



Province of Alberta

The 29th Legislature
Third Session

Alberta Hansard

Thursday afternoon, March 2, 2017

Day 1

The Honourable Robert E. Wanner, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of Alberta The 29th Legislature

Third Session

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

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

Party standings:

New Democrat: 55 Wildrose: 22 Progressive Conservative: 8 Alberta Liberal: 1 Alberta Party: 1

Officers and Officials of the Legislative Assembly

Robert H. Reynolds, QC, Clerk	Philip Massolin, Manager of Research and Committee Services	Brian G. Hodgson, Sergeant-at-Arms
Shannon Dean, Law Clerk and Director of House Services	Nancy Robert, Research Officer	Chris Caughell, Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms
Trafton Koenig, Parliamentary Counsel	Janet Schwegel, Managing Editor of <i>Alberta Hansard</i>	Paul Link, Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms
Stephanie LeBlanc, Parliamentary Counsel and Legal Research Officer		Gareth Scott, Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms

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Sarah Hoffman	Deputy Premier, Minister of Health
Shaye Anderson	Minister of Municipal Affairs
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
Richard Feehan	Minister of Indigenous Relations
Kathleen T. Ganley	Minister of Justice and Solicitor General
Christina Gray	Minister of Labour, Minister Responsible for Democratic Renewal
Danielle Larivee	Minister of Children's Services
Brian Mason	Minister of Infrastructure, Minister of Transportation
Margaret McCuaig-Boyd	Minister of Energy
Stephanie V. McLean	Minister of Service Alberta, Minister of Status of Women
Ricardo Miranda	Minister of Culture and Tourism
Brandy Payne	Associate Minister of Health
Shannon Phillips	Minister of Environment and Parks, Minister Responsible for the Climate Change Office
Irfan Sabir	Minister of Community and Social Services
Marlin Schmidt	Minister of Advanced Education
Lori Sigurdson	Minister of Seniors and Housing

STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Standing Committee on the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund

Chair: Mr. Coolahan
Deputy Chair: Mrs. Schreiner

Cyr	McKitrick
Dang	Taylor
Ellis	Turner
Horne	

Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future

Chair: Mr. Sucha
Deputy Chair: Mr. van Dijken

Anderson, S.	Gotfried
Carson	Orr
Connolly	Piquette
Coolahan	Schneider
Dach	Schreiner
Drysdale	Taylor
Fitzpatrick	

Standing Committee on Families and Communities

Chair: Ms Goehring
Deputy Chair: Mr. Smith

Aheer	Miller
Drever	Pitt
Hinkley	Rodney
Horne	Shepherd
Jansen	Swann
Luff	Yao
McKitrick	

Standing Committee on Legislative Offices

Chair: Mr. Shepherd
Deputy Chair: Mr. Malkinson

Drever	Nixon
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Special Standing Committee on Members' Services

Chair: Mr. Wanner
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Select Special Ombudsman and Public Interest Commissioner Search Committee

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Ellis	Pitt
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Kleinsteuber	Woollard
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Standing Committee on Private Bills

Chair: Ms McPherson
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Anderson, W.	Kleinsteuber
Babcock	McKitrick
Drever	Rosendahl
Drysdale	Stier
Fraser	Strankman
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Kazim	

Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections, Standing Orders and Printing

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Deputy Chair: Ms Babcock

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

Standing Committee on Public Accounts

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Kazim	Woollard
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Legislative Assembly of Alberta

3 p.m.

Thursday, March 2, 2017

The Sergeant-at-Arms: Order! All rise, please.

[The Clerk read the Royal Proclamation dated January 18, 2017, summoning the Members of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta to convene on this date]

The Clerk: Please be seated.

[The Sergeant-at-Arms left the Chamber]

The Sergeant-at-Arms: Order! Order! Mr. Speaker.

[Preceded by the Sergeant-at-Arms, the Speaker, accompanied by the officers of the Assembly, entered the Chamber and took the chair]

Prayers

The Speaker: Welcome back, hon. members. Honoured guests and visitors, welcome to your Legislature.

