



Province of Alberta

The 29th Legislature
Fourth Session

Alberta Hansard

Tuesday afternoon, May 15, 2018

Day 30

The Honourable Robert E. Wanner, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of Alberta
The 29th Legislature

Fourth 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

Aheer, Leela Sharon, Chestermere-Rocky View (UCP),
Deputy Leader of the Official Opposition
Anderson, Hon. Shaye, Leduc-Beaumont (NDP)
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),
Alberta Party Opposition House Leader
Connolly, Michael R.D., Calgary-Hawthorn (NDP)
Coolahan, Craig, Calgary-Klein (NDP)
Cooper, Nathan, Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills (UCP)
Cortes-Vargas, Estefania, Strathcona-Sherwood Park (NDP),
Government Whip
Cyr, Scott J., Bonnyville-Cold Lake (UCP)
Dach, Lorne, Edmonton-McClung (NDP)
Dang, Thomas, Edmonton-South West (NDP)
Drever, Deborah, Calgary-Bow (NDP)
Drysdale, Wayne, Grande Prairie-Wapiti (UCP)
Eggen, Hon. David, Edmonton-Calder (NDP)
Ellis, Mike, Calgary-West (UCP)
Feehan, Hon. Richard, Edmonton-Rutherford (NDP),
Deputy Government House Leader
Fildebrandt, Derek Gerhard, Strathmore-Brooks (IC)
Fitzpatrick, Maria M., Lethbridge-East (NDP)
Fraser, Rick, Calgary-South East (AP)
Ganley, Hon. Kathleen T., Calgary-Buffalo (NDP),
Deputy Government House Leader
Gill, Prab, Calgary-Greenway (UCP),
Official Opposition Deputy Whip
Goehring, Nicole, Edmonton-Castle Downs (NDP)
Gotfried, Richard, Calgary-Fish Creek (UCP)
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)
Horne, Trevor A.R., Spruce Grove-St. Albert (NDP)
Hunter, Grant R., Cardston-Taber-Warner (UCP)
Jansen, Hon. Sandra, Calgary-North West (NDP)
Kazim, Anam, Calgary-Glenmore (NDP)
Kenney, Hon. Jason, PC, Calgary-Lougheed (UCP),
Leader of the Official Opposition
Kleinstauber, Jamie, Calgary-Northern Hills (NDP)
Larivee, Hon. Danielle, Lesser Slave Lake (NDP),
Deputy Government House Leader
Littlewood, Jessica, Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville (NDP)

Loewen, Todd, Grande Prairie-Smoky (UCP)
Loyola, Rod, Edmonton-Ellerslie (NDP)
Luff, Robyn, Calgary-East (NDP)
Malkinson, Brian, Calgary-Currie (NDP)
Mason, Hon. Brian, Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood (NDP),
Government House Leader
McCuaig-Boyd, Hon. Margaret,
Dunvegan-Central Peace-Notley (NDP)
McIver, Ric, Calgary-Hays (UCP),
Official Opposition Whip
McKittrick, Annie, Sherwood Park (NDP)
McLean, Hon. Stephanie V., Calgary-Varsity (NDP)
McPherson, Karen M., Calgary-Mackay-Nose Hill (AP)
Miller, Barb, Red Deer-South (NDP)
Miranda, Hon. Ricardo, Calgary-Cross (NDP)
Nielsen, Christian E., Edmonton-Decore (NDP)
Nixon, Jason, Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House-Sundre (UCP),
Official Opposition House Leader
Notley, Hon. Rachel, Edmonton-Strathcona (NDP),
Premier
Orr, Ronald, Lacombe-Ponoka (UCP)
Panda, Prasad, Calgary-Foothills (UCP)
Payne, Hon. Brandy, Calgary-Acadia (NDP)
Phillips, Hon. Shannon, Lethbridge-West (NDP)
Piquette, Colin, Athabasca-Sturgeon-Redwater (NDP)
Pitt, Angela D., Airdrie (UCP),
Official Opposition Deputy House Leader
Renaud, Marie F., St. Albert (NDP)
Rosendahl, Eric, West Yellowhead (NDP)
Sabir, Hon. Irfan, Calgary-McCall (NDP)
Schmidt, Hon. Marlin, Edmonton-Gold Bar (NDP)
Schneider, David A., Little Bow (UCP)
Schreiner, Kim, Red Deer-North (NDP)
Shepherd, David, Edmonton-Centre (NDP)
Sigurdson, Hon. Lori, Edmonton-Riverview (NDP)
Smith, Mark W., Drayton Valley-Devon (UCP)
Starke, Dr. Richard, Vermilion-Lloydminster (PC)
Stier, Pat, Livingstone-Macleod (UCP)
Strankman, Rick, Drumheller-Stettler (UCP)
Sucha, Graham, Calgary-Shaw (NDP)
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, Fort McMurray-Conklin
Vacant, Innisfail-Sylvan Lake

Party standings:

New Democratic: 54 United Conservative: 25 Alberta Party: 3 Alberta Liberal: 1 Progressive Conservative: 1 Independent Conservative: 1 Vacant: 2

Officers and Officials of the Legislative Assembly

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

Executive Council

Rachel Notley	Premier, President of Executive Council
Sarah Hoffman	Deputy Premier, Minister of Health
Shaye Anderson	Minister of Municipal Affairs
Deron Bilous	Minister of Economic Development and Trade
Oneil Carlier	Minister of Agriculture and Forestry
Joe Ceci	President of Treasury Board and Minister of Finance
David Eggen	Minister of Education
Richard Feehan	Minister of Indigenous Relations
Kathleen T. Ganley	Minister of Justice and Solicitor General
Christina Gray	Minister of Labour, Minister Responsible for Democratic Renewal
Sandra Jansen	Minister of Infrastructure
Danielle Larivee	Minister of Children's Services
Brian Mason	Minister of Transportation
Margaret McCuaig-Boyd	Minister of Energy
Stephanie V. McLean	Minister of Service Alberta, Minister of Status of Women
Ricardo Miranda	Minister of Culture and Tourism
Brandy Payne	Associate Minister of Health
Shannon Phillips	Minister of Environment and Parks, Minister Responsible for the Climate Change Office
Irfan Sabir	Minister of Community and Social Services
Marlin Schmidt	Minister of Advanced Education
Lori Sigurdson	Minister of Seniors and Housing

Parliamentary Secretaries

Jessica Littlewood	Economic Development and Trade for Small Business
Annie McKittrick	Education

STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Standing Committee on the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund

Chair: Mr. Coolahan
Deputy Chair: Mrs. Schreiner

Cyr	Luff
Dang	McPherson
Ellis	Turner
Horne	

Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future

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

Carson	Littlewood
Connolly	McPherson
Coolahan	Piquette
Dach	Schneider
Fitzpatrick	Starke
Gotfried	Taylor
Horne	

Standing Committee on Families and Communities

Chair: Ms Goehring
Deputy Chair: Mr. Smith

Drever	Orr
Ellis	Renaud
Fraser	Shepherd
Hinkley	Swann
Luff	Woollard
McKitrick	Yao
Miller	

Standing Committee on Legislative Offices

Chair: Mr. Shepherd
Deputy Chair: Mr. Malkinson

Aheer	McKitrick
Gill	Pitt
Horne	van Dijken
Kleinsteuber	Woollard
Littlewood	

Special Standing Committee on Members' Services

Chair: Mr. Wanner
Deputy Chair: Cortes-Vargas

Babcock	Nixon
Cooper	Piquette
Dang	Pitt
Drever	Westhead
McIver	

Standing Committee on Private Bills

Chair: Ms Kazim
Deputy Chair: Connolly

Anderson, W.	Orr
Babcock	Rosendahl
Drever	Stier
Drysdale	Strankman
Hinkley	Sucha
Kleinsteuber	Taylor
McKitrick	

Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections, Standing Orders and Printing

Chair: Ms Fitzpatrick
Deputy Chair: Ms Babcock

Carson	Loyola
Coolahan	Miller
Cooper	Nielsen
Goehring	Nixon
Gotfried	Pitt
Hanson	van Dijken
Kazim	

Standing Committee on Public Accounts

Chair: Mr. Cyr
Deputy Chair: Mr. Dach

Barnes	Malkinson
Carson	Miller
Clark	Nielsen
Gotfried	Panda
Hunter	Renaud
Littlewood	Turner
Luff	

Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship

Chair: Loyola
Deputy Chair: Mr. Drysdale

Babcock	Loewen
Clark	Malkinson
Dang	Nielsen
Fildebrandt	Panda
Hanson	Rosendahl
Kazim	Schreiner
Kleinsteuber	

Legislative Assembly of Alberta

1:30 p.m.

Tuesday, May 15, 2018

[The Speaker in the chair]

The Speaker: Good afternoon. Please be seated.

Hon. members, the RCA Band under the direction of Captain Christopher Embree, CD, will now play a brief musical interlude, *The Arrival of the Queen of Sheba*, originally a sinfonia for two oboes and strings from the oratorio *Solomon* by George Frederick Handel, which premiered in London on March 17, 1749. *Solomon* is rarely performed in its entirety, but Handel's bright and lively *The Arrival of the Queen of Sheba* interlude is a widely appreciated processional set piece.

Please enjoy listening to the Royal Canadian Artillery brass band ensemble performing *The Arrival of the Queen of Sheba*.

[The Premier and the Deputy Sergeant-At-Arms left the Chamber to attend the Governor General]

[The Mace was draped]

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

The Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms: Ladies and gentlemen, all rise, please.

Mr. Speaker, Her Excellency the Right Honourable Julie Payette awaits.

The Speaker: Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms, admit Her Excellency the Right Honourable Julie Payette, Governor General of Canada.

[A fanfare of trumpets sounded]

[Preceded by the Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms, Her Excellency the Right Honourable Governor General of Canada, Julie Payette, CC, CMM, COM, CQ, CD, her party, and the Premier entered the Chamber. Her Excellency took her place upon the throne]

The Speaker: Ladies and gentlemen, I would now invite Mr. R.J. Chambers, accompanied by the Royal Canadian Artillery Band, to lead us in the singing of our national anthem. Please join us in the language of your choice.

Hon. Members:

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

The Speaker: Your Excellency, hon. members, ladies and gentlemen, please be seated.

On behalf of all members and Albertans I am honoured to welcome you, Your Excellency, to the Legislative Assembly of Alberta.

Your Excellency is an outstanding Canadian whose exceptional achievements range across a number of fields. You worked as an astronaut. You flew two missions in space, and you served for many years as a capsule communicator for NASA. You are a scientist and

an engineer of considerable repute and have been active in the educational, sports, and cultural matters of our nation.

1:40

Your Excellency, you are a role model for young Canadians and most especially for young Canadian women. Do not underestimate your influence and your voice, that needs to be heard. You reinforce our confidence and hope in the future of our province and of this great nation we call Canada. We are proud of your appointment as Canada's 29th Governor General.

It is truly a momentous occasion to have the Governor General here with us in our Chamber. It is only the third time in the history of our province that a Governor General has addressed the Legislative Assembly of Alberta. Representing Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, Queen of Canada, Your Excellency's presence here today strengthens the connection between the Crown and our Assembly. The Governor General continues to play an essential role in our constitutional democracy and through official visits such as this helps to bring us together as Canadians, a bond that is not hampered by boundaries but which celebrates our diversity and our strengths from sea to sea to sea.

With great respect for you, your accomplishments, and the esteemed position you hold, I wish to extend Your Excellency the best wishes from all members of this Assembly as you make your way through our great province and as you travel through our beloved country.

I am pleased to invite the Premier to make her remarks to Your Excellency and to all Albertans.

Thank you.

Ms Notley: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Your Excellency, colleagues, distinguished visitors, ladies and gentlemen, what a great pleasure it is for me today to welcome Her Excellency the Right Honourable Julie Payette, Governor General and commander-in-chief of Canada, to this Assembly.

While she is still relatively new to the vice-regal role, having been installed as our 29th Governor General only last October, Mme Payette is very well known to Canadians. We know her best, as the Speaker has already mentioned, of course, as one of Canada's most accomplished astronauts. She flew two space shuttle missions and was the first Canadian to board the International Space Station, she served for many years as capsule communicator to NASA's Mission Control Center in Houston, and from 2000 to 2007 she was Chief Astronaut for the Canadian Space Agency.

Her down-to-earth accomplishments, to name only a few of them, are no less impressive. She was a scholar at the Woodrow Wilson International Center in Washington, DC. She served as the chief operating officer of the Montreal Science Centre. A long-time member of the board of Own the Podium, she was recently appointed to the International Olympic Committee's Women in Sport Commission. She is also a gifted musician and singer and has sung with the Orchestre symphonique de Montréal and Toronto's Tafelmusik Chamber Choir.

Mr. Speaker, Her Excellency's experience as an astronaut has given her the rare privilege of looking upon our wonderful nation in its entirety from the vantage point of outer space. She has seen Canada as we all should strive to see it, as a precious and beautiful gift without lines or divisions. In her unifying role as representative of Her Majesty the Queen, Her Excellency is travelling the nation to meet Canadians of all backgrounds to learn the stories and aspirations of Canada's greatest resource, its people. We are honoured that Her Excellency has chosen to visit Alberta so soon in her tenure as Governor General.

Your Excellency, all Albertans are honoured to receive you as our guest. We hope that you enjoy your visit to our province, and we know that you will experience the great warmth of Alberta hospitality. You will find that Albertans are to the core of their very being proud and committed Canadians. Merci, Votre Excellence, et bienvenue.

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. Premier.

I would now like to welcome Her Excellency the Right Honourable Julie Payette, Governor General of Canada, to address this Legislative Assembly. Your Excellency.

**Address to the Legislative Assembly by
Her Excellency the Right Honourable Julie Payette**

Her Excellency: Merci. Thank you. Mesdames et messieurs, ladies and gentlemen, I first would like to acknowledge that I am on Treaty 6 territory, and very proudly so. Because I cannot speak all the languages of the First Nations of Alberta, I can speak a greeting in the First Nation language of the Algonquins, where Rideau Hall, the residence of the Governor General, is located. [Remarks in Algonquin]

I would like to go down here, if you don't mind, because I am so humbled by the invitation to address this venerable institution and all of you distinguished guests. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Mme Premier, M. chef de l'opposition. I am humbled because I never thought in a hundred years that I would be standing here, truly, addressing you.

The good reason is that I have a long-standing relationship, actually a love relationship with western Canada and Alberta in particular and that for many decades. From the moment I could buy an airplane ticket on my own, I flew from the east because the real skiing is right here. I came to ski, and I discovered something that was really similar to where I came from, the same kind of warmth of people.

