



Province of Alberta

The 28th Legislature  
Second Session

# Alberta Hansard

Tuesday, March 18, 2014

Issue 10

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

Allen, Mike, Fort McMurray-Wood Buffalo (Ind)  
Amery, Moe, Calgary-East (PC)  
Anderson, Rob, Airdrie (W),  
Official Opposition House Leader  
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),  
Government House Leader  
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),  
Deputy Government House Leader  
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)  
Johnson, Hon. Jeff, Athabasca-Sturgeon-Redwater (PC)  
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Kang, Darshan S., Calgary-McCall (AL),  
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Kubinec, Maureen, Barrhead-Morinville-Westlock (PC)  
Lemke, Ken, Stony Plain (PC)  
Leskiw, Genia, Bonnyville-Cold Lake (PC)  
Luan, Jason, Calgary-Hawkwood (PC)  
Lukaszuk, Hon. Thomas A., Edmonton-Castle Downs (PC)  
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McAllister, Bruce, Chestermere-Rocky View (W)  
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McIver, Hon. Ric, Calgary-Hays (PC)  
McQueen, Hon. Diana, Drayton Valley-Devon (PC)  
Notley, Rachel, Edmonton-Strathcona (ND),  
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Deputy Government House Leader  
Olesen, Cathy, Sherwood Park (PC)  
Olson, Hon. Verlyn, QC, Wetaskiwin-Camrose (PC),  
Deputy Government House Leader  
Pastoor, Bridget Brennan, Lethbridge-East (PC)  
Pedersen, Blake, Medicine Hat (W)  
Quadri, Sohail, Edmonton-Mill Woods (PC)  
Quest, Hon. Dave, Strathcona-Sherwood Park (PC)  
Redford, Hon. Alison M., QC, Calgary-Elbow (PC),  
Premier  
Rodney, Hon. Dave, Calgary-Lougheed (PC)  
Rowe, Bruce, Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills (W)  
Sandhu, Peter, Edmonton-Manning (PC)  
Sarich, Janice, Edmonton-Decore (PC)  
Saskiw, Shayne, Lac La Biche-St. Paul-Two Hills (W),  
Official Opposition Whip  
Scott, Hon. Donald, QC, Fort McMurray-Conklin (PC)  
Sherman, Dr. Raj, Edmonton-Meadowlark (AL),  
Leader of the Liberal Opposition  
Smith, Danielle, Highwood (W),  
Leader of the Official Opposition  
Starke, Hon. Dr. Richard, Vermilion-Lloydminster (PC)  
Stier, Pat, Livingstone-Macleod (W)  
Strankman, Rick, Drumheller-Stettler (W)  
Swann, Dr. David, Calgary-Mountain View (AL)  
Towle, Kerry, Innisfail-Sylvan Lake (W),  
Official Opposition Deputy Whip  
VanderBurg, George, Whitecourt-St. Anne (PC),  
Government Whip  
Weadick, Hon. Greg, Lethbridge-West (PC)  
Webber, Len, Calgary-Foothills (Ind)  
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: 58

Wildrose: 17

Alberta Liberal: 5

New Democrat: 4

Independent: 3

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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
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		Gordon H. Munk, Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms
		Janet Schwegel, Managing Editor of <i>Alberta Hansard</i>

## **Executive Council**

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Dave Hancock	Deputy Premier, Minister of Innovation and Advanced Education
Naresh Bhardwaj	Associate Minister – Services for Persons with Disabilities
Manmeet Singh Bhullar	Minister of Human Services
Robin Campbell	Minister of Environment and Sustainable Resource Development
Cal Dallas	Minister of International and Intergovernmental Relations
Jonathan Denis	Minister of Justice and Solicitor General
Wayne Drysdale	Minister of Transportation
Kyle Fawcett	Associate Minister – Recovery and Reconstruction for Southwest Alberta
Rick Fraser	Associate Minister – Public Safety
	Associate Minister – Recovery and Reconstruction for High River
Doug Griffiths	Minister of Service Alberta
Fred Horne	Minister of Health
Doug Horner	President of Treasury Board and Minister of Finance
Ken Hughes	Minister of Municipal Affairs
Sandra Jansen	Associate Minister – Family and Community Safety
Jeff Johnson	Minister of Education, Ministerial Liaison to the Canadian Forces
Heather Klimchuk	Minister of Culture
Thomas Lukaszuk	Minister of Jobs, Skills, Training and Labour
Ric McIver	Minister of Infrastructure
Diana McQueen	Minister of Energy
Frank Oberle	Minister of Aboriginal Relations
Verlyn Olson	Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development
Dave Quest	Associate Minister – Seniors
Dave Rodney	Associate Minister – Wellness
Donald Scott	Associate Minister – Accountability, Transparency and Transformation
Richard Starke	Minister of Tourism, Parks and Recreation
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

Casey	Mason
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.

Tuesday, March 18, 2014

[The Speaker in the chair]

### Prayers

**The Speaker:** Let us pray. O Holy Creator, fill our hearts with your love, fill our minds with your wisdom, and watch over our actions with your caring eye and guiding hand. Amen.

Please be seated.

### Introduction of Visitors

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

**Dr. Sherman:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to all members of this Assembly the Hon. Dr. Hedy Fry, who is seated in your gallery. She is accompanied by her assistant, Ryan Cotter, who is seated in the public gallery. Dr. Fry has been the Member of Parliament for Vancouver Centre since 1993, when she defeated incumbent Kim Campbell. She also served as the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development in Prime Minister Martin's government and is now the federal Liberal Health critic. She is here to remind us that it's time to recommit to the Canada health accord, which expires later this year. She has been a vocal, passionate advocate for the rights of women, LGBTQ minorities, and the victims of HIV and AIDS and will be speaking tonight at MacEwan University about sex, gender, and politics. I would ask Dr. Fry and Mr. Cotter to please rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Cypress-Medicine Hat.

**Mr. Barnes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to introduce to you and through you a great friend of Alberta, the counties of Forty Mile and Cypress, and the town of Bow Island. In your Speaker's gallery is Alan Hyland, who very capably and diligently represented the constituents of Cypress and Cypress-Red Cliff, serving in this Legislature for 18 years, from 1975 to 1993. He then continued to serve as mayor of Bow Island and still is a town councillor. To this day Alan is extremely active in volunteer work, nonprofit fundraising, and advocating for the citizens of Cypress-Medicine Hat, from the 24-hour Wild Horse border crossing to the Alberta eastern trade corridor. Alan has also been a hundred per cent willing to share advice and information with me to help better represent constituents. He does this any time over breakfast at Bobby's restaurant in Bow Island. Alan Hyland, please rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of this House.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Bonnyville-Cold Lake.

**Mrs. Leskiw:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you and through you to all members of this Legislature a very distinguished former member, my predecessor, and my mentor, Denis Ducharme, who is sitting in the members' gallery. I would ask him to rise and accept our warmest applause.

### Introduction of Guests

**The Speaker:** Let us begin with school groups. The hon. Member for Edmonton-Mill Woods.

**Mr. Quadri:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On your behalf I would like to introduce to you and through you the 30 sharpest and brightest students of Velma E. Baker school, located in your constituency, Edmonton-Mill Creek. They are accompanied today by their teacher, Lynn Peacock, and four parent helpers. Now I will ask them to please rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of this House.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark, followed by Edmonton-Centre.

**Dr. Sherman:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour to introduce to you and through you to all members of this Assembly 61 students from Afton elementary. They're accompanied by Mrs. Audrey Letourneau, Mr. Sean MacGregor, and Mr. Scott Slatter. Afton is an arts school, and the young students in Afton would be described as artistic, intelligent, energetic. "Awesome" is another word to describe them. In fact, they coined a new word, "fantabulous." It's a combination of fabulous and fantastic. They're amongst the best and brightest students in our province and our country. I would ask them to rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

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

**Ms Blakeman:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Just a little secret, if you wouldn't mind keeping it. My favourite school is coming in at 2 o'clock, so if you could all just keep that secret, I'd really appreciate it. There are three classes from Victoria school that are joining us. I tell you, these students are cool, they're smart, they're artistic, they're very with it, hard working, and daring. If you would please welcome them to the Assembly. They'll be in at 2 o'clock, but I'm sure if you welcome them loudly enough, they'll hear it.

Thank you very much.

**The Speaker:** Are there other students or student groups?

If not, let us move on, then, to other guests, starting with St. Albert, followed by the Associate Minister of Wellness.

**Mr. Khan:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I am so pleased to introduce to you and through you two outstanding women who are amazing advocates for families in my constituency of St. Albert. These ladies are known for their inspiring dedication in supporting and assisting parents and children at the Family Resource Centre, which has been providing preventative family social services in the city of St. Albert for over 30 years. These remarkable ladies are Mrs. Sandy Biener and Mrs. Kristi Rouse. They are sitting in the public gallery. I ask them now to rise and receive the warm acknowledgement of my colleagues in the House.