Would you please all bow your heads. Let each of us pray or reflect, each in our own way, to search for wisdom, knowledge, and understanding of and with each other. We ask for guidance in order that truth and justice may prevail in all judgments for the benefit of all Albertans.

Ladies and gentlemen, I would now invite Maura Sharkey-Pryma, accompanied by the Royal Canadian Artillery Band, to lead us in the singing of our national anthem. Please join us in the language of your choice.

Hon. Members and Guests:

O Canada, our home and native land!
True patriot love in all thy sons command.
Car ton bras sait porter l'épée,
Il sait porter la croix!
Ton histoire est une épopée
Des plus brillants exploits.
God keep our land glorious and free!
O Canada, we stand on guard for thee.
O Canada, we stand on guard for thee.

The Speaker: Please be seated.

Entrance of the Lieutenant Governor

[The Premier, the Clerk, and the Sergeant-at-Arms left the Chamber to attend the Lieutenant Governor]

[The Mace was draped]

The Speaker: Hon. members, the Royal Canadian Artillery Band will now play a brief musical interlude. The piece to be performed is entitled *First Suite in E Flat for Military Band*, composed by Gustav Holst. Composed in 1909, the *First Suite* was the British composer's first composition for a military band. Today we hear the March, one of the three movements in the suite.

The RCA Band, Canada's oldest regular army band, was formed in Quebec City in 1879. It was subsequently stationed in Montreal and in Halifax. It has since seen service in both world wars and in Korea, and it has travelled across Canada and beyond our borders. Reconstituted in this city of Edmonton, Alberta's capital, in 1997, the band is under the direction of Mr. Benjamin Van Slyke, who is in the Speaker's gallery.

[The Sergeant-at-Arms knocked on the main doors of the Chamber three times. The Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms opened the doors, and the Sergeant-at-Arms entered]

The Sergeant-at-Arms: All rise, please.

Mr. Speaker, Her Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor awaits.

The Speaker: Sergeant-at-Arms, admit Her Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor.

[A fanfare of trumpets sounded]

[Preceded by the Sergeant-at-Arms, Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor of Alberta, Lois Mitchell, CM, AOE, LLD, and Honorary Colonel Douglas Mitchell, their party, the Premier, and the Clerk entered the Chamber. Her Honour took her place upon the throne]

Her Honour: Please be seated.

Good afternoon, everyone. I was just explaining to the Premier why I am wearing this purple robe. It was given by the Legislative Assembly to the Hon. Helen Hunley in 1987 to commemorate the 75th anniversary of this beautiful building, so I felt that it was only appropriate, as you all know that it's Canada's 150th anniversary, that I should wear it today. I also, though, want you to know that it is a tribute to all the wonderful Albertans, the committed, dedicated citizens who worked in this building for over a hundred years and made such great history, just like we're doing this afternoon.

Let's begin.

Speech from the Throne

Introduction

Her Honour: Friends, welcome everyone to the first day of this new session of Alberta's Legislature. As we gather today on Treaty 6 land, we are reminded again of the bedrock importance of this institution to the democratic life of our province.

Albertans come from every part of the globe. We are an open and inclusive society built on enduring values: compassion, hard work, and justice. In an uncertain world these values are more important than ever, our North Star to guide us through our deliberations as we seek to build a better province for every Albertan, no matter their background, birthplace, or creed. We are one province, one people on a common journey towards a common future. Let's never forget that.

The power of these values revealed itself again this past year. Albertans came together in a time of extraordinary danger. As the Wood Buffalo wildfires tore through communities, we stood as one, as fellow citizens with a shared responsibility to each other. When called upon, ordinary women and men from all walks of life do extraordinary things. Therein lies hope for the future, not only here in Alberta but throughout the world.

Of course, the wildfires were one of the most significant events in what has been a very challenging time in Alberta's history. The collapse in the world price for oil continues to affect the well-being of families and communities, reverberating at boardroom and kitchen tables throughout the province.