Then I got chosen in 1992 to become an astronaut, and they sent us to – you know that province next door? Saskatchewan. They sent me to become a pilot in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, and they sent me to survival training in Jasper Lake, Alberta. It was in November 1993. You may not remember; I do. In November 1993 we went from plus 10 to minus 25 in, like, a day, and we weren't acclimatized. They left us in the forest out there to survive with the contents of the seat pack of an ejection seat to demonstrate that we can actually survive until the rescue folks can come to us. We did. They plucked us out of the forest after a little while, and they took us to Hinton. I have this memory of the best hamburger ever in Hinton, Alberta. It was just so amazing, because we hadn't eaten. It was just Alberta beef, the best. The best.

But that was not the end. I was so impressed by Alberta that when I flew in space in 1999, there were places where I needed to take my crew, and this province was one of them. In 1999, after our flight, which occurred in May, June, we came in the summer here to Alberta. We, of course, went to those places like Ottawa, Montreal, and we even ended up in Nunavut. Nunavut in 1999 had just become a new territory, and we had brought the flag with us into space to honour the new territory.

We came back down, and we landed in Edmonton. We went to see our friends at the science centre and Telus World. We gave a presentation, and then there was a local person who lent us a 1971 Oldsmobile Cutlass, and we took off on highway 2, drove down from Edmonton to Calgary. Six astronauts, five Americans, in one Cutlass. We stopped at the Dairy Queen in Red Deer. Is it still there? It was in the middle of summer. The chinook was there, so it was a really, really nice day. Everybody was out there having an ice

cream, so we came out of the car and we had an ice cream, and it was just amazing, because it is exactly what this is about. Then we ended up in Calgary being received with full honours for the Calgary Stampede and receiving, you know, the warmest of welcomes.

1:50

One of the newspapers in Calgary had taken a photo of me and the pilot of my crew. His name was Rick Husband. We were sitting somewhere. They had a caption underneath that said: Canadian astronaut Julie Payette and rich husband are coming to Calgary. I was, like: all right; I'm getting there. Unfortunately, you may know that Rick Husband was the commander of the space shuttle Columbia, that failed to re-enter the atmosphere in 2003. But he had fond memories of his trip to Alberta.

You're probably wondering why I'm telling you all this. I came again and again and again; I've been everywhere in this province. I've been to Coutts. I've been to Grande Prairie. I've been to Lethbridge. I've been to Fort Smith. That was my last – oh. That's true: Fort Smith is not in Alberta, right? Well, we played a game with my son. Fort Smith, yes, on the map is in the Northwest Territories, but we played that game where we had one foot in Alberta and one foot in the Northwest Territories. Of course, you can't distinguish, right? It's the same soil, the same planet.

That's exactly why I'm talking about this. It's because when we fly in space, that's exactly what we see. We see no distinction. Often the planet makes little distinction except if it's a geographical one. We share a vast, diverse, spectacular country, all of us, and we work together to accomplish things. You do so in this very room every day. We work together so that we can move forward and improve things and so that we can ensure prosperity for all Canadians, including our children, in the future. That's who we are in this country. That's who you are in Alberta, an incredible place.

You have here in this province, more than anywhere else I've ever seen, a culture of open innovation, a resilience, a leadership, a will to move forward no matter what happens. Yet when I think of Alberta, because I've been here so many times, it's mostly the people that I think of. I think of the warmth, of the pride, of the hard-working people of Alberta, and they remind me of other people throughout this country. Then I think of the fact that you're really, really good – I was at the University of Alberta just an hour ago – at developing and exporting talent, excellence, resourcefulness, highly qualified personnel. I know that for a fact.

Actually, I know this first-hand now in this new position. Just last week we had five Albertans that received the Order of Canada, the highest distinction in this country. One of them you might have heard of, Mark Messier, a guy who exemplifies almost alone exactly what this province is all about: hard work, teamwork, and sharing, always.

Ce qui me mène aussi à dire que je suis maintenant dans une nouvelle position, Gouverneure générale, mais un prédécesseur, Roland Michener, from Lacombe, Alberta, was the 20th Governor General. Roland Michener a été le premier décoré de l'Ordre du Canada au monde. Puisque l'ordre a été créé en 1967 et qu'il était le Gouverneur général, donc il a reçu le premier insigne de l'Ordre du Canada. So now, if you did not know this before, then please use that at the next cocktail hour. Yes, the first person that was decorated with the Order of Canada was an Albertan, Roland Michener.

Let me go back to perspective, if I can, for a minute. I know I only have five minutes, so I'm going to go fast. Perspective. One of the greatest privileges that we get when we see the planet from above is to see with perspective, to realize how important and precious home is and how much we need to put in some work.

La planète, c'est tout ce qu'on a. C'est la seule qu'on a encore aujourd'hui, et donc on doit s'en occuper et travailler ensemble pour répondre à ses besoins et à ses défis. Because challenges we have. You know this more than anybody else in this room. There are a lot of challenges, and they're not going to go away. It's through collaboration and it's through the will to make things happen that we move forward.

Oh, by the way, I do have another link with Alberta. You might know that I flew my second mission in space in 2009. At the time, when I arrived onboard the space station, there were people onboard, including a Canadian. The only time so far – this will be rectified in the future – that there have been two Canadians orbiting the planet at the same time, it was me and the chancellor of the University of Calgary. So, again, another connection.

Certainly, you know more than anybody else, because you serve the people of Alberta every day, that we have to be very careful. Things move fast in today's world. Things change. We can't be complacent. We have to always keep our guard up. I know that you will continue to do what you do so well in this room, that you will continue to look out for those who have less, that you will stand up for those who can't, just like those Famous Five, whose mural is right in the middle of the city of Edmonton, who stood up at a time when there was a need for that; that you will continue to do what you do particularly well in this province, welcome people who seek harbour; that you will continue to use, exploit, and share your land intelligently; that you will continue to reach across differences and also seek opportunities for more collaboration and team work; and that you will never cease to base your judgment on facts and evidence, to be curious, and to ask questions, because that is the premise by which we find solutions.

Let's not forget, of course, because that's what we are, to celebrate who we are and what we'd like to become. There is no doubt that this province, in particular, the economic powerhouse of Canada, has made a tremendous contribution in the past to the well-being of our country. Without a strong Alberta, Canada could never reach its full potential in the future.

Thank you for welcoming me into these venerable walls. I actually do feel at home. Merci de m'avoir accueilli si chaleureusement. Thank you for the service that you do for this province and for the entire country.

In closing, I hope you will allow me to use a parting phrase that we flyers use to send each other off on a really important and challenging mission, and that's Godspeed to you all. Merci beaucoup. Merci. [Standing ovation]

I wanted to do this at the beginning, but of course I forgot because I was too impressed. Mr. Speaker, who was so kind to lend me his chair for a few minutes, I brought something that astronauts bring. It's what we do get to see. This here is a picture taken by a colleague of mine two years ago onboard the International Space Station. We see in its entirety, at night, bathed in the beautiful northern lights, the entire province of Alberta. This is the highway we travelled right here. This is Edmonton, Red Deer, Calgary. There's Grande Prairie, and then there's Fort McMurray. We see a little bit of Saskatoon, but don't tell. This is, hopefully, something that will remind you that you inhabit a fantastic world.

Thank you.

The Speaker: Thank you.

Your Excellency, you said that you had five minutes left. Actually, I would be prepared to give you far more time than any other individual in this room. If you were surprised that you were sitting here as our Governor General in this place, you would almost be as surprised as myself, who is a Speaker welcoming the Governor General of Canada. You used the word "spectacular." We

do have a spectacular country, and I think we have a spectacular Governor General.

Thank you, Your Excellency.

2:00

Ladies and gentlemen, I would now invite Mr. R.J. Chambers, accompanied by the Royal Canadian Artillery Band, to lead us in the singing of *God Save the Queen*. Please remain standing at its conclusion.

Hon. Members:

God save our gracious Queen,
Long live our noble Queen,
God save the Queen!
Send her victorious,
Happy and glorious,
Long to reign over us,
God save the Queen!

The Speaker: Au revoir.

[Preceded by the Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms, Her Excellency, her party, and the Premier left the Chamber as a fanfare of trumpets sounded]

[The Mace was uncovered]

The Speaker: Please be seated.

Hon. members, we will now take a two-minute pause before starting our regular Routine. You will have a tough time in the next couple of hours upping that.

Hon. members, on behalf of all of you I will be extending appreciation and thanks to the staff of so many that helped organize this event. It took a lot of commitment and time.

Introduction of Visitors

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Peace River.

Ms Jabbour: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to welcome four important guests seated in your gallery today who were here to watch the address by the Governor General of Canada, and I'd ask that they please rise as I call their names. First, we have Grand Chief Isaac Laboucan-Avirom, the Treaty 8 grand chief and chief of the Woodland Cree; Grand Chief Wilton Littlechild, the Treaty 6 grand chief and member of the Order of Canada and the Alberta Order of Excellence; Audrey Poitras, president of the Métis Nation of Alberta; and Chief Crowchild, chief of the Tsuut'ina Nation. I would ask that they receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Livingstone-Macleod.

Mr. Stier: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you and through you to all members of this Assembly two special visitors. Former MLA Dave Coutts represented my riding of Livingstone-Macleod for three terms, from '93 to 2008. During his 15 years in office Dave served as the minister of government services from 2001 to 2004 and as minister of environment and sustainable resource development from 2004 to 2006. Dave is joined by his grandson today, 12-year-old Graham Morrison. Graham attends Brookside elementary school here in Edmonton and missed his class visit to the Legislature, so his grandfather is making good on his promise to show him around today. I don't think anyone should be surprised to see Graham back here in a more official capacity very soon. They are seated today in the Speaker's

gallery. I'd ask that they please rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of this Assembly.

Introduction of Guests

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Red Deer-South.

Ms Miller: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you and through you the brilliant students from Eastview middle school in the spectacular constituency of Red Deer-South. The students are accompanied by their teachers and chaperones. I would ask them to rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of this Assembly.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Peace River.

Ms Jabbour: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On your behalf I'd like to welcome a number of special guests from around the province who are seated in your gallery today, who were also here to watch the address of Her Excellency the Right Honourable Julie Payette to the Legislative Assembly of Alberta. If these individuals could please rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly: Marichu Antonio; Marlene Poitras; Meeka Otway; Stephen Mandel; Hal Danchilla; David Dorward, former MLA; Erika Barootes; Glen Resler, the Chief Electoral Officer; and Doug Wylie, the Auditor General of Alberta. Please give them a warm welcome.

The Speaker: Welcome.

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Manning.

Ms Sweet: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Through you and to you I'd like to introduce your constituents and close friends Jennifer Kerslake and her mother, Natalie Sauer. They are both committed public servants. Jennifer works for Medicine Hat College and Natalie for the city of Medicine Hat. I'd ask both Natalie and Jennifer to please rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of this House.

2:10

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-Northern Hills.

Mr. Kleinsteuber: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I have three introductions if I may. I'd like to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Legislature Meghan Keating – if you could please rise when I say your name – who grew up in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, and then studied to be an MRI technologist at NAIT here in Edmonton. She has worked in diagnostic imaging for 11 years and recently volunteered on the playground committee in Harvest Hills through the NHCA. They recently received CFEP funding and are super excited to start their playground construction soon.

Leah Argao was born in Lac la Ronge, Saskatchewan. She then moved over 20 times and went to school at Grande Prairie university. She then moved some more before settling down in beautiful Harvest Hills to raise her three children and work in the business and financial risk industry. She currently volunteers as president of the Northern Hills Community Association because she wanted to give back to her community.

Finally, Tamara Keller is originally from a farm in north Saskatchewan. She went to the University of Saskatchewan for a bachelor of commerce. Tamara worked in the agricultural industry for 10 years, then two years in telecom, and then moved to Coventry Hills in 2006 to raise her two boys. She's an active volunteer with AHS, a chair for advocates for the north Calgary high school, and a

member of Northern Hills Connect, which is the subject of today's member's statement.

It's great to see them all here today, and I would ask my colleagues to now give them the traditional warm welcome of the Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: Welcome.

The hon. Minister of Advanced Education.

Mr. Schmidt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Joining us today is Colin Belliveau, director of training and apprenticeship for the Alberta carpenters' union. Colin works with Alberta's carpenters, scaffolders, floor layers, and interior systems mechanics to get them trained and working safely and productively. The carpenters' union is a key partner in supporting Alberta's workers and in keeping our economy growing. With Colin is my friend Jeff Sloychuk. No one really seems to know what Jeff does, but he assures me that he does it very well. I want to thank my guests for their work on behalf of Alberta workers, and I'd ask all members to extend to them the traditional warm welcome of this House.

The Speaker: Welcome.

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Mill Creek.

Ms Woollard: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very happy to be able to introduce two guests today who have been here for the address of the Governor General. I'm very pleased to introduce Gulwant Singh, who is a constituent in my area – I'm very pleased to see you – and Haiqa Cheema, who is my fairly new constituency manager and a nearly completed graduate of the U of A in political science. Thank you, both, and please receive the warm welcome of this Assembly.

The Speaker: Welcome.

The hon. Minister of Health.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I didn't know he was going to be here today, but it's a pleasure to introduce to you and through you Jeff Kasbrick, who is now with the AMA, but we got to know each other about 10 years ago, when we were both political staff. It's a pleasure to have him here today. I'd ask my colleagues to please join me in welcoming Mr. Kasbrick to this House.

The Speaker: Hon. members, any other guests today? The Member for Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills.

Mr. Cooper: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise and introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly a strong advocate for conservative values and principles, a strong member of the community advocating to stomp out racism, and a good friend of mine, Mr. Arundee Sandhu. I'd invite him to rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

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

Loyola: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to introduce to you and through you to all members of this Assembly my constituency assistant Mathew Goncalves. He's a very dedicated and a very hard worker. With him today is Mariam Hosseiny, who is an intern in my office this summer. I'd ask that we all extend the warm welcome to these wonderful guests.

Thank you.

Oral Question Period

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

Federal Response to Pipeline Opposition

Mr. Kenney: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Prime Minister is visiting Alberta today. He arrived yesterday. Will the Premier be meeting with the Prime Minister to discuss the Trans Mountain pipeline with 16 days to go before its possible cancellation?

Ms Notley: Mr. Speaker, thank you very much to the member opposite for that question. I will not be meeting directly with the Prime Minister, but as I've said before, we are fully engaged with federal officials. Discussions are happening daily with those officials. We are very much focused on outcomes, and the particular outcome that we are focused on, the only outcome that we will accept, is that we get a pipeline to tidewater and that we get the certainty that is needed to ensure that construction resumes this summer. We know that we are on track for that outcome.