**The Speaker:** The Associate Minister of Wellness, followed by Edmonton-Calder.

**Mr. Rodney:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour to introduce some very dedicated professionals who are here in recognition of Nutrition Month. Joining us today are Laura Coleman, who is the former president of the Alberta Pharmacy Students' Association; Doug Cook, who is the executive director and registrar of the College of Dietitians; and Karen Boyd, regional director for Dietitians of Canada.

The College of Dietitians and Dietitians of Canada have set up information booths on the first floor of our Legislature in the rotunda today. They're providing invaluable information on nutrition and its importance in preventing chronic disease. There's

so much more to say, but you can find it all on cookspiration.com, the exciting details. Meanwhile student pharmacists are pre-screening for preventable health ailments such as high blood pressure and diabetes. I just got checked, and I'd encourage all of my hon. colleagues, all visitors to the Legislature, everyone who works here, guests, and staff to visit our special guests here today for a wealth of wellness information.

I would now like to invite all of our guests to rise and receive the very warm welcome of this Assembly. Thank you.

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

**Mr. Eggen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I'm very pleased to introduce to you and through you my guests Dale and Judy Swaré. Judy is a retired banker, Dale a retired teacher. Judy volunteers at five organizations in the community, and Dale has started a second career. Later today I will be tabling a letter that Dale and Judy sent to the Premier underlining the tragic mismanagement of health care in Alberta and how it directly affects the quality of life for people like Dale and Judy. I'd ask them now to stand and receive the warm welcome of this Assembly.

**The Speaker:** Thank you.

## Members' Statements

### University of Calgary

**Dr. Brown:** Mr. Speaker, the demand for postsecondary education in Calgary exceeds capacity. Calgary is the largest city in Alberta and the third-largest municipality in Canada. It's also the fastest growing metropolitan area in the country, expected to reach 1.5 million by 2019.

With a young population, demand for postsecondary education in Calgary is also on the rise. Demand at the University of Calgary is increasing as evidenced by the ratio of applicants to the offers of admission. The ratio is the highest of any other peer institution in the province. The University of Calgary received 2.85 applications for every undergraduate student accepted and 4.13 applications for every graduate student accepted in the fall of 2013. Alberta Innovation and Advanced Education estimates that by 2020 there will be a shortage of at least 4,147 spaces at the University of Calgary.

While the metropolitan population of Calgary is 1,214,000, 5 per cent more than metro Edmonton at 1.15 million, postsecondary enrolment in Calgary is 17 per cent less. Facility capacity, current and under construction, is only 69,765, and that is a difference of 17 per cent less than in Edmonton. The ratio of population per postsecondary space in Calgary is 20.3 to 1, and it's 16.6 to 1 in Edmonton, a difference of 18 per cent.

1:40

In order to address the urgent need for more student capacity, the University of Calgary submitted a proposal to expand undergraduate and graduate enrolment by a very modest 1,292 students over five years at an annual cost of \$17.4 million. The proposal would result in increased enrolment in engineering, education, law, medicine, nursing, social work, business, and veterinary medicine and will help alleviate the unmet demand for higher education in Calgary and southern Alberta.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** Thank you.

The hon. Member for Calgary-Fish Creek, followed by St. Albert.

## Member's Decision to Leave Political Party

**Mrs. Forsyth:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It was just over four years ago that I made one of the most difficult decisions in my life, and I remember that day vividly, driving up from Calgary to Edmonton for a press conference to announce to my family, my friends, my colleagues, and Albertans that this government had lost its way. It had quit listening to Albertans. After 17 years of sitting on that side of the House, I was leaving the PC Party.

Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to rehash why I made that decision, but I do want members to know that I have been in the same boat that I know many of them across the aisle are in today. I did not leave the PC Party on a whim. I agonized over it for weeks, and I agonized over it for months. I knew I would be leaving behind a group of people that I had spent much of my life with, people whose families I knew dearly, friends who had gone to bat for me from the day I leapt into politics, colleagues that I stood shoulder to shoulder with during five election campaigns.

I knew that leaving the party wasn't just going to be difficult; I knew it was going to be hell. And for a while, Mr. Speaker, it was. I faced attacks on my character, my integrity, and, worst of all, on my family. Some of these things that were said about me still hurt to this day, but – you know what? – it got better. It got better once I realized that not only had I made the right decision for me, but it was also the right decision for those I was elected to represent.

If you're anything like me, the decision to run for office was not an easy one, but in the end we all took that leap. Now, here we are, sitting in this Chamber, many of you with another agonizing decision to make. Mr. Speaker, I can't tell these members what decision is right for them, but I can tell the ones who already know in their heart of hearts: yes, it is terrifying; no, it won't be easy, and yes, it may get nasty, but, members, it will get better.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for St. Albert, followed by Edmonton-Strathcona.

## Family Resource Centre in St. Albert

**Mr. Khan:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise today to recognize an incredible organization from my constituency, the St. Albert Family Resource Centre. The St. Albert Family Resource Centre and its wonderful, hard-working staff have been providing preventative social services in the city of St. Albert for over 30 years. When the centre started in 1982, there were three individuals. Today the centre has grown to 14 staff and 16 facilitators, who provide a wide range of programs for the families and parents. Not only does the centre serve residents from St. Albert, but many families from northern Edmonton and from our surrounding rural communities also enjoy the great services that the resource centre provides.

To my knowledge, the family resource centre and parent link centres both provide very similar resources and support to families. However, our family resource centre does not receive the same amount of funding and promotion as the parent link centres, which belong to the provincial network. St. Albert Family Resource Centre is funded by Edmonton and area child and family services region 6, St. Albert family and community support services, and the United Way of the Alberta Capital Region. Other revenue is generated through membership fees, fees for service, fundraising, and donations. If the St. Albert Family Resource Centre were able to obtain parent link designation, the centre would be able to expand their programs and make their services more accessible to parents and families.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the St. Albert Family Resource Centre and all their staff for providing invaluable services to the St. Albert community as well as our surrounding communities. It's my sincere wish that the organization will be a part of the parent link centre network in the future as they continue to do amazing work for our families in St. Albert.

Thank you so much, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** Thank you.

Edmonton-Strathcona, followed by Calgary-Hawkwood.

### Government Policies

**Ms Notley:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This current crisis engulfing the PC government has its roots in the broken promises by this government from the last election. The PC promise to end child poverty disappeared entirely from the government's budgets, throne speeches, and talking points. The PC promise for stable and predictable funding for postsecondary education went out the window, with a catastrophic budget last year and a half-hearted attempt to make it up this year. The PC promise to protect vulnerable Albertans was utterly shattered two years in a row, with cuts to the seniors drug benefit, services to Albertans with disabilities, and cuts to income support programs.

Mr. Speaker, the PCs deliberately misled Albertans during the election about what kind of government they would be. Albertans had a vision for a better province in the last election, the kind of province where public services would receive stable, predictable funding and increases, the kind of province where action on crucial issues like child poverty wasn't just a cynical election promise but something that we all agreed we needed to take real action on.

Now with the province littered with broken PC promises, all we're talking about in this Legislature is government waste. Now, that suits the Wildrose opposition just fine, Mr. Speaker, because when it comes down to their vision for the province, it really isn't that much different from that of this PC government: same policies, same corporate backers, and the same kind of blatant attempts to mislead Albertans about where they really stand.

But, Mr. Speaker, Albertans deserve better than either of these conservative parties. Albertans deserve a government that will actually keep its promises and that will definitely stand up for all Alberta families.

Thank you.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Calgary-Hawkwood, followed by Lacombe-Ponoka.

### Health and Wellness Framework

**Mr. Luan:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Alberta's population is aging, and the associated health care costs pose a serious challenge to our health care system. Some people call this a social tsunami. However, this challenge is an anticipated one, one that gives us opportunities to respond with a new framework that fundamentally transforms how we approach health care.

Alberta is leading the nation in many ways, as we all know. We are the economic engine of the country. In 2012 we led the nation in employment, creating 87 per cent of the new jobs in the whole of Canada. We also led the nation in population growth, attracting talent from all over the world. We led the nation in quality of life, and we enjoy the highest quality of life index as it stands now.

We have every reason to lead the nation in developing a new health care framework in order to approach health care in a very different way. One possible solution is to take a wellness approach

to sustain our public health care system. According to the wellness foundation the focus of wellness is evidence-based actions that have been shown to avoid or remove the root causes of health care problems. These include addressing numerous well-established risk factors, including physical inactivity, unhealthy eating, tobacco use, alcohol misuse, and preventing adverse childhood experiences and injury.

