



Province of Alberta

The 29th Legislature
First Session

Alberta Hansard

Tuesday afternoon, November 3, 2015

Day 14

The Honourable Robert E. Wanner, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of Alberta
The 29th Legislature

First Session

Wanner, Hon. Robert E., Medicine Hat (ND), Speaker
Jabbour, Deborah C., Peace River (ND), Deputy Speaker and Chair of Committees
Feehan, Richard, Edmonton-Rutherford (ND), Deputy Chair of Committees

Aheer, Leela Sharon, Chestermere-Rocky View (W)	Malkinson, Brian, Calgary-Currie (ND)
Anderson, Shaye, Leduc-Beaumont (ND)	Mason, Hon. Brian, Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood (ND), Government House Leader
Anderson, Wayne, Highwood (W)	McCuaig-Boyd, Hon. Margaret, Dunvegan-Central Peace-Notley (ND)
Babcock, Erin D., Stony Plain (ND)	McIver, Ric, Calgary-Hays (PC), Leader of the Progressive Conservative Opposition
Barnes, Drew, Cypress-Medicine Hat (W)	McKittrick, Annie, Sherwood Park (ND)
Bhullar, Manmeet Singh, Calgary-Greenway (PC)	McLean, Stephanie V., Calgary-Varsity (ND), Deputy Government Whip
Bilous, Hon. Deron, Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview (ND), Deputy Government House Leader	McPherson, Karen M., Calgary-Mackay-Nose Hill (ND)
Carlier, Hon. Oneil, Whitecourt-St. Anne (ND)	Miller, Barb, Red Deer-South (ND)
Carson, Jonathon, Edmonton-Meadowlark (ND)	Miranda, Ricardo, Calgary-Cross (ND)
Ceci, Hon. Joe, Calgary-Fort (ND)	Nielsen, Christian E., Edmonton-Decore (ND)
Clark, Greg, Calgary-Elbow (AP)	Nixon, Jason, Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House-Sundre (W), Official Opposition Whip
Connolly, Michael R.D., Calgary-Hawkwood (ND)	Notley, Hon. Rachel, Edmonton-Strathcona (ND), Premier
Coolahan, Craig, Calgary-Klein (ND)	Orr, Ronald, Lacombe-Ponoka (W)
Cooper, Nathan, Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills (W), Official Opposition House Leader	Panda, Prasad, Calgary-Foothills (W)
Cortes-Vargas, Estefania, Strathcona-Sherwood Park (ND)	Payne, Brandy, Calgary-Acadia (ND)
Cyr, Scott J., Bonnyville-Cold Lake (W), Official Opposition Deputy Whip	Phillips, Hon. Shannon, Lethbridge-West (ND), Deputy Government House Leader
Dach, Lorne, Edmonton-McClung (ND)	Piquette, Colin, Athabasca-Sturgeon-Redwater (ND)
Dang, Thomas, Edmonton-South West (ND)	Pitt, Angela D., Airdrie (W)
Drever, Deborah, Calgary-Bow (Ind)	Renaud, Marie F., St. Albert (ND)
Drysdale, Wayne, Grande Prairie-Wapiti (PC), Progressive Conservative Opposition Whip	Rodney, Dave, Calgary-Lougheed (PC)
Eggen, Hon. David, Edmonton-Calder (ND)	Rosendahl, Eric, West Yellowhead (ND)
Ellis, Mike, Calgary-West (PC)	Sabir, Hon. Irfan, Calgary-McCall (ND)
Fildebrandt, Derek Gerhard, Strathmore-Brooks (W)	Schmidt, Marlin, Edmonton-Gold Bar (ND), Government Whip
Fitzpatrick, Maria M., Lethbridge-East (ND)	Schneider, David A., Little Bow (W)
Fraser, Rick, Calgary-South East (PC)	Schreiner, Kim, Red Deer-North (ND)
Ganley, Hon. Kathleen T., Calgary-Buffalo (ND)	Shepherd, David, Edmonton-Centre (ND)
Goehring, Nicole, Edmonton-Castle Downs (ND)	Sigurdson, Hon. Lori, Edmonton-Riverview (ND)
Gotfried, Richard, Calgary-Fish Creek (PC)	Smith, Mark W., Drayton Valley-Devon (W)
Gray, Christina, Edmonton-Mill Woods (ND)	Starke, Dr. Richard, Vermilion-Lloydminster (PC), Progressive Conservative Opposition House Leader
Hanson, David B., Lac La Biche-St. Paul-Two Hills (W), Official Opposition Deputy House Leader	Stier, Pat, Livingstone-Macleod (W)
Hinkley, Bruce, Wetaskiwin-Camrose (ND)	Strankman, Rick, Drumheller-Stettler (W)
Hoffman, Hon. Sarah, Edmonton-Glenora (ND)	Sucha, Graham, Calgary-Shaw (ND)
Horne, Trevor A.R., Spruce Grove-St. Albert (ND)	Swann, Dr. David, Calgary-Mountain View (AL)
Hunter, Grant R., Cardston-Taber-Warner (W)	Sweet, Heather, Edmonton-Manning (ND)
Jansen, Sandra, Calgary-North West (PC)	Taylor, Wes, Battle River-Wainwright (W)
Jean, Brian Michael, QC, Fort McMurray-Conklin (W), Leader of the Official Opposition	Turner, Dr. A. Robert, Edmonton-Whitemud (ND)
Kazim, Anam, Calgary-Glenmore (ND)	van Dijken, Glenn, Barrhead-Morinville-Westlock (W)
Kleinstuber, Jamie, Calgary-Northern Hills (ND)	Westhead, Cameron, Banff-Cochrane (ND)
Larivee, Hon. Danielle, Lesser Slave Lake (ND)	Woollard, Denise, Edmonton-Mill Creek (ND)
Littlewood, Jessica, Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville (ND)	Yao, Tany, Fort McMurray-Wood Buffalo (W)
Loewen, Todd, Grande Prairie-Smoky (W)	
Loyola, Rod, Edmonton-Ellerslie (ND)	
Luff, Robyn, Calgary-East (ND)	
MacIntyre, Donald, Innisfail-Sylvan Lake (W)	

Party standings:

New Democrat: 53 Wildrose: 22 Progressive Conservative: 9 Alberta Liberal: 1 Alberta Party: 1 Independent: 1

Officers and Officials of the Legislative Assembly

W.J. David McNeil, Clerk	Stephanie LeBlanc, Parliamentary Counsel and Legal Research Officer	Brian G. Hodgson, Sergeant-at-Arms
Robert H. Reynolds, QC, Law Clerk/ Director of Interparliamentary Relations	Philip Massolin, Manager of Research Services	Chris Caughell, Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms
Shannon Dean, Senior Parliamentary Counsel/Director of House Services	Nancy Robert, Research Officer	Gordon H. Munk, Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms
		Janet Schwegel, Managing Editor of <i>Alberta Hansard</i>

Executive Council

Rachel Notley	Premier, President of Executive Council
Deron Bilous	Minister of Economic Development and Trade
Oneil Carlier	Minister of Agriculture and Forestry
Joe Ceci	President of Treasury Board and Minister of Finance
David Eggen	Minister of Education, Minister of Culture and Tourism
Kathleen T. Ganley	Minister of Justice and Solicitor General, Minister of Aboriginal Relations
Sarah Hoffman	Minister of Health, Minister of Seniors
Danielle Larivee	Minister of Municipal Affairs, Minister of Service Alberta
Brian Mason	Minister of Transportation, Minister of Infrastructure
Margaret McCuaig-Boyd	Minister of Energy
Shannon Phillips	Minister of Environment and Parks, Minister Responsible for the Status of Women
Irfan Sabir	Minister of Human Services
Lori Sigurdson	Minister of Advanced Education, Minister of Jobs, Skills, Training and Labour

STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Standing Committee on the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund

Chair: Ms Miller
Deputy Chair: Mr. Nielsen

Cyr	Sucha
Ellis	Taylor
McKitrick	Turner
Renaud	

Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future

Chair: Miranda
Deputy Chair: Mr. Schneider

Anderson, S.	Hanson
Carson	Hunter
Connolly	Jansen
Coolahan	Piquette
Dach	Schreiner
Fitzpatrick	Taylor
Gotfried	

Select Special Ethics and Accountability Committee

Chair: Ms Gray
Deputy Chair: Ms Payne

Anderson, W.	Miranda
Clark	Nielsen
Cortes-Vargas	Nixon
Cyr	Renaud
Jansen	Starke
Loyola	Swann
McLean	van Dijken
Miller	

Standing Committee on Families and Communities

Chair: Ms Sweet
Deputy Chair: Mr. Smith

Hinkley	Pitt
Jansen	Rodney
Littlewood	Shepherd
Luff	Swann
McPherson	Westhead
Orr	Yao
Payne	

Standing Committee on Legislative Offices

Chair: Cortes-Vargas
Deputy Chair: Ms Sweet

Bhullar	Nixon
Connolly	Shepherd
Cooper	van Dijken
Horne	Woollard
Kleinsteuber	

Special Standing Committee on Members' Services

Chair: Mr. Wanner
Deputy Chair: Mr. Schmidt

Cooper	Nielsen
Fildebrandt	Nixon
Luff	Piquette
McIver	Schreiner
McLean	

Standing Committee on Private Bills

Chair: Ms McPherson
Deputy Chair: Mr. Connolly

Anderson, S.	Kleinsteuber
Anderson, W.	Littlewood
Babcock	McKitrick
Drever	Rosendahl
Drysdale	Stier
Fraser	Strankman
Hinkley	

Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections, Standing Orders and Printing

Chair: Mrs. Littlewood
Deputy Chair: Ms Fitzpatrick

Carson	McPherson
Coolahan	Nielsen
Cooper	Schneider
Ellis	Starke
Hanson	van Dijken
Kazim	Woollard
Loyola	

Standing Committee on Public Accounts

Chair: Mr. Fildebrandt
Deputy Chair: Ms Gray

Barnes	Malkinson
Bhullar	Miller
Cyr	Payne
Dach	Renaud
Gotfried	Turner
Hunter	Westhead
Loyola	

Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship

Chair: Ms Goehring
Deputy Chair: Mr. Loewen

Aheer	Kleinsteuber
Babcock	MacIntyre
Clark	Rosendahl
Dang	Stier
Drysdale	Sucha
Horne	Woollard
Kazim	

Legislative Assembly of Alberta

1:30 p.m.

Tuesday, November 3, 2015

[The Speaker in the chair]

Prayers

The Speaker: Let us contemplate and reflect. Fellow members, let us contemplate and give thanks for the good fortune of being in a province with such a divergence of different faiths and beliefs. Tonight in our rotunda we will celebrate the Eid event, which our fellow Islamic Albertans celebrated in September. Let us give thanks for the significant contribution and strength that the Islamic community has provided to our great province.

Please be seated.

Introduction of Guests

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar.

Mr. Schmidt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to introduce to you and to the Assembly some of the smartest and hardest working students in Alberta, the grade 6 class from Headway School, with their teachers Sandra Nicholson and Jackie Small. I visited the grade 4 class at Headway recently, and they told me that education was so important to them that they thought this House should make it illegal for students to not do their homework. I disappointed them when I told them that with oil at \$45 a barrel, Alberta can't possibly afford to incarcerate that many children. I know that these dedicated students will be our next leaders, maybe future MLAs, or, if they're particularly talented and hard working, perhaps future directors or assistant deputy ministers in Alberta's top-notch civil service. I ask that the Headway School group rise and receive the warm welcome of this Assembly.

Ms McKittrick: Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly another grade 6 class from St. Theresa school, and I would ask them to rise. As I mentioned another time, St. Theresa school is a school that organizes political forums in our riding every single election, and I'm delighted that these students are learning about the work that we're doing in the Assembly.

Thank you.

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

Mr. Carson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to introduce to you and through you to all members of this Assembly grade 6 students from Afton school of the arts in my constituency of Edmonton-Meadowlark. Accompanying the students are their teachers Scott Slatter and Bailee Cochrane. These students are taking part in the School at the Legislature program, and they'll be spending the whole week here learning about the exciting world of the provincial legislative process. I wish them a great week, and I would invite them all to stand to receive the traditional warm welcome of the House.

The Speaker: I'm sure the hon. member would acknowledge that they have much to teach this group of hon. members.

Are there any other school groups today?

Hearing none, the hon. Premier.

Ms Notley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm honoured to rise today and introduce to you and through you to all members of the

Assembly a group of citizens and staff seated in the members' gallery from the Ashbourne assisted living facility in the constituency of Edmonton-Strathcona. The Ashbourne was funded by members of the Garneau United church who identified a need for an assisted living facility in the community. It is owned and operated by Garneau United Assisted Living Place, a charitable, not-for-profit corporation. Residents of the Ashbourne live independently in a safe, private, and friendly community. I would ask them now to stand, if possible, and remain standing as I read their names: their executive director, Laurie Winder; recreational therapist Danielle Mathias; and residents Gitte Lindsay, Jason Dickson, Hazel Magnussen, and Robert Mill. Please stand and enjoy the warm welcome of the Assembly.

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Environment and Parks and Minister Responsible for the Status of Women.

Ms Phillips: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise today and introduce to you and through you representatives of the Canadian Wind Energy Association and the Canadian Solar Industries Association, including the organization's presidents, Mr. Robert Hornung and Mr. John Gorman. Robert, John, and other representatives from these important industries will be meeting with members over the coming days. Alberta is home to one of the finest solar and wind resources in Canada. Our work with these industries will help us diversify our economy and build the economy of tomorrow. Our conversations and work with the renewable energy industry are also important as we continue to talk to Albertans about a made-in-Alberta climate change plan. I ask Robert, John, and their fellow colleagues to rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of the people's Assembly.

The Speaker: If the House would allow the Speaker to make a personal comment. I'm sure that all of this House knows and certainly our guests know that I have the good privilege of coming from the sunniest city in Canada.

The hon. Member for Lethbridge-East.

Ms Fitzpatrick: We'll have an argument about the sunniest city.

Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to introduce to you and through you to the members of this Assembly Ms Patti Johnsen and her son Kevin McGarvey. Ms Johnsen is the president of the Lethbridge and district Canadian Federation of University Women group and has been for the last four years. Patti has encouraged the members of the group to pursue many initiatives for the betterment of women in Lethbridge and the surrounding areas such as the university scholarship program, providing feminine supplies for Harbour House and ARCHES, the Persons Day breakfast event, weekly bridge group, monthly book club, and the school readers, to name a few. Patti doesn't just encourage people to pursue these initiatives; she participates. I have been so fortunate to be a member of this group and to participate in the work that they do. I ask Patti and Kevin to rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of this Assembly.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Athabasca-Sturgeon-Redwater.

