as far as I know, North American history. It happens to every party.

Mr. Bilous: Longer than dictatorships.

Dr. Swann: Yeah. I mean, it happens to everybody. I don't blame you for staying in power for too long. I just have to say that

you've been in power for too long. The signs are everywhere. The signs are everywhere.

An Hon. Member: The signs are everywhere. [interjections]

Dr. Swann: Oh, yeah. Unintended pun, but I'll take credit for it. [interjections] And our Premier is on those, absolutely.

Opening our minds and our hearts to what the real duty and responsibility are here, surely, in these last few days would challenge you all to reconsider and perhaps stall what is a misguided and heavy-handed approach to reasonable relationships with our most valued civil servants. It's sending a very bad message to the people that care for us in our offices, that care for us in our hospitals, in our institutions, on our streets. How many of you have talked to security guards here in the Legislature? How many of you have heard anything positive said about these two bills and the message they send to these important players in our personal lives? I have, and it's not positive.

Either you're not listening, or you don't care. I would prefer to think that your ears have been closed, and that comes with the territory after 42 years, as I said: extremely sensitive to criticism, unwilling to engage in meaningful debate, unwilling to look at the evidence. How much time have you folks spent listening to people in unions over the last, well, three or four days? [interjection] It sounds like Calgary-Glenmore has been listening.

How long have you been asking? We've only known about this bill for four days. How could we possibly get a sense of where people are at? Or do you care what people are thinking about out there? Well, we welcome people to this historic debate. It is going to be, I think, historic because it's setting a new tone for a government that is increasingly showing that it's lost its way.

There is an assault on human rights coming from this very Legislature, that should be the champion of human rights. You have majority. You could be the champions. You could set the bar highest in North America. Instead, you choose to lower it to where none of us can get under it. None of us on this side of the House can accept it. And I can tell you that many of the thousands and thousands of union workers and citizens who have paid attention to this will not accept it and will remember it in 2016.

This is not serving you either in political terms or in terms of your ability to get maximum productivity from our workers. How can people who feel demeaned, diminished, slighted, disrespected, and violated give of themselves to the full? Many of the people in our services give an hour extra just because they feel committed to their work. I know best the health services, whether it's EMS or whether it's in the hospital or long-term care, the nursing aides, the LPNs, the RNs. These people don't mind giving extra because they're so committed. I know the Member for Lethbridge-East would echo those comments. People in the health care services give extra because they feel this is their calling, and they want to give of themselves. What will this kind of mean-spirited decision do to their spirit, to their morale, to the workplace stress that is already so challenging?

The right to gather, to negotiate, the right to strike is there in the Constitution. You have said in your wisdom as a government that you will take away that right for those – not essential workers, which it should have been. I like many things that Peter Lougheed did, but taking away blanket rights from all civil servants without respect to whether they're essential or not is a travesty, really. Why would we do that? And you guys have gone the next step. You've actually said: we're not even going to allow collective bargaining to the point of arbitration; we're going to take that away as well.

It's called the Public Sector Services Continuation Act. What kind of continuation is this on the basis of coercion? This is not the kind of Alberta that I stand for and, I don't think, that most of you stand for either, but you're cowed by a party that has decided that this is the way you're going to go and a leadership that has decided that this is where you're going to go. Many of you are new MLAs in the last term. I can understand that you don't wish to express dissent. But this is a province built on dissent, of mavericks, of free thinking. Speak up. Vote independently. Challenge a government that has lost its way. We would all respect you for that. If your party can't take it, then maybe you should look for another party.

You're looking more and more like your cousins in Ottawa, using the democratic process to serve yourselves. Omnibus bills, proroguing, pressing the vote, giving no free votes in the Legislature: this is, unfortunately, what's going to bring the downfall of the federal party, your cousins in Ottawa.

It's profoundly disrespectful, and it means a costly war. Do we need this? It's not only costly in terms of morale, productivity, absenteeism, stress in the workplace, but it's a costly war in the courts, and you guys expect the public to pay for that war. It is going to go to the courts, and you are going to lose, and you're going to say after two years, after the next election: "Okay. The courts ruled against us, but this is a new dispensation. We have a new leader, and we're going in a new direction. We've learned something from this; we won't do this again."

8:20

Mr. Bilous: How much did it cost the taxpayers?

Dr. Swann: Yeah. How much is it going to cost the taxpayers?

You folks should put money from your own pockets into a fund to deal with this. You shouldn't expect the taxpayers to fund something that is so inevitably going to end up in the Supreme Court or, if not, then here in the Alberta Court of Appeal.

The Finance minister and the Human Services minister have both said that the primary goal, at least in Bill 46, which will be coming next, is the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees. Well, everybody knows that this is sending a message to all unions. It's setting a very dangerous precedent not only for future negotiations but, again, court costs and the kind of quality work that we can expect from people who don't feel that you're really onside with them.

Not only is this unprecedented in Canada; it overthrows decades of constructive working relationships with tens of thousands of workers in this province. It ultimately leads to dissatisfied workers, workers who are inclined, then, to express their stress and anger in unhealthy ways, as all of us would if we don't feel appreciated, if we aren't given the respect and the support that we need to do a good job and have a healthy private life, family life. I would expect to see increased absenteeism, increased drug use, increased medical checks, increased depression, increased workplace bullying, increased stress, and the need for more workers to come in.

Penny-wise, pound-foolish. This is a government that consistently makes short-term decisions, Mr. Speaker, saving money, saving a few dimes here and paying hundreds of thousands of dollars down the road, whether it's in health care, on environmental issues, or now on social issues, looking specifically, for example, at the failure in Human Services around the deaths of these hundreds of children in care. It's an attitude. You may not see the connection, member over there, but there is an attitude here that is going to be translated into huge costs: human costs, social costs, financial costs, legal costs, and ultimately political costs. If you don't see that, you're not paying attention.

Bill 41 in 1977 opened the door to binding arbitration. This government agreed to binding arbitration. Somehow we don't see a government that's prepared to follow through on that.

So, Mr. Speaker, much has been said. I don't want to add redundancy to this, but I tried in my earlier messages to this government to say: "Let's just take a step back. Let's look at what the implications of this are and think about the possibility that this could be a mistake." I asked the questions of how this will affect you in your relationships with the civil services, how this will affect you as a government that is wanting to bring the maximum productivity and economy to this province, how this will affect you in terms of your reputation not only in Canada. As I mentioned, international websites are now indicating that Alberta is threatening fundamental labour rights. How will this affect our international business opportunities, the issues that we all care about but seem to have been misguided in their interpretation by this government?

Surely, on that basis alone and the need to see progress on the Keystone pipeline, this government could see some merit in thinking through the long-term implications of what precedent you're setting here. Comparing this decision to and touting the doctor's settlement, the teacher's settlement is a false comparison.

The Deputy Speaker: Standing Order 29(2)(a) is available.

I'll recognize the Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood under 29(2)(a).

Mr. Mason: Yes, please. I just want to ask the hon. Member for Calgary-Mountain View if he wished to finish his thought.

Dr. Swann: Thank you, hon. member. To draw the comparison, let's take it a step further. The doctors were out of a contract for two years. It was fractious. It came into election time. There was all kind of, I think, threat to this government if they went through an election with doctors unhappy with the lack of progress in negotiations. There was a very quick resolution based on – well, it was a reasonable settlement with a well-paid profession. Not all teachers, also, agreed with their settlement, and they were coerced.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I don't think there's any comparison to these negotiations and the negotiation that has been forced as a result of abandoning a legal and mutually agreed upon solution, which is binding arbitration. So I'm not so sure that this should be called the Public Sector Services Continuation Act, and we will be vigorously objecting to this. We will be vigorously active after this bill gets rammed through this House.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: Are there others under 29(2)(a)?

Seeing none, I'll recognize the hon. Member for Calgary-Mackay-Nose Hill.

Dr. Brown: Thank you much, Mr. Speaker. I would like to speak to Bill 45. First of all, I want to start by saying that I'm amazed that we have so many members opposite who apparently have some expertise in the area of constitutional law, including the members for Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview, Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House-Sundre, Edmonton-Centre, and just most recently, Calgary-Mountain View, all of whom have been so quick to opine that Bill 45 is unconstitutional.

I did take some constitutional law myself, but I don't consider myself an expert. What I do know is that there are a lot of very smart men and women in the Department of Justice of Alberta who, no doubt, have had a very close look at this legislation and who, evidently, gave it the green light of being within the law. I would certainly give more credence to their opinion on these

constitutional matters than I would to some of the members opposite.

I heard a number of the members opposite, including the members for Edmonton-Meadowlark and Edmonton-Calder. They appeared to condone those illegal actions that took place at the Edmonton Remand Centre, the illegal strike, saying in justification that the individuals concerned had no recourse, that they had no alternative but to abandon their posts. I would dispute that, that there was no alternative recourse to those grievances.

Mr. Speaker, did those members really condone public servants, who were charged with enforcing security and maintaining public security in a correctional facility, breaking the law and walking off the job? Do they really condone public servants walking out on illegal strike, which they knew so manifestly would facilitate damage to public property? And do they really seriously condone public servants charged with security illegally abandoning their posts and incurring financial loss amounting to over \$13 million for the taxpayers of Alberta? Do they condone essential services or peace officers walking out in those conditions?

Mr. Speaker, we heard much hyperbole from the opposition characterizing this bill as some sort of an apocalypse in nature, being the end of democracy as we know it, a repudiation of the British parliamentary system. But nothing could be further from the truth. This bill is not directed in any way, shape, or form at loyal workers who are lawfully carrying out their work. It doesn't affect them. For them this bill will have absolutely no effect. It won't affect their lives in any way. It only affects them if they go out on illegal strike.

8:30

I can't let the remarks of the hon. Member for Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House-Sundre go by, with respect to his comments about how in his expert opinion this bill offends the tenets of contract law. I must remind the hon. member that in addition to the breach of the labour law and the collective agreement – and a collective agreement is in fact a contract – there are long-standing and time-honoured common law principles of employment. Those dictate that employees have a duty of loyalty to their employer and to act in the best interests of their employer. Those are fundamental and implied terms of every contract of employment, and they have been for decades.

Those principles were offended, Mr. Speaker, when essential workers abandoned their post, endangered the safety of the persons in the remand centre, and allowed prisoners to vandalize and destroy public property and to incur damages at the expense of the taxpayers of Alberta.

For those reasons, Mr. Speaker, I continue to support Bill 45, and I urge all of the members in this House to support it as well.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

Standing Order 29(2)(a) is available. The Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood.

Mr. Mason: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Well, I cannot let the hon. member's comments pass without a little bit of a response. They're somewhat more measured than his comments the other evening, where he inflamed the gallery by comparing strikers to Stanley Cup rioters. That was very offensive. Nevertheless, the approach that the member takes is that nobody on this side knows anything about the Constitution. He presumes that we haven't consulted with people who do have that professional expertise. We have, and our comments are based on that consultation. Now, obviously, there are a million – if you have 10 lawyers, you probably have 10 opinions, and several of them are

of the nature of: well, on one hand, and then on the other hand. So there is actually more than one opinion, in my experience.

Nevertheless, Mr. Speaker, I think that there is a good basis for questioning this, and it's not like the government's record is unblemished with respect to passing legislation that's ultra vires or unconstitutional. There are examples of the government doing that. The fact of the matter is that in their zeal to accomplish political objectives, politicians sometimes push lawyers. They sometimes push senior civil servants. They want to accomplish certain political goals, and they're prepared to push that. We have seen that before.

You know, the hon. member talks about the respect for law and so on, but I think we need to take into account that there are bad laws. The history of the world is full of examples of where people have defied unjust laws. For example, one example that has been made is Rosa Parks refusing to vacate the seat on the bus. She broke the law. Nelson Mandela in fighting against apartheid: apartheid was kept in place by a whole structure, a whole legal structure, all of the laws that had been passed to support apartheid. There are many, many more examples in history, Mr. Speaker, of unfair, unjust, and repressive laws that have been defied, and people pay a price for that. They certainly do. But I think that whether it's Martin Luther King or Mahatma Gandhi, there is a history of very, very courageous individuals who did the right thing by violating laws that were unfair and unjust. The hon. member seems to just have forgotten all of that history.

Much of the social progress and economic progress around the world has come from people standing up to tyranny, standing up to lack of democracy, undemocratic governments, unfair laws. He won't get much sympathy from us when he makes a black-and-white argument about what's legal and what's not.

We've seen here today, Mr. Speaker, in this particular bill and its companion, Bill 46, that the government is prepared to use its power, given to it by the majority government that it has, to impose unfair laws. We have seen the government use its power through its majority to restrict the ability of members of the House to adequately debate the legislation and thereby carry out their responsibilities to their constituents. I just want to suggest to the hon. member that it's not as black and white as he says. Simply because the government uses its legal authority to pass legislation does not make it good.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. member. Your time has expired for that item.

Hon. members, before I recognize the next speaker, might we revert briefly to Introduction of Guests?

[Unanimous consent granted]

Introduction of Guests (reversion)

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Associate Minister of Regional Recovery and Reconstruction for Southeast Alberta.

Mr. Weadick: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's very rare that I get to actually introduce somebody from Lethbridge, and on a day like this, where it's been blizzarding and blowing and quite the road conditions south of here, I'm pleased to tell you that a very good friend and my constituency assistant Gloria Roth is here. She started her time working for Albert Klapstein, an MLA that served in Leduc prior to our Deputy Speaker being the elected member there. She moved to Lethbridge, and that was sure our gain and Leduc's loss. I just would like her to stand and receive the warm welcome of our Assembly.

Government Bills and Orders

Third Reading

Bill 45

Public Sector Services Continuation Act

(continued)

The Deputy Speaker: I'll recognize the next speaker. The hon. Member for Innisfail-Sylvan Lake.

Mrs. Towle: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise and stand up and speak to Bill 45. It's interesting that the hon. Member for Medicine Hat talked about his experience as it relates to this bill. I was going to talk about a similar experience. Growing up, my mum was a general labourer, and my dad was in the oil field. He owned his own business. I didn't grow up in a union home. I didn't really understand exactly all the protections and what that looked like for a very long time in my life.

I then went on to work for the federal government, and I was in one of those positions that were exempt from the union. I don't believe that I've ever been a union member. There might have been some small period of time in my work history that I was. Even when I worked for the David Thompson health region, in that position as well it was one of those technical positions that are exempt from being a union member. You followed a union contract, but you weren't actually a union member.

But I think what we all need to go back to is exactly what Bill 45 represents and whom it affects. The reason that I bring up that I didn't grow up in that type of environment is that I've come to respect what the hard-working front-line people do for this province. I currently own a small business. I'm not unionized, but a lot of the people that I know who own businesses and even my husband's workplace have union workers. What we're talking about with Bill 45 and whom it pertains to is everyday Albertans. We're talking about front-line staff. We're talking about health care workers. We're talking about health care aides. We're talking about the sheriffs. We're talking about the maintenance people. We're talking about the plant lady who comes into our office every single day and makes sure that that plant lives or dies, because God knows that if I had to do it, it wouldn't. That's who this bill affects.

This bill does not affect the over 80 vice-presidents that had their names changed at AHS but still received over \$300,000 a year. This bill does not affect the CEO of Alberta Health Services, who makes \$580,000 a year. This bill does not affect any of the senior management of the public service, none of the deputy ministers, none of the bureaucrats, none of the senior management of all of our Crown corporations. It doesn't affect any of them. Do you know who it does affect? Twenty-two thousand AUPE employees who are doing the front-line work.

8:40

What they're doing right now is creating a situation where, when the union decided that they couldn't negotiate anymore with the government and wanted arbitration, the government didn't want that, so they needed to bring forward a bill to kill that. What they've done with these two bills put together, especially Bill 45 and even worse with Bill 46, is essentially take away any right to free speech.

While I know that every single day this government talks about all the promises it made – promise kept, promise broken – we hear it on the other side all the time, every single time. It doesn't matter that most of the time the promise has actually been broken. I know for a fact that there is not a single person in here that banged on the doors of everyday Albertans and actually said to them: "And

by the way, if you vote for me, I promise I'll bring in Bill 45. I promise you that." They weren't at your door saying that. They weren't knocking on your door saying: "I promise that if you vote for me, I will make sure that you do not have the right to strike. I will make sure you can't even talk about it. I will make sure, though, that if you do talk about it, the penalties will be so heavy and heavy-handed." They didn't do that. They didn't go to the doors and actually say that. If they had, that's great. If you actually door-knocked on this, then that's fantastic. Then that absolutely is promise made, promise kept. But they didn't do that.

What they did was that they promised them the world. They told them that they were going to have a better Alberta, that there is lots of money, that we're prosperous, that this is a great province, and all those things are true. After the election what they did was break the promise.

As the Member for Medicine Hat said, I grew up in a family, and I grew up in small-town rural Alberta. Many of our business deals are still done on a handshake. They're still done on your word, and when you do things like this, what it does is that it negotiates in bad faith. Today it's the AUPE; tomorrow it's UNA; the next day it's another one. So don't think that this is the end of the train for this. The next time that you challenge this government in any sort of way and don't like what they have to say, they'll just make sure legislation comes forward to strip you of those rights, and that's what Bill 45 does.

The worst part of it is that Bill 45 strips the rights of the very people who make sure that our everyday lives are taken care of. They make sure that our seniors are taken care of, they make sure that people in hospitals are taken care of, they make sure our roads are cleared and our offices are clean, and they make sure we're kept safe. When you start attacking the grassroots people who put you here, that's just a sign that you've lost your way. Clearly this government has lost its way.

Now, if the government wanted to campaign on this, they certainly should have. They should have been honest with Albertans and told them exactly what they were going to do. They should have told them that the legal rights of front-line workers were going to be taken away. They should have told them that they were going to go to war with their public sector.

Had they told them all of that, had they been honest with Albertans, then they would have had every right to bring these two bills forward. They would have every right to go to Bill 45 because they could say: "You know what? I brought this bill forward because I campaigned on it. I was honest with you. I told you we were going to do it this way. You had the right to be at the table, and we're going to do it." But when you don't do that, you lose all ability to be at the table, you lose all ability to negotiate in good faith, and you lose all ability for people to trust what you have to say.

It's interesting that they decided to bring these two bills forward now. Last year all MLAs received an 8 per cent pay raise. We all did. I know the other side likes to argue a thousand times about how they didn't, but our paycheque on April 30 and our paycheque in October was dramatically different and was 8 per cent higher. I can read. I went to school. I'm able to read. I know what my paycheque said, and I have no problem showing my paycheques to anybody who wants to see them. Each and every person can see exactly what we got paid in April, in May, in June, in July, in August, and in September, and then they can see every month from October onward. If anybody wants to look at mine, you're certainly more than welcome to. I'll post it publicly if you want. It doesn't make any difference to me. But you can see that there's a distinct difference after the October Members' Services Committee gave us more money.

Wildrose MLAs donated that money to charity because we didn't campaign on an 8 per cent pay raise. This government didn't campaign on an 8 per cent pay raise. We gave our money to charity, and it was the right decision to do that. That's what we said we would do. We said that we wouldn't take a pay raise. You can't give yourself a pay raise and then go to the public service and tell them: you have to take a pay cut. It just can't be done.

This is the problem with this government. They keep saying that they've made all these promises and this is the way it's going to be, and then they renege on all these promises. They talked about 50 schools and 70 rebuilds. Not a shovel in the ground; no chance of that even happening before 2016. Not a chance. They talked about building a thousand long-term care beds in the platform. Now it's continuing care.

That's what Bill 45 does. Bill 45 shows that you can't keep your word. This government has a terrible track record of doing that. When you keep on doing that, you set up a system that doesn't work, a system that is broken. All you needed to do was work collaboratively and respectfully with the union members. All you had to do was stand up and actually work with them and come to an agreement. In the event that you couldn't come to an agreement, you absolutely had the right to go to arbitration.

An Hon. Member: That's Bill 46, not 45.

Mrs. Towle: Yes, that is Bill 46. You're absolutely right. But these are paired together. These two bills are paired together. You can't talk about one in isolation of the other because they need both of them. To make either of them happen, they need to take away the rights on both levels. The government side can sit there, and they can heckle, and they can whisper. They can do all of those things.

I applaud the Member for Edmonton-Decore. Even though she has constituents here who are against this bill – she brought them here tonight; she is listening to them – she's introducing them here tonight knowing full well that her position is going to be different from theirs. I respect that. At least she's open about that.

But to pretend that there's not a single person who's upset with these bills – I'm an opposition MLA, and I know how many letters have come into my office. It's a lot; 500 or 600 people stood on the steps of the Legislature in minus 30 the other night to tell this government that they're not happy with these bills. Those are grassroots Albertans who are just asking you to talk to them. You don't need to have heavy-handed legislation that takes away their rights. You don't need to have legislation with time allocation that says, "You can only speak to this bill for six hours" and not allow everyone to go home and consult with their constituents. This bill was dropped onto the House floor on Monday. Monday.

When the government saw a mistake with Bill 28, they pulled it off the table. They revamped it. They went to the AUMA, they went to the AAMD and C, and they said: let's talk. That was the right thing to do, and I applaud the government for doing that. They absolutely did that.

They could very easily pull Bill 45 and Bill 46 off the table today. They could do exactly what they did with Bill 28. There's nothing wrong with that. It's not embarrassing. There's nothing wrong with admitting that you went too far too fast. But six hours of time allocation and ramming a bill through because you want a solution to a union negotiation is not the right way to do things. Taking away front-line service workers' rights to collaborate, to talk about, and to deal with what they need to deal with in their business: that's fine. But you have to be open and honest about what you're going to do. You don't just sort of slam it on the day of the House to the surprise of everybody.

There's a lot of discussion about whether the union is at the table or whether the union is not at the table and who walked away first. Quite frankly, it doesn't matter how that works because there are provisions in place through arbitration, through what Premier Lougheed set up previously, that said that we can deal with each one of those things. But what you can't do is come to the floor of this House and say: not only are we going to put in a bill that is terrible – terrible – to front-line staff, but we're also going to put time allocation on it and make sure that nobody consults, nobody can talk about it, and then we're going to ram it through whether anyone likes it or not.

I'm warning this government now. Bill 45 and Bill 46, should they pass – and there's no question they will. Sorry. There's no question that Bill 45 and Bill 46 are going to pass tonight. It'll be late, but they will pass. But when they do, this is going to have a ripple effect through the communities like we haven't seen in a long, long time. A long time.

8:50

So I applaud the government for what they did on Bill 28, and I implore the government to take a look at bills 45 and 46 and realize that they've made a mistake or need some more consultation or need to have the different people at the table and go back to the table and do not pass these bills. Do not pass these bills.

I won't be supporting these bills mostly because of the ramifications of the removal of a fundamental right to free speech. When you start removing anybody's right to free speech, that's where I draw the line. You cannot do that. We as legislators do not have that right. It's their right. It's written in the legislation. It's written in the Constitution. They have a right to free speech, and we can't take that away from them.

Pay attention to what's going on. Bill 45 is not wanted by the general population. The majority of people this affects don't want this, and this is going to have detrimental effects to you in the future. You did the right thing with Bill 28. Please do the right thing and pull bills 45 and 46 off the plate today. You have every opportunity to do that, and you would get all of the support that you need to do that. Bring these bills back when you've done the consultation, and then you might just find that you get all the support you need.

