



Province of Alberta

The 29th Legislature
First Session

Alberta Hansard

Thursday afternoon, June 18, 2015

Day 4

The Honourable Robert E. Wanner, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of Alberta
The 29th Legislature

First Session

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Legislative Assembly of Alberta

1:30 p.m.

Thursday, June 18, 2015

[The Speaker in the chair]

Prayers

The Speaker: Hon. members of the Assembly, as we reflect today, I would like to make a slight introduction and then the reflection. In Islamic tradition today marks the beginning of the holy month of Ramadan, which runs from June 18 to July 17, 2015. This is the sacred time of fasting, prayer, almsgiving, and family gatherings. We express gratitude for the contribution that the Muslim communities make to the social fabric of our Alberta. Let us take a moment of silence to experience peace, which is the objective of every spiritual practice. May the source of all compassion and mercy teach us the ways of wisdom, care, and love. We join our Muslim sisters and brothers in learning the disciplines that overcome our egotism so that we may live in harmony with every person alive today.

Please be seated.

Introduction of Guests

The Speaker: The hon. Member for . . .

Ms Larivee: Lesser Slave Lake.

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

Ms Larivee: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the gallery today we have visiting with us Heidi Gould, a strong advocate for nursing and for client care within the health care system. She's here partway on behalf of herself but also for the United Nurses of Alberta and as one of the many active health care workers for Alberta Health Services. Welcome to Heidi for coming here to take part.

The Speaker: The Minister of Environment and Parks and minister responsible for the status of women.

Ms Phillips: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure to rise today in the Assembly to introduce to you and through you to all members of our Assembly members of the Environment and Parks planning branch. The planning branch leads our ministry's work in developing and implementing the seven regional land-use plans as outlined by the land-use framework. They help usher these important plans from the conceptual stage all the way to realizing them on our landscapes, working collaboratively with other areas of government along the way. They develop the objectives and strategies to manage our environment and resources and ensure a balance between protecting our natural landscapes and responsible development. Their work includes the development of regional management frameworks for air, water, and biodiversity and to issue specific plans to address environmental or resource management issues.

In the House today we have, if I could ask them to rise as I read their names: Chad Willms, Laura Polasek, Nicole Keef, Cassidy van Rensen, Fiona Slessor, Wen Xu, Karen Sundquist, Tracy Price, Sarah Depoe, Aaron Petty, Marika Atkinson, and Samuel Wahab. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to acknowledge the hard work of the planning branch, that they undertake in helping shape the future of our great province, and I ask them to rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of our Assembly.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-Mountain View.

Dr. Swann: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have four introductions today with your indulgence. Eric Musekamp and Darlene Dunlop are here for their final day in the Legislature to honour the ninth anniversary of the death of farmworker Kevan Chandler, killed in a silage elevator, who, without workers' compensation, left a young widow and two children in poverty. Lorna spent the next six years in court thanks to a compassionate lawyer and finally received a settlement. They're here again hoping the government will be able to in this legislative session ensure that no more paid farm workers are injured or killed without compensation, by immediately regulating workers' compensation for all agricultural operations with employees.

Next to them is the inimitable Dr. Judy Johnson, an emeritus professor in psychology at Mount Royal University, former chair of Friends of Medicare, on the board of directors of the Canadian Mental Health Association, and president of my constituency association. She's accompanied by Carolyn Campbell, a former schoolteacher and now a much-quoted conservation specialist for the Alberta Wilderness Association, also a past president of my constituency association in Calgary-Mountain View. I'll ask them to rise. Give them the warm welcome of the Legislature.

The Speaker: The Member for Calgary-Elbow.

Mr. Clark: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It is my honour to introduce to you and through you to the Members of the Legislative Assembly three students and their teacher visiting our province from El Salvador as well as their sponsor here from Calgary. The students are Sandra Patricia Cortez Henriquez, Eduardo José Ortiz Cornejo, Maria Odilia Vasquez Gonzalez, and their teacher Jorge Adalberto Barahona Avelar. Thank you, and also special thanks to the Member for Calgary-Cross for his agreeing to meet with students and introduce them to members of Calgary's Salvadoran community.

The students are joined by their sponsor, Doug Frenette. Doug formed a group to assist the students and many more with their education in El Salvador. Doug really is a true example of the generosity of spirit Albertans are known for all around the world. It is my honour to introduce you to my friends and colleagues in the Legislative Assembly. I ask that you please rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

The Speaker: Welcome.

The Minister of Health and the Minister of Seniors.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour to introduce to you and through you Michael Janz. He's the chair of the Edmonton public school board. Michael and I have worked together since we were both first elected to public office in October of 2010. We were committed to a shared-leadership model and relied on each other to ensure strong fiscal management of public resources, evidence-based decision-making, fair and respectful negotiation with public-sector employees, and equitable resource allocations to address student needs. One of the reasons I felt empowered to run provincially was because I knew that Michael would make a great board chair and that he would continue to put student needs first and make Edmontonians proud of their public schools, and I want to say that we are. Please join me in giving a traditional warm welcome to the guest.

The Speaker: Do I understand that the Member for Edmonton-McClung has a guest?

Mr. Dach: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Thank you. Through you and to you I have the honour of introducing a gentleman who has just arrived in the galleries, Mr. Myles Thrift, a childhood friend who has now recently retired from 35 years of service with Canadian National Railway. Mr. Thrift has always been an outgoing and sports-minded individual. He in the early '70s was on CBC television, having completed his goal of meeting 10,000 people in person. He is also known as the Prince George Cougars superfan, hailing from Prince George. Now he has also been a seniors masters award-winning diver. He's in town to enjoy the FIFA World Cup games. It is my pleasure to have Mr. Thrift stand and receive the warm welcome of the House.

1:40

Members' Statements

The Speaker: The Member for Banff-Cochrane.

2013 Southern Alberta Flood

Mr. Westhead: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is an honour to rise for my first time in this Assembly to address an issue that is top of mind to many in southern Alberta and certainly those in Banff-Cochrane, which was ground zero for the tragic flooding event that occurred nearly two years ago.

In 2013 Albertans witnessed the extreme power of Mother Nature. Communities in the river's path experienced damage on an unprecedented scale. Many are still trying to recover and move on with their lives. During this event, in the midst of the chaos, we also witnessed the extreme power of our communities, our families, our friends, our neighbours, and complete strangers. In response centres those in need of assistance found volunteers willing to help them get back on their feet again. Albertans proved, as they have in other disasters, that they were up for any challenge.

Much work remains to be done to recover from the 2013 event as well as to protect homes, businesses, families, and communities from future catastrophes. We must learn from this and other flooding events to make wise and careful decisions about how we can ensure the safety and well-being of all Albertans.

Flood mitigation is a complex issue, which stirs the emotions, which are still raw. Getting this right in the best interests of all Albertans will require us to work together in this government and with our opposition colleagues. We must also work closely with the many stakeholders, including indigenous peoples, landowners, businesses, and homeowners. Together we can work to address the uncertainty and fear of those at risk and put an end to the nightmares that some still experience every time it rains.

Thank you.

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

Highway 28

Mr. Cyr: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Not a day goes by that I don't hear from a local constituent from my riding that tells me about the awful commutes that they have between Cold Lake and Edmonton on highway 28. In fact, it has become so unbearable and dangerous that they have stopped using the shortest, most direct route in favour of a longer, slower alternative to avoid the potholes, the missing shoulders, and the general disrepair. It is becoming completely undriveable. Highway 28 is the key artery to the Cold Lake oil sands, which produces over 12 per cent of Canada's daily oil production. East of Bonnyville alone the traffic count is 7,000 vehicles per day.

The Wildrose believes that infrastructure is critically important to the well-being of Alberta. The Wildrose has advocated for a long time for a fully prioritized public infrastructure list. In fact, we campaigned on it. It's great to see that the NDP government has adopted another Wildrose proposal, and I'm very glad that we're on the same page. It is high time that the priorities be made available to all Albertans. At the very least, Albertans need assurances that the highways they regularly use are scheduled for repair.

My constituents want to know when highway 28 will be addressed. They need to know when highway 28 will be addressed. This affects more than just my constituency. The residents of Lac La Biche-St. Paul-Two Hills and Athabasca-Sturgeon-Redwater also have a big stake in seeing this highway addressed.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-Mountain View.

Flood and Drought Damage Mitigation

Dr. Swann: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. On June 20 river communities in Calgary will be getting together to celebrate the spirit that brought so many people together during the 2013 flood. Stories will be shared about recovery, resiliency, and the power of community in Calgary.

But two years on, while some local measures have been taken by the city to reduce risk along the Bow and Elbow rivers, much remains to be done to reduce the risk from the next inevitable flood. Two years on and with many consultations and reports Calgary has yet to see a comprehensive upstream mitigation strategy for the Bow and Elbow rivers.

Excellent work has been done by groups, including WaterSmart solutions, most recently the impressive room for the river process, which provides cost-benefit scenarios. It's time to make decisions. In fact, all Albertans living in the South Saskatchewan River basin deserve to see evidence-based watershed management, beginning in the eastern slopes, from this government.

Part of the solution is the long-awaited land-use plan. This defines priority development and conservation activities in relation to our major waterways. This needs new momentum as well. Clearly, for the Bow a long-term water management agreement is needed between TransAlta, which manages all the dams, and the province that takes into account both flood and drought mitigation, and it must be public. No more backroom deals.

Ironically, drought this year appears to be more likely than flood in southern Alberta and is highlighting the need for all stakeholders, including irrigation districts, to be at the table. The financial and human cost of both floods and droughts can be minimized through a range of evidence-based, upstream, natural and engineered developments, and this will be a defining task for this new government. On behalf of my constituents in Calgary and all Albertans I call on this government to make flood and drought mitigation a priority.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ramadan

Ms Kazim: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my honour to have the opportunity to rise and wish Ramadan Mubarak to all. Ramadan is the ninth month in the Islamic calendar and depends on the moon sighting. In some parts of the world today is the first day of Ramadan, while in others it's the second day. It is the month when the holy book, the Quran, was revealed to Muslims. It is the month

when Muslims were given this holy book, which is the complete code of life for Muslims and thus a benediction for Muslims.

It is the month when fasting is practised by Muslims all over the world by abstaining from food and drink during daylight hours, but more than this, it is the month when followers of Islam learn to abstain from all the deeds, desires, and activities that contribute to illicit human character. Fasting is one of the five pillars of Islam, followed by shahada, which means the faith in the oneness of God; salaah, which means praying five times each day; and zakat, meaning almsgiving; and preceded by a pilgrimage to Mecca. A fast fosters strong will, teaches patience and self-discipline and the ability to bear hardship and tolerate hunger and thirst.

The word "Ramadan" came from the Arabic word "ramad," which means to burn. Therefore, according to Muslims this month is an opportunity for the believers to burn away wishes and unhealthy thoughts and acts and cleanse the human body, heart, and soul. In medical science the advantages of fasting have been proven scientifically. Fasting helps retain the acids in the stomach during hunger and thirst that help kill germs causing different diseases. Each day's fasting ends after sunset with a time of joy and hospitality.

Once again, Ramadan Mubarak to all.

1:50

Oral Question Period

Provincial Fiscal Policies

Mr. Jean: While the Premier doesn't want to introduce a budget until after the federal election, we are getting some ideas about this government's fiscal plans. Yesterday, for instance, the Government House Leader said that 10 per cent of the \$18 billion in interim supply is new spending. That works out to almost \$2 billion, a lot of money. The NDP's platform shows that they will actually bring in less in tax revenue this year than Prentice had planned. Where's the money coming from?

The Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Ms Notley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As all Albertans know and knew and discussed over the course of the last election, Alberta is facing a fiscal challenge, and they were offered different ways of dealing with it. Some people wanted to slash and burn and take billions and billions out. Other people wanted middle-class and lower class Albertans to pay more while sending 12,000 kids to school without teachers. We ran on a plan to make sure those kids had teachers. We ran on a plan to make sure our health care system worked, and we ran on a plan to pay for it with progressive and fair taxes, and that's what this side will see more of later today.

Mr. Jean: Thank you for the applause, and thank you for that clear non answer.

