



Province of Alberta

The 29th Legislature
Third Session

Alberta Hansard

Thursday afternoon, November 16, 2017

Day 55

The Honourable Robert E. Wanner, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of Alberta
The 29th Legislature

Third Session

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

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Deputy Leader of the Official Opposition
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Anderson, Wayne, Highwood (UCP)
Babcock, Erin D., Stony Plain (NDP)
Barnes, Drew, Cypress-Medicine Hat (UCP)
Bilous, Hon. Deron, Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview (NDP)
Carlier, Hon. Oneil, Whitecourt-St. Anne (NDP)
Carson, Jonathon, Edmonton-Meadowlark (NDP)
Ceci, Hon. Joe, Calgary-Fort (NDP)
Clark, Greg, Calgary-Elbow (AP)
Connolly, Michael R.D., Calgary-Hawkwood (NDP)
Coolahan, Craig, Calgary-Klein (NDP)
Cooper, Nathan, Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills (UCP)
Cortes-Vargas, Estefania, Strathcona-Sherwood Park (NDP),
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Dang, Thomas, Edmonton-South West (NDP)
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Eggen, Hon. David, Edmonton-Calder (NDP)
Ellis, Mike, Calgary-West (UCP)
Feehan, Hon. Richard, Edmonton-Rutherford (NDP),
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Fildebrandt, Derek Gerhard, Strathmore-Brooks (Ind)
Fitzpatrick, Maria M., Lethbridge-East (NDP)
Fraser, Rick, Calgary-South East (Ind)
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Official Opposition Deputy Whip
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Gray, Hon. Christina, Edmonton-Mill Woods (NDP)
Hanson, David B., Lac La Biche-St. Paul-Two Hills (UCP)
Hinkley, Bruce, Wetaskiwin-Camrose (NDP)
Hoffman, Hon. Sarah, Edmonton-Glenora (NDP)
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Rosendahl, Eric, West Yellowhead (NDP)
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Stier, Pat, Livingstone-Macleod (UCP)
Strankman, Rick, Drumheller-Stettler (UCP)
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Swann, Dr. David, Calgary-Mountain View (AL)
Taylor, Wes, Battle River-Wainwright (UCP)
Turner, Dr. A. Robert, Edmonton-Whitemud (NDP)
van Dijken, Glenn, Barrhead-Morinville-Westlock (UCP)
Westhead, Cameron, Banff-Cochrane (NDP),
Deputy Government Whip
Woollard, Denise, Edmonton-Mill Creek (NDP)
Yao, Tany, Fort McMurray-Wood Buffalo (UCP)
Vacant, Calgary-Lougheed

Party standings:

New Democratic: 54 United Conservative: 26 Alberta Party: 2 Alberta Liberal: 1 Progressive Conservative: 1 Independent: 2 Vacant: 1

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Kazim	Woollard
Kleinstauber	

Legislative Assembly of Alberta

1:30 p.m.

Thursday, November 16, 2017

[Ms Sweet in the chair]

Prayers

The Acting Speaker: Good afternoon.

Let us reflect or pray, each in our own way. Hon. members, this morning we commemorated the life and efforts of Louis Riel. As we head back to our homes throughout Alberta, may we remember his words. "Deeds are not accomplished in a few days or in a few hours. A century is only a spoke in the wheel of everlasting time." Let us continue to be diligent, determined, and thoughtful in the work we do for the people of this incredible province.

Please be seated.

Introduction of Guests

The Acting Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Castle Downs.

Ms Goehring: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I have two introductions today. It's a privilege to rise and introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly your parents, Gary and Leslye Sweet, and your constituency office staff, Page Moniz and Kevin Aulakh. Gary and Leslye are visiting all the way from Campbell River on Vancouver Island. They are here to see you and their future son-in-law Paul settle into your new home, assist with wedding preparations, and watch today as you ensure that all hon. members are on our best behaviour. Page and Kevin are not only your constituents, but they work at the Edmonton-Manning constituency office, ensuring that all constituents are heard and have the information that they need. I would now ask all of your guests to rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of this Assembly.

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

Mr. Carson: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I have two introductions today. It's a privilege to rise to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly Nathan Collins, an ambitious social work student who is studying at Grant MacEwan and currently doing his practicum placement in my constituency office. Nathan has a keen interest in learning about government policy and how it can relate to his future career.

Second, I introduce a group of Grant MacEwan social work students, including Mikhayla Patterson, who my office had the pleasure of hosting last year for her practicum placement. She's here today with fellow students Trevor Buttery and Louise Speakman.

I'd ask my guests now to please rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

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

Drever: Thank you, Madam Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise today to introduce to you and through you to all the members of this Assembly the grade 6 class from the Calgary French & International School, which is joined by their teachers, Catherine Bernard, Isabelle Gauthier, Chantal Fyfe-Hudon, and Benoit St-Arneault. Ranked as a top French immersion school in Alberta and one of the largest independent French immersion schools in Canada, I'm proud to say that students at the Calgary French & International

School are amongst the brightest and well-rounded individuals, benefiting from a diverse and rich curriculum that includes global focus, cultural diversity, and international perspectives. I'd ask them now to rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

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

Mr. Barnes: Thank you, Madam Speaker. It's my great pleasure to stand today and introduce to you and through you a great friend of mine for a long time, a great local southeastern Albertan, who has just been elected to Cypress county and has already shown that he is very, very willing to be involved in hearing what his constituents' needs and ideas are. I salute him for that, and I also salute his fellow county councillors for immediately stepping in with funds to help alleviate and help do the cleanup after the serious wildfires. Please, colleagues, extend the traditional warm welcome to my friend and newly elected Cypress county colleague Councillor Robin Kurpjuweit.

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

Mr. S. Anderson: Thank you, Madam Speaker. It's an honour to introduce to you and through you to the members of the Assembly Ken Kobly. Ken is the president of the Alberta Chambers of Commerce, a very important role, no doubt, but he's also a constituent of mine and a fine, fine member of our great community of Leduc-Beaumont. I know that Ken is well known to all members of this House. I'm very proud to have him as a constituent, and I'm very proud to work with him to make Alberta's communities stronger. Ken is seated in the members' gallery this afternoon, and I'd ask that he stand and you all join me in giving him the warm welcome of the Assembly.

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

Mr. Strankman: Thank you, Madam Speaker. It's an honour today to rise on your behalf and to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly members of my constituency. Seated in the Speaker's gallery we have Peter Rafa, the reeve of the municipal district of Acadia; William Vandeligt, deputy reeve; Tim Peers, Ron Hoyt, Aaron Skappak, all councillors for Acadia; and their CAO Brent Williams. Would they please rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

For my second introduction I have members who are here today from the special areas, again, in the diverse constituency of Drumheller-Stettler. It's my privilege to introduce to you and through you, indeed, to all members of the Assembly, representing the Special Areas Board, one considerably younger chairman, Jordon Christianson, and advisory council member Travis Foot along with Oyen town councillor Doug Lehman. Would they please rise and receive the warm traditional welcome of the Assembly.

The Acting Speaker: The hon. Member for Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House-Sundre and Leader of the Official Opposition.

Mr. Nixon: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I have two sets of introductions today. My first is some constituents of mine from Rocky Mountain House, Laura Andreas and Paul Andreas, and along with them some friends of ours from Red Deer, Brad Vonkeman, Brenda Vonkeman, and Heidi Vonkeman, who do a tremendous amount of work with parent councils all across Alberta. That's how I know them. I'm glad to see them here today visiting with us, and I would ask them to rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of this Assembly.

For my second set of introductions, Madam Speaker, I have a large group of people from Sundre and Mountain View county here today, including His Worship Terry Leslie and Bruce Beattie. Terry Leslie is the mayor of Sundre and has been here many times. Bruce Beattie is the reeve of Mountain View county, my home county. He's actually my councillor, and I would like to tell you whether I voted for him or not, but he keeps getting acclaimed, so I don't have to answer that question.

Along with them are several councillors from Mountain View county and the town of Sundre along with Dr. Eugene Landsbergen from Sundre; Teddie Tanguay from the Nurse Practitioner Association; Jared Friesen from the Nurse Practitioner Association; Gerald Ingeveld, the chair of the Sundre hospital committee. Several citizens from the communities of Sundre and Mountain View county are here today with Tammy Surbey, who is a nurse practitioner in our community who, because of certain circumstances associated with the funding model, which we will talk about later today, will no longer be able to practise in our community, and it's causing 350 patients to not have access to their nurse practitioner. They're here today to show their support for Tammy and that important issue.

I would ask them all to stand and receive the traditional warm welcome of this Assembly.

The Acting Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health and Deputy Premier.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Thank you for this opportunity to introduce my four visitors today, who are in the members' gallery. I ask that they rise as I introduce their names. Cooper Pirtle is also here with his mom, Arla, and his grandparents Fae and Morris. Cooper wants you all to sign up to be organ donors. He's been working to raise awareness about the importance of organ donation since his grandpa's double lung transplant in 2011, and we are so glad that he's here today. Cooper was named 2016's Canadian Transplant Association youth ambassador, and I'm so thankful for people like Cooper standing up to raise awareness and encouraging all of us to register and have those conversations with our families as well. Please join me in welcoming these guests to our Assembly.

1:40

The Acting Speaker: The hon. Member for West Yellowhead.

Mr. Rosendahl: Thank you, Madam Speaker. It's a privilege to rise and introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly your aunt and uncle Robert and Nancy Sweet. Robert and Nancy are visiting from Hinton, which is located in my constituency of West Yellowhead. I would like them to now rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

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

Mr. Hanson: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. It's my pleasure to stand in the House today and introduce to you and through you to members of this Chamber a school group from the wonderful constituency of Lac La Biche-St. Paul-Two Hills, with their principal, Mayor Moghrabi. I call them students because it's the brand new, newly elected council, all brand new faces, of Lac La Biche county. They're here in town to attend the AAMD and C for the first time, and they were also here, most of them, to attend the Métis Week ceremonies in the House today. If you'd please rise as I mention your names – I hope you're all here – Jason Stedman, Lorin Tkachuk, Sterling Johnson, Darlene Beniuk, Colette Borgun,

Charlyn Moore, Colin Cote, George L'Heureux, and, of course, Mr. Moghrabi, the principal. I hope you all enjoy your time here in Edmonton. I will ask everybody else to please help me in giving them the traditional warm welcome of this Assembly.

The Acting Speaker: The hon. Member for Little Bow.

Mr. Schneider: Thank you, Madam Speaker. It is my distinct privilege to rise today to introduce to you and through you to all members of this Assembly some folks from my riding of Little Bow, Mrs. Serena Donovan from the Mossleigh area and Mr. Ryan Smith from east of Champion. Both of these folks were recently elected to Vulcan county council in the fall election, and they are, of course, now in the process of figuring out how municipal politics works. I met Ryan over at AAMD and C this morning, and I'm pleased that Serena decided to come with him. They thought they'd come over to the Legislature during their trip to Edmonton from the deep south and watch question period today. My guests are sitting in the public gallery. I'd ask both Serena and Ryan to please rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of this Assembly.

Members' Statements

The Acting Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-Hawkwood.

Calgary Cancer Centre

Connolly: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I'm honoured to stand in the House today as a member of this government and a Calgarian to talk about just how proud I am of the new Calgary cancer centre, that will be built on-site next to the Foothills medical centre. Just last month our Infrastructure minister and I visited the site of what will be the brand new cancer centre. Work on this project is well under way. My colleagues proudly stood with the Premier a few weeks ago and made history by breaking ground on this facility. With shovels full of dirt we are already ahead of schedule on what will be a leading international facility for cancer care and research.

Madam Speaker, Calgarians have been waiting a long time for this badly needed facility. Klein, Stelmach, Redford, Prentice: promise after promise after promise after promise for a cancer centre in Calgary, and time after time these promises were broken. For more than a decade Conservative governments announced and then welshed on this vital infrastructure project. None have delivered on giving Albertans the medical care they deserve.

During the 2015 election campaign the NDP promised to build a cancer centre for Calgary, and we are delivering on that promise. Our \$1.4 billion investment will bring 160 much-needed in-patient beds, more than 100 chemotherapy chairs, research laboratories as well as an additional 1,650 new parking stalls on-site. In addition to the much-needed care this facility brings to Calgarians, I am very pleased to say that by the time it opens, this cancer centre will add 1,500 jobs to Calgary's economy.

Madam Speaker, we know that this project would be among the first to be cancelled under Jason Kenney's reckless and extreme cuts. This government has the right priorities. We are following through on our promises, we are bringing hope to those fighting cancer, and we are making lives better for generations of Albertans.

Thank you.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

Nurse Practitioners

Mrs. Pitt: What if Alberta had an opportunity to dramatically improve the delivery of health care, especially in rural parts of the

province, and achieve significant cost savings at the same time? It sounds crazy, right? The government has been telling Albertans for over two years that it simply can't be done. They argue that any attempt to reduce the amount of money we spend on health care in this province would result in deep, punishing cuts to front-line services. But what the government isn't telling Albertans is that they have had an effective, common-sense solution for improving access to high-quality health care right under their noses the whole time.

The solution, Madam Speaker, lies with nurse practitioners. These highly trained health care professionals can perform many medical services to Albertans at a reasonable cost. Yet despite the evidence and despite promises from this government to develop and implement a sustainable funding model for nurse practitioners so that taxpayers could save millions, we have seen no action.

Madam Speaker, the community of Sundre provides us with a perfect example. The local nurse practitioner has approximately 350 patients, that this particular nurse sees and treats on a regular basis. To date she has been paid by local doctors who hire her to work out of their offices to assist with their large caseloads. But that funding model simply isn't sustainable. The doctors can no longer afford to pay her out of pocket for her work, and as a result her 350 patients will now have to join long wait-lists to see a doctor for the same service. This serves no one, not doctors, not nurse practitioners, and certainly not patients.

I can't for the life of me understand why, when faced with a golden opportunity to improve front-line services while simultaneously reducing costs, the NDP still refuses to act. It's yet another example of a government focused on ideology rather than on what's best for the people it serves. It's yet another reason why Albertans are already shopping for a new government.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

The hon. Member for Calgary-Mackay-Nose Hill.

Sexual Violence and Harassment

Ms McPherson: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Thirty-three out of every 1,000 sexual assaults are reported to police. Me Too. Twelve of those have charges laid. Me Too. Ninety-nine per cent of people arrested for sexual assaults are men. Me Too. Eighty per cent of women with disabilities will be sexually assaulted in their lifetime. Me Too. Indigenous women suffer sexual assault at three times the rate of other women in Canada. Me Too. Forty-three per cent of Canadian women have been sexually harassed at work. Me Too. Sexual violence costs the Canadian economy \$4.8 billion every year. Me Too. Hope that we can make the world a safer place. Me Too. Hope that we can take this from a meme to a movement. Me Too.