With that, I'll sit down and hope that the government has the opportunity to listen. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

Standing Order 29(2)(a) is available. I'll recognize the hon. Deputy Premier.

Mr. Lukaszuk: Mr. Speaker, I have a few questions. I'm going to read a few quotes and ask that member to tell me how she rationalizes everything that she has just said with the track record of not only their party but, in particular, a couple of key members of their party.

Let me read some quotes: I came to see unions as self-serving entities that punish good workers and protect bad ones, destroy workplace morale, and harm the companies they operate in. The Leader of the Opposition in the *Calgary Herald*.

The Wildrose want to cut government managers by 50%, not 10%. [The Member for Airdrie] dismisses 10% as "a spit in the bucket."

He says the province should sit down [with all the unions] and [tell them] the truth. There's no money for raises, probably for two to three years.

Member for Airdrie in the *Calgary Sun*, February 20, 2013, not so long ago.

Considering we already have the highest paid public sector in the country, we believe it is important to re-direct the hundreds of millions in savings made from freezing salaries to services in priority areas like health care and education.

Wildrose alternative budget.

"If a serious economic downturn were to hit... we would balance the budget... by freezing spending increases." Then they go on to say that the WRP, Wildrose Party, would implement "a hiring freeze in the public sector." The alternative budget.

How do you reconcile all of these comments recently made by your leader and your Finance critic with everything that you're saying right now, and how do you reconcile the fact that when cameras are rolling outside, when these individuals actually rally in front, the cock didn't have a chance to crow three times before you sold them out and voted against them right over here in the House? How do you reconcile that?

Mrs. Towle: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Actually, these are the exact same quotes that he read yesterday in the House, and the House leader actually did already rationalize to you exactly what happened. The quotes that you're referring to: there's no question that they were made. I'm not disputing that. They were also made previous to the Leader of the Official Opposition being the leader of our party, and as we all know, in her private life there is no question that as a young, opinionated columnist our leader made a few arguments, but she has always believed in the Charter of Rights and freedom of assembly, which permits workers to organize into a union.

She has always believed in good-faith bargaining and the long-term interests of both taxpayers and public-sector employees. I know that this government likes to bring up things she said from 2004, 2005, 2006, 2008. There is no question that she made those comments. No one on this side is denying that. However, as anyone knows, when you take on a different role – at that point in time she was a *Calgary Herald* editorial columnist. She was very opinionated. There is no one in our party who doesn't agree with that.

There is no secret that the Wildrose would have asked for a wage freeze through 2014. We've not been secretive about this. It was part of our platform. We actually did campaign on asking public-sector workers to take a wage freeze till 2014. We campaigned on that. We absolutely were honest about that. We went to the public sector, and we told them that. It's written in our campaign platform. We stand by that. The union knows that, the public knows that, and every party in this House knows that. You keep reading about it. Those editorials aren't secret. The fact that we asked for the public-sector unions to take a wage freeze wasn't secret. None of it is secret. Clearly, I love that you guys love us so much that you need to keep digging this stuff up because you don't understand what's going on. None of this has been secret. Do you really think AUPE doesn't know our position? They know our position.

An Hon. Member: Now they do.

Mrs. Towle: Absolutely. So you're good.

Unlike the PCs, though, we would negotiate in good faith with the unions, and we would not promise the moon to pull out the rug from under them. We didn't go into the 2012 election telling them that we would give the teachers \$107 million, that we would promise everybody jobs, there's lots of money, there'll never be any cutbacks. We were honest. We said that there was going to be debt. We said that. We said that it was going to take two years to get out of debt. We absolutely said that the public-sector front-line workers would need to take a wage freeze till 2014. We didn't tell

them that we were going to promise them everything, and we still don't. That's the difference between open and transparent and hiding. They knocked on every single door saying: "No, no, no. We have no debt. We'll be debt-free. We have no deficit. There are lots of jobs. Everything is good." That's the difference.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

I'll recognize the Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood.

Mr. Mason: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Well, that was an interesting exchange. It would seem that the two conservative parties just keep switching positions. You know, one runs on a progressive platform and then is reactionary. The other one runs on a reactionary platform and then is progressive. I don't know. I have never been able to fathom conservatism, so I'm at a bit of disadvantage here.

I do want to talk a little bit about this law because, you know, I think Albertans are very, very justifiably concerned about this particular piece of legislation. Now, the various ministers in the front row – the Deputy Premier, the Minister of Human Services, and the Finance minister – have been fronting up the defence of this bill, and they've been trying to downplay the seriousness of the legislation, both 45 and 46. It's really, you know, "We would never really use this against individuals or groups of workers" and so on. I guess I can be forgiven and others, particularly in the labour movement, can be forgiven for not being entirely confident that the leadership of this government is going to use this piece of legislation fairly because it gives broad powers and it creates new categories of offences that don't exist in other legislation such as the threat of a strike.

The Minister of Human Services has made a number of arguments about this. He's talked about, "Well, you know, if there's the threat of a strike, then we have to spend money to get ready for a strike just in case," arguments of that kind. The government has talked about the cost of the illegal strike, or the wildcat strike, that took place at the new Edmonton Remand Centre and that that cost a lot of money. They had to bring in RCMP to take care of the prisoners in the remand centre, and that cost a lot of money and so on.

9:00

There are a couple of problems with the arguments that the government is making, Mr. Speaker. First of all, they take no responsibility for what happened in that illegal strike. When something like that happens, there are usually some long-standing and deep-seated grievances and considerable discontent that have been there for quite some time. In this particular case there was a great deal of concern about the structure of the building, the safety of the inmates, the safety of the guards, and there was a real feeling that they weren't being heard, that they weren't being listened to. Then, in fact, when certain actions were taken in terms of forcefully trying to bring these points of view to management, two of the people were disciplined, and that was the trigger.

The first thing that I'd like to say about this argument is that the government takes no responsibility for what happened at the remand centre. As far as they're concerned, everything was the fault of the union because it didn't police its members, there was no fault on the side of management, and the reaction of the government was irrelevant to whether or not there were additional costs to the government.

The second argument I'd like to make against that is the idea that the government in order to save itself inconvenience and, yes, to save the taxpayers' money can take away basic civil rights from individuals to prevent that from ever being a possibility, and I

fundamentally disagree with that, Mr. Speaker. The idea that the threat of a strike might cost the government some millions of dollars does not justify taking away their right to strike. It does not justify breaking unions through punitive and draconian fines. It does not justify making individuals legally responsible if they talk about taking strike action. So I don't accept that particular argument at all.

Mr. Speaker, I want to note that we have representatives here from a number of other labour organizations that are not affected by Bill 46. They are affected by this one. Although the general thrust here is against AUPE, I think largely out of revenge for the wildcat strike, the fact that other unions from the public sector are here is because they know that they're next.

It started with the teachers. The teachers, the ATA, negotiated a deal, but that deal wasn't ratified according to the legal requirements for ratification. A number of locals and some school boards failed to ratify the deal, so the government used legislation to push the deal through, thereby setting a precedent which they are now attempting to impose on other public-sector unions. So it's the teachers yesterday, AUPE today, and tomorrow it's UNA and the Health Sciences Association of Alberta and after that possibly CUPE as well.

The government has made a similar argument that it made with respect to the ability to take away people's rights, and that is to say that because they've decided that living within their means is part of their mandate, they are now assuming that they have the authority and they can use their authority to impose that to reduce any norms of collective bargaining, of negotiation in order to impose what they think they can afford. Well, you know, Mr. Speaker, it doesn't work that way. The employer doesn't get to say: "You know what? This is what I want to pay, and you have to take it. If you don't take it, we'll fine you into the Stone Age." It doesn't work that way. It's not supposed to work that way.

It might cost the government some more money. Well, that's just the way it is, Mr. Speaker. They should not be taking away the rights of unions and imposing a settlement that suits them. You don't get to do that in collective bargaining unless you're this government, unless you are prepared to completely ignore the norms of collective bargaining and impose your own idea of a deal. I mean, that's what collective bargaining is. It's two parties sitting down and trying to reach a compromise. It's not one side saying: take it or leave it. [interjections] And that's exactly what has happened.

Now, I hear the Deputy Premier and the Minister of Human Services say: exactly, exactly. In other words, what they're suggesting is that that was what AUPE is doing. Well, Mr. Speaker, what happened was – they don't say this – that there was discussion and negotiation, and the government insisted that AUPE take similar levels of a settlement that was imposed on the teachers and accepted by doctors. AUPE rejected that. It wasn't that AUPE flatly refused to negotiate. It was that they refused to agree to the government's compensation proposals in the negotiation. So AUPE did what the government had told it that it needed to do if they couldn't reach an agreement. AUPE used the law that this government passed to apply for binding arbitration as a means of settling that dispute.

I know that the arbitration – and I had a look at the criteria that the arbitrator is required to use in coming to an agreement. The arbitrator has to look at other similar contracts, compensation in other similar positions, and so on. They need to take into account the overall economics of the province and so on. So the chances are that an arbitrator applying those criteria and striving to reach a fair and balanced deal would have come in at somewhat higher

than zero per cent, and zero and 1 and 1. I think that's very likely, and I think the government knows that it's likely, too.

Higher than zero would be fair, Mr. Speaker. You know, with inflation running in this province higher than in any other province, prices increasing, with a shortage of labour, wages are going up in this province. So are prices. Any arbitrator applying those criteria would naturally come up with a better deal than 0, 0, 1, and 1. The government knew that. They knew that they couldn't apply those criteria if they wanted to get the wage settlement that they wanted. They didn't want a fair one.

They are now claiming that their mandate in the election was to "live within our means." Well, Mr. Speaker, I have a list of the Tory campaign promises. We costed them, and there was \$7 billion of new spending in that platform on new programs that this government promised and never delivered. That was the mandate that they got. They got the mandate to increase spending on public programs. That's what they ran on. They didn't run on fiscal restraint.

Now they're claiming in their propaganda, that is being paid for by the taxpayer, that they were elected to "live within our means," and to them that means that they are freezing wages in the public sector. They didn't talk about it in the election. It's actually the opposite of what they promised to do. This government is fictionalizing its own mandate. It's making it up to suit what it wants to do now.

9:10

This government has done what Conservative governments always do, and that is to promise the moon at election time and then after the election to govern like Conservatives. That means trying to force down wages, cut social spending, tax breaks for their wealthy friends, lowest royalties in the world. That's the old-style Tory agenda, and it hasn't changed under this Premier or under this government. It's exactly the same as it was before. But let's be clear. It was not the mandate that this government was elected upon. Far from it, in fact. Quite the opposite.

One of the members of the Wildrose spoke a little bit about, I think, not being a labour hugger. [interjection] Yeah, yeah. Thank you. Well, I wouldn't mind being called that. I am certainly proud of my own labour affiliation. I'm still a member of the Amalgamated Transit Union local 569. I have been for over 30 years. I'm very proud of that. The labour movement has contributed far more to our society than it's normally given credit for. It fought against laws and struck illegally in order to accomplish the eight-hour day. Mr. Speaker, in doing so, the labour movement brought us my very favourite contribution of all time, and that is the weekend. Thank you for the weekend, brothers and sisters.

They've done some other things . . . [interjection] Yeah. It's the weekend, Brother Rick, not just a day of rest, and it means limiting work hours during the week, so eight-hour days. [interjection] I see the hon. Minister of Human Services is fictionalizing what the average union work week is like. It's not three days off.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

Standing Order 29(2)(a). I'll recognize the Member for Calgary-Currie.

Ms Cusanelli: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am very pleased to stand and throw in a few comments about my thoughts on this. One thing – 29(2)(a)?

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. member, 29(2)(a), relative comments or questions to the member?

Ms Cusanelli: No. I'll wait, then.

The Deputy Speaker: You want to speak on the bill? Okay. I'll come back to you, hon. member.

I'll recognize the hon. Deputy Premier.

Mr. Lukaszuk: I thank the member for his comments. I have to tell you that unlike the Official Opposition, I don't have a doubt – any doubt – that in everything he says, he's being very genuine. He definitely has a track record of making similar comments at least for the last 13 years that I have been in this House. We may often agree to disagree on matters of ideology, but I will always give him credit for being consistent in his beliefs and what he stands for, which is something, obviously, that we're not getting from the Official Opposition over the last few days or so, particularly. How starkly different can you be?

Mr. Speaker, I would like to hear from this member because he actually may not be even aware of this. He made comments about the remand centre and occupational health and safety. That matter is very important to me from two perspectives. One, the remand centre happens to be in my riding. I tried to be part of it from inception all the way to the ribbon cutting on the opening day of that centre because it was something that the city needed. The old remand centre was not only not an appropriate way of incarcerating our inmates but definitely was not a place where we wanted our civil servants to work for a variety of safety reasons. The second aspect was the safety part. As you know, in a couple of ministries prior I was charged with overlooking occupational health and safety, and that's something that I took very seriously. I probably paid more attention to occupational health and safety than many out there wanted me to. That was something I was very interested in.

My question to the member is this. Is he aware of the fact that when the illegal walkout happened with correctional officers, the first offer that I had made to the leader of AUPE – and that offer, by the way, is still on the table, but he never took me up on it. It was: "If you provide me with a list of occupational health and safety issues at that facility that you believe are in any way endangering the safety or work conditions of our workers in that facility, we will do one of two things, and you pick. Either we will do a thorough occupational health and safety review with our occupational health and safety officers, who are, nota bene, AUPE members themselves, or if you believe that this will not be thorough and this will in any way not be objective and somehow hide or mask, in your belief, real safety issues, I will make sure that we will bring occupational health and safety officers from another province to do a thorough, objective review of that facility to make sure so that their families and I and all of us can sleep at night knowing that this place is safe."

Mr. Speaker, the last time I checked was about three weeks ago. Unless something happened over the last three weeks – I stand to be corrected, but as of the last three weeks we have yet to receive one occupational health and safety formal complaint to be reviewed. Do you know that?

Mr. Mason: No, Mr. Speaker, and I still don't.

I know that the union has forwarded many safety concerns about that facility. I don't know if it was to this minister here, but I know that the frustration that boiled over in the wildcat strike was based on repeated attempts to try and get some of those safety concerns addressed by management, and they were not. So I appreciate that.

Mr. Speaker, you know, aside from the weekend, mandatory health and safety legislation is something that the labour move-

ment has brought us. Pensions are something that they also brought forward. An end to child labour is something that they campaigned on. And, of course, public health care is an important campaign that the labour movement has fought for. Many, many positive and progressive social reforms in our society that make life better for all people, union members or not, have been the result of the activity of the labour movement in sustained campaigns over many, many years. In my view, supporting the labour movement is something that's very easy for me to do because I think that, on balance, their contribution to our society has been extremely positive.

But, of course, the . . .

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. member. Your time has expired.

I'll recognize the Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar, followed by Airdrie, followed by Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview.

Mr. Dorward: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to stand and discuss Bill 45, but before I do, I want to thank all the public servants within the sound of my voice, including those who came here tonight to spend some time, those who have been here, the others that have been here other nights and have demonstrated on the steps, those individuals within my riding of Edmonton-Gold Bar that have reached out to me either by voice mail, e-mail, discussing things with my constituency manager, or on Twitter, in fact. I'd like to thank them all for their thoughts and their opinions that they've given to me as I've gone through the bill.

And I have, Mr. Speaker. Those on the other side sometimes say things that kind of indicate that we on this side don't go through these bills. We absolutely do. [interjection]

The Deputy Speaker: The Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar has the floor.

Mr. Dorward: In fact, it's out of great respect for the time of the opposition, as they've asked for more time to discuss these, that I hesitate to stand up and give a fulsome review of my review of all 25 clauses over 26 pages, Mr. Speaker.

I'm used to reading these kinds of things. As a chartered accountant I've spent many, many hours, days, and probably weeks and maybe even a month – I don't know – in my career going through the Income Tax Act. I daresay I've been through this kind of information. When I get one of these bills, I take it, and I sit in my office in the Annex, and I do go through it.

I sincerely want to thank all of the individuals who are public servants in the province of Alberta for the work that they do. Many I visit with, and I ask them questions. I'm thankful for all the things that they do in the public service for all Albertans.

9:20

There have been a lot of generalizations, Mr. Speaker, in this debate as I've listened to people on first reading, on second reading, also in Committee of the Whole, and then now today. One of them is that something bad is going to stop folks from free speech. I'm trying to find that in here, and I have difficulty getting down to a nuts-and-bolts expression of where that difficulty lies that would stop free speech. There are things in our society already that are not appropriate to say lightly, and logically that could include counselling a person to cause a strike.

So, indeed, section 4(4). As I sat down with people – and I'd like to thank those that I communicated with directly with in Edmonton-Gold Bar. It's not possible for me, given my schedule, to talk one-on-one to everybody in Edmonton-Gold Bar that's communicated with me. But I did reach out to some of them that

contacted me. I also at random spoke to some people because I realized that a lot of the angst comes – but there are those who don't contact me who are actually okay with what's in here, and I reached out to some of those. I sat down with them, and I said to them on a detailed basis: this clause 4(4), is that something that should be done, to counsel a person to cause an illegal strike?

Even, Mr. Speaker, if there was a bogeyman or a person that says, "You owe us \$500 because we think that you shouldn't have said that," and that's free speech violated, if that is the contention or the concern, I don't think that we as politicians make the decision. There's the Labour Relations Board who does that. My understanding is that labour relations would be involved in that. They would be the determiner of whether or not something was said inappropriately that needed to be put into action by way of this bill, which would become an act.

So while I definitely respect the opinions of others in my area and throughout the province that feel that this bill is not necessary and those who came to express their concerns tonight, certainly I'll support the bill, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: Standing Order 29(2)(a) is available.

Seeing none, I'll recognize the Member for Airdrie.

Mr. Anderson: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to talk a little bit tonight about some of the problems with this little couplet of bills 45 and 46. I was eating supper in the back, and I heard the wonderful musings of our Deputy Premier. He gets so excited when he reads our literature that he just has to share it with everybody. He just has to share that information with everybody because he's obsessed, clearly, with the Wildrose, and we welcome that obsession from him. We are worth being obsessed about, Deputy Premier, so please continue to be obsessed. We welcome that.

Here's the issue, Mr. Speaker. He points to quotes in Wildrose alternative budgets. I think the exact quote is that we would work collaboratively and respectfully with unions to negotiate a wage freeze through 2014. It's like this big gotcha moment. "Oh, my gosh. Look what they said. They were going to respectfully try to negotiate a wage freeze through 2014. We got you. How can you possibly want to negotiate a wage freeze for one or two years but then be against bills 45 and 46? How is that consistent?"

Well, Mr. Speaker, we're going to explain that for him for about the fifth time. We're going to explain it because it's so hard for him to comprehend. We don't want him to go to bed feeling that angst, that unresolved angst. We want to help him with that. So here is the reasoning for that. When we went into the election, clearly we had huge deficits. Of course, we had the Alice-in-Wonderland budget, as it became well known, where everything was promised to everybody. You know, everyone was going to get a school on every street corner, a hospital in every community. Every voter was to get a pony for every child that they had. Everybody remembers the Alice-in-Wonderland budget.

Of course, it didn't work out that way after the election. It didn't work out that way after the election and after they had scared everybody about everything that the evil Wildrose was going to do to people. She was able to scare enough people into voting for her party. They were able to do it. It was the lowest vote total in the history of the PC Party, but they pulled it off. They pulled it off.

But here's the issue. When we went into the election, we told folks what we would do. We said we would negotiate in good faith, try to get a wage freeze through 2014 and then inflation after that so that we could get the budget balanced. That's not what the PCs promised during the election. They promised the exact opposite. So

that is not inconsistency on our part. That's called telling the truth on our part. That party over there did not tell the truth. They told a story. They told a fairy tale. And that's why there's a lot of anger in the public service right now, and rightfully so.

The other piece is this. I'm going to help the government understand since I'm assuming they are going to be in opposition in 2016. What we will be doing in 2016 is sitting down with the unions, with our public-sector unions. We're going to sit down with them, and we're going to say: "Look. This is where the budget is at. This is what we need to do to balance it." It might mean offering – let's just throw numbers out there – 1 per cent, 2 per cent, 2 per cent, 3 per cent over four years, whatever. That's our starting point that we put out there. Then they're going to come back, and they're probably going to say: "You know what? We got ripped off these last four years, and we're going to need more than that. We're going to ask for a little bit more than that." We're going to go back and forth, and we're going to try in good faith to reach an agreement. That's what we're going to try to do.

Now, here's the kicker. Here's the difference. If we had been in government, perhaps we would have said, "You know what; we would like a wage freeze for the first year, and then 1 per cent, 3 per cent, 3 per cent," whatever it would be. We're throwing numbers out there. We're just playing. But the key is the wage freeze. So we throw these numbers out there. [interjections]

The Deputy Speaker: The Member for Airdrie has the floor, hon. members, please.

Mr. Anderson: They're so excited. I like that.

So we would offer them that. Now, the union, if they come back and say, "No; we don't want 0, 0, 1, 2," or whatever the number is, "We would like something else," here's where the difference is, Mr. Speaker. We would not have gone the next day and passed two bills that ripped their rights to arbitration away from them. See, that's the big crux here. We wouldn't have taken out our gun, figuratively speaking, stuck it to their heads, and said: "You get back to the negotiating table, and you get back right now, or else we're going to take away the rights of arbitration that you've had for 35 years since Premier Lougheed was in power. We're going to take that away. So now not only is it illegal to strike, not only is it illegal to even think about striking or threatening to strike, now we're not even going to give you the recourse of arbitration. You can go . . . yourself." That's essentially what this government has told our public-sector employees: you have no recourse.

That's not how you govern fairly. You can go in as a hard negotiator. Do you not think that Guy Smith at the AUPE or one of the other public-sector union leaders knows that the PC government or the Wildrose government or whatever government is going to come in there and say, "You know what; we've got a problem with our budget; we'd like to offer you 0, 0, 2, 2," or whatever, that they're going to start with a hard bargain? You don't think that they know that? Of course they do. But the difference, Mr. Speaker, is that this party, instead of making the offer and then, when they didn't get their way, going to arbitration and respecting the legal rights of our public-sector unions, instead of doing that, they ripped those rights away and said: "No. We're doing it this way. Our way or the highway." That's the difference.

We never said in any literature anywhere that that's what we would do. We never said that we would impose any agreement. We would negotiate hard. You betcha. We would have asked, definitely would have asked, for a freeze in the first year. One or two years, I believe the quote is. We would ask for it, and we would negotiate hard to get it to see if we could do it, but if we couldn't get agreement – and perhaps we would have had to come

up on that offer, perhaps, whatever. But if we didn't get it, we would go to arbitration. We would make our case, the union would make their case, and the arbitrator would decide because that's the law. We wouldn't come here and rip away the rights of our public-sector union. That's bad-faith negotiating.

9:30

You know what the other problem with it is, Mr. Speaker? It poisons the water. Someday, one day, there will be a new government in this House, we think. We don't think this government has got much left in the tank. But someone is going to have to clean up this mess, and this government has completely poisoned the well with our public-sector workers. You know what's ironic about this with regard to Bill 45? They'll pass Bill 45 in order to stop illegal strikes. They said: we want to stop illegal strikes. Well, okay. Maybe the NDP think illegal strikes are fine. Okay. Fine. All right. That's expected. It's not something they want, but they happen, and it's a way of civil disobedience. [interjections] Yeah. Okay.