Mr. Speaker, March is Nutrition Month, and as we speak, our government is hosting nutritionists and student pharmacists with displays in our Legislature, downstairs.

Health care is a shared responsibility among individuals, communities, and governments. Mr. Speaker, we must work together to ensure Alberta's population remains as healthy as possible.

Thank you.

### Statement by the Speaker

#### Rotation of Questions and Members' Statements

**The Speaker:** Hon. members, just before we proceed with the daily Routine and Oral Question Period, I would like to make a brief statement about the rotation for questions during Oral Question Period and also for Members' Statements. Revisions to the rotations are required due to changes in caucus membership pertaining to the Member for Calgary-Foothills and the Member for Calgary-Varsity, who are now independent members of this Assembly.

*1:50*

Adapting and applying past practices to this current arrangement of independents, the Member for Calgary-Foothills is entitled to question 6 on day 2 of the Oral Question Period rotation. The Member for Calgary-Varsity is entitled to question 6 on day 3 of the Oral Question Period rotation. For each of these sitting days in the rotation the remaining caucuses each move down one position for questions 7, 8, and 9. The PC caucus, which was at question 9, is moved to question 21, and subsequently the Wildrose question moves from question 21 down to question 22. The remainder of the rotation on days 2 and 3 does not change. This will give the Member for Calgary-Varsity, the Member for Calgary-Foothills, and the Member for Fort McMurray-Wood Buffalo one question every four days, which replicates the Oral Question Period rotation in the fall sitting of 2013, where each independent member was entitled to one question per week. Hon. members, please be advised that today is rotation day 1, so to speak, in terms of question period.

Now, with respect to the rotation for Members' Statements, this has also been modified to provide for one statement by each independent member every third week. Applying this principle, the Member for Fort McMurray-Wood Buffalo is entitled to the first of these members' statements on Thursday, March 20. Calgary-Foothills will then be recognized on Thursday, April 10, and Calgary-Varsity will be recognized on Thursday, April 17.

Hon. members, you will find the revised Oral Question Period rotation on your desks, and I will be distributing shortly to each of your offices a revised projected sitting days calendar to reflect the changes in the Members' Statements rotation, which I just explained.

Now, just before we start the clock for Oral Question Period, please be reminded that you have a maximum of 35 seconds for each question and a maximum of 35 seconds for each answer. I will do my best once again to enforce these time limits as strictly as I can. Finally, be reminded that there are to be no preambles to supplementary questions after main question 5.

Thank you.

### Oral Question Period

**The Speaker:** Let me recognize the hon. Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition for question 1.

#### Alberta Health Services Executive Compensation

**Ms Smith:** Mr. Speaker, Alberta Health Services has a new chief executive officer, Vickie Kaminski. She certainly has a difficult job ahead of her, and we wish her well. I'd like to start by giving the minister credit for one thing. We combed through Ms Kaminski's contract and found no evidence of the country-club clause that gave past health executives up to \$15,000 a year in memberships to exclusive clubs. This is progress. Can the Health minister assure Albertans that no current AHS executive has this ridiculous entitlement?

**Mr. Horne:** Well, Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member knows the answer to this question. I will start off by thanking her for her compliments with respect to Ms Kaminski. We're very much looking forward to her leading Alberta Health Services. As the hon. member also knows, I asked Dr. John Cowell, the official administrator of AHS, to undertake a comprehensive review of executive compensation. That review has been made public. In addition to prescribing set salary ranges, it eliminates bonuses . . .

**The Speaker:** Thank you.

**Ms Smith:** Mr. Speaker, there is one aspect of Ms Kaminski's contract that we do find concerning. In the real world executives are normally given severance of one month's pay for every year of service, yet she'll be entitled to severance of one month's pay for every month of service to a maximum of one year. Now, we like the fact that there is a maximum, so thank you for taking our advice on that, Minister, but doesn't the Health minister see that taxpayers are annoyed at paying rich severance packages to Health executives who only last for a few months?

**Mr. Horne:** You know, Mr. Speaker, what I think Albertans will come to appreciate very quickly is that they will be thankful that it wasn't left to the Official Opposition to recruit a senior leader for Alberta Health Services in this province. If that were the case, we would not have someone of Ms Kaminski's calibre joining Alberta Health Services. This is the CEO of the fifth-largest employer in the country, the largest health care organization in Canada, certainly larger than in many developed countries. These are appropriate terms and conditions for this appointment.

**The Speaker:** Second supplemental.

**Ms Smith:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I understand the minister had quite a time convincing somebody to take this job, so I guess we should count ourselves lucky that we got somebody in it.

Speaking of severance, though, even though Alberta Health Services has a new CEO, I want to ask about the former CEO Dr. Chris Eagle. He resigned from his post in October, but he said that he was going to stay on with AHS until this fall doing, quote, special projects. Now, I suspect this was just a way to mask the fact that he was being paid a \$580,000 severance, but I could be wrong. Could the Health minister explain in detail the specific projects Dr. Eagle is working on and what . . .

**The Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Health.

**Mr. Horne:** Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. In fact, the greatest challenge in recruiting senior-level health talent to this

province is the hon. members opposite and their constant undermining of Alberta Health Services and also the front-line staff that deliver care in this province. The hon. member knows full well the terms and conditions surrounding Dr. Eagle's departure. He was a product of an earlier era that provided for much more generous severance packages than we see today with Ms Kaminski. He is involved in some high-level, senior projects within the organization, and he is working out that notice period, not being paid . . .

**The Speaker:** Thank you.

Second main set of questions.

**Ms Smith:** I'd love to know what those high-level projects are, Minister. We'll try again another day.

#### Mathematics Curriculum

**Ms Smith:** Mr. Speaker, parents across Alberta are demanding that this government end its failed experiment in new math and get back to basics. International and national assessments have our children's math scores dropping. The government's failure to teach our kids basic math has resulted in Alberta math scores continuing to head in the wrong direction. Meanwhile, the minister continues to ignore the outcry from parents. Why won't he just restore the practice of teaching basic math skills to elementary school children in Alberta?

**Mr. J. Johnson:** Mr. Speaker, day after day we get the same question, and we give the same answer. The answer is that we will, and we are. It's not a matter of old rote memorization versus inquiry-based methods of teaching. When we're talking about curriculum, we're talking about the what, not the how. What they're saying is that they don't trust teachers. They don't trust teachers to decide which methods work best for which kid. When we talk about curriculum, we're talking about what we're teaching and the objectives of that education system, not necessarily the teaching methods.

**Ms Smith:** The problem is, Mr. Speaker, that teachers are complaining, too. A recent *Edmonton Journal* blog quoted an analysis by a teacher and former principal in Edmonton's public school system. He says, "The City University of New York conducted a meta-analysis of 164 studies on discovery learning. [It] concluded that 'unassisted discovery does not benefit learners.'" The minister is ignoring top teachers who warn that this government is gambling children's futures on unproven theories. Will the minister restore the practice of teaching basic math skills to elementary school students in Alberta?

**Mr. J. Johnson:** Mr. Speaker, once again, they can't take yes for an answer. I said that we will, and we are. But it's not one or the other; it's both. As any teacher in the classroom will tell you, they need the latitude, they need the flexibility to decide how to reach each kid. This isn't just about rote memorization. Maybe they'd like us to remove the smart boards and bring back blackboards. A year ago they didn't believe in climate change either, so maybe there's hope that they'll evolve on this as well.

**Ms Smith:** Sorry, Mr. Speaker. They aren't, and they don't. As noted in a *Calgary Herald* column today, government education propaganda states, "We're preparing (Alberta students) for a future we can't imagine, and giving them the tools to succeed in work that doesn't yet exist." Apparently, the minister believes that in the future Alberta students won't need math skills. The minister

should just admit that his department's approach to teaching math has failed. Will he restore the practice of teaching basic math skills to elementary school students in Alberta?

**Mr. J. Johnson:** Mr. Speaker, on one hand they want us to change the curriculum, but on the next hand they don't support curriculum changes. We've just said that we're in the middle of a curriculum redesign, and part of that redesign is to reinforce the fundamentals, numeracy and literacy, and have those woven through all pieces of the curriculum. Yesterday they questioned our support of the trades. Well, Inspiring Education is calling for dual crediting, where we're bringing trades in, and we've got dual crediting going on in postsecondaries, industry, NAIT, and the polytechnics. Guess who's on those advisory groups for the curriculum? It's the Building Trades of Alberta, it's NAIT, it's the employers, but they don't support . . .

**The Speaker:** Thank you.

Hon. Member for Greenwood, your third main set of questions.

