



Province of Alberta

The 28th Legislature
Second Session

Alberta Hansard

Thursday, March 13, 2014

Issue 8a

The Honourable Gene Zwozdesky, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of Alberta The 28th Legislature

Second Session

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

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Amery, Moe, Calgary-East (PC)
Anderson, Rob, Airdrie (W),
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Anglin, Joe, Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House-Sundre (W)
Barnes, Drew, Cypress-Medicine Hat (W)
Bhardwaj, Hon. 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
Brown, Dr. Neil, QC, Calgary-Mackay-Nose Hill (PC)
Calahasen, Pearl, Lesser Slave Lake (PC)
Campbell, Hon. Robin, West Yellowhead (PC),
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Cao, Wayne C.N., Calgary-Fort (PC)
Casey, Ron, Banff-Cochrane (PC)
Cusanelli, Christine, Calgary-Currie (PC)
Dallas, Hon. Cal, Red Deer-South (PC)
DeLong, Alana, Calgary-Bow (PC)
Denis, Hon. Jonathan, QC, Calgary-Acadia (PC),
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Donovan, Ian, Little Bow (W)
Dorward, David C., Edmonton-Gold Bar (PC),
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Drysdale, Hon. Wayne, Grande Prairie-Wapiti (PC)
Eggen, David, Edmonton-Calder (ND),
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)
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)
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Lemke, Ken, Stony Plain (PC)
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McDonald, Everett, Grande Prairie-Smoky (PC)
McIver, Hon. Ric, Calgary-Hays (PC)
McQueen, Hon. Diana, Drayton Valley-Devon (PC)
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Pedersen, Blake, Medicine Hat (W)
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Redford, Hon. Alison M., QC, Calgary-Elbow (PC),
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Rodney, Hon. Dave, Calgary-Lougheed (PC)
Rowe, Bruce, Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills (W)
Sandhu, Peter, Edmonton-Manning (PC)
Sarich, Janice, Edmonton-Decore (PC)
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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, George, Whitecourt-St. Anne (PC),
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Weadick, Hon. Greg, Lethbridge-West (PC)
Webber, Len, Calgary-Foothills (PC)
Wilson, Jeff, Calgary-Shaw (W),
Official Opposition Deputy House Leader
Woo-Paw, Hon. Teresa, Calgary-Northern Hills (PC)
Xiao, David H., Edmonton-McClung (PC)
Young, Steve, Edmonton-Riverview (PC)

Party standings:

Progressive Conservative: 60

Wildrose: 17

Alberta Liberal: 5

New Democrat: 4

Independent: 1

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Robert H. Reynolds, QC, Law Clerk/ Director of Interparliamentary Relations	Fiona Vance, Sessional Parliamentary Counsel	Brian G. Hodgson, Sergeant-at-Arms
Shannon Dean, Senior Parliamentary Counsel/Director of House Services	Nancy Robert, Research Officer	Chris Caughell, Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms
		Gordon H. Munk, Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms
		Janet Schwegel, Managing Editor of <i>Alberta Hansard</i>

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Naresh Bhardwaj	Associate Minister – Services for Persons with Disabilities
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Jonathan Denis	Minister of Justice and Solicitor General
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Kyle Fawcett	Associate Minister – Recovery and Reconstruction for Southwest Alberta
Rick Fraser	Associate Minister – Public Safety
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Ken Hughes	Minister of Municipal Affairs
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Donald Scott	Associate Minister – Accountability, Transparency and Transformation
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Greg Weadick	Associate Minister – Recovery and Reconstruction for Southeast Alberta
Teresa Woo-Paw	Associate Minister – 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

Dorward	Pastoor
Eggen	Quadri
Hehr	Rogers
Kubinec	Rowe
Lemke	Sarich
Luan	Stier
McDonald	

Standing Committee on the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund

Chair: Mr. Casey

Deputy Chair: Mrs. Jablonski

Amery	Khan
Barnes	Sandhu
Dorward	Sherman
Eggen	

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: Ms Olesen

Deputy Chair: Mrs. Forsyth

Cusanelli	McAllister
DeLong	Notley
Fenske	Pedersen
Fritz	Sandhu
Jablonski	Swann
Jeneroux	VanderBurg
Leskiw	

Standing Committee on Legislative Offices

Chair: Mr. Jeneroux

Deputy Chair: Mr. McDonald

Bikman	Leskiw
Blakeman	Quadri
Brown	Wilson
DeLong	Young
Eggen	

Special Standing Committee on Members' Services

Chair: Mr. Zwozdesky

Deputy Chair: Mr. VanderBurg

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Forsyth	McDonald
Fritz	Sherman
Johnson, L.	Towle
Kubinec	

Standing Committee on Private Bills

Chair: Mr. Xiao

Deputy Chair: Mrs. Leskiw

Allen	Notley
Brown	Olesen
Cusanelli	Rowe
DeLong	Stier
Fenske	Strankman
Fritz	Swann
Jablonski	

Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections, Standing Orders and Printing

Chair: Ms Kubinec

Deputy Chair: Mr. Rogers

Calahasen	Pastoor
Casey	Pedersen
Kang	Saskiw
Khan	VanderBurg
Luan	Wilson
Notley	Young
Olesen	

Standing Committee on Public Accounts

Chair: Mr. Anderson

Deputy Chair: Mr. Dorward

Allen	Khan
Amery	Luan
Barnes	Pastoor
Bilous	Sandhu
Donovan	Sarich
Fenske	Young
Hehr	

Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship

Chair: Mr. Khan

Deputy Chair: Mr. Anglin

Allen	Goudreau
Bikman	Hale
Bilous	Johnson, L.
Blakeman	Webber
Brown	Xiao
Calahasen	Young
Casey	

Legislative Assembly of Alberta

1:30 p.m.

Thursday, March 13, 2014

[The Deputy Speaker in the chair]

Prayers

The Deputy Speaker: Let us pray. Dear Lord, help us to always know what is true, pure, and just. Enlighten our minds and our hearts with thoughts of peace, respect, and freedom as we fulfill our commitment to serve others. Amen.

Please be seated.

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Hehr: Well, Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I introduce to you and, in fact, through you to all members of this august Assembly Deanna Holt. Deanna is a lifelong Calgarian who is currently working in the nonprofit sector for CUPS, an organization that is dedicated to moving individuals and families out of poverty and into independence. Further – and this may surprise you – Deanna is also a testament to the fact that the age of miracles has not passed. How, might you ask. Well, let me tell you. Deanna is also my girlfriend, whom I love very much. She is seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, and I would ask all members of the Assembly to give Deanna our traditional warm welcome.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Minister of Culture.

Mrs. Klimchuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly a group of employees from the Provincial Archives of Alberta who are touring the Legislature today. These men and women are some of the fabulous individuals who work day in and day out at the archives to preserve historical documents and make them available to all Albertans. They do the important job of making sure that our past can be remembered and celebrated. I thank them all for their hard work, and I would ask them to please stand as I call their names: Kimberley Main, Sara King, Meghan Leschert, Adam Wisheu, Laurette Miller, Jaelyn Landry, and Lucas Antoniuk. Please welcome them to the Assembly.

Mrs. Jablonski: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to rise to introduce to you and through you to all members of this Assembly a group of students at law who are articling at the Edmonton courts. They are here to gain an understanding of the law-making process and to explore the jurisdictional boundaries between courts and Legislatures. They met this morning with our Clerk and Law Clerk and director of interparliamentary relations as well as the Chief Legislative Counsel. They will meet with a couple of our members following question period. Some members here may recognize Jennifer Huygen in the group, who is not only articling as a student at law but is a former page. They are seated in the public gallery, and I'd ask them all to rise now and receive the traditional warm welcome of the House.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Minister of Transportation.

Mr. Drysdale: Thank you. It's indeed a pleasure of mine to introduce to you and through you to all members of this Assembly a leader in my community who is here today on his way to the northern Alberta leaders' summit in Athabasca tomorrow to be a moderator. It is my pleasure to introduce Mr. Don Hnatiuk. He's

the president and CEO of the Grande Prairie Regional College, and I'm thrilled he's here today. I'd ask him to stand – I think he's standing already, Mr. Speaker; it's hard to tell – and receive the warm welcome of this Assembly.

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

Mrs. Sarich: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my honour and privilege to rise today to introduce to you and through you to all Members of the Legislative Assembly four representatives that are directly involved in an exciting upcoming Edmonton concert on Saturday, March 15, which commemorates the 200th anniversary of Taras Shevchenko, Ukrainian national poet, accomplished artist, and hero to the Ukrainian people world-wide. My guests are seated in the members' gallery, and I would now ask them to please rise and remain standing as I mention their names. I would like to welcome this afternoon Mr. Laurence Ewashko from the province of Ontario, a former conductor of the Vienna Boys' Choir, renowned world-wide for his significant contributions to vocal music, who will be directing two choirs at the Shevchenko concert; Mrs. Luba Feduschak, president, Ukrainian Canadian Congress Edmonton branch; Mrs. Luba Boyko-Bell, president, Ukrainian Music Society of Alberta and vice-president Ukrainian Canadian Congress Edmonton branch; and Mr. Michael Bell, member, Ukrainian Music Society of Alberta. I would now ask the Assembly to join me and give them the traditional warm welcome.

Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you.

Hon. Member for Red Deer-North, you had a second introduction?

Mrs. Jablonski: That's correct, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: Please proceed.

Mrs. Jablonski: Mr. Speaker, I have the great privilege today of introducing to you and through you to members of this Assembly Diane Gramlich, a young woman for whom I have a great deal of love and respect. Diane Gramlich is here today to hear my member's statement for Marlin Styner, her late husband and one of Alberta's most dedicated citizens. Diane Gramlich is also one of Alberta's most dedicated citizens. Diane is in the members' gallery, and I would ask her to rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

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

Ms DeLong: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to all members of this Assembly five residents of the West Springs, Cougar Ridge, and Aspen communities. These residents, parents all, represent an advocacy group from west Calgary that's sounding the clarion call for new schools in their neighbourhood. Specifically, they need a middle school to help address capacity issues facing schools in their area. Their area currently has four of the top ten priority spots on the CBE plan. There are only three public elementary schools west of Sarcee, no middle school, one high school, all of them near or well over capacity. They have been gathering support for new schools in the area for the past six months from families in the area, and they've been tireless advocates for their communities. I'd ask them to please stand as I call their names: Mrs. Deanna Bradley, Mr. John Pantazopoulos, Mrs. Melanie Derwantz, Mrs. Robyn Plotnikoff, and Mr. Sean Alexander. I

would ask them to rise, please, and receive the traditional warm greetings of this Assembly.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member for Sherwood Park.

Ms Olesen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I'd like to introduce to you and through you 55 students and their teachers Amanda Fayed and Tandy Atchison from Campbelltown elementary school in Sherwood Park. That's one of the finest schools in Sherwood Park. If they could please stand up, we could show them the warm welcome from the Assembly.

Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Minister of Education.

Mr. J. Johnson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of my colleague the MLA for St. Albert it's a pleasure for me to rise and introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly a group of students from Neil M. Ross elementary school, located in the constituency of St. Albert. Accompanying these bright and energetic students is Mrs. Savoie, Mr. Robertson, and Mr. Arlinghaus. They're seated in the members' gallery. I would thank them for coming in today, and I would ask these guests to please rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. Member for Sherwood Park, you have a second introduction?

Ms Olesen: I do. I have on my list here that a group from Our Lady of The Prairies school is here. I'm sure they're a mighty fine school, too. If they could please rise, we could show them a warm welcome.

1:40

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

Mr. Fox: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm honoured to rise today and introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly the mayor of Lacombe, Steve Christie. Steve has served on Lacombe council for two years. He was first elected mayor in 2010 and re-elected this past October. Steve and his wife Cheryl live in Lacombe, where they raised two daughters. He is the proud grandfather of Lylah, Lilly, and Jayda. Mayor Christie was one of my opponents in the last provincial election, and I thank him for his ongoing contribution to public service and democracy in this province. I'll ask him to please rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of this Assembly.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-Mountain View on behalf of the Member for Edmonton-Centre.

Dr. Swann: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure today to introduce to you and through you to the House Mr. Devon McDonald and Stephanie Belland. They represent two organizations. The first, Voice for Animals Humane Society, founded in 1997, is an Edmonton-based animal protection advocacy and rescue organization. V4A is dedicated to fighting the abuse and exploitation of all animals through education and lobbying on their behalf. The second: Stephanie Belland represents the Council of Concerned Albertans for Animal Welfare and Public Safety, a group of citizens who believe in active and consistent enforcement of Alberta zoo standards. The two organizations have recently joined forces in addressing the ongoing substandard conditions at Guzoo Animal Farm. Could they rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

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

Ms Notley: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I am pleased to introduce to you and through you to this Assembly my guest, Jamie Post. Jamie is the co-ordination and communications director at the Alberta Disability Workers Association, an organization which is committed to education and training for disability workers in Alberta. One of Jamie's major concerns with this PC government's 2014 budget is the lack of clarity and certainty regarding a commitment to wage increases for front-line PDD workers. I would now ask Jamie to stand and receive the traditional warm welcome of this Assembly.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member for Medicine Hat.

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly a great group of student advocates that I met with earlier today. Bethany Tynes, Jessica Turowski, Thomas Ridgeway, and Teresa Currie join us from the Alberta Students' Executive Council. They are seated in the public gallery, and I would ask that they rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of this Assembly.

The Deputy Speaker: Are there others? The hon. Member for Chestermere-Rocky View.

Mr. McAllister: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. No stranger to this Assembly, a very engaged political voice: I would like to introduce Rory Koopmans in the Legislature today and give him the honourable welcome of the Assembly.

Members' Statements

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member for Red Deer-North.

Marlin Styner

Mrs. Jablonski: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On February 28, 2014, Alberta lost one of its greatest leaders in the disability community and in the province. Marlin Styner died at the age of 51 years, after filling every day with purpose even after a car crash in 1981, when he sustained a serious spinal cord injury and became a quadriplegic.

With the dedicated support of family, friends, and the community Marlin was able to fulfill one of his life's goals when he received a business administration diploma from Red Deer College. Marlin had a desire to give back to the community, so he became a passionate public speaker and volunteered wherever he could to make a difference. He spoke to over 1 million youth about injury prevention and to thousands of adults about universal design, motivation, and overcoming personal and physical barriers. I can tell you that even though Marlin lived his life in a wheelchair, he walked the talk. He was an inspiration to all who had the privilege of knowing him.

You can read Marlin's biography, and you will be amazed at the number of boards and agencies that he served on, including the Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities. You will be incredulous at the many awards he received and the many achievement awards named after Marlin. Marlin was an extraordinary person who made this a better world. He taught me and many others about the importance of accessibility and visibility.

In the last 13 years of his life Marlin had an angel by his side: his wife, Diane Gramlich. I can't say enough about the dedication

and love that I have seen in Diane's words and actions. Marlin's parents, Roy and Nora Styner, were totally dedicated to their son with their unconditional love and support.

Marlin had many, many friends who loved and appreciated him. Close to 1,000 friends and family attended his celebration of life on Monday.

We will all miss Marlin. We will miss his passion, his words of wisdom, his friendship, his love for others, and his smile.

Please join me in thanking Marlin Styner and Diane Gramlich for their outstanding, passionate, and dedicated service to the people of Alberta. [Standing ovation]

The Deputy Speaker: I'd recognize the Member for Calgary-Mountain View for the next member's statement.

Farm Worker Labour Protection

Dr. Swann: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Agricultural Safety Week reminds us that agriculture is still one of the most dangerous occupations in Alberta. Over the past 20 years 355 farm workers have died, including four to eight children per year. Unlike nearly all other occupations in Alberta, however, farm workers do not have the benefit of occupational health and safety standards or workers' compensation even in large industrial cattle, hog, dairy, grain, potato, and sugar beet operations: for every death approximately 25 hospital admissions each year, resulting in millions of dollars borne by the public health system instead of employer insurance through WCB. One would think the increasing rates of child deaths would motivate this government to legislate child labour standards also, but no.

Three years ago the Premier promised to address this gross inequity and has done nothing. Recently the minister of jobs initiated an OH and S inspection of ski hills, which resulted in a 60 per cent reduction in infractions from the previous year to protect health. To quote the minister: employers in other high-risk industries should take notice; we're coming to visit them next. End of quote. When will this include industrial farming operations? To quote Dr. Bob Barnetson of Athabasca University: low labour costs reduce the price of food, and cheap food policy meets the needs of both businesses and nonagricultural workers and is a form of state subsidy to the business community. End quote. However, keeping labour costs low results in greater injury to low-income workers and violates their rights to equal treatment in the workplace, including the right to know about hazards and refuse unsafe work conditions.

Farmers exert significant pressure on this government to maintain the status quo because exploiting farm workers helps them cope with the financial pressures they face from agribusiness. Decades of fruitless advocacy led by two courageous former farm workers, Eric Musekamp and Darlene Dunlop, have been ignored. It's reprehensible that the only recourse now appears to be a costly constitutional challenge on behalf of those who feed us against the Alberta government to achieve the most basic of worker rights in the 21st century.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you.

The hon. Member for Calgary-Bow.

School Construction Needs

Ms DeLong: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to speak for the thousands of parents who despite our best efforts still need schools for their children to attend. My riding in particular is

in dire need of at least one school to keep young children in their own neighbourhood, properly rested and ready to learn.

Mr. Speaker, you may have noticed news reports of dozens of parents filling the lobby at the Calgary board of education this week to file an appeal. Well, these same parents along with some 4,000 others from the area are signatories on a petition that I will be presenting to this House.

West Springs is home to nearly 8,000 people, with a 36 per cent growth rate over the last five years, and it borders Aspen Woods and Cougar Ridge, where the need for a middle school is also dire. There are 5,200 people living in Aspen Woods, nearly 6,000 in Cougar Ridge, and they have teamed with the West Springs residents to bring a middle school to the area.