The Deputy Speaker: Through the chair, hon. member.

Mr. Anderson: Anyway, no one wants illegal strikes.

Mr. Mason: No, not even us.

Mr. Anderson: Not even the NDs. Not even the NDs want illegal strikes. Okay. So nobody wants this.

But you know what the ironic thing about Bill 45 is? Bill 45 is a recipe for disaster. It's a recipe for illegal strikes. Do you want to know why? Because combined with Bill 46, you've just taken away the rights of arbitration from our public-sector unions. You've just ripped those away. So now what have they got left? What are they going to do? That's what you've done. You've basically said: "What are you going to do to us? What are you going to do? You don't have arbitration rights. Get back to the arbitration table. Get back to the negotiation table, or I'm sending my cousin Vinny." That's what this is about. That's what this is about.

Here's the problem. What you've done is that you've backed our public-sector workers into a corner. You've backed them right into a corner, where they have no arbitration rights. What are they going to do now?

Premier Lougheed, who was a pretty solid individual, a pretty smart individual: do you think that he was an idiot?

Mr. McIver: He was a Progressive Conservative.

Mr. Anderson: Yes, he was a Progressive Conservative. You got it. You're getting there. You're getting there, Minister of Transportation.

So you have this PC Premier, who was very respected by all corners, by most corners, I think. I think he got all but two seats one election or something. Most corners. Let's say most.

An Hon. Member: All corners.

Mr. Anderson: All corners. Fine.

So you've got this Premier. Do you not think he knew what he was doing? He took away the rights of essential workers on the front lines, our public-sector workers, to strike. He took those away, and after he took them away, he said: you know, if we take them away, we've got to give our public-sector employees real recourse so that we're not sticking them in a corner with a gun to their head saying that they've got to do everything that we want them to do or else. He introduced legal arbitration, binding arbitra-

tion. That's what he did, and because of that, we have had roughly 35 years of labour peace.

Now, there have been strikes, for sure, and there have been some illegal strikes but very few major ones. Very few. Very few serious ones. That is because for 35 years we've had this legislation that has allowed for arbitration, that has given our public-sector employees that right, and because of that, there's always been that good faith, and it has allowed better negotiation to happen. People know that at the end of day, if they don't get a good deal from government, there's still that safety valve. There are those legal rights of arbitration that they can go to.

Now you've just taken that safety valve away, and you have backed these folks into a corner, and when people are backed into a corner and they have no legal recourse, then what happens? What happens? That's when you start seeing civil disobedience. That's when you start seeing some of these things that are going to occur and mass illegal strikes from many different unions in order to show solidarity and so forth. That's what is being created here by this arrogance. [interjection] To clarify for the Deputy Premier, we're not saying that it was bad to go in there and offer your – what is it? – 0, 0, 2, 2 or 0, 0, 1, 1. We're not saying that it's bad to ask.

You can ask the girl for a date. That's okay. But when the girl says that she doesn't want to see your face and to get lost – I know. [interjection] It happens. It happens, Deputy Premier. When that does happen, you can't say: "No, we're going on the date anyway. Sorry. I know you said no, but did you really mean no? Are you really serious when you say no?" No, that is not the way to deal with things. You don't come in and force the issue. You don't force someone to the bargaining table at, essentially, gunpoint. It doesn't work that way. You respect their rights.

You can ask, and you can negotiate hard like a good fiscal conservative, that I know you all in your wildest dreams would like to be known as again. Likely not going to happen. You can try, but you have to do so in good faith. If you don't get your way, then you have to go to arbitration, respect the legal rights of those out there, do the right thing, and let the third party decide. That is what respect is about. That's how we would have governed and done things differently while maintaining our principles. I would remind the members opposite again that we were very clear what we were going to ask our public-sector employees to do, very clear, crystal clear.

When you negotiated that deal with the teachers, you didn't hear anything from this side saying, "Oh, it was terrible that you negotiated those wage freezes with the teachers," did you? You didn't hear any criticism from us on that because you did a good job. You did a good job, Minister of Education. You were able to talk with the teachers and get a deal, and you didn't have to beat them over the head and take away all their rights to do it. Good for you.

But that's not what's happening here. Negotiate in good faith, and if you can't get your deal with them, go to arbitration because that's what respect is about. We need to respect these people. These people are on the front lines in our communities. They are the social workers, the aides to daily living, the people that are helping out our people. We need to respect them.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

Standing Order 29(2)(a) is available. I recognize the Member for Calgary-Currie.

Ms Cusanelli: I would like to make some comments in response to this member. One thing I've noticed about sitting over here, besides that it's very hard to get noticed – and I have to tell you

besides that it's very hard to get noticed – and I have to tell you that that is not usually a problem for me in the company of gentlemen. However, at any rate, I will share my perception that it does look pretty easy to sit over there.

Mr. Anglin: Come on over.

Ms Cusanelli: I've had lots of invitations, and I thank you for that.

It's easy to sit over there and throw mud to see if it might stick, and we've seen a lot of that while we sit here. There is much ado about corruption and scandal and shame and poor leadership and empty promises. I didn't run to serve any of those purposes, and I can tell you that I haven't yet met anyone in this House who did.

The Member for Calgary-Mountain View says that not having the right to strike is damaging to morale. Well, I get that. That's an understandable statement coming from your tenet and coming from your philosophy, but I've been on the other side of that. In my view, I've seen the damage that a strike has on morale.

As a former school principal I was on that side, and I don't mind saying that I felt forced into a strike. I really just wanted to be there for my students, I wanted to be there for their families, and I felt like using the time was weeks of valuable instructional time that was made and used in order for us to negotiate the terms of my salary and my benefits. That didn't feel at all like the reason why I went into education in the first place.

Our stance is that there's always an obligation to the employer and to the stakeholders that they serve, and this is the message that we're trying to convey. The cost to an entire province such as ours in terms of safety, security, and, yes, financially sits in our hands, sits on our laps, and indeed it sits on our shoulders. This is the burden of being in government. It matters not how long. It doesn't matter if it's been 40 years or not. For myself, having only been here less than one term, I can tell you that the burden is one that we take to heart, not as is being portrayed over there in the House tonight.

Is that what your constituents sent you here for, to make suppositions about what we think, about what we believe and feel on this side of the House? Bring their voice in here, because I don't think that's what their voice is here to serve.

9:40

Yes, it's our duty – it's our duty – to serve Albertans, and we are charged with the responsibility of balancing a budget while building communities and reaching out to the world and inviting them to invest in our Alberta so that we might all have, all of us, a high quality of life. That is what we are elected for, that is the burden of responsibility that we have, and it means making some very difficult decisions. That's what leaders do.

I've been a leader and a good one. My results show growth and improvement, without fail, in every school I ever worked in. I know what it takes to lead, and I know and I assure you, Mr. Speaker and everyone in this House, that being a leader and being a good government means that you leave popularity back in high school, where it belongs. Good leaders know that. Good leaders do not change with the will and whim of popularity over what is right.

It is unfortunate that we will not please everyone all of the time. But I am here and my colleagues are here to fulfill one promise and one alone, to do the right thing to ensure the highest quality of life for all Albertans, not just some, not just those who will be upset if we don't but the majority of Albertans. That, Mr. Speaker, is democracy.

So the Official Opposition can sit there and hide behind the veil of criticism. But make no mistake about it, Mr. Speaker. The alternative to the decision they would make has already been stated once tonight by our Deputy Premier. This party says that they would offer fair negotiation. Well, what on earth would you do when they walked away from the table? I suspect that you would have to draw up some crafty legislation that would ensure the repercussions of a strike did not interfere with morale, with safety and security, and, behind all of that, the financial cost to all Albertans, who have voted for a government that will protect their hopes, their dreams for the future. [interjections]

The Deputy Speaker: Please, the member has the floor.

Ms Cusanelli: We can only do this . . . [interjections]

The Deputy Speaker: Airdrie, please.

Your time has expired.

Hon. members, 29(2)(a) is questions or comments, and there's been quite a lot of latitude on all sides of the House. It's five minutes in total. I would appreciate, if you don't want me to enforce this really tightly – all members have been afforded the same kind of latitude.

When someone has the floor, hon. member, if you would, please, as you did, let that individual have the floor, the House would greatly appreciate it.

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview.

Mr. Bilous: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: Oh, hon. member, please. If you'd pause one moment. My apologies.

I've had this request for some time. Might we revert briefly, very briefly, to Introduction of Guests?

[Unanimous consent granted]

Introduction of Guests

(reversion)

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

Ms L. Johnson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise with great pride to introduce Kim Brundrit and Pam Valk, my assistants in the Calgary-Glenmore constituency office. They were accompanied by my legislative assistant, Bryan Tower. These individuals are an important part of my success as I fulfill my responsibilities as an MLA, and they ensure that I return all calls and e-mails from my constituents, whether in support or not of government initiatives. I ask that they rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

Government Bills and Orders

Third Reading

Bill 45

Public Sector Services Continuation Act

(continued)

The Deputy Speaker: I recognize the hon. Member for Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview.

Mr. Bilous: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm afraid I'm going to run out of time due to, again, the closure motion that the Government House Leader brought forward. I love hearing from other members when they stand up. They just give me even

more to speak about. I'm going to try to address initially some of the comments that some of the members have made.

To the Member for Airdrie: when arbitration was brought in and strikes were illegal, it was for all public-sector workers. I want to clarify on that. Again, the hon. Member for Edmonton-Strathcona: at that time her father was a member in this House, I want to say the sole New Democrat MLA in this House, and opposed that move to make strikes illegal for public-sector workers. Now, I will give some credit where credit is due. At least binding arbitration was brought in. However, the NDP was opposed to making the strike illegal, and binding arbitration should have been brought in. So those two things should have been there.

Addressing some issues from other members, I find it really rich when government MLAs stand up and talk about how they support labour, the unions. They appreciate them speaking out, but at the end of the day, their action is going to be that they're voting in favour of this bill. You know, it's not lost on Albertans that, really, it's just lip service, not actions, when push comes to shove, when you're on that side of the House.

Let's see here. To address the teachers' agreement: now, it's been referred to by several members in this House, that it was negotiated. Well, it was negotiated with a gun because when two different locals opposed or voted against the negotiation, that's when legislation was brought in. So that's not negotiation. You don't negotiate at the table, and, you know, when it doesn't go your way, then you just use force. Well, we're doing it anyway: that's not bargaining in good faith. Not bargaining in good faith.

To address one other comment that the Member for Airdrie made: someone is going to have to clean up the mess that this government has made. I agree, and that is, of course, only going to be the Alberta NDP who will be able to clean up this mess that they've made with – I mean, you name it. You name it.

Talking a little bit about closure, again, the reason why the opposition is so opposed to closure is the fact that it does really attack our fundamental right as Members of this Legislative Assembly to speak on behalf of our constituents. We have not been allotted due process, and the example is that I'm going to actually run out of time, before my time ends, to speak to third reading of this bill. I'll move on to that.

Before I do, the message that is communicated to me when closure is brought in is that this government is scared of debate. They're scared of democracy. They're scared of giving members their process and their time to raise their concerns and raise their suggestions, whether they're for a bill or speaking in opposition to it.

It does need to be mentioned that in Alberta we sit the fewest number of days of any provincial House. Now, I know that members want to jump up, and they want to talk about – well, I don't know what they want to talk about. But the fact of the matter is that the Alberta NDP has said numerous times: "Let's sit more days. Let's extend the Legislative sitting. Let's have thorough debate on these bills and have discussion as opposed to bringing in night sittings immediately and then trying to ram through legislation in the middle of the night." A great example of that was Bill 28. I believe second reading was voted on around 2 in the morning, when most people are asleep or not in the House. That's not democracy in action; that's the opposite. That's hiding under the veil of night.

Going back to Bill 45, we are completely opposed to this bill. With every fibre of my body I am opposed to Bill 45. It is and, I believe, will be ruled unconstitutional. To answer one of the other member's questions, when he had brought up the fact that he doesn't know where it says that – I can't remember what you were referring to. But the strike threat itself is problematic in the sense

that now, again, you've got people who are talking about a strike or saying, "Hey, maybe you should go on strike," and now they can be fined. I know that the minister has assured the House that that's not the case, and this isn't a witch hunt, but as I asked the minister last night: where does it say that in the legislation? I'm sorry if I don't take you at your word, Mr. Minister.

Other reasons why we're absolutely opposed to this. This is an attack on working Albertans, on our public-sector unions. This is definitely taking – well, the one analogy that I thought of is, you know, to take a tank to a fist fight. I mean, it's rich that members on the other side will talk about: well, there are still a couple of months to reach a deal, a negotiated deal. Well, again, you know, that's not negotiating in good faith when you can strong-arm if you don't get your way.

9:50

Let's see here. A large reason why this bill is so offensive – and I need to go back to the examples of illegal strikes that have occurred within this province, and it does need to be clarified. Again, our most recent example is the wildcat strike at the remand centre, in which very many employees had tried to go through all of the channels, speaking to management, raising issues of concern, which were ignored time after time. So the illegal strike took place as a last resort for the workers at the remand centre because they felt that their lives were in danger, that it was unsafe for them and the inmates.

You know, some members on the other side seem to think that unions love to go on illegal strikes and will just do it for the heck of it. The reality is that it is a last resort, when their requests, when their concerns are constantly being ignored, neglected, when they're being pushed aside. That is a course of action that they are literally forced to take.

Now, again, had this government addressed their concerns when they were being raised, that would have avoided the strike, and as members on the opposite side have mentioned: well, the final price tag of that strike was \$13 million. Well, I place the blame squarely on the shoulders of this government, when had they addressed the safety concerns for far less than \$13 million, that strike could have been avoided, and it would have saved Albertans a large sum of money.

Let's see here. The other thing I want to clarify is that – you know, we keep talking about wage freezes, but the reality is that giving zero per cent is not a wage freeze. It's actually a rollback, and the Minister of Finance, I'm sure, understands this, or if not, I'll explain it to him. In Alberta we do have the highest rate of inflation of any province in the country. When you give a zero per cent increase, you're actually giving a rollback. I believe our inflation rate in Alberta is somewhere around 1.5. Maybe that's even a little low.

An Hon. Member: It's 1.4.

Mr. Bilous: Oh, 1.4. Pardon me. Okay. But when it's 0, 0, 0 in contracts, it is a rollback.

You know, it's frustrating that this government says that they respect public service workers, respect the work that many of our front-line workers do in this province. Well, then I say: well, put your money where your mouth is. Show your respect through giving our public-sector workers appropriate – first of all, negotiate in good faith, bring decent offers to the table, but show your respect for them through the salaries that they earn, not through talking about it in the House and then turning around and trying to mow them down.

I see I only have a couple of minutes, so I want to address a comment that the Minister of Finance made last night, when he

talked about the B.C. public-sector union and what they just negotiated. Now, in addition to 5.5 per cent over five years they negotiated . . . [interjection] I think I have three. I don't know if you're talking to me, Mr. Speaker. Oh, I only have one? Okay.

What I want to say, though, is that the difference between them and us is that they have the right to strike. So this deal was negotiated in B.C., and I find it quite rich, coming from the minister, that he said: well, we find that interesting, and maybe we would have liked to have sat down and bargained for that. Well, I'm sorry, Minister of Finance. I don't think anyone is believing that this government had any intention or has any intention of sitting down and coming up with a deal like that, as this legislation clearly proves by bringing a heavy-handed approach.

In my closing comments here, I think that this government should look at renaming themselves. Maybe the regressive conservatives? The oppressive conservatives? Or the repressive preservatives might be more accurate to describe their approach to working with the men and women who put their lives on the line, day in and day out, night and day, for the betterment of this province. They're the ones that really are the reason that Alberta is as rich as it is, and we enjoy the benefits that we do because of the hours that men and women on the front lines put in, and they do it, Mr. Speaker, because of their passion. They don't do it because they're about to get rich or for some self-serving reason.

Our front-line workers need to be appreciated and valued and not attacked through cheap legislation that is rammed through in a couple of days only, where there isn't time enough for real debate. It speaks volumes that this government would even consider bringing in something as oppressive as Bill 45. I just want to mention in my last few seconds that the line the government gives, "We don't have the revenues" is true because of their decision to . . .

The Deputy Speaker: I hesitate to interrupt, hon. Member for Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview, but pursuant to Government Motion 51, passed earlier this evening, I must put the question.

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

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 9:57 p.m.]

[One minute having elapsed, the Assembly divided]

[The Deputy Speaker in the chair]

For the motion:

Amery	Goudreau	Lukaszuk
Bhardwaj	Griffiths	McDonald
Brown	Hancock	McIver
Cao	Horner	Olson
Casey	Jansen	Quadri
Cusanelli	Johnson, J.	Quest
DeLong	Johnson, L.	Sarich
Donovan	Khan	VanderBurg
Dorward	Kubinec	Weadick
Drysdale	Lemke	Xiao
Fawcett	Luan	Young

10:00

Against the motion:

Anderson	Mason	Strankman
Anglin	Pedersen	Swann
Bilous	Rowe	

Totals:	For – 33	Against – 8
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[Motion carried; Bill 45 read a third time]

Bill 46

Public Service Salary Restraint Act

[Debate adjourned December 4]

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member for Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House-Sundre.

Mr. Anglin: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in opposition to this bill. As many members have heard throughout the debate, how difficult it is to see something like this come into this Legislature and be in such bad faith in dealing with the current union that it affects. The idea of removing the very mechanism that would settle a dispute and leave exposed, as some members have referred to it, a gun to the head to settle or bring a union back to the table makes no sense, but it's consistent with what this government has done in the past. That's a crying shame.

But I think the clock is now ticking on this government to that degree that they can no longer hide behind this charade that they're dealing in good faith. This is the government that passed the Land Stewardship Act, that said that we could take property away from individuals, and under section 11 it said that nobody under this act was entitled to compensation by reason of this act or any regulation made thereunder. Then they claimed that you would still get compensated, but that wasn't the issue. The issue was that they took away the right. We went a couple years before they would actually repeal that but then still never gave the right to compensation.

Now we move fast-forward to dealing with something like this, and we have the ability to deal in good faith. The government is in negotiations with the union and what it does. It just doesn't like the possibility of going to the contractual solution, which is arbitration. One has to question who is to blame or whose fault it was. Clearly, what we see here is that the government has the power to violate the existing contract and remove arbitration, but it doesn't have the moral high ground to say that it is dealing in good faith. That is absent.

What's interesting is the history of what's gone on here. The number of strikes since 1977 is so insignificant in its total duration and in its consequence in many cases. Yes, there have been some important strikes. I would argue that the remand centre was a significant safety issue. I can't imagine why union workers would want to go out on illegal strikes. It isn't something, I think, they put on their agenda for next month or two years. I think they would rather settle the dispute than actually walk.

But to have a union member or a group of people who are looking at an unsafe working condition, an illegal action, or the loss of a job as the three possibilities and then to say that they have to decide between one of the three: I just don't get that because when you remove arbitration, I think it says that the fight is on. Then the problem starts, and we create more of a public safety hazard than we reduce or mitigate. I think that it's disingenuous of this government to bring this forward.

It is easy to argue whether or not the penalty should be raised. It's a shame we don't have a debate on that. It could have easily been an amendment to the Labour Relations Code, and all sides could have debated: do we need to raise the penalties for illegal strikes? Nobody is advocating for illegal strikes. There is one litmus test on the opposition that seems to prove consistently true. When the government cannot defend their position, they can only throw allegations back at the opposition for pointing out a number of the inconsistencies and for pointing out some of the real incorrect sections of various bills. They cannot defend it, so the only thing that's left to them is to attack the opposition, and they can't even do that effectively.

What we end up with here is a bill in front of us that is looking to cause more harm, not less. It is just a sad state of affairs in this province. One of the members of the government party has conveyed to me that not all the unions are lined up on this. I would disagree. They may not care whether somebody gets a raise or doesn't get a raise. That's not what this is about for me. What it is about is the ability to go to arbitration. The hypocrisy of this government to have just passed a law to give itself the ability to go to arbitration on its international dispute but turn around and take it away from the unions, who have it in contract now that they can go to arbitration – but we don't like that contract, and they don't like that contract. They want to get around that clause, and the easy way to get around that clause is to make it illegal. That's shameful. That's absolutely shameful.

I'm not sure that it's going to get the end result that they want. It might get the end result that we want. What's going to happen, I think, is that you're going to see a number of people who are probably PC supporters change their allegiance. I've got to tell you that I really don't care in the sense of where they change their allegiance to. One thing is absolutely true. When the opposition over there stands up and says that they're very proud to be union members and to support the union, I take it as an honest statement on what they actually believe in.

When we presented our platform, no matter how many times the Deputy Premier reads it, it was what we said we would do, which is that we would try to hold the line. We made that absolutely clear. At no time – at no time – did we say that we were going to remove your certain rights in the Charter, that include freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, and due process of law.

Now, I want to make that absolutely clear because that's what happens here. What happens here is that immediately upon somebody leaving and going out on strike, which they can no longer arbitrate and is illegal, the court doesn't get to make a decision on the consequence here or the liability. There's no causal determination. The court is by law under these acts going to make one of two determinations: is there a threat, or is there an actual strike? That's the only determination it can make.

10:10

Once it makes that, dues are withheld for three months, and a million dollars a day is set aside. So not only do we penalize the union for the actions of a few, but their ability to pay that penalty or to pay a million dollars is then restricted. That's unjust. You can't fine someone and then take away their ability even possibly to pay it. Now, the fines can be as much as \$250,000 a day. Yes, there's a right of appeal, but the problem with the right of appeal is that the onus of proof is on the union to prove that they basically gave express instructions, not general instructions but express instructions. They had to do it before the strike or before the threat occurred, which they may have not known about, so how could they possibly have done that? They stack it up. They stack it up against them so that they cannot comply. [interjections] Let them howl. All they have is the hypocrisy of their comments. Let them go. That's just fine.

We're talking about the people that do not have any credibility. I'm talking about the Deputy Premier, who stood up and pointed over here. We're talking about the person who showed up in Sylvan Lake and told a whole bunch of farmers, "Stand off in that corner, and I'll come over and talk to you," so when they went over in the corner to wait for him, he ran out the back door. This union is going to trust this person in negotiations? He stands up here in this House, and he says that he's made an offer to the union, and I'm thinking to myself: is that the same kind of offer he

made to a number of farmers down in Sylvan Lake? When he made that offer, he didn't keep that offer either.

When it comes to integrity, one thing I will say is this. The union may not like what we put out on our platform, but we didn't lie. We told them exactly what we wanted to do, we let them look at it, and that's what we did. We suffered the consequences, I guess. Some might say that. Some would say that we didn't. Others would say that we actually stood on principle and said what we would do. We never once – we never once – said that we would take away your right to arbitration. We never once said that we would threaten free speech. We never once said that we would threaten the right of assembly, and we never once said that we would threaten due process of law. That was not in anything that we every wrote, past, present, or that we will do in the future.