Gratitude that the RCMP is allowing women to report anonymously through third-party organizations. Me Too. Gratitude that we are talking about harassment and consent in schools. Me Too. Gratitude that Tarana Burke had the foresight to start. Me Too. Harassment depicted as love in movies. Me Too. Every day a new accusation: Harvey Weinstein, Woody Allen, Al Franken, Kevin Spacey. Me Too. A lifetime of catcalls, drunk men with bad intentions, feeling unsafe after dark. Me Too. Climate Barbie. Me Too. As bad as it is here, we're safer than women in developing countries who face sexual violence used as a tool of war. Me Too. People who want to move on from Weinstein, like they moved on from Ghomeshi, like they moved on from all the ones before. Me Too.

It's not about sex. It's about power, and it happens to men and women, boys and girls. It happens every day. It happens everywhere, including right here. Me Too.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

The hon. Member for Calgary-Northern Hills.

Calgary Region On-It Transit

Mr. Kleinsteuber: Well, thank you, Madam Speaker. Founded and funded by the Calgary Regional Partnership, or the CRP, On-It transit is a public transportation service in the Calgary region, furthering the smart growth envisioned by the Calgary metropolitan plan. On-It Regional Transit reduces traffic emissions and congestion while connecting communities. It also enhances the region's economic competitiveness by allowing employers to access a broader employee base.

In October 2016 the CRP launched a two-year pilot project providing commuter service from Black Diamond, High River, Okotoks, and Turner Valley to the city of Calgary's Somerset-Bridlewood station.

This past summer a weekend pilot project linked the existing On-It Regional Transit system to Cochrane, Canmore, and Banff. The service carried approximately 12,000 passengers, or about 450 a day, for each of the 26 days the pilot was in operation. For \$10 passengers could take On-It from Okotoks to Banff and Lake Louise, reducing emissions and the number of vehicles on the road.

1:50

Madam Speaker, On-It has not required heavy provincial or municipal capital investments for facilities and buses. The annual grant of \$1.25 million to the CRP subsidized the pilot program in a cost-sharing arrangement with participating municipalities. In addition, On-It involved a public-private partnership with Pacific Western. As Ettore Iannacito, the regional transit program manager, said: the costs of designing and working one regional system are far less than the individual systems working independently.

Madam Speaker, the On-It system continues to grow in popularity, and I hope that it continues to set an example for other areas of the province that need to relieve traffic congestion and emissions while adding transportation alternatives for their residents.

Thank you.

Oral Question Period

The Acting Speaker: The Leader of the Official Opposition.

Health Care Professionals in Rural Alberta

Mr. Nixon: It's nurse practitioner week. Nurse practitioners provide high-quality, cost-effective services. They could play an important role in alleviating pressure on Alberta's health care system and help to improve rural health. Unfortunately, one of our visitors here today, Tammy Surbey, has about 350 patients that will soon be without a nurse practitioner because the system doesn't fit practitioners within existing funding frameworks of rural health care delivery. Premier, do you recognize the importance of the cost-effective role nurse practitioners play in rural areas, and will your government change the funding model to acknowledge the various types of health care professionals?

The Acting Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. We are certainly working to make life better for Albertans by investing in health care and improving services that families count on. In Alberta right now we have about 510 nurse practitioners, that are a valuable part of that health care team. We are working to find ways

to continue to expand their role in the system, and we certainly wouldn't be able to do that if we followed the advice of the Leader of the Official Opposition on cutting 20 per cent from the budget. Instead, we're working with our health care professionals to find ways to expand scope and increase opportunities for them and all Albertans.

Mr. Nixon: Right now in many communities throughout rural Alberta there are no doctors accepting new patients. Instead, there are wait-lists just to have a doctor, let alone to see a doctor. This is unacceptable in a province that spends \$59 million per day on health care. Recruiting and retaining doctors, nurses, and nurse practitioners is a never-ending battle in rural Alberta. It's not that medical professionals don't want to live in these rural areas; it's that they keep having to overcome political red tape while what they should be able to do is focus on taking care of their patients. Premier, what is your government doing to address their frustrations and ensure that rural Alberta gets efficient and effective health care?

The Acting Speaker: The Minister of Health.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you again, Madam Speaker. I was proud this morning to be at AAMD and C and have meetings with a number of folks. We know that attracting and retaining health care professionals is an important priority for this government and one that we take very seriously. We've been able to revisit the RPAP program, I think, with great effect. Just this morning I met with folks from the Fairview area and Worsley and was happy to make sure that we informed them that we've been able to secure a new doctor who is a Canadian-trained medical graduate who will be starting there this summer. We'll continue to make sure that that happens in all parts of the province, that we get the best care in the best place.

Mr. Nixon: Ms Surbey has lived in the community of Sundre for decades, and she wants to stay there, but her employment as a nurse practitioner in her community won't last much longer. Just to maintain her licence, she would need to commute to Calgary or Red Deer to practise. All the while people in her local rural community need her services. It's outrageous, Madam Speaker, and it makes no sense. There are people in our gallery today and hundreds of people in Mountain View county that are about to lose access to their practitioner. Premier, will you work with your minister to solve the problems with the funding model that are affecting people like Ms Surbey and her patients and get nurse practitioners working all across rural Alberta?

The Acting Speaker: The Minister of Health.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you again, Madam Speaker. I'd be certainly happy to meet with the constituent of yours, hon. member, and to have an opportunity to discuss this. We do work with our primary care networks on a model that gives them \$62 per patient per year to ensure that they have the wraparound services for all of their patients. I'm proud that primary care networks have stepped up to work on a new governance framework, but we definitely are giving those resources to the folks that are closest to the ground to make the best decisions for their communities. Again, I'd be very happy to meet with this constituent and have a conversation, but we do trust the local primary care networks to use those resources as best possible.

The Acting Speaker: Second main question.

Health Care System

Mr. Nixon: Madam Speaker, day in and day out this government would rather talk about the opposition than about what they are doing. When it comes to health care, Albertans need results and not ideological rhetoric. Here are some facts. Alberta spends billions more on health care than it did only a few years ago, with worse results. Albertans are waiting longer for surgeries. The system is failing our seniors who need long-term care beds. It's failing our most vulnerable children as they suffer waiting for mental health treatment that they need. When will this government take health care seriously, and can this Premier tell us what she's actually going to do to make our health care system better?

The Acting Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Ms Notley: Well, thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Let me just say that our government is absolutely committed to ensuring that we protect and preserve and, in fact, improve upon our important – important – public health care system because we know it matters to Alberta families, and we know that it matters to Alberta communities. It is not something that will be done, though, if someone takes 20 per cent out of the system or if someone starts experimenting with new ways to privatize, which, of course, are both things that the members opposite have already talked about doing. We have work to do, we know. We have many challenges we inherited, but we're going to get the job done.

Mr. Nixon: I'm not surprised that the NDP anger machine is choosing to deflect from their abysmal record. However, notable professor Dr. Tombe said in response to the NDP's fearmongering: "Goal by [Jason Kenney] to balance by [2023] is entirely credible. Doesn't (necessarily) require any spending cuts. Certainly not drastic." Jason Kenney has said that we need to grow our economy to get it balanced. We need to encourage our private-sector job creators to get our economy going again, something this NDP government just does not understand. Will the Premier tell us what she is doing to get our health care system back on track for Albertans? Stop dodging the question and tell us what you are doing, not what you think Jason Kenney is going to do.

The Acting Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Ms Notley: Well, thank you very much, Madam Speaker. What we are doing is ensuring that our front-line health care workers have the support of their government to do the important work that they do for their patients each and every day. So in order to do that, we've ensured stable and predictable funding while at the same time moving away from the up again, down again chaos that had been created under the previous 10 years of the PC government's administration. We are absolutely committed to providing good-quality health care to Albertans in the right place and the right time by the right person, and we will continue to work on that because we know it's important to Albertans.

Mr. Nixon: What this government is doing is that it's continuing to act like the rules do not apply to them. Earlier today the NDP candidate for the upcoming by-election in Calgary-Lougheed appears to have used his patient list to send what was clearly a campaign e-mail to his patients. Does this government believe that this is an appropriate use of patient information? Madam Speaker, I'll remind you that this is a government that has been found in contempt of this Legislature, it's continually under investigation by commissioners and independent officers, and now this is the behaviour of their candidate in Calgary-Lougheed. Albertans are

tired of it, Premier. When is your government going to start acting ethically and following the rules?

Ms Notley: Well, Madam Speaker, first of all, the whole sort of allegations about contempt of the Legislature: actually, I think that the first person to be penalized for breach . . .

Mr. Nixon: Point of order.

Ms Notley: . . . with respect to conduct in this House is actually a member opposite, not anyone here.

But with respect to the matter that the member raises, we can certainly look into it. I'm completely unaware of the issue, so we'll certainly be happy to look into it.

The Acting Speaker: The hon. Member for Fort McMurray-Wood Buffalo.

Health Care Costs and Service Delivery

Mr. Yao: Madam Speaker, a new report from the Canadian institute of health reconfirms that Alberta continues to see high per capita costs in our health care system. Amongst provinces we're second highest in the country. However, our population is the youngest in the country. These numbers don't add up. To the Premier: with sky-high health costs accompanying our young population, how will this government deal with the exponential growth of seniors in Alberta?

The Acting Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I am definitely proud of the fact that under this government we've worked to provide stability to the people of Alberta in terms of health care and education, and I'm not going to apologize for that. We know that in the past former governments had costs go up, you know, 6 to 10 per cent a year. We've certainly gotten that much more under control. We're working with our health care providers to make sure that we have sustainability for all Albertans, and I'm proud of the fact that we are working with Alberta Health Services to deliver quality services, including the expansion of home care and building 2,000 new long-term care and dementia care spaces.

2:00

Mr. Yao: Madam Speaker, Alberta is not just the biggest spender in Canada but also internationally, with terrible results. We spend more per capita on health than the U.K., Australia, Netherlands, Germany. In fact, of the top 11 developed nations in the world we're only more cost-effective than two other countries, and we have the lowest results to show for that. To the Premier: what are you doing to ensure that the funds allocated to health are spent efficiently and effectively?

The Acting Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. We certainly inherited that spending record from the colleagues of the member opposite, so I suggest that he ask them some of those questions. But I'll tell you that over the last two years we've made significant progress. If you read the CIHI report further, you'll see that we actually have the third-lowest projected increase among provinces. That's because we're taking a steady hand, a stable approach. We're working with front-line providers. We're protecting and investing in nurses; they would fire them. We're building the Calgary cancer centre; they would cancel that project. We're making sure that 24-hour access is available in communities

like Airdrie. We don't know where they stand other than that they want cuts and privatization. On this side of the House we stand with health care. [interjections]

The Acting Speaker: Hon. members, just a reminder. If we could please listen to the question and the answer.

Mr. Yao: Madam Speaker, privatized health care. Well, this minister needs to explain to Albertans why she is supporting and promoting the very thing that she accuses this loyal opposition of. She needs to explain why 90 per cent of physician funding, 100 per cent of primary care network funding, 50 per cent of lab services, 60 per cent of diagnostic imaging, and 100 per cent of air and ambulance service funding all goes to private institutions and corporations. What is this government talking about when they're the ones that are supporting privatized health care?

Ms Hoffman: Madam Speaker, be still, my heart. I am very grateful to have an opportunity to collaborate with the hon. member and talk about what we're doing to actually protect public universal access and expand opportunities for public investment and public delivery. I'm very grateful that the member opposite highlights the track record that his colleagues have created in terms of privatizing a number of services across this province. But we're working in partnership with health care professionals to make sure that we're expanding opportunities for public investment and making sure that we take care of one another. On the opposition side they would be slashing budgets, firing, and privatizing. On this side we're protecting, investing, and supporting Albertans.

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

Addiction Treatment Facility Oversight

Mr. Clark: Well, thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Thousands of Albertans continue to struggle with addictions to opiates and other substances. Not surprisingly, this has led to an increased demand for residential treatment facilities, several of which I'm proud to say are in Calgary-Elbow. But in conversations with some of the highly professional addiction treatment agencies in Elbow and beyond, I learned that there is no provincial regulation in this area. Anyone can just hang a shingle and call themselves an addiction treatment facility. To the Associate Minister of Health. It is amazing to me that Alberta doesn't regulate something as critical as addiction treatment. Do you have any plans to address this, and when?

The Acting Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker and to the member for the very important question. We certainly are moving forward to expand opportunities for opioid-dependency treatment and for supports for those who are struggling. Just yesterday the associate minister and our colleague from Strathcona-Sherwood Park were in that community to announce that there is a whole new range of opportunities for opioid-dependency treatment, something that we know is going to save lives. We're working to ensure that we can continue to expand access in communities as close to home and through the patient's established medical home, whenever possible.

Thank you.

Mr. Clark: With respect, Madam Minister, this question is about regulation. We've already had one particularly egregious case in this province when Addiction Canada facilities in Sundre and

Gleichen were shut down following the suicide of one of their clients. Later it was revealed that the facility's owner was facing drug-trafficking and fraud charges in Ontario. Again to the Associate Minister of Health. You said over a year ago that you would make changes to ensure that addiction treatment facilities are regulated and that Albertans are protected. What specifically have you done this past year to address this, and when will we see regulation?

The Acting Speaker: The Minister of Health.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. We are certainly in partnership with the Minister's Opioid Emergency Response Commission working to address a number of factors, including ensuring the safety and oversight of all these facilities. In terms of exploring additional supports, we have invested significantly in opioid-dependency treatments, supervised consumption services and are continuing to expand opportunities for all Albertans to have the care they need where they need it. We want to get to the point where, just like you can with smoking cessation and other areas, your first stop is your patient health home, your family doctor, with additional supports available from there.

Mr. Clark: Let's try one more time. You're not anywhere close to answering my question. Madam Speaker, there are many industries in this province that are regulated by the government. They include hairdressers, auto mechanics, massage therapists, and so many more, but for some reason addiction treatment remains totally unregulated. The job of government is to ensure that unqualified or unscrupulous operators don't take advantage of vulnerable people, again, such a critical area. Residential treatment is proven to work, and I am a big proponent of facilities that allow people to recover with dignity in a community setting. Again to the Minister of Health: will you commit here and now to requiring addiction treatment centres to be accredited by Accreditation Canada or another reputable agency?