Cutting the Growth of Government Spending

It has also affected the province's bottom line. For too long Alberta tied spending to the price of oil, which resulted in volatile funding swings for core services. For instance, under former governments the rate of yearly spending growth increases was as high as 11 per cent. Your government stopped that practice.

Through diligent action and targeted reductions we are bringing the rate of spending growth down thoughtfully and prudently. Your government has cut and amalgamated government agencies; frozen salaries for cabinet ministers, MLAs, political staff, and management in the civil service; and streamlined spending across government. For example, last week your government took action to cut salaries and eliminate bonuses for the highest paid executives of agencies, boards, and commissions, including eliminating perks such as retention bonuses, golf club memberships, and housing allowances.

As we pursue further spending reductions, your government will hold firm to the belief that spending reductions should never happen at the expense of our schools, hospitals, and those very things Albertans rely on to weather the downturn and provide for their families. Such reductions certainly should not happen at the expense of Albertans who need government to have their backs in a crisis such as the residents of Wood Buffalo.

Working to Make Life Better for Families

Now more than ever the fundamentals matter. Albertans are worried about the basics: paying the bills, keeping or finding a job, saving for retirement and their children's education, and caring for loved ones. As our economy recovers, families rightly expect their government to help them come through the downturn and make their lives better. Your government understands this is its core responsibility, to make life better for everyday Albertans. Over the last two years your government has aimed its every action and decision at meeting this test. We will continue to do so.

Building New Pipelines

Making life better starts with coming to terms with an economic reality that past governments failed to address. Alberta is too dependent on selling its energy products to one customer at one discounted price. As a result, we have been at the mercy of global economic forces over which we have no control. This must change. Under this government it is changing.

In last year's Speech from the Throne your government committed to erasing doubts about Alberta's environmental reputation as part of an effective economic diversification strategy that would break Alberta's land lock and open up new markets for our oil. The plan is working. Last November the government of Canada approved the Trans Mountain pipeline and line 3, citing Alberta's climate leadership plan as key to its decision. Let there be no doubt: the approval of these two pipelines is a historic step forward. Though we won't celebrate until the first drop of oil leaves Canadian shores from a new pipeline, we recognize the spirit of co-operation and hard work by those who have brought us to this point. Our energy industry, indigenous communities, environmentalists, and ordinary Albertans came together in common purpose, showing, once and for all, that a strong economy and a clean environment can and must go hand in hand.

In the weeks and months ahead your government will remain focused on bringing this pipeline to completion. But to get the job done, we must all pull in one direction. We must speak with one voice and communicate one message: a strong energy industry supports a strong Canada. This is a message we will repeat at every opportunity. On the Trans Mountain pipeline our work is not done. In any and all appropriate forums your government will continue to make the case that this pipeline is critical for Albertans and all Canadians. To that end, your government will defend our province and its key industry in court, seeking intervenor status on legal challenges to the Trans Mountain pipeline.

Trans Mountain is not the end of our market diversification efforts. This year we will also continue to work thoughtfully and respectfully with the federal government, indigenous communities, and elected officials across Canada on the Energy East pipeline proposal.

Creating and Supporting Jobs

Your government's singular determination to build new pipelines to Canada's shoreline is for an equally singular reason: Alberta's energy industry creates good jobs, and good jobs are the bedrock of a strong province.

Good Jobs in Alberta's Energy Industry

Since the beginning of its mandate your government has zeroed in on the task of supporting Alberta's energy industry. Three weeks ago Alberta celebrated the 70th anniversary of the Leduc No. 1 oil strike, which inaugurated the rise of modern Alberta: strong, confident, and proud. Over those seven decades Albertans have become world-class innovators. The same is true today. Through innovation our energy industry will always stay ahead of the pack.