Mr. Kenney: Mr. Speaker, does the hon. the Premier believe that the Prime Minister's refusal to meet with her during his visit to Alberta demonstrates the seriousness of the federal government's commitment to building the Trans Mountain pipeline?

Ms Notley: Well, Mr. Speaker, I can say very clearly that the Prime Minister did not refuse to meet with me, and that is a ridiculous assertion on the part of the member opposite. You know, the Prime Minister knows exactly where I stand, quite honestly. The only confusion out there right now is the position of the Leader of the Opposition. Back on April 8 he said that the federal government must be prepared to step up and provide financial certainty. Now he's saying that that's just the wrong way to go. I just want to know: who is pulling the strings of the Official Opposition leader? The Conservative leader in Ottawa? Or is he actually committed to the people of Alberta?

Mr. Kenney: Mr. Speaker, I guess the Premier doesn't understand the difference between that as a last resort – it appears that she and her close ally Justin Trudeau are prepared to write multibillion-dollar cheques as a first resort.

On April 15 the Prime Minister said, quotes: we are actively pursuing legislative options that will assert the government of Canada's jurisdiction on the Trans Mountain pipeline. Close quotes. A month later no legislation. Today in Calgary the Prime Minister said that he's still considering his options. Why can't this NDP government get any action out of their close friend and ally Justin Trudeau?

The Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Ms Notley: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. In fact, we are getting a great deal of action. As I've said, we're working very closely. But you know what's really interesting? The member opposite is opposed now to ensuring that we support, provide the financial certainty to Kinder Morgan to make sure we get the project done. Meanwhile, when he was in Ottawa, he and his Conservative government friends wrote a \$9 billion cheque to General Motors and Chrysler for Ontario jobs, but apparently Alberta's industry isn't worth it. So my question is: he may have said that he's moved back to Alberta, but is he still picking up his mail in Ontario?

The Speaker: Second main question.

Mr. Kenney: So now I see we're back to the NDP attacking their opponents . . . [interjections]

The Speaker: Hon. member.

Mr. Kenney: . . . but that's all right, Mr. Speaker. When they go low, we'll go high. [interjections] Can you hear them heckling? It never stops.

The Speaker: Hon. member.

Mr. Kenney: The anger machine never turns off.

Federal and Provincial Energy Policies

Mr. Kenney: Mr. Speaker, the real question is this. This Premier gave in to Justin Trudeau's carbon tax. She's going to increase it by 67 per cent. She's increasing payroll taxes to satisfy the Prime Minister. He's given us two dead pipelines and is doing nothing to build Trans Mountain. How is this working out for Alberta?

The Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Ms Notley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, what I will say is that when the member opposite and his friends in Alberta were running both governments – you may not have heard this before, but I'll just let people know – for nine years they couldn't get a pipeline built to tidewater. They messed it up so badly that they couldn't save it when the courts said no. But you know what? We are working very carefully, very strategically to get the job done. We will keep a cool hand on all the levers at our disposal, we will use them at the right time, and we will succeed.

Mr. Kenney: Mr. Speaker, let's be clear. The NDP gave Justin Trudeau a carbon tax. They're going to give him a 67 per cent increase in that carbon tax. They're going to raise CPP payroll taxes. What have we got in return? The cancellation of Northern Gateway; the killing of Energy East; the intrusion of the federal government into provincial jurisdiction on upstream emissions; Bill C-68, that will make it impossible to get a future pipeline approved; and rewarding the B.C. government with billions of dollars of transfers even though it's violating the Constitution. What exactly are we getting out of the NDP's close alliance with Justin Trudeau?

2:20

Ms Notley: Well, Mr. Speaker, what I'll tell you that Albertans are not getting is a Premier who's standing in a corner grandstanding, having temper tantrums for the sake of that day's media cycle and their own political, cynical desires. What they have instead is a government that is working strategically, thoughtfully with a multipronged approach with many, many different stakeholders at many, many different levels to get this pipeline built. And you know what? Things are looking up, and we're going to get it done.

Mr. Kenney: Mr. Speaker, what the Premier characterizes as a temper tantrum was my suggestion nine months ago that Alberta should be prepared to turn off the taps of Alberta oil fuelling the B.C. economy if the NDP there violates the Constitution and attacks our vital economic interests. That so-called temper tantrum is now the policy of the NDP government. Well, it was supposed to be. It was in their throne speech, but 10 weeks later they still haven't passed their keynote legislation. Why, again, are they dragging their feet on the turn-off-the-taps legislation?

The Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Ms Notley: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As I think I was very clear about yesterday, we expect that that piece of legislation will probably pass tomorrow. As I've also been very clear and very consistent on from the very outset, this is one tool that we will use at the right time at the right place in the best interest of Albertans to ensure that we get the best return for our resources. I have always been very clear about that. But when it comes to consistency, the member opposite had better figure out his position. Is he for government support or against it? Is Andrew Scheer his boss or are the people of Alberta?

The Speaker: Third main question.

Federal Response to Pipeline Opposition (continued)

Mr. Kenney: Mr. Speaker, we know who the boss of this NDP government is. His name is Justin Trudeau. He killed the Northern Gateway pipeline. He killed Energy East. He's killing any future pipelines with his Bill C-68. He has got this NDP government to agree to punish Albertans for heating their homes with a 67 per cent increase in the carbon tax, and he won't even meet with this Premier while visiting in Alberta. He promised legislation to crack down on B.C.'s obstructionism, and nothing has been forthcoming. Will this Premier get on the phone with her friend Justin Trudeau and demand federal action to defend Alberta's economy?

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

Ms Notley: Well, again with the temper tantrum, Mr. Speaker.

What I'm not going to do is make things up, as the member just did in about three-quarters of his preamble there. What I am going to do is carry on with exactly what we have been doing. We are working closely with the federal government, with federal officials on a very clear strategy to ensure that the uncertainty is removed and that construction resumes on schedule this summer. That is the only outcome that is acceptable to this government on behalf of the people of Alberta and the people of Canada, and we will not stop until that is exactly what happens, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Kenney: Mr. Speaker, one of her ministers said that shovels would be in the ground last fall. The project is 18 months behind schedule. We are 16 days away from its potential cancellation, and this Premier has given Justin Trudeau everything he wants, including a punitive carbon tax. She can't get any action out of the Prime Minister to defend Alberta's vital economic interests. Why is the NDP government giving in to Trudeau on everything and getting precisely nothing in return?

The Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Ms Notley: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. What we're not doing is getting the outcomes that the member opposite and his friends and colleagues in Ottawa and Alberta delivered to Albertans: zero, 'zipkus,' nothing, no pipeline to tidewater. Nine years: no pipeline to tidewater. We are on the verge of getting construction under way on the best reviewed, most rigorously reviewed pipeline in the country. We will get it done. The member opposite should join Albertans instead of hoping for their defeat.

Mr. Kenney: Mr. Speaker, our previous government approved and saw the construction of four pipelines that doubled the capacity of shipping oil and approved the Coastal pipeline, Northern Gateway, that she opposed and that her Education minister said was a dirty tar sands pipeline that should not be allowed to proceed. Justin

Trudeau listened to the NDP when he cancelled Northern Gateway. He listened to the NDP when he shut down Energy East. He apparently has listened to the NDP with Bill C-68, that makes it impossible to get another pipeline built. Why are they punishing low-income Albertans for heating their homes in order to get no pipeline built?

The Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Ms Notley: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. In fact, the first delay to Energy East came as a result of the bumbling, last-minute appointments of the former Conservative government that blew the whole process up and then made them have to start all over again, so everyone has a lot of blame to share for the end of Energy East. What we have done is that we have worked thoughtfully and consistently to play by the rules and get things done to build support, which is growing – I know the member opposite hates to admit it, but it is growing everywhere, including in B.C. – for that pipeline to western coastal waters. We will get it done.

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

Unemployment and Job Creation

Mr. Fraser: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last week Edmonton's chief economist spoke about how the unemployment rate in Edmonton was dropping but that it was dropping for the wrong reasons. What he was referring to is the fact that some Albertans have been out of work for so long that they're actually leaving the labour force altogether, this in spite of this government spending millions of tax dollars to try to retain and retrain these workers and consistent messaging from the government about the strength of the economy. Premier, we want to see this province succeed, but if things are as good as your government is saying, why are workers continuing to leave the workforce and the province?

The Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Ms Notley: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I don't think that they're actually leaving the province. It's interesting. One of the other things that was in that report by the city of Edmonton's chief economist was that one of the things that has helped make the problem not as bad as it would have been – we all know that we have a very serious problem and that people are suffering – is the fact that our government chose to continue to invest in important public services and that if the plan put forward by the Official Opposition were to go in place, the city of Edmonton would struggle mightily with respect to jobs and economic growth. Thankfully, that's not what is in place, but we know that we have more to do to deal with the very people that that member opposite . . .

The Speaker: Thank you.

Mr. Fraser: Our caucus believes in the value of public investment in the economy, but we must always ensure that there's a good return on investment when we're using public dollars. This is especially true when we're talking about programs aimed at job creation. Unless there is a measurable impact on job numbers, these programs often amount to paying public dollars to companies for jobs that would have been created anyway. To the Premier: what specific measures is your government using to make sure that the tax dollars that you're using for job creation are actually delivering value for Albertans?

The Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Ms Notley: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As the member opposite knows, last year alone our province created roughly 90,000 new jobs. That's exactly the kind of progress that we need to make after one of the worst recessions that the province of Alberta has ever felt in history. We know that we have more work to do, but we know that we're taking a multidimensional approach and that we also need to focus on diversification. We need to not just talk about economic diversification, but we need to start delivering on that. That is work that our government will continue to do.

Mr. Fraser: Thank you, Premier, for the answer. This government has focused on tax credits for specific industries, with the goal of diversifying the economy. The problem with that approach is that most economists agree that Alberta's economy is well diversified but that the real lack of diversity is in the government's revenue. We can see this in the government's plan for a balanced budget, which relies almost exclusively on royalty revenue to come close to balance. To the Premier: if the government continues to offer industry-specific tax credits, aren't government revenues going to become even less diversified and more reliant on resource revenue?

The Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Ms Notley: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. In fact, while our path to balance does continue to rely to some degree on resource revenue, it does so with relatively conservative assumptions around the price of oil and the differential and all those things. In fact, if we continue to perform in the long term above those conservative assumptions, we actually will be in a position to apply that money to other projects. Meanwhile we'll continue to focus on diversification, and we will, of course, measure the effectiveness of different programs as we go, because we know we share the same objective, diversifying the economy and getting people back to work.

Calgary LRT Green Line

Mr. Malkinson: Mr. Speaker, my riding is served by the west LRT and the upcoming southwest BRT, and Calgary-Currie is seeing the benefits of this investment in transit. The upcoming green line is the largest infrastructure investment in Calgary ever. This investment in public transportation will directly help tens of thousands of Albertans get around the city faster and connect with transit currently serving Calgary-Currie. Can the Minister of Infrastructure explain why this significant investment is needed?

2:30

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Infrastructure.

Ms Jansen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for the question. You know, capital spending to remove impediments to growth was exactly the message I got from former Bank of Canada Governor David Dodge when I circled back with him for a conversation before we released our capital plan. The green line means an easier commute to work and school. It means that an extra 65,000 Calgarians every day will have an easier time getting around, 12,000 direct jobs, 8,000 supporting jobs. Great cities have great transit infrastructure. Flailing opposition parties fight great infrastructure.

The Speaker: First supplemental.

Mr. Malkinson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the same minister: what are the other environmental and economic benefits of this project?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms Jansen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member. You know, stage 1 of the green line is going to reduce CO₂ emissions by an estimated 30,000 tonnes every year. It would be nice if the opposition actually listened to this because it's important to them, too. I know that when they ask for infrastructure, their list right now is over \$3 billion. I'm sure they should be paying attention to this. The green line is going to promote growth and diversification over the long run. It will help stimulate housing, employment, and shopping developments in all the neighborhoods that it serves. We continue to make these investments in the economic growth of Calgary, of all the cities in this province. Certainly, building back from previous . . .

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.
Second supplemental.

Mr. Malkinson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I understand that this project is possible because of funding from the carbon levy. I'm often asked: what would happen if the carbon levy was axed, as the UCP proposes? To the same minister: what would happen if the tax was axed?

Ms Jansen: I'd like to thank the member. You know, \$1.5 billion of the green line funding is coming from the climate leadership plan revenue. The other side calls it a green slush fund. Mr. Speaker, if we want to build this province into an even greater province than it is, we need great infrastructure, and it would be nice if everybody got onboard with that. They promise to do nothing about climate change. They're not interested in putting folks to work. They promise to leave tens of thousands of Calgarians stuck in traffic while they spend their policy time working at how to out gay kids in school and limit women's reproductive rights.

Workplace Safety and Employment Standards

Dr. Swann: As a result of Bill 6, passed in this House in 2015, farm workers are now persons. Last week in question period the Member for Cypress-Medicine Hat, following through on the lead of the opposition's grassroots guarantee, announced that the UCP would repeal Bill 6 based on the votes of a strong majority at the UCP convention. The Official Opposition continues to misrepresent the legal, moral, and business imperatives of Bill 6. To the Premier: could you explain again to the political opportunists in this party why Alberta must abide by the Canadian Charter and the Supreme Court decisions in Canada?

The Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Ms Notley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member opposite for that important question. I know he's fought for years, as have I, to ensure that we finally bring justice to a group of very underrepresented workers for whom that justice was long overdue. The member opposite rightly points out, of course, that there were also, in fact, among many other reasons to bring forward legislation that would protect the safety and health of working people in the farming industry, previous judicial decisions that stated very clearly that we were discriminating against these people by treating them differently from other workers. So we were proud to address that injustice.

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. Premier.
First supplemental.

Dr. Swann: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Could the Premier also explain the moral imperative behind finally bringing in child labour standards in this province, health and safety and employment standards in line with the rest of Canada and the developed world?

Ms Notley: Well, Mr. Speaker, you know, I want to really congratulate the work of our initial Minister of Labour and our current Minister of Labour and our Minister of Agriculture and Forestry because what we've done is that while we have brought in important legislation to protect this very vulnerable group of workers, we have also followed that up with extensive consultations across the board, with agricultural industry people, with farmers, with health and safety representatives, and with workers, to bring in health and safety laws that are both workable for people in the industry but will protect children and workers in that sector.

Dr. Swann: Again to the Premier: could you explain how Bill 6 respects and protects farmers, landowners, operators in the industry by bringing Alberta's agriculture sector in line with the standards of the world market regarding health, safety, compensation, and employment?

Ms Notley: Well, you know, Mr. Speaker, it is absolutely true, actually, that if you have a catastrophic accident in a place and you don't have proper workers' compensation coverage, it is very possible that you could be sued in a way that could hurt your business and make it impossible to carry on. The insurance that people were buying for that, actually, in the long term is ultimately very, very expensive, so what we've been able to do is that in many respects we've provided more certainty to farmers while also providing care and income support for families and injured workers should they suffer an accident in the workplace.