**Ms Smith:** Thanks, Mr. Speaker. Our kids need to memorize the times tables, and that just ain't happening.

#### Disaster Recovery Program Administration

**Ms Smith:** Mr. Speaker, back to the disaster of the disaster recovery program. Here's a story of how LandLink is dealing with the minister's order to start closing files. Richard Murray of High River started repairing his home on September 23 after getting permission in writing from LandLink to do so. He followed every step required and kept LandLink in the loop throughout. He was told on November 23 that all of his paperwork was in order, so he waited for payment. On March 11 he got a phone call from LandLink. His claim has been denied in full without explanation. Is this how the minister intends to close all . . .

**The Speaker:** The hon. minister.

2:00

**Mr. Hughes:** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member knows flat out that that's an outrageous – outrageous – statement. There have been almost 4,700 payments to individuals, totalling \$48 million, since this disaster recovery program started. You know, if there are individual cases, I encourage the hon. member to share them. We will put them into the system and make sure that they're reviewed. I encourage individuals who have a concern with the DRP file to go through the appeals process as well.

**Ms Smith:** What's outrageous is that this minister still hasn't fired LandLink.

Richard Murray's circumstances are not unique. All over southern Alberta homeowners victimized by the flood are being revictimized by LandLink. We're now getting multiple reports that if a homeowner challenges or appeals any part of the DRP process, all DRP payments are put on hold. If you think the DRP got one little thing wrong, you get no further money or anything until the dispute is resolved. That makes me think that LandLink is being paid commission on the money that they don't pay out. To the minister: is LandLink being paid to shortchange flood victims?

**Mr. Hughes:** Mr. Speaker, that is actually a very irresponsible statement. You know, this government is committed to supporting Albertans in ways that no other province could ever afford to do. We will be there for Albertans. We'll deliver through the disaster recovery program, and we will ensure that Albertans are looked

after. If there are concerns that individual Albertans have, there's a process by which it will be resolved. We're here to see it through for Albertans.

**Ms Smith:** Mr. Speaker, if there was nothing to hide, he would table the contract, and I've been asking him to do that.

This government has called last spring's flood a \$6 billion event, yet in the community where more homes were destroyed than in all the other communities combined, less than \$23 million has actually flowed through to homeowners who were devastated by the flood. The people most hurt are seeing nothing, but there seems to be plenty of money for companies that manage to score sole-source contracts from the government. To the minister: how much has LandLink been paid so far as a result of the 2013 floods?

**Mr. Hughes:** Mr. Speaker, I'd be very happy to table that information in this House. My understanding is that the administrative cost of delivering the disaster recovery program is in the order of a magnitude of 11 per cent of payout. That actually compares very favourably to the insurance industry, which is an over 20 to 25 per cent cost for delivering the payout. Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to make that information available, and we'll go right back the last 20 years of DRP payments and make that information available.

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

#### Flood Recovery Communications Contract

**Dr. Sherman:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Speaking of contracts, after the flood Alberta Liberals called for a special auditor to conduct real-time monitoring of flood recovery related expenses. The Premier refused, and now we know why. Our FOIP request revealed that Executive Council, the Premier's own ministry, gave a quarter million dollar contract for flood recovery communications advice to Navigator, a PR firm headed by a long-time PC campaign strategist, Randy Dawson. To the Premier: where is your judgment? Why did you use public money to reward such an obvious PC insider?

**Mr. Hancock:** Mr. Speaker, it's not about reward; it's about communicating. It's about having Albertans understand what's happening at a time of very high stress for Albertans. Albertans want to know what's going on. When the floods were on, people needed to know what was happening, when it was going to happen, and how their issues and concerns were going to be taken care of. That requires people to come to the table immediately, to work hard, and that's what this government did.

**Dr. Sherman:** Mr. Speaker, a quarter of a million dollars: that's a lot of money.

Mr. Speaker, you'll have to forgive Albertans for being skeptical given previous lapses in the Premier's judgment with Tobaccogate, Travelgate, and now this. The nature of this contract raises some very serious questions. Was there a competitive tendering process? What services were so unique that they could only be provided by this one PC-led PR firm? To the Premier. You have the highest priced Public Affairs Bureau in the country. Why was this contract necessary at all?

**Mr. Hancock:** Mr. Speaker, when the flood happened, this government mobilized quickly and addressed the concerns of Albertans, moved immediately to help Albertans who were in need and to make sure Albertans who were under stress under-

stood that the government was there and was going to work with them to deal with those issues. We mobilized immediately. We did what we needed to do to make sure that Albertans were well cared for during the most difficult time in their life.

**Dr. Sherman:** Mr. Speaker, it seems like they're addressing the concerns of a PC insider, not the very people who needed the help.

One of the very few obligations listed in this quarter million dollar contract was to provide logistical support for the half-day flood symposium. Interestingly, during Alberta's centennial the Public Affairs Bureau managed to do a fine job of co-ordinating the logistics for something as minor as Her Majesty the Queen's royal visit. To the Premier: if the PAB is good enough for royalty, why isn't it good enough for you and your government?

**Mr. Hancock:** Well, Mr. Speaker, this is a classic case of people who think that they can govern by looking in the rear-view mirror and analyzing everything that happened in the context of what they think today. [interjections]

What happened in June of 2013 was that Albertans faced the most massive natural disaster that's happened in this province and perhaps in North America. This government responded; our Premier responded. Albertans knew, because we responded, that their issues would be taken care of, and they were taken care of. We recovered from this disaster better than any other place in North America. It was a big disaster, but Albertans knew that their government and their Premier was there.

**The Speaker:** Thank you.

Could we please cut out the interjections? They're really not necessary. They're coming from both sides, and that's enough.

Let's move on to Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood.

**Mr. Mason:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Today is transit operator appreciation day, and I know they get as much respect as electricians on the other side of the House.

### Government Work Plan

**Mr. Mason:** Mr. Speaker, Albertans are interested in the Premier's work plan and what's in it. Does the work plan given to the Premier by her party include steps to reverse cuts to PDD programs, to poverty reduction or the seniors' benefit or to bring down the price of . . .

**The Speaker:** The hon. Deputy Premier.

**Mr. Hancock:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know that it's not necessarily appropriate or within the rules to talk about party politics in the House, but I can tell this hon. member that the plan that this government has, this party has, this Premier has, and this caucus has is to work hard for the next two years to ensure that we continue to have the opportunity to provide good government for Albertans each and every day.

**Mr. Mason:** Good luck with that, Deputy Premier.

Does the work plan involve keeping the Premier's election promise for affordable child care? Or how about the promise to eliminate child poverty in five years?

**Mr. Hancock:** Mr. Speaker, while developing a platform is a very important role of the party and talking with party members about what should be in that platform is a very important role of the party, perhaps the hon. member would like to know that door-knocking in his constituency might also be a very important part of that plan. This government, this caucus, and particularly this

party, because he's raising party business in the House, likes to plan to listen to Albertans, to work with Albertans, to address the issues of Albertans while we build the future of Alberta and work with Albertans to develop the kind of place where our children and our grandchildren can live and work and raise their families.

**Mr. Mason:** Well, good luck with that, Mr. Deputy Premier.

Does the Premier's work plan include measures to clean up the tailings ponds in the oil sands or to keep jobs here by refining more bitumen in Alberta? Or how about repealing bills 45 and 46? Albertans want to know.

**Mr. Hancock:** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member continues to want to talk about a so-called work plan from a party perspective, but let me talk about a government perspective. This is a government who builds Alberta. This is a government who builds forward, who looks for the opportunity to create the kind of place where Albertans can live and work and raise their families in Alberta, trade out into the world, a place where it's the best place in North America, perhaps in the world to live and to raise your family. That's the kind of Alberta we want, that's the kind of work plan we have, and that's how we're working going forward, focusing on the kind of place where people can have a quality of life and raise their family, get their education, and really pay back as the citizens of our province.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Calgary-Fish Creek, followed by Barrhead-Morinville-Westlock.

### 2:10 Infrastructure Maintenance and Repair

**Mrs. Forsyth:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This government loves to talk about the so-called building Alberta plan. What it doesn't speak to is the unacceptable job it is doing on maintaining Alberta; that is, ensuring the facilities that we already have don't fall into disrepair. A FOIP – I love those FOIPs – of Alberta Infrastructure shows over a dozen health facilities listed in poor condition. These are just a few that we know of right now. How can the Infrastructure minister ensure that a government busy putting up flashy Building Alberta signs isn't forgetting about the critical infrastructure that we need today?

**The Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Infrastructure.

**Mr. McIver:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know what? The fact is that we work with Alberta Health Services all the time, get their advice on which buildings need to be repaired. We work with the list they give us. They do the repairs. We monitor to make sure the money gets spent where it's supposed to. We'll continue to do that because that's how we actually keep things in good order. If the hon. member actually has examples of places that she genuinely feels are in bad repair, we'd of course be happy to hear about that.