Innovation is one of the driving motivations behind Alberta's modernized royalty framework. The new framework is now doing its work: offering incentives to reduce costs, improving efficiency, and, through increased activity, creating jobs, a fact recognized by industry leaders and energy experts. Although the framework only came into force in January, many producers opted in early, leading to the approval of 158 new wells that would not have otherwise been drilled last year, with each well supporting up to 135 direct and indirect jobs. Mid-January of this year saw a 50 per cent increase in active rigs compared with the same point in 2016. Shipments in energy products in December of last year were the highest in two years and almost double the 2016 low. Your government is taking action to build on this momentum and make life better for families.

In addition to accessing new overseas markets, this year further work will be undertaken to add value to our energy products here at home. Through the petrochemical diversification program your government will continue to work alongside our energy industry to push forward on the construction of two new world-class petrochemical plants. These new plants will create thousands of jobs and diversify our economy by adding value to our energy resources here in Alberta, producing products used in plastics all over the world.

Later this year we will receive recommendations from the energy diversification advisory committee. Committee members are currently consulting with industry, economists, academics, and labour to find ways to get more value and more jobs from our energy resources and diversify our economy. Also, your government is working with Ottawa to create good oil field service industry jobs and make sure more orphaned wells, those no longer under the care of a company, are safely closed and reclaimed.

Creating Jobs Across Our Economy

As important as it is to create jobs in energy, it is equally critical we create jobs across our economy, in agriculture, forestry, tourism and manufacturing, as well as in emerging sectors such as high tech, craft brewing, and more. To help, your government has cut small business taxes, created new tax credits to encourage innovation, and helped entrepreneurs get loans to start new businesses. The newly introduced capital investment tax credit and the Alberta investor tax credit, both of which are tax credits other provinces have enjoyed for years, are doing exactly what they are supposed to: helping

business expand, innovate, and hire more people. This year work continues to support small businesses, entrepreneurs, and job creators.

Alberta's agricultural producers are the world's best, and so are the products made by them. Building on investments your government made last year such as capital to expand the Agrivalve Processing Business Incubator and Food Processing Development Centre in Leduc, an investment that doubled the size of that facility, making it the largest of its kind in Canada, this year will see further support to help Alberta's agrifood entrepreneurs.

Entrepreneurs across the province will also get tailored, new supports. The expansion of more entrepreneurship incubators in communities across Alberta will help get good ideas off the ground and provide new businesses with tools to help them grow. Alberta small businesses with this type of support average a 25 per cent annual growth rate compared with a rate of less than 5 per cent nationally. Your government will also remain nimble and responsive to good ideas for bringing more business to Alberta, like we were with the city of Lethbridge to ensure the expansion of Cavendish Farms, the single largest private-sector investment in the history of Lethbridge, which will create good jobs and more opportunities for Alberta farmers.

Clean Energy

This year your government will also move forward on attracting more renewable energy investments. When it comes to renewables, investors world-wide are looking to Alberta as the next exciting place to bring their money. This spring the first competitive renewable energy auction will take place, securing up to 400 megawatts of new renewable energy investment in Alberta. Over the coming years more renewable auctions will take place, keeping Alberta on track to add 5,000 new megawatts of renewable energy capacity while also generating more economic activity in a more diversified economy and creating jobs.

While your government works to attract more renewable energy, we need to ensure that green power is backstopped by strong, stable power from clean-burning natural gas. So this year your government will continue with Alberta's electricity market transition. By changing our electricity market so it is no longer a risky outlier in North America, we can provide more stable, predictable prices, less risk for investors, and attract the new natural gas generation investments needed to create jobs and power Alberta's future.

Infrastructure

While we are building renewable energy infrastructure, we are also building the hospitals, schools, highways, and transit that are the lifeblood of the modern economy. Jurisdictions with the foresight to invest today will be tomorrow's economic leaders. Last year shovels were in the ground on nearly 300 transportation projects, more than 100 schools, plus universities, colleges, and health facilities. This year even more progress will be made on Alberta's historic capital plan, putting thousands of Albertans to work on construction sites, building the infrastructure we need to secure our economic future and way of life. With interest rates at historic lows there is simply no better time to get projects built and create good jobs.