Mr. Speaker, Albertans are going to need some help making sense of these numbers. The most experienced minister told us that this government was taking on \$1.8 billion in new spending that has not been debated by this Legislature. Today four cabinet ministers held a press conference and gave us details on less than \$700 million of that spending; \$700 million does not equal \$1.8 billion. Can someone over there please tell us where the other billion dollars in new spending is going?

The Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Ms Notley: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I think that the member opposite may have confused what the hon. House leader may have said in debate yesterday. What I will say is that our

interim supply bill is actually on the Order Paper today, so I don't really want to get too involved in it, but in principle it talks about meeting the promises that we made in this election. Where it was debated was over 30 days of a provincial election in this province. The money coming forward you'll see more of this afternoon.

Mr. Jean: Albertans might have been worried that the NDP government would be a tax and spend government. Now we know. They are a tax and spend, spend, spend government. Alberta already spends more per capita than any other province in Canada. When you adjust for population, for instance, we spend \$8 billion a year more than British Columbia. Now this government announces almost \$2 billion in new spending but much less than that in revenue. How much debt is the Premier going to make future generations pay back?

Ms Notley: Once again I take issue with the hon. member's numbers. What we are planning on putting forward is funding to ensure that those, for example, 12,000 kids who are coming to our schools in September have a teacher. Now, I appreciate that under the platform that the hon. members opposite ran on, those 12,000 kids wouldn't have had a teacher, nor would probably another 12,000 on top of that because you can't take \$5 billion out of a system and not have it show up on the front lines. That's not what Albertans voted for. They voted for our plan, and I'm very proud of it.

The Speaker: Second main question.

Pipeline Development

Mr. Jean: Mr. Speaker, yesterday I wanted the Premier to confirm that her government will not oppose Keystone pipeline. Her answer wasn't clear. I asked her to confirm that her government would support all new pipelines that get energy to markets safely. Her answer wasn't clear again. That's not helpful. Alberta gets most of its wealth from energy. Doesn't the Premier agree that her role as Premier is to champion efforts to get our energy to market?

Ms Notley: Thank you. Mr. Speaker, as I've said all along, we understand that our energy sector contributes a great deal to jobs in Alberta, and that's our fundamental priority. Moreover, what we want to be able to do as the stewards of this resource is make sure that we get as many jobs as we can from our resource before we ship it out. That's our job because we represent Albertans. We represent voters. Sending natural resources away as fast as we possibly can without thinking about ways to incent job creation is not good governance.

Mr. Jean: This Premier has confirmed that pipelines are, in fact, the safest way to get the product to market. She certainly knows that pipelines are the most environmentally friendly way to move energy. Alberta's economy depends upon getting our energy to new markets, not just existing ones, yet the Premier has been saying that upgrading is her top energy priority. Is the Premier suggesting that shovel-ready pipeline projects will get less support from her than hypothetical upgraders?

Ms Notley: Mr. Speaker, what I'm saying is that we're going to work with industry to ensure that our oil and gas sector is sustainable, effective, and that it creates jobs and that we are also able to grow in an environmentally responsible way. Now, I've talked about working with our colleagues in B.C. and our colleagues across the country to talk about environmentally responsible ways to get our product to market, and I will certainly continue to do that.

Mr. Jean: You know, Wildrose really wants to help this government. [interjection] We do. Can you not tell? But this government is digging itself into a deep hole on energy policy, and it's confusing. I have a very simple question, and I really hope the Premier can answer it thoughtfully. Maybe I'm missing something, but I don't think I am. Some day in the future, when we get these upgraders and refineries that the Premier really wants and wants, won't we still need more pipelines in all directions so that we can get the upgraded product to market?

Ms Notley: There's no question, Mr. Speaker, that going forward we do need to ensure that we have access to pipelines to get our product to market. There's no question about it. However, as the member opposite knows, shipping unprocessed bitumen, that creates the lowest number of jobs per barrel extracted from our province, actually takes 30 per cent more pipeline space. In fact, the more we upgrade, the fewer pipelines we need. It doesn't mean that we're not going to work with industry to get the pipelines that they need going forward, but we're going to do it responsibly and carefully in the interest of those Albertans who want . . .

Mr. Jean: With respect, the Premier is wrong. The more you upgrade, the more pipelines you need.

Market Access for Energy Resources

Mr. Jean: For two days now we've asked the Premier some very important questions about pipelines. For some time market access for our energy products has been the top international and inter-governmental issue for Alberta's government. You're the minister for that. Wildrose has always been helpful and supportive on this file, as we are on all files. Can the Premier confirm that building more pipelines to move Alberta's energy to new markets remains this province's top intergovernmental and international priority?

Ms Notley: Quite honestly, the previous government's record in that regard has gotten us nowhere. I would suggest that when we're talking about our international and intergovernmental priorities, maybe what we really should be doing is developing a record on the environment such that those new markets will actually accept our product, because that's a problem, and that's what's been ignored for a very long time.

The Speaker: First supplemental.

Mr. Jean: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm certain that the Premier knows that getting our energy to a coast, any coast, means that we get the higher world Brent oil price rather than the lower western Canada select price. That means more royalties and thus more schools and more hospitals for Albertans. That's helpful. Getting new pipelines built is really important to Albertans. How often has the Premier spoken with the Deputy Minister of IIR to discuss our market access strategy or the Canadian energy strategy? How many times? How often?

Ms Notley: It's a bit of a strange question. I've met with my deputy minister to talk about a number of issues in IIR, including the Canadian energy strategy, including trips outside of the country to talk about other partnerships. I can't actually count how many times, at least five or six at this point. And we'll continue to do that because that's my job. I am here to ensure that the interests of Albertans, when it comes to job creation and economic stability, are represented.

Mr. Jean: Eight questions, eight waffles. I feel like I'm having breakfast.

Alberta has 13 international offices that exist to promote Alberta's interest in other countries and, of course, to help Alberta companies access new markets. In my opinion, no office is more important than the Washington office, which has led our efforts to secure American approval for the Keystone pipeline. Question: has the Premier spoken to Rob Merrifield, our senior representative in Washington, and if so, what instructions has she given him? How about an answer this time? We've had eight up; one good one would be nice.

Thank you.

2:00

Ms Notley: I think the answer to the last question was five or six. So, you know, I think that's fairly answerly. Nonetheless, let me just say that no, I have not yet had a chance to talk to any of our staff in our different international offices. I'm a little bit focused on getting us through the session, but I look forward to doing that. We'll be reviewing all our international offices, and I anticipate them continuing to do the good work that's necessary to promote economic opportunity and growth for all Alberta industry.

The Speaker: Calgary-Lougheed.

Aboriginal Relations

Mr. Rodney: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is Aboriginal Awareness Week. The new government is committed to adopting the UN declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission report outlines 94 recommendations for all levels of government across Canada. Both require great co-ordination between numerous Alberta government ministries and beyond. To the new Premier, with respect: why was there not even a single specific commitment in the throne speech to either the UN declaration or the TRC report?

The Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Ms Notley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The member raises a very, very important issue. We did of course talk about the role of indigenous people in the history of our province within that throne speech, and we've been already meeting with indigenous representatives since we were first elected and indeed had them at a cabinet meeting. So we will be moving forward on a number of very complicated but important files over the next few months, and I look forward to speaking about them in this House after we've had a chance to meet with indigenous representatives.

The Speaker: First supplemental.

Mr. Rodney: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It would have been nice to see some of that in the throne speech.

My first supplemental question is to the Premier or the new minister who's responsible for the file. All Albertans do deserve to know: what specific timelines will your government commit to here in the House today for evaluating and implementing the TRC report recommendations?

Ms Ganley: Thank you to the hon. member for the question. Currently our focus is on working to build respectful partnerships with indigenous peoples. We're working on a number of memoranda of understanding to engage going forward and to deal with issues that are important to both indigenous Albertans and all Albertans, so right now our timeline is to work to get those under way. They will

be coming online very soon, and from there we'll set some goals and move forward.

Thank you very much.

The Speaker: Second supplemental.

Mr. Rodney: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the Premier or to the minister: can you please tell us, every member of the House and all Albertans, what specific mechanisms you will make available for all Albertans to hold this government accountable for implementing the recommendations?

Ms Notley: As the minister has said, our government will work with First Nations as a true partner in building a relation of respect and engagement. We are in fact very committed to developing a renewed relationship with aboriginal peoples and communities through improved understanding and collaboration. We'll be working with Alberta's indigenous people to build a relationship of trust. We'll be moving forward on that as quickly as possible. As you know, there's a national aboriginal leaders' meeting in mid-July, and I anticipate being able to make some very encouraging announcements before that time.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-Mountain View.

Public Appointment Process

Dr. Swann: Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. Revelations that former Ethics Commissioner Neil Wilkinson claimed \$450,000 in honoraria while chair of the Capital health region highlights the urgent need to revamp Alberta's discredited public appointment system. While in opposition the Alberta NDP echoed Liberal demands for an end to patronage in government appointments and called for the adoption of the Ontario model, whereby an independent commission manages the recruitment and vetting for prospective appointees. To the Premier: will you do better than simply promise to appoint people strictly on merit, as the previous regime did, and establish an independent public appointments commission in Alberta?

Ms Notley: Thank you very much. That's a good question. Mr. Speaker, like members opposite, I have been very troubled by the information that's come forward about the recent spending excesses with respect to certain former public officials in the previous government. That being said, in fact, we were very concerned about those issues going into the election, and that is one of the reasons why we said that we would do a review of agencies, boards, and commissions, including their compensation packages, and that will be coming soon.

The Speaker: First supplemental.

Dr. Swann: Thanks, Mr. Speaker. Well, again to the Premier: when will the review of agencies, boards, and commissions started last year be made public?

Ms Notley: Well, in fact, the review of agencies, boards, and commissions that was started last year by the last Premier, we have since discovered, was never really completed, so there's not actually much to be made public. However, within the next few days or weeks we will be making an announcement about moving forward to do exactly that, to get the job done. We know that we have a problem in this province, and we want to deal with the issue of the sunshine list, we want to deal with the issue of compensation, and we want to deal with the issue of the efficacy of the many, many boards and agencies that we have in this province.

Dr. Swann: Thank you. Again to the Premier: since your party previously demanded that prospective appointees should have to disclose their qualifications, possible conflicts of interest, and remuneration, are you going to bring in rules requiring this of all appointees?

Ms Notley: Well, I think this is one of the issues that will be discussed, I suspect, with the select all-party standing committee on conflict of interest as well as democratic renewal and whistleblower legislation. This is exactly one of the things that I advocated for when I was an opposition member, ensuring that those conflict-of-interest provisions applied to the many staff and appointees at agencies, boards, and commissions. It is absolutely my intention to ensure that we move forward with that and that all those transparency mechanisms are applicable to the many people in agencies, boards, and commissions.

The Speaker: I'll just remind the House that there are no preambles on supplemental questions.

Municipal Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction

Ms Payne: Mr. Speaker, the impact of climate change on our environment has not received the attention it deserves. Albertans have been waiting for their government to take action on this critical issue. Can the Minister of Environment and Parks tell the House what investments their ministry has made on this important issue?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms Phillips: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, during Environment Week I was pleased to announce an increase in support for municipalities to undertake energy efficient projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions at the local level, and that's why our government announced an additional \$2 million in funding for the Municipal Climate Change Action Centre. That funding will create good local jobs, reduce energy costs for taxpayers, and in turn it frees up more resources for investments in the priorities of Alberta families.

The Speaker: First supplemental.

Ms Payne: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the same minister elaborate a little bit more on how this program will help municipalities to create jobs?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms Phillips: Well, thank you for the question, hon. member. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, the action centre has already demonstrated encouraging success in this area, and this is why we moved quickly to expand the program. We've had some success stories like the town of Beaumont, which retrofitted their town hall, their fire hall, and their RCMP detachment through this program, which is managed through the climate change and emissions management fund. We've also had success stories like the city of Calgary, which tapped the program to undertake efficiency upgrades to three buildings. Those are the kinds of successful partnerships, with communities big and small, that we need to build on if we are to succeed . . .

2:10

The Speaker: Second supplemental.