Mr. Speaker, I realize that the Calgary board of education has its own system for assessing need when deciding who gets a school, and heaven forbid that I would intrude on that process, but I also realize that the members opposite have their own system for assessing the need for schools in this province. On February 13 of this year the Member for Airdrie said that he thinks we're going to have enough schools, a statement most school boards would disagree with. Heaven forbid that I would intrude on that process.

Mr. Speaker, I can and do speak to the need to continue with the work that we have been doing for the last year. Building Alberta has already announced the construction of 50 new schools, schools that are needed to keep our province moving forward, but we cannot stop there. The need is too great. Our province must meet the needs of the population, a population that's growing in leaps and bounds. Thirty-six hundred new students entered Calgary's public school system last fall, and the CBE expects another 9,000 new students over the next three years.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

1:50

Oral Question Period

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

Cabinet Travel to Grande Prairie

Ms Smith: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday the Premier repaid \$45,000 for the South Africa trip, and I'd like to congratulate her for finally doing the right thing. However, we know that this is not the only instance of abuse. We now know that the Premier and her cabinet ministers used government aircraft to attend partisan PC fundraisers, as they did on October 25, 2012. The flight manifest lists the reason for the trip as meetings with government officials. To the Transportation minister, who was on that flight that day. The plane landed at 4:32 p.m. The PC fundraiser began at 5:20 p.m. Which government officials did he meet with in those 48 minutes?

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Minister of Transportation.

Mr. Drysdale: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thanks to the member for the question. This gives me the opportunity to talk about all the flights I took around Alberta that week. That week I flew to Lethbridge, I flew to Medicine Hat, I flew to Edson, and I flew to High Prairie to announce hospital announcements, and the fifth one in that roll of announcements happened to be in Grande Prairie. I'm glad she gave me the opportunity to stand up and tell the people watching today how this government is building Alberta.

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

Ms Smith: Thanks, Mr. Speaker. The real answer is no one.

Mr. Speaker, it's beyond alarming that these ministers don't know the difference between a government event and a PC Party event, and that's exactly why we're in this mess. Since the Transportation minister can't seem to grasp that difference, let's try the Health minister, who was also on the flight that day. The plane landed at 4:32 p.m. The PC fundraiser began at 5:20 p.m. Which government officials did he meet with in those 48 minutes before the PC fundraiser began and where?

Mr. Horne: Mr. Speaker, these questions have been asked and answered several times this week, including a considerable portion of House time that was devoted yesterday to a point of privilege presented against myself that was not upheld by the Speaker. We've answered these questions. We're ready to move on.

Ms Smith: You may be able to take two different accounts and believe they're both true, but we know that the public is not going to believe that.

They say that they had a media event planned that day in Grande Prairie, but no media notices went out. According to the day's ministerial absences neither the Health minister nor the Transportation minister nor the Premier were expected to be absent from this Assembly that day, meaning they were scheduled to be right here when the supposed media event was going to happen. To the Finance minister: will he just admit his colleagues abused the government plane to attend a PC Party fundraiser and get the money back?

Mr. Hancock: Mr. Speaker, this government works every day. This government works in every community across this province. The Premier and ministers travel to parts of the province to meet with Albertans, to talk with Albertans about their issues and their concerns, and to let Albertans know when something exciting is happening in their community that they've been requesting for a long, long time, and that's exactly what happened this day and every other day the opposition complains about. The public of Alberta wants to see their ministers, wants to see their Premier, and wants to talk about the exciting way that we're building Alberta.

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. leader, your next main question.

Ms Smith: Mr. Speaker, they clearly have learned nothing from their recent troubles.

Public Body Executive Travel Expenses

Ms Smith: The Member for Drumheller-Stettler has been raising some very important points about abuse of taxpayer dollars in Travel Alberta, an agency of the government. Many of the worst practices that the opposition works hard at exposing in the government appear to be going on here: expensing tuxedo rentals, expensive bottles of wine, \$99 steaks, among other abuses. These employees are government appointees. Will the Premier extend Treasury Board expense rules and oversight to these entities?

Dr. Starke: Well, Mr. Speaker, I want to be very clear on this issue. While I am very proud of the work that Travel Alberta does and what they have achieved, I am not at all happy about any suggestion of improper expense claims. That's why I've directed Travel Alberta to conduct a full and thorough review of all

expenses, and that review is to be conducted by an independent third party. Only by doing this can Albertans be assured that the tourism marketing agency is conducting itself in full accordance with the stated expense policies which are followed by Travel Alberta.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.
Hon. leader, your first supplemental.

Ms Smith: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the Member from Drumheller-Stettler has made clear, the senior people at agencies, boards, and commissions deserve increased scrutiny. You may recall that the government sunshine list does not cover the salaries and benefits of those who work for these organizations. To the Premier: when will her government expand the sunshine list to include all of the additional employees who get money from the taxpayer?

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Associate Minister of Accountability, Transparency and Transformation.

Mr. Scott: Thanks, Mr. Speaker. It's great to have an opportunity to speak about our government's sunshine list. It's been called a big win for taxpayers. It's been called the gold standard example for other jurisdictions to follow. We are looking at the legal framework to expand our policy, and that work is under way.

Ms Smith: Mr. Speaker, all of the very highest paid government employees work for agencies, boards, and commissions. For instance, the Alberta Investment Management Corporation, ATB Financial, and the Alberta Electric System Operator all have employees that earn more than \$800,000 a year. This means that the sunshine list, far from being transparent and complete and a gold standard, does not disclose the pay and perks for the most expensive people on the government payroll. When will the Premier expand the sunshine list to include all taxpayer-paid employees?

Mr. Scott: Mr. Speaker, this government is delivering unprecedented transparency. It's something this government promised and something we're delivering. Part of that is our expense disclosure policy. Part of that is the whistle-blower legislation that we delivered. Now we have delivered a sunshine list, and we are looking at ways to expand that, and that work is under way.

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. leader, your next main question.

Ms Smith: I guess that answer is still no, Mr. Speaker.

Disaster Recovery Program Claims

Ms Smith: Yesterday the Premier did the right thing. Earlier in the week the Minister of Municipal Affairs also did the right thing when he announced that the government was firing LandLink. There are reports that in Medicine Hat LandLink was paid \$26 million to distribute about \$20 million to affected homeowners after the 2010 flood. Now, that clearly can't be right, Mr. Speaker, but Albertans won't know for sure unless the minister releases the terms of their contract. Will the minister release the contract and tell Albertans how many millions of disaster relief dollars LandLink will keep?

Mr. Hughes: Mr. Speaker, I made clear yesterday – and I saw some erroneous news reports yesterday that I'd like to clarify as well. The transition contract with LandLink actually commences

at the end of March. The contract that they're currently in ends at the end of March. There's a transition one after that. There are about a dozen DRP files that remain open, where the government of Canada actually still owes Alberta money as well. Some of those files are still quite open.

Ms Smith: Mr. Speaker, yesterday the minister committed to closing 90 per cent of the DRP claims in the next 17 days . . .

An Hon. Member: Residential.

Ms Smith: Residential claims – fair enough – 90 per cent of them. . . . despite the fact that minimal progress has been made in the last nine months, as he well knows. We are concerned about how they're going to do this. I'm already hearing reports of homeowners getting file closure letters when their issues have not been resolved. I am predicting that this is going to be a mess. How will the minister deal with the improperly closed cases after LandLink is supposedly done on March 31?

Mr. Hughes: Mr. Speaker, there is a deliberate attempt here, it would appear, to misrepresent what I have said. What I have said is that LandLink will continue to be responsible through this transition phase to administer the 2013 DRP program. It could take some time to resolve all outstanding files. What I asked the officials to do was to bring me a proposal whereby we could close 90 per cent of the residential files by the end of March. Now, we have . . .

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

Ms Smith: It's not quite what the minister said yesterday, Mr. Speaker.

But the minister did say that he wanted to hear from people about their files. Now, my constituency office gets lots of requests for help from families who are desperate for assistance with the disaster recovery program. When people come to us for help with the health system, with workers' compensation, or any other government program, there are defined processes and liaison people we can contact. But if it's a DRP file, there's no one we can speak to, no process to get information, and the information we do manage to get is very often deceitful. How will the minister change that?

2:00

Mr. Hughes: Well, Mr. Speaker, I believe that the hon. leader would not actually suggest that deceitful is the normal course of business. I can tell you that the process is quite open. In fact, the Premier has appointed three very able associate ministers who work with individuals throughout the province, throughout the areas that have been affected. We've paid out just in the town of High River 2,200 DRP payments as of last Friday. We also have an independent DRP appeals branch to review . . .

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.
The hon. Member for Calgary-Mountain View.

Child Poverty

Dr. Swann: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The Premier has promised to eliminate child poverty by 2017, an extraordinary claim, particularly as we approach the halfway mark of her term, we presume. The former Human Services minister excused the lack of progress by saying that they'd not settled on a definition of child poverty. Now, other jurisdictions have put in place many concrete actions to eliminate child poverty – school breakfast

programs, child tax benefits, affordable child care – but so far nothing from this government. To the Human Services minister: after 43 years in power has your government yet defined child poverty? If so, what is it?