Mr. Piquette: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my privilege to introduce to you and through you to members of the Assembly three special guests. Today I have Doug Bertsch, who is vice-president of regulatory and stakeholder affairs for the North West Redwater Partnership. I have Alyssa Haunholter, who is vice-president of government relations for North West Redwater Partnership. As well, I have Jacqueline Andersen, who is the employee services manager with Women Building Futures. If Doug, Alyssa, and

Jacqueline could please rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

The Speaker: Are there any other guests or visitors today?

1:40

Members' Statements

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Athabasca-Sturgeon-Redwater.

North West Redwater Partnership

Mr. Piquette: Oh, Mr. Speaker, it's my lucky day. Today I rise to talk about the North West Redwater Partnership, whose Sturgeon refinery, I am proud to say, is in my constituency of Athabasca-Sturgeon-Redwater. It is of utmost importance for this province to find innovative ways to encourage high-value jobs for Albertans. By working with our private-enterprise partners to build a diverse and robust economy, we are guaranteeing a strong, sustainable, and prosperous future.

The Sturgeon refinery is an example of a project that contributes to the diversification of the Alberta economy while also creating value-added jobs right here at home. Every day, Mr. Speaker, I meet someone new in my constituency who is involved in one way or another with this site, and they tell me that they're glad to have a government that supports value-added jobs. Presently there are 3,500 people working on-site, with that number expected to grow to 5,000 by next year. These jobs are an economic gain for the province, not to mention for my constituents, and through the North West Redwater Partnership and Women Building Futures there are social gains as well.

Women Building Futures offers women pretrades training in a number of fields and holds the engagement of aboriginal women as a priority. This partnership will work to address the need for skilled trades at the refinery through proactive recruitment, training, and apprenticeship of women.

I am very disappointed that our friends across the aisle would disparage such a valuable project. I would suggest that they see for themselves and meet the dedicated people who have worked so tirelessly to make this thing a reality.

Thank you.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Airdrie.

Family Violence Prevention Month

Mrs. Pitt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. November is Family Violence Prevention Month. As a mother and, most recently, as the shadow minister for the status of women I know how important the work that is being done by awareness campaigns such as Family Violence Prevention Month is.

Members of the Legislature may know that Family Violence Prevention Month is a uniquely Albertan campaign, which was started in 1986 as a local initiative in Hinton. This grassroots campaign has spread across Alberta, and today I am heartened to say that hundreds of communities across our province now work each November to shed light on these issues and how to end the cycles of violence. The fact of the matter is that violence against women and children affects all of us. It weakens the very fabric of our society and takes a heavy toll on individuals, families, and communities.

In my community the volunteers of the Airdrie women's shelter campaign, also called Airdrie POWER, have come together to help create thousands of purple ribbons to wear and display to help raise awareness of this important issue. All members of the Wildrose caucus are wearing the same ribbons here today to show our support

for raising awareness about this very serious issue. Mr. Speaker, it takes all members of society working together to end the cycle of violence. Events like Family Violence Prevention Month provide much-needed support to victims of domestic violence and show survivors that they are not alone.

In addition to the purple ribbon campaign, in Airdrie we will raise awareness with a candlelight vigil walk to honour those affected by family violence. If you're interested, the event takes place this Thursday, November 5, in the south office from 7 to 9 p.m., and it's called Light the Night. I encourage all members of this Assembly to discover what their communities are doing to raise awareness during Family Violence Prevention Month and join in and help raise awareness about this issue.

Thank you.

Energy Policies

Mr. Gotfried: Leveraging export markets for Alberta businesses is a key factor in successful economic diversification. The Asia Pacific market continues to be underrepresented in terms of export opportunities as this market continues to rapidly expand. It would be prudent to build relationships and support infrastructure to allow Alberta business to take advantage of opportunities. To the minister of economic development: what specific initiatives are you undertaking to ensure Alberta businesses have the cultural competencies . . . [interjection] My apologies. I'm going fast.

The Speaker: The hon. minister may want to listen. She just sent a signal.

Mr. Gotfried: I'm going fast now.

Mr. Speaker, the key topic of conversation amongst all Albertans today is jobs, jobs, and jobs. With today's announcement of a further 220 job losses in Grande Cache on top of 40,000 jobs already lost in the economy, many arguably due to the economic picture painted by this government, Albertans are increasingly concerned about the policies that attack the rapidly disappearing Alberta advantage.

Today coal mining and coal-fired electricity generation industries and their employees, investors, and stakeholders deserve our attention. With over 5,600 jobs directly engaged in coal extraction and related electricity generation, Alberta stands to be a big loser in a dogmatic approach to coal-fired generation plants. Job losses, loss of mining and industrial capacity, and handicapping of not only the low-grade but metallurgical coal industry need to be looked at along with the unintended consequences of misguided policy driven by hard-line, often externally funded environmental interests.

Alberta needs stable and reliable electricity generation, and we need to be cognizant of unstable or inadequate supply in the price of electricity and the impact on both consumers and industrial customers. Recent studies indicate staggering job losses are the likely result of poorly planned shutdown policies associated with this issue. Another consideration which speaks to investor confidence in Alberta and the re-establishment of the Alberta advantage is the cost associated with shutdown versus a more prudent and logical dial up, dial down approach to coal-fired electricity.

Mr. Speaker, this is a key issue . . .

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Lethbridge-East.

ARCHES Society in Lethbridge

Ms Fitzpatrick: Mr. Speaker, I'm very happy to stand here today to share another piece of the puzzle that is Lethbridge. AIDS Outreach Community Harm Reduction Education Support Society

is the long name for the program called ARCHES. ARCHES is a critical entity in Lethbridge. It provides needed services to a great number of our most marginalized citizens. Formerly known as Lethbridge HIV connection society, ARCHES helps anyone who is in need of their services, and they provide it in a nonjudgmental atmosphere. ARCHES has been pivotal in saving lives in our community through harm reduction as the drug fentanyl has reared its ugly and often fatal head in southern Alberta.

ARCHES provides support for individuals living with HIV/AIDS and hepatitis C: outreach; harm reduction; take-home naloxone; the Alberta Addicts Who Educate and Advocate Responsibly, AAWEAR; and the southern Alberta growth empowerment centre for women. ARCHES has their own facility nestled in a safe and sober neighbourhood close to the downtown area.

Fundraising sustains the services they provide. Their largest fundraiser is coming up on November 27, the condom couture fashion show. This incredible and innovative way to raise funds is a wonderful and life-saving service in our community, and all the fashions are made totally of condoms.

Again, with this member's statement I hope to shed a little light on this critical entity, and I hope that I've piqued your interest.

1:50

Oral Question Period

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

Royalty Review

Mr. Jean: Our energy sector is being crushed by low oil prices, higher taxes, and a government that won't advocate for increased market access. Now the NDP are interfering in a royalty review which the Premier promised would be independent. The Finance minister recently told reporters – and I quote – that as oil companies produce, we will take that profit. End quote. To the Premier: how does it help encourage job creation when your Finance minister is telling potential investors that in Alberta the profit goes to the government?

Ms Notley: Well, Mr. Speaker, it may surprise the member opposite to know that royalties do actually come out of the profits that are paid by oil and gas companies, so that is true. Should there be royalties paid after the royalty review, that's where they'll come from, but we are still waiting to see the outcome of the good work that is being undertaken by the royalty review panel. They're working very hard. They are consulting widely. They are talking with a large number of producers and other advocates within Alberta. I expect that we will get some very innovative and helpful . . .