They can dig up anything they want from a long time ago, but this is the government. This is the government that hired private investigators to follow a bunch of farmers. They don't like that, but that's the mud that sticks. It stinks, doesn't it? Oh, wait a minute. It might not be mud, but it does stick. I'm going to tell you. They got caught tapping phones. They got caught listening in on phone calls, and you don't like it. You got caught red-handed. You know what they did? They changed the law, and they made it retroactive to June 1, 2003, so they could get around that court case that was dealing with that issue. Oh, wait a minute. That's like this law. They don't like going to arbitration, so they change the law so they can get around it. They've got to shake their heads now because the hypocrisy tastes a little bit bitter in the Kool-Aid that they drink. It's a shame.

It's like the Minister of Municipal Affairs. He keeps us here to 2:30 in the morning, 2 o'clock in the morning because he's got to pass a bill one day. It has got to pass, and that's it. No questions about it. It is important, yet here we are a couple of weeks later, and I'm not sure how he likes that crow, whether he likes it baked or broiled, but the fact is that it's a lot of crow. I hope he plucked the feathers before he cooked it up.

I will say that there's no consistency with this government in dealing with one law, another law, and there's no consistency with this government dealing with this union.

How do you like your crow? I never did ask. We ought to find some recipes for this government.

An Hon. Member: Fricassee.

Mr. Anglin: Fricassee.

It's a sad state of affairs. We can joke about it down here, but what we've created, in my view, is a safety issue by doing this. We're telling a union: we want you to come back to the table, and if you don't do as we tell you to do, this is what you've got to take. That's not negotiating in good faith under any circumstances. I think that when the mafia did this kind of stuff, they actually got thrown in jail. I don't know. I'd let the ones that deal with criminal law deal with that one. That used to be called extortion, so it's just a matter of how you want to interpret the law.

One thing is for certain. They can't defend this. They can make excuses, they can be in denial, but they can't defend this. What's going to be the most interesting thing is that if this does go to the Supreme Court, which I think it will, I think there are going to be some serious questions that the court will answer, and I think there's going to be a heavy helping of crow that's going to be served up. It will be fricassee. Some will have it baked. Some will have it broiled. In 2016, when we're elected, we'll make sure those feathers don't get plucked, and we'll serve it up to them in any fashion they like.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: Standing Order 29(2)(a) is available.

Seeing none, I'll recognize the Member for Calgary-Mountain View.

Dr. Swann: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise and again address an issue on which we have repeatedly cautioned the government, challenged them, asked them to take a second sober look. Since we don't have a senate here, we are kind of functioning in some kind of way to help you take a sober second thought. [interjection] Do you want a sober second thought or not?

An Hon. Member: Yes.

Dr. Swann: They're inebriated. They're inebriated with their own power, Mr. Speaker. They do not want a sober second thought. They're walking down a very dangerous path.

I'm only thinking of your re-election possibilities here. I'm only acting and speaking in your own interest. Do you not want to be re-elected in 2016?

Some Hon. Members: Yes.

Dr. Swann: Yes. Well, we all want you to be successful.

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. member, I hope you'll talk to the chair because that's our custom here.

Dr. Swann: Forgive me, Mr. Speaker. I got carried away.

Bill 46 is, again, a travesty of what Peter Lougheed intended. Many people across the floor like to speak about their close connection to Peter and his values and his leadership, his vision. He inspired a lot of people in this province, including me. What unfortunately has happened since he left us is that his name is used, I would say, in inappropriate ways and in a disrespectful way in this context, in bills 45 and 46. He would never support these two bills. Can you imagine Peter Lougheed supporting these two bills? They basically fly in the face of what he had agreed to as a servant of the people, a servant of all people, including those who fly under the union banner: freedom and democratic rights and due process and the responsibility of governments.

With the power that you have, you don't need to use this heavy-handed approach to the whole bargaining issue, which we guarantee under the Charter. Arbitration is part of that process. Allowing that to take its course, maybe pay a few more dollars than you might have but maybe not, depending on the conditions under which the arbitrator finds the negotiations – what a price you're paying now in terms of public opinion.

I've talked about the morale and the threat to the workers' morale. It sends a very strong message in the context of pension reform, in the context of democratic rights and freedoms, as we've mentioned, and bargaining in good faith. It sends a very unhelpful message at a time when we want to build capacity, build productivity, improve people's sense of self and their contribution to society.

Is it necessary to be this heavy-handed? I guess the other side of this is that it's one thing to believe that you have to go this route. It's another thing to slap us all around with this hasty, uncaring approach is what I would say. This is a hasty, uncaring approach. It isn't serving you. It isn't serving the workers. It isn't serving this Legislature.

I dare say that Peter Lougheed would be ashamed to see this. He set a standard that many of us aspire to, and part of it was respect. You've lost a lot of respect over this. It looks like you're hell-bent on pushing this through. Come hell or high water, you're going to

impose this. I don't see that it will do anything but add to your own demise in a couple of years.

10:20

Again I would have to ask how many people you have talked to about this. I've only begun to tap the hundreds of e-mails that have been sent to me on this. None of them have been positive, of course, but I wonder if you've been listening to either citizens at large or unionized people, who feel this is really a slap in the face, not specifically on the issue but on the question of basic decency and rights. As I've said in other contexts, it's going to cost us all. It demeans the role of the Legislature. It undermines the trust in what we're trying to do here as citizens who see the long-term best interests of this province and good relations with people and the highest of standards.

Again, you have the power. As I said out on the steps this week, why are you doing this? Because you can. You have the power, and you're using that power. You're abusing that power, I guess, since you're not willing to take a second thought and you're not willing to get out of your drunken stupor over this power that you've been given. It's a privilege that you've been given, and you've decided to abuse it. Unfortunately, all of us as legislators will pay a price because this reflects on political process. It reflects on power and money, which is only one dimension of the political role and responsibility that we take. Surely, the other dimension of the political process and the role and responsibility we take is to see the bigger picture, to see the long-term public interest, to build relationships, to encourage due process, and to honour the commitments of the democratic society that we've been elected in.

In your own interests I'm suggesting that you're going down the wrong path. Some of you know it. Some of you agree with me, but you don't have a free vote, clearly, on that side because privately you've told me that this is a very uncomfortable set of bills for you. All I can say is that it's not too late. Bill 46 doesn't have to be passed just because Bill 45 has been passed. This is called a restraint act, and it certainly is a restraint. Unfortunately, it's not a restraint on your own decency. It's not a restraint on your own power. It's, in fact, an abuse of that power in the name of restraining others and restraining others' rights and freedoms.

Not only are we going to see, I predict, the need for more staffing in some of the most basic of our care services, where people are sacrificing themselves to clean up after the most dependent people in our society, in the most horrific accidents, and the most desperate conditions. These people are now going to be simply more demoralized. Again, it sends the very worst message to citizens who elected you and wanted to see us build a stronger sense of community around the most important services that this province provides.

Mr. Speaker, it's with a heavy heart that I conclude my comments, my last comments probably on this particular bill unless someone chooses to ask me a sober question. I really have given it all I have. Our Liberal Party, our Liberal caucus has given it all we can to try to convey the seriousness with which we take this set of bills and the demoralization that this is creating and the legacy it will leave not only to us but, I think, to our children who are looking at jobs, who are looking at careers, who are looking at even the possibility of becoming active politically. You're enflaming a whole new generation of people to get involved in the union movement and activism around human rights and constitutional rights and paying attention to what is the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

I've said before that one of the aspects of both these bills that I need to raise is the whole abuse of the legislative process with

respect to farm workers, who are legally unable to form a union. If this government is really committed to rights and freedoms, to the rule of law, why would you take away the right to unionization from paid farm workers in Alberta? Why would you deliberately avoid giving them the same rights and freedoms as other employees and workers in this society? Why would you deliberately exclude them from meeting standards of safe workplaces?

Why would you exclude them requiring child labour standards such that children in southeastern Alberta, in particular, Mexican Mennonites, are not getting schooling. They're continuing to cycle in poverty because they're desperately needed in the workforce. Instead of being in school, they are cheap labour, not different from what happens in Mexico, because you don't have the courage to stand up and say that it's not acceptable in the 21st century for paid farm workers to not have protections, including child labour standards. We continue to lose 18 to 24 people each year – a third of those are children – because you're unable and unwilling, it seems, to follow your own self-proclaimed standards in democratic rights and freedoms.

You continue to argue that black is white and that this is not an offence, this is not an affront, this is not undermining your responsibility as democratic elected leaders in this province. Again, the farm worker issue is a travesty in the 21st century. In some ways, I guess, I would challenge the member opposite who can't see any justification for an illegal strike. Well, it would be illegal today for farm workers to form a union in Alberta.

Mr. Donovan: Yet there's a Farmworkers Union. How does that work?

Dr. Swann: Yeah. There's a Farmworkers Union of Alberta. It's just the name on a ball cap, actually. It's not actually a union because it's illegal to form a union.

I would challenge the fact that even in Alberta, where farm workers have been given no rights, no basic 21st century rights, they would find this offensive if they broke the law, formed a union, and challenged the rights of this government to withhold their basic Charter rights. It's really offensive to see how hard they fight for the law and how poorly they fight for unions, for the right to collective bargaining, for arbitration. These are hard-fought battles that have been gained over hundreds of years, and this government is intent on stepping back 50 years in our history, again to their own risk, Mr. Speaker.

I won't prolong the harangue. We are where we are in this place after 42 years of one tired, old, corporate-driven government that doesn't see the big picture, doesn't listen well, has decided that for its own short-term interests, it's going to violate some of the most fundamental principles that got us all here. I'll have to leave them to their own devices as, again, I don't see any real recognition of how seriously they've embedded themselves in this travesty of democracy and the legislative process.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

Standing Order 29(2)(a) is available. I'll recognize the Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar.

Mr. Dorward: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member for Calgary-Mountain View asked for a sober question, and I certainly hope mine is a sober question. I've heard the number bandied about. I'm not involved, obviously, in the labour negotiations that went on, nor have I had any experience, quite frankly, in that area. I understand that it's been bandied about that there were 12 days of discussions and negotiations since March 31, 2013, when the contract ended. If that is indeed the case, I would ask the Member

for Calgary-Mountain View for his comments on whether he sees any hidden agenda or an agenda in that regard relative to that number of days. Maybe he has more experience in labour negotiations than I do. I know this came up in my discussions with some of the individuals that I talked to, and I've heard on the other side that individuals have said: you know, there's a hidden agenda, and there's this, and there's that. I'm just curious if he feels that 12 days is a fulsome, honest debate going forward to try to come up with a settlement between both parties.

10:30

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

Dr. Swann: Well, thank you for the question. I wasn't at the table. I don't know enough details about what was presented, what was countered. I don't know the extent to which there might have been deferrals of meetings and sickness and inability to meet. I suppose that if it was 12 continuous days, that sounds like a lot of time, but without knowing the details, it's impossible to say whether this was a reasonable time.

My question is: why would you interrupt a process that has been established in law and has been successful in the past and is considered legitimate between both government and unions? Why would you interrupt a process that is moving things forward in a legitimate fashion? It appears – and maybe it is – an illegitimate breach of our responsibility as government and leaves a union no alternative but to strike. If you don't give them that, then what do they have? They have nothing.

As others have mentioned, it paradoxically would lead to more likelihood of violence, more likelihood of breaking the law, more likelihood of using whatever means are possible when people don't feel fairly treated, and it certainly leads to demoralization when people see an established process breached because it isn't convenient or isn't acceptable or it isn't what this government wants despite having agreed to these conditions for decades. I don't understand why you would want to do that. Who benefits from this?

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member in response.

Mr. Dorward: Well, you know, in response to that, Mr. Speaker, I totally respect those thoughts. However, if I have my set of facts correct, I don't think that arbitration has been brought into the picture for 30 years of negotiations. I would just say: why are we headed for something that wasn't necessary for 30 years when there's been the continuous negotiation, which obviously led to contracts in the last 30 years?

Dr. Swann: Was that a 29(2)(a), Mr. Speaker?

The Deputy Speaker: It was also 29(2)(a). Did you care to respond? Or I could go to another member.

Dr. Swann: I'm pleased to respond. Arbitration is a process, as I understand it – and I've personally had no experience with it myself – by which both parties choose someone they believe has some independence from both interests to come to a conclusion that appears to be fair in the conditions in which the two parties are coming together, in the context of the provincial standards and norms and practices. They come to a conclusion, and both parties have to live with it. It doesn't go on for 30 years. Is that the implication I had from what you were saying, that it could go on indefinitely? No.

Mr. Dorward: Mr. Speaker, I apologize. I wasn't being very clear.

The Deputy Speaker: Go ahead, hon. member.

Mr. Dorward: What I meant, to the Member for Calgary-Mountain View, was that in 30 years there has been no arbitration necessary in the province of Alberta with respect to those contract negotiations. That's my understanding. So why is it that negotiation this time has broken down after 12 days and not continued on?

Mr. Anderson: Arbitration has been used before. It has been used several times.

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. Member for Airdrie, the Member for Calgary-Mountain View has the floor, please.

Dr. Swann: Again, Mr. Speaker, I thank you for the question. I'm not exactly sure about this particular situation, whether it's been used.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

Standing Order 29(2)(a) is over. I'll recognize the Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood.

Mr. Mason: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Well, you know, there's been a lot of misinformation about what's happened and what the processes are and what the history is that has been spread by this troika of union-busting sitting over here: the Deputy Premier, the Minister of Human Services, and the Finance minister. They have been spinning their hearts out to try and create false impressions about what's actually going on, so I want to just talk a little bit about that. They try to suggest – and I was watching the minister of advanced education, the Deputy Premier, talking to the media just outside. He repeated some things that we've heard, about how this wasn't how arbitration was supposed to go, that it wasn't supposed to work this way, that you only ever bring it in when every other alternative is exhausted and you've negotiated for months on end, that, gosh, the government was willing to do that, but this union just up and used this very unusual and somewhat irregular arrangement in order to short-circuit the negotiations that were going on.

Well, Mr. Speaker, nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, it was not the union's preference to have compulsory arbitration as their alternative. They wanted the full, free collective bargaining rights enjoyed by other unions, and that includes the ability to strike and also the right to lock out. That's what the union wanted, that's what labour wants for workers, and there were not good reasons to take away the right to strike. Many if not most provincial employees are not what you would customarily refer to as essential services. Even where they are essential services, there are measures that can be taken, at great inconvenience to the employer, I might add, in order to maintain a safe level of service in those areas. They were against that. But that was what the government imposed. They took away the right to strike, and they gave up the right to lock out the employees, and they passed legislation requiring parties to go and seek compulsory arbitration if they felt that it was in their interests to do so. That's a big difference from what the troika over there has been suggesting.

The use of that, the use of a compulsory arbitration clause, is a legitimate legal resort of either party if, in fact, they don't believe that they're making progress at the negotiating table. That's for the party to decide. It's not for the other side to agree. If one side wants to go to compulsory arbitration, then that's where you go, Mr. Speaker. After you've finished the process of negotiation and mediation, then one or the other party can apply.

That is, in fact, exactly what the government intended as an alternative to the right to strike. It's perfectly legitimate for AUPE

to request binding arbitration, and in fact the government had agreed to it. The government had participated in the process. I tabled the other day documents in the House, Mr. Speaker, indicating that the government and AUPE had undertaken an interest in arbitration. This letter was sent to Phyllis Smith of Emery Jamieson law firm, and it says:

Dear Madam . . .

Please be advised that the parties have selected you as the Chair in this Interest Arbitration Tribunal concerning the outstanding Collective Agreement between the Government of Alberta and the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees ("AUPE"). Please confirm your acceptance of this appointment.

I will be acting as Nominee for the Government of Alberta and Carl Soderstrom will be acting as Nominee for AUPE. [Here's our contact information.]

Counsel for the Government of Alberta will be Hugh McPhail, Q.C., and counsel for the AUPE will be William Rigutto, their respective contact information is . . .

So here we go, Mr. Speaker. This is dated October 15 of 2013, and it was clear. They've also settled on dates for hearings, and the process was under way when the government brought in bills 45 and 46.

I think we've established clearly that it's utter nonsense, that AUPE was not in any way manipulating or misusing the process but actually was using the channels that were set out for them in the legislation as a legitimate – legitimate – bargaining strategy, Mr. Speaker.

10:40

Now, the reason that the government didn't want to go to arbitration is an interesting question. They had established with doctors initially a contract that didn't increase their wages or their compensation for the retroactive period that they had not had a contract for but gave them some small increases going forward. They then negotiated a similar type of agreement with the Alberta Teachers' Association, but that required the unanimous consent of all locals and school boards, something that was not achieved, so that process came to an end. That was not ratified by the Alberta Teachers' Association because some of their members did not support it, and some of the school boards didn't support it.

Then the government did what it's doing now. It resorted to legislating the agreement that had been rejected by the membership of the Alberta Teachers' Association. In doing so, the government claims to have established some sort of precedent that they feel they're entitled to enforce on all other unions, whether they agree to it or not. They further believe, Mr. Speaker, that they have the right to take away their collective bargaining rights, access to arbitration, and impose a settlement by legislation in order to accomplish that goal.

Now, it may well be a legitimate goal of the government to try and meet the same level of compensation increases year over year in agreements with all its employees, but it might not be acceptable to another group of employees, another union. The government certainly, in our view, does not have the right to cancel the rights of that group of employees in order to achieve consistency in the contracts for all groups that negotiate with the government. They have no right to cancel their rights because it's their policy or their desire to create an equivalent level of compensation increases.

Why, then, are they afraid of arbitration? What would arbitration do? Well, Mr. Speaker, I have here a section from the Public Service Employee Relations Act, section 38, and it deals with the matters to be considered by an arbitrator in the event that compulsory arbitration has been initiated. First of all:

To ensure that wages and benefits are fair and reasonable to the employees and employer and are in the best interest of the public, the compulsory arbitration board

- (a) shall consider, for the period with respect to which the award will apply, the following:
 - (i) wages and benefits in private and public and unionized and non-unionized employment;
 - (ii) the continuity and stability of private and public employment, including
 - (A) employment levels and incidence of lay-offs,
 - (B) incidence of employment at less than normal working hours, and
 - (C) opportunity for employment;
 - (iii) the general economic conditions in Alberta;
- and
- (b) may consider, for the period with respect to which the award will apply, the following:
 - (i) the terms and conditions of employment in similar occupations outside the employer's employment taking into account any geographic, industrial or other variations that the board considers relevant;
 - (ii) the need to maintain appropriate relationships in terms and conditions of employment between different classification levels within an occupation and between occupations in the employer's employment;
 - (iii) the need to establish terms and conditions of employment that are fair and reasonable in relation to the qualifications required, the work performed, the responsibility assumed and the nature of the services rendered;
 - (iv) any other factor that it considers relevant to the matter in dispute.

Mr. Speaker, the first line is the most important: "To ensure that wages and benefits are fair and reasonable to the employees and the employer." That would have given a different result than what was in this bill. That would have been different because what is in this bill is neither fair nor reasonable. It is the government's inability to manage the finances of the province that has created a financial crisis in the middle of a boom. In the middle of a growth period in the Alberta economy this government has brought in recessionary policies because it can't balance the budget, because it hasn't dealt appropriately with its revenue problem. What we see, then, is that they are asking the working people who work for this government to help them out of the mess that they created. The way they're doing that is by asking them to take a wage settlement that actually will set them back, that will actually move them backwards in terms of their standard of living because they won't be able to keep up with inflationary pressures.

At the same time when the economy is a growth economy, there's a shortage of labour, and workers in other sectors, outside the government's control, are actually seeing increases in their wages. Those employees are getting higher levels of wages, and government employees are asked to take reduced levels of wages.

The reason that the government doesn't want to go to arbitration is simple. If they apply the criteria here, including the criteria that the settlement must be fair and reasonable and take into account other wages in the economy and the overall state of the economy, the arbitrator would naturally award increases that are higher than what the government is prepared to offer, and they're not prepared to accept that. They're prepared to take away the rights of the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees' members in order to accomplish their goal.

Mr. Speaker, what's happening here is really just a naked power play by the provincial government in order to enforce their will on their employees, abandoning the principle that these agreements are negotiated and that there is some way of finding a balance between competing interests, whether it be through strike, lockout, negotiation, or arbitration. They've abandoned those principles, and they are taking away the rights of their own employees in order to accomplish their own narrow goals, which are based fundamentally on their inability to manage the province's finances in the first place.

Mr. Speaker, what we've seen in this province is a structural financial problem or fiscal problem for the government of Alberta that was created when Ralph Klein was the Premier, when Steve West was the Treasurer, and when Stockwell Day was the Treasurer of the province, when there was a huge surplus based on very high natural gas prices and the royalties that flowed from that, \$8 billion a year in natural gas royalties alone at the peak. During that period the government felt that it could cut taxes for corporations – and they did – and that they could cut taxes for the wealthiest Albertans, and they did that by the imposition of the flat tax. Corporate taxes went from 16 to 10 per cent, and the government turned its back on billions of dollars in revenue.

Then the price of natural gas fell as new reserves were found in B.C. and the United States and Alberta and so on. So the royalty revenues dried up. Now we can't afford to pay for the basic programs that we have in this province. We can't afford to pay for health care. We can't afford to pay for education, good environmental protection, the social services that we need because the government depends on hoping and keeping its fingers crossed that the price of oil is going to be high enough that we're going to get some royalty revenues so that we can pay those bills. But when the price of oil goes down, we lay off nurses, we lay off teachers, we lay off government employees.

That's no way to run a province, Mr. Speaker, and it is hardly the way that you would expect the wealthiest province in the country to conduct its business. What we've seen, really, is nothing less than a wealth transfer from working- and middle-class families, who take lower wages and have the services that they depend on cut, to the highest income earners and corporations, who have their taxes reduced, so they actually get richer while the rest of us get poorer.

Mr. Speaker, that's the background. That's the real reason this is going on in the province.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

Standing Order 29(2)(a) is available. The Member for Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview.

Mr. Bilous: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood. I would actually like to ask the hon. member: he's criticized the government for their failure in their fiscal management, and I'm wondering if the member can expand on ways the government could increase its revenue sources.

10:50

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

Mr. Mason: Yeah. Well, thank you very much, hon. member. You know, as I mentioned, the flat tax cut taxes on the very wealthiest people in this province by a significant amount, thousands of dollars in reductions of taxes for people who earn a million dollars or more, whereas middle-class families pay more under the flat tax, hundreds of dollars more than they would, for

example, in B.C. or Ontario. That's another method of transferring wealth from poor to rich under this government.

Reversing the flat tax is a very important thing. We believe that like all other provinces and like Alberta before Stockwell Day and Ralph Klein, Alberta should have a progressive personal income tax system. We also think that corporate taxes don't have to be the dead lowest in the country. I would also mention, by the way, that despite our resource wealth Alberta charges some of the lowest royalties in the world. You know, oil companies are making extra profits and moving capital to the United States and other places out of Alberta.

There are a number of ways that we could redress this balance, Mr. Speaker, but we need to make sure that the public understands the link between these tax policies and their labour policies because they fit together. They also help us understand why this government is making cuts to education, health care, and other important services at a time when the economy is growing and revenues of the government are growing.

This doesn't make sense for a lot of reasons. Even though it's relatively temporary, there has been a significant uptick in the revenues coming into the government. The Finance minister in his second-quarter update indicated that by the end of the year they're expecting about a billion dollars more in revenue than they projected in the last budget. So there's no financial reason for the government to undertake this kind of restraint at the expense of its own employees right now. Neither does it make much sense from an economic point of view in the broader scheme of things.