The Acting Speaker: The Minister of Health.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. We'll certainly take the member's advice under advisement. We're working to make sure that we've got opportunities for all, and certainly when public funding is available, it should be put in a way that ensures safety for all as well as when individuals are reaching into their own pockets. Like all Albertans, I want to ensure that when somebody I care about needs medical help, it's done in a safe and respectful way. I welcome the recommendation from the hon. member and will be happy to report back on progress to this House.*

Age 55-plus Residential Buildings

Ms Goehring: Madam Speaker, I firmly believe in the rights of Albertans to not face discrimination based on their age. Older Albertans should also be able to live together in a community of people who are at a similar stage of life. I have personally advocated for the residents of Edmonton-Castle Downs by bringing forward the importance of inclusive legislation while respecting the 55-plus adult-only condo request of constituents. To the Minister of Justice and Solicitor General: what is the ministry doing to support 55-plus adult-only condos in Alberta?

The Acting Speaker: The Minister of Justice and Solicitor General.

Ms Ganley: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker and to the member for the important question. Based on our consultations over

the summer, we know that many Alberta seniors choose to live in seniors-only buildings, both condos and rental. That's why we've moved forward ensuring that our legislation protects those sorts of buildings so that those folks can continue to live together. I'd like to thank all members of this House and the member in particular for advocacy on this issue in terms of buildings in their constituency and people they've been hearing from. I think we were able to strike a good balance here.

Thank you very much.

The Acting Speaker: First supplemental.

Ms Goehring: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Given that this change will affect something as important as housing for thousands of my constituents, to the same minister: for those who are in a 40-plus adult-only condo building, can they transition to a 55-plus adult-only condo building?

The Acting Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms Ganley: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker and to the member for the important question. We know that many Albertans have made significant investments on the basis of bylaws in place at the time when they purchased those condos. That's why we're protecting the status quo for existing age-restricted buildings for a 15-year transition period. Those buildings will be able to transition to 55-plus if they feel inclined to do that, and they can make that transition whenever they like. At this point those individuals who are living there who would be below that limit will be grandparented in for a period of time, and we think this strikes a good balance between the rights of Albertans.

The Acting Speaker: Second supplemental.

Ms Goehring: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I have also heard concerns about when these proposed changes would come into effect. To the same minister: can you please provide a timeline of when residents would see these changes take place?

The Acting Speaker: The Minister of Justice.

Ms Ganley: Thank you, Madam Speaker and to the member for the question. If the legislation is passed by this House, the new rules will apply immediately to rental buildings. However, when it comes to condo buildings, as I've mentioned, we are proposing a 15-year transition period. We are also protecting benefits for seniors and youth so that those programs can continue to provide a benefit to those groups.

Thank you very much.

The Acting Speaker: The hon. Member for Vermilion-Lloydminster.

2:10

Methane Emission Regulations Alberta Energy Regulator Application Timelines

Dr. Starke: Well, thank you, Madam Speaker. After promising an imminent release of draft methane regulations three times, the Energy minister has announced that discussion groups will go back to the drawing board with new committee members. This oversight committee has invited CAPP, CNRL, Ecojustice, and the Environmental Defense Fund to the discussion table for the first time, so clearly these regulations are nowhere near ready for release. This process has dragged every step of the way with promises of draft regulations in the summer, then September, then November, and now who knows when? Will the minister finally

*See page 1977, right column, paragraph 9

admit that the draft regulations are nowhere near completion and commit to a timeline for release?

The Acting Speaker: The hon. Minister of Energy.

Ms McCuaig-Boyd: Thank you, Madam Speaker. What I will admit is that we've worked very hard with industry to develop industry and environment groups to develop a 45 per cent reduction in methane. I mentioned last week and I'll mention again that these regulations are about to come out very soon. There will be a period of reaction to them before the final regs come out. This second group is just a last look before these regs come out.

Dr. Starke: Well, Madam Speaker, with respect, very soon was last summer, the first time we heard that promise.

Given that Lloydminster is the heavy oil capital of the world and our innovative producers developed the cold heavy oil production with sand extraction technique, better known as CHOPS, and given that the new methane regulations could jeopardize CHOPS production, resulting in massive job losses and economic damage to Lloydminster and area, to the minister: will you commit to reviewing the proposed new methane regulations with Lloydminster-area producers in order to minimize the impact of the potential negative impact of these regulations?

The Acting Speaker: The Minister of Energy.

Ms McCuaig-Boyd: Thank you, Madam Speaker. You know, we are working, as I mentioned, with industry and a number of groups such as CAPP and many of the oil and gas industry players for a made-in-Alberta solution because the alternative is that we will get an Ottawa-imposed solution if we do not do that. We are taking steps to reduce that pollution. We know that we have to balance industry needs with the certainty they need, but we also have to get this done. We're using facts, science, and innovation to accomplish this.

Dr. Starke: Well, Madam Speaker, let's talk about innovation. Given that the producers in the Lloydminster heavy oil region have already begun the process of transitioning to a less methane intensive thermal flood extraction process and given that seven of these new thermal plants have recently been approved, all in Saskatchewan where the approval process takes 12 to 18 months compared to the AER's record of over four years, to the minister. This discrepancy hurts heavy oil production in Alberta and certainly doesn't make life better for Albertans. Will you commit to streamlining the AER's approval process?

The Acting Speaker: The Minister of Energy.

Ms McCuaig-Boyd: Thank you, Madam Speaker. The AER has had the lead on this along with my department, along with the Ministry of Environment and Parks. We have worked with industry, both heavy oil, traditional oil, oil sands, and we have the regulations coming, as I've said, very soon. I invite any of you folks over there to have your constituents look at these regulations, provide feedback before the final regulations come out.

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

Lacombe Hospital and Care Centre

Mr. Orr: Thank you, Madam Speaker. The Health minister will recall that in the spring there was a standards of care audit at the Lacombe long-term care centre. This was triggered because nursing students on practicum were so concerned that they spoke out. Eighty standards of care at the facility were breached. Management

personnel were replaced. Families were notified. The Alberta Health Services deputy chief of staff assured me that a public report of findings and, more importantly, solutions to the crisis would be made public. It's now half a year later. When will that report be released?

The Acting Speaker: The Minister of Health.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker and to the member for the question. Albertans deserve to be treated with dignity and respect. Our focus now is and always will be on our residents. We're grateful to the Red Deer College students who came forward with the concerns. That's why immediate steps were taken to investigate the concerns and conduct an audit to ensure that quality care is provided to all residents. PPIC also conducted an investigation. Any Albertan with concerns is certainly asked to raise those. I would be happy to elaborate on additional steps that were taken in the member's supplemental questions.

The Acting Speaker: First supplemental.

Mr. Orr: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Given that at the time of the investigation long-term care managers were put on a leave of absence and interim managers were brought in, then later I was advised by the AHS deputy chief of staff that the managers have been permanently let go and that a search was on for new managers, now six months have gone by, the interim team is still there, and permanent managers are not hired: when will the managers for the long-term care centre be installed, and why has it taken so long?

Ms Hoffman: Madam Speaker, the member is right that three staff were fired in this situation. AHS and Alberta Health auditors have been on-site weekly for six months to monitor facility progress and continue to monitor the situation very closely because we take the safety of all residents very seriously. Thorough health assessments on all 75 residents have been done. A thorough cleaning of the site with guidance from infection prevention and control professionals occurred immediately, and we're continuing to work to make sure that we have the best care long term and in the immediate term for the residents and their families. I'm proud of all the steps to date and look forward to continuing to have great health outcomes there for the years to come.

Mr. Orr: Given that at the time of the crisis the long-term care centre was full and that since the crisis there has been an intake freeze – now there are 19 beds sitting empty, but no new residents have been accepted; applicants would like to get in; patients in the critical care wing should actually be transferred to the long-term care wing but are not; a 90-year-old ailing man's wife has phoned me looking for answers and help – with 19 waiting spaces available, why are patients in need of placement being refused care by AHS? Is this the right care in the right place at the right time?

The Acting Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. We certainly aren't going to do anything that would create any concern for any of those patients. That's why we're making sure that we're moving forward in a thoughtful way to make sure that the staff have the opportunities to be retrained. We've launched a re-education awareness program at the site for all clinical staff. AHS has met with the residents, families, local stakeholders, and community leaders to advise them about the investigation and the actions. We're moving forward thoughtfully and carefully to ensure the safety of all residents. I'm proud of that. I know the members

opposite want to rush quickly towards deep, drastic, brutal cuts that would jeopardize the care of patients, but we aren't going to let that happen. [interjections]

The Acting Speaker: Just a reminder to all members of the House that I can actually hear some of the heckling, and the "tell the truth" part needs to stop, please.

Supportive Living Facility Food Preparation

Mr. Stier: Madam Speaker, earlier this week I asked the current Minister of Health why AHS has been ignoring the order of the previous minister that required supportive living facilities to discontinue reheating frozen meals from off-site and instead bring back on-site fresh food preparation. The response received questioned the validity of my information, with no commitment to order the facilities to immediately begin to serve fresh food. Minister, this problem exists under your watch as the person ultimately responsible for these facilities for the past 31 months. How could you allow this appalling situation to continue for so long?

Ms Hoffman: Well, the member is right that I did question the validity of his statements, and let me tell you why, Madam Speaker. In the past these kinds of accusations have been made, and they have not been accurate. Yet, again, at Willow Creek continuing care centre in Claresholm today 60 per cent of the meals are prepared on-site for residents. That's an increase from the 40 per cent under the previous minister.

Mr. Stier: Well, Madam Speaker, given that both the minister and I recently received a disappointing letter from a relative of a patient in such a facility and given that her father was told that he must wait for fruit as he was the 11th on the list, that he only received three salads in four months, which are supposed to be available six days a week, that beef is either scorched, smells bad, or cannot be eaten, and given that complaints to the advisory councils there are ignored and they seem unconcerned, Minister, what more evidence do you think you need to take action on this issue and restore fresh food?

Ms Hoffman: Well, what the member didn't hear was the answer to the first question, which was that under the former government, his new best friends, 40 per cent of the meals were made locally. We've increased that to 60 per cent. I'm proud of the progress we're making, Madam Speaker. I know he's happy to dance with his new dance mates, but we're working to protect Albertans, including those living in Claresholm. In this instance we've met with the resident and their family. They've been given a tour of the kitchen and talked to about the food and nutrition program on-site. Residents and families in Claresholm are participating in tasting of a new menu and new menu items. Based on their feedback, items may be added to the menu or modified to meet the individual residents' tastes.

Mr. Stier: Madam Speaker, given that regular seniors' lodges serve fresh food without problems but that in AHS facilities there are numerous complaints about poor food quality and given that so far the minister seems uninterested to address the substandard food problem in these facilities and given that the minister has been frequently bragging that her ministry has made promises to provide over 2,000 new supportive living beds, Minister, please kindly tell this House: will those new facilities provide their new residents fresh meals prepared on-site, or will they, too, have no alternative but to eat previously frozen, reheated, mushy food?

2:20

Ms Hoffman: Madam Speaker, I said it in the first question and the second question. We're working with residents and with their families to increase opportunities for their tastes to be addressed and met. That's why it's gone from 40 per cent fresh food to 60 per cent fresh food in this facility in particular and why we're continuing to work with residents and their family members to make sure that their tastes are catered to in a local manner and another reason why I'm so proud we brought forward legislation to ensure that resident and family councils are available throughout Alberta. I'll continue working with families, working with residents, and working with health care providers to provide good-quality, safe living environments for all residents.

Health Care Service Integration

Mr. Barnes: Madam Speaker, for 25 years the government has been saying that integrating physician services with other health professionals will lead to cost savings and better service. Costs have gone from \$4 billion to \$21 billion, and costs are still climbing. Alberta now has some of the longest wait times amongst OECD nations. For many procedures in Alberta the family pet gets better service. To the minister: when will the minister admit that the system is failing, sit down with doctors, and fully integrate their services and fix the problem?

Ms Hoffman: Well, I have to say how proud I am of the work that we've done sitting down with doctors. As a result, one of those doctors is running for us in the by-election, Madam Speaker. Just to clarify for anyone who was wondering, as they were earlier, the doctor did send a note to all of his patients to say that he was taking a leave of absence because he was running. He did clear that with the College of Physicians & Surgeons, and he's proud to let them know what he'll be doing for the next month while they'll be seeing other expert health care providers. But we're working to make sure he has an opportunity to keep giving back in this Chamber.

Mr. Barnes: The Alberta government, going back over two decades, has talked about integrating physician services to better serve Albertans. Given that Al Gore created the Internet in the early 1990s but for some reason our health system still cannot manage to share a patient's medical records unless they're running for the NDP, to the minister: when will the doctors and patients be able to access their patients' medical records on a timely basis?

The Acting Speaker: The Minister of Health.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I imagine that there's an emoji being created up in the press gallery right now to match that very question. We've been working hand in hand with physicians and with patients to make sure we're increasing access to their electronic medical records. That's why we're investing to make that project move forward, so it can be a seamless ownership of information. Just like when your child gets a report card, parents and students have access to that information; it's the same principle that we're moving forward to ensure that patients have access to their information. Instead, the Official Opposition is proposing 20 per cent cuts, which would deeply damage health care, all of the information. None would be there because the . . .

The Acting Speaker: Second supplemental.

Mr. Barnes: When Alberta Health Services was created, it was lauded as a masterpiece of efficiency and the ultimate in integration. It's become a monster, which Health ministers repeatedly have

been helpless to combat. Given that the Auditor General's report on health care states that one of the problems is that the health care system is monitored by administrators and government officials, to the minister: when will this minister stop interfering and increasing bureaucracy and let local experts and allied health care professionals get involved and fix our system?

Ms Hoffman: Madam Speaker, if you want to talk about fixing a mess, ask your own party members because you guys are the ones that created this system. I'm proud to be the one at the charge of fixing it, and I am so proud of the fact that this morning at AAMD and C one of our constituents – one of our constituents – walked up to the mike and said that for the first time he feels that AHS, the department, and the minister are on the same team. That's the side of Albertans, and I'm very proud of that. [interjections]

The Acting Speaker: Hon. members.

The hon. Member for Calgary-Northern Hills.

Calgary LRT Green Line

Mr. Kleinsteuber: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Last week my constituent the Member for Calgary-Greenway stated that I was, quote, surprising constituents by telling them that the provincial portion of the green line funding was coming from the carbon tax. It's true that I would never have said that. However, I did say that the funding is coming from the carbon levy. Could the Minister of Infrastructure please clear up the confusion for the member and clarify how the carbon levy will fund the green line and when the provincial funding was announced?

Ms Jansen: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Well, Calgarians told us that they want to see the green line built, and we are doing exactly that. That's why our government announced \$1.7 billion so that the city can start work on phase 1 of the green line. The majority of funds are coming from the carbon levy. Don't take my word for it, though. Here's what the LRT on the Green Foundation had to say about it: "One of the main reasons the City of Calgary can now begin construction on stage 1 of the Green Line is thanks to . . . the Alberta Government."