Provincial Fiscal Policies

Mr. Barnes: Former U.S. President Herbert Hoover once said, "Children are our most valuable resource." Unfortunately, this government's legacy of debt, interest, and deficit will leave a \$96 billion bill to be paid by our children. According to a recent U of C report a 16-year-old Albertan will pay an additional \$42,000 in interest debt over their lifetime. Mr. Speaker, this is nearly four times the cost of a criminal justice diploma at Medicine Hat College. To the minister: why do you insist on setting our children up for failure rather than success?

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

Mr. Ceci: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. You know, on this side of the House we are setting Albertans up for success each and every day by investing in education, by investing in advanced postsecondary schools and hospitals. Here's another U of C professor. Economist Lindsay Tedds from the University of Calgary School of Public Policy stated that only the incredibly wealthy would benefit from the policy that's been peddled by the Leader of the Opposition, the flat tax. That's no legacy to leave anybody.

Mr. Barnes: Mr. Speaker, given that since the carbon tax was instituted, rec centres around the province have been forced to drastically reduce their service levels in order to pay the carbon tax and given that one rec centre in Calgary literally turned off the heat and instituted cold showers, the NDP's carbon tax is leaving many young Albertans cold. To the Premier: are these the type of choices

you were referring to when you said that the carbon tax was a tremendous opportunity for people to make better choices?

The Speaker: The Minister of Environment and Parks.

Ms Phillips: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Of course, a few weeks ago we announced \$54 million to help municipalities and recreation centres and others reduce their energy costs. That's \$17.5 million to reduce energy costs at community rinks, arenas, swimming pools, and so on. The folks from the RMA said, "The magnitude of this new funding is an important recognition of the role municipalities play." It enables municipalities to continue to build climate change resilience, improve efficiency, reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Those are all win-win-win scenarios that position Alberta well for the future rather than dragging us into the past.

Mr. Barnes: Mr. Speaker, given that the carbon tax will cost school boards nearly \$20 million this year – and that doesn't even account for the increased cost of electricity – that's the equivalent of 201 experienced teachers. To the minister. Your carbon tax has ripped tens of millions of dollars of funding out of the classroom in order to pay for the increased cost of utilities and transportation. Will you commit to scrapping the carbon tax and keeping education funding where it belongs, in the classroom?

The Speaker: The Minister of Education.

Mr. Eggen: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I find that a bit rich coming from the members opposite, who are going to cut education quite significantly, 20 per cent. Our government has put significant investment in education for the last four budgets. We owe it to our kids to make sure that we have great schools, that we build schools, and that we also protect the planet that they will inherit from us one day.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Chestermere-Rocky View.

Physicians' Disciplinary Policies

Mrs. Aheer: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last month I asked the minister about Dr. Ismail Taher, who, after showing a repeated pattern of sexually inappropriate behaviour and being found guilty in the court of assaulting an 18-year-old girl, sexually assaulting a nurse twice, and physically assaulting a clinical manager, had been allowed to return to work as a doctor following the ruling from the College of Physicians & Surgeons of Alberta. Last month the Health minister assured me that her ministry had reached out to the college to seek assurances. Can she please update the House on this discussion?

Ms Hoffman: Thank you to the member for the important question. I'm deeply concerned by this, and we know that all Albertans and Alberta women should feel safe when getting medical care or when working in a doctor's office as well. Doctors are in a position of trust, and patients have the right to know that their disciplinary histories will be public, especially for those they're putting their trust in. When I was made aware of this situation, where a doctor was convicted of sexual assault and got his licence back, I was shocked. My staff reached out to the college immediately, and we're working on developing the supports to be able to remedy this.

2:40

The Speaker: First supplemental.

Mrs. Aheer: Thank you. Mr. Speaker, given that Dr. Taher's case is not an isolated case in Alberta and given that Albertans are calling for greater transparency and higher penalties for physicians who abuse the trust of patients and given that the College of Physicians & Surgeons has limited options under the current legislation to sanction its members that abuse patients' trust, what specific measures is the minister taking to ensure that patients are protected and that Albertans maintain faith in the health care system?

Ms Hoffman: Thank you for that. I want to ensure that the college has all of the tools necessary to keep Albertans safe and make Albertans aware if there has been disciplinary action or a criminal conviction against a doctor in the past. Some jurisdictions are ahead of us in this work. For example, the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario posts criminal convictions of doctors and also keeps disciplinary decisions on their website longer than we do here in Alberta. I also understand that Ontario has recently taken legislative steps to prevent sexual abuse by amending the Regulated Health Professions Act to expand the grounds for mandatory revocation of medical licences. These are two of the things that I'm certainly considering.

The Speaker: Second supplemental.

Mrs. Aheer: Thank you. Given that there are serious concerns with compliance with those disciplinary conditions currently imposed by the College of Physicians & Surgeons – to follow up on what the minister said, there's a lack of transparency, Mr. Speaker, in the disciplinary process, including the fact that Alberta only maintains those records for five years. The minister said that she would consider bringing forward legislation similar to Ontario's, which requires the colleges to revoke the licences of members who have engaged in certain types of abuse. To the minister: will you then be bringing forward this legislation to protect Albertans this session, and if not, why not?

Ms Hoffman: Thank you very much for the question. We are certainly working hand in hand with the College of Physicians & Surgeons and looking at what has happened in Ontario as well. I want to make sure that we get any legislation right, and of course we want to ensure that it will withstand any kind of appeal that might happen. We're working to bring a draft as quickly as possible, Mr. Speaker, but I also want to ensure that it will be something that we can all be confident will withstand court challenges, so I'm not going to rush the timeline. I want to make sure we get the legislation right, and I also want to ensure that every Alberta woman feels safe when she's going into a doctor's appointment or receiving that care.

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

Adverse Possession of Property

Mr. Gottfried: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday this House was faced with a choice, and once again the members opposite rejected the principle of property rights protection for land- and homeowners across this province. As they voted down my private member's bill, NDP MLAs continually said that we needed to further await a review already two years in the making. To the Minister of Justice: when will the review of adverse possession be complete, and when will the results of that review be tabled in this House?

The Speaker: The hon. Justice minister and Solicitor General.

Ms Ganley: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I believe that what the hon. member is referring to is the request that the government made after the recommendation of an all-party committee that adverse possession be eliminated in Alberta. We have asked the Alberta Law Reform Institute to take a look at that. As I understand, they will be coming forward with recommendations later this fall to ensure that we enact that fully across all the acts throughout the government of Alberta.

Mr. Gottfried: So we're hearing this fall.

Mr. Speaker, given that the Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship, with an NDP chair and majority no less, voted to ask the Department of Justice to develop legislation to abolish adverse possession and given that the minister has consistently failed to actually follow through on these recommendations, which should have been initiated as much as two years ago, again to the minister: when will we see this legislation in this House to abolish the doctrine of adverse possession?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms Ganley: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Well, as I have said, an all-party committee studied the issue. They made recommendations that the doctrine of adverse possession be eliminated here in Alberta, and that's why we asked the Alberta Law Reform Institute to take a look at all of our legislation throughout the government of Alberta to ensure, first off, that we are impacting all things that have an impact on adverse possession so that we're getting it right but also that we're not having any unintended consequences, because this has been in the law for quite a long time in this province.

Thank you.

Mr. Gottfried: Mr. Speaker, given that this government has an abysmal track record on standing up and protecting the property rights of Albertans and given that various government MLAs demonstrated their lack of respect for landowners in Alberta when they dithered around the abolition of adverse possession, leading many Albertans to question this government's commitment to scrapping this punitive and archaic law, again to the minister: when your review is complete, if the recommendation is to abolish this outdated law, will you commit today to following through on that recommendation and abolishing adverse possession at the earliest possible opportunity?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms Ganley: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I believe I've said it twice before, but I'm happy to say it again a third time. An all-party committee has recommended the abolition of that doctrine. That's why we asked the Alberta Law Reform Institute to look at how best to abolish the doctrine, and that is what they're doing.

In terms of our record on property rights, Mr. Speaker, it's pretty rich for the members opposite to stand up and say that after they voted against investments in the RCMP to protect the property of rural owners.

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

Seniors' Mobile Blood Collection Service in St. Paul

Mr. Hanson: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday I informed the House about the government's decision to abandon seniors in my constituency who rely on mobile collection for blood

work. To the Minister of Health. Especially with higher fuel costs and the carbon tax and the increase in GHGs that this will create, transportation for seniors in rural Alberta is not always easy. Why was it a priority to abandon this service for our seniors?

Ms Hoffman: Thank you very much to the member for the question. I'll be happy to follow up with specific details with regard to the specific situation.

I want to ensure that all Albertans know that in 2015 we had a choice. We had a choice between going down a path that we'd been down many times in Alberta, one that saw deep cuts; for example, seniors had to start paying property tax for education, something that was done under the guise of, you know, everyone needing to carry their weight. Seniors had a lot of health care services cancelled. Instead, our government chose to follow a different path, one that invests in seniors and makes sure that we support communities and the health care that those seniors count on, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Hanson: This certainly looks like a cut to seniors to me, Mr. Speaker.

Given that the lab technician providing the mobile collection service is paid whether they are performing the service in the hospital or on-site and given that the medical supplies used are the same either way, to the Minister of Health, a simple question: what were the criteria used to make this decision?

Ms Hoffman: Thanks again for the question. I will be happy to look into this very specific case. We do have an MLA contact in my office that we try to ensure is available to all Albertan MLAs so that we can make sure we can get details on very specific, case-related items community by community. I'll have to certainly look into this. I imagine that this is something that Alberta Health Services determined. I didn't make this decision, but I'll certainly be happy to look into it and determine if there is something that we can respond to, to help provide greater clarity.

I do welcome all MLAs to please bring these kinds of concerns forward as soon as you hear of them so we can help to come up with clarity and potential solutions. Thank you.

Mr. Hanson: Mr. Speaker, I did a member's statement yesterday on this topic, and I tabled the documents from AHS so that the minister could read them.

Given that it is much more efficient to do this service on-site with the help of the more-than-willing staff at Sunnyside lodge and given that travelling to the ER for lab work is not only costly and inconvenient for these seniors but it exposes them to unnecessary illness, Minister, why are you allowing these seniors to be treated this way? Will you reinstate this program immediately?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker and again to the member. My office is completely accessible. We certainly welcome you. There are many times that we've worked through a number of local concerns. For example, we found a solution when some of the seniors in your neighbouring riding wanted to ensure that they could have their Remembrance Day honoured in a respectful way. For example, we brought dialysis to Lac La Biche, something that I'm very proud of. This government has shown that we are willing to work on coming up with solutions. We certainly welcome you to call our office or e-mail my office, and we'll be happy to look at the details about your specific question.

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

Home-care Services

Ms McPherson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Home-care clients rely on service providers to perform daily living tasks, things like personal hygiene and medication management. I was disturbed to hear this week that a senior home-care client outside of Edmonton waited for hours for an AHS-contracted home-care provider, who didn't show up for a scheduled appointment, to move her between her wheelchair and her bed. To the Health minister: what is being done to ensure that AHS home-care clients receive services from providers?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker and to the member for the question. One of the big things that we've done as a government is that we've provided stable, predictable funding to the people of this province to ensure that health care under, well, what was the Conservative cabinet minister and now the leader of that member's party – they were proposing a \$1 billion cut to health care. We reversed that. We invested in the people of this province, and we specifically increased home-care funding every single year because we want to ensure that the people of this province get the care they need close to home.

Again, with regard to a very specific situation, I'll be happy to look into that specific instance. But, Mr. Speaker, this side of the House is investing in the people of this province and expanding home-care services.

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

Ms McPherson: Given that the home-care provider told the client that they didn't need to provide any backup and that the client would need to find her own backup and given that after being previously stranded in her home for 13 hours in her wheelchair, this time she called a friend to drive from Edmonton to her place, almost an hour, to give her some help, how is it acceptable for AHS to allow contractors to not have contingency plans and to require home-care clients to find their own backup services?

2:50

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you. Again, with regard to one specific case we'll be very happy to look into that. My office is very accessible. Please call my office or e-mail my office, and we'll be very happy to address specific concerns with specific care.

Under self-managed care clients receive funding to hire and pay for their own unmet personal care and supportive needs. We also have AHS care, and we also have AHS contracted care, Mr. Speaker. We're proud of the fact that we're providing these choices and options for the people of Alberta to ensure that they get the care they need instead of pushing for rash cuts that would certainly hurt all Albertans, including those who are on home care. This government is investing in the people of this province.

Ms McPherson: Given that not every home-care client lives in a community where ad hoc home-care services are available when AHS fails to provide sufficient oversight of its contractors and given that adding funding to pay for the services Albertans do not receive does not make life better, does the minister know how much of the \$575 million spent on home care last year through AHS has been spent on services that were not delivered?

Ms Hoffman: Well, I can tell you that it's a lot more than a billion-dollar cut. Mr. Speaker, I'm proud that on this side of the House

we're investing in health care, we're investing in our seniors, and we're keeping them well. We had a choice in this province. We could go down the same path that Conservative after Conservative after Conservative asked us to go down, which was deep cuts that hurt the people of this province, including our seniors. On this side of the House we were elected to stand up for the people of Alberta. I think actually many members were elected to stand up for the people of Alberta and make sure that they got the services they needed. I won't be lectured to by somebody who is now following the lead of a leader who's advocating for billions of dollars in cuts. That's pretty rich.

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.
The Member for Calgary-West.

Serenity and Her Siblings

Mr. Ellis: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. We all know the sad tale of little Serenity and her all-too-short life. Less acknowledged is the story of her two older siblings, who survived in the same horrific circumstances. Minister, can you please tell us if Serenity's sister and brother will ever see justice for the abuse that they experienced?

The Speaker: The Minister of Children's Services.

Ms Larivee: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This government is absolutely committed to working to improve the way that kids and families are supported when they are struggling. We are absolutely moving forward – thank you to the all-party panel members – with ensuring that as we move forward, our child intervention system has all the support it needs to ensure that children and families have the very best opportunity to meet their potential. I do want to thank all the members of the House for supporting an increase to the budget of Children's Services. It's so important to ensure that we actually have the capacity and the front-line staff to ensure the well-being of those children.