When the economy is growing and when wages are growing and prices are increasing, it would not be normal or sensible economic policy to try and restrain your wages of government employees unless the government had a very serious financial crisis, which it does not in this case. Even if it did, Mr. Speaker, I've outlined a number of ways that those problems could be resolved in a way that would not come at the expense of government employees. The irony of the situation is that this is very much unnecessary. This is not necessary from an economic or from a government financial point of view.

The fact that they're doing it at all really indicates to me that it's a bit of a megalomaniacal obsession with making sure that they get to say what everybody's rights are, and if anybody stands up to them, as the jail guards did in the AUPE wildcat, then this government is going to punish them. We've seen that pattern of behaviour before. There were some unauthorized strikes a few years ago among construction workers. Of course, the government then brought in legislation that attacked some of the legitimate practices of some of the building trade unions in their organizational efforts. It was essentially a revenge scenario, much like this. I think much of the motivation for this legislation does come from a desire to punish people who defied the government, and that's really something that I find very troubling.

I suppose we might expect that after 42 years in power, as the hon. Member for Calgary-Mountain View suggested . . .

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

I'll recognize the next speaker, the Member for Airdrie.

Mr. Anderson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to first commend the hon. Member for Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview. He clearly gave the model of 29(2)(a) and how it works and asking a question of the speaker. Well done, sir. You've been an example to all of us.

I'd like to speak a little bit to Bill 46, the public sector salary restraint act. When I first heard the title of this bill being read in the government motion – you'll remember, ministers – I was, like, "Yes" because I thought it was dealing with executive and mana-

gerial salaries in the government bureaucracy, in the AHS bureaucracy. I was really excited. I didn't know what the bill was about, and I was, like: "They're stealing my Bill 209. This is sweet. This is awesome. What a way to end this session."

I was wrong. They weren't talking about cutting costs in government by shrinking the size of the bureaucracy or the severances enjoyed by executives at AHS or in the government. That's not what they were talking about at all. They were talking about an imposed contract or an imposed settlement or whatever you want to call it with our public-sector workers, including a stripping of their rights to arbitration and so forth. It was a little bit of a letdown.

Wildrose believes very strongly in respecting the rule of law and upholding contracts, including collective bargaining agreements. Those are just a type of contract. Negotiating a collective agreement that is fair for taxpayers is an important goal, of course, and we commend the government for at least understanding that it's okay to ask for fiscal restraint and so forth and to work hard for it. That's a good goal, but it does not give the government the right to terminate the legal arbitration rights of its public-sector employees. The ends do not justify the means.

It's just like if you want to build a highway or a ring road or something like that. It's a good thing to do. You want to build roads. You want to build the ring road. Let's talk about Stoney Trail, for example. We all favour Stoney Trail. In order to build that road, it was necessary to expropriate some lands, and they did so in order to build the road. That's okay. There's a legal process for that. There are legal rights involved, compensation, all of these rights that have been well established over the years. They didn't just say: "Okay. We need to build the road. Ha ha. You're in the way. Too bad. Go away now." That's not how it works. You have to respect the legal rights that those homeowners, landowners, et cetera, have, and you have to compensate them for that. So we have a process under the Expropriation Act that does that.

So here's a very similar thing. The government wanted a contract. It wanted to negotiate a strong deal for taxpayers, that froze wages for a couple of years. They wanted that. Okay. Fair enough. It's all right to go to the negotiating table with a tough first line. That's okay. Nothing wrong with that. But then they forgot the next part. Instead of using the legal process, the good-faith bargaining process followed by the arbitration process if they couldn't arrive at an agreement, they said: "We're just not going to respect your rights. In fact, we're just going to pass a piece of legislation that takes away your arbitration rights and imposes the agreement that we want." That's not correct. It's not right, it's not respectful, and it's just wrong. It lacks integrity, frankly, to act in that way, to not respect those rights that have been around and have been in place for 35 years and have been respected for 35 years.

In 1977 Premier Peter Lougheed provided public-sector employees the right to binding arbitration as an alternative to removing the right to strike. That was the grand bargain, so to speak. And although the NDP reminds me that they didn't agree with that idea either, I would say that the vast majority of Albertans did agree with that and thought: "Okay. That's a fair compromise. We don't want our public-sector employees to have the right to strike because, frankly, when they're not working, the province essentially shuts down, and all the essential services and health services and everything else shuts down. But if we're going to take that right away, we're going to make sure that we give them binding arbitration as a replacement so that they have recourse, legal recourse, to get a fairer deal for their workers." We believe that it was and still is a fair compromise that should be upheld.

11:00

The question is: why should the front-line workers of Alberta be penalized for the PCs' inability to balance the budget when the economy of Alberta is roaring ahead? Why should they be penalized for the PCs' inability to cut the obvious areas? We have, as we've been reminded, many alternative budgets, where we put forth ideas on how to do that. Easy ideas. Bill 209. How about we do things like – well, here's an example. We've talked about the \$350 million for new MLA offices. We've talked about the Infrastructure budget and how we should look more to what the Canadian average is, trying to make sure that we can build more with less by better tendering of contracts and making sure that we're opening it up to more construction firms, not just the huge ones that are able to do these massive P3 bundles but actually let the private sector compete and get a better upfront rate for those projects.

There are all kinds of different ways. We could cut corporate welfare. It's in the hundreds of millions every year. We give money to private, for-profit corporations in order to subsidize their dealings. It's not that they're not doing good work, but why does Shell Canada need \$800 million over several years to build their carbon capture and storage plant or set-up? Why do they need that? They don't need that. It's Shell. It's one of the richest companies on earth. Why are we spending taxpayer money that way? That's a place we could cut.

We could cut in the bureaucracy. I feel that in the AHS bureaucracy alone we could shrink the size of that at least by 20 per cent. I'm talking about the bureaucracy here, managers, executives. The government said that they couldn't do it all – “Oh, we're actually saving money in the bureaucracy” – even though spending has just skyrocketed since AHS took over the scene. But lately they have actually started some small – after saying they couldn't do it, they say, “No, no. We can actually do it. We're going to shrink the size of how many vice-presidents we have,” and so forth. Actually, again, they came around. I believe that over a couple of years we could shrink the size of that bureaucracy immensely by decentralizing a lot of what we do in health care to the front lines.

We could cut severances and bonuses from our executives and managers in the public service. Bill 209, my private member's bill, does exactly that. It limits the severance that our executive managers and AHS executives, et cetera, can make, the severance packages that they can make.

There are many, many examples. And any one of those examples isn't going to cure the deficit problem by itself, but taken together, it would make a huge dent in the deficit. But they're not willing in most cases to do what is necessary because they have too many friends to reward, too many cronies to pat the back of and make sure that they're well rewarded for their good loyalty and work over the years to the PC Party and its folks.

The Wildrose would ask the public sector, no doubt, as we've said before, to hold the line on spending to help fix the financial mess created by the PC government. What a Wildrose government would not do is hold a gun to the heads of our public-sector workers and take away their legal rights. Wildrose will not balance the budget on the backs of front-line public-sector workers, their salaries, or their services, nor will we unilaterally terminate the legal rights of any Albertan. [interjections]

I hear a lot of noise over there, and I think what that is, Mr. Speaker, is the sound of a crumbling coalition. It's the sound of a dying party. It's the sound of change in 2016. That's what I hear over there right now. That's what I hear over there. I hear folks that are so terrified that their actions and their lack of judgment has so mortally wounded their ability to get re-elected in the next

election that they're concerned about that. I understand that sound. It's very interesting to hear on that side. But that's okay. It's part of the grieving process that you're going through.

Instead of negotiating a fair contract with our province's front-line public-sector employees, the PC government has decided to terminate the legal rights of arbitration so they can force their preferred deal upon front-line workers without good faith negotiations, without giving them even the respect of good faith negotiations. For 35 years the arbitration system put in place by Premier Lougheed has worked. Even under Ralph Klein and the government cuts of the early '90s the system worked. It worked even for Ralph. Think of the cuts of the early '90s. We're not talking about wage freezes. We're talking about cuts. Yet the system worked. But this government goes to the negotiating table, the arbitration is filed, everything is set up, and, bang, they pull the rug out from underneath the public-sector workforce, and say: “We're taking those arbitration rights. Too bad, so sad. Thanks for coming out.”

Under the Redford government the labour arbitration system is collapsing and the good faith that once existed with our public-sector workforce is collapsing. One must question this government's ability to govern when a system that has held up for over 35 years through thick and thin is collapsing under her watch. For the first time in this province's history the government may impose – I didn't say create or be able to secure; I said impose – a wage freeze through legislation. This is a continuation of the PC government's laws and policies that attempt to crush all opposition to it.

The pushing through of Bill 46 also shows a lot of arrogance and contempt for the democratic process. Before the two bills in question were even introduced, the PCs imposed several motions to limit debate on these bills to just a few hours so they can ram through the legislation without the opposition having any meaningful input on the matter, without allowing public-sector workers to meet with their MLAs in their ridings and share their feelings about those things. Why should we take away those rights, the rights of our civil service to go and meet with their MLAs and tell them what they think about this?

One week is hardly enough for that. We all have busy schedules. We all have things to do. But at least let us respect them enough to sit down with them, have a cup of coffee with them, and talk it out. Even if there's disagreement, at least they feel that they've been consulted with. And at least you've heard it before you come to this House, you've heard from them how they feel about that.

That would be a better way of conducting this business. But, instead, here we are after six hours on each bill, two of the most important bills of the session, probably, along with Bill 28. Instead of introducing those bills at the beginning of session and allowing that consultation to occur, that's not what happens. They were introduced literally in the last week, with just enough time to pass them using time allocation. That's how this was done.

How is that democratic? It's very disrespectful of the legislative process and of the democratic process. I know the government has a hard time understanding this, but the democratic process is not just them ramming through every bill that they want to ram through the Legislature in the shortest amount of time possible, that's the most efficient for their calendar of holiday events and cocktail parties. That's not what this is about. That's not the democratic process. The democratic process doesn't just include passing bills. It includes debate and stakeholder consultation and feedback and more debate. That what we have to be . . .

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. members, Standing Order 29(2)(a) is available. I'll recognize the Associate Minister of Regional Recovery and Reconstruction for Southwest Alberta, followed by Calgary-Glenmore.

11:10

Mr. Fawcett: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to take the opportunity for the hon. member to be intellectually honest with this Assembly and with the people in the galleries. Earlier, in talking to another bill, he started to go through a hypothetical scenario, which I assume was in reference to this bill, a hypothetical scenario, Mr. Speaker, where he said that this is the way it should work. The government comes in and offers 0, 0, whatever, whatever it needed to offer in order to be hard to hold the line on spending. The union would come back and say: no, no; we're taking this. You wouldn't disagree. Then you would go to arbitration. That's the way that it would work, that's what his party is committed to, that's why they're opposed to this legislation, and that's why this is a travesty, what this government is doing.

Mr. Speaker, I want to take that scenario, the hypothetical scenario, to its logical conclusion, then, and ask the member to be intellectually honest with everybody in this Assembly, including those in the gallery and all Albertans, on where his party stands. Okay? To bring that hypothetical scenario to conclusion, you know, you go to arbitration, and the arbitrator says that, in fact, no; we think the union or those workers should get a 3 per cent raise, maybe it's 4, hypothetically, as the member brought up, maybe it's 5 per cent. So their party is now stuck with the decision of trying to balance a budget that they've committed to, that they said that they would commit to, what they said to Albertans in the election that they would do, because they said that they wouldn't take arbitration rights, as well as giving increases in salary, right? There are only a few options left available. They like to trot out that, oh, we'd cut this or we'd cut that or we'd reduce government management. Sorry. You're not going to balance the budget by making little decisions here and there.

The hon. member sat on Treasury Board before. He knows that. If you want to make some drastic changes in the way the financial trend is going, you have to make some tough, big decisions. So those decisions come to this, and there are three of them: restrain the salaries of the public sector, raise taxes to be able to pay for those salaries, or – and this is where I want the hon. member to be honest, intellectually honest – if they're not willing to do that, tell them. Tell these people in here that their party would start to cut the public service. They'd start to lay off people, the people that do the work, that work in nursing homes, that work in the corrections facilities. Be intellectually honest and tell these members that their unions, their colleagues, that group, would start to get smaller.

Hon. member, you talk about integrity. You talk about being honest. Let's work that scenario through to its logical conclusion and be intellectually honest with the members of this House and all Albertans.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member for Airdrie to respond.

Mr. Anderson: It'll be a first time. That's a rousing question from the member. I appreciate it very much. Well, what would we do? I'll read it for you. We'd start here:

Wildrose proposes a 20% reduction over 4 years on what is spent on . . .

Now, listen closely.

. . . the salaries, benefits, bonuses, and severance packages for non-front line workers in the Government and AHS bureaucracies.

[interjections] Hold on.

This would mean achieving \$456 million in savings within the Government bureaucracy, and an additional \$400 million [over four years] in the AHS bureaucracy by year four.

That's a lot of money. We could start there, right? That's where we could start.

The other thing we could do – there are so many little wonderful . . .

Mr. Lukaszuk: You forgot the federal building. You always use that one.

Mr. Anderson: The federal building. That's right. I always forget about the federal building: \$350 million. Three hundred and fifty million dollars. Think about that. To the members in the gallery: do you know about that big building across the street there?

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. member, through the Speaker.

Mr. Anderson: Do you know that, Mr. Speaker? That big building across the street, that huge monstrosity with the rooftop garden, with the theatre system, with the underground heated parking: do you know that those are MLA offices for you and me, for all of us to enjoy because the people of Alberta said that we need new MLA offices? We can do without our seniors' care and health care, but dammit, we need new MLA offices for \$350 million. That's what Albertans clearly voted this government in to do. There's no doubt about it.

The other thing they said is: "You know what? Shell Canada is a very poor company, and clearly we need to give them \$800 million."

The Deputy Speaker: Standing Order 29(2)(a) has finished.

On third reading I'll recognize the Member for Edmonton-Centre.

Ms Blakeman: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Well, I'm glad to join my colleagues in the Assembly at a quarter after 11. I'm not thrilled about talking in third reading to Bill 46 because I really don't like Bill 46. It's a terrible bill, and it's a reflection of a government that has completely run out of ideas. I know that the hon. members opposite don't feel like that right now. You feel brimming with ideas, I'm sure. You know, really, is this the best you could do? It strikes me that it isn't the best that you could do.

The big question that comes to my mind when I read Bill 46 is: what was wrong with arbitration? What were you so worried about that you couldn't wait – what is it now? – five weeks to go to arbitration? What was wrong with that? That's a perfectly acceptable process. You didn't want to do that because it was compulsory or arbitrary? What was wrong with waiting for the arbitration process? No one has explained that. I'm sorry. I may have missed somebody because I was skimming the *Hansard*. I'll admit that. I was skimming it. I didn't read every word, but as far as I could see, nobody from my hon. colleagues opposite got up and gave a really robust argument for why they couldn't wait for that arbitration.

Earlier, when I spoke to some other version of this – it must have been Bill 45 – I was talking about how when the union had asked for arbitration, in fact, it was the government side that kept saying: "Well, we're not ready. Hang on. We've changed our lawyers." There were a number of excuses as to why they couldn't meet earlier, like back in November. In fact, the date is where it is because of the government. Again, I thought: "Hmm. That's

usually kind of a delaying tactic.” If you don’t want to go to court, you keep changing lawyers, you can’t appear on that date, and that sort of thing.

I thought: why is this? If this is the process that was available, it has been maybe not the perfect solution but certainly one that seems to have been accepted by various sides previously. What was wrong with it this time? It’s so wrong or it appears to be so wrong or so distasteful to the government that not only could they not wait for it, or rather, they kept postponing it – let me be correct here – but then they had to bring in legislation that comes into effect a couple of days before when the arbitration would have been.

Let me go back and start from the beginning. When I read the preamble – and we all know, of course, having studied carefully in the late-night school of parliamentary debate, that the preamble is not enforceable. You can have it in the act, but you can’t enforce it. Well, just a little teaching moment. Teachable moment, Mr. Speaker. You were a teacher. The second whereas talks about:

Whereas the Government of Alberta is seeking a better market alignment of salaries . . .

Ooh. That’s sexy language, “alignment of salaries.”

. . . given that salaries for job classifications under the collective agreement between the Government of Alberta and the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees generally exceed those paid to employees in the public service of comparable provinces.

You know, I go through these acts, and I scribble in the margins. So it says – whoops; there’s a swear word in there. Okay. Why is this a goal, to be less than? I’m pretty sure – no; I know – that it’s this government that always wants to be the best, the first, the mightiest, the greatest tax cutters. What are all the claims you guys make? The best education system, the healthiest seniors. You know, you really want that number one title for yourself, so – what? – you’re going for the lowest paid public servants here?

11:20

Why would that even be a consideration, a framing context for your act, that our employees’ salaries for job classifications “generally exceed those paid to employees in the public service of comparable provinces”? Well, why wouldn’t they be? I guess I’ve got three questions. One, so? Two, why do you feel the need to drive down public-sector wages? And three, in this province, where we stick a pipe in the ground and oil and bitumen come out of it and you take it to the bank and you get money for it and the government gets a cut of the royalties? [interjections]

Well, yes. That’s true. I’m getting some argument about: you don’t stick a pipe in the ground anymore. That’s true. That hasn’t happened in 50 years. But it did happen. Leduc No. 1: they stuck a pipe in the ground, and the oil came out. It was really easy to get then. It’s much harder to get the oil now. We have to put other product down underneath it, deep-well injection, to get the oil to come up to the top, or we’ve got to use steam. We frack things. Actually, that’s for gas. But it’s much more expensive to get out of the ground. Nonetheless, it’s our resource. It belongs to all Albertans, and we are a wealthy province.

I’m sorry. This is a bit of a tangent here, but I’m still struggling with the previous speaker about – well, honestly, could you tell me what an intellectually honest or an intellectually dishonest person is? I don’t understand that.

Mr. Dorward: We do. We know somebody who could.

Ms Blakeman: You do. Okay. Well, maybe this is a special, Conservative, insider definition that they use. Intellectually honest and intellectually dishonest. Okay. Sorry about that total tangent.

We’re back to: why would you want to drive the salaries down? Is that your goal, to be the worst paying provincial government in Canada? Why on earth would that be a goal, especially in this province when there is wealth, where we are a natural resource province? We have trees. We have nonrenewable resources: coal, which we shouldn’t be using anymore; gas; conventional oil and gas; and oil sands. We are a wealthy province, and, certainly, the government should be able to bring in enough revenue to cover its expenses based on that fact. There are other provinces that don’t have that amount of wealth. That struck me as very odd, that the government had a goal of paying people less.

You’ve heard the argument quite a bit about how this act is contravening this with its twin, Bill 45. No. I guess it would be a sibling.

An Hon. Member: Ugly stepsibling.

Ms Blakeman: Yes. Someone phrased it better. Ugly stepsister?

An Hon. Member: Ugly stepsibling.

Ms Blakeman: Ugly stepsibling. Well phrased.

So 46 along with 45 are breaking our constitutional freedoms. Not rights, constitutional freedoms, which are granted to everyone that’s walking around in Canada, not just voters, not just citizens, not just people over 18 or under 65 or over 65. It’s granted to everyone here that we have constitutional freedoms. Why the government would feel that it was okay for them to push that line, to push that boundary, I still don’t understand.

The only explanation I’ve heard from the hon. members opposite is: we’re not breaking it. Okay. Well, I disagree. I think you are, and I think the courts are going to find that you are. Why this government keeps insisting on pushing that line when you know it’s going to cost the taxpayers – you’re playing both sides of this with somebody else’s money. Somebody is going to have to pay for the government side, and eventually, when you guys lose and you have to pay costs for the court case that’s brought by the unions or organized labour, then you’re going to have to pay for that side, too. I think you’d be a bit more cautious if you were playing with your own money here rather than paying with the taxpayers’ money, but that’s who ends up footing the bill in the end. This is sort of: well, this is what I say – sorry; it’s getting late. My language skills diminish somewhat. I go to that old colloquial expression, which I’m not supposed to use in this House.

That’s the second bit, and you guys have heard a lot about that. I won’t go over it again. Nonetheless, I don’t buy your argument. I did make some notes, though, while some of the hon. members opposite were speaking. There was quite an argument from the Treasury Board president, the Treasurer. I seem to have mightily offended him. He was going on and on about how they were trying to deal – sorry. I don’t have the *Hansard* in front of me. I ended up writing down: well, then, why don’t you just put a COLA clause in for the fines? Oh. That’s why.

They feel that they have to rewrite legislation in order to bring the fines up to a point where they weren’t just the cost of doing business, you know, because time went on, and things have inflated. I thought to myself: why don’t you just put a COLA clause in for the fines? If you think the fines haven’t kept pace with some sort of a deterrent for the organized labour movement, then put a COLA clause in that says that every five years this fine will be adjusted by the average cost-of-living increase averaged over the last five years. That’s simple enough. We didn’t need two whole pieces of legislation, that we’re going to throw the book at unions and the labour movement because you didn’t want a COLA clause. That just doesn’t make sense to me.

Also, one speaker had said something. I've got: you're pretty thin-skinned if you have to change the legislation for one speaker. I knew who the one speaker was at the time. I'm sorry. I didn't write that down.

I've also got the point about: why would the government drive downward on public-sector wages?

It's interesting, this whole situation. We both have different interpretations of how this came about, the wildcat strike at the remand centre. My sympathies are clearly with the workers. I met a number of times and spoke daily with the people that were concerned about this. They really were concerned about the safety of that new remand centre. They felt very strongly that, one, they had not been allowed to look at the plans; two, they asked for meetings to express their concerns, which the hon. — oh. He's here.

I'm sorry. Mr. Finance Minister, who was the one speaker that you changed the legislation for? I'm not going to get anything out of him. Okay.

Now you distracted me. Oh, dear.

Mr. Donovan: Quit winking, you guys. Quit winking.

Ms Blakeman: No, they can. I'm fine with same-sex whatever. Sorry. I'm going to move on. If I remember, I'll come back. [interjections] I'm sorry. I heard something about people over there winking and having fun with each other. I just assumed that's what it was. I shouldn't have done that.

One of the things that I've heard . . .

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. members, if you stop distracting the member who has the floor, we might get somewhere.

Ms Blakeman: You know, what is it? I turn up at this place, and everybody gets lively. What is it?

Okay. There is a paramountcy clause in here. At one point I think I heard one of the members opposite say: "You know, there's no really big deal about this. It's not that different. We're not changing that much." Yet there's a paramountcy clause in here. That's what section 5 is.

If there is a conflict or inconsistency between this Act and the Public Service Employee Relations Act or between this Act and any other enactment, this Act prevails to the extent of the conflict or inconsistency.

That would be a paramountcy clause. It says that no matter whatever else is written anywhere else, this one triumphs. This one trumps. This is the trump card here. It does change the scope of the legislation very much.

The scope undeniably has been changed, and this act changes the scope and the way they apply of the other two acts, the Public Service Employee Relations Act and the Labour Relations Code. So it's much more than just a listing and a changing of fines. I talked before about the 0, 0, 1, and 1, which . . . [Ms Blakeman's speaking time expired] Oh, come on. It's not 15 minutes.

11:30

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. member, your time has expired.

Standing Order 29(2)(a) is available. The hon. Member for Edmonton-Decore.