Mr. Bhullar: Mr. Speaker, we're working very closely with our stakeholders, and we'll be coming out with an action plan, a strategy on child poverty. Child poverty is something that affects countless Alberta families. There's no question about that. There's no doubt, though, that Alberta's robust economy, Alberta's robust set of opportunities help all families. We know that child poverty can't be alleviated without working specifically with underlying issues and causes of poverty for all Albertans.

Dr. Swann: Mr. Minister, I'll give you another chance. Have you defined child poverty yet, and if so, what is it? What is the definition of child poverty?

Mr. Bhullar: Mr. Speaker, there are a multitude of different measures in defining poverty – period – a multitude of them. What I'm interested in is how we can help those that are suffering, that don't have all the opportunities that the rest of us may enjoy, how we can help them move on, and how we can help them further advance their opportunities. We're moving forward with initiatives like the youth plan on homelessness. I had a series of meetings yesterday meeting with specific . . .

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

Dr. Swann: Mr. Speaker, core funding for a single parent with a child in this province is \$600 to \$1,000 a month. How can anybody take you seriously when you say that you want to address child poverty?

Mr. Bhullar: Mr. Speaker, I'm tempted to say: how can anyone take that party over there seriously when they've done the types of things they've done over the past period of time? But that would be silly. That would be below us.

The fact is, Mr. Speaker, that Alberta is a place with great opportunities, but there are those that are, unfortunately, stuck in the continuous cycle of poverty. We have to do everything we can to help them move out of that. That means working very, very closely with all of our partners to make sure we break the cycle, and that's what we're going to do.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood.

Medical Laboratory Services Contract

Mr. Mason: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday the deadline for the request for proposals closed on the massive privatization of lab services in Edmonton. The request for proposal clearly states that Alberta Health Services can make public the names of those people who have submitted propositions under the RFP. Albertans have a right to this information. To the Minister of Health: will you ensure the release of the list of bidders on that RFP to the public right away, and if not, why not?

Mr. Horne: Well, Mr. Speaker, I don't have in front of me the details of the RFP to which the hon. member is referring. I'll be pleased to look into that. Certainly, if a commitment has been made and if the rules and procedures governing the RFP allow that information to be made public, it will be.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Mason: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for that. If the minister will tell us when, that would be great.

A number of the companies that are understood to be bidders on this \$3 billion privatization contract have repeatedly been accused and convicted in the United States of overcharging state governments for their services. Albertans have a right to know if it is acceptable to this PC government to award a \$3 billion contract to a company with a history of illegal activity. Is it, Minister?

Mr. Horne: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member – and I’m sure he knows this – is clearly within the realm of speculation. I’m not going to aid and abet the characterization of any organization that may have chosen to respond to an open tender for proposals, particularly for such an important project in our health care system. He’ll have to make do with that.

Mr. Mason: Well, thanks, but I’m not going to make do with it, Mr. Speaker.

The question to the minister is: as a matter of government policy does the government award major contracts to companies with a history of illegal activity? Yes or no?

Mr. Horne: Mr. Speaker, obviously, the rules and procedures that govern procurement practices in the government and in Alberta Health Services as an agency of the government of Alberta are clearly spelled out. I’m sure the hon. member can take a few moments to educate himself as to what those rules and procedures would be, and in doing so, he would recognize that this is not a matter of policy. This is a matter of appropriate procurement practice, to which we adhere in this province.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

Hon. members, the time for preambles has passed, so in the next set of questions there will be no preambles after the first opening question.

Educational Curriculum Redesign

Mr. McAllister: Mr. Speaker, it’s getting more and more difficult to trust anything that this Education minister says about the discovery learning rewrite of the Alberta curriculum. In this House he stands and says that it’s absolute rubbish that his department is shifting away from traditional learning, but in his own Inspiring Education report he promises to shift education to a process of inquiry and discovery, and as we speak, this is how our kids are being taught. Minister, why are you backing away from your own document, or are you trying to confuse parents, just as you are their kids?

Mr. J. Johnson: Mr. Speaker, it’s good to finally hear that the Wildrose does not support Inspiring Education. They do not support the initiatives that were in Inspiring Education, and they don’t support that document. That means no dual crediting, no high school flexibility. We would go back to PATs and not the new student learner assessments.

But I’m happy to answer the question that he’s posed. The new curriculum that we’re talking about – and let’s be clear. Curriculum is not just instruction. Curriculum is the what; instruction is the how. So when we’re talking about curriculum redesign, we’re talking about what the outcomes are . . . [interjections] Clearly, they don’t want to hear.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

The hon. member. First supplemental, with no preamble.

Mr. McAllister: Let’s be clear, Mr. Speaker. What Wildrose supports is listening to parents, teachers, and students.

Given that the words “discover” or “discovery” appear 13 times in this minister’s Inspiring Education report, why does the minister continue pushing this New Age, edubabble-filled report and philosophy on Alberta families when thousands of Alberta parents and teachers are pleading with him to go back to the basics, that have served Alberta kids so well for so long?

Mr. J. Johnson: Mr. Speaker, the other thing parents want is that they want schools, and they don’t support that either.

Mr. Speaker, there is nothing wrong with using the word . . . [interjections] There’s nothing wrong with using the word “discovery” in a document. [interjections]

The Deputy Speaker: I think we’d like to hear the answer, hon. members.

Mr. J. Johnson: I’m happy to give an answer, Mr. Speaker. There’s nothing wrong with using the word “discovery” in a document. It doesn’t mean that we’re moving towards a system that they’ve described, where the student is completely self-directing their learning or where the teacher is simply the partner in education. That is absolutely rubbish. We already use inquiry-based learning. Those are methods . . .

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

Mr. McAllister: If the minister would stick to one story, he wouldn’t be stuck for an answer when I ask him questions.

Given that Manitoba’s recent experiment with discovery learning came to a screeching halt when that province’s education minister said that there has to be a basic foundation in regard to adding and subtracting and memorizing facts and knowing how to do math at an early age, why is the minister insistent on adopting a model that has failed elsewhere and is clearly failing here in Alberta?

Mr. J. Johnson: Mr. Speaker, nothing is further from the truth. Our system is fantastic. He says that it’s on the skids. He has said that our system is on the skids and it’s failing. It’s not. We’re one of the top-performing jurisdictions in the world, but we can do better. It’s not the basics and old school. It’s not rote memorizations or inquiry-based learning or discovery learning. All of those things can happen together. Those are best left up to the professionals in the classroom to decide what methods to use in instruction. We’re talking about curriculum, which is the what, which is the outcome of the system. We’re not talking about the method of instruction. They want to continue to try to confuse Albertans, and hopefully that separates . . .

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Mill Woods.

2:10

Traffic Court Reform Initiative

Mr. Quadri: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Justice and Solicitor General. I have heard lots of concerns from my constituents in Edmonton-Mill Woods about reforming traffic tickets court. It has been suggested that a new administrative process would be in place that would replace the traditional court system. My question to the minister: why do we have to reform the traffic court in this manner?

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Minister of Justice.

Mr. Denis: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Traffic ticket court cases are the most common case in Alberta by a long shot, 1.9 million traffic court cases a year, roughly 300,000 criminal court cases by comparison. It involves a lot of time for police officers but also a lot of time for the public when they deal with long lineups. These lineups are only going to get worse as Alberta keeps attracting more and more people, and having a traffic court in the downtown has also been raised as an issue. We're looking into this because there has to be a better way and a more efficient way to respect the whole issue behind traffic tickets.

Mr. Quadri: To the same minister again: is it true that Albertans will lose their right to fight a traffic ticket?

Mr. Denis: One-word answer: no. I don't believe that it would be constitutional in any way to go and deal with that particular matter.

I think it's more important to have an easier and less intimidating process that serves the needs of all Albertans, knowing that the vast majority of people dealing with traffic tickets do so on their own as self-represented litigants, without a lawyer or traffic ticket agent, even though that is their right.

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

Mr. Quadri: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the same minister again. I would ask the minister to stand in this House and guarantee that Albertans will not lose their right to fight a traffic ticket.

Mr. Denis: The one thing, Mr. Speaker, that is not on the table with our consultation with respect to traffic court reform is the right to fight a ticket. That will never be infringed, period. You'll always have the right to fight a traffic ticket, full stop.

I want to hear from all Albertans on this. E-mail me at traffic.reform@gov.ab.ca. I want to hear from you.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member for Innisfail-Sylvan Lake, followed by Sherwood Park. [interjections]

Hon. members, please. We'd like to hear the questions and the answers.

Abuse of Seniors in Care

Mrs. Towle: On February 28 the government quietly released the protection for persons in care report on their website, nine months after it was due, alarming since the report found that there were 166 confirmed cases of abuse. Even more alarming is that the report comes on the heels of three health care workers being charged for abusing a senior in care. This isn't the first time this has happened. Sadly, it's not even the second. Wildrose has brought several cases of abuse to this minister's attention, and every time this minister told Albertans that these were one-offs. Minister, how can Albertans have confidence in the safety of their loved ones in care when your own government delays the very reports they rely on?