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

Mr. Ellis: Given that police have investigated the treatment of Serenity's siblings and that that involved multiple interviews, which caused them to relive their horror each and every time, and given that Alberta's Child and Youth Advocate has also confirmed that these children suffered abuse and given that Serenity and her sister and her brother were all living in the same care home and experienced the same terror, Minister, can you please tell us why almost four years later no charges have been laid in relation to Serenity's siblings?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms Ganley: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Of course, these sorts of situations are incredibly concerning. They're incredibly concerning to all Albertans and to all members on both sides of this House. Ultimately the police make the decisions. They investigate specific cases. It's not appropriate for me to speak to those investigations or to what those decisions will be in terms of them laying charges. You know, we continue to be dedicated to ensuring that as we move forward, we revamp our child welfare system just to make sure that things like this don't happen again in the future.

Mr. Ellis: Not dedicated enough, Mr. Speaker.

Given that in budget estimates last month, following a question from my colleague, the Minister of Children's Services said, "The Serenity case is somewhat dated at this point," and given that if we ever consider Serenity's case dated that that means we are not doing

her memory any justice, Minister, why would you have used that term in relation to a little girl whom you say that we can never forget?

The Speaker: The Minister of Children's Services.

Ms Larivee: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What I think the children and the families of Alberta deserve is a government who's committed to ensuring that they take action instead of putting a report on the shelf. I'm really excited that we will be moving forward with an action plan very soon in terms of actioning the recommendations from the plan. What they don't deserve are Conservative politicians who would politicize this particular issue and politicize a particular family instead of focusing on getting down and doing that work that needs to be done.

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

Schoolchildren's Transportation

Mr. Gill: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Department of Education has announced a student transportation survey to help determine future changes for school busing criteria and mandated service levels. It's a bit curious to do this consultation now as the government implemented major and unwelcome changes to busing last fall, which greatly affected students in alternative programming in my constituency in northeast Calgary. Minister, is transportation to alternative education programs part of the scope of this review, or is the review solely focused on the public system?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Education.

Mr. Eggen: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Certainly, the survey that we have out is very popular. We have many thousands of people participating. We know that we need to focus on transportation to make sure it's safe, to make sure it's timely and reliable. We've been meeting those targets to some degree, but you can always improve. I encourage everyone to make sure they make their submissions and work with school boards to make sure that we make life better for all our kids and the school buses that they travel on.

The Speaker: First supplemental.

Mr. Gill: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that the survey mentions that any, I quote, potential changes, unquote, will not take place until the 2019-2020 school year, not this upcoming one, and given that the surprise policy changes made this past school year left students in many alternative education programs without busing, leaving them to take transit or rely on their parents to get them to school, Minister, will the government commit to being fully transparent with parents on the future of busing for their children?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Eggen: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's important to point out that individual school boards do build their schedules and scheduling. That is their responsibility. It's also important to point out that it's a very large task to build busing transportation schedules. That's why we're consulting and working with school boards over this next year to make sure that we get it right. You know, the biggest thing that we can do to support them is to make sure that we're financing and putting money behind education in each and every budget, which we've done so for enrolment. If you take money away, like the members opposite would do, chaos would ensue.

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.
Second supplemental.

Mr. Gill: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that the Member for Calgary-McCall held a town hall on education and transportation issues in northeast Calgary and given that I'm interested to know if anything came out of it that could inform education policy, Minister, what was the outcome from this meeting, and how much of a role will it play in affecting your decision on future busing policies in northeast Calgary for students attending alternative programs?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Eggen: Yes. Well, certainly, Mr. Speaker, I recognize that we want to improve school busing in general. That's why we made the space through Bill 28 here last session to look specifically at the walk limits, right? The walk limit has been set at 2.4 kilometres for many, many, many years, and clearly that wasn't working. You know what? When I see something that needs to be improved, I actually act on it and I actually put in money. We have a caucus and a government behind us that actually do invest in education. That's something that we can all be very proud of.

Medical Laboratory Construction in Edmonton

Mr. Yao: Mr. Speaker, media reports that costs for Edmonton's new superlab facility have risen to \$595 million, significantly more than the preliminary estimate of \$325 million. When a building doubles in cost, there should be some hesitation. We all want to have the necessary health facilities, but can the minister of Health or Infrastructure explain what is causing this massive cost overrun?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker and to the member for the question. I think what he's referring to is the budget documents the first year that the lab showed up and the budget documents this most recent year. As the member might be aware, but I want to ensure that all Albertans are aware, the budget documents usually only have three or four years. We've actually gone out six years with our fiscal plan, so it's the entire costing for the project as opposed to just the first three years of the plan.

Mr. Yao: It's still double what your estimates were.

Mr. Speaker, the current lab contractor is occupying a facility owned by AIMCo. It has a podium for an office tower with no current plans of expansion due to the proliferation of the Ice District. The city of Edmonton wishes to develop a technology cluster in the city centre, and removal of this lab does not help. Can the minister explain how they chose the new location, what the criteria used was, and was there not a downtown option available to own, lease, or build there?

3:00

Ms Hoffman: Well, again, the member is wrong. What I said is that the first fiscal time it ended up in the budget, it was just the first three years of costing. This is now six years out. We're being even more open with Albertans about the cost of our infrastructure projects, clearly far more open than we ever saw under the former government. My job, Mr. Speaker, is to make sure that we get the best value for the people of Alberta. We had land in Edmonton on an excellent site that's adjacent to the LRT. You're asking me to lease land or buy land from a private developer downtown. I don't think that's very fiscally responsible. I'm going to look at the best

way to get the best value for the people of Alberta, and we will own that lab in the city of Edmonton.

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

Mr. Yao: So let's clarify. In three years it's going to cost you \$300 million, and then it's going to cost you \$600 million over double that time, yet the value of the building is actually in the equipment involved and the people that are there, the lab technicians. Please explain: what is the doubling in cost that has occurred on this project?

Ms Hoffman: Let me clarify that. You're wrong. What we did is that we put it in the budget the first three years. Now we've got a six-year fiscal plan, so we have the total costing for six years of development. This is a massive project that's certainly in the public interest. The Health Quality Council of Alberta confirmed that we want to ensure that there's confidence, that no matter where you are in the province, you get the very best quality of lab services, and I also believe that those lab technologists deserve to be treated with respect in a consistent fashion as well, Mr. Speaker. I'm proud of the fact that we're building a public lab. I'm proud of the fact that it's going to be in Edmonton. I'm proud it's on land that we already own, so we don't need to waste money buying additional land. You guys have got to figure out what your real values are in this place.

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

The hon. Member for Wetaskiwin-Camrose.

Indigenous Relations

Mr. Hinkley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Alberta's previous government did a poor job of consulting with indigenous peoples, and if their founding convention is any indication, it appears as though the current UCP isn't doing much better of a job. Since forming government, our party has committed to renewing the relationship between indigenous peoples and the government of Alberta. To the Minister of Indigenous Relations: what are you doing to ensure proper consultation happens with indigenous peoples?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Feehan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for the question. Throughout the past two years the Alberta government has been working to renew our First Nations and our Métis settlements consultation policies and is developing a Métis consultation policy for those living off settlements. As part of our work to ensure Alberta's consultation process is more effective and efficient for all parties, we're also speaking to industry and municipalities and other groups in the province. We've engaged First Nations, Métis settlements, the Métis Nation of Alberta, and the MSGC, and we're planning to have our policies in place this fall. These new policies will help to ensure that indigenous people living in Alberta have a voice and can . . .

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

First supplemental.

Mr. Hinkley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd just like to mention, before I do my second question, that we have Mr. Willie Littlechild in the audience today, and he was a member of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

To the minister. I would like to know: what other consultation processes has the Alberta government undertaken with indigenous peoples?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Feehan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am very proud to speak to this question because, of course, the provincial government has really worked on transforming our relationship with the indigenous people in this province, and that includes coming to the table with them and having multiple conversations, whether it be through our Treaty 8 tables or our Blackfoot protocol tables or many other areas. For example, we have had consultations with indigenous people around curriculum, around rural broadband, around the North Saskatchewan regional plan, mandatory training for the Alberta public service, a human health study in Fort Chipewyan.

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.
Second supplemental.

Mr. Hinkley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that the Conservative governments in the past just tried to ignore the problems facing indigenous peoples and given that the same attitude seems to be alive and well in the UCP today, again to the same minister: what are you doing to ensure that indigenous people and communities are treated with the respect they deserve?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Feehan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you very much, Member, for the question. I appreciate the hard work you've been doing in the area of Wetaskiwin, and I look forward to working with you and with the Maskwacis communities again, just as we did even last week.

You know that we have been working very hard to develop a really positive relationship with indigenous people in Alberta, but meanwhile the UCP members, like the Member for Little Bow, say things like, quote: these people don't traditionally vote. I'm not sure what part of that sentence is most offensive. It's a shame that a member of this House would say that, and that shows that the UCP has no interest in working with our indigenous peoples. Our government will continue to strengthen these important relationships . . .

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.
Thirty seconds, hon. members.

Hon. members, I think the Deputy Premier has a supplemental answer which she'd like to clarify. Is that correct, Deputy Premier?

Tobacco Reduction and Industry Lobbyists

Ms Hoffman: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and to all members. I have a supplemental response to the question that the Member for Calgary-Mountain View asked last week of the Premier. I'd like to clarify some information from last week.

In the Ministry of Health there were actually two meetings with staff and National Smokeless Tobacco regarding the ban of menthol cigarettes. I also understand that there had been annual meetings with Treasury Board and Finance staff regarding regulating the industry. In 2017 I directed my deputy minister to send a memo to Health ministry staff to reinforce article 5.3 of the framework convention on tobacco control, which states that interaction with the industry is limited to only those meetings which are absolutely necessary about regulating the industry. No government official will meet with the tobacco industry going forward.*

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

Dr. Swann: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't have a lot to say, but thank you for clarifying it. There have been rumours about meetings within other government departments. You've clarified that there have been a couple. I would hope that all departments in government get the same message at some point so that related departments such as Economic Development and Trade or whatever other departments also understand the same proscription on meeting behind closed doors with tobacco lobbyists.

Thanks very much.

The Speaker: The hon. Deputy Premier.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. That's certainly my intent. I look forward to – I believe my office has tried to schedule time so that the Member for Calgary-Mountain View and myself can discuss this in further detail face to face and discuss how we're going to make that happen.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Members' Statements

The Speaker: Edmonton-McClung.

Ramadan

Mr. Dach: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my honour to rise today and wish Ramadan Mubarak to all, especially to those of my constituents in Edmonton-McClung and to all Albertans of Muslim faith. Muslim Albertans have a long history in our province. Across Alberta Muslims are volunteering in our communities, donating not just time but also financially. In Alberta we are proud to say that the oldest mosque in Canada, the Al Rashid mosque, was built right here in Edmonton in 1938.

During this month Muslims will be fasting from sunrise to sunset, praying, reading the Quran, and reflecting on their personal habits. This time of renewed devotion to the practice of Islam is meant to not only connect mind, body, and spirit but to increase empathy for those less fortunate. While Ramadan is a time for faith, prayer, and fasting, it is also a time for charity. Let us all take some time this month to reflect on what each of us can do in our own communities to help those less fortunate and how we as Albertans can work together to make a more inclusive society, a society that helps those in need, values diverse cultures, and sees our differences as a strength.

Muslim Albertans will be gathering to break their fasts this month at iftar meals across the province. In my constituency Rahma mosque will be hosting daily iftar meals. I encourage all MLAs to work with their local mosque to invite their non-Muslim constituents to attend an iftar meal. You will be wholeheartedly welcomed. This is an excellent opportunity to learn about the commitment to community that is fundamental to Islam throughout the year, and the food is fabulous.

Observing Ramadan in a climate as northern as Alberta's means long hours of daylight, leading to long hours of fasting. I hope that this month those of us who do not observe Ramadan take the time to recognize and support our friends, colleagues, and neighbours who may be fasting. I plan to do a one-day fast in solidarity with our Alberta Muslim neighbours, and I invite all MLAs to join me.

Once again, I wish a hearty Ramadan Mubarak to all.

The Speaker: Hon. members, we've had a request for unanimous consent to revert to introductions.

[Unanimous consent granted]

*See page 872, right column, paragraph 6

3:10 Introduction of Guests

(continued)

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

Mr. Hunter: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not sure what happened earlier, but some of the school groups were escorted out before introductions were made. I'd like to introduce to you and through you to all members of this Assembly the Taber Christian school. The children are accompanied by René Angermeier, Trina Friesen, Stacey Kopp, Helene Ypma, Jennette Ypma, and Colin Oosterhof. If they could please rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of this Assembly.

The Speaker: Welcome.

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Manning.

Ms Sweet: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my privilege to introduce one of my constituents from the lovely constituency of Edmonton-Manning, Ranjit Singh Powar. I would like to congratulate him also for the celebration that happened this past weekend with the bringing together of families between his nephew Harpreet Singh Sandhu and Anapreet Kaur Dhillon.

Thank you so much.

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Culture and Tourism.

Miranda: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly 20 staff and members of the Book Publishers Association of Alberta, and I'd ask them to please rise at this time. The Book Publishers Association of Alberta was founded in 1975 to support the development of a thriving provincial publishing industry. Earlier today I had the honour of declaring, with the BPAA, May 15 as Alberta Book Day, recognizing the importance of Alberta's book publishing industry in preserving and sharing Alberta's culture with the world as well as contributing to the province's economic growth and diversity. I would like to now ask our guests to receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

The Speaker: Welcome.

Members' Statements

(continued)

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

Provincial Election Third Anniversary Reflections

Mr. Gottfried: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is now just three years since earning the honour of serving the constituents of Calgary-Fish Creek, and I continue to firmly believe that there is no greater privilege than public service. We are given the opportunity to not only represent people from all walks of life but to hear, listen, consult, and share conversations around the hopes, wishes, dreams, and, yes, more than occasionally the challenges they face in making a living and living a good life.

I am adamant in my commitment to absolute accessibility to all of my constituents irrespective of political or other affiliation and am proud to host my regular MLA cafés, to attend community meetings and events, and to be visible, engaged, and accessible to all in the community. It is my pleasure as well as my privilege to do so.

I believe we are all blessed as legislators in our opportunity and commitment to bring our varied work, life, and community experience, skills, and ability in all that we do, and I am grateful for

the opportunity I've had in my life for global travel, community building, community and economic development, the creation and growth of businesses, and, yes, for the philanthropy and volunteerism that enrich the community.

We must represent, promote, advocate, and defend the best interests of our diverse constituents with passion and humility. We must be frugal, accountable, and responsive with hard-earned tax dollars and remember that all of the resources we are entrusted with and the debt we create are theirs, not ours. We must be committed to the health, education, and well-being of Albertans while being compassionate about the vulnerable. And, yes, we must be committed to enhancing life not just for today but for tomorrow and to pass on wealth and prosperity, not debt and burden, to future generations.