The Acting Speaker: First supplemental.

Mr. Kleinsteuber: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would not want to be accused by the Member for Calgary-Greenway of providing, quote, misleading information, so for the benefit of Calgarians could the Minister of Infrastructure please tell us the exact funding breakdown for phase 1 of the Calgary green line?

Ms Jansen: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Well, our government was proud to support the green line LRT with \$1.7 billion in investment. We're getting good help from the federal government. One of their biggest fans, of course, is the Member for Calgary-Greenway, who was quoted as saying on Twitter: God bless Canada for the Liberal government, and it's about time Mr. Sohi got rid of the CPC. [interjections]

The Acting Speaker: Hon. members. [interjections] Hon. members. You can tell it's Thursday.

Second supplemental.

Mr. Kleinsteuber: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Given that I attended nearly every green line consultation on the north end of the project and given that I did not once see the Member for Calgary-Greenway at any of these consultations, where the member could have seen for himself how engaged Calgarians were

designing their green line with city planners, could the Minister of Infrastructure please provide us an explanation as to why the project took two years to plan and explain the advantages of using revenues from the carbon levy?

Thank you.

Ms Jansen: Thank you, Madam Speaker, and thank you to the member. I did not see the Member for Calgary-Greenway there either.

This project is a project that was approved by the city of Calgary. They needed to do the appropriate planning work. We trust the city of Calgary and, of course, all of the folks they consulted with because it is a made-in-Calgary plan for Calgarians who are using this green line. The reality is that without the revenues from the carbon levy the city of Calgary wouldn't be able to begin construction on phase 1 of the green line. Calgarians wanted that green line. We're building that green line. That is exactly how it was supposed to be.

Hospital Heliport Capital Funding

Mr. van Dijken: Madam Speaker, the judge overseeing the fatality inquiry has called for the restoration of helicopter landings at the Fort McMurray hospital with all due haste after the landings were discontinued a decade ago for upgrades and compliance as Transport Canada shut down numerous Alberta hospital helipads in 2007. Former Premier Prentice announced a new 5 and a half million dollar helipad for Fort McMurray's hospital in October 2014. To the minister: what is the holdup?

The Acting Speaker: The Minister of Health.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. It is absolutely true that we care deeply about ensuring that all Albertans have access to the EMS services they need in all parts of this province, and that means that we have to have newer, faster, safer air equipment and safe places for individuals to be able to land.

With regard to this very specific helipad I'll be happy to get further details and table in this House with regard to this very specific question. If there are other specific questions, I certainly welcome members to call my office about their specific local issues. We definitely have an open line in the Alberta Health office.

2:30

Mr. van Dijken: Given, Madam Speaker, that Budget 2013 allocated \$26 million over three years to fix the provincial heliports and given that Budget 2015 allocated \$23 million over two years to fix the provincial heliports and that now Budget 2017 has \$10 million over two years to fix the provincial heliports, to the minister. The heliports were supposed to be fixed in 2015. Instead, the NDP kicked the can down the road, and now a judge has called you out for the delay. What is going on in your department preventing you from getting these things fixed?

Ms Hoffman: With regard to the first question that was asked, let me make sure I update the information that the hon. member has. The truth is that AHS announced that construction would begin this year in the spring, so the construction is moving forward. It is true that this didn't happen for decades under the former Conservative governments in this province. You might want to ask your caucus mates about that. It's also true that we're continuing to invest to ensure that Transport Canada's regulations are in accordance with what's in the best interests of Albertans, which are safety and ensuring that they can land helicopters at health care facilities. But,

really, with your issues about the past you need to ask your colleagues.

Mr. van Dijken: Madam Speaker, given that CN can replace a major bridge near Mayerthorpe in all of 20 days, a lot faster than this province takes to fix hospital helipads shut down by Transport Canada in 2007, and seeing as how the judge said, quote, there are many circumstances under which rapid helicopter transport to the hospital would contribute greatly to the saving of lives, end quote, why is the minister contributing to the increased risk of death and poor health outcomes in Fort McMurray and other communities by increasing travel times and delaying access to care?

Ms Hoffman: You know, Madam Speaker, over the last two years we've worked diligently to make sure that there is investment to ensure the proper health care services and opportunities throughout the province, including in a number of opposition ridings, including in the community of Fort McMurray. At the same time, the members opposite vote against those budgets that put those very dollars into providing that safety. It's pretty rich for the members opposite to advocate for 20 per cent cuts and tell us that we're not moving fast enough, but – you know what? – I don't care. I'm going to move forward taking care of Albertans, providing them the very best care, including that helipad in Fort McMurray, that's already been announced.

The Acting Speaker: The hon. Member for Innisfail-Sylvan Lake.

Opioid Addiction Treatment in Central Alberta

Mr. MacIntyre: Thank you, Madam Speaker. This government does not understand the serious drug problem consuming our province and its impact on central Alberta. Vulnerable Albertans are reaching for drugs, destroying their families and their own lives in the process. They need our help, they need our compassion, yet the NDP refuses to declare the opioid crisis the public health emergency that it is. Minister, there are 440,000 people in central Alberta facing a lack of services and a lack of a plan to address the drug problem. Why doesn't this government care for them?

Ms Hoffman: Madam Speaker, nothing could be further from reality. For years Sylvan Lake was promised better health care services by the Conservatives. Nothing was delivered. I'm proud that we're finally bringing better access to health care to the town of Sylvan Lake. You know what? We're doing that in other towns across the province as well because we care about all Albertans and ensuring they get access to the care that they need, where they need it. You know what drives our decisions? Taking care of people and making sure we've got their backs. You know what drives opposition decisions? Headlines and 20 per cent cuts. There is no way that I'm going to allow that to happen. I'm going to make sure that we continue to move forward protecting Albertans, protecting the front-line providers that serve them, and making sure that we give them better health outcomes.

Mr. MacIntyre: Drug use and abuse is a serious issue destroying families. Given the associate minister's remarks here earlier this week that "substance use is a medical condition that requires a health care response" and given the fact that central Alberta has been neglected by this government and is still not receiving anything close to an adequate health care response, to the associate minister. Central Alberta doesn't need empty words; they need action. When will you provide the health care response that the families in my riding need?

Ms Hoffman: Everyone who is using substances is loved by somebody. That's why, Madam Speaker, we're moving forward to make sure that we do have a health care model to provide that increased support, just like yesterday's announcement of new opioid dependency treatment options. You know what? We're not going to stop there. We're going to keep moving forward to make sure that Sylvan Lake has opportunities for the urgent care that they need so that they don't have to travel to specific isolated communities. Here's what Susan Samson, who's chair of the Sylvan Lake and Area Urgent Care Committee, said:

I cannot put into words, how exciting and momentous this news is – that this government has recognized our community's need, and reinforced [the community's] commitment to providing enhanced health [care] services to our region.

I'm proud to do that work for all.

The Acting Speaker: Second supplemental.

Mr. MacIntyre: Thank you. The question is about drug use and abuse, Minister.

Given that drug-fuelled dependency can escalate to increased social and health concerns, which further strain our already maxed-out health care system, and given that this government talks about having the right treatment in the right place at the right time but misses on every one of those metrics in a health care system that habitually ignores the health needs of rural Alberta, to the minister: when can central Alberta expect the same level of treatment as big cities?

Ms Hoffman: Well, the mayor of Sylvan Lake, Sean McIntyre, said, "Today, the provincial government has proven that not only did they hear us, but they've listened [to us]." These are the kinds of municipalities in the hon. member's riding that we are proud to be working with, proud to be making sure we're giving them the care that they need, where they need it. We are moving forward with actions and with real results and with a budget that shows that we care about communities. That's why we have a reasonable path to get to balance in 2023, that's why we won't be firing nurses and teachers, like the members opposite are pushing, and that's why we're continuing to improve access for opioid dependency treatments through a patient health home model, all of which I'm very proud of.

Alberta Health Services Laundry Service

Mr. Hunter: Madam Speaker, a little over a year ago the government interfered and stopped an AHS decision to use a private contractor to take care of their laundry services. AHS was concerned about the decaying state of their infrastructure. In order to stop the creation of private-sector jobs, this government had to spend what was estimated at between \$54 million and \$200 million in order to keep the laundry in-house. That would equate to between \$400,000 and \$1.5 million of taxpayers' dollars per full-time job. Minister, how much did it end up costing taxpayers to keep the laundry service facilities in the public realm?

Ms Hoffman: The previous government left Albertans with a significant amount of deferred maintenance in our hospital laundries, as they did with many parts of our health care system. And you know what, Madam Speaker? When the hon. member talks about creating jobs in the private sector, he's talking about firing people working in hospitals, washing our sheets, and making sure that the environments that our residents and our patients are living in are safe and clean. I'm not going to apologize for providing the same level of care, the same jobs, and the same opportunities for Albertans

in rural communities, just like we are in urban communities. I'm proud of the fact that we're working in a sustainable way to provide consistent service for all Albertans.

Mr. Hunter: Madam Speaker, given that it was more than the Official Opposition pointing out that the NDP were making an ideological decision when it came to laundry services and given that outsourcing laundry services does not pose a threat to the public health care system and given that doing so would have actually saved taxpayers' money, which could have been spent on the health care system, it begs the question: does the minister value public-sector jobs more highly than private-sector jobs even if they are providing the same service?

Ms Hoffman: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Let me explain what the member opposite is advocating for. He's advocating for me to lay off hundreds, probably thousands of laundry workers in rural communities throughout our province and centralizing that service to a private provider in the big cities. To those women and men working diligently to clean the sheets, to make sure that the residents have a safe place to live and work, I say thank you. We respect you. We respect the work you do in your local communities, and we've got your back. The members opposite should take note.

Mr. Hunter: Madam Speaker, given that it is impossible to sustain a stable public sector without a vibrant private sector that is growing and creating tax revenues and given that this government's spending is saddling taxpayers with enormous debt that will need to be paid off and given that this government has stated that they will balance the budget at some future date, how does the minister plan on balancing the budget while still decreasing wait times?

Ms Hoffman: Let's remember what the member opposite is calling for. He's calling for us to fire hundreds and thousands of local workers in rural communities and to move those jobs to the private sector in the big cities. Instead, we're working on a site-by-site basis to ensure these services are protected. This, hon. members, is an attack on working people in our health care system. It's the same old angry name-calling and outsourcing that they've done in the past. We believe hospitals need to be clean. They need to have clean sheets, equipment to keep patients safe. Jason Kenney isn't hiding what he said time and time again. They want a private health care system in Alberta. Instead, we're protecting the one we've got.

The Acting Speaker: The hon. Member for Highwood.

2:40 Postsecondary Education Funding

Mr. W. Anderson: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Alberta's postsecondary students and administration are worried. With no indication about what will be happening with tuition for the coming year, institutions are being forced to plan for significant cuts because of no backfill. To the Minister of Advanced Education: how long does the government plan on keeping students, administrators, and academics in the dark?

The Acting Speaker: The hon. Minister of Advanced Education.

Mr. Schmidt: Well, thank you, Madam Speaker, and thank you to the member for the question. Perhaps the member thought that he was asking the Minister of Health a question and didn't realize that it was theme day, but I'm happy to talk about postsecondary education. We've kept tuition frozen for three years because we're making sure that every Albertan has access to an affordable education regardless of the amount of money that they have in the bank, and we are

committed to continuing to do so in the future. We're looking at a number of ways to continue to promote accessible, affordable education for our higher education system in this province.

Mr. W. Anderson: Well, Madam Speaker, given that Alberta's colleges, universities are planning for the future – well, they're trying to – and given that they do not know how much base funding this government will provide and they do know that if they will be able to raise tuition, they don't know when they might, and they don't know what to do, would the Minister of Advanced Education please enlighten us as to when the students and institutions will have the indication of their future funding?

Mr. Schmidt: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Of course, we are going to be making those announcements very soon. I would like to inform everybody listening about what Jason Kenney's plans for higher education would mean. It would mean shutting down the University of Alberta. It would mean shutting down the University of Calgary. It would mean shutting down NorQuest College. It would mean shutting down Bow Valley College. In fact, it would shut down every university and college in this province, and they still would need to find money in the budget because that's how big the cuts that they're proposing are.

Mr. W. Anderson: Madam Speaker, given that 19 months ago this minister stated in this House – and one can read it in *Hansard*, April 7, 2016, at 2:40 – that the tuition review would start “in the fullness of time,” well, to the Minister of Advanced Education: what does the “fullness of time” mean to you? Please enlighten us.

Mr. Schmidt: Well, Madam Speaker, I don't know what the member's problem is. We are committed to keeping the deadline that I gave them on April 7, and we are still committed to doing that. We will be making the announcement in the fullness of time. We're still on track to meet that commitment, but I would remind everybody again that if they had the opportunity to get their hands on the budget of the postsecondary education system, they would close down every university and college in this province.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you, hon. members.

Minister of Health, did you want to appoint a supplemental to the hon. Member for Calgary-Elbow?

Addiction Treatment Facility Oversight

(continued)

Ms Hoffman: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I just wanted to confirm for the Member for Calgary-Elbow that there is indeed a process under way to ensure that we do have regulations. It is proving to be cumbersome for that specific project, but we're working on it. We look forward to being able to update this House and all Albertans about our progress.*

The Acting Speaker: Thank you, hon. members. I'll give you 30 seconds to leave.

The hon. Member for Calgary-Shaw.

Members' Statements

(continued)

2017 Football Championships

Mr. Sucha: Thank you, Madam Speaker. It's November in Canada, which means football playoffs are under way. The talk of the town has been the University of Calgary Dinos win over UBC and Niko

*See page 1972, left column, paragraph 5

DiFonte's 59-yard field goal. This game came with a lot of excitement, interceptions caused by balls bouncing off body parts, and a fourth quarter that saw both teams trade off the lead. But with no time left on the clock, DiFonte broke a U Sports record and broke social media by successfully kicking a nearly impossible field goal without the wind to assist. Credit to Coach Wayne Harris for having faith in his players and to quarterback Adam Sinagra for his amazing play, that propelled the Dinos to a 44 to 43 win. The Dinos will have a rematch this Saturday against Laval Rouge et Or to determine who will advance to the Vanier Cup in Hamilton.

Madam Speaker, further to this, I look forward to attending the 105th Grey Cup in a few weeks. During this festival many great groups from Alberta will showcase our hospitality, including the Spirit of Edmonton and the Calgary Grey Cup Committee. Since Calgary's original Grey Cup win the Calgary Grey Cup Committee has showcased western hospitality by visiting schools, conducting public outreach, and holding its annual pancake breakfast, a Calgary tradition. They are also responsible for the horse in the hotel lobby that is seen every year, and I thank them for their hard work.