Protecting Alberta's International Trade Interests

This year action is also being taken to protect Alberta's interests and jobs in a fast-changing global economy. The Premier just returned from Washington, DC, where she had productive

conversations with members of Congress, officials from the Canadian embassy, industry representatives, policy experts, and others. Those conversations were grounded in advance work with representatives of key Alberta industries. The Premier and members of cabinet got good advice from industry leaders on how to best approach upcoming trade discussions, with a focus on protecting jobs and seizing new areas of opportunity.

These important conversations will continue. Your government's message to officials in Washington was clear: a strong Alberta contributes to a stronger Canada and a stronger continent. Your government will continue to work closely with Ottawa and officials in Washington to ensure our shared economic interests are protected and advanced. In order to bolster and diversify Alberta's trade relationships, additional trade missions will be undertaken this year to key markets across the world, including Japan, India, and China.

Making Life More Affordable

Whether it's selling Alberta to new markets, attracting new investments, building pipelines, or putting Albertans to work on vital infrastructure projects, your government's focus is the same: creating good, family-supporting jobs. Those good jobs are even better when paycheques go further, and paycheques go further when life is more affordable.

Reducing School Fees

Every September parents across Alberta scramble to cobble together money to pay for a host of school fees. Rather than having a bit extra to put into savings or groceries or their mortgage, parents are forced to redirect their money to pay for education services. For years families have said enough is enough; the fees are too much. Yet school fees have grown and grown. This session your government will take a major step forward to make life more affordable for parents and families by eliminating instructional supply and material fees at Alberta's public schools. Your government will also eliminate busing fees for children travelling to their designated school. The first bill tabled this session will start that work, by eliminating these fee categories in time for the start of the next school year. These changes will reduce total mandatory school fees by approximately 25 per cent. Work to further reduce school fees for families will continue.

Capping Electricity Rates

But that is far from the only step your government is taking to help protect the family budget and make life better. This year your government is capping electricity rates for families and businesses because an electricity bill isn't a jack-in-the-box. There is no need for a surprise. Rates will be capped below the average price families have paid over the last decade. If electricity prices go up past the cap, electricity bills won't. Period. Legislation will be introduced this session to make this cap the law.

Energy Efficiency

Not only will energy bills be capped, but tools will be made available to bring energy bills down. Your government will help families, businesses, nonprofits, farmers, municipalities, and indigenous communities save money and increase energy efficiency with programs to support more energy-efficient appliances, heating, lighting, and more. In addition, your government will make it more affordable to install solar panels on homes, supporting jobs and growth in Alberta's residential solar industry and helping families power their homes with more green energy. All the while, carbon

levy rebates will continue going right to the bank accounts of two-thirds of Alberta households.

Protecting Consumers

But to protect the pocketbooks of families, your government is not stopping there. We banned door-to-door energy sales and put an end to predatory payday lending. This year your government will take further action to protect consumers and give them more peace of mind. Also, in this session your government will make consumer protection laws in Alberta stronger and introduce a consumer bill of rights.

Strong Support for Health Care and Education

Focusing on jobs and affordability helps to make life better for families. So, too, does a focus on other fundamentals such as high-quality public services. This year your government will build on its plan to protect and enhance health care, education, and the public services families in Alberta count on every day.

Strong Public Education

Albertans want their children and grandchildren to fulfill their potential and realize their dreams. It's for this reason that generations of Albertans built a strong public education system to provide our children with tools they need to lead productive and happy lives. It's for this reason that through the economic downturn your government has made classroom education a top priority, including reversing planned cuts that would have taken teachers out of the classroom. Through the future ready initiative we are freezing tuition, working with parents to modernize our curriculum, expanding access to student loans, and investing in more apprenticeship and training. This year, in addition to eliminating certain school fees, your government will continue to provide stable, predictable funding to our schools, universities, colleges, and institutes and will announce the approval and construction of new schools.