The Speaker: Thank you, Madam Premier.

Mr. Jean: Energy companies are craving stability in Alberta and have been forced to put investment on hold as they watch this royalty review play out. Albertans are worried about affording their mortgage payments and paying their bills. It's clear that for the NDP this is all about taking the profits from Alberta business to pay for risky experiments. To the Premier: your budget is banking on increased royalty rates, so why even bother with a review that creates so much uncertainty for Alberta's energy sector?

Ms Notley: Well, Mr. Speaker, let me clarify a couple of things. First of all, in the last campaign we ran on a plan to do a royalty review. Much to the chagrin, I'm sure, of the folks over there, who find it unique to actually move forward on your platform positions, that's what we decided to do. Now, we have put in place an

independent panel, and one of the things that very early on they came back to us with – they said: “You know what? Industry would find it very helpful if they were given until the end of 2016 before any changes came into place.” We responded to that and to . . .

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. Premier.

Mr. Jean: We can't tax our main industry into oblivion and expect positive results for Albertans. The Finance minister said in June that the review will help, quote, boost government revenues. End quote. In the budget the NDP said clearly that they're banking on higher oil prices and higher royalty rates. It's clear. Any energy workers hoping for a fair hearing are out of luck. Why isn't the Premier worried that a drastic hike in royalty rates will kill Alberta's oil and gas sector and, as a result, kill the quality of life of Alberta families?

Ms Notley: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the question because it allows me to correct a misapprehension. One of the things that we were also very clear on in our campaign and that I've been very clear on since is that should there be any incremental increases as a result of the royalty review, it is not our intention to have those injected into our operating but, rather, to go to the heritage trust fund. To be very clear, our budget does not bank on any kind of increase to the royalty rates. Our budget banks on a slow increase in the price of oil, so please – please – be clear on that.

The Speaker: Second official question. The Leader of the Official Opposition.

Mr. Jean: Well, right now, Madam Premier, we are paying for the lights with borrowed money in this place.

Job Creation and Retention

Mr. Jean: Today we also found out that 200 union coal miners in Grande Cache will be out of a job just before Christmas. If this is part of the NDP plan to reduce our environmental footprint, Albertans should be worried. It's the same story every morning across every corner of Alberta. Investors are fleeing, businesses are closing, and Albertans are losing their jobs. Temporary employment plans and \$5,000 job grants after the fact just aren't going to cut it. What is the Premier doing to get ahead of this to prevent further job losses and to keep Albertans working?

Ms Notley: Well, first of all, Mr. Speaker, let me begin by challenging the premise of the question. First of all, we are very concerned about what impact the job losses at the Grande Cache coal mine will have on the community of Grande Cache, and we will be working with community leaders to talk about things that we may be able to do to ameliorate those problems. But let me be very clear. The Grande Cache coal mine is closing or at least temporarily closing because the underground mine is no longer particularly productive and because the other mine has not yet been approved. It has nothing to do with any of these other issues . . .

The Speaker: First supplemental.

Mr. Jean: Tax hikes, royalty reviews, massive debt, credit downgrades, profit grabs, and mixed messages to the market: no, the government doesn't control world oil prices, but it's those actions that this Premier does control, and her actions are not helpful for Alberta families. Businesses create jobs when there's work to be done and profits to be made. They don't create jobs because 18 months later they might get a few thousand bucks back from the government. Why doesn't the Premier understand that?

Ms Notley: What doesn't help the health of the economy is groundless fearmongering. Albertans understand that the price of oil has dropped significantly, and as a result jobs are being lost. We understand that. The question, then, is: how do they want to navigate those tough times over which we have no control? They were given two options: cut billions of dollars and lay off teachers and nurses and hurt communities or work with a government that has a multipronged plan to work through economic diversification, job creation.

Mr. Jean: I wouldn't call 40,000 Alberta families losing their jobs groundless.

Albertans have never been more worried about our economy. You don't have to take my word for it. According to the Canadian Federation of Independent Business confidence in Alberta businesses has never been lower than it is now. They are suffocating under bad NDP policies that result in higher costs, fewer work hours, and less opportunity to grow their businesses. Instead of treating profit like it's a dirty word, why won't the Premier follow the Wildrose suggestion to cut small business taxes so that businesses can create jobs for Albertans that desperately need them?

The Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Ms Notley: Thank you very much. Mr. Speaker, what our plan has done – we've thought this through in great detail. We are ensuring increased access to capital for small and medium enterprises, we are increasing access to venture capital for innovators, we are offering up the job incentive program for long-term job creation opportunities, and we've just today, of course, announced that we've brought back the STEP program. So there are a number of things that we are doing through this government to promote job creation. You know, I need to – well, I'll wait until the next question.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Promotion of Alberta's Energy Industry

Mrs. Aheer: Mr. Speaker, yesterday we learned that TransCanada will suspend its application on the Keystone XL, and we can't help but see where they're coming from. This project faces obstacles from Washington and false allegations that Alberta oil is the dirtiest oil on the continent, and right here in Alberta this project faces an NDP caucus, some of whom are bigger fans of Chávez than Chevron. When Keystone comes back online, will the Premier instruct her new Washington envoy to fight for it, or is she hoping Keystone, along with all those Alberta jobs, will just go away?

The Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Ms Notley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, we know that getting our product to tidewater is very important to the object of diversifying the market for a product. We know that's very critical. Over the last eight or nine years of a Conservative government in Ottawa and a Conservative government here and an überconservative opposition over there, there has been no success in getting these pipelines built. [interjections] Part of the reason for that is that there is no social . . .

The Speaker: I remind the House that I was having some difficulty hearing both parties.

First supplemental.

Mrs. Aheer: Thank you. Mr. Speaker, failing to be an open advocate for Keystone XL is just another example of how this NDP

government has pushed investment out of Alberta. The Premier has filled her senior advisors with antipipeline activists. She has publicly opposed Northern Gateway, with zero consultation, interfering in Kinder Morgan. She's even implied an environmental veto on Energy East to a province that, to quote my colleague, prefers raw sewage over all pipelines. What, if anything, is she actually going to do to get pipelines built?

The Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Ms Notley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, I'm not quite sure. It seems like the premise of that question may have been slightly flawed from the hon. member.

2:00

As you know, Mr. Speaker, I had a meeting last week with the Premier of New Brunswick to talk about mutual strategies that we could adopt to promote the Energy East pipeline. We also have been talking with our colleagues out west about promoting that particular pipeline. We understand that it's important to get our pipelines to tidewater, and we also, of course, understand that it's important to upgrade as much as possible here.

The Speaker: Second supplemental.

Mrs. Aheer: Thank you. Energy investment is fleeing our province because we don't have access to tidewater, and while the Premier sometimes says the right words, her government's actions are drowning them out. In these tough economic times other Premiers are finding ways to boost their provinces; ours seems busy trying to drive away private investment. It's time for the Premier to stop thinking of Alberta as an embarrassing cousin and to wave Alberta's flag proudly. When the Premier goes to Paris, will she stand up for Alberta and tell the world that no one produces oil and gas more responsibly than Alberta?