Mr. Horne: Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm sure neither this minister nor any member of this government ever said that these situations were one-offs. These are matters that we take extremely seriously. I spoke to this after the report was released. In fact, I'm surprised it took the opposition this long to raise the report in the Legislative Assembly. We have very strong protection for persons in care legislation in this province. I have asked my department to go back and look at recommendations that have been made, including

the recommendations this year with respect to founded allegations of abuse to ensure those recommendations . . .

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

Mrs. Towle: I'll remind the minister that it was the government's job to release the report in July of last year.

Minister, Albertans cannot comprehend or even imagine a senior being abused, let alone learn from your own report that 22 per cent of the abuses that were founded were of a sexual nature. What is the minister doing to stop this horrific abuse?

Mr. Horne: Mr. Speaker, I'm sure that the people of this province cannot imagine any member of this Assembly trying to make cheap political points by exploiting these situations.

Mr. Speaker, the responsible position and the position of this government is to do everything we can to make sure that the very strong legislation that we have is enforced. This legislation includes a very broad definition of the term "abuse." Many members of this caucus, including the hon. Member for Whitecourt-Ste. Anne, spent the last part of the fall touring the province, making people aware that this legislation exists and how to access it . . .

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. member, your final supplemental. No preamble.

Mrs. Towle: Standing up for Albertans is never considered cheap politics, Minister.

There are 18 founded instances of sexual abuse of seniors in care in your very own report, that you delayed for nine months. Why have Albertans not heard of 18 charges being laid against the alleged abusers?

Mr. Horne: Mr. Speaker, as I said, I've asked the Department of Health to look at all of the founded allegations of abuse, to ensure the recommendations that were made are being implemented, and in addition to look at what else we can do to strengthen the compliance mechanisms. [interjections]

Mr. Speaker, I'm at the point where I can't even hear my own answer. I'll conclude by saying that we take the issue extremely seriously. We have loved ones in care as well. There is absolutely no excuse for any instance of abuse in this province, and this legislation is in place to protect Albertans from any such event.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

Hon. members, please. When we ask a question, I would assume we would like to hear the answer and not heckle the minister while he's trying to answer it. [interjections] Please.

I'll recognize the hon. Member for Sherwood Park, followed by Calgary-Mountain View.

Skilled Trades Journeyman Certification

Ms Olesen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Alberta's strong labour market is a trademark of this province. A key element of this success is the exceptional apprenticeship training programs we have in place. However, it's been brought to my attention that some individuals have experienced significant delays in receiving their Alberta journeyman certificates even after successful completion of their programs. To the Minister of Innovation and Advanced Education: can you please identify potential causes for these delays?

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

Mr. Hancock: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is an important question. The hon. member is correct. We are experiencing delays in the certification process due to a very high number of applicants. In recognition of the importance of getting these certificates to tradespeople, our ministry has assigned staff temporarily to process the files that are ready for certification and to deal with the backlog as quickly as possible. The review process is significant and necessary to ensure that individuals certified have met all the standards that are expected of a certified tradesperson, but we must do that in an expeditious way, and we will.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member.

Ms Olesen: Thank you. To the same minister: given that these workers need a physical certificate to complete advanced training in their respective fields and that these certificates sometimes can be delayed for a variety of reasons, has the option of an online certification or proof of completion system been explored?

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Hancock: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Obviously, the official certificate itself is of value to the tradesperson but so is the proof of certification, which could be done more easily, perhaps, online. We are exploring that option so that they can have the proof of their certification in hand on a timely basis so that they can pursue further educational opportunities. Of course, the certification itself doesn't hold up their ability to work or their ability to work at an advanced level as long as they have the proof that they've achieved that status. We're working to do that as quickly as we can.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.
Hon. member, your final supplemental.

Ms Olesen: Thank you. Given that there are concerns that trade programs will be overlooked in favour of traditional university programs, can the same minister please identify for the House current initiatives in place that demonstrate a strong commitment to these trade and technical school programs?

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Hancock: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is very important. It's very important that as we talk about Albertans advancing their education, we celebrate and encourage every type of education. Trades and apprenticeship programs are a very, very important part of the education system in this province. In fact, we educate 22 per cent of the apprentices across the country. That's much, much higher than the level of our population, obviously. So we take it very seriously, and we encourage it a lot. The new Bill 1, with \$200 million going into the Alberta heritage scholarship fund, will actually enhance by \$9 million a year the funds that we . . .

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.
The Member for Calgary-Mountain View, followed by Edmonton-Strathcona.

Farm Worker Labour Protection

Dr. Swann: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. For decades this PC government has dodged and ignored the basic 19th century human rights of paid farm workers to have a safe workplace under the guise of, quote, protecting the family farm. End quote.

Somehow Saskatchewan and B.C. have managed to do both. The Premier committed to closing loopholes that allow agriculture to exclude paid farm workers, including children, from occupational health and safety standards and workers' compensation. To the Minister of Jobs, Skills, Training and Labour: are you going to legislate for paid farm workers, the people that feed us . . .

2:20

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. minister. [interjection] I've recognized the minister.

Mr. Lukaszuk: Thank you. I wanted to make sure I heard the entire question, Mr. Speaker. It is important what the member is saying. Those are the people who feed us, and because of the importance they play in our society not only within Alberta but Canada – actually, Alberta is becoming the breadbasket of the world – we will make sure that we will work with that industry. I have been meeting with stakeholders in the industry. They recognize the importance of keeping their workers and their families safe just like the member and I do. They're Albertans. They share these values. We will get to the point we have to get to in due course.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

Dr. Swann: Well, it's about 60 years since we've been talking about this issue in this province.

Why will you not at least order that the deaths of farm workers be investigated? How are we to learn and to prevent these in the future if we will not even investigate them?

Mr. Lukaszuk: Mr. Speaker, I may appear mature beyond my age, but I have not been engaging in this discussion for 60 years. I can tell you that I don't think it's a secret to anyone in this House, in Alberta that I take occupational health and safety very seriously not only because it is my responsibility in this ministry, but it is something that I was engaged in in my life prior to being elected. I can assure this member that the safety of farm workers and their families, who may be engaged in farming, is as important to me as it is to him. I'll also assure him that the industry is taking this very seriously now.

Dr. Swann: Let me ask you directly. Is it you or is it the Premier that's stalling on this legislation?

Mr. Olson: Mr. Speaker, I would like to weigh in on this. First of all, I'll say that I appreciate the hon. member's question because it is a matter of great concern to us, too. We're very interested in this issue. I would not like him to leave the impression that nothing has been done. There has been a lot of activity. I'm interested, even, in provinces that maybe have legislation. They seem to be focusing on the awareness, the education, and so on as to what really makes the difference. I was reading recently in the *Western Producer* that that seemed to be the theme. That's something that we're putting a lot of money into. We've got a number of different programs that I could mention.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.
I recognize the hon. Member for Edmonton-Strathcona, followed by Calgary-Shaw.

Legal Challenges to Provincial Legislation

Ms Notley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This government has not been scoring big points with the courts lately. On environmental protection they've said that government action served to "ignore

the purposes of the Act as published” and that through their behaviour “the valid object” of the environmental protection act is “hijacked” and also that “it is difficult to envision a more direct apprehension of bias.” To the Attorney General. Now, I know that today of all days it’s a really complicated thing to figure out who’s in charge of what; however, this is your job. Why can’t you get your cabinet colleagues to follow their own laws?

Mr. Denis: Mr. Speaker, I’m not exactly sure where that question was meandering towards. It’s incumbent upon all of us to follow the laws of the land but also to ask appropriate questions. Maybe for the second question she can be a little bit more clear.

Ms Notley: I think it’s pretty clear.

Given that a more recent judicial decision concluded that the government’s behaviour in relation to Bill 46 “raises the question of whether those negotiations were . . . conducted in good faith” and given that the obligation to negotiate in good faith isn’t discretionary but is actually another statutory obligation, will the Attorney General admit that he doesn’t appear to hold any sway at all when it comes to getting his colleagues to follow their own laws?

Mr. Denis: Mr. Speaker, there’s one thing that I have no sway over entirely, and that is matters before the courts. I refer this member to Standing Order 23(g), and I will just leave it at that because that matter is before the courts.

Ms Notley: It’s not, actually.

Given that both of these judicial decisions, which concluded that the government actions have been biased, breached the principles of environmental legislation, breached the legal obligation to bargain in good faith, and likely contravened the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and given that it’s your job to make your colleagues respect the rule of law, is the problem that they won’t listen to you, or is it that you agree with the rest of them that your government should be above the law?

Mr. Denis: Again, Mr. Speaker, I refer this member to Standing Order 23(g). The matter dealing with Bill 46 is before the courts. No one is above the law, including this member and myself.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you.

The hon. Member for Calgary-Shaw, followed by Banff-Cochrane.