Ms Payne: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the same minister tell the House how this program will help municipalities with their energy bills?

Ms Phillips: Well, thank you for the question. You know, this announcement is a sign of things to come, Mr. Speaker. We did make a commitment in the election to take leadership on the issue of climate change, and we are doing precisely that. We have made the commitment to take international and national leadership. We will be leading those conversations moving forward, engaging with Albertans and industry because we understand, unlike other parties in this House, that getting it right on climate change means getting it right for the economy.

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

Minimum Wage

Mr. Hunter: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday I asked the minister what her plan was for helping those who will lose their jobs due to the dramatic increase to minimum wages. The answer was less than fulsome, I might add. But what's really troubling me is that in a meeting with the Canadian federation of small businesses this government told them that they had done no economic impact analysis on the potential effects of this policy. Minister, bluntly put, why are you putting thousands of jobs at risk without even doing the necessary research first?

Ms Sigurdson: Thank you to the member for the question. We know that Alberta families are better off when all Alberta families are better off, so that's why we're moving ahead on our platform of \$15 an hour by 2018. We also know that we are looking to diversify our economy. I also am the Minister of Innovation and Advanced Education, and we're working with stakeholders. I toured NAIT recently, and they're doing amazing work on green energy and technology. We've just invested in postsecondary education today. We're supporting people to have good jobs here in Alberta.

Thank you.

Mr. Hunter: I certainly do applaud this government's intent on this issue. However, their approach is simply an ill-conceived gamble with people's livelihood. This gamble is not going to hurt the corporate bigwigs; instead, it's going to hurt the very men and women who cannot afford to lose their jobs. They need a champion and not a politician looking to score points at their expense. Minister, Albertans want to know – no; they need to know – before you implement this policy: how many Albertans are going to lose their jobs?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms Sigurdson: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and again thank you to the member for the question. Alberta has the lowest minimum wage of any province in Canada, tied with Saskatchewan. We know from small-business owners that it actually reduces their costs in recruitment and training when they pay a higher level because they're more likely to retain those workers, and there are studies that have shown that. We are also helping more vulnerable populations, like women.

Thank you.

Mr. Hunter: Minister, yesterday a big labour group with close ties to the government issued a press release demanding that the minimum wage be increased 25 per cent by October of this year. [interjections] Even in the three . . .

The Speaker: I might have mentioned yesterday that I'd like to hear the question. To all of the House: please.

I would also remind the House about the lack of a preamble in this set of questions.

Mr. Hunter: I appreciate that.

Even in the three cities in the United States that are also trying to implement this experiment, they are slowly increasing the minimum wage over seven years. Knowing that this government has shown no concern for the impact on the economy for the job losses, can the minister assure . . .

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms Sigurdson: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The Premier and I met last week with industry leaders, with labour, and with advocacy groups to hear their input on this, and we're going ahead with those consultations.

We will be speaking shortly about where we're going to go, and we're moving forward to work together on this with all partners.

Thank you.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-South East.

Flood Damage Mitigation in High River

Mr. Fraser: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This weekend marks the second anniversary of the Alberta floods, and a tremendous amount of work has been done by Albertans, particularly those in Municipal Affairs, ESRD, and the Alberta Emergency Management Agency. Many of those people are heroes who previously served in our military, and once again they acted during the floods. As you can imagine, those folks were extremely disappointed to hear their new minister characterize their efforts as a gong show. In the town of High River much of the mitigation work has been completed in partnership with this province. To the Minister of Environment and Parks: will you commit to completing the mitigation work in High River even though you consider it a gong show?

Ms Phillips: Thank you for the question. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to talk about the former PC government's record on preparing for the 2013 floods, which is that they did not adequately prepare for those floods, and those floods then devastated Calgary and other communities. They waited for a catastrophe to start work on flood mitigation. Now, when it comes to protecting residents of Calgary and their property from flooding, we have only one chance to get it right, and that is why we are carefully considering all of our options before us as we move forward with an appropriate flood mitigation plan for this province's future.

The Speaker: First supplemental.

Mr. Fraser: Thank you. To the same minister: given that you're the minister in charge of the Alberta community resilience program, will you commit to complete and full funding to this program so that communities can help protect themselves and identify their own risks?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms Phillips: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for the question. Right now we are reviewing our approach to flood mitigation. We need to make these decisions in the public interest. I have said this over and over again. The reason that we need to take that approach is that we need to have an evidence-based approach to all of our decisions going forward. We are asking our officials to

fully brief us. We are asking outside officials to fully brief us. We are ensuring that our final decisions will be based on science. They will be based on good public policy. They will be based on careful deliberation of the public interest.

Mr. Fraser: I'm hoping, since they've looked at our record in predicting disasters, that you'll come out with a complete, full list of where the next disaster will happen.

Again to the same minister: given that you now lead the department in charge of mitigation and ACRP, can you assure these hard-working Albertans that, in fact, their efforts were not a gong show and that you will defend their actions and these workers and their departments before the Auditor General?

Ms Phillips: Well, Mr. Speaker, I think that Albertans levelled their verdict on May 5 on what they thought of this government's efforts on flood mitigation, and it has very little to do with the workers. It has everything to do with the record of a government that did not adequately take the time to protect the citizens of Calgary or southern Alberta, which is why we are going to ensure that any decisions that we take will be based on science, based on good public policy, based on careful deliberation moving forward.

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

Transportation Infrastructure Priorities

Mr. van Dijken: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A well-maintained provincial transportation network is essential to ensure the safe movement of Albertans and our commodities. The government's own performance measure clearly indicates a rise in the number of highways and bridges in very poor condition. What is this new Minister of Transportation doing to stop the deterioration of the provincial transportation network?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Mason: Thank you. Thank you, hon. member, for that question. It's a very good question and, I think, a very pertinent one. I agree with you that there's been a deterioration in the condition of many of our roadways under the previous government. We're taking a very close look at this. We're developing a capital plan that I think will meet the transportation needs of Albertans going forward, and I am certainly willing to discuss with any member on any side of the House any issues relevant to their constituencies and see what we can do to help, bearing in mind that there's a long, long, long list of priorities, and we will not be able to deal with all of them at once.

2:20

Mr. van Dijken: Mr. Speaker, in order to get the politics out of the capital investment process, both the Wildrose and the NDP have advocated for a prioritized list of infrastructure and transportation projects. I was happy to hear the minister state yesterday that they are establishing a sunshine list so that everyone will know which projects and what time. When can we expect this list to be published?

Mr. Mason: Thank you very much for that question. We do want to let the sunshine in when it comes to capital projects. We've seen with the previous government manipulation of capital priorities in order to further electoral chances of individual ministers, and that's something that, like our Wildrose colleagues, we deplore, so we will be working to develop a sunshine list at the earliest opportunity. I'm sorry I cannot give you a date, but I am looking forward to bringing that forward, probably sometime in the fall.

Thank you.

Mr. van Dijken: Thank you for the answer, hon. member, and I look forward to being able to help with that.

Surely, this new Minister of Transportation is not content to continue downloading onto municipalities the funding responsibility for over 8,000 bridges. Will this Minister of Transportation help rural Alberta and restore funding to the local road bridge program?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Mason: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To the hon. member: that's something that as a critic I met with the AAMD and C executive on. We discussed rural bridges on a number of occasions. I recognize that there is a very serious problem with respect to that, and I've asked my department to take a look and let me know what things we might be able to do to assist. But I should note for the record that there are very serious problems with the bridges under provincial control that also need to be addressed. There are many, many demands on the capital budget, and I know that with the Wildrose's...

The Speaker: Thank you, Minister.

Need I remind both sides of the House about preambles. On both sides I've noticed it. Please eliminate it in your supplemental questions.

The Member for Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House-Sundre.

Flood Damage Mitigation

Mr. Nixon: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's hard to believe, but it's already been two years since one of the worst floods in Alberta's history devastated homes and communities right across the province. The Wildrose just wants to help the government get this right. I couldn't help but notice that the NDP candidate in my riding had very little to say during the election campaign. I'm hoping the minister can clear this up. What is your government's plan to address flood mitigation that helps communities right across the province?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms Phillips: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the hon. member for the question. These are very, very grave decisions that face us. We have been left with some choices to make, and we will undertake the appropriate time and the appropriate review to make those decisions. These are decisions that require hundreds of millions of dollars of public investment. They are decisions that require environmental assessment. They are decisions that require negotiation with communities and landowners. That is why we will take the time to review all of these matters before us. That is why we are being briefed by experts who are giving us...

The Speaker: Thank you, Minister.

Mr. Nixon: Mr. Speaker, the minister should know that in March this year the Auditor General released a report that said that the province doesn't even have up-to-date flood maps. That means communities like Sundre, Medicine Hat, Fort McMurray, Red Deer, Drumheller, High River, Rocky View, and Calgary all remain on the front lines when the next flood strikes. Will the minister commit today to updating these flood maps and making sure that these communities are no longer left exposed?

Ms Phillips: Well, Mr. Speaker, I very much appreciate the question given that the hon. member has been doing an excellent job, as other hon. members in this House have, over the last few days of representing his constituents on this matter. We are

committed to reviewing the flood mapping issue along with all of the other issues with respect to flood mitigation that have been pushed onto our plates as we have inherited this situation from the previous government. We are reviewing all of the matters associated with flood mitigation to ensure that we are using the best science and the best public policy moving forward.

Mr. Nixon: Mr. Speaker, given that my constituency of Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House-Sundre has often faced flooding and given that in March the government announced flood projects all over the province but denied funding requests for Sundre, Drumheller, and Medicine Hat, saying that we needed another engineering study even when a number have already been completed, to the minister: will your government reverse the decision to reject Sundre and other impacted communities' flood mitigation applications so that residents will be protected before there is another flood?

Ms Phillips: I'm very pleased for the question, and I thank you for raising this with me. I am happy to discuss this matter and have a meeting with the hon. member afterwards so that we can follow up. I have had other requests to review previous decisions, and I am happy to do so and report back to this House when we have finalized the matter.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Grande Prairie-Wapiti.

Urgent Health Care in Beaverlodge

Mr. Drysdale: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As outlined in the rural health review, there was strong feedback that there needs to be better access to health care services in rural areas of Alberta. Beaverlodge is home to one of Alberta's oldest rural hospitals. In the latest budget the government promised \$2 million to design a new urgent health care facility in Beaverlodge. The new facility in Beaverlodge was to be used as an example for future facilities in Airdrie and Sylvan Lake. My question to the Minister of Health: will this government commit to funding this much-needed urgent health care facility in Beaverlodge, as was promised to them?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the hon. member for the question. We have heard a lot of discussion around decisions being made by the past government that weren't actually based on evidence, and I think we owe it to the people of Beaverlodge and to the people of Alberta, who are all taxpayers, to make sure that we are considering all options while we move forward. So I won't be able to make that commitment. Unlike other governments, when I make a commitment, you can count on it.

Mr. Drysdale: Mr. Speaker, to the same minister: given that yesterday in the interim supply debate you said that the plan to adhere to original funding for Beaverlodge, or the capital plan in the original 2015 budget, you would stick to as proposed, can you commit to the funding for the Beaverlodge facility and indicate the specific time, considering there have been seven years of study on this already?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for the question. I like the fact that the third party, who was actually the government at the time, is highlighting the fact that they've stalled for seven years on commitments that they wanted done.

Mr. Drysdale: Well, Mr. Speaker, seven years just proves that we weren't making them for political decisions. This facility replacement is much needed, and I wish this minister would commit to this facility and the design that's going to be used across all rural Alberta.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you to the member for the opportunity to basically supplement what was asked of my hon. colleague the Minister of Infrastructure. He has mentioned that we're working on ensuring there's a sunshine list. The sunshine list will demonstrate that this government is taking evidence and fact in making their decisions moving forward on behalf of all Albertans.

The Speaker: Before I acknowledge the next hon. member, there have been a number of requests about extensions of time. As we all ease into this process, today is the day that we begin not to acknowledge that, and I would therefore ask the Member for Wetaskiwin-Camrose to stay within his allocated time.

2:30

Mr. Hinkley: Excuse me. Stay within the time?