On a final note, one absolute, with the CFL west final occurring, is that for the fourth straight year Alberta will be represented in the big game in Ottawa. This shows the first-place Stampeders battling against the Edmonton Eskimos, who had a record seven straight wins to open the season.

There is one thing, however, that overshadows these games and the remarkable Canadian players who participate in this. "Edmonton Eskimos" is a serious concern, the name, for some of our indigenous leaders. I support the league, and I am attending the Grey Cup for the ninth time, but I do call on this community-owned team to take this concern seriously.

With that said, I look forward to an exciting weekend as Alberta prepares to play host for the Grey Cup in Edmonton in 2018.

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

Political Action Committees

Drever: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Albertans deserve to know who is trying to influence their elections, and that's why our government's first act was to take big money out of politics and make our election system more fair and transparent by banning union and corporate donations, imposing strict spending and contribution limits, and bringing in new accountability measures for third-party advertisers.

But despite all this work, there are folks out there who are dead set on returning Alberta back to the same system of entitlement that Albertans rejected last election, and the person who thinks that they're the most entitled to take Alberta backward and make their own rules is Jason Kenney. I've heard from constituents who've told me that they want elections decided based on the ideas, not corporate money and the size of a bank account. Our government answered their calls, but maybe Jason Kenney missed the memo since he's been accepting big corporate donations to his PAC from outside of the province since day one. Madam Speaker, Albertans deserve better than Jason Kenney's and the Conservatives' dark-money PACs trying to spend their way back to power.

What's clear is what the Conservatives' priorities are. It's not what's best for Albertans; it's only what's best for them and their wealthy friends and insiders. Even though Jason Kenney and the Conservatives have claimed that they don't have any policies, we all know, based on their actions lately, that that's just not true.

With the by-election coming up, I thought I'd help them out a little bit so their leaflets aren't empty. Jason Kenney told us that his first priority is massive tax giveaways for their richest friends and insiders

and brutal cuts for everybody else. Next on the agenda: outing kids in schools who want to join a GSA. But one of his biggest priorities of all is refusing to release his donors and ensuring that dark money and big money stay in politics.

Madam Speaker, Albertans have a choice in front of them. Do they want a government that's making life better and more affordable, or do they want those Conservatives' entitlement, with one set of rules for wealthy insiders and another set for everyone else?

Thank you.

Presenting Petitions

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

Mr. Westhead: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Today I rise to table a petition containing nearly 2,000 signatures from Alberta residents, that's been approved by Parliamentary Counsel. The petition reads as follows:

We, the undersigned residents of Alberta, petition the Legislative Assembly to urge the government to declare a moratorium on logging in the Upper Highwood near the junctions of Highways 541, 40, & 940 immediately and urge the Government of Alberta to assess the impact of clear-cutting in all of Kananaskis.

Over the long-term we ask the Government of Alberta to invite conversations with Albertans to consider the environmental value of our wild lands and watersheds for water quality, tourism, low-impact recreation compared to clear-cut logging.

The Acting Speaker: The hon. Member for Airdrie.

Mrs. Pitt: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise to table a petition today, two of them, actually, having 326 online signatures and 1,233 paper signatures in support of the use of more nurse practitioners in our rural communities right across this province.

2:50

Introduction of Bills

The Acting Speaker: The hon. Minister of Justice and Solicitor General.

Bill 26

An Act to Control and Regulate Cannabis

Ms Ganley: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. It's a privilege for me to rise today and introduce for first reading Bill 26, An Act to Control and Regulate Cannabis. They tell me that Weed Control Act was already taken.

Madam Speaker, cannabis is set to become legal across our country in July 2018. Despite the tight timeline our province is on track to meet that deadline. We have developed a framework to legalize cannabis that Albertans told us they support. With the input of tens of thousands of Albertans we developed a system that reflects their views and values and will protect our children, prioritize our health and safety, and limit the illicit market. The amendments in this bill mark one of the first important steps in establishing that system.

I'm proud of the work we have done so far, and I ask that we move first reading of Bill 26. Thank you.

[Motion carried; Bill 26 read a first time]

Tabling Returns and Reports

The Acting Speaker: The hon. Member for Airdrie.

Mrs. Pitt: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I have two tablings today. The first one – I have the appropriate copies here – is from the Greenwood Family Physicians, in support of the increased use of a sustainable funding model for nurse practitioners.

The second tabling I have is from the AAMD and C, in support of a sustainable funding model for nurse practitioners in Alberta as well.

The Acting Speaker: The hon. Minister of Transportation.

Mr. Mason: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I would like to table in the House on behalf of the hon. Premier the response to Written Question 14, which was accepted May 2017.

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

Mr. Ceci: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am pleased to table the required number of copies of the Report of Selected Payments to the Members and Former Members of the Legislative Assembly and Persons Directly Associated with Members of the Legislative Assembly, also known as the MLA report. This is tabled for the year ended March 31, 2017, pursuant to the Legislative Assembly Act and the Conflicts of Interest Act. The disclosure of MLA payments ensures that we remain accountable for public dollars, that they are spent responsibly and in accordance with legal and ethical standards. Information listed in the report includes salary, expenses, benefits, allowances, fees for serving on standing committees of the Legislative Assembly, and travel expenses while travelling on MLA or government business.

I have several other tablings as well for written questions. Madam Speaker, it's my pleasure to table the response to the MLA for Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills' Written Question 11: "What is the total dollar amount of public property lost due to theft in each Ministry in each fiscal year from 2012-13 to 2016-17?"

Madam Speaker, it's my pleasure to table the response to the MLA for Strathmore-Brooks' Written Question 12: "What groups were given an invitation to the Government's Budget 2017 consultations?"

The next one it's my pleasure to table is the response to the MLA for Strathmore-Brooks' Written Question 13: "As of March 1, 2017, how many individuals were employed by the Government, and of that number how many were classified as managers or above?"

The next one it's my pleasure to table is the response to the MLA for Strathmore-Brooks' Written Question 15: "As of March 1, 2017, what was the unfunded liability for each of the following public sector pension plans: the Local Authorities Pension Plan, the Public Service Pension Plan, the Management Employees Pension Plan, and the Special Forces Pension Plan?"

Mr. Mason: You don't have to read them all.

Mr. Ceci: The House leader wants me to hand these over, and I will.

Mr. Mason: You have to say which ones, which questions they are.

Mr. Ceci: Oh. Okay. This is on Written Question 16. It has to do with money on carbon offsets the government of Alberta spent.

The last one is Motion for a Return 17 for the MLA for Strathmore-Brooks, requesting copies of the budget restraint memos issued by the government between April 1, 2013, and March 1, 2017.

It's my pleasure to table all those.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Centre.

Mr. Shepherd: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I'm pleased to rise today and table five copies of the Conference Board of Canada's

Metropolitan Outlook for Edmonton. It shows that things, indeed, in Edmonton are looking up: retail jobs are up, jobs are up, housing starts are up. The report states, "Edmonton's real GDP is expected to increase by 3.9 per cent in 2017," the first increase in three years and, I think, due to the steady support of our government.

Thank you.

The Acting Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-Shaw.

Mr. Sucha: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I'm pleased to table five copies of ATB Financial's economic and research team's publication titled Restaurant and Bar Receipts Continue to Impress. It shows that things are up in Alberta. In this publication it states that restaurant sales are up. "Albertans spent \$771 million at restaurants and bars across the province . . . [That] total was more than \$1 million higher than the previous record set the previous month."

The Acting Speaker: Oh, sorry, hon. member. The hon. Member for Calgary-Mackay-Nose Hill.

Ms McPherson: Starting to feel like a gopher.

Thank you. I'd like to table a document titled The Interactive Impacts of High School Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs) on College Student Attitudes toward LGBT Individuals: An Investigation of High School Characteristics, authored by Meredith G. F. Worthen. I referenced this during the Bill 24 debate earlier this week.

Tablings to the Clerk

The Clerk: On behalf of the Hon. Ms Notley, Premier, response to Written Question 14, asked for by Mr. Fildebrandt on May 1, 2017.

On behalf of the Hon. Ms Phillips, Minister of Environment and Parks and minister responsible for the climate change office, return to order of the Assembly MR6, asked for by Mr. MacIntyre on May 1, 2017.

On behalf of the Hon. Ms Ganley, Minister of Justice and Solicitor General, pursuant to the Legal Profession Act the Law Society of Alberta annual report 2016; pursuant to the Fatal Accidents Act, review of damage amounts, fall 2017; responses to written questions 4 and 6, both asked for by Mr. Cyr on May 1, 2017.

The Acting Speaker: I believe there was one point of order. The hon. Leader of the Official Opposition.

Point of Order Imputing Motives

Mr. Nixon: Thank you, Madam Speaker, for the opportunity to rise on this point of order. I rise, for the benefit of the Government House Leader, on 23(h) and (i). Earlier today in response to a question from me to the Premier – at the time that I raised the point of order, the Premier was, from my perspective, certainly implying that I was misleading the House or not telling the truth in regard to her government being found in contempt of this Legislature. Certainly, she was making an allegation against me as another member of this House when she said that, and she was also imputing false motives as to my question.

3:00

The reality – and I don't want to belabour the point of this on Thursday afternoon – is this. If you look at page 1609 of the November 1, 2016, *Hansard*, Madam Speaker, you will see a ruling from the Speaker of this Assembly that makes it very clear.

In this case pursuant to Standing Order 15(6) I find that there is a prima facie question of privilege, which may be called a question

of contempt, as the dignity of this Assembly was offended by the actions of the government in publicizing certain aspects of Bill 20 and presuming its passage prior to the bill making its way through the legislative process.

This government was found in contempt of this Legislature for its actions. I was there when that decision was made. I certainly would appreciate why the Premier would not want to talk about it, but the reality is that in no way was I misleading with the facts. It was a dark day in our legislative history and certainly a day, I'm sure, the government would like to forget, but the reality is that they were found in contempt.

With that said, they clearly were offended by me raising that, so I will happily withdraw my point of order.

Mr. Mason: Well, Madam Speaker, that's a neat trick, to stand up and put on the record a point and then withdraw the point, which has no basis at all. I don't know what we can do in the future to prevent that kind of manipulation of our rules, but I suggest that we do put our minds to it, because if you want to make a point of order in this place, you should stand up and you should be clear that you're making a point of order and not claim to be making a point of order just to make some kind of a member's statement.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister and Government House Leader. At this time it has been withdrawn, but I hear your concerns, and we can discuss it in the future.

Orders of the Day Government Motions

The Acting Speaker: The hon. Government House Leader.

Committee Referral for Conflicts of Interest Act

32. Mr. Mason moved:
Be it resolved that:
1. The Conflicts of Interest Act be referred to the Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship, and the committee shall be deemed to be the special committee of the Assembly for the purpose of conducting a comprehensive review pursuant to section 48 of that act;
 2. The committee may without leave of the Assembly sit during a period when the Assembly is adjourned or prorogued;
 3. The committee may take into consideration any material prepared for or submissions provided to the Select Special Ethics and Accountability Committee;
 4. In accordance with section 48 of the Conflicts of Interest Act the committee must submit its report to the Assembly within one year after beginning its review, and that report is to include any amendments recommended by the committee.

Mr. Mason: Thanks, Madam Speaker. As background I should indicate that the Conflicts of Interest Act currently in place includes a requirement that a committee of the Assembly undertake a comprehensive review every five years.

[The Deputy Speaker in the chair]

In accordance with section 48 of this act this review must begin by December 1, 2017. Motion 32 allows for that review to begin in time to meet that obligation.

The Deputy Speaker: Any other members wishing to speak to the motion?

Seeing none, the hon. Government House Leader to close debate?

Mr. Mason: No. Thanks.

[Government Motion 32 carried]

Evening Sittings

33. Mr. Mason moved:
Be it resolved that pursuant to Standing Order 4(1) commencing November 27, 2017, the Assembly shall meet on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday evenings for consideration of government business for the duration of the Third Session of the 29th Legislature 2017 fall sitting unless the Government House Leader notifies the Assembly that there shall be no evening sitting that day by providing notice under Notices of Motions in the daily Routine or at any time prior to 6 p.m.

[Government Motion 33 carried]

Government Bills and Orders Second Reading Bill 28 School Amendment Act, 2017

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Minister of Education.

Mr. Eggen: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I appreciate the opportunity to move second reading of Bill 28, the School Amendment Act, 2017, here this afternoon.

Through Bill 28 our government intends to make life better for Alberta students. The Alberta School Act has served our province's students, schools, and communities for over three decades. The amendments within this bill will help to ensure that it continues to do so well into the future.

The amendments included in this legislation align with the government's commitment to make life better for Albertans in general and for our students specifically. Building on the strengths of our school system, we will continue to build a modern, inclusive education system that prepares students for success, ensures fair and equitable access to education, and continues to support the closing of the achievement gap for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students.

The amendments have been arrived at through careful consideration as well as consultation with stakeholders and education partners. In short, these amendments will help to bring the School Act up to date with other pieces of legislation and pave the way for future changes that will further support students' success.

A key theme in these amendments is changes that will help to ensure that schools and school authority leadership are supported in leading modern, inclusive, and prudently administered schools. Bill 28 does this in several ways, but the primary focus is on changes that would support enhanced professional practice standards for principals, superintendents, and school jurisdiction leaders.

This act will help us to establish a set of certification requirements for principals and superintendents in the province. Once these standards, which would describe the leaders' professional competencies, are also in place, we will be on our way towards more consistent practice and therefore more consistent outcomes for Alberta students.

The amendments related to principal and superintendent certification will come into force on September 1, 2019, if the bill is passed, ensuring that school authorities and school leaders will have time to prepare and adapt for the certification process. I believe, Madam Speaker, that this could be the very first set of standards for superintendents and district leaders in the entire country of Canada.

Bill 28 also specifies that school boards will be required to develop and implement a code of conduct that applies to school board trustees. The minister will be able to set out a set of principles for these codes of conduct and must specify sanctions for those who breach the code. While we respect and appreciate the amazing work done by elected school boards across the province, this amendment would ensure that provincial legislation recognizes the importance of work done by the trustees. These changes would also better align the expectations of trustees with the expectations of other elected officials as outlined in the Municipal Government Act.

These amendments would come into force on September 1, 2018.

Another one of the priorities in this bill is to ensure fair and equitable access to the education system for all students. That focus on equality of access will begin at kindergarten, and the bill will establish a common age of entry for students beginning their schooling. Right now the age at which a student may start kindergarten is set individually by local school authorities and varies across the province. Bill 28 would set a consistent standard that students must be five years of age by December 31 of the year that they are entering kindergarten.