Calgary Southwest Ring Road

Mr. Wilson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. After 50 years of failed negotiations this government was finally able to secure a deal for the southwest Calgary ring road. That was a major win for the city and the residents and constituents of Calgary-Shaw. Seeing as this is now a funded project in the government’s capital plan, there should be no hiding from these questions today. This question has been asked by my constituents many times, and I’m hopeful the Minister of Transportation can give us a crystal clear answer. When will the southwest ring road be started, and when will it be completed?

Mr. Drysdale: Well, Mr. Speaker, as the member said, thanks to some good work of my colleague last year, that agreement was reached with the Tsuu T’ina nation, and we have an agreement to have that land, so we can finish the ring road. In the three-year budget there is \$1.8 billion budgeted for that project. We all know that isn’t enough money to do that project, but that’s all that’s

shown in the three years. This project is going to take seven or eight years to complete, and we’ll work diligently to get it done as soon as possible.

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

Mr. Wilson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that you can drive on Stoney Trail, the Calgary ring road, from highway 1 all the way to Macleod Trail, a distance of 70 kilometres, without hitting a single traffic light yet you hit two, back to back, once you reach that interchange, will the Minister of Transportation commit to addressing this critical piece of infrastructure as its top priority during construction of the southwest ring road?

Mr. Drysdale: Mr. Speaker, we just improved that intersection. There are setbacks from one approach to another. There are minimum setbacks. In that section there isn’t enough room to build the exact design we’d want just because of the restrictions in distances.

Mr. Wilson: A puzzling answer, but maybe the Infrastructure minister should have taken it.

Given that building out the interchange on McLeod Trail and constructing the planned interchanges at 6th Street SW and James McKeivitt Road, along Stoney Trail, would seem to be a very reasonable first step in the construction of this road and given that there is no need to wait for the completion of a land transfer in order to start these projects, will the minister tell this House when those interchanges will be started and when they will be completed?

Mr. Drysdale: Well, Mr. Speaker, that intersection isn’t necessarily all to do with Alberta Transportation. It’s partly with the city. I can look up specifically the member’s answers, but I can’t know every intersection in the province of Alberta. I’ll seriously take his question and get the answer and get back to him.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

The Member for St. Albert, followed by Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House-Sundre.

Youth Emergency Services

Mr. Khan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Emergency youth shelters offer food, counselling, support, and life-skills training in a safe and supportive environment for young people who are in need of short-term emergency housing. However, due to the lack of shelter space in St. Albert many of my constituents are forced to go to Edmonton for support and a safe place to stay. St. Albert families have told me that the experience of our youth being placed in shelters in downtown Edmonton often leads to exposure to the very types of dangerous and high-risk activities from which they are seeking solace. To the Minister of Human Services: are there any plans to address the need for youth shelters in St. Albert?

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Minister of Human Services.

Mr. Bhullar: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. This member raises a very, very valid point. It’s actually something that I’ve noticed first-hand. When I’ve been visiting youth shelters in Edmonton, I’ve noticed that there’s a large proportion of youth that come from all over the province. They migrate to the city, and this is where a lot of them end up seeking supports. Notwithstanding that, I’m more than prepared to work with the member to see how we can help provide additional services and supplement some

great services that are already in place in St. Albert, like the family resource centres.

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

Mr. Khan: I appreciate that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. St. Albert youths who require emergency shelter cope with heartbreaking issues like abuse and addiction or cope with complex issues like FASD. Just last month I had a young man, battling addiction, in my office looking for some help. To the same minister: what are you doing to help those in youth shelters transition back to their communities?

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Bhullar: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, in this year's budget we've got a 17 per cent increase for homeless supports, and some of that money is actually devoted to youth homelessness.

On another note, the member mentioned issues of abuse and trauma, and I've got to say that abuse and trauma are by far the biggest indicators of youth homelessness and youth challenges and developmental challenges later in life. So I've been speaking a lot about our absolute need to get into the root causes. Preventing childhood trauma and abuse is one of the biggest . . .

2:30

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

Mr. Khan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I look forward to working with the minister on this issue.

To the same minister: given that children in need who are of elementary age generally receive more support than those youth in high school, what is your ministry doing to ensure that youth of an older demographic are not shortchanged emergency supports?

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Bhullar: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That is a great question. There is a lot of focus on early childhood development, and then there sometimes is not as much focus on the adolescent years, so that's why we're working right now on a plan to end youth homelessness. We've invested dollars in this year's budget to support that as well. This is a really significant issue. I've met with many young people that actually are homeless. They're, unfortunately, homeless because of the really severe issues they face.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.
The Member for Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House-Sundre, followed by Banff-Cochrane.

Electricity Pricing

Mr. Anglin: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Alberta's electricity market is a complex system that is stacked against consumers. Every day companies offer to sell their electricity to the grid, but unlike in a normal auction market, the lowest price that companies are willing to accept for their electricity doesn't matter. The market guarantees the company will get paid the highest price regardless of the lowest offer. We know this fills the wallets of industry. How does this system work for Albertans when companies are guaranteed to receive the highest price for the lowest cost electricity?

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Minister of Energy.

Mrs. McQueen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our government is focused on protecting Albertan consumers and ensuring a reliable, affordable electricity system. Like in any market, there are rules, and that's why the Market Surveillance Administrator has the power to investigate to make sure the rules are followed. Our government is focused on what is important to Albertans: protecting Alberta consumers and ensuring affordable and reliable electricity that meets the needs of Alberta today and in our growing economy.

Mr. Anglin: The rules are rigged against the customer.

Given the Premier only decided to pay back Albertans after numerous questions, there is hope we might get an answer from the Energy minister to a question that has been asked in this Assembly multiple times. Is it permissible, under Alberta's market rules, for a company to withhold electricity from the market in order to raise prices? Yes or no?

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mrs. McQueen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I said in my last answer, there are rules to this system. The Market Surveillance Administrator is able to investigate those rules if there's anything wrong happening in the market. That is their job to do. If they see anything, they then take it to the AUC. But I want to tell you that we have been working very hard as this economy is growing to make sure that Albertans are receiving a good price with the regulated market. On the price: this month's average on our regular rate option is 7.13 cents per kilowatt hour, down, in fact, from last year.

Mr. Anglin: Notice she doesn't mention the wholesale price of \$400 a megawatt.

Given that B.C. Hydro conserves its power production at night by buying electricity from Alberta at about 3 cents a kilowatt and given that B.C. Hydro then turns around and sells that electricity, which we just helped them to save, the very next day to Alberta for 6 cents a kilowatt hour, double, will this government do a complete and independent audit of this silly gaming practice and tell us how it came to be that Albertans have been subsidizing B.C. consumers to the tune of hundreds of millions of dollars for the last several years?

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mrs. McQueen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I said to start with, our government is focused on protecting Alberta consumers. That's job one for us. Alberta has been ranked second in North America for residential retail markets for consumer choice. We are doing what's right. We have no long-term debt, no debt. Alberta's prices are good prices, and we are doing everything in Alberta to protect Alberta consumers.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.
The Member for Banff-Cochrane, followed by Cypress-Medicine Hat.

Spring Flood Mitigation

Mr. Casey: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Residents in my constituency of Banff-Cochrane have expressed concern regarding spring flood mitigation efforts. Municipalities were funded through the flood recovery erosion control program for short-term mitigation

projects; however, residents are not seeing the advancement of some of these programs and are concerned about the readiness for spring. To the Minister of Municipal Affairs: what is being done to ensure that these critical short-term mitigation projects by both municipalities and the government are completed in time for spring runoff?

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

Mr. Hughes: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Well, I want to thank this hon. member for his very thoughtful question and for the good work he's done on behalf of people throughout southern Alberta as a result after the flood. Obviously, we have recently approved \$150 million for the flood recovery erosion control program and streamlined the approval process. You know, we're working very closely with municipalities to make sure that we, both the province and the municipalities, understand what the needs are and that we're in the position to move forward as early as possible.

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

Mr. Casey: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the same minister: but what is the government doing to monitor the progress of these projects and to ensure that municipalities have the capacity to complete them on time?

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Hughes: Thanks, Mr. Speaker. Well, you know, we're actually getting projects approved much more quickly, first off. In some cases ESRD has been able to approve projects as quickly as in five days, in some cases 20 days. Then we've also got very skilled task force employees and ESRD employees who are working directly with the impacted municipalities. We're working hard to empower these municipalities to make sure that they get these projects done on time, ready for the spring flood season.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you.
The hon. member. Your final supplemental.

Mr. Casey: Thank you. To the same minister: are there plans to have developed a functional early warning system for communities for this spring?

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Hughes: Yeah. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. You know, I think we learned a lot from last year, and much has been taken on. There's already a system in place through the Alberta Emergency Management Agency. We're working with key partners, most notably the river forecast section within ESRD, to understand and communicate with Albertans as effectively as possible in whatever ways people want to be communicated with. We will continue to invest in this program to make sure that people can be alerted if there are challenges coming at them and that they understand what they can do in order to protect themselves.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.
The hon. Member for Cypress-Medicine Hat, followed by Edmonton-Gold Bar.