The Speaker: Within your time, please.

Mr. Hinkley: Mr. Speaker, I will try to be brief, then. I wanted to start off with a number of compliments to the House for the conduct of members during Committee of Supply yesterday. I was very impressed and wished that the media, the audience, the school students, and our international friends could actually have seen that excellent behaviour.

Aboriginal Entrepreneurship

Mr. Hinkley: I will try to be quick, but I also want to give a compliment to our hon. Member for Calgary-Mountain View for his eloquent and insightful comments about First Nations people deserving the right to be recognized and respected. In that light, I ask my question. Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Aboriginal Relations. Some First Nations people . . .

The Speaker: Hon. member, could you be very, very brief and ask the question, please. [interjections] Order, please. Order. Thank you.

Could you in five seconds or less address your question.

Mr. Hinkley: My question is to the Minister of Aboriginal Relations.

The Speaker: Five seconds.

Mr. Hinkley: Many First Nations businesses are not able to access capital through the credit of lenders . . .

The Speaker: Does the minister have an answer?

Ms Ganley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you very much to the member for the question. It's true; many First Nations people do have difficulty starting new businesses because they have difficulty accessing capital. This government is committed to a true partnership with aboriginal peoples, including First Nation people living on reserves. I agree that there's a need for greater participation by aboriginal peoples in the economy, and we are developing several programs and initiatives to address these barriers, including the aboriginal economic partnership program, which works directly with communities to support economic and small-business development.

Thank you.

The Speaker: Hon. member, I want to advise that you have one supplemental question left.

Mr. Hinkley: To the Minister of Aboriginal Relations: that's all fine and good, but does the ministry provide any actual funding to help budding entrepreneurs?

Ms Ganley: Thank you to the member for the question. Mr. Speaker, there's a long-standing program to support aboriginal entrepreneurs. There are grants and loans through the federal government, but still sometimes those businesses need additional supports to help develop plans and access these programs. Aboriginal Relations works with partners in First Nations and the federal government to offer programs on-reserve that are complementary to this funding such as contracted services for workshops to teach small-business skills and the drafting of small-business plans. Our service providers would provide First Nations entrepreneurs with the advice and support that they need to develop business plans and access other sources of funding.

Thank you.

The Speaker: It's been suggested that I gently remind all of you to sit when the Speaker stands.

I would like to acknowledge the hon. Member for Battle River-Wainwright.

Health Facilities in Wainwright

Mr. Taylor: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My constituents rely on the Wainwright health centre for fulfilling their medical needs, but this facility is falling apart. Reviews were undertaken and updated by Alberta Health Services in 2002, 2008, and 2011. In all cases significant problems were found, and a new hospital was called for. To the Health minister: what will you do to address the serious situation at the Wainwright health centre?

Ms Hoffman: Thank you to the hon. member for the question, and thank you for the opportunity to be able to address it. As has been mentioned by my colleague the Minister of Infrastructure, we're in the process of developing a sunshine list for a number of different capital projects, including hospitals and other health care facilities. I've already set up meetings with the critic from the opposition party to discuss some of their needs, so feel free to communicate them through your critic.

Mr. Taylor: Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Infrastructure: given that the last government politicized hospital infrastructure all over the province by keeping its infrastructure priorities secret and this caused serious harm to communities – I think we can both agree that this was wrong and unethical – and given that your government promised to do things differently, is a new Wainwright health facility currently on the list of infrastructure priorities, and if not, why not?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Mason: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Well, I'm going to have to take that question under advisement, and I can get back to the hon. member. I can assure you that when a sunshine list is published, you'll be able to see all of the projects that are potentially funded on the list in the order of priority that they've been ranked.

But with respect to your specific question I will supply you with the answer as soon as I have it.

Mr. Taylor: Thank you, Minister.

Mr. Speaker, back to the Minister of Health. Given that Alberta Health Services determined that the infrastructure at the Wainwright health centre is falling apart and needing replacement and given that the people of Wainwright know this, they want to know: are there any specific plans to build a new hospital in Wainwright, which your own government says needs to be done? The Wildrose has long petitioned for a priority list. When will this list be released?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for the question. As has already been answered in question period, we're doing our utmost to make sure that we do bring forward a sunshine list in a timely manner. We'll be creating opportunities to have a public dialogue around that once it's published, but we're making sure that they're evidence-based decisions moving forward. I believe my colleague said that we're aiming for the fall, so we'll do our absolute best to do it as quickly as possible.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-Fish Creek.

Affordable and Special-needs Housing

Mr. Gotfried: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm honoured to rise for the first time in this House with a question to the Minister of Seniors which has been asked before but which I will seek a straight answer for once again. Will you and your government commit to delivering funding of \$180 million to the 2,612 units previously approved under the affordable supportive living initiative?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for the question. I have answered this question, and I can answer it again and again and again, but the truth is that we know that there was political interference. I'm not saying specifically with regard to the ASLI projects, but we know that the past government has a proven track record of political interference from the party that just asked the same question. When we make announcements and when we make decisions moving forward, we're going to make sure that we can stand by those. I owe it to the people of Alberta to be confident in the decisions that we're making.

Dr. Starke: Mr. Speaker, a point of order.

The Speaker: The point of order is acknowledged. I'd like to consult with the Clerk, with the permission of the House.

First supplemental.

Mr. Gotfried: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again to the minister: given that there was also a commitment of \$357 million to the Alberta seniors' benefit announced in support of approximately 150,000 seniors to allow them to live with dignity, will you and this government remain accountable to low-income seniors by committing to maintaining this funding?

Ms Hoffman: Absolutely. Funding for ensuring the dignity and respect of seniors is a priority for this government. We put that in our platform, and we're committed to delivering on that.

Mr. Gotfried: Mr. Speaker, to the same minister: given that this House had designated \$200 million for the Alberta Social Housing Corporation, including \$143 million for seniors' housing and rent supplements, what amounts, if any, will your government commit

to the Alberta Social Housing Corporation in support of Alberta's low-income seniors, individuals, families, and those with special needs?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for the question and to the member for raising it. Yesterday we had an opportunity to debate the interim supply bill. That's about making sure that we can continue to operate as a government in the days ahead.

In terms of specific line items we've made it very clear that we'll be presenting a full budget in the fall, and we'll have a thorough opportunity to debate every one of those line items at that time.

2:40

Members' Statements

(continued)

The Speaker: Hon. members, I would advise that we have two members' statements left for this afternoon.

The Member for Edmonton-Ellerslie.

World Refugee Day

Mr. Loyola: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour to stand today and recognize World Refugee Day, which occurs on June 20 each year. With my father, mother, and older brother I came to Canada, fleeing our homeland due to violence as a result of the September 11, 1973, military coup in Chile. I happened to arrive in Canada on Canada Day in 1976. I often tell people that coming to Canada as a refugee is not the same as coming as an immigrant. Refugees under threat of persecution and violence are fleeing their homes, leaving loved ones, and they long for the opportunity to return home. However, that being said, soon after arriving, my parents decided that we would stay in Canada and apply for citizenship so that we as children could attend postsecondary education, an opportunity we would not have had if we'd stayed in Chile during the dictatorship.

Alberta has good organizations providing assistance to refugees. I couldn't name them all, but I do want to recognize the Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers, Catholic Social Services, and Edmonton Immigrant Services Association.

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees there are more than 50 million refugees around the world. Half of them are children and women. Today I ask that we honour the courage, strength, and determination of people forced to flee their homes. I also ask that we recognize the contribution of these refugees to their new communities. Today let all members of this Legislature and all Albertans reflect on the human right to a secure place that each person can call home.

I am thankful I was received with open arms by fellow Albertans in 1976 and that since then I was able to access education, health care, and other services to become a fully engaged and productive member of society.

Refugees have much to contribute, and I know that this government will respect the dignity of each of them and ensure each of them a full opportunity to contribute and be supported.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Stony Plain.

Freson Bros. 60th Anniversary

Ms Babcock: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let me take us back to October 20, 1955. On that date Freson Market Ltd. began when Frank Lovsin opened a butcher shop with two partners, Frank Resek and Frank's father, Leo Resek, from Edson. The name Freson was

derived from a combination of the letters in the three partners' names. It is now the 60-year anniversary of this strong, committed company.

This started in Hinton, Alberta, with a butcher shop. Throughout the 1950s and the 1960s Freson Bros. expanded to new locations within Alberta, always looking at the horizon. The chain of businesses the grocers became in communities can be attributed to the entrepreneurial spirit Albertans have always enjoyed, as demonstrated by these people, and to a commitment to providing quality products, good value, a clean shopping environment, and outstanding customer service for the people of Alberta.

This Alberta-founded, family-owned business is a shining example of Alberta and the qualities we as Albertans aspire to. Throughout Alberta we never need to look far to find successful businesses of every sort making social and economic contributions to the strength and health of our communities. As stated in the throne speech, "Albertans are working together to build a prosperous, entrepreneurial, diversified economy full of opportunity for us all."

Freson Bros. holds its own in a fight above its weight class. National and multinational conglomerates are the competitors that they and their approximately one thousand workers face every day. These Albertans face this fight with grace. Freson Bros. is an ethical, fair employer, with employees ranging from teenagers with after school jobs to those getting ready to exit the workforce.

I commend Freson Bros. for the determination and grit it takes to not just survive but to flourish in this tough industry, and I also commend and recommend them and their gorgeous and tasty flagship store in Stony Plain.

Introduction of Bills

The Speaker: The hon. President of Treasury Board and Minister of Finance.

Bill 2

An Act to Restore Fairness to Public Revenue

Mr. Ceci: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present Bill 2, An Act to Restore Fairness to Public Revenue, for first reading.

This bill is an important step in restoring balance and fairness to our taxation system and allows us to better invest in hard-working families. The proposed bill has two distinct components, one that affects corporate income tax and the other that affects personal income tax. With this bill CIT will be changed from 10 to 12 per cent, a change that will take effect on July 1, 2015. On the PIT side there'll be five new tax brackets that we'll introduce, restoring balance to our system of taxation, with implementation beginning on October 1, 2015.

Mr. Speaker, these tax measures restore progressivity, balance, and fairness to our revenues while maintaining a provincial tax system that is competitive and responsible. These measures will allow the government to invest in services for all Albertans.

I would encourage all members to support the bill on first reading, and I look forward to the coming debate. Thank you.

[Motion carried; Bill 2 read a first time]

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-South East.

Bill 201

Assuring Alberta's Fiscal Future Act

Mr. Fraser: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to request leave to introduce Bill 201, Assuring Alberta's Fiscal Future Act.

I'm humbled to have the opportunity to sponsor this private member's bill and bring the best representation possible to my constituents and Albertans at large. This bill will charge the government to save a specified percentage of nonrenewable resource revenue. It will charge this government to immediately strengthen the Alberta heritage savings trust fund. Nonrenewable resource revenue should not be treated as a right. It is not a right that was promised to us, and it is not a right that will continue to flow forever. The federal government intends to phase out carbon emissions, which means that saving now has become more important than ever.

The time has come when we must commit more of this wealth to the future of Alberta. This bill asks the government to introduce a bill of their own that gives effect to the contents of Bill 201. Bill 201 outlines the savings of 25 per cent of nonrenewable resource revenue into the heritage trust fund until the fiscal year where operational revenue is projected to exceed operational expenses. For the next fiscal year that percentage increases to 50 per cent for that year and every subsequent fiscal year after that.

I look forward to fulsome debate on the future of Alberta. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[Motion carried; Bill 201 read a first time]

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Strathcona-Sherwood Park.

2:50

Bill 202
Alberta Local Food Act

Cortes-Vargas: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise to request leave to introduce a bill being the Alberta Local Food Act.

This act is designed to ensure a resilient, sustainable, strong local economy and agricultural land base in Alberta. The establishment of the Local Food Act will work towards several important goals for Alberta and our agricultural industry in this province. It will establish an advisory committee on food and agriculture to review the current state of our local food systems, develop a local food and agriculture strategy, improve and maximize economic return and food security here in Alberta, and establish a local food awareness week. Bill 202 will promote the purchase of local foods by public-sector organizations.