Mrs. Sarich: Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. I just had one question for the member. I was curious if you could take a look at Bill 46, page 6, section 8, on repeal. I was wondering if you knew what the words meant. It says, "This Act is repealed on Proclamation." Do you understand what that means?

Ms Blakeman: Well, as soon as they proclaim it, it ceases to exist. Is that the explanation you were looking for? Did you think I didn't understand that?

Mrs. Sarich: Yes. It's quite unique that this particular piece of legislation is repealed on proclamation.

Ms Blakeman: Well, if you say so. I don't see why that would stop us all in our tracks. By the time this comes into being, the damage will have been done. It's nice that you stopped it or that you will stop it once it's been proclaimed, but by the time it's been proclaimed, you've already invoked that settlement. The 0, 0, 1, and 1 is already done. The fines are already changed or will have prevailed if they needed to. Why do you want a standing ovation for repealing it on proclamation? You already did the damage. Are you going to make it disappear? Well, I guess you can by saying that, but the damage is done. The evil intent is done by then. I'm not going to give you a standing ovation for repealing it as soon as it comes into effect. Yes, I did understand what it meant. I do read the legislation.

That's not a get-out-of-jail-free card for the government. What they have done here, and knowingly — I mean, none of you can convince me. I've watched and listened to some of you for a long time and others for as long as you've been here, but none of you are going to convince me that this was a genuine, warm attempt at getting a better relationship with public-sector unions. None of you are going to convince me of that.

If you really meant that, one, you would have come to the bargaining table with a deal that was workable instead of coming to the bargaining table with something that was so offensive that the unions went: "You're kidding me. You don't expect us to take this seriously. We're out of here." Why didn't you come to the table with something that was workable? But, no, you can't do that. So the unions went. They said: "There's no point in even talking to these guys. They're not interested in putting something on the table that's actually workable, so we're going to use the arbitration clause that is in here. We're not allowed to strike, so we're going to use the arbitration clause." They did exactly what you wanted them to. They didn't strike. They used the arbitration clause. And then what happened to them? Then the government decided: "Hmm, not today, not tomorrow. Got a headache, Honey. Can't make it to this meeting and that meeting. Going to change lawyers." We end up with an arbitration date that is in early February, and now we have a piece of legislation in front of us in early December — it's still early December, right? — that says: you're going to do what we say, or we're going to put this on you.

What did you expect? The unions are going to come to the table. They know that if they don't deal with you by the end of January, you're going to do 0, 0, 1, and 1. Do you really think the unions feel that they're going to get a good negotiating situation out of you? Do you not think this is a poisoned atmosphere? Do you genuinely believe that anybody would sit down at a table with you at this point and go, "Yeah, I think you're going to bargain in best faith, absolutely, because if you don't, in a couple of days you're going to slam me with 0, 0, 1, and 1"? Seriously? Yeah, seriously.

You didn't start out with any kind of — sorry. It's not actually the people in this room, but, you know, you were directing the proceedings, one assumes. You're the cabinet, you're the government, so one presumes you were directing what happens here. I don't see how any union member, any negotiator could consider what the government had on the table as something that was workable and that they could work from there. Then you threaten them.

The phrase “trying to negotiate with a gun at your head” is a little overused. Sorry, but it’s a little overused in this discussion. Nonetheless, it is trying to negotiate under pressure and at a table where I think it’s easy to see why people would feel they weren’t going to get a fair deal out of it and that if they can’t somehow negotiate you guys up, they’re going to end up with 0, 0, 1, and 1.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

I’ll recognize the Member for Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview.

Mr. Bilous: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I wanted to address just a comment that the hon. Member for Edmonton-Centre made, when she said that, you know, she was grasping for words and lost her train of thought, which is not like the Member for Edmonton-Centre but is understandable considering the time of night that it is that we’re debating this piece of legislation and how it’s literally been around the clock because of this government’s insistence on ramming this through.

I want to start with my comments on Bill 46. In case anyone is unclear on my position, I’m a hundred per cent opposed to this bill. I’m going to outline as concisely as possible, but being a former English teacher, sometimes brevity is not my strong suit. I will go through and outline the concerns that I have with this bill.

I think it needs to be stated, Mr. Speaker, first and foremost, that this bill and its evil stepsibling, its sinister stepsibling, Bill 45, were not bills or ideas or concepts that the Premier nor this government ran on during the election last year. I think, you know, that had they brought this out during the election, we would have seen very different results in the election in 2012. It needs to be highlighted that by bringing in Bill 45 and Bill 46, there is a significant betrayal of trust that falls squarely on the shoulders of the Premier, who had spoken kindly to labour and to the very workers who support her but also Albertans throughout the province. This is an attack on them and an attack on working Albertans everywhere in the province.

I want to address a couple of things. There’s a complete misnomer or falsehood that this bill is necessary, Mr. Speaker. It frustrates me greatly that members on this side of the House, or many of them, fail to acknowledge or recognize that when we look at budgets, there are choices.

[Mr. Cao in the chair]

You know, I want to remind the House that this government has chosen to spend \$1.3 billion on an unproven, unfounded technology, carbon capture and storage, and on other priorities of theirs. There’s money for them. Yet when it comes to supporting Alberta families and Alberta’s hardest workers, this government couldn’t be bothered to support or to find the money. Not only is it a case of priorities and the fact of ensuring that our public-sector workers are paid a decent wage, a living wage, and are respected for the hard work that they do, which is primarily shown through salaries, but this government decides to undervalue the very workers who make this province safe and who make this province tick every day, Mr. Speaker.

Just to outline briefly, you know, other than the priorities, and clearly this government has got – now I’m struggling for the word that I’m looking for. [interjections] No, no, no. It’s not you, member. Well, they’ve got, obviously, their priorities mixed up, their priorities backwards.

11:40

The other issue with revenue that I just want to touch on briefly other than reprioritizing where the dollars are going: again, we do live in the wealthiest jurisdiction, I would argue, in North

America, at least the wealthiest province in the country. Our economy is quite strong at the moment. We’re not in the middle of a recession. This austerity budget is absurd. The fact that the government has an extra billion dollars: I mean, there are dollars at every turn. The fact of the matter is that this government doesn’t see our public-sector workers as a priority, as valuable enough to invest in them.

I do believe that Bill 46 is an attack on not just AUPE; it’s an attack on all organized labour. As some members may or may not know, other unions are coming to the bargaining table shortly, if we’re looking at the nurses. CUPE is going to be back at the bargaining table soon. I mean, this government is using an iron-fist approach to try to set the precedent and then beat down everybody else.

Ms Blakeman: Maybe we could have a boxing match.

[The Speaker in the chair]

Mr. Bilous: Okay. Now you’re being a little distracting, Member.

Before I get into this, we’ve got our revenue streams that could address the very issues that this government purports to have. Looking at our royalties, again, very easily Alberta could still be very competitive with other jurisdictions in Canada, from Saskatchewan to, actually, jurisdictions in North America that have the natural resources that we do yet still bring in millions more dollars into the government coffers if we raised our royalty rate slightly to still be competitive with other jurisdictions.

Ms Blakeman: That’s a tax break.

Mr. Bilous: I’m going to get to taxes.

There’s a gap there, Mr. Speaker, that is unnecessary, and in fact this government is essentially shortchanging Albertans and selling us out. Our natural resources belong to all Albertans, I’d like to remind the government, not just to the Albertans of today but future Albertans, our kids and grandkids and future generations. Collecting a reasonable rate for a nonrenewable resource is just good business. That’s one way.

The other two ways are addressing, again, our corporate tax rate, which this government cut again. You know, if the logic were true that the lowest tax rates are where businesses are going to go to, then that argument would mean that there would be no businesses working in any other province. Alberta has got the lowest corporate tax rate, so why would a corporation continue to exist in provinces where there are higher rates? So that logic is completely flawed.

As well, remove our flat tax on our personal income tax. As the hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood so eloquently explained, when you look at a comparative analysis between middle-income earners in Alberta – I think it’s somewhere between \$100,000 and \$120,000 a household earns – they pay more in Alberta under the 10 per cent flat tax than they would if they lived in British Columbia or Ontario. So it is simply a fallacy that the flat tax benefits everyone. Clearly, it does not.

Through those four different ways, Mr. Speaker, that’s how very easily we could address our revenue shortfall, our revenue issue, and ensure that we are treating Albertans – and I’m talking about our front-line workers. But we would also have the dollars to ensure that there are enough beds for our seniors, that they are properly staffed, that they receive the proper care they need, that we have enough schools so that we don’t have to have kids learning in closets and in classrooms of 45-plus students, that we have enough supports for them, that we could improve our health

care system as opposed to starving it to death and then saying: "Oh, look. We need to privatize it because the current system is failing." Well, it's failing because of how it's being run.

I'm coming back to the bill, Mr. Speaker. That would address this very attack on our workforce.

Now, I want to bring up a couple of quick points here, Mr. Speaker. Interestingly, a fact here, between 1993 and 2013 management wages in this province grew 52 per cent above and beyond inflation while professional and technical services in this province grew by 44.2 per cent in that window. Public administration salaries grew by a measly 13 per cent over inflation. So there is a gross inequity and difference between our public administration and front-line workers and those that are in management positions, in fact, a significant salary difference of about 40 per cent.

My frustration when I hear this government trot out the fact that MLA wages are frozen and "Look at us" and "We're doing our part, so public-sector unions need to do their part" – let me clarify a few things here, Mr. Speaker. Number one, our front-line workers are not earning a salary of 150,000-plus dollars a year. So when this government brags about the fact that MLAs wages are frozen, there's quite a big difference between a person earning \$150,000 and a person earning \$50,000. Let me tell you that that statistic, when it's brought up, is quite frustrating.

In my dying minutes speaking to Bill 46, which I wish would die, I want to address the issue of arbitration. The fact of the matter is that the existing legislation, as far as the Public Service Employee Relations Act, which will be railroaded by this current legislation, calls for binding arbitration. The Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar had asked: if we've never had to use binding arbitration, then what is the purpose of it? Well, I'd like to clarify. Yes, binding arbitration has been used numerous times in this province. No, it has not been used by AUPE in the past, but again the fact of the matter is that it's a tool that is there if needed, that if both sides cannot come to a negotiated agreement, then they go to an arbitrator.

Clearly, this government is afraid of going to arbitration. Again, the Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood explained it quite concisely, that they would then look at a comparative analysis of what other public-sector workers in other provinces are earning and what would be deemed a fair contract so as well looking at some of the collective agreements with other unions. I'm quite certain that the arbitrator would come up with numbers much higher than what's in this current bill. Therefore, this government doesn't want to go that route. They choose to sell out the very workers who, honestly, especially in this last year, when we look at the responders and all the rest down in the floods, put their lives on the line and worked innumerable hours, and this is the respect that they get.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would like to move a notice of amendment. I'm moving this on behalf of the hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood, and I have the appropriate number of copies.

Mr. Speaker, the hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood moves that the motion for third reading of Bill 46, Public Service Salary Restraint Act, be amended by deleting all of the words after "that" and substituting the following: "Bill 46, Public Service Salary Restraint Act, be not now read a third time but that it be read a third time this day six months hence."

The Speaker: Hon. member, let's have the amendment distributed, please, quickly.

Mr. Bilous: Yes. Pardon me. I'm holding the original.

11:50

The Speaker: Would you mind sending the original up, please?

Mr. Bilous: My mistake, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Hon. members, the member for Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview on behalf of the Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood has moved an amendment, and it's being circulated to you now. However, in deference to time, why don't we go ahead and hear your comments that you have. You have about a minute and 13 seconds left.

Mr. Bilous: A minute and 13, Mr. Speaker? Okay. Thank you very much.

I mean, the members of the Assembly should be able to figure out why I'm moving this amendment. Quite simply, there is no repairing Bill 46. I can tell you that that's the reason that the Alberta NDP did not move any amendments during committee. We felt that there was no way to repair such a damaged piece of legislation that, as other members have said, is a direct assault and attack on not just AUPE but on all organized labour and as well, I would argue, all working Albertans.

The Speaker: Hon. member, Parliamentary Counsel has just advised that the Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood has already spoken, so it would not be appropriate for you to move it on his behalf, but you're welcome to move it on your own. If you wouldn't mind to just reinitial this and sign it in your own name. We're holding the clock for you. I'll get one of the pages to bring you that amendment right now.

Mr. Bilous: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Take the original back. I just want to make sure we're on the side of correct procedure here.

Hon. member, is this your signature above the Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood signature?

Mr. Bilous: Yes, sir.

The Speaker: Okay. With your permission I'll just print your name underneath this.

Mr. Bilous: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Hon. members, we have one signed copy by the Member for Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview, and with your permission we're going to allow him to continue, then, with the amendment under his name.

Hon. member, you've been speaking for almost 15 minutes, and you have about 24 seconds left, so do your best.

Mr. Bilous: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I just want to say that the purpose of this amendment is to move it for six months so that this bill will die. I now move this motion.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

Are there any speakers to the amendment? This is now on the amendment, right?

Mr. Mason: Yes it is, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you.

Mr. Mason: Well, I am so glad that my colleague from Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview has moved this amendment, Mr. Speaker. I

couldn't have drafted an amendment better myself. I believe that we should not read the bill now for its third reading. I think we should take some time to think about it, cooling off time, a little cooling off time over there, and read it again in six months. If the House isn't sitting in six months, then we forget about it altogether. It seems to me the perfect solution, and I don't know why the government didn't think of this earlier, but I do think we should do that.

I do note, Mr. Speaker – and I don't think we've got this on the record just yet – that a letter was sent to the Premier dated December 4. That is just in a few minutes going to be two days ago. This letter, on Alberta Federation of Labour letterhead, was signed by Gil McGowan, president of the Alberta Federation of Labour; Heather Smith, president of the United Nurses of Alberta; Elisabeth Ballermann, president of the Health Sciences Association of Alberta; and Marle Roberts, president of the Canadian Union of Public Employees Alberta. That's five presidents, Mr. Speaker, five presidents representing thousands and thousands – I would say that collectively they probably represent about 100,000 workers in the province of Alberta. They have requested that the government sit down and talk to them. What a concept.

Ms Blakeman: Seriously?

Mr. Mason: Yes. Well, we all know that when the Minister of Municipal Affairs stood in the House and talked about his wonderful bill on intermunicipal consultation, he assured us that everything was fine and it was great and it was just like a carbon copy of something we're already doing.

But then the municipal leaders, the mayors of towns and counties and cities around the province, didn't agree with the minister. In fact, it turns out that they weren't consulted.

An Hon. Member: No.

Mr. Mason: No, no. I'm sure the minister was just having a bad day. But the government then did the right thing, and they pulled the bill, and they consulted, and they made a few changes. Now everybody's happy, and the minister has gone from chump to hero. So it really worked for the government. It really did.

I would like to use the Minister of Municipal Affairs as a good example in this House of the right way to go about things. The good example is that when you screw up big time, you go back and change it, and he did, and everybody's happy now, and that's good.

I think we should do the same thing with this bill. I think the government should actually sit down with labour, talk to them. They're normal people, you know. They're not scary. They don't have horns.

The Minister of Transportation says that the point of the bill is to talk to them. Oh, my goodness, Mr. Speaker. I think he could learn a lesson from the Minister of Municipal Affairs, I'll say that. I do. This isn't a talk-talk bill. This is a war-war bill, and there's going to be a lot of trouble.

Seriously, Mr. Speaker, they make some good points. They want to have a task force on public-sector labour relations. The task force "would provide a platform to discuss key issues, including the following: workplace arbitration . . . quality of public services and workplace safety . . . pensions . . . and revenue reform."

Mr. Speaker, I think these are all very reasonable things. I think the idea of a task force is a good one. I think the idea of this government actually talking to labour the way it talks to municipalities or talks to business or talks to farmers or talks to the oil industry is a heck of an idea. They should try it. That would be one advantage of passing this motion, Mr. Speaker. They

would have a chance to do that and really get to the bottom of some pretty tough issues.

12:00

One of the things we haven't talked about too much in the context of this debate – and I think it's an oversight – is the attack by the Minister of Finance on the pensions of our provincial employees. Now, I don't know about other members, but I am getting a lot of e-mails from very ticked-off provincial employees. Of course, we know that the local authorities pension plan was just a matter of years from being fully self-sustaining and eliminating its unfunded liability. The board managing the pension had a clear plan and a timeline in order to make these pension plans entirely sustainable. So there was no need for what happened.

Again there was no consultation. I mean, I remember attending the minister's news conference on the steps of the Legislature. He had just briefed some of the union members. He said: "You know what? I think that they're actually pretty happy." You know, it turns out they weren't happy at all, Mr. Speaker. I know that the Premier said just today that the public service employees she's talked to are really happy that she's freezing their wages. [interjection] Yes. This stands very much along with many of the other statements that the Premier has made in terms of the veracity of those statements. It's not unusual for the Premier to make such a statement. [interjection] Yes. I would say that the Premier has a frequently uncertain . . .

The Speaker: Hon. member, I hesitate to interrupt, but the time has now elapsed, so we'll have to put the amendment to a vote. Then we'll come back and immediately vote on third reading of Bill 46.

[Motion on amendment to third reading of Bill 46 lost]

The Speaker: Hon. members, pursuant to Government Motion 54, which was agreed to earlier this evening, I must now put the question.

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

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 12:03 a.m.]

[One minute having elapsed, the Assembly divided.]

[The Speaker in the chair]

For the motion:

Amery	Hancock	McDonald
Bhardwaj	Horne	McIver
Brown	Horner	Olson
Cao	Jansen	Pastoor
Casey	Johnson, J.	Quadri
Cusanelli	Johnson, L.	Quest
DeLong	Khan	Redford
Dorward	Klimchuk	Sarich
Drysdale	Kubinec	VanderBurg
Fawcett	Lemke	Weadick
Goudreau	Luan	Xiao
Griffiths	Lukaszuk	

Against the motion:

Anderson	Blakeman	Strankman
Anglin	Mason	Swann
Bilous	Pedersen	

Totals:	For – 35	Against – 8
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[Motion carried; Bill 46 read a third time]

Bill 28 Enabling Regional Growth Boards Act

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs.

Mr. Griffiths: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise today to move third reading of Bill 28, the Enabling Regional Growth Boards Act.

I'm so glad that it has a name that's more reflective of what I'd originally intended. When our bill was introduced for first and second readings, we did not have much time for consultation, as I said before. We had an impending court case. We listened to the decisions. We had to ensure that the regulations under 603, the Capital Region Board and such, would be secured. We went through second reading, and then meaningful amendments got proposed at Committee of the Whole. We were asked to strike a task force on Bill 28. We had the AUMA, we had the AAMD and C, we had the city of Edmonton, we had the city of Calgary, the Capital Region Board, and the Calgary Regional Partnership all sitting down at the table as a team and working on some proposed amendments, and they went through the bill line by line.

I've said before at AUMA and AAMD and C when I gave updates – we had task team meetings. The first two, Mr. Speaker, were about going through the bill line by line so that everybody understood exactly what was in the legislation. I know I heard first-hand from all of the members that they understood exactly what our intentions were, and they realized that there was nothing to fear from the bill.

12:10

Then we started to discuss what we could do to improve it. So at the third committee meeting, which we had scheduled for a couple of hours but actually only took an hour, wording for some consequential amendments were discussed. At the fourth committee meeting we reviewed them and discovered that we were in unanimous agreement about how they should read. Those amendments amounted to five general categories.

First, as I already mentioned, the name. We changed the name. We agreed that Modernizing Regional Governance Act was not the appropriate name because it has nothing to do with regional government, which is, frankly, what caused a significant amount of the confusion about what our intent with the legislation was, Mr. Speaker. So we changed the name to Enabling Regional Growth Boards Act because it is about regional growth boards and about helping collective regions that are experiencing substantive growth to find ways to manage that growth in a very productive manner, and enabling is key to the beginning because it really was meant from the very beginning and still is meant to be a tool that municipalities can access to help improve the way they manage.

Now, I've said before – we had discussions at AUMA and AAMD and C at the task force – that municipalities already manage growth within their own political jurisdiction, their legal jurisdiction, Mr. Speaker. They also, though, know that growth challenges cross those legally defined boundaries all the time. So most municipalities have, if not one or two, handfuls . . .

Mr. Hancock: After midnight in third reading they don't need that long a speech.

Mr. Griffiths: Thank you.

Many municipalities have several IDPs, intermunicipal development plans, Mr. Speaker, that work between municipalities because they realize that those legal boundaries are simply legal boundaries, and growth doesn't know those boundaries. They

want to make sure that they're not in competition with each other but actually doing their design and their development in a way that's constructive not just for their municipality but for all the municipalities in the region. This is simply another tool to make sure that they are empowered, if they so choose, to move forward with regional growth management boards to help manage that growth in a very productive manner.

This leads us to the second consequential amendment that was approved, and that is that these boards are voluntary. They were always intended to be voluntary, which is why we use the exact same wording as commissions. You know, I probably didn't explain that clearly enough to begin with, so people had concerns. So the municipalities, the members of the task force, asked if we could just have very explicit wording that makes sure that everyone understands that it's meant to be voluntary.

The third consequential amendment was the dispute resolution or appeal mechanism process, Mr. Speaker. We had actually more discussion about this than anything else, about how it should look, what it should look like. There were discussions that the province through the legislation should enforce a certain type of appeal or dispute resolution mechanism. But, consequentially, I said that it's not up to me to decide. Just as any growth management board would come together, they write the bylaws, they write the rules, and they manage their own affairs, so it was agreed that there should be an amendment that simply lays out that they couldn't be incorporated as an organization through regulation until they had come forward with some clear dispute resolution or appeal mechanism or both if they so choose. I had told them from the very beginning that that was not my call, and I didn't want to write it, but they asked if we could make sure that in the legislation it's explicitly laid out that they needed to have one before they could exist.

The fourth substantial one was the penalties, Mr. Speaker. Frankly, they recognized fully that we simply copied the penalties provision which is already currently in the MGA but simply asked, since we're going through the MGA process – their intention was to make some changes going forward – if we could incorporate some of those changes now, that we would have fines for the lack of provision of information to the growth management board rather than a penalty provision with prison time. Frankly, we've never used that provision, so I had no issue with that.

Then there were some miscellaneous amendments setting out that the board will set the time frames to comply with the growth plan that they set out, that it would remove a reference to the appointment of a public or other interest member, that it would clarify that the minister could approve the plan or reject it and send it back to the growth management board with suggestions, and finally, that we would table the growth plan, Mr. Speaker. None of these were too consequential, but they were significant in ensuring that municipalities understood our intent from the very beginning: that this is a tool for them to manage their growth.

As I said before, Mr. Speaker – our Premier has said it before, the cabinet has said it before, and our entire caucus says it constantly – we saw 136,000 people move to this province last year, and that number is not going to go down. In fact, it's likely going to grow. In four years, one term, those municipal leaders are going to need every tool they have in place to manage that growth, the competition between industry and agriculture, between where we do recreation and where we preserve the environment. There are real challenges, and they're going to need tools to manage their growth appropriately. This is a fantastic tool, which is why every single one of them and municipal leaders beyond those six organizations that were on the task force have asked the members

of this House to please, as quickly as possible, pass this exceptional piece of legislation so that they can get on with their work.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Airdrie.