**Mrs. Forsyth:** Oh, I have them, Mr. Speaker. Lots of them.

Given that residents in Boyle are concerned about losing health services in their community after a four-year Alberta Health Services plan to repurpose this facility into a primary care clinic was shelved, can the Minister of Infrastructure ensure residents that they won't lose local services altogether by consolidating them all within 50 kilometres?

**Mr. Horne:** Well, Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member will know, responsible planning and delivery of health care services involves looking at all of the services in geographical areas across the province, ensuring that we're making the most of the equipment

and the staffing and the facilities that we have available, and that means centralizing some services in appropriate areas within those geographical areas, which we call AHS zones. We'll continue to do that work. The residents of Boyle can be assured by this government that they'll continue to have access to all of the health care services they need just as their neighbours across the province do.

**Mrs. Forsyth:** Okay. Minister, let's try another one. Given that the Wainwright health centre, according to Alberta Health Services, has deteriorated to the extent that continued safe building operations cannot be taken for granted and given that the facility – now, listen to this one – is at risk of being shut down if further sewage system failures occur, why after at least four years of being on Alberta Health Services' priority plan has this government not taken any action?

**Mr. Horne:** Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member knows, Alberta has the highest number of hospitals per capita than any other province in this country bar none, 99 approved hospitals. We have proposed in Budget 2014 a capital budget of \$2.6 billion covering 24 projects. The issue of infrastructure maintenance is an issue in every province in this country. We provide for that in our budget. We have more work than most provinces because of the number of hospitals that we're working with. The quality of care in this province is not in question and should never be in question.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Barrhead-Morinville-Westlock, followed by Livingstone-Macleod.

#### Highway Maintenance and Rehabilitation

**Ms Kubinec:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A robust transportation system is vital for all Albertans, whether they need to get products to market, to get to and from work, to get their kids to school, whatever. Over the past number of years this government has invested billions in major capital projects like building the Edmonton and Calgary ring roads or twinning highway 63, but many Albertans worry about the condition of the highways and bridges that we already have. To the Minister of Transportation: what is this government doing to make sure that Alberta's existing highways infrastructure, especially secondary highways like 661 in my Barrhead-Morinville-Westlock . . .

**The Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Transportation.

**Mr. Drysdale:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thanks to this member for always advocating on behalf of rural Alberta. Budget 2014 is great news for Alberta's smaller roads and highways and bridges. Over the next three years we've allocated \$735 million for highway rehabilitation. That's an increase of \$284 million from Budget 2013. We'll be able to rehabilitate 2,500 kilometres of highways in Alberta over the next three years.

**Ms Kubinec:** To the same minister: how are these rehabilitation projects prioritized, and how can municipalities know that projects in their communities are on the list?

**Mr. Drysdale:** Mr. Speaker, my department has a very technical method of measuring highway condition based on pavement roughness. Once highway condition has been determined, it is placed on Alberta Transportation's three-year construction program. Where it falls in that program depends entirely on the condition of the pavement, and safety is the number one reason for

looking at these conditions. Safety is always our number one consideration when determining projects in our three-year plan.

**Ms Kubinec:** To the same minister: is this renewed focus on maintenance and rehabilitation enough to clear the backlog of projects that has built up over the last several years?

**Mr. Drysdale:** Mr. Speaker, Alberta has more than 28,000 kilometres of paved provincial roads. With a network this vast we'll never be done rehabilitating roads in this province. It's true that when times were tough over the last few years, we had to make some tough decisions with respect to rehabilitation and maintenance, but the extra \$284 million dollars in this year's budget will go a long way to catching us up on that.

**The Speaker:** Livingstone-MacLeod, followed by Red Deer-North.

#### Calgary Southwest Ring Road Cost

**Mr. Stier:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, the Finance minister let the cat out of the bag when he said that the southwest ring road project will cost \$5 billion. Calgary residents need this project, but they want it at the best possible price. Yet it's been reported that the \$5 billion could produce three replica south Calgary hospitals. To the Minister of Transportation: if the 46-kilometre Stoney Trail east freeway cost \$1.4 billion, why in the world is the 41-kilometre west and southwest ring road projected to cost a whopping \$5 billion?

**Mr. Horner:** Mr. Speaker, I thought I might take this first piece because I understand that the *Calgary Herald* is quoting a statement that I made at a chamber of commerce luncheon some couple of weeks ago. The \$5 billion number was an estimate that we used during the discussions of the ring road that is going to be happening. As I mentioned in the speech to this House on the budget, this is an agreement that took 50 years in the making to work with the aboriginals and First Nations, to work with Calgary residents, to work with the municipalities. The hon. member knows that this is a very important project not only for Calgary but for southern Alberta, to move those through. We anticipate that it's going to be around . . .

**The Speaker:** First supplemental.

**Mr. Stier:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, given the Minister of Finance already announced the cost of the project at \$5 billion and given his government is considering a P3 to build and finance it, then how does the Minister of Transportation plan on getting the best possible value from bidders when he's already let it slip how much money is in the envelope?

**Mr. Drysdale:** Mr. Speaker, this is quite hilarious. Last week they were trying to get me to commit to a number. Now that we have, they're saying that we shouldn't have, but in fact it was the minister of Treasury Board that came out with that number. That's the reason I didn't want to come out with that last week. The \$5 billion is a rough number. Until we put it out for tender and have the bids come in, you can't have an exact number.

**The Speaker:** Second supplemental.

**Mr. Stier:** Yeah. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, given that it's four times the other one, you've got to wonder.

To the Transportation minister, then: given that this government said that it was considering a P3 to build this ring road project, if

the government doesn't get any bidders, like what's happening to the schools, what's your plan B for this?

**Mr. Drysdale:** Mr. Speaker, there you go with speculation again. I'm quite confident we'll get lots of bidders on our P3 project on these ring roads. We've always done that. We've built pretty well all the ring roads around Edmonton and Calgary under P3s, and we've saved the taxpayers of Alberta over \$2.5 billion building P3 roads.

#### Penalties for Drinking and Driving

**Mrs. Jablonski:** Mr. Speaker, I'm outraged that a young man under the age of 18 can have a 24-hour suspension for drinking, two 30-day suspensions for driving while impaired, an impaired driving charge that is thrown out of court, and still be allowed to carry on drinking and driving until he finally kills a hard-working, responsible citizen of Red Deer. When a person continues to drink and drive and kills someone, this is not an accident; it is vehicular homicide. The bereaved family is then made to feel that the justice system is more concerned with the rights of the killer than it is with rights of the innocent victim and his family. To the Minister of Justice and Solicitor General: how can a young man . . .

**The Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Justice.

**Mr. Denis:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. First off, I want to thank this member for her tireless advocacy on behalf of victims of drunk drivers. Thank you very much. It's very important to me as Justice minister that we always put our victims first, and that's why I'm also very happy that we've introduced legislation that prevents future victims. Now with new legislation if you have a graduated driver's licence, as did this gentleman, if there's any blood-alcohol level at all, there's an immediate 30-day suspension and an immediate seven-day vehicle seizure. I'm very proud of this government's record on this drunk-driving file.

**The Speaker:** Thank you. I'm assuming this is not sub judice, then.

**Mr. Denis:** No.

2:20

**The Speaker:** Thank you, Minister, for clarifying. First supplemental.

**Mrs. Jablonski:** Thank you. He did have a graduated driver's license.

How is it possible that a person in Calgary is killed by a man who's had three previous drunk-driving charges? Is there no way that we can stop these drunk drivers and get them off the road?

**The Speaker:** Hon. minister, you say that this is not sub judice. It's sounding like it is, but proceed if it isn't.

**Mr. Denis:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As this member had mentioned, this is a Criminal Code issue, and I've advocated time and time again to the federal Justice minister, the Hon. Peter MacKay, at our meetings that there should be mandatory minimum sentencing for drunk drivers who cause death or serious bodily harm. I know this member supports that. It's time for the opposition, Wildrose, to join us in this particular fight.

**Mrs. Jablonski:** Same minister. Why are there no minimum sentences for someone who is driving and drunk and commits vehicular homicide? Why don't we have minimum sentences?

**Mr. Denis:** Again, Mr. Speaker, that's a great question because I feel that there should be mandatory minimums for drunk drivers who actually kill someone or cause serious bodily harm to somebody. You know, a couple of years ago when we were at the doors talking about our strong record on this particular file, there were members opposite that kept on setting up beer coasters, these little beer coasters mocking victims of this particular issue. It's time that we stand up against drunk drivers.

**Mr. Anderson:** Point of order.

**The Speaker:** Thank you.

Airdrie, your point of order has been noted at 2:22.

Let us move on to Edmonton-Centre, followed by Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview.