3:10

Madam Speaker, there is research that shows that older children perform better academically than their younger peers in the same grade. By setting a common age for all students across the province, we will better set up all students for success no matter where they live in the province. We have set a date of September 2020 for this change to take effect, leaving school authorities and families plenty of time to plan for this new standardized age of entry for kindergarten.

We know as well, of course, that we're building our kindergarten curriculum and so forth, and we're building new curriculum in keeping with sort of age-appropriate material. This will help to align our teaching in kindergarten for the kids at a specific age.

Access to the education system stretches well beyond kindergarten, however. Alberta has a very large and growing First Nations population, and for some of the families and students in these communities, attending a provincially funded school may be preferred. In cases like this, where students living on-reserve want to attend a school in a public, separate, or francophone school jurisdiction, an education service agreement, otherwise known as an ESA, is signed between the First Nation and the school authority or school authorities. These ESAs currently vary widely across the province, Madam Speaker. As a result, how these agreements deal with accountability and reporting, renewal practices, and dispute resolution is not consistent from one geographic area to the other.

Bill 28 will allow the Minister of Education to set standards for these ESAs to ensure that students are able to access the provincial education system on equitable terms no matter where they live in the province of Alberta. Giving both school authorities and First Nations clear expectations on how ESAs operate will break down one further barrier that may exist between some students getting the sort of education that they expect and deserve.

But it's also important for me to note that these standards would still allow for significant flexibility to permit the First Nation and the school authority the room to negotiate an agreement that is in the interests of all parties involved. The draft standards have actually been previously consulted on, and they have been widely

supported, with some stakeholders utilizing these draft standards to help guide their current education service agreements. Improving the education outcomes of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students is one of the ministry's highest priorities, Madam Speaker, and I believe that this will help to do exactly that.

Madam Speaker, we are also changing the School Act to increase collaboration around transportation for students, especially in the process around establishing separate school districts. It's important to note that both Catholic and public school board associations, the main voices for issues on this matter, were driving forces behind developing this process outlined in the updated act. They should be commended for this. Certainly, I was very pleased with the outcome. This would provide a consistent approach with standardized timelines and specific steps throughout the process. It will also encourage all parties to work together in close co-operation with the communities in which the establishment is taking place.

We are also updating our financial reporting requirements for private schools to bring them into alignment with practices in public schools. While many private schools already provide this information to Alberta Education, this change would ensure that all schools that accept public dollars are subject to consistent financial reporting expectations, and it would go to ensure greater accountability for public funds that go to our schools.

Madam Speaker, the bill that's before us today also includes a legislative change that is the first step in reviewing transportation eligibility criteria across the province of Alberta. We've heard from stakeholders and parents that the walk limit was too far, especially for young children, and now we're looking for ways to fix this challenge. School boards would still have the legal obligation to provide transportation to students that live within a certain school board boundary according to the specific criteria set by the province.

Our government is committed to working with our education partners to ensure that updated student transportation regulations address the concerns that we have heard from parents, students, and school boards. It's important to note that for the 2017-2018 school year school board obligations won't change. Once the regulation has been put into place, it would be in effect for the 2018-19 school year. We aim to have these eligibility criteria set out early next year so that schools, families, and others will have time to plan for and implement any changes that must be made.

Finally, Madam Speaker, there are a number of small amendments in this bill that are largely administrative in nature. Many of them focus on bringing the School Act up to date and to align with other pieces of legislation. For example, this includes matching the changes to the Municipal Government Act that have changed election timing for school trustees. These smaller amendments would come into force upon passage of the bill.

Madam Speaker, I hope that this provides a useful description of the amendments proposed in Bill 28 and explains how these changes will be able to bring improvements to the students, who are at the core of our education system. Ultimately, these changes are done to ensure that education remains strong, accountable, and serves the public of Alberta in the strongest way possible.

I hope that you will stand with me and support this bill as it supports the students of our province. I look forward to constructive debate on this particular bill, Madam Speaker. With that, I move that debate be adjourned on this bill this afternoon.

[Motion to adjourn debate carried]

Government Bills and Orders Committee of the Whole

[Ms. Jabbour in the chair]

The Chair: I'd like to call the Committee of the Whole to order.

Bill 29
An Act to Reduce Cannabis and Alcohol
Impaired Driving

The Chair: Are there any questions, comments, or amendments with respect to this bill? The hon. Member for Edmonton-Whitemud.

Dr. Turner: Thank you, Madam Chair. It is my pleasure to rise to start the deliberations of the Committee of the Whole on Bill 29, which is an act to reduce cannibal – I think we want to reduce cannibalism, too, don't we? I don't know. Can you get that corrected in *Hansard* or not? I'm going to be labelled as being in favour of cannibalism, aren't I? These guys aren't smiling over there. I don't know why.

Mr. McIver: We weren't listening.

Dr. Turner: Anyways, Bill 29, An Act to Reduce Cannabis and Alcohol Impaired Driving. I'm pleased to be a cosponsor of this along with the MLA from Red Deer-South. You know, this is an update of the Traffic Safety Act, that will ensure that Alberta is ready to apply provincial sanctions when the federal government gets its act together in terms of the legislation that's going to have to be in place by next July.

I think an important thing to consider is that impaired driving is impaired driving no matter what the substance is that is impairing the physical or mental capacity of the driver. Albertans have expressed concern about a perceived potential for an increase in impairment when cannabis and other similar agents are combined with alcohol. It's important that this province basically have a robust program of penalties and roadside detection processes in place. Impaired driving is unacceptable, dangerous. We know that it's a plague, and it kills and injures thousands of Albertans every year.

3:20

Our government's goal – and this would be shared, I'm sure, by all members of this Legislature – is to move as quickly as possible to zero impairment-related collisions and fatalities on Alberta's roads. It's the first step to being ready for the legalization of cannabis. There are going to be more steps coming. The details that are in this legislation are basically what are needed to prepare our law enforcement agents and the justice system as well as the Transportation ministry for the federal government's legislation.

I think one of the things that I wanted to bring up today is that these administrative penalties are also being changed as a result of the decision of the Court of Appeal of the province of Alberta, in which the Court of Appeal said that having an indefinite licence suspension was not constitutional. Our government, at least the Ministry of Justice and Solicitor General, decided not to appeal that decision; therefore, by early next year we have to have administrative penalties that would fulfill the mandate of that court decision. I think that having a fixed administrative penalty, as is in this legislation – if a driver is found to be impaired by alcohol or by any other substance and, following that fixed suspension, if the driver does want to go back to driving, to have an interlock system that would prevent someone that had consumed alcohol from operating the vehicle is very rational.

As I mentioned in second reading on this, it's important to also recognize that this legislation also applies even if the operator of a vehicle who is thought to be impaired by law enforcement refuses to provide a blood sample or a breath sample. The refusal to blow

will not circumvent the intent of this legislation. It's not so much to get those drivers off the road as to really put into Albertans' minds, who are considering going and operating a vehicle after they've consumed intoxicating substances, a second thought. Perhaps they should think about not driving, to use a taxi, to use the help of a designated driver, or to organize their social activities such that they don't involve using a vehicle.

It's that attitudinal change that I'm hoping will pervade this province. I think that if we can get people's attitudes changed about the acceptability of operating a motor vehicle after the consumption of intoxicating materials and make that, basically, a moral and ethical situation where it just is unacceptable to do that, I think that will be one of the best outcomes of this legislation.

There are particular situations in which this legislation I think really is going to make a difference, too, and one of those situations is with the young person who is acquiring their first driver's licence. That situation you can call the graduated licence situation. Basically, in that context there is zero tolerance for the consumption of intoxicating materials before one operates a vehicle. If a person in possession of a graduated licence does break the rules in that situation, there are going to be significant repercussions for that individual. If we can catch these 18-year-olds, 17-year-olds, 16-year-olds and get their attitudes changed, that's going to reverberate over the years. They are going to be the role models for their younger brothers and sisters coming up or their friends who haven't yet acquired a licence and will make our roads a lot safer.

I think that this gets around this concern about: well, is cannabis really as intoxicating as alcohol, and, you know, are illegal drugs really the problem? I think what we'd want to focus on or what I'd like to focus on in this bill is making it unacceptable and, in a sense, illegal to operate a motor vehicle and put the general public at risk of significant injury and harm, not to mention the terrible toll in property damage, not to mention the terrible toll that I can speak to personally of posttraumatic stress disorder, dealing with the carnage that some of these terrible motor accidents lead to among our first responders, among our nurses. They are the ones that have to deal with most of the quote, unquote, dirty work in this. I mean, we doctors get to come in and look like we're running the show most of the time, and most of the time the nurses have done all of the work. I think the Member for Banff-Cochrane can back me up on that.

It isn't just the fatal accidents on the road; it is all these other repercussions of impaired driving. Again, I mentioned this the other day: Mothers Against Drunk Driving, MADD, the folks that have the red ribbon that I've got on my lapel, the victims, the survivors, if you wish, of these terrible accidents that have to live with the consequences for years and years and years. I think it's really important that we get on with this.

Now, there is part of this that we didn't discuss in great length in second reading, but this refers to the Alberta Transportation Safety Board. We're also taking the opportunity as we make amendments to the Traffic Safety Act to update and streamline some of the processes and procedures of the Alberta Transportation Safety Board. The board is the final administrative authority for decisions about drivers' licences for motor vehicles. They review the conduct of unsafe or high-risk drivers, including impaired drivers, and determine sanctions and hear appeals of decisions made by law enforcement and the registrar of motor vehicle services.

The first proposed amendment would clarify how the board would reconsider its decisions. Upon application the board would have to grant one reconsideration but only if the circumstances of the appeal have substantially changed since the original decision. Now, in the past there have been repeated appeals to this board, and it has basically delayed – it's like deferring your taxes. This is

basically that you're delaying a judgment here. I'm really pleased that this loophole, that some of the defence bar has utilized to allow impaired drivers to continue to operate vehicles, is going to be closed. Decisions already reconsidered would not be considered again. That said, drivers always have the right to appeal a board decision to the court.

3:30

Another proposed amendment will remove the authority of the board to hear appeals on court-imposed driver's licence suspension. This would align with other quasi-judicial boards in Canada. Drivers may always appeal their court-imposed suspension to a higher level of court.

Finally, the Minister of Transportation would be authorized to make regulations respecting the use of electronic documents and e-signatures.

Most of the other amendments are administrative in nature and would clarify incorrect references and processes. It's important to note that the Alberta Transportation Safety Board has both requested and is in full support of these changes. These amendments are absolutely necessary to ensure continued safety of everyone who uses Alberta's roads. The purpose of the bill is to make our roads as safe as possible for all road users and to prevent impaired driving as this country prepares for the legalization of cannabis. As I said before, the goal is to see zero impairment-related collisions and fatalities on Alberta roads. This is a process. We're going to work towards that. It will come in the fullness of time, as has been suggested in response to one of the questions during question period, but the fullness of time will hopefully be as short as we can make it.

A robust system of immediate sanctions has been proven to be one of the greatest deterrents for impaired driving. Updating the Traffic Safety Act now ensures that Alberta's impaired driving sanctions reflect the new proposed federal offences, and Alberta would be able to continue to effectively deter impaired driving.

Anyway, in conclusion, I would encourage all members of the Legislature to support Bill 29, and I look forward to the ongoing discussions of this bill. Thank you.

The Chair: Any other questions, comments, amendments? The hon. Member for Bonnyville-Cold Lake.

Mr. Cyr: Thank you, Madam Chair. Bill 29, An Act to Reduce Cannabis and Alcohol Impaired Driving. You know, I just want to note that it does seem that we're rushing this process, and I'm not blaming the Alberta government and the NDP for this. I am blaming our federal counterparts, the Trudeau Liberals.

Now, I'd like to start off this speech with a quote based on a press release done by the Alberta government. Alberta to Bolster Drug-impaired Driving Laws: that's the name of the release. I'd like to quote the Minister of Transportation.

Impaired driving due to alcohol, cannabis or any other impairing drug or combination of drugs, is the leading criminal cause of death and injury in Canada. These tragedies are entirely avoidable. Alberta's impaired driving laws aim to reduce the number of impaired drivers on our roads, encourage safe driving behaviour and strongly discourage impaired driving.

Those are very strong words, and I wholeheartedly agree with our Minister of Transportation that this is something that we need to identify, that we need to move forward.

Now, the problem that we've got here is that impaired driving is a societal problem, and we do need to address this. I do go to a report done by Stats Canada. The report's name is Police-reported Crime Statistics in Canada 2015. I'm going to quote this throughout my speech here.

Drug offences involving cannabis continued to decline in 2015. In total, the overall rate of police-reported offences involving the possession, trafficking, production and distribution of cannabis decreased by 15% between 2014 and 2015.

So we're actually seeing a decrease. Now, I'm not sure if it's just that the law enforcement is deciding that cannabis is no longer a priority that they need to start cracking down on or that maybe, possibly, the harder drugs are something that they need to focus on.

It goes on to say:

In contrast, offences involving the possession, trafficking, production or distribution of methamphetamines grew 25%.

These are the fentanyl and the other things that are really, really terrible, the ones that are actually killing people. So I understand why the RCMP would shift their focus away from a drug that probably isn't killing people to drugs that are killing people, killing lots of people. I think we're over 300 as we speak right now. Now, what's interesting about this is that we're seeing a decrease in the conviction rate of cannabis charges.

It goes on to say:

Almost all police-reported impaired driving incidents continued to involve alcohol in 2014 (96%) while a small proportion (4%) involved drugs.

We see that the vast majority of these convictions for impaired driving are alcohol related. The vast majority. Is it because we can test for alcohol and we can't test for cannabis? I believe that is the true problem here. What we've got here now is a drug that we have no way of being able to really test impairment on. This goes back to my point on the reckless actions of our Prime Minister, Prime Minister Trudeau. By bringing in legalization of cannabis with no way of being able to make sure that our roads are safe or our job sites are safe, this is a problem.

Now, this bill goes on to state a lot of important things like saying that it's important that we identify that driving under the influence is wrong. Well, if we're not coming up with how this is illegal and in what way for the individual, we're putting a law forward where we have no way of actually holding people to account. This is not like alcohol, where we can give them a test, take that test to a court, and then they lose their licences. They may lose their family's income. But there is a result from this impairment: we get them off the roads. We put the public's safety first.

Now, it goes on to say:

Unlike the overall decline in impaired driving between 2014 and 2015, the number and rate for almost all drug impaired driving violations increased.

They're actually saying in this article that driving under the influence of alcohol is decreasing right now but that drug impairment is increasing. Now, does that mean our society is possibly moving away from alcohol impairment and going to drug impairment? This is something that can only get worse.