That should be our goal and our responsibility to all Albertans. Mr. Speaker, we must do so with the highest commitment to integrity, ethics, and principles of selflessness, even when we respectfully agree to disagree, while doing our best to do so with a sense of humility, humanity, charity, and compassion.

Thank you.

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

Flood Mitigation

Drever: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise before you to talk about the very critical issue of flooding in Alberta and in particular in Calgary. As most Albertans know, conditions can swing dramatically year to year, season to season. The flooding that hit Calgary in 2013 was devastating to families, homes, businesses, schools, and many communities. My own constituency of Calgary-Bow suffered during that flooding.

As memories fade and other priorities arise, our government took action to ensure that progress was made on key flood resilience and emergency preparedness initiatives. These projects will help ensure public safety, protect critical municipal infrastructure, and better manage stormwater.

As part of its \$150 million in funding for Calgary the province has approved the new Alberta community resilience program grants, totalling \$13.5 million. This funding will support three of the city's top-priority projects: the construction of the downtown flood barrier along the south bank of the Bow River, the separation of the upper plateau stormwater system from the community of Sunnyside-Hillhurst, and support for raising the replacement deck for the 9th Avenue bridge.

Across the province the government will invest close to \$30 million for 20 flood mitigation projects. Additionally, a new \$10 million investment will support projects to prepare communities across the province for emergencies.

Mr. Speaker, flood mitigation initiatives help communities address existing flood concerns while taking proactive steps to better protect our neighborhoods from future floods. We have made significant progress in our efforts to address immediate and short-term remedies while working on long-term solutions to protect our people and property well into the future.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Farmers

Mr. Gill: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's springtime in Alberta. That means that birds have returned, bringing music to the ears of all. In rural Alberta there's another sound springing up. It's the sound of farmers hitting their fields. As Albertans we are one of the world's

most productive agricultural economies, with a total farm area of 50 million acres. To offer another perspective, farm cash receipts tallied \$13.5 billion in 2016, which accounted for 22 per cent of our nation's agriculture production.

Alberta has been increasing its ability to process agricultural products at home, and most of our entrepreneurs' endeavors have succeeded wonderfully. In fact, based on revenues of \$15 billion our value-added agricultural product sector has become our top manufacturing industry.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to work with many colleagues in our United Conservative caucus who are proud farmers. It amazes me that they spend their time here in Edmonton representing their constituents in this Legislature, and then they go back home and they're busy performing valuable work in their community. Instead of relaxing, they will head out to their fields, for they must take advantage of this good weather to seed their fields. So when we see a farmer making the solitary journey around their land as they sow their crops and hope for perfect weather, I encourage everyone to take a moment to appreciate them.

As I am myself from a farming family, I would like to extend my best wishes to all the farmers for this upcoming season. As the saying goes, if you ate today, thank a farmer.

I would like to close with a famous quote from Paul Harvey. And on the eighth day God looked down on His planned paradise and said, "I need a caretaker," so God made a farmer.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-Northern Hills.

Northern Hills Connect Social Enterprise Support

Mr. Kleinstuber: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. In early 2017 Vivo for Healthier Generations facilitated community discussions focused on increasing social connections in Calgary's Northern Hills. Out of this, Northern Hills Connect was born. This group of energetic neighbours connects entrepreneurs with innovative ideas for social enterprises with the people and resources to further their business plans.

With the support of the Northern Hills Community Association, Vivo, Momentum, and Thrive Calgary, Northern Hills Connect hosted workshops throughout 2017 to develop skills for social entrepreneurs. Of the 150 participants, eight pitched ideas in September's pitch competition and two went on to share their winning ideas at EconoUs, the national community economic development conference.

Nanny shack was one of those winning ideas. Pitched by Jessie Leighton and Fatima Cuade, nanny shack was further developed by Sanya Chaudhry, a student at the University of Calgary's Haskayne School of Business. Sanya described the impact of the experience. She said that it had been a discovery of her own strengths and talents with the help of her neighbours. Social enterprise is what she wanted to be a part of.

Night Market North was another social enterprise born out of a connection with Northern Hills Connect. Within a few short months Ian McAnerin's idea became reality, with vendors, entertainment, and food trucks converging in Vivo's parking lot. Six hundred people attended the first night and 2,000 the second night.

Mr. Speaker, to kick off Stampede this year, my office will again partner with Vivo for Healthier Generations, changing it up from our usual breakfast to instead host a Stampede barbecue at Night Market North on July 6. This is a great opportunity to support Northern Hills Connect as it cultivates entrepreneurs to launch social enterprises, thereby fostering community connections.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

3:20

Serenity's Siblings

Mr. Ellis: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Alex, Ryan, Ezekiel, Serenity: these are all children of Alberta who died tragically. There is another distressingly common thread among them. In each case there were adults in their lives who were aware of that plight.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, there are many other children out there at risk right now who can be saved by adults today. How do we know this? Well, because the media reports their cases on an, unfortunately, regular basis. What happens following each report? Each time we shake our heads in shock and say that we have to stop this from occurring, and then we simply go about our lives.

At this point I'm sure everyone might be expecting me to talk about Serenity's law, my private member's bill that the NDP refused to implement. You know, the one they say isn't supported by the Alberta chiefs of police, but, Mr. Speaker, I called them, and – guess what? – they actually do support it.

But I digress. Today I'm not going to do that, even though it is always on my mind. Instead, I'm going to remind everyone about Serenity's siblings. They, too, were in care like her. The child advocate in his comprehensive report confirmed that they also suffered but that, thankfully, unlike their younger sister, they survived. These children have been back with their mother for years now, and they are thriving. I hope that brings joy to your hearts. It certainly does to mine.

It seems that this government has forgotten them, for while Serenity's case continues, her brother's and sister's appears to have been abandoned. I have promised Serenity's mother that I will never give up seeking justice and protection for children for the sake of her children and all others who are at risk. Today I make that vow again. My wish is that everyone in this Assembly makes that vow with me, for we are in a position to make a difference, Mr. Speaker. Let's never lose sight of that. We can and we must do better.

Thank you.

Tabling Returns and Reports

The Speaker: The hon. Member for St. Albert.

Ms Renaud: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday I spoke in support of Bill 206, Societies (Prevention of the Promotion of Hate) Amendment Act, 2018, and I have some tablings. The first is an article with *Vice* June 14, 2017, The Birth of Canada's Armed, Anti-Islamic 'Patriot' Group.

The second was in the *Edmonton Journal*, Jonny Wakefield, August 21, 2017: After Charlottesville, Police and Activists Look to Counter Alberta's Extreme Right.

I tried to get a copy of the Rebel media piece called 10 Things I Hate about Jews, but of course they've since taken it down, or the paywall is strengthened.

Here they are. Thank you.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Sherwood Park.

Ms McKittrick: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In response to the Member for Cypress-Medicine Hat this morning, to the comment that he made during the Bill 2 debate, I rise to table the five requisite copies of three separate articles detailing the Methanex investment in Louisiana. In one of the articles the CEO of Methanex says: "That doesn't mean Medicine Hat is dead by any means . . . We [still] think Medicine Hat is a great place to [make] methanol.

Thank you.

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

Mr. Coolahan: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to table the five requisite copies of the incorporation certificate for Invisible Empire Association of Alberta, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, which I referenced during second reading of Bill 206 yesterday. It shows that the KKK was registered as a society in Alberta in 1980.

Tablings to the Clerk

The Clerk: I wish to advise the Assembly that the following documents were deposited with the office of the Clerk. On behalf of the hon. Mr. Feehan, Minister of Indigenous Relations, responses to questions asked by MLA McPherson, hon. Member for Calgary-Mackay-Nose Hill, Mr. Loewen, hon. Member for Grande Prairie-Smoky, and Mr. Hanson, hon. Member for Lac La Biche-St. Paul-Two Hills, during Ministry of Indigenous Relations 2018-19 main estimates debate.

On behalf of the hon. Ms. Sigurdson, Minister of Seniors and Housing, responses to questions asked by Mr. Clark, hon. Member for Calgary-Elbow, and Dr. Starke, hon. Member for Vermilion-Lloydminster, during Ministry of Seniors and Housing 2018-19 main estimates debate.

Orders of the Day

Government Bills and Orders Committee of the Whole

[Ms Jabbour in the chair]

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

Bill 5

An Act to Strengthen Financial Security for Persons with Disabilities

The Chair: Currently under consideration is amendment A1. Are there any members wishing to speak to this amendment? The hon. Member for Chestermere-Rocky View.

Mrs. Aheer: Thank you, Madam Chair. I want to read the name of the bill out again: An Act to Strengthen Financial Security for Persons with Disabilities. That's what we thought we were doing when we were bringing this amendment forward. I'm really quite disappointed. This is purely what would seemingly be a partisan decision, voting against this amendment. This amendment strengthens this legislation. Actually, that's what's in the title, just to be clear, An Act to Strengthen Financial Security for Persons with Disabilities. That's what this amendment does.

The amendment would have allowed AISH recipients to draw up to \$800 a month from a trust without their AISH benefits being clawed back, the same way that AISH recipients can currently draw \$800 a month of employment income. I mean, this costs the province nothing, Madam Chair. Nothing. Earlier, you know, the Premier was saying that they're standing up for Albertans. This is not the way you show how you stand up for Albertans, by not giving AISH recipients another opportunity to be able to top up the money that they receive in order to maybe, potentially, pull them out of poverty. I can't even begin to tell you how disappointing this is. It costs the government nothing.

I am a parent, Madam Chair, of a child who is now an adult who could be part of this particular situation, and I am telling you as a parent and as a stakeholder and as a person who's researched this that this decision of this government to go against this amendment is ridiculous. My only hope is that maybe they'll come back with

their own wording and do it in a different way. I'm not quite sure what the government has in store, but I can tell you that as a stakeholder and as a person who is a parent of a young adult who could benefit from something like this when I'm not here to oversee this that it's more than disappointing; it's appalling.

Bringing some income from a trust and employment is in line. It's a practical, common-sense amendment that would have positively impacted the lives of disabled Albertans and their families as well as reducing confusion. Let me tell you that at a time when you're going through this, when you're creating these wills, when you're doing this, when you know that your child could be on their own some day, reducing confusion is absolutely imperative in piece of a piece of legislation like this.

I mean, I was so excited about this bill. It's a measure that we specifically heard from stakeholders. The government, Madam Chair, keeps saying: nothing for us without us. Well, I am telling you that going against this amendment is going against that saying straight up. This came directly from stakeholders. The disappointment is not only that the government is voting this down but that they didn't come up with this on their own. But even that would have been okay because the legislation as it stands is a needed piece of legislation. But let me read the title again, just to be clear so the government knows that this was their title. An Act to Strengthen Financial Security for Persons with Disabilities. So strengthen it. Strengthen it. Madam Chair, this is a real opportunity to actually do that. The government is voting down a reasonable amendment, and I'm going to go into why later.

3:30

This is particularly interesting for Albertans, for families that I know of. I happen to be in touch with a ton of families in this particular stakeholder group and not just because my son happens to be a part of that group but because we actually have friends and associates and groups of people.

Did you know that people have travelled to this province from all over the world, Madam Chair, to receive services in this province? The government would have you believe that our services in this province have been lacklustre. Let me tell you. I can tell you of 10 or 15 families, specifically, that moved here to this province for these services in the time that I had the privilege of finding out all about these services that were there and the people that came to my aid when my son was first diagnosed. Let's just clear that one up right away.

If the government has concerns about the language, which was vetted and approved by Parliamentary Counsel – these people are extremely well educated and brilliant. I'm pretty sure that if there was an issue with the language, they would have caught it. I'm not sure if maybe the government, then – can you just take the spirit of this legislation, Madam Chair? Is that possible? I would love to know what wording issues are here because it has already been vetted by the experts.

If you want to put forward your own amendment, please do. I really don't care who takes credit for this, but it is a needed part of the legislation that was left out by your government, and we brought it forward with good intentions to work with the government to make this better. Let me read the title again, just to be clear, because this is the government's title: An Act to Strengthen Financial Security for Persons with Disabilities. Really? But you're not willing to take a well-intentioned amendment, and you're going to say that you're not taking it because of language. Really? Well done. Well, then you fix the language and bring it back. How about that? Like I said, I really don't care who takes credit for it. Let's just get it right. Will the government commit to doing this, Madam Chair?

I'd also like to highlight a few other things. The government has concerns about the specific wording of this amendment. We would have been more than happy to sit down with them and discuss these concerns, rework the amendment to get all-party consent to pass this. That's what happened with my bill for adoption. The government had concerns. We went back and forth. We fixed it. We did it together. That would have been fine.

But to vote down this amendment is ludicrous. At no time did the government reach out for further clarity or to work collaboratively. Interesting. The government said today, specifically in question period: please reach out to us; our offices are open; we're here to do work with you. Really? Well, here's a perfect example, Madam Chair, where that didn't happen. We did reach out. We did ask for help. We were willing to work collaboratively, but the minister decided, along with the government, to vote down a reasonable amendment instead of working with us to get the wording clear to make this legislation stronger, which is in the title of the government's legislation. Wrong. I hope Albertans are watching this. Wrong. We did reach out for help.

The NDP has made life more difficult and more expensive for more Albertans, and under this government they've increased the cost of everything. With the carbon tax, minimum wage increases, regulatory burden, the cost of life in this province is soaring. Meanwhile, the last time that AISH was indexed to adjust for the cost of living was 2012, when it rose from \$1,188 to \$1,588, which is significantly lower than the current low-income cut-off, which is \$1,699. This means, Madam Chair, that the AISH recipients are receiving the same amount of money, but their costs have risen. Their costs have risen.

So we came up with an alternative plan, especially for those folks who do have trusts that would be able to draw on that, that costs the government nothing. It leaves a huge financial gap, and many AISH recipients are living well below the poverty line, which is absolutely unacceptable. Our disabled population deserves every opportunity we can give them to live comfortable and successful lives, and this amendment would have provided them an additional opportunity. I cannot understand why the government would have taken this way.

Again, should the government choose to bring their own amendment forward, that would be fantastic. We will vote in favour of that. If it needs to be in your language, then do it. Again, this suggestion came from the stakeholders, Madam Chair. It's such a simple amendment, and the only reason the government has given us for voting it down is because of language. Please do clarify. It would be greatly appreciated.

The ability of AISH recipients to draw from a trust, in line with employment income, would have helped to make up some of the difference in that financial gap that is created by this government. It's so incredibly disappointing that they would have voted this amendment down. I mean, again, this could have helped raise AISH recipients out of poverty. I mean, honestly, it's a top-up. It's a top-up that would have cost you nothing – absolutely nothing – and it's already something that can be put in this legislation right now. But it's clear. Despite talking a big game, Madam Chair, does this government actually care about Alberta's vulnerable populations? Does this government actually have their backs? I would say, based on this, no.