Sage Grouse Protection Order

Mr. Barnes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The imposition of the sage grouse protection order has many southern Albertans worried about their economic future and the future of their communities. The restrictive provisions of the protection order risk reduced revenues not only for oil and gas but also for ranchers and municipalities. Meanwhile this government is silent. Can the minister tell me when the province will stand up for ranchers and municipalities, who together are the best local stewards of the land?

The Deputy Speaker: We've got the Minister of ESRD.

Mr. Campbell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for the question. We as a provincial government weren't very happy either with the fact that the federal government put their order in place. As a matter of fact, we weren't very happy that we got the order the afternoon before they did it the next day. But I have had discussions with our counterparts from Saskatchewan, and we are together going to work with the federal minister to see what we can do to make sure that the sage grouse area that is protected is done in a feasible manner and to make sure that there is no economic hardship for people in the southeastern part of this province.

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

Mr. Barnes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The PC government's South Saskatchewan Regional Advisory Council called for a 4,200-square-kilometre expansion of a conservation area in Cypress-Medicine Hat. Again to the minister: did the province purposely neglect taking action on protecting the sage grouse in order to allow the federal government to establish a conservation area?

Mr. Campbell: Well, Mr. Speaker, nothing could be farther from the truth. We understand that the sage grouse was a species at risk. Again, the federal government has SARA, which is federal legislation, and I will say to you that it causes me nothing but angst because we do have areas in this province where we do have species at risk. But it's imperative for us to work with the federal government, to work with stakeholders and landowners all across this province to do what we can. I must also say that, you know, if the hon. member wants to put his anger at some people – I mean, again, things happen in southeastern B.C., for example, and we put nesting for hawks and other raptors down there. These raptors are sitting on these fences and sitting on these power lines, and they're looking down . . .

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.
Final supplemental.

Mr. Barnes: Thank you again, Mr. Speaker. Given that the population of the sage grouse has been declining since the 1960s and knowing that the PCs have had decades in government to produce solutions to help the sage grouse, why do ranchers, oil and gas, and municipalities in the area have to pay for this PC lack of attention?

2:40

Mr. Campbell: Well, Mr. Speaker, we have worked on this for a long time. We have always wanted to have a good relationship with Montana and Saskatchewan. I guess the bottom line is that

we appreciate private landowners' rights, and we're not about to trample on them. So that's where we're at today.

Cancer Prevention and Treatment

Mr. Dorward: Mr. Speaker, every day 500 Canadians are diagnosed with cancer. Statistics show that an estimated 2 out of every 5 will develop cancer in their lifetime and that an estimated 1 out of 4 will die from it. Changing our future: Alberta's cancer plan to 2030, the Ministry of Health's program, was implemented in order to put into operation effective and sustainable strategies to reduce cancer in the province by 2030. I sure hope that that report is not sitting on a shelf somewhere. To the hon. Minister of Health: what preventative measures will be implemented in the next 10 years?

Mr. Horne: Well, Mr. Speaker, the Alberta cancer plan is very much alive and well. We see the embodiment of the spirit of the cancer plan in efforts that were made such as the hon. member's earlier this week, when he participated in an important fundraising campaign to support kids' cancer care. There are a number of preventative measures already in place. We will see more action as we go forward. So far we've seen some very progressive and far-reaching legislation passed in this House to protect children and youth from tobacco use. We're working with the Canadian partnership against breast cancer to increase screening rates for women no matter where they live. Similar actions are being taken . . .

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

Mr. Dorward: What supports are available to my constituents in Edmonton-Gold Bar and their families in order to deal with the physical and mental toll of this disease when it happens in their lives?

Mr. Horne: Well, Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member alluded to, the statistics are indeed startling. Each day in Alberta 45 Albertans are diagnosed with cancer, and 15 people die of cancer in this province every day. There are a number of options for people that are newly diagnosed, including the ongoing supports that allow family members to take time off work to support a loved one, thanks to the efforts of the hon. Member for Edmonton-South West, right through to investments being made in radiation and cancer treatment centres across the province in our corridor that stretches from Grande Prairie to Lethbridge.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

Mr. Dorward: Mr. Speaker, cancer does not just exist in the cities. What's happening in rural Alberta to help those Albertans with cancer?

Mr. Horne: Well, Mr. Speaker, one of the most important initiatives, as I alluded to in the last question, is the establishment of the cancer corridor. With new radiation treatment centres in places such as Red Deer and Medicine Hat and Lethbridge and eventually Grande Prairie people who live in far-reaching parts of the province have to travel a shorter distance in order to receive that sort of treatment. We know that makes a difference for them in terms of their access. We also know it makes a huge difference for families and friends and neighbours and loved ones who support people who are newly diagnosed.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

I want to congratulate you, hon. members. We got through 17 sets of questions and answers today, and there were no points of order.

In 30 seconds, hon. members, I'll call for the first of the rest of the members' statements.

Members' Statements

(continued)

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member for Sherwood Park. Your member's statement.

Sherwood Park Environmental Technology Enterprises

Ms Olesen: Yes. Thank you. I rise today to commend the Sherwood Park & District Chamber of Commerce for their role in promoting environmentally friendly and innovative technologies. Three years ago our chamber established an environment committee to promote and develop environmentally friendly businesses. They have now transitioned that committee to expand the chamber's role in green economies by further emphasizing innovative, sustainable technologies.

Committee members include Clearflow Enviro Systems Group Inc., makers of products to clean water and land, who, incidentally, won the 2013 business leaders of Edmonton award and the 2013 Alberta science and technology award; SepTech Solutions Canada Inc., that has a proprietary technology to remediate septic systems and eliminate the need for vacuum tanks; Christenson Group of Companies, focusing on environmentally friendly construction and technology such as Built Green and LEED; Biogénie, a division of EnGlobe Corp., offering innovative soil treatment and site remediation technologies, enabling onsite rather than hauling solutions, including a patented process to remediate salt impacted sites; Douglas environmental, offering leading technologies for testing and treating air and water issues in commercial and residential buildings; DX3 Enterprises, who design and manufacture solar-powered LED lights that work in 40 below on the shortest days; GSS Integrated Energy, who focus on geothermal heating and electrical cogeneration systems and microgrid utilities.

I salute the Sherwood Park & District Chamber of Commerce for encouraging innovative technology companies to work together. As Jerry Hanna, president of Clearflow, noted, Sherwood Park is really becoming an epicentre for new technology, and I believe more and more innovative ideas will develop out of our community.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you.

The hon. Member for Lac La Biche-St. Paul-Two Hills.

Premier's Travel Expense Repayment

Mr. Saskiw: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Would everyone in this Assembly please join me in thanking and congratulating the Premier for repaying almost \$45,000 for money wasted on her trip to South Africa. [some applause] Come on, folks. You can do better than that. Will everyone please join me in congratulating the Premier. I guess this is what the Premier's definition of real-life leadership is. Frankly, I've seen more leadership, for example, from my niece after she gets in trouble, when she immediately – immediately – gives back her brother's toy.

So just to recap, first, the Premier denied knowing about the cost of the trip. Then she threw her staff under the bus. Then she said that she was disappointed. Then she apologized and in some bizarre world thought that that was being held accountable. This was a Premier backed into a corner and forced to cough up the cash. She didn't pay it back on principle. She didn't pay it back because it was the right thing to do. She paid it back because Albertans demanded it. She only paid it back to save her political skin. Albertans can't trust this Premier. Albertans can't believe a word she says.

Paying back the money for the South Africa trip is only the beginning. This Premier should pay back the money used to fly the government plane to pick her up from vacation in Palm Springs. She and her cabinet should pay back the money used to send the government plane to PC fundraisers over and over and over again.

Some courageous MLAs have spoken out. For the rest of the PC caucus, your continued support of the Premier is an affront to accountability and to all Albertans. Albertans deserve better from their leaders.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member for Banff-Cochrane.

Paralympic Winter Games Medallists

Mr. Casey: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my honour to rise today to bring news to this House that Alberta athletes have won four medals in the 2014 Paralympic Games in Sochi, including Canada's first gold. I'm extremely proud to say that the medallists are from my constituency of Banff-Cochrane.

Mr. Speaker, Brian McKeever took home gold on Monday morning in the visually-impaired men's 20-kilometre classic cross-country ski event and another gold yesterday morning in the men's cross-country skiing one-kilometre sprint. This brings to nine the number of gold medals won by this amazing athlete during his career. On Sunday morning he will try to make it 10. Brian's wins came with the help of two guides from Canmore, Erik Carleton and Graham Nishikawa, and his coach and big brother, Robin. Brian is one of the most accomplished athletes in the history of Paralympic sport and continues to be a shining example of the pursuit of excellence that defines what it means to be an Albertan.

On Saturday afternoon Mark Arendz won Canada's second medal when he won silver in the 7.5-kilometre biathlon, and he won a bronze Tuesday in the men's 12.5-kilometre standing biathlon. Mark is the reigning world champion in the 7.5-kilometre biathlon and was first overall in the 2012-13 World Cup standings.