#### Legal Aid

**Ms Blakeman:** Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. A publicly funded legal aid system is essential to our democracy. It ensures that even if you can't afford a private lawyer, you can be represented in court with assistance from legal aid except in Alberta. When I asked the minister a question last week, he seemed more intent on blaming the feds than in answering the question, so I'll try again. To the Minister of Justice: why is the Justice ministry funding legal aid so meagerly that people on assured income for the severely handicapped cannot qualify?

**Mr. Denis:** Mr. Speaker, legal aid is a very valued service, but it is an independent society, and it sets its own independent criteria. I say again that this government continues to fund legal aid. For the federal government it's time to step up. We fund over 80 per cent of legal aid in this province, and we'll continue to do so.

**The Speaker:** First supplemental.

**Ms Blakeman:** Well, thanks very much. Does the Minister of Justice not see the connection between provincial government funding of this program and the cut-off criteria that legal aid has to apply?

**Mr. Denis:** I definitely agree with this member. There's a connection with the federal government's lack of funding of the legal aid program. We fund over 80 per cent, Mr. Speaker, and we're going to continue to fund this amount for vulnerable Albertans and for providing access to justice through legal aid.

**Ms Blakeman:** It appears he doesn't want his job, wants to give it to the feds.

Well, back to the same minister: could the minister please explain what mentally disabled recipients of the assured income for the severely handicapped should do if their AISH benefits cause them to make too much money to qualify for legal aid or a single mom working full-time on minimum wage who also makes too much money to get legal aid assistance? What would you recommend they do?

**Mr. Denis:** Mr. Speaker, as I indicated earlier, the Legal Aid Society of Alberta sets its own criteria. We'll continue our funding of legal aid. We'll also continue our advocacy for the federal government to live up to its obligations.

#### Calgary School Infrastructure

**Mr. Bilous:** Mr. Speaker, many families move to mature neighbourhoods because of their access to local community

schools, yet year after year this PC government refuses to fund routine maintenance and upkeep in our existing schools, turning simple fixes into major repairs. Today because of this government's neglect, Edmonton Catholic school board is forced to vote on the closure of four mature neighbourhood schools that they can't afford to repair. To the Minister of Education: why do you insist on punishing mature schools in mature neighbourhoods?

**Mr. J. Johnson:** Mr. Speaker, nothing could be further from the truth with respect to what this member is saying. Edmonton Catholic is not voting on closing schools because of the disrepair of the schools; they're voting on amalgamating students into one location because they think it's potentially in the best interest of the students with respect to programming. That's what we're here for. We're here to deliver education, not to manage buildings. I don't disagree with the member in terms of that I wish we could give them more money to maintain their buildings. But the truth of the matter is that there are also large capital reserves across the province. At the end of the day we're interested in instruction and programs and opportunities, and sometimes that means operating a building has to come . . .

**The Speaker:** First supplemental.

**Mr. Bilous:** Mr. Speaker, given that creative programming like the sports program Edmonton Catholic brought in at St. Mark can attract parents to mature neighbourhood schools and given that St. Mark narrowly avoided closure last year but now enrolment has increased by 30 per cent, why doesn't the minister support schools boards, parents, and teachers who have creative solutions to avoid school closures?

**Mr. J. Johnson:** It's a great question, Mr. Speaker, and that's why I'm very happy that the Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar brought the parents and the school board in to meet with me some time ago to talk about this situation. I commend the school board for taking on this challenge, because it's a difficult decision. That's one of the reasons why under this Premier we stepped forward and provided money ahead of time for that school board so they could have certainty that when they go out and develop those programs and develop those creative opportunities and make those tough decisions, they know that this Premier and this government will stand behind them and that we'll provide the funding so they can deliver the best programs possible.

**The Speaker:** Second supplemental.

**Mr. Bilous:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Still closing schools, Minister.

Given that the Calgary board of education's new capital plan asks for over \$300 million in school modernizations alone and given that over 19 of those modernizations have been requested by the board for more than five years, will the minister commit to funding these modernizations before more Alberta schools are too costly for repair?

**Mr. J. Johnson:** Mr. Speaker, I think this member agrees with me in that we elected the right Premier and that's why we've got such a strong investment in the schools and the infrastructure. We've never had such a big capital program for education, and that's due to one person, the person that was talking about it during the election. This is the only party that was talking about that during the election. She's to be commended because we delivered on it

with 50 new schools and 70 modernizations, and we'll continue investing in that capital.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Medicine Hat, followed by St. Albert.

#### Postsecondary Noninstructional Student Fees

**Mr. Pedersen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Every year hundreds of millions of dollars in operating grants are given to postsecondary institutions, and taxpayers have an expectation that those funds are used to provide basic services to students. The reality is that mandatory noninstructional fees are being charged to students for such basics as safety or academic advising or hallways as a way to work around the tuition cap. To the Deputy Premier: how are taxpayers receiving value for their investment in postsecondary when the basics aren't even being covered?

**The Speaker:** The hon. Deputy Premier.

**Mr. Hancock:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would say that the hon. member's assumptions are actually wrong, first of all. We fund the postsecondary system in this province quite well compared to other jurisdictions, and we get good-quality education as a result of that. We also get a lot of student spaces as a result of that. Now, is there more demand? Always. Are there more things that can be done? Always. Are there different things that could be done? Always. So postsecondary institutions look to their finances – they have boards – to determine how they're going to finance the things that they want to do on their campuses to be the best that they can be.

**Mr. Pedersen:** Given that this PC government all too often uses fee hikes and service charges as an easy escape instead of working hard to reduce red tape and get spending under control and given that we are hearing that noninstructional fees are now being used to cover academic salaries, how can Albertans be confident that this minister is up to the job of making sure taxpayers are getting the best return on their investment in postsecondary education?

**Mr. Hancock:** Well, if the question is how Albertans can be sure that this minister is up to the job, they only have to look at this minister's record of 17 years in this House and seven different departments without much in the way of public profile in the newspapers. As I used to say during the leadership process that I ran in: the reason you don't hear about me is because I never screwed up anything. There may be another explanation that somebody else wants to give of how Albertans can be assured that this minister is competent to do his job, but I'm satisfied that I come to work every day and give my best in that particular effort on behalf of good relations.

**The Speaker:** The hon. member. Second supplemental.

**Mr. Pedersen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that Ontario is the only province with a higher cost for an undergraduate education, why hasn't the minister gone to greater efforts to rein in mandatory noninstructional fees and reduce the cost of obtaining a postsecondary education for Alberta students?

2:30

**Mr. Hancock:** Mr. Speaker, this is actually a very serious topic. Every Albertan needs to be able to advance their education when and where they want to do it, and we have to ensure that finances are not a barrier to a student getting an education. Now, education is still the best investment that an Albertan can make, and we need

more Albertans to be looking to invest in their education right across the spectrum, whether it's a PhD or whether it's a trade or whether it's technology. We need Albertans to be educated. We work every day with our postsecondary system to make sure that those spaces and places are available at an affordable price for Alberta students.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for St. Albert, followed by Strathmore-Brooks.

#### Parenting Resources in St. Albert

**Mr. Khan:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A major component of the building Alberta plan is to build strong families and communities. The development of parent link centres in Alberta shows that our government values and invests in families and children. However, the city of St. Albert remains one of the few Alberta cities without a parent link centre. To the Minister of Human Services: can you please explain why my community of St. Albert does not have a parent link centre?

**The Speaker:** The hon. minister.

**Mr. Bhullar:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To be quite honest, I wish I could have parent link centres in every single jurisdiction in this province because they provide very, very valuable resources. We have recently announced some new parent link centres – I did that in January – and they're based on the early development index. On this index we look at a series of different things and essentially see the progress that children have made when they enter kindergarten. St. Albert is a jurisdiction where children are actually entering kindergarten with a very, very strong footing.

**The Speaker:** First supplemental.

**Mr. Khan:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the same minister: given that St. Albert and surrounding communities are not assigned to any specific parent link centres, how can your ministry ensure that families and children in St. Albert are able to receive the services and programs they need?

**Mr. Bhullar:** Well, Mr. Speaker, I know that the member is very, very passionate about the work of the St. Albert Family Resource Centre, and I know we have Sandy and Kristi from the centre here today. That's one example of some of the great resources that are available in the city of St. Albert. The member is a very strong advocate for his community, and I will ensure that we continue to work together to see how we can better the services.

**Mr. Khan:** I do appreciate the kind words about our fabulous St. Albert Family Resource Centre.

To the same minister: given that the St. Albert Family Resource Centre has been providing preventative social services in the city of St. Albert and providing for surrounding regions such as Edmonton and our rural communities for over 30 years, will the minister please designate the St. Albert Family Resource Centre as part of the parent link centre?