Ms Notley: What I'm going to do, Mr. Speaker, is that when I go to Paris, I'm going to start by telling the truth. What that will be is that this government is committed for the first time to developing a climate change strategy, a renewable energy plan, an energy efficiency plan, and moving forward in terms of an appropriate greenhouse gas emissions reduction strategy. This is what we will do, and this is how we will earn the credibility . . .

The Speaker: The leader of the third party.

Mr. McIver: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You have to know the truth to tell the truth.

Job Creation and Retention

(continued)

Mr. McIver: Yesterday in this House the NDP caucus laughed when I talked about Albertans losing their jobs. Let's see what they say today. Albertans have heard that this government wants to make the province less reliant on resource revenues and create a knowledge-based, lower carbon economy. Their quote. But we have yet to see any evidence of that. To the Premier: can you tell this House and the thousands of Albertans who have lost their jobs when they can work in this new knowledge-based, lower carbon economy, what their jobs will be, and when they can start?

Ms Notley: Well, Mr. Speaker, as the member opposite knows, the government is not in the business of job creation; we are in the business of working with job creators. By working with job creators, we then get economic diversification, which is what we

are working on. I mean, it would be lovely to wave a magic wand and create 40,000 jobs out of nowhere, but God knows that group of folks never did it. To suggest that somehow we can deal with the drop in the price of oil overnight and replace each and every job is ridiculous. We are working on economic diversification very hard because we care about the Albertans who have . . .

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. McIver: Mr. Speaker, the Premier says that they don't create jobs, but it's her own government and their promise that said that they're going to create this new economy. The new economy seems like a fantasy today based on the answers that we just received in this House, so can the Premier enlighten Albertans on this? Until you unveil your plans for a brave new world, will you start supporting Albertans in the ways they've chosen to make their living by putting your efforts into being a friend of the current economy, at least until you can describe your new fantasy economy?

The Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Ms Notley: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let me begin, I guess, by correcting a couple of prefaces to various and sundry questions. In terms of small business confidence, in fact, it appears that according to the CFIB in October, for the first time in several months, small business confidence is up. That is because they understand that this government is committed to working with business to give them the tools they need to promote their good ideas, their plans for diversification: access to capital, access to venture capital, access to innovation support, and access to incentive programs.

Mr. McIver: There you heard it, Mr. Speaker. The Premier just admitted that the fantasy economy isn't coming.

You know what? In one breath they talk about the fantasy economy; in the next breath they talk about building our economy on the backbone of the energy industry. The Environment minister's words, very recently. To the Premier. Let's forget for a minute about the future. Let's talk about the now. Now that we've established that there's no fantasy economy, will you stop damaging the current economy? Will you roll back the corporate tax increases? Will you cancel the royalty review? Will you actually tell the people in Paris that we have a great way of dealing with the energy industry? Will you actually . . .

The Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Ms Notley: Well, Mr. Speaker, as I've said before, in the spring it was very clear that this province was going into very tough times as a result of our inability to diversify our economy, so different parties laid out different plans to Albertans. We laid out a plan, and Albertans – I hate to break it to you – chose that plan, so we are moving forward on that plan.

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

Provincial Debt

Mr. Clark: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Now, earlier today I asked the Minister of Finance if he had calculated the impact of a credit-rating downgrade. It is troubling to learn that his department hasn't even done this most basic financial risk management. Today my single budget researcher calculated that a 1 per cent increase to Alberta's borrowing costs starting in 2017 will result in over \$700 million in additional debt-servicing costs just two years later. To

the Minister of Finance. It seems incredible to me that your department hasn't done these calculations. If you haven't done them, will you? If you have, will you table the results?

Mr. Ceci: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. No one wants to see a credit-rating downgrade, of course, and I can tell you that our plan is to build the economy so that that won't happen. That kind of a view is negative and not optimistic. We have a different view, and we're going to follow through with it.

Mr. Clark: Mr. Speaker, how do they know it's not a risk if they haven't done the work?

Let's try another finance question, Mr. Speaker. Last week I tabled the Alberta Party's alternative budget, which balances in three years while still investing in infrastructure and protecting front-line services. As of today no other opposition party has tabled theirs. [interjections] As we prepared this document, we discovered that there's a big gap in the ND's plan, which makes it nearly impossible to balance without significant new revenues or spending cuts. To the Premier: where does the money come from?

Ms Notley: Well, Mr. Speaker, let me begin – I do appreciate that coming up with a shadow budget is a lot of work, and one certainly does need to get up pretty early in the morning to find the time to put together a shadow budget. [interjections]

But that being said, all other things being equal, it's very important to understand that this government is in the position of having the lowest debt to GDP of any province in the country now and also five years from now, and the best way to make sure we stay that way is to pass our legislation that this minister will be introducing.

Mr. Clark: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Premier doesn't seem to know where the budget gap comes from, but I do. It comes from overly optimistic revenue forecasts, and there is a huge risk to our province if they're wrong. Now, I've thought about it, and I think I know where the government plans to get the money. They have repeatedly said that they plan to increase royalties. [interjections] Again to the Premier. You seem to assume that higher royalties will fill this budget gap. If you already know the outcomes of the royalty panel, what's the point of the panel in the first place?

Ms Notley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I believe I've already answered this question earlier, let me be very clear. The panel will make the recommendations to the government that they make, but what we have been very clear on is that any incremental increase that arises as a result of any changes will go into the heritage trust fund and is not part of our budgeting process. That's one of the things we committed to in the election campaign, and that is one of the things that we will stick to.

We also have introduced a budget with the lowest debt-to-GDP ratio of the rest of the country now and five years from now. This member over there should know that, and he should be proud that we are building Alberta at the same time.

The Speaker: This place is quite robust today.

I want to remind members again about the preambles on questions from here forward.

2:10

Family Violence

Ms Goehring: Mr. Speaker, I worked with child and family services for quite some time. I am sad to say that research shows that two Alberta cities, Calgary and Edmonton, rank lowest as safe Canadian cities for women. A few weeks back we saw a mother of five die at

the hands of her former partner. The previous government did little to improve services for women. Discrepancies exist in wages, child care affordability is a big issue, and the opposition voted no to affordable child care in government buildings just last week. My question to the Minister of Human Services: in light of recent family violence tragedies in Alberta . . .

The Speaker: Hon. member, your time has elapsed. Would the minister mind answering the question?

Mr. Sabir: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Although I didn't hear the full question, [interjections] the question was going to family violence, which is a very important issue, nothing really to laugh about. Our government has allocated \$95 million in this budget to come up with a co-ordinated system of support to provide women fleeing from violence the needed supports. We are absolutely committed that in Alberta there should be no violence, no place . . .

The Speaker: First supplemental, hon. member.

Ms Goehring: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that Alberta has some of the highest rates of family violence and intimate partner violence, to the same minister: what is your department doing to ensure that those in vulnerable positions of domestic violence are being taken care of?

Mr. Sabir: Mr. Speaker, our government believes that no one should suffer from or live in fear of violence. Supports to survivors of domestic violence are crucial, and that's why we have invested in such supports. We have invested \$15 million going towards women's shelters to provide a safe place for women to turn to when that unfortunate incident happens. We have invested in FCSS programs. We have invested \$15 million in family and community support programs. All these programs are geared towards preventing family violence.

Ms Goehring: Mr. Speaker, given that women's shelters are important in providing support while fleeing violence, again to the same minister: how is your ministry planning to stabilize the lives of women fleeing domestic violence.