In total, there were 2,786 drug impaired driving violations in 2015, 268 more than the previous year. Despite a 10% increase in rate . . .

That's alarming, a 10 per cent increase in rate.

. . . the rate of drug impaired driving (7.8 per 100,000 population) remained low compared with the rate of alcohol impaired driving [which is] 193 per 100,000.

We're seeing again that wonderful difference I was telling you about, that 96 per cent right now are being charged with alcohol convictions, 4 per cent with drug convictions. That's, I would argue, in my opinion, because we can't test for marijuana impairment or cannabis impairment.

The low rate for drug impaired driving may be partly explained by the fact that determining and measuring the level of drug impairment can be more difficult and less reliable than the measures used to detect alcohol impaired driving.

3:40

This is within the report that I'm quoting right now. It is actually acknowledging that right now we have a gap. We can't test reliably for the amount of impairment with drugs. Now we're legalizing this and we are going to be putting people behind the wheel, saying: we're still working out how this is going to play out.

What we've got here is that, overall, Alberta has decreased by 9 per cent when it comes to our impaired driving rates, declined by 9 per cent. This is within the same report. So we're seeing all impairments going down, but our percentage of drug related is going up. At some point we have to acknowledge that cannabis use behind the wheel and not being able to test for any sort of impairment with a reliable test is a problem, a problem that needs to be addressed.

I would like to see our Minister of Justice ask the Prime Minister to slow down this process. Where did this arbitrary number of July 21, 2018, come from? Why are we rushing towards that date?

Now, I understand and I have been told that when the Prime Minister was elected, we saw a spike in convictions of cannabis use right after the election. That's because what happened is, from my understanding, that just because Prime Minister Trudeau was elected, suddenly cannabis use was legal. Obviously, that's flawed because we need to go through the legislation. This is more complex than just suddenly being elected and cannabis being legal.

Now, I'm very sad to see that we're moving at such an alarming rate. We need to identify how to close this gap before we start to legalize, and again we need to push back on the federal government, saying that it's not just taxes that are a problem with this. I hear that the province is pushing back on the fact that there is going to be a 50-cent tax per gram on each side. Why should the province, who does all of the work, only get half the tax? So we're pushing back on taxes, but why are we not pushing back on the date that this is all moving forward on or it becomes legal?

The Prime Minister needs to demonstrate that we can ensure that our roads and our work sites are safe. He needs to demonstrate that, and the only way to demonstrate that is to have a reliable test to hold people to account. We have seen that there is already a disproportionate number of people that are being charged under impaired driving convictions for alcohol use, and again that's because we can test. Until we can test this, why would we move forward?

Now, again, I stated right off the bat that I do have sympathy for the Alberta government because they're told by the federal government that this is the route that we have to go. We have to legalize by July 1. But we do need to acknowledge that there is a serious gap. We are putting people at risk, and until we can test for this, I am going to say that we're probably going to find that we're going to see a spike in potential fatalities on the roads.

I had a constituent come to me about a month ago. Their family was leaving the Bonnyville area – this is a sad story – going to Edmonton, driving to Edmonton. What happened was that a young 24-year-old who was impaired, from my understanding, both with alcohol and drugs struck them head-on. Tragically, out of this family – there was a father, a mother, a child, and a grandmother – the grandmother passed. It's a terrible story. Now, the day that this constituent came to my office was a year from the date that his mother had passed. He was saying that he really feels that there is a problem in Alberta. He also felt that our victims of crime fund was not actively being able to represent them as well, but that's a different problem.

We have examples of impairment that are causing deaths within Alberta. We also have another quote stating that impaired driving is one of the leading causes of death within Canada. So we're now going to be adding a whole new genre or group of people that are going to be impacted. I understand why MADD would be upset that

we are now allowing the potential for more impaired drivers. We've got concerned people that are saying that marijuana, or cannabis, is something that needs more time. We need more research. We need to be able to make sure that our job sites and roads are safe so that an example like that young family within my constituency doesn't happen within your own constituencies.

To strengthen this legislation, what we need to start doing is looking at how we put in limits. Let's start by making sure that if a person is suspected of being under the influence of cannabis, we are able to ensure that they're not on a job site unsafe and they're not on the roads unsafe as well. Again, you know, I think that we all want to get home safely. Every Albertan wants to be able to go to work and come home and be able to hug their families and spend that time. But when you've got a literal bullet on the highway, where somebody is unable to make reasonable decisions within a snap of a finger, you end up with fatalities, and I don't think anybody wants that.

It's not that I'm saying that Bill 29 is a bad bill – actually, I probably will be supporting this bill – but I will say that we need to ensure that there is a rule to hold people to account. If we can't hold people to account, then all that's going to happen is that we're going to have a large spike in fatalities, and we're going to say: well, we saw it; we saw this coming.

And you know what? Really, it's the federal government's fault. Well, I don't think that we can solely put the fact that we've got a problem here on their shoulders, but we do need to acknowledge that the Trudeau Liberals are a big part of this. Why is your government not pressing harder? Why are we not sending delegations to Ottawa to ensure that that July 1 deadline gets pushed back so that we have the time to make sure that we get these appropriate tests done so that we can ensure that our roads and our job sites are safe? This seems to be a gap within the government.

Now, I have to commend the Premier for going to B.C. to promote our pipeline, but we also need that Premier to be going to Ottawa and speaking with the Prime Minister, explaining that this is an unreasonable time frame. Let's bring safety and accountability and integrity back. We can't allow something like this to move at an accelerated rate just because the Prime Minister feels that we can pick an arbitrary date out of the air to somehow be able to, I guess, fulfill a campaign promise that was made before thought was put into it. I can say that there were a lot of people that were pressuring the Prime Minister to have this done a lot earlier, which is even more shocking.

3:50

What I'm trying to get at here is that we really need to ensure that our roads – our roads – are safe. If we can't test for impairment, then we are taking the risk that people are going to be driving unsafely on that road, and we are unable to take them off when they are unsafe on the road.

Madam Chair, I just want to reiterate, in final, that it's not just our local MLAs that need to be debating this. It needs to be something that we take as a serious thing going forward because lives in Alberta matter.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

The Chair: Hon. members, before we proceed, would there be any objection to returning briefly to Introduction of Guests?

[Unanimous consent granted]

Introduction of Guests

(reversion)

The Chair: The hon. Member for Wetaskiwin-Camrose.

Mr. Hinkley: Thank you, Madam Chair. I rise to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly council members from Mackenzie county. If you would please rise, we would like to give you the traditional welcome applause of all members of the Assembly. Please rise.

Thank you.

The Chair: I love it when I have visitors from my constituency. It doesn't happen often.

Bill 29
An Act to Reduce Cannabis and Alcohol
Impaired Driving
(continued)

The Chair: The hon. Member for Edmonton-McClung.

Mr. Dach: Thank you, Madam Chair. I rise to briefly make some remarks this afternoon with respect to Bill 29, an Act to Reduce Cannabis and Alcohol Impaired Driving. In September of this year there was a 40-year anniversary of the class of 1977 of Queen Elizabeth composite high school that was attended by one of the members of that class who is a member of this Legislature as well, that being the Member for Vermilion-Lloydminster. Now, I wasn't a member of that graduating class, but he was. He was in grade 10 when I was in grade 12. I thought I might attend that reunion last September, but I wasn't able to.

There was somebody else who was not able to attend that 1977 40-year class reunion from Queen Elizabeth composite high school. That individual was the graduating class president for that year. That individual, who was the grad class president, had been killed in a car accident in a collision caused by a drunk driver six months after he graduated from that high school. That individual was my brother Kevin Dach. Kevin was my younger brother, and in that criminal collision his 17-year-old life was snuffed out.

I can tell you that we've been talking about the effects that drunk driving or impaired driving has on families, and I don't think there's a family represented by the members in this Legislature that has not been touched by impaired driving. I can tell you honestly that the family that my brother belonged to remains deeply touched by his death and the tragedy of that lost promise that was created by the reckless action of somebody who got behind the wheel while impaired. The individual was charged and convicted of drunk driving and received a \$1,500 fine and six-month licence suspension. There possibly was marijuana involved – I'm not sure – but as we've said in this legislation, impairment is impairment. I'm very pleased to see these measures go forward.

I know that the Member for Vermilion-Lloydminster remembers my brother well. He was attending Lakeland College, wanting to be a park warden. Of course, that never came to fruition, but we were able to place his ashes in Jasper national park, above the place where they had a field trip during his class training at Lakeland College. I do manage to usually get there every year and visit the site, knowing that they're placed in a spot where he would have hoped to have worked, had he had the opportunity to live a normal lifespan without it being cut short by somebody's reckless actions.

Members opposite talk to me about whether this legislation is happening too fast, whether maybe we should be waiting for an adequate test to be determined before we move forward with it. I agree that the timelines are tight – I think that all provinces across this country know that the timelines are tight – but I don't say: too fast. I say: giddy-up.

Members opposite like to talk about business opportunities and letting private business find solutions to problems. Well, guess

what? Here's one. Let's get private business and/or government labs going on this right away. There's a heck of a business opportunity. If you solve the issue of testing for cannabis in a person's blood system and come up with a good test solution, you're going to have a very profitable business on your hands.

As we approach Grey Cup day – November 27, 1977, was the date that a drunk driver killed my brother as well as two others in the same car. So three dead, one injured for life and changed forever. It happened on Grey Cup day in 1977. All were students at Lakeland College, full of promise, and every family affected horribly by it. Every member of this Assembly knows how it affects families, and those that have been directly affected, really never forget and always are affected by the death or tragic injury of a loved one.

I seldom will have a drink if I'm going to drive, and I do ask myself whenever I'm at a function: how many joints or drinks would I like my airline pilot to have before they get into the cockpit? That's the question we should be asking ourselves and Albertans when we talk about how much tolerance there should be for any alcohol or impairment substances we might put into our system before deciding to get behind a wheel. Personally, I'd like to see zero tolerance extended to everybody who happens to get behind the wheel. That may be a point we get to at some point. Ultimately, I'd hope we get there.

But for the moment I'm glad to support this legislation. I do hope that we do elicit the business community to recognize a business opportunity and develop a test system very quickly, and I hope that we are able to find something that satisfies the scientific needs for proving charges in court. In the meantime implementing the legislation now will act as a deterrent and save lives even as we seek a reliable test method.

So enjoy yourselves this holiday period, Grey Cup period, but I suggest that you employ zero tolerance in your habits when you decide to get behind a wheel for all the reasons that you've outlined or have seen outlined before you today.

Thank you.

The Chair: The hon. Member for Banff-Cochrane.

Mr. Westhead: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'd like to thank the Member for Edmonton-McClung for sharing that very personal story and also all of the other members who have participated in the debate this afternoon. This bill is very wide ranging. A lot of us would also benefit from continued conversations with our constituents.

With that being said and seeing the hour, I would move that the committee now rise and report progress.

[Motion carried]

[The Deputy Speaker in the chair]

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

Ms Luff: Thank you, Madam Speaker. The Committee of the Whole has had under consideration a certain bill. The committee reports progress on the following bill: Bill 29.

The Deputy Speaker: Does the Assembly concur on the report?

Hon. Members: Aye.

The Deputy Speaker: Opposed? So ordered.

The hon. Member for Banff-Cochrane.

Mr. Westhead: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Just seeing the hour and the incredible, robust debate we've had this afternoon – I also

understand that the roads around the province might be a little bit icy today – in consideration of that, I'd like to move that we adjourn the House until 1:30 p.m. on the Monday following the constituency week.

[Motion carried; the Assembly adjourned at 3:59 p.m. to Monday, November 27, at 1:30 p.m.]

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

Activity to Thursday, November 16, 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*)

Second Reading — 105-10 (*Mar. 8, 2017 morn.*), 192-96 (*Mar. 9, 2017 aft.*), 235-42 (*Mar. 14, 2017 morn.*), 269-71 (*Mar. 14, 2017 aft.*), 273-74 (*Mar. 15, 2017 morn., adjourned*), 282-91 (*Mar. 15, 2017 morn., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 424-31 (*Mar. 21, 2017 aft.*), 556-58 (*Apr. 6, 2017 aft., passed*)

Third Reading — 674-78 (*Apr. 19, 2017 aft., passed*)

Royal Assent — 879 (*May 4, 2017 aft.*) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2017 c6]

Bill 2* — An Act to Remove Barriers for Survivors of Sexual and Domestic Violence (Ganley)

First Reading — 67-68 (*Mar. 7, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 110-11 (*Mar. 8, 2017 morn.*), 192 (*Mar. 9, 2017 aft.*), 314-22 (*Mar. 15, 2017 aft.*), 336-39 (*Mar. 16, 2017 morn., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 455-59 (*Mar. 22, 2017 aft., passed with amendments*)

Third Reading — 678-79 (*Apr. 19, 2017 aft., passed*)

Royal Assent — 879 (*May 4, 2017 aft.*) [Comes into force May 4, 2017; SA 2017 c7]

Bill 3* — Voluntary Blood Donations Act (Hoffman)

First Reading — 208 (*Mar. 13, 2017 aft., passed.*)

Second Reading — 323-36 (*Mar. 16, 2017 morn., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 394-400 (*Mar. 21, 2017 morn.*), 421-24 (*Mar. 21, 2017 aft., passed with amendments*)

Third Reading — 472-80 (*Mar. 23, 2017 aft., passed on division*)

Royal Assent — (*Mar. 30, 2017 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force Mar. 30, 2017; SA 2017 cV-5]

Bill 4 — Appropriation (Supplementary Supply) Act, 2017 (\$) (Ceci)

First Reading — 191 (*Mar. 9, 2017 aft, passed*)

Second Reading — 306-07 (*Mar. 15, 2017 aft., adjourned*), 322 (*Mar. 15, 2017 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 389-93 (*Mar. 21, 2017 morn.*)

Third Reading — 449-52 (*Mar. 22, 2017 aft., passed on division*)

Royal Assent — (*Mar. 30, 2017 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force Mar. 30, 2017; SA 2017 c2]

Bill 5 — Appropriation (Interim Supply) Act, 2017 (\$) (Ceci)

First Reading — 266 (*Mar. 14, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 310-14 (*Mar. 15, 2017 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 393-94 (*Mar. 21, 2017 morn.*)

Third Reading — 452-55 (*Mar. 22, 2017 aft., passed on division*)

Royal Assent — (*Mar. 30, 2017 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force Mar. 30, 2017; SA 2017 c1]

Bill 6 — Northland School Division Act (Eggen)

First Reading — 524 (*Apr. 4, 2017 aft., passed*)
Second Reading — 558-61 (*Apr. 6, 2017 aft., passed*)
Committee of the Whole — 671-74 (*Apr. 19, 2017 aft., passed*)
Third Reading — 755-59 (*May 2, 2017 morn., passed*)
Royal Assent — 879 (*May 4, 2017 aft.*) [Comes into force May 4, 2017; SA 2017 cN-5.1]