**The Speaker:** The hon. minister.

**Mr. Bhullar:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would welcome the member to spend some time and effort with myself, and we can see what additional services we can add on. Essentially, some of this evaluation comes down to, unfortunately, limits on financial resources. There are some communities that rank in the high 20s and 30s on the early development index whereas St. Albert ranks

down towards 15. Now, that means that the community has got some good things going for it. We want to support that, so I'll work with the member to see how we can advance services in St. Albert.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Strathmore-Brooks, followed by Calgary-Glenmore.

#### Strathmore Search and Rescue River Access

**Mr. Hale:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last fall my constituency received some very disappointing news. Alberta Transportation sent the Strathmore fire hall a letter informing them that the department would be closing the boat launch on the highway 24 bridge. Since my meeting with the former Minister of Transportation last November, the department has fenced off the property and installed cement barriers along the riverbank to prevent boats from launching. Now, the obvious concern is that there are no launch sites for emergency service to this section of the Bow River below the Carseland weir. Why has the current Transportation minister not ensured that at least search and rescue will have access to the boat launch area?

**Mr. Drysdale:** Well, Mr. Speaker, I don't know all the details of this particular project – there are a lot of projects in Alberta Transportation – but I will do some research on it. I do understand that it was not a legal boat launch, and my department is working with them to find an alternative method that will better suit their needs.

**Mr. Hale:** I have pictures from 2006, when it was a boat launch. You did the work already.

To the same minister: in relation to safety concerns, given that there is currently no immediate access to the river south of the Carseland weir and, again, given that most of the Strathmore search and rescue missions are on this side and that the closest boat launch is 30 miles away on the Siksika reserve, why has this government failed to make river access a priority and now put people's lives at risk?

**Mr. Drysdale:** Well, Mr. Speaker, he might have a picture of a boat launch, but it wasn't an approved boat launch, and it wasn't permanent.

Mr. Speaker, as I said, we're working with them to try and find a more suitable situation for them to do their operations, and I'll continue to do that. You know, to know everything in this House off the top – if he has more specifics, it would be nice if he sent me the specifics ahead of time.

**The Speaker:** Final supplemental.

**Mr. Hale:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I did talk specifics with the previous minister, and I would have hoped that he would have put this on your table because it is public safety. It's public safety.

Given that Wyndham provincial park is adjacent to this site and has the capacity for a boat launch and that, obviously, the Transportation minister doesn't seem to be too worried about this, will the Minister of Tourism, Parks and Recreation take the initiative and build a boat launch at Wyndham to ensure search and rescue have access to the water?

**Dr. Starke:** Well, Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for that question. Indeed, one of the things that, of course, was tragic about last summer's floods was the degree of devastation and damage that was caused throughout southern Alberta, not the least

of which was to our parks system. One of the, perhaps, opportunities this gives us is the possibility of relooking at the various functions of the various facilities and infrastructure we have in that area, including our provincial park system. If a boat launch is something that perhaps could be incorporated to provide both recreational opportunities as well as emergency services, I think that, actually, that's a good idea, something we could take a look at, and we will investigate it during the course of the rebuild.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Calgary-Glenmore, followed by Chestermere-Rocky View.

### Public Service Pensions

**Ms L. Johnson:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I continue to receive many calls from my constituents on the proposed changes to the pension plan. People in their mid-career are being hit hard by the changes. I refer especially to those who are within the age range of 30 to 45 years. They are under the impression that they are going to receive less from their pension than they had anticipated. My question is for the minister of Treasury Board and Finance. How many people are impacted by these changes, and what is the rationale behind making these changes?

**The Speaker:** The hon. President of Treasury Board.

**Mr. Horner:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. No doubt there are thousands of members of the public sector that are impacted by these changes, but the case for the change is solid. People are collecting pensions longer. The ratio of people paying into the plan is almost equal to the number of people that are collecting, and in some plans it's actually the other way. That's simply not sustainable. Changes are needed to ensure that these pensions are there for those 30- and 40-year-olds who will retire when they hit their 60s.

Mr. Speaker, as trustee of these plans and as the Minister of Finance we have a fiduciary duty and a responsibility to protect that pension promise of a guaranteed percentage of their annual income for the rest of their lives.

**Ms L. Johnson:** Thank you, Minister. During recent meetings my constituents are telling me that according to their actuaries these plans are viable and do not require the changes proposed. Mr. Minister, what is the problem?

**The Speaker:** Mr. Minister.

**Mr. Horner:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When you go to an actuary, you give him your assumptions. You say: here are the assumptions that I want you to use when you do the analysis of this plan. Unfortunately, some of the actuarial analysis that I've seen would say that the assumption is that the number of contributors is going to grow by 2 per cent a year. For many of these plans that's not the case. In fact, in the PSP plan there are the same number of contributors in 2013 as there were in 1993, but the number of retirees has almost doubled.

The second thing they use is the mortality tables. Frankly, Mr. Speaker, some of the reports that I've seen use old mortality tables. In other words, people are living longer, and they . . .

**The Speaker:** The hon. member. Final supplemental.

**Ms L. Johnson:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again to the same minister: my constituents are also expressing concern that the imposition of a contribution cap will reduce their defined benefits in the future. Is that true?

**Mr. Horner:** Mr. Speaker, we are going to be moving to a joint sponsorship, which means that the employers and the employees, the people who pay, will be making the decisions as to how those benefits and changes will be made in the future.

I can tell you that the contribution rate cap was put in place to address concerns that were expressed by the plan members and the employers about the ever-increasing contribution rates, because the only place they could go was to take more money out of the pockets of the employees. Some of these plans cost more than 25 per cent of the salaries. Those are some of the highest rates in Canada. We want our employees to have a competitive salary. We want them to be able to take home pay so that they can do the things they want to do.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Chestermere-Rocky View, followed by Edmonton-South West.

### 2:40 Queen Elizabeth II Highway Overpass at Balzac

**Mr. McAllister:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Residents and visitors in my constituency are raising serious concerns about the state of the highway 566 and QE II interchange in Balzac. Development in that area has skyrocketed, and most people use this interchange to access the CrossIron Mills megamall. Alberta Transportation recognized the need to widen that overpass and placed it on a three-year capital plan in 2011, but then they took it off. To the Transportation minister: I know that priorities change – we understand that – but, Minister, the traffic concerns here are getting worse, not better. Why did you take it off the list?

**Mr. Drysdale:** Well, Mr. Speaker, as I've said before, if people have specific questions about specific intersections or boat launches or kilometres of road, it would do better to send me the information ahead of time, and I'll work with the constituents to find it. Politicizing the thing in the House isn't the way to get something done.

Mr. Speaker, we have a list of road projects, we set priorities, and if this one was bumped off the list, obviously it doesn't meet the priorities stacked up against the rest of the requests in the province.

**Mr. McAllister:** Mr. Speaker, again, the former minister was made aware of the file. He ought to be aware of it, too.

Given that there have been two engineering studies done on this overpass, one stating that with the development in Balzac and area the overpass won't handle existing traffic, much less traffic increases, and given that that was back in 2009 and traffic has increased 24 per cent on the 566 since, again to the minister: why aren't you listening to the engineers? Can't you see this is a huge safety issue?

**Mr. Drysdale:** Well, again, Mr. Speaker, without knowing all of the details, it's hard to comment, but I don't think the citizens of Alberta should pay for a developer to improve access to his establishment that he's going to make money on. The municipality approves development permits and asks the developer to pay for the improvements needed to access his site.

**Mr. McAllister:** Mr. Speaker, we're talking about two provincial highways here.

Traffic often backs up, in fact, on the QE II, on the overpass, all the way to the highway. Now, given that traffic is coming to a screeching halt on a major highway and given that even the RCMP are raising concerns about this, will you commit to putting

this project back on the priority list, where it belongs, in the interest of public safety before it's too late?

**Mr. Drysdale:** Well, again, Mr. Speaker, it's up to the municipality. If a development has increased the amount of traffic in the area, it's up to the developer to improve the highway even if it is a provincial highway. That's a cost of doing business. The rest of the taxpayers of Alberta shouldn't upfront the cost of that business to make a profit.

**The Speaker:** Thank you.

That concludes Oral Question Period for today.

Could we have unanimous consent to please revert briefly to Introduction of Guests?

[Unanimous consent granted]

### Introduction of Guests

*(continued)*

**The Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Culture.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure today to introduce to you and through you some tremendous community advocates from Edmonton-Glenora whom I've known for many years. I want to thank them for all of their volunteer efforts. We solve many problems together at the Glenora Community League. I'd like to acknowledge Ken and Connie Marshall and thank them for coming to the House.

**The Speaker:** Are there others?

If not, in 30 seconds we will finish off private members' statements. I believe Lacombe-Ponoka is up. Thank you.