Strong Public Health Care

At the same time as we are improving education across the province, we are also improving health care. Modern new hospitals are being built such as the new cancer building in Calgary, and services at rural health centres are expanding such as the one in Sylvan Lake. But hospitals aren't the only answer. We can deliver more care in our communities. This year your government is partnering with the Alberta Medical Association to help communities find and retain the health care professionals they need both in rural and urban areas and especially in underserved communities. New ways to pay doctors are being developed, ways that support them in spending more time with each patient. Taken together, these initiatives mean families spend less time on the highway and in the waiting room and more time with a medical professional who knows them.

Your government will continue to create new long-term care and dementia spaces and offer more home-care services to help seniors live safely in their homes and communities. We will make life better for vulnerable Albertans by putting nurse practitioners on the front lines to care for homeless women and youth in Calgary and Edmonton. We will invest in mental health care, with specific programs for youth, for children and families, for Albertans who have experienced trauma, and for indigenous communities. We will move forward with supervised consumption services and other harm reduction measures to address the rising tragedy of opioid overdose deaths. Above all, we will maintain a stable, dependable

health care system that Albertan families can rely upon to make their lives better.

Protecting People, Workers, and Families

For Alberta's youngest and most vulnerable more needs to be done to help struggling families thrive and to make sure every child has a safe home. When a child's home isn't safe, we have a responsibility to step in and do whatever it takes to make sure kids are protected. Child protection is one of the most important services any government can provide, and we owe it to our children to get it right. It is for this reason that your government created a new department to focus on services for children and launched an all-party Ministerial Panel on Child Intervention. Building on the work of that panel, your government will introduce new legislation focused on ensuring child death reviews receive the utmost care and attention.

Your government will also build on our work to better help and protect victims of sexual and domestic violence with the introduction of legislation that eliminates barriers to pursuing justice.

For Albertans with disabilities more work will be done to provide timelier, more accessible services.

More work will also be done this year to modernize working conditions for Albertans.

For low-income families in need of housing, your government will continue to address long-overdue repairs of the affordable housing units we already have, and we will build more units for families and seniors in need.

Hundreds of thousands of families will continue receiving the Alberta child benefit and the enhanced Alberta family and employment tax credit to ensure that children get a good start in life.

This year your government will also make further progress on its commitment to \$25-per-day child care. Bids to create or expand new affordable and innovative child care centres will be awarded in the coming weeks.

Your government will also continue to make sure Alberta's lowest paid workers, most of whom are women and many of whom are parents, get a modest and predictable raise, staying on track to fulfill our commitment to increase the minimum wage to \$15 an hour.

Supporting Local Government

In addition to creating jobs, making life more affordable, and supporting strong public services, this year your government will take further measures to support communities and families. Important work remains this session on the Modernized Municipal Government Act. This work will build on the strong, respectful relationships developed with municipal leaders. Those relationships have allowed us to bring in new measures that empower local governments, enabling them to provide their communities with better services and more jobs. Your government, the city of Edmonton, and the city of Calgary will also continue to work together to create city charters, with a view toward building stronger, more vibrant cities that attract trade, investment, and jobs.

Working with Indigenous Communities

Important work remains to improve relations with indigenous communities and people. To date the Alberta government has signed new relationship agreements with Treaty 8 and the Métis Nation of Alberta. This year your government will pursue further agreements.

When it comes to ensuring that First Nations communities have access to safe drinking water, our country has a shameful record. Many First Nations communities in Alberta currently have boil

water advisories and have for some time. This is unacceptable. Indigenous people in Alberta need to see concrete action that makes their lives better. Working with First Nations and the federal government, your government will address the critical need for access to clean drinking water on reserves, thereby making real progress on fulfilling the principles of the United Nations declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples.

Protecting Our Natural Heritage

As we work to create better conditions for communities across Alberta, we also have a responsibility to protect our extraordinary natural heritage. Albertans love to hike, fish, hunt, and enjoy our natural beauty. This year your government will continue to improve parks across our province and build on the historic protections we have brought into place such as the recently announced protections for the Castle area. Consultations on the plan to protect the Castle area will continue this year, as will your government's commitment to create better opportunities for everyone to enjoy our parks. Investments will be made in new campgrounds, trails, and roads, and we will support all types of recreation with real improvements to our parks, whether you are exploring on a motorized vehicle, horseback, or lacing up hiking boots. Alberta's natural beauty is part of the wealth we all inherited, and that natural inheritance must be protected and passed on for future generations to enjoy.