Mr. Anderson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I first off want to commend the minister on taking the advice of the opposition and going for consultation on this matter before bringing it to this House. There is no doubt that this bill is far better in its final form than it was in its original form. There's no doubt that it is a better bill than it was.

One particular key point that I raised during question period as well as in debate was the issue of making sure that the boards were voluntary. The minister claims that they were always voluntary. That's not what the act said, of course, but the amendments do seem to address that issue that municipalities will have the opportunity to voluntarily join these growth boards if they wish. I think that that's a very key part because it is important that we give options, obviously, to our municipalities to work and grow together and so forth, and this, I guess, could be considered a tool in the tool box for that.

But make no mistake; this legislation clearly did not say that this was a voluntary thing before. It said that the minister could unilaterally decide who joined and what communities would be involved in these boards and their borders, et cetera. That was unacceptable. But the minister has adopted the recommendations of, certainly, the Wildrose caucus and also the AUMA and AAMD and C, who were telling us – and that's where we got the recommendation from, the AUMA and AAMD and C reps – that that was a key provision that they wanted to see. So we're glad to see that in there.

That's what effective opposition does. We talk to stakeholders when they have issues with it. That night I was on the phone with my mayor in Airdrie, and we talked it over a couple of times that week and identified the problems with it. I know many members in this House did the same thing, and we were able to express those issues with an all-night debate on Bill 28. Thankfully, the minister listened to those things and has made the changes. There were other changes that were made, and a lot of them are positive.

I still have some misgivings, some concerns about this bill that make it very difficult to support. First of all, everybody in here agrees with regional co-operation, where two municipalities, three municipalities, a group of municipalities get together and come together and undertake a joint project and so forth. In some communities it's a rec centre. In Airdrie we have a rec centre that was mostly funded by the people of Airdrie, the city of Airdrie, but also partially funded by the county of Rocky View. So that's an example of regional co-operation, coming together and building a shared facility that both the county and the city can enjoy, which is good.

12:20

But regional co-operation and regional governance: there is difference between those things. Regional governance is something that I put a red flag around. We have three levels of government already in this country and where we live in this province. We have, obviously, federal government, provincial government, municipal government. I am concerned, as I think we should all be concerned, about forming a fourth level of government, a quasi-fourth level of government, regional governance.

We already have enough bureaucracy in this province, and I'm worried that by creating these regional boards, they can quickly get away and turn from an organizational arm or a way for

communities to come together and talk, like the Calgary Regional Partnership, et cetera, and all of a sudden turn into an entire separate level of government, an expensive level of government that will need to be funded and will have all kinds of complications in it. I don't think that's something we need. I think we should be very careful, and I think all of the municipalities in this province should be very careful that they don't let these planning boards become another level of bureaucracy and another level of government.

I'm also worried that those municipalities that chose not to become part of these growth boards will be punished either through the allocation of water or not allowing the allocation of water and water rights and so forth as is the case with Rocky View county right now and Foothills and others that are essentially being punished by the city of Calgary for not joining the Calgary Regional Partnership. I don't think that's a good, neighbourly thing to do. I think that there needs to be co-operation, but you can't hold, figuratively speaking, a gun to the smaller municipality and say, "You must do this, or else you don't get water," for example.

I also worry with regard to the province if they come forward and, say, make funding available disproportionately to the communities that are involved with these governance boards versus those that are not involved with the governance boards. They haven't done that yet, but will they? And will that become a way of penalizing those communities that choose to maintain their municipal autonomy and the autonomy of their citizens? That's a danger that we need to guard against, in my view.

We have had regional planning boards in the past. They have not been successful, Mr. Speaker, for the reasons that we've talked about, a lot of the reasons that we've talked about. They failed, and it was for a lot of the same reasons. The voting structures couldn't be agreed upon and were unfair and gave veto power to one community over others. There were competing interests. We see this with Parkland county, for example. Parkland county, part of the Capital Region Board, wants to build an industrial park on their land and is unable to because for the Capital Region Board, particularly the City of Edmonton, it doesn't fit within their priorities within their plan; therefore, they don't want to allow it.

I don't expect Edmonton to not act in its best interests. That's what municipalities do. But when that impact and having that authority takes away the autonomy of a neighbouring community like Parkland county, which is a very proud and prosperous county – to take that autonomy away from them and say, "No, you can't develop," is a problem. You can't develop in the way you want to. That's a problem.

If that same scenario had been imposed in Calgary and, say, the Calgary Regional Partnership was like the capital board, that means that CrossIron Mills, for example, which is something that, certainly, my constituents and the Member for Chestermere-Rocky View's constituents and a lot of folks in Calgary and elsewhere really enjoy – that piece of infrastructure would not exist today if we had the equivalent of the Capital Region Board governing Calgary. That economic driver would not have been built because Calgary would not have allowed it, and they've said that several times. They would never have allowed it. So I have concerns about these boards.

Finally, I would like to give, I guess, a friendly warning to communities in our high-density, high-population areas in this province, mainly around Calgary and Edmonton, a warning for those surrounding communities, that they need to be very, very careful – very careful – about joining these governance boards. They have to be very careful that not only can they get in voluntarily but that they can leave voluntarily so that if the powers

of that board are starting to take advantage of them and take advantage of their population and are overruling decisions and limiting development in ways that are not proper, they can get out of that arrangement. Don't go into something that you can't get out of without a lot of pain. Whatever you do, please, please be careful.

As someone who lives in Airdrie, I hope that the folks in Airdrie – but I would apply this to Okotoks, High River, Chestermere, and other places – work with the city of Calgary, are good neighbours with the city of Calgary, but be very careful before giving away your autonomy and your own rights.

Second, please make sure before you join any of these boards that the voting rights are fair, that they don't give a veto to the larger population centre. That will never work, because that means that you've created a power imbalance that is just not healthy for local communities. So please don't join these boards unless voting rights are fair and equal.

Thirdly, minimum density requirements. I would urge the smaller centres in these rural counties surrounding these areas to be very wary about density requirements. When you control density and you artificially control it and densify, you make it difficult and more expensive for families who are growing and getting larger to get affordable lots. You make it difficult for the city to create larger parks and wider streets. There are a lot of things that come with high-density housing. It's good to have some high-density housing, but you don't want your community to become all high-density housing. Please be very careful that you get the right mix. By putting artificial density requirements in there, you are risking losing that unique nature that makes you a small rural community or a mid-sized city and so forth.

Just be careful before you give away your rights, before you give away your autonomy under these boards, and once you get in, make sure that you can get out no matter what so that you don't run into the situation that Parkland county, for example, is experiencing right now.

With that, I will not be supporting the bill in its entirety, but I will say that the bill is certainly better than it was because it creates a voluntary mechanism going in. But there are just so many red flags here and dangers. I worry about how these are going to be used going into the future, so I will not be supporting the bill. I know that our caucus is split on it. Some support it; some do not support it. We'll have that debate, I'm sure, going into the future, depending on how this plays out.

Thank you for your time, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms Blakeman: Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the opportunity to speak in third reading to the anticipated effect of Bill 28. Sorry; I've forgotten the new name, something about enabling something, enabling growth management boards.

I think this is where it really shows the difference between whether you come from representing a high population, a high-density area, or not. I am not convinced, and I have not heard any arguments that would convince me that the government amendments were a huge improvement on the bill. Now, granted, there are some things in there that were good, and I'll certainly give you credit for where I think improvements were made.

12:30

Let me back up and start from the very beginning. I think it's very important that we have tools for managing growth and tools for planning. Really important. I supported and still support the concept of the land-use management plans, the idea that we would

be planning long into the future and being able to think ahead about how we were going to allocate land and how water was going to be used and where wildlife corridors could be, et cetera, et cetera.

I would argue very strongly that the government is not making appropriate decisions with those land-use plans. This constant thing about, yeah, look how much we're promising not to develop: of course, it's all the crappy land that nobody wants anyway that they'll be so generous in giving away.

This is just to say, you know, that I'm generally in favour of all of those tools to be able to plan ahead, whether it is the land-use plans, which are more for the unoccupied land – well, that's not true, because I think the municipalities will use it as well – but also to address some of the problems that we've seen in managing larger cities surrounded by smaller centres or a sort of urban-rural mix.

Frankly, there are competing interests there. Cities are trying, I hope, to not sprawl so much, and they're trying not to allow constant acreagelike developments moving farther and farther out. It's a frustration to places like Edmonton and Calgary and, I imagine, Lethbridge and some of the other cities that they then get some centres outside of them that welcome those acreages moving right up to their borders. Now the cities are still having to work with that, but exactly what they didn't want is now sitting, you know, two feet past their borders.

There does need to be a way to manage all of that and to plan for the future, which is really important. We've got a lot of land and not a huge population. What we do know is that we need to really plan for our growth and how things will be managed along our high-population areas, and that is that Edmonton to Calgary line. If you look at a map of where the population is in Alberta, in that strip are the really population areas and population growth.

Interestingly, in southern Alberta the number of people is not increasing. It's actually either stable or slightly decreasing. Where did I pull that information from? It actually came from the numbers that were used by the Electoral Boundaries Commission. There was quite an argument at one point about whether southern Alberta should lose a seat, and that argument came from the last two Electoral Boundary Commissions.

Planning is very good, and I'm glad to see that the government understands that and that they're trying to assist the municipalities with doing that and that they did finally step up and do something. This government tends to say: oh, you know, we'll allow this stuff to develop through a patchwork. You know, with nonsmoking the provincial government wouldn't step up and say: "Here's what we're going to do. No smoking in public places." No. They allowed a little patchwork: this community, that community, this, that. It was a patchwork all over Alberta. You didn't really know what the rules were as you moved from one area to another. The other place we saw that was with VLTs. Some communities voted to get rid of them; some were thinking about it. We didn't get a complete view of it from the government. For a long time we couldn't get the provincial government to step in on this one, so good to do that, good that there was something written about a dispute resolution mechanism or an appeal mechanism.

What is not clear to me is whether or not it's binding. It's one thing to have a dispute resolution, but if it's not binding, then you just start all over. It just gets appealed to a different level, and it wasn't particularly effective in dealing with the problem at the level you said you wanted it dealt with. So I'm not sure that that really did everything it was supposed to.

I believe that in the end what ended up happening here is that the Capital Region Board kind of got cut out of the act or kind of went around it, or the act kind of moulded itself around the capital

regional plan. I guess that's what the government decided to do, but considering that that's why we got into this, it's a bit strange.

The penalty clause. You know, I remember standing in the hallway behind the Minister of Municipal Affairs, who was absolutely bewildered that people would be upset with the penalty clause because, as he said: but it's all over the MGA. Yeah, but that doesn't make it right. I'm glad that they dealt with the penalties and that they're not going to try and throw people in jail. They've also reworded it so that they wouldn't be fining the mayors. Of course, in the other section it says that the people that were appointed to this board were the mayors, and then the mayors could designate someone else to go if they wanted to. The penalties would have applied directly to the mayors of all of the municipalities, which I thought was kind of an odd way for the provincial government to do things, but there you go.

The minister was very careful to get up and list everybody that was on the round-table and say that everybody was in favour of this, and, you know, I'm not sure that that's true. I think that some of the people just signed off to say, "Please make the pain stop," whatever, and signed it. If he wants to believe that everybody was gung-ho, okay – fine – but I don't see this, in particular, being an agreement that is really the best possible agreement for the centres that have the most people in them. Once again, this provincial government has made a decision that works more in favour of rural municipal districts and counties, very small centres, and disproportionately works against where the majority of the population in Alberta lives, which is in the metro areas of Edmonton and Calgary.

You know, they just seem very persistent. The government keeps coming down on the side of these smaller areas, yet for what most of us are interested in and want, we are not being well served by the government in the choices that it keeps making in giving way to these municipal districts and counties. It just doesn't make sense to me.

Let me get to the last point now. This voluntary thing: that absolutely baffles me. What is the point of having people come together if they don't all have – you're trying to plan for a region. You're trying to plan for a specific geographic region that has different leaderships in it and different sizes, maybe competing sizes, certainly competing interests of municipalities. Generally speaking, they've got a great big city, Edmonton or Calgary, in them or one of the smaller cities – Medicine Hat, Lethbridge, Red Deer, Grande Prairie, Fort McMurray – and then the clusters of these smaller centres that are around them.

I still have not heard a compelling argument from the government as to why this, being a voluntary membership, is an advancement. One, what good is it if you're going to have six of the areas in and one not? Great. Well, then what do you do when you've all decided that the place that you want to get your transport hub happening in is municipality A and you've got an outlier out there that's not going to co-operate and they decide to do it, too? Well, you're no further ahead. You had a bunch of people agreeing on a plan and an outlier that didn't want to join in on this that goes ahead and screws everybody up anyway. How are we further ahead there? I don't think we are.

Also, the amendment is not clear about getting out. It seems to be voluntary to get in. Okay. That's a problem I've already described. Is it also voluntary to get out? Can you take your bat and your ball and go home if you don't like the deal that's happening? [interjection] Somebody is saying no. It's the Minister of Transportation. I'd feel better if I was hearing it from somebody else.

12:40

Again, you know, how is that an improvement? You all come to an agreement, and one of them says: "No, I don't like it. I'm going to opt out of this. I'm voluntarily going to leave this arrangement." You can use your dispute mechanism or your appeal mechanism, but if it's not binding, again, how are you further forward?

This whole arrangement seems really odd to me. I'm a fairly logical thinker, and I am missing the logic in this. I don't see how this is actually implementable and how it's actually going to work in the long run.

When I listened to my hon. colleague from Airdrie, who's representing one of those areas around a larger centre, the cautions that he's giving his people are exactly what makes me very concerned as someone representing part of a large urban area where there is a higher density of population. He's cautioning people, you know – what was it he was talking about? – about the way the voting comes out. The voting rights are fair. Yeah, it has to be done in a fair way. That doesn't mean equal shares. That doesn't mean each municipality that's in on this gets one vote. It has to be done in a way that is actually representative of the money and of the people that are in the region. So, yes, a larger municipality is going to carry more weight. They've got more people and more money, and they're providing more services that everybody is able to take advantage of.

Mr. Anderson: That's another level of government, though.

Ms Blakeman: The hon. member is raising concerns about another level of government being implemented there. I share his concerns about that, but I am not going to agree to any scheme that has the much larger share of the population being disadvantaged in favour of much smaller centres. Where's the logic in that? That doesn't make any sense to me at all. As someone who's living in and representing one of those urban centres, why on earth would we agree to that?

In the end, after all of this to deal with the problems that the Capital Region Board was experiencing, you know, the act seems to have sort of gone around it or excluded it or jumped over it or something. I think there are still a number of problems that are inherent in this plan.

I know that the AAMD and C was real keen on it – that doesn't surprise me – that AUMA went for it. Calgary has always got to be different, God bless them, because they have a marketing board. I was really fortunate in one of the sessions I went to at the AUMA conference, and thank you, AUMA, for inviting me and allowing me to come and to the taxpayers for paying for me to get there. It was a fantastic session. It was a session that was exactly on all of these issues, and it had a lot of different points of view represented. I learned a lot from that. I learned that I was on the right track with some of the things I've been saying about a redistribution of industrial property taxes. That's how I learned that Calgary has a marketing board, and, boy, that woman representing them was firm about that.

I am really reluctant to support this. Thank you.

The Speaker: Thank you.

Hon. members, the 29(2)(a) section is available.

Seeing no one under 29(2)(a), other speakers? We will recognize Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview.

Mr. Bilous: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Question.

Mr. Bilous: I know that members on the other side are dying for the question, but I do need to make a few comments on this bill.

I do want to say that we were quite pleased that the minister decided to put the brakes on this and, I should say, the Premier as well although it is very much worth noting that there was very little media coverage and little discussion going on before we, the Alberta NDP, raised the alarm bells on this bill.

I can tell you that I was talking to members of AUMA and AAMD and C about this bill. The concern, Mr. Speaker . . . [interjections] I'm not sure why there's so much holiday cheer on the front bench there.

In all seriousness, Mr. Speaker, I was on the phone talking with people from AUMA, AAMDC. They had heard about this bill, weren't sure exactly what was in it, what their position was. I even had comments from some of them saying: well, we're going to present our position paper next week. I remember this was on a Tuesday, I believe. My concern was: "No, no, no. This bill will be rammed through in the next 48 hours. You need to address this today, now."

The Alberta NDP held a press conference where all the media was available and in attendance, and we went through the bill and the alarming sections of the bill. Again, I do want to say that our biggest concerns with the bill were actually addressed. Now, I do find it, again, ironic that instead of getting it right the first time and actually consulting with municipalities and having a real dialogue about a piece of legislation, as per usual this government felt that they knew best and tried to ram through Bill 28 without actually consulting with the very municipal districts and counties that it affects.

You know, it's funny. I need to find this quote. Well, it's not a quote, but I know that the Minister of Municipal Affairs had initially said that we were – I don't know if he used the word "fearmongering" – trying to induce fear or hype about a bill that really just was already in existence, that this was just house-keeping, and we were just going to enshrine policy that they already had. I mean, the frustration or the challenge is that that's not true at all, and the concerns ranged from lack of consultation with municipalities to the fact that this bill was written in a very heavy-handed way, talking about severe punitive measures for municipalities that are part of the regional boards but don't agree with the decision, and if they went back to their own mayor and they didn't support this, they could be thrown in jail.

I do want to say that the current amended version that we're speaking to now in third reading isn't perfect, but I do want to mention that the first draft was very much written in a top-down, very paternalistic way, where the provincial government knows best and municipalities are children that can be scolded. You know, they're given dollars through grants, which is very much like giving them an allowance, as opposed to coming up with real, innovative ways for municipalities to have revenue or to address their revenue issues and as well to give them more authority and more power.

You know, the fact that the province and the minister listened to our concerns, the concerns of municipalities – obviously, this wasn't just an Alberta NDP victory. This was a victory, I would argue, for all municipalities. I know all opposition parties joined the discussion and had concerns with the bill as it was written.

Again, this is kind of a pat on the back and a kick in the bum. It's kind of both of those things. I'm happy that this government hit the brakes on this and decided to go back and consult with AUMA, AAMDC, other organizations and municipalities. But the frustration is that it took, once again, the government being forced and scolded and the public stepping up and making a lot of noise about a bill.

12:50

Again, it must be noted, Mr. Speaker, that second reading of Bill 28 in its old form was passed at almost 2 in the morning. That doesn't speak to transparency or openness or the fact that it's done in daylight hours, when people are awake and listening. It's just another day for this government to pass poorly written legislation in the wee hours of the night.

You know, the major concerns that we had, including the title of the bill – I remember first hearing the minister bragging about how they're going to change the title, and I thought: wow, that's going to amount to making some significant impacts for municipalities.

Mr. Anderson: Huge.

Mr. Bilous: Yeah. Other than killing some more trees and wasting some ink, you know, the name is not really what municipalities were concerned about.

Again, I'm happy to see the changes that did come in. The fact that these regional governance boards are voluntary is something that, again, municipalities were calling for, and the organizations that know best were consulted, which is what we were calling for in our opposition to the bill. Despite what some members on the other side may think, no, we don't come up with our positions just randomly or in opposition just to oppose bills. It's actually from working with the very people that the bills are going to affect.

You know, I'm glad that we're at where we are. I do have to scold the government for their process or lack thereof once again, but this is definitely much better for regional governance, for our municipalities.

I just want to say in closing, Mr. Speaker, that all along the Alberta NDP have supported the fact that we need to look at not just individual municipalities but, as the province is growing, look at how different municipalities can co-operate and work together. We are in favour of regional co-operation and regional growth, but the method which the government took to get to this point is what we have an issue with.

Again, I'm happy that we were there to raise the alarm to notify Albertans that this was going on and to get them to voice their concerns. You know, I'm always happy to see the government when they come to their senses and listen to the Alberta NDP and other voices around the province and actually consult with stakeholders.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Hon. members, 29(2)(a) is available. The hon. Member for Little Bow.

Mr. Donovan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Now, as the hon. House leader had said, this side doesn't always vote exactly the same as . . .

Mr. Anderson: Clones.

Mr. Donovan: That we're clones. Yeah. Something along that line.

I'm going to get up and pat the minister on the back for this one because, yes, we did sit up here on October 30 until 2 in the morning debating the original Bill 28, and quite a few things were brought up. He went back and he actually consulted with AAMD and C and AUMA and the mayors and stuff, and that's what we asked him for that night. Process, going through it: I think I said it 40-some times in about 10 minutes. I think everybody was getting a little tired of it, but I give kudos where they're due.

The amendments. After talking with the members that it was affecting, the AAMD and C, AUMA, and the other mayors and

reeves around the province seem happy with it, so I think it seems to be a good piece of legislation now.

When I got this job, one of the previous MLAs, Ray Speaker, who was an MLA from '63-92 and was on all angles – he was a Social Credit, he was an independent, and he was a PC at the end – said that your job is to hold the government accountable when they do things, pat them on the back when they do things right, and try not to do any personal attacks. I'm patting the minister on the back for this one because he did listen to us, and I give full credit for that.

That's all I wanted to add to it. Thank you for listening. Next time maybe we'll go through that process a little earlier so that we don't have to bond until 2 in the morning on it next time. But I thank you for that.

The Speaker: Hon. members, 29(2)(a) is available. I see no one.

Any other speakers? No.

Are you ready for the question?

Hon. Members: Question.

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

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 12:55 a.m.]

[One minute having elapsed, the Assembly divided]

[The Speaker in the chair]

For the motion:

Amery	Goudreau	Lukaszuk
Bhardwaj	Griffiths	McDonald
Bilous	Hancock	McIver
Brown	Horne	Olson
Cao	Horner	Pastoor
Casey	Jansen	Pedersen
Cusanelli	Johnson, J.	Quadri
DeLong	Johnson, L.	Quest
Donovan	Khan	Redford
Dorward	Klimchuk	Sarich
Drysdale	Kubinec	VanderBurg
Fawcett	Lemke	Weadick
Fraser	Luan	Xiao

Against the motion:

Anderson	Blakeman	Strankman
Anglin		

Totals:	For – 39	Against – 4
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[Motion carried; Bill 28 read a third time]

1:00

Bill 44

Notaries and Commissioners Act

The Speaker: The hon. Government House Leader.

Mr. Hancock: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the Member for Sherwood Park I would like to move Bill 44. It's a good bill. We should vote for it.

The Speaker: Are there other speakers? The hon. Member for Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview.

Mr. Bilous: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to rely on some paper here as my brain is slowing down a little bit. [interjections] What, you don't like when I just wax there, Madam Premier?

Ms Redford: Yes.

Mr. Bilous: Okay. Speaking to third reading of Bill 44, Notaries and Commissioners Act, we agree and are quite pleased with the fact that the minister decided to consolidate the Notaries Public Act and the Commissioners for Oaths Act into one piece of legislation. However, there are numerous concerns that we share. Again, it fits in with the pattern of pieces of legislation that this government is putting forward giving the minister incredible powers as opposed to spelling out and limiting those powers within the legislation. I'll try to go through this as quickly as possible. This bill – and here we have our word of the week – creates draconian requirements for notaries and commissioners and hands the minister enormous amounts of discretion over regulations and even day-to-day personal meddling in a notary's affairs.