We've seen that this is the case with the minimum wage increase. I mean, I can give you a perfect example. We have a fellow who's working at our car wash, and the increases to minimum wage made him unable to work at our car wash and still receive what he needed. I know that the minister knows this because I've sent him this information. This is a person that was trying to get ahead but, if he made more than \$12 an hour, was unable to receive the

requirements that he needed. He had to pick, Madam Chair, between either his medication or his AISH payment, and with one sign-off from the government, that could have been fixed in that particular situation. Again, I have reached out to the government. I have asked for help.

We've seen it with their shocking mishandling of the PDD review, which was frantically announced in early January this year despite stakeholders receiving assurances that the government would not be doing a review. Since the stakeholders have heard little to nothing about this review, which has no scope, no timeline, or deliverables – and it appears to be simply another announcement that the government can pat themselves on the back for, Madam Chair. Where is that PDD review? I'd like to know.

We have seen, in fact, that the PDD agencies were not consulted – isn't that interesting? – on the recent labour changes regarding overtime and holiday pay, which has caused some agencies the choice of being noncompliant with the legislation, closing their doors, or cutting services. This is particularly interesting. The government is cutting services to vulnerable populations, Madam Chair. The government is cutting services to vulnerable populations. I'm so tired that the government keeps talking about what they're doing to help vulnerable Albertans, and time and time again I see those Albertans' needs not being met. They're pawns, pawns for a government, being used as a political football.

This is actually a decent piece of legislation. I was so excited about this. We just wanted to help strengthen it, and the government, for partisan reasons, has shot it down. Interesting.

The disabled are already being negatively impacted. Let me give you another example, Madam Chair. Federally, if CPPD increases living for a person with disabilities, guess what happens? Da-da-da-da: AISH is clawed back. The minister also has that one, too. I've sent him a couple of those as well. Every time they get a cost-of-living increase, this is deducted from AISH. The minister has the power to fix this. Why not? Why am I bringing this up? Here's a decent piece of legislation that could have been strengthened, and the government is choosing to vote down the amendment. Hopefully, I can convince you not to do that.

You know, when you see a piece of legislation come through this – and the member had done a ton of consultation on this, went to the stakeholders. I was at all of those meetings. I saw the work that was done. It was very, very good. There are some things that are going to get missed, and it's such a privilege to be in this place, to be able to bring forward amendments that will strengthen legislation that is already good to start with. You feel like: oh, my goodness, they're listening to stakeholders – that's fantastic – and not just making meaningless promises and cutting ribbons and patting yourselves on the back. Yet such a simple amendment, which would have strengthened the legislation, is going to be or has been defeated needlessly.

3:40

There's another hole in this legislation that I'd like to also bring out, that the NDP has failed to address, which is that, unfortunately, due to the scope of the bill we are not able to amend because this bill does not bring this into consideration. We've heard from concerned families of disabled seniors who have trusts like the one that's laid out in Bill 5 and that raise their income to a level that is disqualifying them, Madam Chair, from being able to receive the Alberta seniors' benefit. Okay. I understand that that's out of the scope of this bill, but why isn't there legislation on the table, then, for that one? Bill 5 is supposed to ensure that those that receive an inheritance or trust will not be disqualified from AISH. Would it not stand to reason that the bill should also prevent disabled Albertans who have gone over to the side of the Alberta seniors'

benefit from being disqualified from those benefits as well? I think it's a fairly major gap that needs to be fixed. Maybe the government has legislation in the works. Let's hope so.

We know that the transition from AISH to the Alberta seniors' benefit at the age of 65 is really, really, really, really difficult, and it's a huge hurdle for Albertans and their families. Like I've said to you before, Madam Chair, as a parent that has tried to navigate this – and I feel like can navigate this – I've made a gazillion mistakes in my own situations. I'm telling you that when those mistakes are made, you are rejected and not just once or twice or three times. You know what's even more interesting? When you're rejected, nobody tells you what you're rejected for. That's the most interesting part, going through that form and trying to figure out what you did wrong in the first place. It can sometimes be as simple as putting your name in the wrong space or not having a doctor's piece of information completely directed to the same place as what you may have checked off elsewhere.

If the government isn't taking the time to actually read the forms and make sure that people are being taken care of – I mean, hopefully, that advocate will be available to us soon so that maybe there will be some help there because this is extremely difficult to navigate. It's extremely stressful. I am so blessed, Madam Chair, that I have family around me. My husband and I are able to work through this paperwork. If it was my son who had to do this with some sort of advocate, I can tell you that I don't even know the language that I should use to explain to you the level of anxiety that that puts into me even thinking about that. The anxiety is almost too much to bear, the idea that my son could be left as an adult without help to figure out and navigate this system. And the government is not even willing to pass a small amendment to make it easier for people in this province. Holy moly.

Anyways, I would highly recommend that the government look through this problem and create legislation to protect disabled Albertans of all ages from having their government subsidies negatively impact their family's ability to leave them an inheritance. In conclusion, I mean, I've said "ludicrous." I've said "appalling." All of those words describe to me an inability to see past partisanship, but what's worse is that I'm really sad that the government would vote against a valuable amendment. I hope, Madam Chair, that they will fix this problem that our amendment highlighted as well as amend Bill 5 to include a provision to protect disabled seniors from having their seniors' benefit revoked because of a trust.

It would be a nice show of unity for the government to work with the opposition to make life better for Albertans with disabilities, but what, in the end, this side of the House cares most about is that the work gets done. We don't care who takes credit for it, and we would be happy for the NDP to take credit for closing these loopholes, as long as they get closed.

Thank you.

The Chair: The hon. minister.

Mr. Sabir: Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you, Member, for the remarks. I also heard words like "ludicrous," "appalling," and I can start by telling you what's really appalling. We added \$103 million to this program in the last four budgets, and you have voted down those increases every time. What's really appalling is that we added \$150 million to the PDD budget, and every time you along with your caucus have voted down all of those increases. There was an opportunity to vote on that budget separately as well; you still chose to vote it down. What's really appalling? You were asking about other bills that may be in the pipeline. There is a bill before the House, Bill 9, which you have walked out on along with your

colleagues six times so far if my count is correct. That's really appalling. Yes, you made arguments about this amendment without even listening to this side, what we have to say about this amendment.

The thing is that what we have done as government: we had focused on making these programs better, making improvements to these programs, increasing funding to these programs over the period of last year. As I said, we have increased funding for AISH by \$103 million to ensure that more Albertans have access to this vital support. If we were to take the advice from that side and cut 20 per cent, make it equal to B.C. – B.C. pays around \$1,100 in AISH payments.

Also, there are things that are shared here that I don't think are completely correct. The way the AISH program works is that it's a guaranteed income program. What it says is that it ensures that your income from all sources doesn't fall below \$1,588. There are categories of income which are exempt, partially exempt, not exempt, and if something falls in one of those categories, it will be treated accordingly.

I can talk about some other questions raised. Again, there are many things that were talked about that don't fall within the scope of this amendment or this legislation, so I will talk specifically about this legislation and this amendment and how AISH treats trusts and other incomes. I will start by saying that we have made strong investments in public service, health care, and education so that individuals and families have the help that they need. We have invested in the Calgary and Edmonton low-income transit pass program, which most people on these programs benefit from. We are investing in affordable housing, a \$1.2 billion investment that low-income families will benefit from. We increased funding for FCSS programs, \$25 million.

With that said, we value the intent of the amendment put forward by the member opposite, that they are trying to give an exemption to those on AISH. However, I think I briefly said this before. I do not think that it accomplishes what it's intended to accomplish. Insofar as the language of 3.1(1) goes, it refers only to cohabiting partners. The way I am reading it and the advice that I'm getting on it, this assumes that all AISH clients have partners, and it could have a negative impact on individuals who do not have partners. At best, I would say that it's not the most clearly written piece of legislation. We think that that's not fair, and we are concerned why it's drafted that way. I think I spoke to the member who brought this amendment. I shared my concern when this bill was debated a couple of weeks ago.

Secondly, the exemption level of a maximum \$800 per month that is quoted in 3.1 doesn't actually match the true employment exemption level for a single client or cohabiting partner. The single exemption for employment income is the first \$800 of net employment, which is fully exempt, and any amount over \$800 up to \$1,500 is 50 per cent exempt, for a maximum of \$1,150. The family exemption is that the first \$1,950 of the applicant or client or their cohabiting partner's combined net employment income is fully exempt. Any amount above \$1,950 up to \$2,500 is 50 per cent exempt, for a maximum of \$2,225.

3:50

Neither of these exemptions is reflected in the proposed amendment. We are concerned that this amendment could result in unintended consequences and penalize single individuals who count on AISH. As a result, we cannot support this amendment. However, we are interested in looking at this issue further. I will be directing my department to explore this issue and any potential opportunities, and I will certainly keep all members of this House apprised of this work.

Another difference that I want to explain here is that the rationale behind different exemptions is different. Employment exemptions are there, I guess, to support and encourage employment while this trust income, rent, and other passive incomes – there are quite a few of them – are treated in one bucket separately. Going forward, we can certainly look at how we treat passive income, and again I will ask my department to look into it. But creating this one-off exemption I think creates a new layer of exemption which only applies to one kind of passive income, and the rest of the AISH recipients will have the same \$200 plus 25 per cent exemption.

I think there is more work that needs to be done on this one. When my colleague the MLA for Calgary-Currie consulted with Albertans, that's not something that we have consulted on. We will work with our community partners to make sure that we get this right and that we make a decision that is taken in consultation with the community.

Thank you. As much as I appreciate the intent of the amendment, I will ask all members of this House to vote against this amendment.

The Chair: The hon. Member for Chestermere-Rocky View.

Mrs. Aheer: Thank you, and thank you to the minister for the answers. I have absolutely no issue with the fact that there needs to maybe be more work. I understand that. But for the government to say that this amendment, that went through Parliamentary Counsel and an entire group of people before it comes to you, is poorly worded is disrespectful to this House, in my opinion. If the government had an issue, Madam Chair, with the language or anything like that, as you know as and as we've said to you on several occasions, we would have been happy to work with you on that.

I understand the exemptions. This exemption has nothing to do with those other exemptions, and you know that as well as I do. So if we needed to change the language in order to fix that, it would have been a very minor change. You know that as well as I do. It could have been a very small change that would have very much helped those of us who have children in this particular situation, who will one day leave this Earth and leave these things to our children, to make sure that some aspect of that was taken care of for them, and it could have very well raised them out of poverty.

I think your interpretation of the single versus cohabiting is misunderstood, and that's fair. If you've misunderstood it, Madam Chair, that's fair; that's fine. But we could have discussed that, and I would happily have done that. Having been a parent and having been in the system and having gone through this, I would have happily been a person to have bounced these ideas off to make this amendment work.

The only thing I care about at this point in time, Madam Chair, and that I'd like to have on the record is that the government look at this fulsomely. If you need to come up with whatever language you need to come up with, Minister, in order to make this work, we will be very grateful. If that's what needs to happen here, then so be it.

But in the meantime to be able to have an opportunity, especially in committee like this, to be able to work on language together would have been a wonderful opportunity to make this legislation stronger, which – I've read the title several times – was what this was intending to do.

Madam Chair, thank you so much for the opportunity to speak to this. I look forward to the amendments to this legislation that the government will be bringing forward to amend their own legislation. Thank you.

The Chair: Any other members wishing to speak to the amendment A1? The hon. Member for Calgary-Mackay-Nose Hill.

Ms McPherson: Thank you, Madam Chair. I just wanted to take a couple of minutes to speak to this amendment. When I read it when it was first introduced, I was actually pretty excited to see it. I think it makes a lot of sense. I think it's very compassionate. It fills in a gap that was noticed, and I'm very disappointed to understand that the government isn't supporting this.

I appreciate the explanation that the minister gave, but I think that, as the Member for Chestermere-Rocky View said, there's still space to have a conversation about it and to change the amendment in a way that would be acceptable and still meet what it is that the amendment was trying to achieve in the first place, which is compassionate. AISH recipients are pretty vulnerable people by and large, and it's hard to get by on AISH. Anything that we can do from a regulatory or legislative point of view to make it easier for them, to make life easier for them: I think it's incumbent upon us to at least give it very serious consideration.

With that, again, I'm disappointed in the decision of the government, and I would still urge colleagues in the House to support this amendment.

The Chair: Any other members wishing to speak to amendment A1? Strathmore-Brooks.

Mr. Fildebrandt: Thank you, Madam Chair. I won't take up too much of members' time, but I've been following this bill pretty closely. The Member for Calgary-Currie and I met I believe last September to discuss this when it was in the form of a private member's bill. I thought it was an absolutely excellent piece of legislation, compassionate, and helping families to care for their loved ones in need, and it was sorely needed. I want to thank the Member for Calgary-Currie for bringing this forward.

I won't belabour the point, but this amendment I think does improve upon a positive piece of legislation. I'll be voting for the final piece of legislation if this amendment is accepted or not, but this is a very nonideological piece of legislation and a nonideological amendment. I just want to thank the Member for Calgary-Mackay-Nose Hill for her comments, Chestermere-Rocky View, and then, obviously, the Member for Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills for bringing it forward.

I think this does build upon an already positive piece of legislation. I imagine we'll agree a bit more on this piece of legislation than on the next bill up for debate, but I think it would be a positive move on the government's part to consider accepting this. If they need more time to consider it, perhaps they would just tell the House so, and we could adjourn debate on this and come back to it later in the day or tomorrow. It does build on a positive piece of legislation.

I just also wanted to make sure I'm on the record thanking the Member for Calgary-Currie for consulting widely and bringing forward a good piece of legislation even though it's now in the form of a government bill.

Thank you.

The Chair: Any other members wishing to speak to the amendment?

Seeing none, are you ready for the question?

[The voice vote indicated that the motion on amendment A1 lost]

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 3:59 p.m.]

[Fifteen minutes having elapsed, the committee divided]

[Ms Jabbour in the chair]

For the motion:

Aheer	Gill	Panda
Anderson, W.	Hunter	Starke
Clark	Loewen	Stier
Drysdale	McPherson	Swann
Fildebrandt	Nixon	Yao
Fraser		

Against the motion:

Carlier	Ganley	McKittrick
Carson	Goehring	Miller
Ceci	Hinkley	Miranda
Connolly	Hoffman	Nielsen
Coolahan	Kazim	Piquette
Cortes-Vargas	Kleinstauber	Renaud
Dach	Larivee	Schmidt
Dang	Littlewood	Schreiner
Drever	Loyola	Shepherd
Eggen	Luff	Sucha
Feehan	Mason	Woollard
Fitzpatrick		

Totals:	For – 16	Against – 34
---------	----------	--------------

[Motion on amendment A1 lost]

The Chair: We are back on the main bill. The hon. Member for Calgary-Hawkwood.