Strengthening Our Democracy

Finally, to make life better for families, we will continue to strengthen our democratic institutions. To date your government has taken big money out of politics and enacted an ambitious democratic reform agenda. This session that work continues. New measures will be introduced to expand protection for whistle-blowers and to strengthen our conflict-of-interest laws.

Conclusion – Working to Make Life Better

Friends, grit built this province. Grit will build its future. That future is in the hands of us all: farmers, teachers, oil workers, nurses, welders, entrepreneurs, public servants, and so many others, everyone who made the decision to call this northern slice of the continent their home and never looked back.

As a province we have had our ups and downs. But we have always been at our best when we are focused on what matters. Two years ago oil prices collapsed. It hurt badly. Did Albertans panic? No. Did we sacrifice the very things that make our province strong? No. We didn't do those things because that's not who we are and it wouldn't have solved a thing. What we did was simple. We got down to work and stayed focused on what matters to everyday Albertans: good jobs, protecting pocketbooks, strong health care, and education. These are the things that count, the things that make life better.

Two years later our economy is starting to turn the corner. We are on our way to breaking the land lock, jobs are coming back, our kids have good schools, and our loved ones have the care they need. Are we there yet? No. Though the world around us may be growing more uncertain, your government will remain calm and focused. Now is not the time to let our steady hand waver. As we have from the start, we will continue to create jobs, diversify our economy, and protect the health and education services on which families rely. In that work we will make life better for Alberta families.

Thank you, friends.

God bless Alberta.

God bless Canada.

And God save the Queen.

The Sergeant-at-Arms: Order! All rise, please.

The Speaker: Ladies and gentlemen, I would now invite Maura Sharkey-Pryma, accompanied by the Royal Canadian Artillery Band, to lead us in the singing of *God Save The Queen*. Please remain standing after the conclusion.

Hon. Members and Guests:

God save our gracious Queen,

Long live our noble Queen,

God save The Queen!

Send her victorious,

Happy and glorious,

Long to reign over us;

God save The Queen!

The Sergeant-at-Arms: Order!

[Preceded by the Sergeant-at-Arms, Their Honours, their party, and the Premier left the Chamber as a fanfare of trumpets sounded]

[The Mace was uncovered]

The Speaker: Please be seated.

Hon. members, ladies and gentlemen, it's an honour and a privilege to be before you today as Speaker of this, the 29th Legislative Assembly, to share with you a few words about an important anniversary, an anniversary that binds us all together, the 150th anniversary of Confederation, which we will of course all celebrate together on July 1.

I want to inform you of a number of events that are occurring here on the Legislature Grounds to help celebrate this occasion. Canada Day 2017 will feature a full program highlighting established and emerging Alberta artists throughout the Legislature Grounds. Additionally, Canada's 150th anniversary represents a unique opportunity to celebrate the great diversity of our country, the diversity that binds us together in this Legislature. Performers will be on-site for National Aboriginal Day on June 21 to celebrate our indigenous origins, La Célébration de la Francophonie Canadienne on June 24 to fete our francophone heritage, and Canadian Multiculturalism Day on June 27 to acknowledge that immigration has contributed to the development, the strengthening of our inclusive society. Of course, there will also be a series of Canada Day events across this province, giving us the opportunity to celebrate this great and wonderful nation on its 150th birthday from our smallest rural communities to our urban centres.