Mr. Sabir: Mr. Speaker, a 2015 survey of front-line agencies found that for people affected by family violence, meeting their basic needs is very critical to keeping them safe. Our Budget 2015 includes \$49 million for the women's shelters across the province. That investment will help us deal with women fleeing from violent situations. We are also creating a new child tax benefit that will also help women to meet the basic needs of their children.

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.
The hon. Member for Livingstone-Macleod.

Mr. Strankman: Mr. Speaker, I understand that I am to . . .

The Speaker: Proceed.

Spray Lake Sawmills

Mr. Strankman: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Timber harvesting is a well-established activity in the Castle special management area, and throughout Alberta timber harvesting is guided by modern rules and practices. Forestry adds key diversification to Alberta's economy, and with the cancellation of that forestry management agreement, Spray Lake has another move that will hurt our economy. This government appears to have a policy of going ahead without consultation of those affected. Mr. Minister of Agriculture and

Forestry, why is this government hurting Alberta's third-largest industry?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Carlier: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to the member for the question. The fact is that it wasn't necessarily an FMA that was cancelled; it was another forestry agreement. Forestry remains a critical sector of our economy. Over 15,000 hard-working Albertans work in the industry, and personally I'm very proud to support this industry and to be their champion as forestry minister. We're working closely with Spray Lake Sawmills in Cochrane, as they employ, you know, 300 with jobs in Cochrane and southern Alberta, and are working closely with them as we move forward.

Thank you.

The Speaker: First supplemental.

Mr. Strankman: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that the abrupt announcement by this government regarding the Castle area is having negative economic impacts and given that Spray Lake Sawmills is deeply concerned because of potential job losses that would be acutely felt in the area, Mr. Minister, what will the government do to address serious shortfalls in our province's GDP and diversification with the cancellation of these types of contracts?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Carlier: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to the member. Our government made a commitment in our platform to protect the Castle area, and we have fulfilled that promise. There has been, you know, a slight cutback in their harvesting plants, for sure, but they remain a viable industry in Cochrane and area and continue to do so. Going forward, we will continue our discussions with the sawmill in Cochrane to ensure we can continue to protect those important industry jobs.

Thank you.

Mr. Strankman: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that the Forests Act states that compensation is available for cancelled quotas at the minister's discretion to the amount that the Minister considers just and given that last night the minister said that he will not be providing any compensation to Spray Lake Sawmills, how can this minister consider no compensation at all to be just?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Carlier: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again to the member: thank you for the question and for the opportunity to correct you once again. I did not say that there would be no compensation. What I was saying is that we are continuing our discussions with Spray Lake Sawmills, including the opportunity for them to present any plans they might have, to ensure that we protect those very important jobs in Cochrane and southern Alberta.

Thank you.

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

School Construction

Mr. Bhullar: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My question today, first off, is to the Premier. The Premier and her government have said that the 197 school projects currently under way in this province are of the utmost importance to them. However, in this year's budget they are spending \$301 million less on these school projects. If these projects are such a priority, why have you

allocated \$301 million less to build these schools when that could account for the construction costs of up to 20 schools? Where is that \$300 million?

The Speaker: The Minister of Education.

Mr. Eggen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for that question. You know, Alberta families have been waiting a long time for these new and upgraded schools. We have 200 school projects, either new ones or upgrades, on the books to be built over these next few years. We've forwarded the money to ensure that those schools are being built. So we have a \$1.3 billion capital project expenditure for these schools. It's in the books. It's there, and we're building those schools for Albertans.

Mr. Bhullar: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Actually, sir, page 44 of your budget document says that you are spending \$959 million in '15-16. First of all, the total sum of money allocated for the school projects is \$301 million less. Secondly, if the school projects are so behind, why are you spending \$120 million more in '15-16?

2:20

Mr. Eggen: Well again, Mr. Speaker, certainly, we have looked to make sure that we are building these schools over a three- and four-year period. We've made sure that every one of these schools is required to ensure that we meet enrolment and increasing enrolment in all of our areas. Certainly, one of the first things we did was to make sure that we put the money in place, that the former government failed to do, to ensure that we build these schools in a reasonable time. Now, we have adjusted the timelines, but we certainly have the money to do it. Albertans know that we are building these schools to meet the needs of our students.

Mr. Bhullar: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. So we've established a couple of things. One, they are doing a review to see which schools are needed. Hmm. Secondly, given that they are spending \$120 million more this year and given that they are spending \$220 million more in the next fiscal year while they've reduced the pot by \$301 million, was the minister misleading the public by saying these schools are behind schedule, or does the minister plan on . . .

The Speaker: Hon. member. Hon. member.

Members of the Assembly, I want to use our hon. member as an outstanding example. I think I might have heard a preamble.

The Minister of Education.

Mr. Eggen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. All Albertans should know, in each community, that the 200 schools that we have on the books are being built by this government. We have put plans in place to do so. We have more realistic timelines after having to make adjustments from the previous government making outrageous promises to build schools in order to try to win the election. They were unfortunate. Certainly, we are building these schools. The money is in place, and Albertan communities are very excited about the prospect of getting new schools.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Battle River-Wainwright.

Postsecondary Education Funding

Mr. Taylor: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The tuition freeze instated by the NDP government is reducing opportunity for Alberta students. While government argues that it will help the students in this province, they have failed to realize the unintended consequences

associated with their action. Since the tuition freeze does not apply to international students, postsecondary institutions are admitting more and more students from outside of Canada. To the Minister of Advanced Education: are you aware that your government is reducing opportunity for Alberta's students?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms Sigurdson: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for the question. We are very proud to be working with students, and I know first-hand from students that they are so pleased that the government has gone ahead with the tuition freeze for two years plus invested \$133 million this year into stabilizing the postsecondary system. People are speaking very positively.

Mr. Taylor: Given that the tuition freeze may have been instated with the best of intention, this policy has simply disrupted long-term planning for postsecondary institutions as they do not know how long this freeze will last. Since Wildrose believes in capping tuition-rate increases to inflation, this is a predictable, reasonable, and sustainable framework. Minister, how long does your government intend on freezing tuition rates?

Ms Sigurdson: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for the question. We've been clear from the beginning. We have put a two-year freeze on tuition, and during that time we're doing an adult-learning review to hear from postsecondary students, to hear from boards across the province to absolutely be working with them to look at how we can make the system better. We're very proud of moving forward on this commitment that we made in our platform.

Mr. Taylor: Given that some universities are facing financial issues, including the threat of insolvency, and given that without institutions like Athabasca University thousands of young Albertans will be faced with even less opportunity to develop and advance their skills and education since thousands of high-paying jobs will be lost should an institution like AU go under, Minister, what is this government's plan to preserve these institutions, that are important to Alberta?

Ms Sigurdson: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for the question. Well, over the summer I had the opportunity to travel across Alberta and speak with many of the presidents, the chairs, the faculty associations, the students of postsecondaries across the province, and I want you to know that they said: thank you. They said: thank you for reinvesting money back into postsecondary; thank you for stabilizing the sector; we're very grateful. I think we're pretty healthy.

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

Calgary Cancer Centre

Mr. Panda: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am invested in ensuring that Calgarians and all Albertans have access to timely health care with no financial surprises. The Calgary cancer centre has only been costed to the 2019-20 fiscal year. That leaves a three-year funding gap that hasn't been included in the \$830 million price tag. To the Minister of Health: will this government commit to the completion of the centre with a firm timeline and fully disclosed financials?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the hon. member for the question. We are of course thrilled to be moving forward on a promise that had been made over 12 years ago, and this government is going to deliver. It's a lot easier to deliver on essential health care services like the Calgary cancer centre when you have a government that believes in having stable front-line health care as opposed to proposing more cuts than a bad slasher film. I have to say that I'm really proud of that.