I'm proposing this bill for many reasons. Local food and agriculture are important to my community of Strathcona-Sherwood Park. My constituency is home to many farmers that face barriers to connecting with larger markets. It's a common problem throughout the province. The advisory committee proposed in this bill will consult with individuals and organizations with experience and interests applicable to the local food market such as farming and food systems, agricultural associations, organic farming associations, municipalities, First Nations and indigenous organizations.

I am proud to be presenting my first private member's bill on this issue, and I look forward to discussion and deliberation with all colleagues. Thank you.

[Motion carried; Bill 202 read a first time]

The Speaker: Points of order.

The hon. member.

Point of Order
Imputing Motives

Dr. Starke: Mr. Speaker, thank you. I rise on a point of order, specifically the citation of Standing Order 23(i) and (l). I will quote

these as soon as I put my glasses on. You'll appreciate that with aging, you need to do this. It reads:

- (i) imputes false or unavowed motives to another Member;
- and
- (l) introduces any matter in debate that offends the practices and precedents of the Assembly.

During the course of answering the question from the hon. Member for Calgary-Fish Creek with regard to funding of ASLI projects, the Minister of Health – and I don't have the Blues in front of me – used a phrase, something to the effect of: we know that this party had political interference with the selection process. Mr. Speaker, I think all of us in this Assembly, even after only four days, can appreciate the zeal of the hon. Minister of Health and her desire to make her points very strongly. Nonetheless, there are limitations upon that zeal, and that zeal cannot be expressed in such a way that casts negative aspersions on other members within the Legislature.

With regard specifically to the standing orders that we operate under and to the custom that we all call each other hon. members, she specifically indicated that at least three members of our caucus had been involved in improper practices. We have three former ministers of Infrastructure in our caucus. We have two former ministers of Transportation. When she uses the phraseology, "We know that this party," as opposed to that it is an allegation or a suspicion or something that they just believe to be true, then it is stating that as fact, Mr. Speaker, and I would suggest that those are facts that are not presently in evidence.

Mr. Speaker, you know, like I say, I think that it is just simply a matter of the minister being very zealous in her duties, and that is certainly something that I think we can all appreciate. Nonetheless, there are procedures, precedents, and privileges within our Assembly that need to be honoured, and I would simply ask that the member withdraw the comment and apologize to the House.

The Speaker: The hon. Government House Leader.

Mr. Mason: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Having had an opportunity to speak to the hon. minister with respect to this, she's indicated to me that in her enthusiasm she went a little too far, and on her behalf I'm happy to indicate that she's willing to withdraw the remark and to apologize to the House.

The Speaker: I would like to acknowledge the comment made by the member as well as the appreciation of the Speaker for the withdrawal of the comment. I would use this as an opportunity. While we've read the details of these standing orders, the issue that you all committed to was one of respect, and we must continuously practise that.

Thank you.

Orders of the Day

Consideration of Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor's Speech

Mr. Connolly moved, seconded by Ms Kazim, that an humble address be presented to Her Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor as follows.

To Her Honour the Honourable Lois Mitchell, CM, AOE, the Lieutenant Governor of the Province of Alberta:

We, Her Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly, now assembled, beg leave to thank Your Honour for the gracious speech Your Honour has been pleased to address to us at the opening of the present session.

[Adjourned debate June 17: Mr. Bilous]

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-Elbow.

Mr. Clark: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, it's a great honour to rise to present my response to Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor's speech. I do want to acknowledge the Government House Leader and thank him for the opportunity to do so.

Well, it's been quite a journey getting to this moment, but here I am and here we all are to do the important work of the people of Alberta. It is a new day in the Alberta Legislature, and I again want to congratulate the Premier and her government and all of the members of the House.

When we run for office, our families run with us. I want to thank my wife, who somehow manages to keep things on track for our daughters while also working full-time plus, doing her important work as a palliative care physician, helping those in their time of great need. To my daughters: thank you for putting up with all of this. It might not always seem like it, but I am doing this for you. I know that all members of the Assembly are also spending a lot of time away from their families as we work together in our shared goal of making Alberta even better than it already is.

Now, I'm not the first in my family to seek elected office. My grandmother Alberta Clark – and, yes, her name really was Alberta Clark – was the 35th woman in Alberta history to run in a provincial election, standing in the constituency of Calgary in the 1952 general election. My grandmother taught me that perseverance, service to community, and commitment to family are what really matter. Also, my father sought the seat of Calgary-Elbow in 1989. He lost narrowly to one Ralph Klein. My father tells me that he wants all of you to know that the cuts to health and education in the 1990s were not his fault.

It is indeed an honour and a privilege to represent the people of Calgary-Elbow, the place I was born, where I was raised and I've lived my entire life. Parts of what are now Calgary-Elbow have been home to five Premiers, including Premiers Redford, Klein, Lougheed, Manning, and Aberhart, as well as two Lieutenant Governors, John J. Bowlen and Grant MacEwan. It is a diverse community, home to some of Calgary's oldest and newest neighbourhoods, co-op housing, and homes that are historic landmarks. In all parts of the constituency the people of Calgary-Elbow enjoy a strong sense of community and connectedness to their neighbourhoods.

This was tested two years ago, almost to the day, when we experienced one of the worst natural disasters in our country's history. In the days and weeks after the flood we showed the world what we're made of. Thousands of people pitched in to help total strangers dig out their basements, and neighbours with less damage helped those worse off than themselves. We showed the world, but more importantly we showed each other what it means to be an Albertan. While we should remember the positives that came out of the aftermath of the flood, we must not be complacent. Another flood is coming. We just don't know when.

3:00

Let us never forget the five people who lost their lives in the flood and count ourselves lucky that the number was not much higher. Also, think of the first responders who risked their lives running towards danger while the rest of us sought safety. Think about the economic impact. The 2013 flood was the most expensive natural disaster in Canadian history. The flood waters came within inches of entering downtown from the south. If that happens again, the damage could be tens of billions of dollars in lost business, and the impact on the thousands of people living and working downtown would be immeasurable. We can and must build flood mitigation, and we must do it quickly to ensure the continued economic

viability of downtown Calgary and ensure that the residents of Calgary-Elbow and other communities never have to live through another devastating flood.

While flood mitigation is important, it certainly is not the only reason I'm here. I stand before you in the Legislative Assembly of Alberta because of my daughters, because I have a deep and abiding desire to ensure that the Alberta they inherit has even greater opportunity and even greater equality than we enjoy today. I worry that this might not be the case. If we do not ensure that our province continues to be an attractive place for entrepreneurs, with a competitive tax regime especially for small business, if we do not pursue purposeful, market-driven economic diversification and we do not ensure that our government delivers well-managed and efficient public services, my daughters and all Albertans will not share in the prosperity that is possible in this great place.

We are truly fortunate to be Albertans, and I am endlessly optimistic about the future of our province. Alberta was built by forward-looking people who were optimists and risk takers at heart. We Albertans believe in ourselves and our families, families of all shapes and sizes. The real Alberta doesn't care whom you love, only that we treat each other with dignity and respect. We want the best for ourselves, but we also want the best for our neighbours, for our children, and for each and every one of the 4.3 million people who call Alberta home. This includes First Nations and Métis peoples, whose culture and heritage help define who and what Alberta is and what it can be. We must work together as partners to truly consult, to listen, and more importantly, to hear.

The people who built this province persevered. They didn't take no for an answer. They didn't let a failed crop or a dry well or a failed business stop them. They dusted themselves off, learned from the past, and moved forward, looking to the possibilities of tomorrow rather than bemoaning the failures of the past.

Albertans have always made the impossible possible. People more than a century ago were told that it was an impossible task to establish farms and homesteads on this bald prairie or even to survive an Alberta winter. Oil sands pioneers were told that it was impossible to overcome the technical challenges to produce bitumen economically. Medical researchers at the University of Alberta were told that nothing could be done to improve the lives of people with type 1 diabetes. Doctors at the University of Calgary were told that every stroke is a death sentence. They didn't give up. They didn't take no for an answer, and our province, our world is a better place for it. That's who we are as Albertans, and that is something to be proud of. Our work in this Assembly must be focused on ensuring that continues to be the case for future generations.

At the same time, we must recognize that many Albertans are going through difficult times and our province is facing an historic deficit. We must find more and more stable sources of revenue, but more spending cannot be the only answer. We must transform Alberta's public service and operate our government more efficiently and effectively. A new government is an opportunity to make our public service more transparent and less expensive.

I have had the privilege of listening to many responses to the Speech from the Throne, and what strikes me is that each and every one of us is here because we believe passionately in making Alberta a better place. I think we would be wise to heed the advice of the Member for Calgary-Mountain View. Let's make this Assembly a place of negotiation, always focusing on the best interests of Albertans.

We have a remarkable opportunity. We have the chance to define ourselves by our ideas, by our vision for Alberta, not by what we oppose, by who we are rather than what we are against. This new Legislature gives us a chance to look at old problems with a fresh

perspective. I hope we all take this opportunity to show Albertans that we are ready to govern differently.

I make the same commitment to you that I make to my constituents in Calgary-Elbow, to my family, and to myself. I will be reasonable, rational, and forward looking. Where I believe government policy is good for Albertans, I will support it. I will never oppose for the sake of opposition. Where I disagree, I will say why, and I will propose clear alternatives. My hope is that we as members working together will ensure that the Alberta spirit of looking out for our neighbours and rewarding hard work, of shared prosperity and a focus for the future continues today and for many generations to come.

Thank you very much.

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

Mr. Clark: I've been asked to remain standing and move adjournment of debate on consideration of Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor's speech.

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

[Motion to adjourn debate carried]

Government Bills and Orders

Second Reading

Bill 3

Appropriation (Interim Supply) Act, 2015 (No. 2)

The Speaker: The hon. President of Treasury Board and Minister of Finance.

Mr. Ceci: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to move second reading of Bill 3, the Appropriation (Interim Supply) Act, 2015 (No. 2).

The Appropriation (Interim Supply) Act, 2015 (No. 2) will provide funding authority to the offices of the Legislative Assembly and to the government for the period from July 1, 2015, to November 30, 2015, inclusive. The approval of this act will provide the funds needed to continue the business of the province while the government and the Assembly take the time necessary to prepare, present, review, debate the government's 2015-16 budget plan. Through the passage of this supply act this government will reinvest in health care, education, advanced education, and human services. I respectfully urge my colleagues in this House to support the bill.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: I'll recognize the hon. Member for Strathmore-Brooks.

Mr. Fildebrandt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We've completed a mere three hours of debate on this bill. We've been allotted only three hours, the minimum legal time allowed under the standing orders of this House for interim supply. Now, the government appears to have taken its cue from the previous government in forcing debate down to one and a half hours for second reading of this bill under Standing Order 64. They are forcing a vote at a quarter after 4 today, effectively cutting debate in half. All of my colleagues would have liked to have spoken to the bill today. The government is not allowing even the minuscule promised debate.

3:10

Yesterday in Committee of Supply I asked the government some very basic questions that I truly believe should have been answered and could have been answered. My colleagues asked questions

pertaining to some of their shadow ministerial portfolios. Each and every one of my colleagues representing a shadow ministry should have been allowed to ask their ministers opposite detailed and probing questions with regard to spending in their ministries. Not that it would have done us any good. Again, most of the ministers had a very strange way of providing details on their ministries. The government has been vague about when the budget itself will be released. According to this interim supply it goes until the end of November, even a month after the scheduled federal election. This document, as I have stated before, is a blank cheque. It is asking this House for permission to spend without accountability, without scrutiny, without any guidance from the Legislature. It is asking for us to rubber-stamp it and just trust them.

I asked the Minister of Finance yesterday five very simple questions. I'm going to ask them again today. One, how much money will this government spend during this fiscal year? Two, how much revenue will this government collect during this fiscal year? Three, what will be the deficit for this fiscal year? Four, what will be the debt at the end of this fiscal year? Five, what will be the province's net financial assets at the end of this fiscal year? If the minister is unable to answer these questions, he is asking us to give him an \$18.6 billion preloaded gift card.