### Members' Statements

*(continued)*

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

### Russian Intervention in Ukraine

**Mr. Fox:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I stand in opposition to the Soviet-style Russian neoimperialism of Vladimir Putin and his annexation of Ukraine's Crimea region. I am proud that the Ukrainian flag now flies at the Alberta Legislature so that we can all show our solidarity with the freedom-loving Ukrainians. It is unfortunate that our government decided to inject partisan politics into such a serious affair by withholding invitations for opposition parties at the flag-raising ceremony, but I digress.

Events are unfolding quickly in eastern Europe. There are reports of a Ukrainian base being stormed by Russian troops while in Moldova Russian-backed politicians are moving ahead with a request to be incorporated into the Russian Federation. The Republic of Georgia still has two regions under Russian occupation as well, Mr. Speaker.

Russia cannot be allowed to bully liberal democracies any longer, and we stand united with our federal counterparts in condemning and sanctioning all those involved in this injustice. Only a handful of so-called countries have moved to recognize this sham of a Russian takeover of Ukraine, and they include the largest bastions of horror in our world: Syria, North Korea, and Venezuela. These are Vladimir Putin's friends. Now we learn that Russia is sanctioning eastern European countries like Lithuania for condemning this takeover of sovereign land.

But there is hope, and there is support for our beleaguered friends in Ukraine. After all, Alberta has one of the largest Ukrainian populations in the world. Ukrainians helped build Alberta into the home that we all love today. Last week on behalf of the Wildrose Official Opposition I attended a rally by the Canadian Ukrainian Congress, that raised over \$100,000 for fallen heroes of the Euromaidan. They are already remembered as those who fell for democracy and died to rid Ukraine of tyranny.

So I say once again: Slava Ukraini.

[Translation] Glory to Ukraine. [As submitted]

**The Speaker:** Thank you. And the response would be Heroyam slava.

[Translation] Glory to the heroes. [As submitted]

### Introduction of Bills

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

#### Bill 6

#### New Home Buyer Protection Amendment Act, 2014

**Mr. Campbell:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to introduce Bill 6, the New Home Buyer Protection Amendment Act, 2014

The existing legislation protects Albertans buying a new home. Sometimes when new legislation is introduced, there are minor modifications needed, and that's what these amendments to the New Home Buyer Protection Act are about. The proposed amendments are the result of extensive stakeholder consultation while preparing the regulations in 2013. I look forward to speaking more about this legislation.

I'm proud to table Bill 6, New Home Buyer Protection Amendment Act. I move that the bill be read a first time.

Thank you.

[Motion carried; Bill 6 read a first time]

### Tabling Returns and Reports

**The Speaker:** We have several. Let's be as brief as we can, please.

Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview.

**Mr. Bilous:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The first tabling I'm doing on behalf of the Member for Edmonton-Calder. I'd like to table the appropriate number of copies of a letter sent to the Premier by Dale and Judy Swaré, two constituents of Edmonton-Calder. Judy has been waiting for back surgery for almost a year. In this four-page letter she outlines the tragic deterioration of our health care system under this PC government as she has experienced it firsthand. She says, "In one of the richest economies in the world, where universal health care is constitutionally enshrined, explain the shocking failure of your government to deliver the most basic of these services and tell us what you intend to do about it."

My second tabling. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to table 50 of over 4,000 postcards our office received, asking this PC government to restore consistent, reliable funding to postsecondary education in Alberta. These postcards were collected by the Non-Academic Staff Association at the U of A and are clear evidence the government is not listening to the demands of Albertans for a well-funded postsecondary system that is both accessible and affordable.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms Blakeman:** Thank you very much. On behalf of my colleague from Edmonton-Meadowlark, the leader of the Liberal opposition, three tablings. The first is the appropriate number of copies of the letter that he wrote to the Premier recommending a special auditor.

The second is the appropriate number of copies of the contract worth \$240,000, which is a result of our FOIP. This is the contract between the government and Navigator for special communications advice during the floods.

The last is, in fact, Navigator's web printoff of what they were paid as a result of various contracts with the government of Alberta.

May I continue with my tablings, Mr. Speaker?

**The Speaker:** Please.

**Ms Blakeman:** Thank you very much. I have three tablings, and they're all about the government's push to change the pension. The first is from Jason Woo, who is a younger engineer with the city of Edmonton. He points out that this scheme would add 10 years to his career and points out the number of well-educated professionals working for civic governments, that this really challenges their loyalty or the reason for them to stay working for the public sector.

2:50

The second is an e-mail from a constituent who feels that as a taxpayer we have made an agreement with the public employees and that on his behalf we the public do not approve of the proposed measures. He points out that the majority of the people who will suffer the effects of this change in pensions are women.

Finally, a letter from Rhonda van Heyst, who started working in '78 as a nurse. She worked on a part-time basis to raise her children and be an active volunteer, and the factor changes are going to very much affect her. Nursing is a hard job. It's going to be really hard on her to keep going for that period of time.

None of them are too happy with what the government's doing. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Strathmore-Brooks, followed by Cardston-Taber-Warner.

**Mr. Hale:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have the required number of copies. I'm tabling these reports from the 2006 flood. I guess the comments of the Transportation minister were that they weren't official sites. I have photos here of repairs to McKinnon flats; Portage boat launch; Jensen's access, which is Legacy Island; more McKinnon flats; and highway 24 access, the one I mentioned in my question. These pictures were all taken by Alberta fish and wildlife, and there were inspections completed after the work was done to these sites. I'd just like to table those.

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

**Mr. Bikman:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have the requisite number of copies that I would like to table of an e-mail that I received from Dr. Ian Armstrong. He references that the Canadian Psychological Association recently released an independent report by a group of internationally recognized health economists. The report, *An Imperative for Change*, states that "the delivery of mental health services . . . can be characterized as a silent crisis" and provides a business case and proposes models for improved access to psychological services that can be implemented in our province. He writes: "I urge you to affirm your commitment to our

province's health and specifically to increasing access to psychologists by considering the following recommendations from the report." And they're in this e-mail.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** Hon. members, that takes us to points of order. We had one point of order raised at 2:22 p.m. or thereabouts by Airdrie during a question and answer going on between I think it was Red Deer-North and the Justice minister.

Hon. opposition whip, are you looking after this?

#### **Point of Order Factual Accuracy**

**Mr. Saskiw:** Yes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's been a while since I've done these. I rise according to 23(h), (i), and (j). During the debate the Justice minister had indicated – and it was quite inappropriate – that members of this Official Opposition, and I quote, mocked victims of crime. What an absurd statement. You know, drunk driving is so prevalent in our province, in the country. To say that somehow we mocked victims of crime clearly crosses the line.

Of course, the Wildrose has had positions in the past in regard to the .05 legislation. We've advocated that there's a limited amount of resources for enforcement and that that's why the police should be targeting those driving over the criminal legal limit. Otherwise, they're spending a lot of time on the .05s. Of course, we've advocated for five provincial checkstop teams to catch those drunk drivers throughout the year.

Mr. Speaker, this minister has done absolutely nothing on individuals who've been charged and convicted of drunk driving in regard to their driver's licence. He's done absolutely nothing on that, yet he's going to try and indicate in this Legislature that somehow this side is mocking victims of crime. You know, by blaming the federal Conservatives, he's taking on the role of the Trudeau Liberals. He should be doing his job instead and increasing the penalties for those who are charged and convicted of drinking and driving.

Mr. Speaker, I respectfully submit that he crossed the line by saying that individuals on this side mock victims of crime, and I request that those statements be retracted.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Oberle:** Mr. Speaker, I rise to address the point of order. I wish that the hon. member would stick to the actual violation that they allege. Clearly, whether or not the minister, in that member's opinion, somehow emulates a federal Liberal politician has nothing to do with the point of order at hand.

Nonetheless, the minister was referring to the coaster campaign, a campaign by which the opposition stood in opposition to our drunk-driving legislation, Mr. Speaker. The campaign did not mock victims. The minister incorrectly chose those words, and through me unreservedly withdraws those words.

**The Speaker:** Thank you. I think that closes the matter because the statement has been withdrawn. It's in *Hansard*, and it's been clarified by both sides, so let us move on with the next item here.

Before we do, can I just remind you that the legislative policy committees will convene this afternoon and this evening for consideration of main estimates, or the budget. This afternoon, for example, starting at 3:30 p.m., the legislative policy committee on Resource Stewardship will consider the estimates for Environment and Sustainable Resource Development in committee room A, and Alberta's Economic Future will consider the estimates for

Agriculture and Rural Development in committee room B at the same time.

This evening, starting at 7 p.m., the legislative policy committee on Families and Communities will consider the estimates of Service Alberta in committee room A.

[The Assembly adjourned at 2:57 p.m. to Wednesday at 1:30 p.m. pursuant to Standing Order 59.01(5)(b)]

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