Bill 7 — An Act to Enhance Post-secondary Academic Bargaining (Schmidt)

First Reading — 552 (*Apr. 6, 2017 aft., passed*)
Second Reading — 679-81 (*Apr. 19, 2017 aft.*)
Committee of the Whole — 810-15 (*May 3, 2017 morn.*), 828-38 (*May 3, 2017 aft., passed*)
Third Reading — 865-66 (*May 4, 2017 morn., passed*)
Royal Assent — 879 (*May 4, 2017 aft.*) [Comes into force May 4, 2017, with exception; SA 2017 c4]

Bill 8* — An Act to Strengthen Municipal Government (S. Anderson)

First Reading — 577 (*Apr. 10, 2017 aft., passed*)
Second Reading — 691-700 (*Apr. 20, 2017 morn.*), 716-22 (*Apr. 20, 2017 aft.*), 780-84 (*May 2, 2017 aft., passed on division*)
Committee of the Whole — 784-95 (*May 2, 2017 aft.*), 838-45 (*May 3, 2017 aft.*), 855-65 (*May 4, 2017 morn., passed with amendments*)
Third Reading — 991-1004 (*May 11, 2017 morn.*), 1101-06 (*May 16, 2017 aft.*), 1107-10 (*May 17, 2017 morn., passed on division*)
Royal Assent — (*Jun. 7, 2017 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force on various dates; SA 2017 c13]

Bill 9 — Marketing of Agricultural Products Amendment Act, 2017 (Carlier)

First Reading — 606 (*Apr. 11, 2017 aft., passed*)
Second Reading — 683-87 (*Apr. 20, 2017 morn., passed*)
Committee of the Whole — 687-90 (*Apr. 20, 2017 morn., passed*)
Third Reading — 759-62 (*May 2, 2017 morn., passed*)
Royal Assent — 880 (*May 4, 2017 aft.*) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2017 c5]

Bill 10 — Appropriation Act, 2017 (\$) (Ceci)

First Reading — 670-71 (*Apr. 19, 2017 aft., passed on division*)
Second Reading — 690-91 (*Apr. 20, 2017 morn.*), 700-02 (*Apr. 20, 2017 morn.*), 722-23 (*Apr. 20, 2017 aft., passed*)
Committee of the Whole — 762-67 (*May 2, 2017 morn.*), 795-97 (*May 2, 2017 aft., passed*)
Third Reading — 799-810 (*May 3, 2017 morn.*), 845-47 (*May 3, 2017 aft., passed on division*)
Royal Assent — 880 (*May 4, 2017 aft.*) [Comes into force May 4, 2017; SA 2017 c3]

Bill 11* — Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblower Protection) Amendment Act, 2017 (Gray)

First Reading — 771 (*May 2, 2017 aft., passed*)
Second Reading — 849-55 (*May 4, 2017 morn.*), 924-39 (*May 9, 2017 aft., passed*)
Committee of the Whole — 1072-77 (*May 16, 2017 morn.*), 1092-1101 (*May 16, 2017 aft.*), 1168-69 (*May 18, 2017 morn., passed with amendments*)
Third Reading — 1199-1202 (*May 23, 2017 morn., passed*)
Royal Assent — (*Jun. 7, 2017 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force on proclamation, with exceptions; SA 2017 c11]

Bill 12* — New Home Buyer Protection Amendment Act, 2017 (S. Anderson)

First Reading — 877 (*May 4, 2017 aft., passed*)
Second Reading — 939-44 (*May 9, 2017 aft.*), 945-56 (*May 10, 2017 morn., passed*)
Committee of the Whole — 956-62 (*May 10, 2017 morn.*), 1004-1008 (*May 11, 2017 morn.*), 1008-10 (*May 11, 2017 morn.*), 1111-20 (*May 17, 2017 morn., passed with amendments*)
Third Reading — 1169-71 (*May 18, 2017 morn., passed*)
Royal Assent — (*Jun. 7, 2017 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2017 c10]

Bill 13 — Securities Amendment Act, 2017 (Ceci)

First Reading — 893 (*May 8, 2017 aft., passed*)
Second Reading — 977-90 (*May 10, 2017 aft., passed*)
Committee of the Whole — 1027-31 (*May 11, 2017 aft.*), 1065-72 (*May 16, 2017 morn., passed*)
Third Reading — 1137-44 (*May 17, 2017 aft., passed*)
Royal Assent — (*Jun. 7, 2017 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force June 7, 2017; SA 2017 c12]

Bill 14 — An Act to Support Orphan Well Rehabilitation (McCuaig-Boyd)

First Reading — 1090 (*May 16, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1144-52 (*May 17, 2017 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 1225-30 (*May 23, 2017 aft., passed*)

Third Reading — 1244-46 (*May 24, 2017 morn., passed*)

Royal Assent — (*Jun. 7, 2017 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force June 7, 2017; SA 2017 c14]

Bill 15 — Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2017 (Ceci)

First Reading — 1137 (*May 17, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1184-89 (*May 18, 2017 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 1215-25 (*May 23, 2017 aft., passed*)

Third Reading — 1246-48 (*May 24, 2017 morn., passed*)

Royal Assent — (*Jun. 7, 2017 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force on various dates; SA 2017 c15]

Bill 16 — An Act to Cap Regulated Electricity Rates (\$) (McCuaig-Boyd)

First Reading — 1214 (*May 23, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1262-78 (*May 24, 2017 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 1279-91 (*May 25, 2017 morn.*), 1291-97 (*May 25, 2017 morn.*), 1351-58 (*May 29, 2017 eve.*), 1389-1406 (*May 30, 2017 aft., passed*)

Third Reading — 1514-17 (*Jun. 1, 2017 aft., passed on division*)

Royal Assent — (*Jun. 7, 2017 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force June 7, 2017, with exceptions; SA 2017 cC-2.3]

Bill 17* — Fair and Family-friendly Workplaces Act (Gray)

First Reading — 1260 (*May 24, 2017 aft., passed on division*)

Second Reading — 1311-22 (*May 25, 2017 aft.*), 1359-61 (*May 29, 2017 eve.*), 1363-76 (*May 30, 2017 morn.*), 1407-20 (*May 30, 2017 eve.*), 1421-32 (*May 31, 2017 morn., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 1432-36 (*May 31, 2017 morn.*), 1449-66 (*May 31, 2017 aft.*), 1467-79 (*May 31, 2017 eve.*), 1490-99 (*Jun. 1, 2017 morn.*), 1517-20 (*Jun. 1, 2017 aft.*), 1534-51 (*Jun. 5, 2017 aft.*), 1553-67 (*Jun. 5, 2017 eve., passed with amendments*)

Third Reading — 1589-93 (*Jun. 5, 2017 eve., passed on division*)

Royal Assent — (*Jun. 7, 2017 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force on various dates; SA 2017 c9]

Bill 18* — Child Protection and Accountability Act (Larivee)

First Reading — 1388 (*May 30, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1481-90 (*Jun. 1, 2017 morn., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 1567-79 (*Jun. 5, 2017 eve., passed with amendments*)

Third Reading — 1587-89 (*Jun. 5, 2017 eve., passed*)

Royal Assent — (*Jun. 7, 2017 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2017; c8]

Bill 19 — An Act to Protect Gas and Convenience Store Workers (Gray)

First Reading — 1610 (*Oct. 30, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1648-53 (*Oct. 31, 2017 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 1695-98 (*Nov. 1, 2017 aft., passed*)

Third Reading — 1729-31 (*Nov. 2, 2017 aft., passed*)

Bill 20 — Beaver River Basin Water Authorization Act (Phillips)

First Reading — 1610 (*Oct. 30, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1627-35 (*Oct. 31, 2017 morn., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 1655-64 (*Nov. 1, 2017 morn., passed*)

Third Reading — 1728-29 (*Nov. 2, 2017 aft., passed*)

Bill 21 — Agencies, Boards and Commissions Review Statutes Amendment Act, 2017 (Ceci)

First Reading — 1648 (*Oct. 31, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1664-72 (*Nov. 1, 2017 morn., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 1699-1706 (*Nov. 2, 2017 morn., passed*)

Third Reading — 1789-90 (*Nov. 7, 2017 aft., passed*)

Bill 22 — Resident and Family Councils Act (Hoffman)

First Reading — 1648 (*Oct. 31, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1687-94 (*Nov. 1, 2017 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 1706-14 (*Nov. 2, 2017 morn., adjourned*), 1731-32 (*Nov. 2, 2017 aft., passed*)

Third Reading — 1790-94 (*Nov. 7, 2017 aft., passed*)

Bill 23 — Alberta Human Rights Amendment Act, 2017 (Ganley)

First Reading — 1685-86 (*Nov. 1, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1761-69 (*Nov. 7, 2017 morn.*), 1796 (*Nov. 7, 2017 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 1805-15 (*Nov. 8, 2017 morn., passed*)

Third Reading — 1910-17 (*Nov. 14, 2017 aft., passed*)

Bill 24 — An Act to Support Gay-Straight Alliances (Eggen)

First Reading — 1726-27 (*Nov. 2, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1769-74 (*Nov. 7, 2017 morn.*), 1796-1803 (*Nov. 7, 2017 aft.*), 1833-46 (*Nov. 8, 2017 aft., passed on division*)

Committee of the Whole — 1847-55 (*Nov. 9, 2017 morn.*), 1870-75 (*Nov. 9, 2017 aft.*), 1917-19 (*Nov. 14, 2017 aft., passed*)

Third Reading — 1921-35 (*Nov. 15, 2017 morn., passed on division*)

Bill 25 — Regulated Forestry Profession Amendment Act, 2017 (Gray)

First Reading — 1745 (*Nov. 6, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1794-96 (*Nov. 7, 2017 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 1815-19 (*Nov. 8, 2017 morn., passed*)

Third Reading — 1935-36 (*Nov. 15, 2017 morn., passed*)

Bill 26 — An Act to Control and Regulate Cannabis (Ganley)

First Reading — (*Nov. 16, 2017 aft., passed*)

Bill 27* — Conflicts of Interest Amendment Act, 2017 (Ceci)

First Reading — 1831 (*Nov. 8, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1876-78 (*Nov. 9, 2017 aft.*), 1904-10 (*Nov. 14, 2017 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 1936-39 (*Nov. 15, 2017 morn.*), 1955-59 (*Nov. 15, 2017 aft., adjourned*)

Bill 28 — School Amendment Act, 2017 (Eggen)

First Reading — 1953 (*Nov. 15, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1980-81 (*Nov. 16, 2017 aft., adjourned*)

Bill 29 — An Act to Reduce Cannabis and Alcohol Impaired Driving (Mason)

First Reading — 1903 (*Nov. 14, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1959-66 (*Nov. 15, 2017 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 1982-85 (*Nov. 16, 2017 aft., adjourned*)

Bill 201 — Justice System Accountability Act (Jean)

First Reading — 127 (*Mar. 8, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 208-20 (*Mar. 13, 2017 aft., defeated on division*)

Bill 202* — Protecting Victims of Non-Consensual Distribution of Intimate Images Act (Cyr)

First Reading — 245 (*Mar. 14, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 375-86 (*Mar. 20, 2017 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 578-86 (*Apr. 10, 2017 aft., passed with amendments*)

Third Reading — 738-40 (*May 1, 2017 aft., passed on division*)

Royal Assent — 880 (*May 4, 2017 aft.*) [Comes into force 3 months after date of Royal Assent; SA 2017 cP-26.9]

Bill 203 — Alberta Standard Time Act (Dang)

First Reading — 253 (*Mar. 14, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 496-503 (*Apr. 3, 2017 aft.*), 1614-20 (*Oct. 30, 2017 aft., reported to Assembly, not proceeded with*)

Bill 204 — Protection of Property Rights Statutes Amendment Act, 2017 (Stier)

First Reading — 444 (*Mar. 22, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 503-07 (*Apr. 3, 2017 aft.*), 899-905 (*May 8, 2017 aft.*), 1046-50 (*May 15, 2017 aft., reasoned amendment agreed to on division (not proceeded with)*)

Bill 205* — Advocate for Persons with Disabilities Act (Jansen)

First Reading — 552 (*Apr. 6, 2017 aft.*)

Second Reading — 1050-57 (*May 15, 2017 aft.*), 1120-25 (*May 17, 2017 morn., moved to Government Bills and Orders*), 1153-63 (*May 18, 2017 morn., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 1163-68 (*May 18, 2017 morn.*), 1191-99 (*May 23, 2017 morn., passed with amendments*)

Third Reading — 1231-43 (*May 24, 2017 morn., passed on division*)

Royal Assent — (*Jun. 7, 2017 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2017 cA-5.5]

Bill 206* — Child, Youth and Family Enhancement (Adoption Advertising) Amendment Act, 2017 (Aheer)

First Reading — 1024 (*May 11, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1334-45 (*May 29, 2017 aft., passed on division*)

Committee of the Whole — 1747-56 (*Nov. 6, 2017 aft., passed with amendments*)

Third Reading — 1879-82 (*Nov. 14, 2017 morn., passed*)

Bill 207 — Regulatory Burden Reduction Act (Hunter)

First Reading — 1310 (*May 25, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1756-58 (*Nov. 6, 2017 aft.*), 1882-90 (*Nov. 14, 2017 morn., adjourned*)

Bill 208 — Government Organization (Utilities Consumer Advocate) Amendment Act, 2017 (Hinkley)

First Reading — 1512 (*Jun. 1, 2017 aft., passed*)

Bill 209 — Radon Awareness and Testing Act (Luff)

First Reading — 1903 (*Nov. 14, 2017 aft., passed*)

Bill 210 — Missing Persons (Silver Alert) Amendment Act, 2017 (Smith)

First Reading — 1869 (*Nov. 9, 2017 aft., passed*)

Bill Pr1 — Calgary Jewish Centre Amendment Act, 2017 (Kazim)

First Reading — 524 (*Apr. 4, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1110 (*May 17, 2017 morn., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 1110-11 (*May 17, 2017 morn., passed*)

Third Reading — 1261-62 (*May 24, 2017 aft., passed*)

Royal Assent — (*Jun. 7, 2017 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force June 7, 2017]

Bill Pr2 — Paula Jean Anderson Adoption Termination Act (MacIntyre)

First Reading — 524 (*Apr. 4, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1027 (*May 11, 2017 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 1027 (*May 11, 2017 aft., passed*)

Third Reading — 1110 (*May 17, 2017 morn., passed*)

Royal Assent — (*Jun. 7, 2017 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force June 7, 2017]

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