We would expect the Minister of Justice as a former lawyer to have a better idea of how seriously most notaries and commissioners take their duties and how they uphold the standards of the office. Everyone has taken an oath at some point, whether they're a notary by virtue of being a judge, lawyer, or MLA or whether they are an appointed notary. The challenge that I have with this bill, Mr. Speaker, is that it's written in a way that is quite condescending and paternalistic.

We would have liked to have seen the minister, if he was serious about improving the regulatory scheme for notaries and commissioners, consider a model similar to British Columbia's instead of instituting the provisions of this bill, which give him enormous powers and do very little to protect the public interest or the men and women who are serving us as notaries public and commissioners for oaths. I'm just going to go through these points here. In British Columbia notaries are appointed for life by the Supreme Court of British Columbia as a self-regulating profession. They're regulated by the Society of Notaries Public of British Columbia, which oversees and sets standards to maintain public confidence. This model is actually very similar to the model we use in Alberta and indeed across the country to regulate the legal profession. So why is the minister targeting notaries and commissioners to be put under his foot but sees no problem with the regulatory scheme of lawyers within the province? Furthermore, B.C. notaries exercise far greater power, which aids in access to justice for the public. Lawyers are busy and expensive. Wouldn't it be better for us to give more resources and powers to qualified notaries and paralegals instead of taking their powers away and instituting patronizing and offensive regulations?

Another problem with the bill, Mr. Speaker, is that in granting powers to notaries public, the minister has added the words "subject to the Regulations." There are questions as far as: subject to what regulations? Regulations can change in time, which will result in uncertainty about a notary's powers and role and make it difficult for notaries to ensure that they're carrying out their duties in compliance with requirements. It also makes it difficult for the public to know where to turn for various services. If the legislation is meant to instill confidence in the public and assist notaries in knowing applicable duties and standards, this section fails in those objectives. Regulations cannot and should not dictate the powers of a notary public, which is an office upon which the public frequently needs to rely.

Again, the minister has now changed the powers that used to be available for all notaries so that only lawyers and judges may notarize deeds, contracts, and commercial instruments. This even includes those issued or prepared by judges or lawyers in respect of which judges or lawyers have otherwise provided legal advice. This will impede access to justice for the public since even more

powers are moved from notaries to lawyers. This also conflates the role of lawyer and notary. If you need legal advice or contract interpretation, you need to see a lawyer. Thus it's always been. If you just need a document notarized, you should be able to use a notary, who's cheaper and faster and more accessible.

The bill also hands the minister enormous amounts of discretion in a number of ways, which I'll try to go through. He may now wish to establish a code of conduct through regulations, to issue directives governing the duties and conduct of notaries public. The minister should know that notaries and commissioners are already issued a booklet with guidelines for their conduct when they're appointed. Why take such a heavy-handed approach to a formerly well-regulated profession?

It also creates, to an extent, a lack of clarity, transparency, and security. What will be in these regulations and directives, and what will be in the code of conduct? There's also a lack of certainty, if these can change frequently, both for notaries, in knowing how they must conduct the affairs of their office, and for the public, when they need their notarial services. The minister may also issue written directions to notaries and commissioners and communicate those to anyone he thinks appropriate with no regard for privacy rights.

Now, the minister may also refuse an application or suspend or revoke the appointment of any notary public for a number of reasons, including certain charges or when "the Minister considers it appropriate to do so." Aside from the wild discretion this affords the minister, it's also problematic because someone charged is not yet convicted. We still have the presumption of innocence in Alberta. Even more troubling, "A decision by the Minister under this section is final." There are no opportunities for appeal.

Many people must be notaries public for their employment duties. How can you prevent them from being able to carry out their jobs with no chance to appeal? What will the disciplinary process be before resorting to revocation or suspension of the appointment? That's not included in the legislation. I'm not sure if it would be covered under the regulations, but notaries public, commissioners for oaths, and the public as a whole deserve to know that there will be an appropriate process in place, considering how devastating it may be for someone's employment to have their appointment revoked.

Similarly, the minister's powers to make regulations are totally new and wide ranging. Particularly troubling is the ability of the minister to limit the power of any particular notary public. This is highly reminiscent of the problems that this government finds itself running into over and over. Marceau, for example. Considering that this government has been called out by a judge of the Court of Queen's Bench for blatant and egregiously biased decision-making, how will people know this power is being used fairly, transparently, and appropriately?

I note a few drafting problems with the bill. The definition of lawyer: the language is similar to previous legislation, but the minister has added the line "has not been suspended or disbarred." The language isn't clear that once the suspended lawyer is reinstated, he or she will regain his or her status as a notary public or commissioner. The language of the previous legislation was far clearer in stating that members could not exercise their powers of notary public while their membership or registration is suspended.

There are classes of members of the Law Society who are not active and practising lawyers who nonetheless retain their status as members. They are not entitled to practise law or provide legal advice, and they are not covered by insurance, but they still can act as notaries or commissioners. In other words, an inactive member is not a lawyer but is a notary public. Since provisions requiring lawyers to notarize certain documents, deeds, contracts, and commercial instruments rely

on this definition, there is a discrepancy in the bill in terms of who's qualified to perform those particular notarial services. In drafting the definitions as you did, did you intend to include nonactive members of the Law Society amongst those with the ability to notarize deeds, contracts, and commercial instruments? As drafted, the language is unclear and contradictory.

Now, I'm sure that my colleagues have spoken to this in other readings, but for these reasons, that I listed, Mr. Speaker, we have some serious concerns about the bill and the way that it's currently written, and therefore I cannot support this bill.

Thank you.

1:10

The Speaker: Other speakers? The hon. Member for Edmonton-Centre.

Ms Blakeman: Sorry. I know it's late and I know everyone wants to go home, but I haven't been able to speak to this bill, and for my caucus I'm the critic for it, and I do have a couple of concerns. I'll go as quickly as I can so that those that are sleeping can sleep in a more comfortable place.

I was a little curious about why this came into being. I did get, actually, a two-column document from the minister, which was very kind. Once I complained, I think, about not getting briefed at all, this did appear, which I appreciated. Thank you very much. But it's not very informative. It basically states the obvious, which is that the act is combining two previous acts together, that the fines are being increased. I mean, it's just kind of a colour commentary on what's happening in the bill.

What it doesn't explain is why this has to happen. I asked the sponsor of the bill, for example, what the reasoning was behind having the fines go from a hundred dollars to a thousand dollars or from \$500 to \$5,000. It seemed a bit steep to me. I wondered what had caused this that there would need to be such a leap. Now, earlier tonight I heard that some other bill – sorry; I don't remember – was being changed because really there wasn't a cost of living factored into the fines, to which I said: well, then, factor it in. I mean, you change the bill here; if that's your concern, you know, write it in that every five years there'll be a cost-of-living increase to the fines that are mentioned in the bills. But there's no explanation here. It just goes from a hundred to a thousand and from \$500 to \$5,000. I couldn't get the sponsor of the bill or the minister to tell me why it had to increase that much.

I'm really uneasy about how uncertain the bill is and the minister is about the FOIP application here. They have stuff in the bill, but the minister – I believe it was the minister; I'm sorry if I've got the quote wrong – spoke to it – yeah, it was in the briefing note – and said: there may be a need to add provisions so that the collection, use, and disclosure of information regarding conduct and discipline reflect the current FOIP requirement for an enactment and the new more flexible discipline options. So they've put something in the bill, and they're not quite sure how it's going to work, which, especially around FOIP, frankly, makes me uneasy.

There is quite a large expansion of the Minister of Justice's scope and power around this. The number of times it says that "the Minister may, by regulation" or "subject to the Regulations" or "the Minister may, by regulation, establish a code of conduct" or it's done "in a manner determined by the Minister," just, you know, that "the Minister considers it appropriate to do so" or "a decision by the Minister . . . is final" – there's a lot that is being left out of the bill and up to the minister's say-so. I'm never comfortable when that happens because, inevitably, we get differing interpretations depending on who happens to be the minister of the day.

The last thing that was a little odd was the mandate and role of the review committees. Sorry, it's an advisory committee for the notaries and a review committee for the commissioners. Their mandate and role are actually contained in a completely separate document, not in regs and not in the act. Again, you know, put it in the act and fess up to it, or don't do it.

You know, I once had a piece of advice from Nick Taylor, who said: if you're not clear exactly on what's in this bill and the effect that it's going to have, don't support it. I find myself in that position with this bill. I've not been able to get any kind of substantial explanation for my questions, and I just don't know what's at play here. So I'm not willing to support it. That's not going to change the history, the outcome. But I think it's important that we do understand why we're doing something and that the minister or the sponsor of the bill is able to explain it, and all I heard in varying forms was: this is a good bill; support it. Not good enough.

Thank you.

The Speaker: Standing Order 29(2)(a) is available.

Seeing none, are there any other speakers? None?

Some Hon. Members: Question.

The Speaker: Hon. members, the question has been called on third reading of Bill 44, Notaries and Commissioners Act.

[Motion carried; Bill 44 read a third time]

The Speaker: The hon. Government House Leader.

Mr. Hancock: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It has been a very productive session. It is now my privilege and pleasure to move pursuant to Government Motion 41, which was passed the other day by this House, that the business that we needed to accomplish has been accomplished and that the House stand adjourned.

[Motion carried; the Assembly adjourned at 1:17 a.m. pursuant to Government Motion 41]

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

Activity to December 05, 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 Sitzings.

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)
Royal Assent -- (May 27, 2013 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2013 cE-7.5]

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)

Royal Assent -- (May 27, 2013 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force May 27, 2013; SA 2013 c9]

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)

Royal Assent -- (May 27, 2013 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2013 cP-18.5]

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)

Royal Assent -- (May 27, 2013 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force May 27, 2013; SA 2013 c8]

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)

Royal Assent -- (May 27, 2013 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2013 c7]

22 Aboriginal Consultation Levy Act (\$) (Campbell)

First Reading -- 2191-92 (May 8, 2013 aft., passed)

Second Reading -- 2275-83 (May 9, 2013 aft.), 2321-342 (May 13, 2013 eve., passed)

Committee of the Whole -- 2413-442 (May 14, 2013 eve., passed)

Third Reading -- 2468-478 (May 15, 2013 aft., passed)

Royal Assent -- (May 27, 2013 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2013; cA-1.2]

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)

Royal Assent -- (May 27, 2013 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force May 27, 2013, with exceptions; SA 2013 c11]

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)

Royal Assent -- (May 27, 2013 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force May 27, 2013, with exceptions; SA 2013 c10]

- 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)
Committee of the Whole -- 2342-375 (May 13, 2013 eve., passed with amendments)
Third Reading -- 2408-410 (May 14, 2013 aft., passed)
Royal Assent -- (May 27, 2013 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2013 cC-12.5]
- 26 Assurance for Students Act (J. Johnson)**
First Reading -- 2394 (May 14, 2013 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 2403-408 (May 14, 2013 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 2442-444 (May 14, 2013 eve., passed)
Third Reading -- 2464-468 (May 15, 2013 aft., passed)
Royal Assent -- (May 27, 2013 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force May 27, 2013; SA 2013 cA-44.8]
- 27 Flood Recovery and Reconstruction Act (Griffiths)**
First Reading -- 2495 (Oct. 28, 2013 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 2549-50 (Oct. 29, 2013 eve.), 2584-94 (Oct. 30, 2013 aft.), 2706-14 (Nov. 4, 2013 eve., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 2732-44 (Nov. 5, 2013 aft.), 2749-71 (Nov. 5, 2013 eve.), 2796-808 (Nov. 6, 2013 aft.), 2809-19 (Nov. 6, 2013 eve., passed)
Third Reading -- 3083-87 (Nov. 25, 2013 eve.), 3128-41 (Nov. 26, 2013 eve., passed)
- 28* Enabling Regional Growth Boards Act (Griffiths)**
First Reading -- 2495 (Oct. 28, 2013 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 2550 (Oct. 29, 2013 eve.), 2594-601 (Oct. 30, 2013 aft.), 2603-641 (Oct. 30, 2013 eve., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 3209-12 (Nov. 28, 2013 aft), 3345-46 (Dec. 3, 2013 eve., passed with amendments)
Third Reading -- 3417-22 (Dec. 4, 2013 eve., passed on division)
- 29 Pharmacy and Drug Amendment Act, 2013 (Horne)**
First Reading -- 2495-6 (Oct. 28, 2013 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 2534 (Oct. 29, 2013 aft.), 2550-60 (Oct. 29, 2013 eve., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 2705-6 (Nov. 4, 2013 eve., passed)
Third Reading -- 2771 (Nov. 5, 2013 eve., passed)
Royal Assent -- (Nov. 7, 2013 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force December 19, 2013; SA 2013 c13]
- 30* Building Families and Communities Act (\$) (Hancock)**
First Reading -- 2581 (Oct. 30, 2013 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 2788-96 (Nov. 6, 2013 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 2937-60 (Nov. 19, 2013 eve., passed with amendments)
Third Reading -- 3146-50 (Nov. 26, 2013 eve., passed)
- 31 Protecting Alberta's Environment Act (\$) (McQueen)**
First Reading -- 2496 (Oct. 28, 2013 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 2544-7 (Oct. 29, 2013 aft.), 2560-6 (Oct. 29, 2013 eve.), 2657-65 (Oct. 31, 2013 aft.), 2703-5 (Nov. 4, 2013 eve., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 2744-7 (Nov. 5, 2013 aft.), 2749-71 (Nov. 5, 2013 eve., passed)
Third Reading -- 2819-24 (Nov. 6, 2013 eve.), 2848-49 (Nov. 7, 2013 aft.), 2895 (Nov. 18, 2013 eve., passed)
- 32 Enhancing Safety on Alberta Roads Act (McIver)**
First Reading -- 2526 (Oct. 29, 2013 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 2583-4 (Oct. 30, 2013 aft.), 2886-91 (Nov. 18, 2013 eve., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 3081-83 (Nov. 25, 2013 eve., passed)
Third Reading -- 3124-26 (Nov. 26, 2013 aft., passed)
- 33 Tobacco Reduction Amendment Act, 2013 (Rodney)**
First Reading -- 2837 (Nov. 7, 2013 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 2885 (Nov. 18, 2013 eve.), 2981-87 (Nov. 20, 2013 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 3075-81 (Nov. 25, 2013 eve., passed)
Third Reading -- 3174-84 (Nov. 27, 2013 aft.), 3185-88 (Nov. 27, 2013 eve., passed)
- 34 Building New Petroleum Markets Act (\$) (Hughes)**
First Reading -- 2786 (Nov. 6, 2013 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 2846 (Nov. 7, 2013 aft.), 2913-27 (Nov. 19, 2013 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 2997-3010 (Nov. 20, 2013 eve., passed)
Third Reading -- 3087-90 (Nov. 25, 2013 eve., passed)

- 35 Financial Administration Amendment Act, 2013 (Horner)**
First Reading -- 2678 (Nov. 4, 2013 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 2731-2 (Nov. 5, 2013 aft.), 2928-31 (Nov. 19, 2013 aft.), 2933-37 (Nov. 19, 2013 eve., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 2993 (Nov. 20, 2013 aft., passed)
Third Reading -- 3029-39 (Nov. 21, 2013 aft., passed)
- 36 Appropriation (Supplementary Supply) Act, 2013 (No. 2) (\$) (Horner)**
First Reading -- 3125 (Nov. 26, 2013 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 3170-74 (Nov. 27, 2013 aft.), 3191 (Nov. 27, 2013 eve., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 3304-06 (Dec. 3, 2013 aft., passed)
Third Reading -- 3370-72 (Dec. 4, 2013 aft., passed)
- 37 Statutes Repeal Act (\$) (Denis)**
First Reading -- 2786 (Nov. 6, 2013 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 2846-47 (Nov. 7, 2013 aft.), 2891-94 (Nov. 18, 2013 eve.), 2960 (Nov. 19, 2013 eve., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 2993-96 (Nov. 20, 2013 aft., passed)
Third Reading -- 3039 (Nov. 21, 2013 aft.), 3091 (Nov. 25, 2013 eve., passed)
- 38 Statutes Amendment Act, 2013 (No. 2) (\$) (Denis)**
First Reading -- 2837-38 (Nov. 7, 2013 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 2885-86 (Nov. 18, 2013 eve.), 2960-62 (Nov. 19, 2013 eve., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 2996 (Nov. 20, 2013 aft., passed)
Third Reading -- 3091-92 (Nov. 25, 2013 eve., passed)
- 39 Enhancing Consumer Protection in Auto Insurance Act (Horner)**
First Reading -- 2786 (Nov. 6, 2013 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 2847-48 (Nov. 7, 2013 aft.), 2987-90 (Nov. 20, 2013 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 3127-28 (Nov. 26, 2013 eve., passed)
Third Reading -- 3188-89 (Nov. 27, 2013 eve., passed)
- 40 Settlement of International Investment Disputes Act (Quadri)**
First Reading -- 2678-9 (Nov. 4, 2013 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 2732 (Nov. 5, 2013 aft.), 2990-93 (Nov. 20, 2013 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 3141-42 (Nov. 26, 2013 eve., passed)
Third Reading -- 3189-90 (Nov. 27, 2013 eve., passed)
- 41 Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities Amendment Act, 2013 (Oberle)**
First Reading -- 2727 (Nov. 5, 2013 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 2787-8 (Nov. 6, 2013 aft.), 2896-98 (Nov. 18, 2013 eve., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 3142-46 (Nov. 26, 2013 eve., passed)
Third Reading -- 3191 (Nov. 27, 2013 eve., passed)
- 42 Securities Amendment Act, 2013 (Horner)**
First Reading -- 3164 (Nov. 27, 2013 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 3257 (Dec. 2, 2013 eve.), 3348-49 (Dec. 3, 2013 eve., passed)
- 43 Alberta Economic Development Authority Amendment Act, 2013 (Lukaszuk)**
First Reading -- 2727 (Nov. 5, 2013 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 2788 (Nov. 6, 2013 aft.), 2898 (Nov. 18, 2013 eve.), 2927-28 (Nov. 19, 2013 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 3010-14 (Nov. 20, 2013 eve., passed)
Third Reading -- 3090-91 (Nov. 25, 2013 eve., passed)
- 44 Notaries and Commissioners Act (Olesen)**
First Reading -- 2976 (Nov. 20, 2013 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 3028-29 (Nov. 21, 2013 aft.), 3190 (Nov. 27, 2013 eve., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 3350-52 (Dec. 3, 2013 eve., passed)
Third Reading -- 3422-3424 (Dec. 4, 2013 eve., passed)
- 45 Public Sector Services Continuation Act (Hancock)**
First Reading -- 3165 (Nov. 27, 2013 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 3212-16 (Nov. 28, 2013 aft.), 3261-75 (Dec. 2, 2013 eve., passed on division)
Committee of the Whole -- 3308-12 (Dec. 3, 2013 aft.), 3318-22 (Dec. 3, 2013 aft.), 3323-31 (Dec. 3, 2013 eve., passed)
Third Reading -- 3372-82 (Dec. 4, 2013 aft.), 3389-403 (Dec. 4, 2013 eve., passed on division)

- 46 Public Service Salary Restraint Act (Horner)**
 First Reading -- 3165 (Nov. 27, 2013 aft., passed)
 Second Reading -- 3254-56 (Dec. 2, 2013 eve.), 3275-90 (Dec. 2, 2013 eve., passed on division)
 Committee of the Whole -- 3306-08 (Dec. 3, 2013 aft.), 3317-18 (Dec. 3, 2013 aft.), 3331-45 (Dec. 3, 2013 eve., passed on division)
 Third Reading -- 3382-86 (Dec. 4, 2013 aft.), 3403-16 (Dec. 4, 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)
 Committee of the Whole -- 2298-303 (May 13, 2013 aft., passed)
 Third Reading -- 2303 (May 13, 2013 aft., passed)
 Royal Assent -- (May 27, 2013 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2013 c6]
- 204 Irlen Syndrome Testing Act (Jablonski)**
 First Reading -- 968 (Nov. 22, 2012 aft., passed), 1912 (Apr. 22, 2013 aft., referred to Standing Committee on Families and Communities), (Oct. 28, 2013 aft., motion to concur in report), (Nov. 4, 2013 aft., reported to Assembly, not proceeded with)
- 205 Fisheries (Alberta) Amendment Act, 2012 (Calahasen)**
 First Reading -- 1117 (Nov. 28, 2012 aft., passed), 1913 (Apr. 22, 2013 aft., referred to Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship), (Oct. 28, 2013 aft., motion to concur in report), (Nov. 4, 2013 aft., reported to Assembly, not proceeded with)
- 206* Tobacco Reduction (Flavoured Tobacco Products) Amendment Act, 2013 (Cusanelli)**
 First Reading -- 1350-51 (Dec. 6, 2012 aft., passed)
 Second Reading -- 2303-312 (May 13, 2013 aft., passed)
 Committee of the Whole -- 2687-94 (Nov. 4, 2013 aft.), 2865-73 (Nov. 18, 2013 aft., passed with amendments)
 Third Reading -- 3062-66 (Nov. 25, 2013 aft., passed on division)
- 207* Human Tissue and Organ Donation Amendment Act, 2013 (Webber)**
 First Reading -- 1690 (Mar. 21, 2013 aft., passed), 2375 (May 13, 2013 eve., moved to Government Bills and Orders)
 Second Reading -- 2395-403 (May 14, 2013 aft., passed)
 Committee of the Whole -- 2534-44 (Oct. 29, 2013 aft.), 2566-8 (Oct. 29, 2013 eve., passed with amendments)
 Third Reading -- 2566-8 (Oct. 29, 2013 eve., passed)
 Royal Assent -- (Nov. 7, 2013 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force November 7, 2013; SA 2013 c12]
- 208 Seniors' Advocate Act (Towle)**
 First Reading -- 1315 (Dec. 5, 2012 aft., passed)
 Second Reading -- 2873-83 (Nov. 18, 2013 aft.), 3067 (Nov. 25, 2013 aft.), 3235-45 (Dec. 2, 2013 aft., adjourned)
- 209 Severance and Bonus Limitation Statutes Amendment Act, 2013 (Anderson)**
 First Reading -- 2976 (Nov. 20, 2013 aft., passed)
- 211 Education (International Language Programs) Amendment Act, 2013 (Luan)**
 First Reading -- 3230 (Dec. 2, 2013 aft., passed)
- Pr1* Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Canada Act (Dorward)**
 First Reading -- 1999 (Apr. 24, 2013 aft., passed)
 Second Reading -- 2410-411 (May 14, 2013 aft., passed)
 Committee of the Whole -- 2445-446 (May 14, 2013 eve., passed with amendments)
 Third Reading -- 2478 (May 15, 2013 aft., passed)
 Royal Assent -- (May 27, 2013 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force May 27, 2013]

Pr2* Wild Rose Agricultural Producers Amendment Act, 2013 (McDonald)

First Reading -- 1999 (Apr. 24, 2013 aft., passed)

Second Reading -- 2413 (May 14, 2013 eve, passed)

Committee of the Whole -- 2445 (May 14, 2013 eve., passed with amendments)

Third Reading -- 2478 (May 15, 2013 aft., passed)

Royal Assent -- (May 27, 2013 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force May 27, 2013]

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Managing Editor
Alberta Hansard
1001 Legislature Annex
9718 – 107 St.
EDMONTON, AB T5K 1E4
Telephone: 780.427.1875