Mr. Panda: Mr. Speaker, Calgarians are telling me they want action from this government, not fearmongering about the opposition. Given the Calgary cancer centre has been announced and reannounced multiple times yet very little progress has been made, again to the Health minister: can you explain why such an essential project has been delayed a further three years?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for the question. Our government is committed to being open and transparent with information. That means when we have updates around timelines that were proposed by the former government, that were not realistic at all, we share that information with the public. We are doing that in an ongoing way, and we will continue to have announcements around the Calgary cancer facility and other facilities when there is new information to announce, including after the updates come in on the original estimates, that are coming through right now. We're moving forward for the next four years. That's the appropriate way to do planning, and when there are further updates, we will share those as well.

Mr. Panda: Mr. Speaker, I lost my mother to cancer and have seen first-hand the devastation that this disease causes. Given the fact that measures must be put in place to ensure this project is completed on time and it isn't just an empty promise to Albertans and Calgarians, will this government commit to ensuring that the centre does not become collateral damage of inefficient infrastructure spending?

Ms Hoffman: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My sympathies to the hon. member. I know that all of us in this House have been touched by somebody very personally, and that's one of the reasons why we're moving forward on this commitment. Yes, we will continue to invest in the essential infrastructure that's needed in Calgary, including the Calgary cancer hospital.

Economic Diversification

Mr. Gotfried: Mr. Speaker, I'll try this question again. Given that leveraging export markets for Alberta business is a key factor in successful economic diversification, the Asia Pacific market continues to be underrepresented in terms of export market opportunities. As this market continues to rapidly expand, it would be prudent to build relationships and support infrastructure to allow Alberta businesses to take advantage of growth opportunities. To the Minister of Economic Development and Trade: what specific initiatives are you undertaking to ensure Alberta businesses have the cultural competencies, business knowledge, and market access to successfully penetrate these markets?

The Speaker: The Minister of Economic Development and Trade.

Mr. Bilous: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the hon. member for his question, a very prudent question. First of all, I want to say that our Premier decided to create this ministry with the expressed

intention of having a one-stop shop for business, to ensure that we can work with the private sector to create jobs within our province. But equally important is increasing Alberta's ability to trade, our export market. Through the international offices that we have, we will be looking at expanding our opportunities to increase our exports, reduce trade barriers, and support Alberta businesses.

The Speaker: First supplemental.

2:30

Mr. Gotfried: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the same minister, who seems to have created at least one job: given that the creation of your ministry seems to have potentially cut our international outreach off at the knees and given that fuel costs for rail companies were significantly increased in Budget 2015, making commodity exports more expensive, what do you say to Alberta businesses that feel international economic diversification is no longer a priority of this government?

Mr. Bilous: Mr. Speaker, the premise of that question is absurd. The fact is that this ministry was created by our government, not the previous government, that for years neglected diversifying the Alberta economy. This is a priority of our government. Working with small and medium-sized enterprises, working with the Alberta Enterprise Corporation, the minister on my left announced a job incentive grant. Our government has concrete steps and initiatives to increase employment and increase trade for our province.

The Speaker: Second supplemental.

Mr. Gotfried: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, congratulations on the one job already created, but given that Edmonton and Calgary already have economic development corporations, which aggressively engage in trade missions and effective lobbying for businesses in their respective cities and around the world, what specifically are you doing to ensure that your ministry works alongside these organizations instead of competing against them, noting that your party was conspicuously absent from Calgary's recent economic outlook event, with over 1,600 local businesses represented?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Bilous: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, first and foremost, our government is listening to business and industry because for years they were asking for a ministry that would focus specifically on partnering with business and industry as a one-stop shop, and our government has demonstrated that this is a priority for us.

Mr. Speaker, it's also worth noting that part of the reason that thousands of Albertans, unfortunately, have lost their jobs is because of an overreliance on one energy sector and a previous government that refused to diversify the economy.

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

Fentanyl Use Prevention

Ms Payne: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As noted yesterday, communities across our province have witnessed the horrible effects of fentanyl overdoses and deaths. In these tough economic times we know that taking care of each other is the Alberta way of doing things. My constituents want to know that all Albertans are being taken care of and that our streets are safe. To the Minister of Health: what is your ministry doing in order to protect and support Albertans from fentanyl overdoses and addiction?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the hon. member for the question. Addictions, of course, are devastating not just to the individual who is addicted but to the family and community members that are involved as well. So our sympathies, of course, to the families that have been impacted.

In terms of some of the initiatives, we moved immediately, once we took office, on a mental health review, and I think members from both sides of this House are working collaboratively on that. This is too important. We're talking about saving lives and helping people see hope in the future rather than falling victim to addiction and far too often overdose.

The Speaker: First supplemental.

Ms Payne: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that many social service agencies are now struggling to keep up with fentanyl addiction and overdose cases, what is the department doing to support these agencies in this time of need?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The hon. Member for Lethbridge-East, actually, was just talking earlier today about ARCHES and some of the work that's happening there. I had the honour of visiting them this summer as well as the Sheldon Chumir in Calgary. They are doing amazing work in trying to make sure that they increase access to harm reduction initiatives in the community. We have to say a big thank you to them as well as to Alberta Health Services for their education campaign around the dangers of fentanyl. Alberta Health Services has formed a fentanyl emergency command centre. One of their first tasks is to find a way that we can distribute naloxone kits throughout our communities more widely.

The Speaker: Second supplemental.

Ms Payne: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that some Albertans with addictions may be reluctant to access services for fear of reprisal, to the same minister: what are you doing to ensure that harm reduction policies are put into place where appropriate?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker and to the member for the question. We are of course doing the mental health review, but also additional actions are being taken immediately by Alberta Health Services, as I just mentioned. These include prevention awareness, harm reduction, and improving access to treatment for people who are struggling with addictions. I'm really proud of the board that we announced recently for Alberta Health Services. One of the board members is actually Marliss Taylor, who has a very strong international reputation for doing work around harm reduction here in Edmonton with Streetworks and internationally as well. I'm excited to see what type of initiative she proposes as well.

Thank you.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Airdrie.

Urgent Health Care Services in Airdrie

Mrs. Pitt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The city of Airdrie is a booming city. We have a population of over 60,000 people within the riding, and with a population as large as ours you would think that the city would be serviced properly, but it is not. Airdrie is severely lacking a 24-hour health care facility. Currently residents are forced to drive

over an hour and a half into Calgary to receive urgent care in the evening and late-night hours. To the Minister of Health: can you tell the people of Airdrie where their urgent care facility lies on the minister's priority list?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you very much, hon. member, for the question and, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity to answer it. When I hit Airdrie, I'm pretty excited about being close to Calgary, so I'm sorry that there sometimes could be an hour and a half commute. That, of course, is something that my hon. colleague down the way will have to help us address, I guess, if it's traffic that you're talking about.

In terms of emergency after-hours care I have met with a number of different stakeholders from Airdrie, including the mayor and some individuals from the hospital. I'm aware of the desire to have an expanded health care facility. [interjections] That requires expanded investment, and I find it ironic that members opposite are criticizing . . .