A more sombre but no less important anniversary is that of the Battle of Vimy Ridge. Now, I know you know that Vimy is one of if not the most important military battles in Canadian history. Many historians consider that battle at Vimy Ridge a defining moment for Canada, with some saying that after that battle Canada truly emerged as a nation. But that battle was not without its heavy costs. Taking place over four days, from April 9 until April 12, 1917, the Canadian Corps successfully took Vimy Ridge, which was an important strategic position on the front lines in northern France overlooking enemy positions. Fighting together for the very first time during the First World War, approximately 15,000 Canadian infantry stormed German positions on the morning of April 9, showing tremendous bravery as they moved forward during the barrage even though thousands of their soldiers fell in that battle. More than 10,000 Canadian soldiers were killed or wounded on just those four days.

After the battle was fought and the war was won at a huge cost, Vimy Ridge has endured as a reminder of the sacrifice that the young Dominion made. In 1936 an impressive memorial was unveiled in northern France, which commemorates the sacrifice and

the contributions of Canadian soldiers at that battle. Anyone who has seen that monument can testify to its magnificence. I have visited that solemn place. It screams of the pain and loss of war. Fifty thousand Albertans were a part of that Canadian force and enlisted in the Great War, and nearly 50 per cent of those Albertans were either killed or injured.

Partly to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge, we are presenting an impressive exhibit called Alberta and the Great War, which is featured in the Borealis Gallery in the Edmonton Federal building's visitor centre. It will be on display until May 22, 2017. I would invite and ask all of you present today to attend an opening reception of Alberta and the Great War at 5:30 this afternoon.

[The Premier returned to the Chamber]

Tablings

The Speaker: I have the honour to table a copy of the speech graciously given by Her Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor.

Introduction of Bills

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Education.

Bill 1

An Act to Reduce School Fees

Mr. Eggen: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today with a great deal of pride to introduce the first reading of Bill 1, An Act to Reduce School Fees.

This is legislation that through a series of amendments and a new school fee regulation will make life better and more affordable for Alberta families.

Our government ran on a platform of commitment to reduce the burden of school fees on Alberta families, and we are following through with that commitment. If passed, this legislation will put money back into the pockets of parents of nearly 600,000 Alberta families. They will no longer be billed for textbooks, workbooks, photocopying costs, and so much more. Our government is protecting and improving education because of the difference it makes in the lives of Albertans, Mr. Speaker.

With that, I am truly proud and honoured to move first reading of Bill 1. Thank you very much.

[Motion carried; Bill 1 read a first time]

Motions

The Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Ms Notley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that the speech of Her Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor to this Assembly be taken into consideration the week of March 6, 2017.

[Motion carried]

The Speaker: The hon. Government House Leader.

Mr. Mason: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I move that the Assembly stand adjourned until Monday, March 6, at 1:30 p.m.

[Motion carried; the Assembly adjourned at 4:04 p.m.]

Bill Status Report for the 29th Legislature - 3rd Session (2017)

Activity to Thursday, March 2, 2017

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 number until the conclusion of the Fall Sittings.

Bill 1 — An Act to Reduce School Fees (Eggen)

First Reading — 6 (*Mar. 2, 2017 aft., passed*)

Table of Contents

Prayers.....	1
Entrance of the Lieutenant Governor.....	1
Speech from the Throne	
Introduction.....	1
Cutting the Growth of Government Spending.....	1
Working to Make Life Better for Families.....	2
Building New Pipelines.....	2
Creating and Supporting Jobs	
Good Jobs in Alberta’s Energy Industry.....	2
Creating Jobs Across Our Economy.....	2
Clean Energy.....	3
Infrastructure.....	3
Protecting Alberta’s International Trade Interests.....	3
Making Life More Affordable	
Reducing School Fees.....	3
Capping Electricity Rates.....	3
Energy Efficiency.....	3
Protecting Consumers.....	4
Strong Support for Health Care and Education	
Strong Public Education.....	4
Strong Public Health Care.....	4
Protecting People, Workers, and Families.....	4
Supporting Local Government.....	4
Working with Indigenous Communities.....	4
Protecting Our Natural Heritage.....	5
Strengthening Our Democracy.....	5
Conclusion – Working to Make Life Better.....	5
Tablings.....	6
Introduction of Bills.....	6
Bill 1 An Act to Reduce School Fees.....	6
Motions.....	6

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