The former government ran up \$12 billion of debt in a few short years, squandered the sustainability fund, and planned to run up another \$5.7 billion for just this year alone in the budget that they tabled before calling an election. Now in addition to the \$5.7 billion that the previous government had intended to add to the provincial debt during this fiscal year, our best estimate of the government's numbers – and we are estimating because it appears that they haven't even begun to estimate – is that the new government will add an additional \$2 billion to that figure either in the form of drawing down the last pennies of the sustainability fund, now called the contingency account, or by adding it to the provincial debt. Draining away the remaining pennies of the rainy-day fund is the same as putting it on the credit card.

The Government House Leader spoke out on March 15, just a few months ago, when the former government tried to pass a similar bill for less money for a shorter period of time and allowed even more debate than the current government is allowing. Now, is it that the government does not see its inconsistency? This government is spending faster than it can tax, and they need to explain where these additional – what is it now? Is it \$1.8 billion or \$700 million or \$682 million? – dollars are going to come from. I'm not sure. It depends on which press release from the government you're checking and at what hour.

This government does not have a plan, and it has not shared the details for the rationale of the spending plan. If the NDP wants to spend \$682 million – let's just go with that figure for the sake of argument today – of taxpayers' money, then Albertans deserve to know where it's coming from. The Minister of Finance was clear that the NDP are still reviewing the spending decisions of the previous government. How can they possibly announce new spending and be confident that the money is improving services for Albertans instead of propping up a bloated bureaucracy?

The NDP platform called for \$1.8 billion in new spending for the fiscal year. This was confirmed by the Government House Leader just a few days ago. [interjection] Yesterday, even better. That is confusing. I think also yesterday – and the member will correct me if I'm wrong – they also said that figure was \$700 million in interim supply. Now it's \$682 million. It's quite confusing. It's confusing to us, but it still appears to be confusing to the government itself.

Now, I am looking at a summary of NDP budget changes, taken from their own platform. For the fiscal year ending 2016, they list the following revenue changes, some of which myself and my

colleagues wholeheartedly agree with. Removing the PC health care levy: \$396 million for this fiscal year is removed from their revenue projections. Removing user fees: \$184 million. Restoring the charitable tax credit: \$90 million. These are three measures that we fully support, but money must come from somewhere.

Now, this is where the NDP committed to bringing in an extra \$1.1 billion in personal income tax revenues this year. This seems to be a rather difficult task to obtain when the Canada Revenue Agency is highly unlikely to allow these changes to come into place retroactively for this fiscal year on July 1. Perhaps the minister will clarify if that figure will be \$1.1 billion, zero dollars, or somewhere in between.

Business taxes. The government committed to bringing in another \$805 million a year in business taxes by hiking the rates. We've just seen Bill 2 before us now. Now, again, it is highly unlikely that, under tax collection agreements with the Canada Revenue Agency, the government would be able to retroactively increase taxes for this fiscal year to July 1. Let's say for the sake of argument that the government was able to raise taxes for half this fiscal year. That would make it \$402.5 million compared to the \$805 million they were promising.

Now, they promised another \$100 million this fiscal year for delinquent business tax collection. They haven't even begun really writing their budget; I'm not sure if they've gotten around yet to grabbing businessmen by their ankles and shaking them upside down for money they haven't paid yet, a favourite practice of the NDP, I'm sure. That is \$100 million. They might eventually be able to collect that, but again it's doubtful that they would be able to collect it this year. But let's be generous and say that they can. They also added a railway fuel tax adjustment, that would collect \$10 million under their plan.

So the most likely figure for new taxes and revenue collected this year under the NDP plan, not that I particularly endorse any of it, would be \$402 million this fiscal year. At the high end, the highest likely figure they would possibly collect, would be \$512 million. The new government has committed to spending \$1.8 billion in new spending this fiscal year alone. If they're going to spend \$1.8 billion in new spending but are likely to collect at the high end \$512 million, that leaves a \$1.3 billion black hole in their budget. Mr. Speaker, that scares the hell out of me.

Now, there is quite a differential in many of their numbers. That \$1.8 billion in new spending commitments is for the full fiscal year. If they're saying that they're going to collect \$512 million at the very high end, but the \$682 million that they are referring to is only for this fiscal year and that they were merely confused, then that leaves still a differential of about \$170 million.

Mr. Speaker, the point is that the numbers don't add up. Now, that's nothing new to this Legislature, but at least the government had a PR plan before they presented it. This all to say that this government is spending faster than it can tax.

3:20

The government does not have a plan, and as much as I and my colleagues have patiently asked, they have not provided details on a rationale for this additional spending, and they have not provided details about where the money is going to come from other than thin air. If the government wants to spend \$682 million of taxpayers' money, taxpayers deserve to know where it's going to come from.

Now, the new spending promised by the government amounts to \$650 per family. They might particularly like that. Some people might like that. But the money must come from somewhere. Because the government has thus far refused to provide details on its total expenditures, total revenues, its deficit, its debt, and net financial assets, we must assume that this money will come from

one of two places, even higher taxes than the government campaigned on during the election or an even higher debt than the government campaigned on during the election. Since Bill 2 is before us today, I think the answer to that is most likely going to be higher debt than they campaigned on and an even deeper draw on the contingency account.

The NDP platform is confused about how much it's going to spend, and the minister has not done anything to clarify this for us yet. Now, I genuinely am looking for some answers. Oppositions like to embarrass governments, but we don't want to do that. We genuinely would like some answers. We've been asking for them for two days now despite the minuscule amount of debate time that has been allowed, despite the fact that my colleagues have not been allowed to ask legitimate, probing questions of the ministries that they shadow.

Mr. Speaker, we face a \$2 billion black hole in the NDP budget in addition to the \$5.7 billion consolidated cash deficit projected by the PCs. We know from looking at other jurisdictions that spending more does not necessarily equal better outcomes. Their plan is to spend more, tax more, borrow more, and let the budget run wild. They are driving in the dark. These announcements might sound good, but the money must come from somewhere. It does not grow on trees. According to the numbers announced this week, we are likely headed for an entire summer and probably another two months in the fall without a budget.

So, Mr. Speaker, I am going to close by giving the minister another chance to answer questions that have been asked in good faith, that Albertans deserve, that taxpayers need, that businesses deserve. They promised \$1.3 billion in new revenue, but clearly the government is not going to meet the number this year. Again, I will ask: how much revenue will the government collect, how much will it spend, how much will it borrow, what will be the net financial assets at the end of the year, and will they commit to a budget before the federal election?

The Speaker: Is there another hon. member who would like to speak? The hon. member is recognized.

Mr. Hanson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise to speak to Bill 3, Appropriation (Interim Supply) Act, 2015 (No. 2). I have several questions with respect to this bill but will focus on my shadow cabinet, Aboriginal Relations. It's a wonderful first step to say that with this bill the government is taking steps to ensure Alberta families have access to essential services upon which they rely. But what families are you addressing?

Community members living on reserve and on Métis settlements across the province are concerned about what supports they may see coming out of Bill 3. While we have received information that shows specific supports to education, postsecondary education, health, and human services, we're still in the dark about what our First Nation and Métis communities can expect from this budget. How about education for Métis students and students on reserves? How about supports for First Nation and Métis students as they consider postsecondary education away from their communities or sometimes, if they're lucky, within their communities? How will human services be extended on reserves and into settlements? How about health services on reserve and in settlements? There is a large group of community members who are in the dark about what Bill 3 will mean for them. I would like to make sure that their voice is heard today as we debate Bill 3.

Specifically, Mr. Speaker, the breakdown of the funding going to Aboriginal Relations is almost \$85 million in expenses, \$10,000 in capital, which seems to be a pretty specific number, which should be easy to zero in on exactly what that is for, and over \$32 million

in financial transactions for a total of almost \$117 million. That's a lot of money. But what are those expenses? What services are included? To whom? Where? Is there any band- or settlement-specific funding targeted in this bill? What are the capital investments? Where are these investments? Who is going to benefit from them? What are financial transactions? We need some clarifications. That's all we're asking for.

Further, Mr. Speaker, what is the intended distribution of these expenditures across the province? How will the government ensure that there is fair use of these funds across the province? How will community members know what may be addressed for their community? There are no specifics. Who will be accountable for the projects and services that come out of these expenditures?

If the NDP wants to spend this much money, the Alberta public, including our First Nations and Métis community members, deserve to know where it is coming from and, just as importantly, where it is going. Mr. Speaker, I need to be able to go back to my community and be able to communicate with my First Nations and Métis communities across the province to assure them that this bill, as problematic as it is, may yet provide some locally determined, carefully planned supports. But first I need some information.

Thank you.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary . . .

Mr. McIver: Hays.

The Speaker: Is this applying with respect to 29(2)(a)?

Mr. McIver: No, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Standing Order 29(2)(a), as I understand it, is that you now have an opportunity for up to five minutes to ask questions or clarifications for the last speaker with respect to his comments, and if there are none, then we would move to the next member.

The hon. House leader of the Official Opposition.

Mr. Cooper: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise today, and I just would like to thank the hon. member so much for his thought-out comments. It's very clear to me that he has a passion for the people in his constituency and in particular the people that are affected by the Aboriginal Relations portfolio. I guess I'm just a little bit curious to know if he would be willing to expand just a little bit on – you know, many of us are new in the House – the process of how we arrived here today. Do you feel like we've had a fair amount of time to debate this, or do you feel like it may have been rushed?

3:30

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Hanson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for the question. Yes, being new here and being a fiscal conservative, it concerns me when we try to rush through a bill of this magnitude that's going to spend so much of Alberta's money, so much of taxpayers' money because that's where it eventually comes from.

Mrs. Pitt: Shame.

Mr. Hanson: Shame.

I would not in my own personal life make an expenditure on, say, buying a house or an apartment from a picture off the Internet, which is pretty much a snapshot of what we got of this budget. We have a lot of issues in my constituency. You know, although I'm against spending uncontrollably, some of these areas do need to be addressed. With our Métis and First Nations peoples there are a lot

of people there that have very good ideas about promoting their own self-sufficiency, and I think that this government has a real opportunity to address those issues. Specifics in this budget could have done that, but again we've had no specifics. It's been just a snapshot of a budget.

We're talking about \$18 billion of taxpayers' money, my money, my kids' money. They all work for a living. We need to address this, get more specifics on it so that we can go back to our communities and tell them how much money they're going to be getting, where it's coming from, who's going to be watching how it's spent so that we can control this in the respect of all taxpayers of Alberta. No more snapshot budgets. Let's get a full walk-through video. It's all available.

Thank you very much.

The Speaker: Are there any other questions under 29(2)(a)? The hon. member.

Mr. McIver: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate this opportunity to rise and talk about Bill 3. I appreciate my colleagues' comments here in the House. As time goes on, some things stay the same, and some things are different. I think what was pointed out is that the past government provided more time for questions, which is the same, but what is different is that the past government actually gave more detail so that the House had something to question on.

One thing that's the same is that the opposition sometimes has some very good questions, and another thing that's the same is that after complaining about the time, the opposition didn't use all the time available after complaining about not having enough. That hasn't changed.

Mr. Cooper: Two minutes, sir. Two minutes.

Mr. McIver: I thank the hon. member for agreeing with me.

Nonetheless, Mr. Speaker, the opposition has some good questions, and I thank them for asking those good questions.

What is the key question, Mr. Speaker? We asked ministers yesterday a lot of questions, got next to no answers with any meat on them. I think I actually thanked one minister yesterday when I got one straight answer, and I'm grateful for that one straight answer though I asked a lot of questions and my colleagues did. But while I don't expect any answers today because we didn't get any yesterday, the number one question that I think Albertans will be interested in and that I think all members of this House should ponder and talk to our constituents over the weekend about when we get there, because I know I will be, is that the government acknowledged yesterday that they brought forward \$1.8 billion in new spending.

We acknowledge that the government has the right to do that. They have the right to take that money from Albertans as a result of the recent election. They have that right. We acknowledge that right. We acknowledge the rights that come with winning an election. But I'm going to take just a second or two to remind the government of the responsibility that is attached to that. The responsibility, Mr. Speaker, that's attached to that very, very directly is to tell Albertans, whose money you're spending, what you are spending it on.