Mr. Speaker, this government is extremely proud of our support of athletes. Whether it is making sure they have world-class training facilities like the Canmore Nordic Centre or helping them reach their dreams through grant funding like Podium Alberta, the government of Alberta is behind our athletes one hundred per cent.

Alberta is exceptionally proud of all of our Paralympic athletes. They inspire all of us and demonstrate the true meaning of courage. Good luck with the rest of the games to these great athletes.

Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

Notices of Motions

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

Mr. Oberle: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to give oral notice of Bill 6, New Home Buyer Protection Amendment Act, 2014.

2:50

Introduction of Bills

Bill 203

Childhood Vision Assessment Act

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member for Red Deer-North.

Mrs. Jablonski: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I request leave to introduce Bill 203, the Childhood Vision Assessment Act.

Bill 203 would ensure that children of school age are set up for success by requiring a comprehensive vision assessment by grade 1. This could help reduce potential learning and behavioural difficulties that affect children with visual impairments. More than 25 per cent of school-age children have vision problems that can limit their potential in all aspects of learning. Thanks to the work of initiatives like the Eye See . . . Eye Learn program, more children are getting their eyes examined. However, still, more than 80 per cent of children in Alberta begin school without a comprehensive eye exam.

Mr. Speaker, you need to read to succeed, and Bill 203 is an important step to ensuring that children in our families and communities across Alberta have the tools to succeed in the classroom and in life.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[Motion carried; Bill 203 read a first time]

Tabling Returns and Reports

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

Ms DeLong: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure to file the following petition, signed by 4,903 citizens: we the undersigned petition you to "re-evaluate the communities of West Springs, Cougar Ridge, and Aspen Woods to ensure we get [the] much needed schools built within our communities." Now, because this petition is signed only by the supporters of the petition, I am filing it as a document with five copies under our Standing Order 37(3).

Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

The hon. Member for Calgary-Mountain View, followed by Edmonton-Calder.

Dr. Swann: Thank you, very much, Mr. Speaker. I have four tablings today. First, from Dallas Diamond, a Calgary resident whose father experienced very unfortunate care at the urgent care centre in south Calgary, resulting, she feels, in delays and may have resulted in his death. I will table that and the appropriate copies.

Another from Calgary, Honora Thubron, whose husband is in a long-term care setting there. She expresses fears of speaking out because she feels very strongly that the administration has already given her indication that they will not be comfortable with her criticisms being made public. She is advocating for higher staff ratios for seniors.

A third, Mr. Jim Miller from Calgary, who has spent approximately 15 years inspecting farm operations in B.C. and is

encouraging the minister of jobs and skills and the Premier herself to meet and talk about ways to improve the occupational health and safety for farm workers in Alberta.

The fourth is a familiar name to most people here. Mr. Harry Chase, who is a former Member of the Legislative Assembly, is writing a lengthy paper in response to the Minister of Human Services' request for suggestions to improve the child care and family care services here. He is advocating very strongly for a more family-centred and more transparent and respectful approach to families in distress.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you.

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview.

Mr. Bilous: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to table 50 of over 4,000 postcards that the office of the Member for Edmonton-Strathcona has received asking this PC government to restore consistent and reliable funding to postsecondary education in Alberta. The postcards were collected among the thousands by the Non-Academic Staff Association at the U of A. They are clear evidence the government is not listening to the demands of Albertans for a well-funded postsecondary education system that is both accessible and affordable for all.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. members, there were no points of order today, so the Clerk will move to the next item of business.

Orders of the Day

Government Bills and Orders

Third Reading

Bill 4

Estate Administration Act

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member for Barrhead-Morinville-Westlock.

Ms Kubinec: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure to rise and move third reading of Bill 4, the Estate Administration Act.

This bill continues the reform of succession laws in Alberta by taking steps to codify and modernize the existing common law governing the administration of estates. As a result, the role and responsibilities of a personal representative will be easily understood, and beneficiaries can be more assured that the wishes of the deceased are being followed.

There are a couple of questions that I would like to address before I close, and one is having to do with grants from the United

States. I would like to inform this House that Bill 4 does deal with grants from the U.S., but in that case the applicant applies for an ancillary grant under section 19. While resealing the foreign grants from Commonwealth countries is found in section 18, section 19 deals with ancillary grants, where the deceased was not a resident of a jurisdiction referred to in section 18. In other words, this allows for a process to deal with grants from the United States and in any country where the deceased resides.

There's another point of clarification regarding obligations and/or liabilities of the executor or administrator. The role and the responsibilities of the personal representative already exist in common law. Common law currently holds that a personal representative is a fiduciary. Bill 4 only codifies this and puts these responsibilities into plain, understandable language.

The bill also contains provisions that can assist a personal representative to reduce their risk of liability. These are not new but were carried forward from the prior legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I am confident this legislation will benefit Albertans. Several of the changes contained in the bill were motivated by recommendations from the Alberta Law Reform Institute, and both round-table and online consultations were conducted with Alberta's estate practitioners, the Canadian Bar Association, estate planners and advisers, and experts in estate administration. Their feedback showed wide-ranging support for our efforts. This support shows that the work of the government staff in doing the areas of succession law will serve Albertans well, and I would like to take the opportunity to thank the government staff who worked on it.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: Are there other speakers on the bill, or is someone wishing to adjourn debate?

Ms Kubinec: I would like to move to adjourn debate.

[Motion to adjourn debate carried]

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

Mr. Oberle: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Not wanting to upset what is surely to be one of the quietest Thursdays on record and not wanting to miss one second of the spectacular Alberta day that's going on out there, I would like to move that we call it 4:30 and adjourn until 1:30 p.m. on Monday, March 17.

[Motion carried; the Assembly adjourned at 2:59 p.m. to Monday at 1:30 p.m.]

Bill Status Report for the 28th Legislature - 2nd Session (2014)

Activity to March 13, 2014

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

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

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

1 Savings Management Act (\$) (Redford)

First Reading -- 4 (Mar. 3, 2014 aft., passed)

Second Reading -- 47-50 (Mar. 4, 2014 eve.), 84-85 (Mar. 5, 2014 aft.), 146-54 (Mar. 10, 2014 eve., passed)

Committee of the Whole -- 184-87 (Mar. 11, 2014 aft., passed)

Third Reading -- 217-18 (Mar. 12, 2014 aft.), 226-28 (Mar. 12, 2014 aft.), (Mar. 12, 2014 eve., passed)

Royal Assent -- (Mar. 13, 2014 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force April 1, 2014; SA 2014 cS-2.5]

2 Appropriation (Supplementary Supply) Act, 2014 (\$) (Horner)

First Reading -- 84 (Mar. 5, 2014 aft., passed)

Second Reading -- 143 (Mar. 10, 2014 eve.), 154-56 (Mar. 10, 2014 eve., passed)

Committee of the Whole -- 187-88 (Mar. 11, 2014 aft., passed)

Third Reading -- 218 (Mar. 12, 2014 aft.), (Mar. 12, 2014 eve., passed)

Royal Assent -- (Mar. 13, 2014 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force March 13, 2014; SA 2014 c2]

3 Securities Amendment Act, 2014 (Horner)

First Reading -- 62 (Mar. 5, 2014 aft., passed)

Second Reading -- 143-45 (Mar. 10, 2014 eve., passed)

Committee of the Whole -- 187 (Mar. 11, 2014 aft., passed)

Third Reading -- 218 (Mar. 12, 2014 aft.), (Mar. 12, 2014 eve., passed)

Royal Assent -- (Mar. 13, 2014 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2014 c3]

4 Estate Administration Act (Kubinec)

First Reading -- 62-63 (Mar. 5, 2014 aft., passed)

Second Reading -- 145-46 (Mar. 10, 2014 eve.), 184 (Mar. 11, 2014 aft.), 191-93 (Mar. 11, 2014 eve., passed)

Committee of the Whole -- 229 (Mar. 12, 2014 aft., passed)

Third Reading -- 250 (Mar. 13, 2014 aft., adjourned)

5 Appropriation (Interim Supply) Act, 2014 (\$) (Horner)

First Reading -- 119 (Mar. 10, 2014 aft., passed)

Second Reading -- 174 (Mar. 11, 2014 aft.), 188-90 (Mar. 11, 2014 aft., passed)

Committee of the Whole -- 218-20 (Mar. 12, 2014 aft.), 228-29 (Mar. 12, 2014 aft., passed)

Third Reading -- 230 (Mar. 12, 2014 aft., passed)

Royal Assent -- (Mar. 13, 2014 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force March 13, 2014; SA 2014 c1]

201 Agricultural Pests (Fusarium Head Blight) Amendment Act, 2014 ()

First Reading -- 63 (Mar. 5, 2014 aft., passed)

Second Reading -- 123-34 (Mar. 10, 2014 aft., referred to Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship)

202 Independent Budget Officer Act (Forsyth)

First Reading -- 63 (Mar. 5, 2014 aft., passed)

203 Childhood Vision Assessment Act (Jablonski)

First Reading -- 249 (Mar. 13, 2014 aft., passed)

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