The Speaker: First supplemental.

Mrs. Pitt: Mr. Speaker, the minister's answer is, unfortunately, unsatisfactory. Airdrie does not have an adequate health care facility.

Given that health issues do not follow routinely scheduled business hours and do not hold off to strike a patient between the hours of 9 and 5, Minister, since you find more money to hire additional bureaucrats in AHS, why can't you find the time to tell the people of Airdrie where they are on the priority list?

Ms Hoffman: I find the reference to additional bureaucrats very bewildering. We've brought forward a very focused budget. We've got a tremendous team, and we'll be happy to talk through those details in estimates.

In terms of investing in infrastructure, members opposite have proposed cutting \$9.8 billion from infrastructure investment but then want to say that, of course, one individual facility is more important than every other. I think it's important that we have a thoughtful, outcomes-based plan and that we move forward on making sure Albertans get the health care they need where they need it.

The Speaker: Second supplemental.

Mrs. Pitt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that land has been donated for an emergency health care facility in Airdrie and that the city and local businesses are ready to partner to see the citizens of Airdrie protected, will the minister commit to protect the people of Airdrie and partner with us to break ground on this urgently needed health care facility?

Ms Hoffman: Thank you to the member for the question. It's great when local entrepreneurs step up and want to contribute assets, including land. It's very much appreciated. With the land comes the need for construction and then ongoing operations. What we've done is worked with Alberta Health Services to have evidence-based decision-making so that we can make sure that we've got assurances for all Albertans, not just individuals who can afford to donate land, that they will have health care when and where they need it, Mr. Speaker.

2:40

Members' Statements

(continued)

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Stony Plain.

Light Up Your Life Society in Stony Plain

Ms Babcock: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise to share the good work that the Light Up Your Life Tri-Community Palliative/Hospice Care Society is doing in my communities. The Light Up Your Life society was established in 1992 in Stony Plain. These dedicated and compassionate volunteers work all year to raise funds to support palliative, hospice, and continuing care. In 2014 the Light Up Your Life society provided close to \$60,000 to WestView health centre. This donation helped ensure equipment, training, and care kits as well as furnish four private rooms and a communal family centre. The society's efforts raised the number of hospice beds in the Edmonton area to 68, and they are badly needed.

As I know from working in health care, sometimes the best gift you can give someone is to hold their hand and help them pass with grace or to be there to hold a family member after their loved one has passed.

This year's Light Up Your Life fundraising campaign began on November 1 and continues until December 31. Each \$10 donation lights a clear bulb on one of the five community symbols of hope throughout the tri-municipal area. These symbols of hope glow in memory of our loved ones, and the names of those remembered are published in local newspapers after the Christmas season. As of 2014 the society's total fundraising surpassed \$1 million. On average, each year 97 per cent of all funds raised are used directly to support people in our own communities.

On October 6 the society was presented with a 2015 minister's seniors service award, which recognizes Albertans whose volunteerism has made a meaningful difference in the lives of seniors. This award was presented by Minister Hoffman and myself. The society was nominated by Mayor Rod Shaigec and the council of Parkland county. I would like to recognize the society for the important work that they do in our communities and the difference that they make.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Drumheller-Stettler.

Interparty Co-operation

Mr. Strankman: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This morning I looked in a dictionary and looked up the word "co-operate." The word refers to individuals or groups of individuals who work together to ensure a benefit that will be of value to all. Members of this government will be especially interested in the notion of co-operation. Before their party was known as the New Democratic Party, it was called the co-operative federation. Their party was

founded as a group of individuals who were supposed to co-operate. That party's first leader called for co-operation within elected bodies, not unlike this Assembly. Their party's second leader said that people should work together in the public interest.

This week, Mr. Speaker, I put forward a nonpartisan initiative that called for co-operation, Bill 203, a measure that would allow all members to lock arms in order to prevent certain kinds of government spending from occurring during election campaigns. It's a measure that the Member for Edmonton-Strathcona, the Premier, called for on November 19 just last year, yet this week, when given the chance to show goodwill and a spirit of co-operation on this issue, this government's members chose to behave like members of the previous PC government.

Mr. Speaker, the members of this House who are new may want to remember why Albertans sent them here. It wasn't their political experience. They're here because the past members of the government, who sat in this same Chamber, lost sight of whom they represented. They put partisan politics, optics ahead of the public interest. They weren't interested in co-operating with others. New members would do well to learn from their mistakes because if they don't do their job well, they'll soon be out of a job.

Tabling Returns and Reports

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Infrastructure.

Mr. Mason: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to table the requisite number of copies of a transcript of an interview given by the Leader of the Official Opposition to Rosemary Barton on *Power & Politics* in which he makes the outrageous claim that the government was, by moving to morning sittings, "eliminating 50% of our question periods as a result of [the] extension of hours." He went on to say, "They're trying to eliminate the opportunity for us to ask questions." I'd like to table this for the record.

The Speaker: Members of the Assembly, pursuant to Standing Order 7(7) the daily Routine is now concluded. Pursuant to Standing Order 59.01(5) the House stands adjourned until tomorrow afternoon at 1:30.

The legislative policy committees will convene this afternoon for consideration of the main estimates. Alberta's Economic Future will consider the estimates for Jobs, Skills, Training and Labour in the Foothills room, and Resource Stewardship will consider the estimates for Municipal Affairs in the Grassland room.

[The Assembly adjourned at 2:46 p.m. to Wednesday at 1:30 p.m. pursuant to Standing Order 59.01(5)(b)]

Table of Contents

Prayers	415
Introduction of Guests	415
Members' Statements	
North West Redwater Partnership	416
Family Violence Prevention Month.....	416
Energy Policies	416
ARCHES Society in Lethbridge.....	416
Light Up Your Life Society in Stony Plain	424
Interparty Co-operation	424
Oral Question Period	
Royalty Review	417
Job Creation and Retention.....	417, 418
Promotion of Alberta's Energy Industry.....	418
Provincial Debt.....	419
Family Violence	419
Spray Lake Sawmills	420
School Construction	420
Postsecondary Education Funding.....	421
Calgary Cancer Centre.....	421
Economic Diversification	422
Fentanyl Use Prevention.....	422
Urgent Health Care Services in Airdrie.....	423
Tabling Returns and Reports	424

If your address is incorrect, please clip on the dotted line, make any changes, and return to the address listed below. To facilitate the update, please attach the last mailing label along with your account number.

Subscriptions
Legislative Assembly Office
3rd Floor, 9820 – 107 St.
EDMONTON, AB T5K 1E7

Last mailing label:

Account # _____

New information:

Name:

Address:

Subscription information:

Annual subscriptions to the paper copy of *Alberta Hansard* (including annual index) are \$127.50 including GST if mailed once a week or \$94.92 including GST if picked up at the subscription address below or if mailed through the provincial government interdepartmental mail system. Bound volumes are \$121.70 including GST if mailed. Cheques should be made payable to the Minister of Finance.

Price per issue is \$0.75 including GST.

Online access to *Alberta Hansard* is available through the Internet at www.assembly.ab.ca

Subscription inquiries:

Subscriptions
Legislative Assembly Office
3rd Floor, 9820 – 107 St.
EDMONTON, AB T5K 1E7
Telephone: 780.427.1302

Other inquiries:

Managing Editor
Alberta Hansard
3rd Floor, 9820 – 107 St.
EDMONTON, AB T5K 1E7
Telephone: 780.427.1875