Now, the government says that they're going to give a budget here in the fall. October, I think, is what the Premier said yesterday, and I have no reason to doubt that the Premier is telling the truth on that. But the government took the money yesterday, or today, when this bill passes. Before this session ends, the government will have taken the money, effectively, out of Albertans' pockets without an explanation. They didn't borrow a buck for a coffee. One point one billion dollars unexplained: there's your question. There is your

question, Mr. Speaker. Why are you taking \$1.1 billion of Albertans' money without explaining?

Well, there are a thousand questions. Members across, whether they're on the front bench, the middle bench, or the backbench, you maybe should be asking your ministers so that you can tell your constituents where the \$1.1 billion is going. I'm guessing that some of your constituents will be asking you that, and I can tell you that when my constituents ask me that, I'm going to tell them that we PCs fought for the answer, that we PCs asked for the answer because we care about where \$1.1 billion of Albertans' money is going. No answer yet has been offered in this House, Mr. Speaker.

I will close by posing that question one last time: what are you going to do with the \$1.1 billion thus far unexplained?

The Speaker: Are there any questions or observations under 29(2)(a)?

Mr. Mason: Under 29(2)(a) I just want to respond to the hon. member and leader of the third party. In fact, there are four areas where the government has added additional money to fund things that Albertans voted for in the election. There are four. All have been the subject of public announcements.

First of all, there was more money for health care, and I thought I had the actual numbers. I was going to give the hon. member the actual numbers. I'll get them. I'll get back up. We've got a little bit of time here. There was some for health care, there was some for Education, some for advanced education, and some for Human Services. I will go into more detail when I have that chance.

The interim supply bill provides \$500 million in Health to ensure that we can restore front-line funding that was cut in the previous government's budget. That was a cut in the previous government's budget that has been restored. There is \$39 million in Human Services in order to ensure that there are additional services to vulnerable families in Alberta. There is \$45 million for Education that enables us to make sure that school boards are able to hire the teachers to meet enrolment pressures in the school system. There's \$40 million for Innovation and Advanced Education to allow the government to impose a tuition freeze at institutions across the province, a rollback of market modifiers which were introduced back in 2004.

That is the bulk of the additional \$1.1 billion. I will just indicate to the House that the situation that we found ourselves in – how's my time, Mr. Speaker?

3:40

The Speaker: Two and a half minutes.

Mr. Mason: Two minutes.

We found ourselves in a situation. Normally a budget is presented to the House by a government in March or April. The previous government presented their budget in March and April and, instead of debating it in the House and passing the budget, decided to call an election and run on that budget. Of course, the result of that election is well known.

Then this government took office 24 days ago. The interim supply that the previous government had approved in the Assembly runs out at the end of June, and then the government can't operate because it has no authority from the Assembly to pay its employees, to pay for the programs that it has to operate, to pay bills to keep the lights on and the heat on in the hospitals and schools and all of that. We needed to put together an interim supply bill that would allow the government to continue to operate while the government organized itself and took a look at the books and began the process of developing a budget.

Now, we've had argument from the Wildrose members that we should do it in September. We're going to do it in October. They seem to think that this month is of critical importance. But the fact is that we need some time to put together our own budget. In the meantime we're operating along the lines of the supplementary supply that was passed by the previous Legislature at the request of the previous government, with these additions. There are a few more. I realize that these numbers don't come to \$1.1 billion. I'm going to get them and stand up again.

That's the situation we're finding ourselves in. We run out of money to operate the government at the end of the month. The timing of all of this is not our choice. It is not our doing. We have inherited it as a result of decisions of the previous government. But the government must continue to operate, and we are doing a responsible thing by bringing in an interim supply while we can develop a responsible budget as a new government.

You will understand, I'm sure, hon. members from the third party, that creating a budget for a government is a large task that requires a lot of responsible thinking.

The Speaker: I'll recognize the hon. House leader of the opposition.

Mr. Cooper: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise today and speak to Bill 3. I just want to take a quick moment to talk about where we are and how we got here. I recognize that this bill is important, and I recognize that the government needs to keep running. As a number of my colleagues have highlighted today, you know, passing a piece of legislation that's \$18 billion with such limited debate has created all sorts of challenges, particularly on this side of the House when it comes to being able to ask questions. I know that a number of my colleagues – in fact, in the three hours of allotted debate yesterday, other than the two minutes that we offered up to some of our other colleagues in the House, I believe that the Official Opposition was allotted five speakers to speak to \$18 billion in spending.

Then we find ourselves on a beautiful Thursday afternoon in June, and the government has made a choice to introduce second reading of Bill 3 at 3:05 or whatever it was, knowing full well that at 4:15 the guillotine would fall on second reading, again preventing the opportunity for my colleagues in the opposition to speak to the bill and, essentially, limiting debate. I would be hesitant to utilize the words around time allocation. I know that the government when they were in opposition was certainly wildly opposed to such tactics. But here we have a situation where at a critical stage in debate, again, the time is limited for the opposition to raise the valid concerns of our constituents. It's not just about standing up and carrying on. It's about limiting our ability to act accurately and openly, to represent our constituents, that have sent us to this place.

In fact, members of the government regularly took the opportunity when they were in opposition to rise and speak specifically to this type of behaviour in the Assembly. I would just like to point to you one particular day in November last year, when there was a member of this House – and I quote from *Hansard* for you – that said:

Part of it comes down to the courtesy that the government should be extending to the opposition as far as giving us as much time as possible to work through a bill and its process.

I think, you know, something that's very interesting about this House is the process of how the opposition acquires the bill, obviously after the first reading, but the time seems, at least this week, the speed at which we are blasting through pieces of legislation – I'd like to remind all the members of the Assembly that we're enacting laws that affect this year more than 4 million people. Down the road – I mean, we're expanding very quickly here in the province. We should be taking the time to go through

this and have a thorough debate. I don't think rushing legislation does anyone any favours.

And who said that? I was about to refer to someone's presence in the House, so I'll just withdraw that part and say that the Minister of Municipal Affairs is the one who had uttered those words in this House just last year.

You know, when we look at what has happened this week, we've seen supplementary supply introduced on Tuesday, with a massive undertaking for the opposition to be prepared on less than 24 hours' notice to debate that in the House for three hours yesterday, and now some would say the ramming through of second reading of Bill 3 here in the Assembly.

I can go on with some additional quotes when it comes to the now government. This is from December 8, 2014.

Like our friends in the Wildrose, we have a number of amendments that we want to bring forward, but I think it would be better to do this out in the open and involve the opposition and have some real discussion about how we can improve this bill with the people that do that.

That is from the Government House Leader only last year.

One more I'll leave you with, also from a colleague of yours and of ours and, I will say, an all-around good guy.

I just wanted to remind Albertans that with many pieces of legislation, when they are done hastily, when they're done without adequate consultation [or debate], when they're done without input from the opposition, we find ourselves in this situation.

Again, the Minister of Municipal Affairs just last year, in fact in December.

It's a real shame that we arrive here today to debate a critically important piece of legislation with massive ramifications for our province, with massive amounts of increased spending and minimal amounts of debate. For our province I hope for the best, and I hope for the best for all Albertans, that a renewed commitment can be found in the fall Legislature, where this type of behaviour and tactics on behalf of the government will be put aside and fulsome debate on all of the important issues will be able to be heard.

3:50

The Speaker: Are there any observations or questions under 29(2)(a)? The hon. minister.

Mr. Mason: Thank you very much. I just wanted to supplement my earlier comments, Mr. Speaker. In addition to the \$624 million that I indicated for additional program spending, there's approximately \$400 million due to the cancellation of the health care tax, and there is over \$200 million for cancelled increases to various fees and so on that were increased in the previous government's budget. That is approximately \$1.2 billion over and above what was in the previous government's budget. So it's not only increased spending on one side, but it's actually giving up tax revenue where we didn't agree with the tax increases on the other side.

Mr. McIver: That must have hurt.

Mr. Mason: We don't agree with all tax, hon. member.

The Speaker: Hon. member, regarding 29(2)(a)?

Mr. Fildebrandt: Yes, Mr. Speaker. The Opposition House Leader makes some excellent points about the size and scope of this debate and how it's been limited and about the comments of former members of the opposition, now on the government side, and their consistency with their previous remarks.

Now, speaking of remarks from those on the government side, perhaps they can just nod in agreement when these numbers are

read as correct. The Government House Leader had indicated that of the new spending, \$500 million was for Health, that \$45 million was for Education, that \$39 million was for Human Services, and that \$40 million was for advanced education. Mr. Speaker, that adds up to \$624 million. If I'm not mistaken, that is the fourth figure we've seen in two days on new spending from the government. I believe just a few hours ago the government said that the new spending added up to \$682 million. Now, scratching my head here, I think that's a \$58 million differential between 10 o'clock this morning and five minutes to 4.

That is the fourth figure we've heard. We have heard \$1.8 billion. We have heard \$700 million. We have heard \$682 million, and now we've heard \$624 million. Now, I don't know about you, Mr. Speaker, but I'm starting to get very confused. I think Albertans are starting to get very confused. Perhaps someone from the government side would like to take this time to explain their fourth new spending figure in 24 hours.

The Speaker: Other comments or observations under Standing Order 29(2)(a)? The hon. member.

Mr. McIver: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just wanted to rise and thank the hon. member for the comments, and I think it would be impolite of me if I didn't thank the hon. Government House Leader for answering part of the question. The last time I stood here, I said – and nobody seems to have quibbled with it – that the government owes an explanation to Albertans for \$1.1 billion. Due to my badgering, I suppose, the hon. Government House Leader – and let me repeat my thank you to him – stood up and explained \$600 million of those dollars and then said that it comes out to \$1.2 billion. I had \$1.1 billion, so what's a hundred million between friends?

How much time do I have, Mr. Speaker?

The Speaker: You have about 35 seconds.

Mr. McIver: Thirty-five seconds is enough to reframe the question.

Due to the information that the government just provided a few seconds ago, the same question that I asked earlier is the one for Albertans, for all of us in this House. Where is the other \$500 million to \$600 million going to be spent? It hasn't been answered by the government. They've taken it from Albertans. They have the right to take it from Albertans. They just haven't fulfilled their obligation to Albertans to explain why they need the money.

The Speaker: Are there any other speakers wishing to speak to Bill 3, appropriations? The hon. member.

Mr. Schneider: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to speak to Bill 3, the Appropriation (Interim Supply) Act, 2015 (No. 2). I'm disappointed that not all of my colleagues will have the chance to speak as many have a lot of questions and would like to get on record about this spending. There's no need to cut the debate and force this minibudget through, yet it appears that is what we're about to do.

As the shadow minister of Infrastructure it is my job to scrutinize the government spending of Alberta Infrastructure. This minibudget bill allocates \$228.5 million for operational expenses for the next five months in addition to \$147.5 million in operational expenses that were approved for three months. That works out to 64 per cent of last year's operational expenditures.

Operational expenditures cover such things as the big-ticket items, property management, leases of facilities. Yes, it costs money to manage real estate and to pay the rent when leasing buildings from the private sector. All the nice cleaning staff you see

in the Legislature, the guys that change the lights and scrub the windows: these are their salaries. There's even money in here to pay for operations of the one and only Swan Hills Treatment Centre, the only place in Canada to dispose of hazardous materials that are not pathological, radioactive, or explosive. No one can ever say that Alberta is doing nothing for the environment. Alberta takes the worst of the worst materials from across the country to make them safe because Alberta mandates it. Operational expenditures also cover the salaries of the professional, nonpartisan public service.

But, Mr. Speaker, we do not know how much each of these line items is receiving because the government did not treat this mini-budget as a real budget and published those line items as estimates. It is spending without thorough scrutiny. Over in the capital investment vote \$440 million is allocated for the next five months on top of \$153 million for the past three months. That's about 60 per cent of last year's capital spending for Alberta Infrastructure, but I do not know how much is being allocated to the capital construction program, nor do I know how much is going to health facility support. New hospitals are being built across the province, but because the line items are not here, I do not know if hospitals will be completed this year or new ones started or projects stalled in favour of other projects, nor do I know if more land is being released in Fort McMurray for residential and commercial development. This minibudget does not have the details. I'm looking forward to seeing a full budget in the fall to be able to debate the individual line items with the minister in committee.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Any questions under 29(2)(a)?

Are there other members who would like to speak to Bill 3?

The hon. Member for Fort McMurray-Wood Buffalo.

Mr. Yao: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The plan is seemingly to raise taxes, raise spending, and to forget about savings. These announcements sound good. They sound really good, but the money has to come from somewhere, and it doesn't grow on trees. We must not spend too much money without explaining where it came from. This area where investment is being focused on sounds good, but we do have to pay for this. That's why we are here to help you. We are here to help this government.

In layman's terms we can't max out our credit card because we still have to pay for that interest on that credit card. We don't have mom and dad to pay for that credit card anymore.

4:00

Leaving our budget until after the federal election also impairs this province. Industry and business will have no confidence in Alberta. Investment will slow. Business will disappear. We cannot impair our province for politics. We must strengthen this province. Again, that is why we are here to help you. We're all on the same team, aren't we? We're all elected officials. You can just ask us to come on over. We're all paid already. [interjections] No, no. Not cross. Not cross. No, no, no. The Wildrose will help you to run a fiscally responsible government that is transparent and accountable. [interjections] Oh, no, no, no. Four years. Four years. We'll be there.

We are talking about billions of dollars in debt, not a thousand bucks, not a hundred bucks. We're talking billions. The interest on this is just phenomenal. We can't sacrifice future generations to pay for some nice-to-have stuff when we know that there is space in our budgets to cut before we spend.

Thank you.

The Speaker: Any questions or observations under 29(2)(a)? The hon. minister.

Mr. Mason: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just can't resist. I want to thank the hon. member for his offer to have some Wildrose members cross the floor to the government, but given what happened to the last government as a result, I respectfully decline.

The Speaker: Are there any other questions? The hon. member.

Mr. Smith: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for letting me speak to Bill 3. As a . . .

The Speaker: May I interrupt a moment. The chair recognized you, hon. member, believing you were speaking under 29(2)(a).

Are there any other members wishing to speak under 29(2)(a)?

To speak to the bill, the hon. member.

Mr. Smith: As a public school teacher for 30 years and as one that has just had to leave the classroom I speak from my heart here. You don't teach for 30 years without having a great love for kids and for the public education system that I served.

An Hon. Member: The best education in the country.

Mr. Smith: Absolutely.

Now, I guess that's why, with my 30 years of teaching, I stand. I've seen what happens to a public education system when funding is severely affected by government mismanagement. You know, when we aren't wise stewards of the public money, it's not some mythical person that is affected in the public school system. It's the kids, and it's the teachers. I've seen what happens to teachers' wages, and I've seen what happens to teachers' jobs, and I've seen what happens to teachers' pensions when debt is irresponsibly accumulated in this province. I've seen the impact on my classes when you cannot fund public education as it should be funded. I've seen the larger classes, I've seen the fewer resources, I've seen the students with fewer supports, and I've seen the schools with fewer janitors.

We have a responsibility in this Assembly, if we truly care about our publicly funded systems, if we truly care about public education, to ensure that we do not drive this province into deeper and deeper debt. It saddens me and it frustrates me as a new MLA when I'm faced with an interim supply bill here that will obviously sink this province into deeper debt. I don't want to have to go back to my constituents and I don't want to have to go back to the kids that I've been teaching this semester or to their parents and have to explain to them why we're getting increasingly into debt. I don't want to have to have the conversation: where is the money going to come from for public education? So I would ask the hon. members in this institution, if you really care for public education, to stop and think about how deeply in debt we're going to go as a province.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Any comments under 29(2)(a)? The hon. Opposition House Leader.

Mr. Cooper: Mr. Speaker, thank you so much for recognizing me. I really appreciate the words and the passion with which the member speaks. Clearly, his care for our children and those being educated in our province is at the fore. I also know that he is a big advocate of parents being able to be in charge of that education, and I wondered if he would just take a moment or two to expand upon how he thinks large amounts of debts that are incurred in the province might have a negative impact around, you know, different types of education as well.

The Speaker: Proceed.

Mr. Smith: Thank you for your question. Obviously, one of the joys about living in Alberta is that we understand that there are many types of families and there are many types of kids and there are many types and ways of educating our children, whether that's charter schools, whether that's home-schooling. I chose the public school system. I see a value in the public school system. But I have also taught kids that have come in from home-schooling that have been very well prepared for my classroom. I have had kids that I know in my community that have gone to charter schools and to independent schools and to a wide range of educational facilities and choices.

We live in a province where the parents should be able to make those choices and decisions, and your point is well taken. I mean, I focused on public schools because I was a public school teacher. But the decisions that we make as a government and the decisions that we make in this Legislature will affect all of the students in this province, all of the kids, and all of the choices their parents make. So we have a responsibility to be very careful with the way that we spend our monies.

Thank you.

The Speaker: Further comments or observations under 29(2)(a)? Member, proceed.

Mr. W. Anderson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Closing off on this portion, I just want to bring back a thought about interim supply. It reminds me of a story about my son when he was in college. Usually on Friday afternoons I'd get a phone call. "Dad, I need some more money for books," and I'd go: "Books? Again?"

The Speaker: Hon. member, I need to clarify, so that you and I are on the same page, are you speaking on 29(2)(a), to the earlier comment?

Mr. W. Anderson: Yes. I am.

The Speaker: Okay. Thank you.

Mr. W. Anderson: Anyway, we're on interim supply. "I'm talking about money for books." "Okay. Fine. Additional money for books. Let me think about this. How much of it is going to go for beer?" "No. I'm not going to buy any beer, Dad. I'm just going to use the money for books." I was always trying to manage what the truth was behind the story, always looking for the details.

The challenge that I have with what I've heard in the last couple of hours is that I am not hearing anything about any cuts or any savings. I am hearing all about spending, where the money is being allocated to, funds being allocated to different areas, but I am not hearing about any areas of cuts or any areas of savings. That troubles me because as a taxpayer I'm not hearing about anywhere where there's any fiscal responsibility in managing the money. It's just about spending the money.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

4:10

The Speaker: Are there any members who would like to speak on Bill 3, appropriation? The hon. Member for Chestermere-Rocky View.

Mrs. Aheer: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As a mom of a special-needs child my son's funding was cut on a regular basis. It's one of the first things to go when there's an issue with any government spending. So I urge our government to take a look at where this spending is going. We have to take a look, line by line, to see where those initiatives need to go and how that money is going to be spent.

We have to take a look at what's important and prioritize from that point of view. Many of you would understand; many of you are parents. You understand how important it is for your children to get the appropriate education, whether that's through home-school, whether that's through a charter school, whether that's through a public school, whether that's through a private school. There are so many, many options, and we're very, very grateful to have those options.

Having said that, in these situations when these things happen, the very first things to go are aides and care workers and all of the other things that happen in schools. We need to understand, from our side, where those dollars are going to come from, and there needs to be a priority and a sensibility in terms of how that money is being spent. It's wonderful that you're allocating money here, there, and everywhere, but we need to understand how that money is being spent. We need specific numbers. We need to be able to go back to our constituencies and say: this is where this education money is coming from, and this is where it's going.

It is a responsibility all of us have taken on as members in this Legislature, to take back to our constituency, so that they understand that the government actually has their best interests. We are actually here to help. I know you keep hearing that; you may not believe it. As a mother and as a person who has lived in her constituency since 1979 I have a responsibility. I have an 18- and a 16-year-old who we have raised to have fiscal responsibility within our own house. Maybe we should take a leaf out of our own books on how we run our own houses. This is the house of Albertans. Our responsibility here is to run it the way we would run our own house. We don't run deficits at our house. We make sure that the money that we have only goes to a certain point. We don't run a deficit.

An Hon. Member: No mortgages? Did you buy your house with cash?

Mrs. Aheer: Mortgages are fine, but I have to pay those mortgages off. Everybody has to. [interjection] That's absolutely right.

Having said that, I'm held accountable for that debt. That's on my shoulders. So if we as a government are going to take responsibility for that debt, let us know what's going on. There's an accountability and a transparency that's not there. My bank knows when I have a mortgage. My bank knows when I have a car payment due. I'm on the hook for that.

I'm also on the hook to make sure that my constituents get what they ask for, and that's what we're asking for. We need to understand what's happening with the money in this government. We need to understand the transparency and accountability. We deserve that. As members in the Legislature, as members of this province we have that responsibility to make sure that the people know and, like I said, as a mother I want to know.

Thank you so much.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Cooper: Well, thank you so much. I really appreciate you rising today as we move closer to the time allocation at 4:15, that has been imposed by this government. One thing I think that's very clear that we've seen today . . .

The Speaker: Hon. member, are you speaking to 29(2)(a)?

Mr. Cooper: Yes.

The Speaker: Okay.

Mr. Cooper: As we move closer – I think we'll all find that 29(2)(a) is questions and comments, and clearly I'm making a comment.

One thing I think that's clear is that each and every member of the House is passionate about making the province better for Alberta. I'm excited to be a part of a team on both sides of the House that wants to make Alberta better, and . . .

The Speaker: I hesitate to interrupt the hon. member, but in accordance with Standing Order 64(3) the Speaker is required to put the question to the House on the appropriation bill for second reading.

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

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 4:15 p.m.]

[Ten minutes having elapsed, the Assembly divided]

[The Speaker in the chair]

For the motion:

Anderson, S.	Gray	Miller
Babcock	Hinkley	Miranda
Bilous	Hoffman	Nielsen
Carlier	Horne	Payne
Carson	Jabbour	Piquette
Ceci	Kazim	Renaud
Clark	Kleinstauber	Rosendahl
Connolly	Larivee	Sabir

Coolahan	Littlewood	Schmidt
Cortes-Vargas	Loyola	Schreiner
Dach	Luff	Shepherd
Dang	Malkinson	Sigurdson
Drever	Mason	Sucha
Eggen	McCuaig-Boyd	Sweet
Feehan	McKittrick	Turner
Fitzpatrick	McLean	Westhead
Ganley	McPherson	Woollard
Goehring		

Against the motion:

Aheer	Jansen	Smith
Cooper	Loewen	Starke
Cyr	MacIntyre	Strankman
Drysdale	McIver	Taylor
Fildebrandt	Nixon	van Dijken
Gotfried	Orr	Yao
Hanson	Schneider	

Totals:	For – 52	Against – 20
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[Motion carried; Bill 3 read a second time]

Mr. Mason: Mr. Speaker, wonderful progress today. The government will continue and not be shut down. Given the joyous nature of the occasion, I move that we adjourn for the weekend. We'll call it 4:30.

[Motion carried; the Assembly adjourned at 4:29 p.m. to Monday at 1:30 p.m.]

Bill Status Report for the 29th Legislature - 1st Session (2015)

Activity to June 18, 2015

The Bill sponsor's name is in brackets following the Bill title. If it is a money Bill, (\$) will appear between the title and the sponsor's name. Numbers following each Reading refer to Hansard pages where the text of debates is found; dates for each Reading are in brackets following the page numbers. Bills numbered 1 to 200 are Government Bills. Bills numbered 201 or higher are Private Members' Public Bills. Bills numbered with a "Pr" prefix are Private Bills.

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

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

- 1 An Act to Renew Democracy in Alberta (Ganley)**
First Reading -- 9-10 (Jun. 15, 2015 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 30-38 (Jun. 16, 2015 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 85-94 (Jun. 17, 2015 eve, adjourned)

- 2 An Act to Restore Fairness to Public Revenue (Ceci)**
First Reading -- 104 (Jun. 18, 2015 aft., passed)

- 3 Appropriation (Interim Supply) Act, 2015 (No. 2) (\$) (Ceci)**
First Reading -- 77 (Jun. 17, 2015 eve., passed)
Second Reading -- 107-114 (Jun. 18, 2015 aft., passed on division)

- 201 Assuring Alberta's Fiscal Future Act (Fraser)**
First Reading -- 104-105 (Jun. 18, 2015 aft., passed)

- 202 Alberta Local Food Act (Cortes-Vargas)**
First Reading -- 105 (Jun. 18, 2015 aft., passed)

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