Connolly: Thank you, Madam Chair. I move that we adjourn debate.

[Motion to adjourn debate carried]

Bill 9 Protecting Choice for Women Accessing Health Care Act

The Chair: Are there any further questions, comments, or amendments with respect to this bill? The hon. Member for Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville.

Mrs. Littlewood: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. It's my pleasure to speak about Bill 9, access to abortion services act. This piece of legislation has created quite the interesting conversation in Alberta as of late. I think that this is an incredible move by the government to ensure that there is fair access when women are choosing to access reproductive health care. There are a number of services that women access when they visit abortion clinics. It is not only an abortion that they are always seeking when they go into a clinic, and it's important that they feel safe and respected in that community. Just like being at home, just like at a workplace, it's important that they feel that they can access health services without feeling harassed, without feeling that their privacy is being compromised.

I know that we have heard in this House experiences of an increase in protester activity when people are going to these clinics. As well, health professionals have also been feeling fearful for their safety. As well, people that go as a support system to these clinics with friends of theirs, with family of theirs are also feeling a lot of unease when they go to access these services. So, you know, that stigma that still surrounds abortion in Canada and in Alberta is still a real thing.

It reminds me of when, I think, I was 20 and I was seeking services, psychiatry services. I made a trip to the University of Alberta hospital, and I knew that if I were to go in the door and go

through the doors of the office, I would be able to attain services, and if there was someone standing outside staring at me with a placard to tell me that there was something wrong with accessing mental health assistance, I probably would not have gone. It was only because of the ease of accessing that service that I was able to get through those front doors, and I'm grateful that those services were there when I needed them. You know, I've spoken a lot in this House about the stress of having a mom with a lot of complex mental health issues. Over the course of my life that created a lot of compounded stress and was leading to depression, so I needed help that my friends were not able to give me. It's good when we can have support systems around us, but having a mental health professional that is accessible is something that is worth its weight in gold, so to speak.

4:20

You know, the stigma that also surrounds accessing abortion is very real. I was talking to a friend of mine who had accessed those services for herself. She's still not ready to tell it as sort of a general part of her story about who she is, where she's been. She's only told, I think, three people in her life because she's afraid of what people will think of her even though this has been a legal service that women have had access to for 30 years in Canada.

You know, it's for those reasons that I speak highly in favour of this bill. I know that for her it was the right choice. It was a choice that she thought about for as long as she needed, and she needed to know that she had support from her family and friends around her. She had certain plans that she had for her life. She didn't feel like having a family at that time was the right choice for her, so she made that choice of her own free will. That's all this is. It's to allow a woman to be able to have that freedom, to not have someone else, whether it is their values, their morals, their ethics, putting those upon a woman that is going to make her own choice about her own health care.

I think that that's really important. I know that we come from a lot of diverse experiences. You know, I had the opportunity to meet with a couple of people that actually are some of those people that meet outside across the street from clinics that provide abortion services. I listened to them. I listened to why it is that they go. They feel that they're doing their own service. They feel that they are being there in a very specific way for a specific reason outside of the clinic, and they'll continue to do that. They're not happy about this, but they will continue to do that. They just will continue to do it from a further distance away from the clinic. These actually were not people that loudly protest, that hold placards. They just engage in their own prayer. They will continue to do this, and that's their freedom to do that. It's their freedom to practise in their own way, and it is a woman's freedom to access legal health services that are available to her.

I'm also glad to hear that there are parts of this legislation that will make sure that, you know, even beyond that zone that will be set up around a clinic, it will not be legal to harass people outside of that, whether it's to try to intimidate health care providers, to use people's connections that are in these communities and in their families to try and stop a health care provider from being able to do their job. That's what we're trying to address, that sort of chilling effect that happens when women feel afraid to access the service and the health care providers want to be able to practise health care free of intimidation. That should be their right, especially in this country of ours, especially in this province of ours.

Those were some of the things that I needed to reflect on from my own experience and that of my good friend. Also, you know, I needed to reflect on how it is going to affect others, people that would want to go and engage in loud or silent protest outside of

these clinics. It's about striking a balance. It's about protecting a woman's right to access health services, legal health services, and protecting the ability for someone to exercise their own views, their own opinions. But there is a line. There is a line at which my rights should never impede upon yours. I think that's a really important balance to strike.

With that, Madam Chair, I will conclude my remarks on the bill at this time, but I thank the government for bringing forward this bill. I'm thankful that in this country and in this province, women are able to make their own choices when it comes to their own bodies, and I am proud to stand up for those rights.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

The Chair: The hon. Member for Calgary-Hawkwood.

Connolly: Thank you, Madam Chair. It's my pleasure to rise in full support of Bill 9. Now, Madam Chair, I am pro choice, and I am about as pro choice as one can get. I've always believed in a woman's right to choose, and I'm passionate about making sure that people have access to safe abortions.

Something that I want to point out before I continue is that abortion rights are not only women's rights, but many men also have uteruses. There are thousands of trans men and nonbinary people in our province who have a different type of difficulty accessing these types of services, and I want to remind the House that we cannot forget them when we're talking about health care and abortion services.

As a man who doesn't have a uterus and doesn't have to worry about being pregnant or even worry about impregnating my current partner, I realize that I'm in a position of extreme privilege when it comes to the subject of abortion, which is why I don't think it's up to me to tell people what they should do with their bodies. Being pro choice means that you believe people should be able to choose what is best for them when it comes to their own bodies. It's not up to me to decide what is best for people who are pregnant and are making the decision of whether or not to go through with the pregnancy. When I have people that I love trying to make that decision, I help them, I support them, I hold their hand, and whatever they choose, I am there for them. But it's not up to me to make that decision for them.

I can understand people who don't want to have an abortion themselves. But to stop everyone else from seeking access to an abortion is such a foreign idea to me. I simply don't understand. You cannot be pro life and antiabortion because when states bar access to abortion services, people die. We've all heard stories of people trying to self-abort, and we all know that many of those stories end in tragedy. That's why I'm fighting for this bill, because the people of Alberta deserve to have access to abortion services without harassment. They deserve the right to access legal health care services without attacks, without molestation, and without having to go through a throng of people yelling at them and holding up signs with graphic images to try to dissuade Albertans from making a very personal decision.

I am very proud to support this bill, and I would ask all members of this Chamber to stand and vote in support of Bill 9.

The Chair: Any other questions, comments, or amendments? The hon. Member for Strathmore-Brooks.

Mr. Fildebrandt: Thank you, Madam Chair. I want to thank members for their participation in the debate here, especially the Member for Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville for her personal experiences and the experiences of her friend. It is a choice, but it is, I think, for the vast majority of women who make the choice, a

very difficult and personal choice that shouldn't be an easy choice, but it is their choice to make.

I want to address just a few of the comments from the Member for Calgary-Hawkwood around what it means to be pro choice. I am pro choice for everything. If you are pro choice and you believe it is your body and your choice, that should apply beyond just abortion. It should apply to every law that the government passes. It should apply to private health care. If you believe that it is your body and the government has no right to tell you what to do with it as long as you're not hurting anybody else, then surely we should at least believe in the right of people to access private health care in parallel to our public system. If it is our body and our choice and the government has no say over it, then clearly the members opposite must believe that the Canada Health Act itself is in violation of that principle.

4:30

If we are pro choice in believing that it is your body and your choice and that the government has no say over what you do with it, then clearly banning flavoured tobacco should be against the spirit of their convictions. If they are pro choice that it is our body, our choice, then clearly the right to ride a motorcycle without a helmet, however ill advised that activity may be, should apply to everyone regardless of their religion. This is the concept of sovereignty of the person.

Now, there is a legitimate debate about, you know, that some people would say that in the case of abortion there is another person involved, and surely at some point there is, and we generally have a hard time determining where that point starts and where it ends. Some people have black-and-white views on it. I have a bit more of a grey view on it. I want to emphasize the point that if you do believe in what you're saying, that it is your body and your choice, then surely that principle must apply beyond the narrow confines of the abortion debate.

Again, you know, the story the Member for Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville spoke to I think is very heartfelt and one that many women go through every year in Alberta. As men in this Chamber we should be very grateful that we don't have to face that. That is a difficult time. But I do take issue with some of what she said. I think she is confusing opposing a legal right to abortion with opposing even questioning the morality around it. I think that the vast majority of reasonable people in Alberta and in Canada have nuanced views on the topic. As I've said before, if you want to ruin a perfectly good conversation between two civil and reasonable people, talk about abortion. You'll ruin a conversation pretty quickly because it's such a polarized debate, and nuance does not function well in it.

There is a difference between trying to actively deprive someone of the legal right to do it physically and having a disagreement about it as a moral issue. Bill Clinton, probably the most famous pro-choice president of the United States, famously said that abortion is between a woman, her doctor, and her God. He was clear that, you know, he believed that he was pro choice, he believed in lifting restrictions on abortion, but he did not deny that there are moral implications involved in it that every woman must make a decision on herself.

You know, the pro-life movement itself has a pretty broad range of views. There are the more extreme ones who believe it should be banned in all cases. I think that's a very small group, but there are some who believe that. There are moderates along a long line of where they draw the line. And then there are a significant number of pro-life Albertans and Canadians who believe it should be legal but who take moral issue with it and seek to change hearts and minds rather than legislation.

I think this bill is going to make it illegal for even the most respectful kind of protest. I'm sure there probably have been examples, but I cannot recall an example in recent history where there's been violence or active intimidation at an Alberta abortion clinic. These protests are rare in general, but in most cases where I'm aware of something, it's been a little old lady praying quietly, and this will make them illegal. You might disagree with her, and she might disagree with you, but if she's not hurting anyone, if she's not harassing anyone, if she's merely praying, I think that's her business.

That's where this bill crosses the line. It is already illegal to harass someone. It's illegal to intimidate someone. If this bill sought to just clarify that in law, around intimidation and harassment, I would be its most enthusiastic supporter, but this bill talks about protest and has a very broad definition of protest, and that would include someone who just sits there quietly praying, even silently, to themselves. I'm sure that we have a hard time as legislators figuring out what she's saying to God, but that's her business. Somehow we're now going to expect law enforcement officials to figure out what she might be praying quietly. That's a very strange thing for government to legislate.

I'll have a series of amendments dealing with some of these issues, trying to better balance this bill. I'll distribute them now before going any further.

The Chair: This will be known as amendment A5.
Go ahead, hon. member.

Mr. Fildebrandt: Thank you, Madam Chair. The amendment that I've put before members reads as follows. I move that Bill 9, Protecting Choice for Women Accessing Health Care Act, be amended in section 7 by (a) in subsection (3) striking out "160 metres" and substituting "10 metres" and (b) in subsection (5) by adding "not to exceed 10 metres from the boundaries of the parcel on which a residence is located" after "physicians or service providers."

Now, I can speak from personal experience of having unwanted political business outside my house. I mentioned it at an early stage of this debate. Several months ago I had CBC camped outside my house with a camera pointed through the windows of my home while my wife, children, and other members of my extended family were inside. It was a gross violation of privacy and, I think, outright paparazzi-style media, unbecoming of any news broadcaster, let alone one that receives state taxpayer funding and support. I believe that that should have been illegal. I think that would constitute harassment and a violation of my privacy at home. If they want to wait outside my office, that's fine, but not at my home.

The home is much more sacred than that, and there is legitimacy in, I think, stopping protests outside of a home, period. One area of the bill where I would be more comfortable with limiting freedom of assembly is outside of people's homes. Protesting at a place of work is one thing, protesting at a monument or a government building is one thing, but protesting at someone's home is quite another. I'm actually quite supportive of there being a no-protest zone at residences, but at 160 metres it's quite an extraordinarily large zone that's been proposed. I mean, where can we draw the line? If you simply drive by a house with a pro-life bumper sticker, would you be considered protesting? If you wore a T-shirt as you walked by, would you be protesting?

What I'm seeking to do here is leave in place a part of the bill with which I actually strongly agree, that you should not be protesting outside of someone's home, but to bring that zone down to a more manageable level of 10 metres. At 160 metres, especially if you're in an urban area, you might not even know who's there.

That's a very large zone that was extended by the government without particularly much opposition here. I disagreed with 50 metres before, and I certainly disagree with 150 and 160 metres.

I will just say that this is a part of the legislation with which I strongly agree. You should not be protesting outside of someone's private residence. I've experienced that myself, and it's disgusting regardless of what you're doing. I support the spirit of it, but I want to bring the zone size down to a more manageable level so that we're not capturing people in this who should probably not be considered protesting outside of someone's home at that kind of distance.

Thank you.

4:40

The Chair: Any other members wishing to speak to the amendment?
The hon. Member for St. Albert.

Ms Renaud: Thank you. It's my pleasure to rise and speak to the amendment. I am immensely appreciating the opportunity to do so to the amendment, reducing the distance from 160 metres – was it? – to 10 metres. So 10 metres I don't have a way to measure, but that's approximately from myself to you.

I don't know how many clinics you've driven by, but I don't just see little old ladies sitting there praying. It tends to be groups. It tends to be graphic, graphic signs that are huge that people are holding, and they tend to yell some obscenities that I'm not going to say in this place, not to mention the harassment that comes with the name-calling. I don't know. I'm pretty sure that if I called you a baby murderer from here, you'd hear it, so I think 10 metres is not sufficient. Although I do certainly appreciate your interest in this bill and allowing us the opportunity to debate every facet of it, I would encourage all of my colleagues to vote no on this amendment.

The Chair: Any other members wishing to speak to amendment A5?

Seeing none, I'll call the question.

[The voice vote indicated that the motion on amendment A5 lost]

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 4:41 p.m.]

[Fifteen minutes having elapsed, the committee divided]

[Ms Jabbour in the chair]

For the motion:
Fildebrandt

Against the motion:

Carlier	Ganley	Miller
Carson	Goehring	Miranda
Clark	Hinkley	Nielsen
Connolly	Hoffman	Piquette
Coolahan	Kazim	Renaud
Cortes-Vargas	Kleinstauber	Sabir
Dach	Larivee	Schmidt
Dang	Littlewood	Schreiner
Drever	Loyola	Shepherd
Eggen	Luff	Starke
Feehan	McKitrick	Sucha
Fitzpatrick	McPherson	Woollard
Fraser		

Totals: For – 1 Against – 37

[Motion amendment A5 lost]

The Chair: Any further questions, comments, or amendments with respect to the bill? The hon. Member for Edmonton-Castle Downs.

Ms Goehring: Thank you, Madam Chair. It's my absolute honour and privilege to stand up today to talk about Bill 9, the access to abortion services act. As a woman, as a mom, as a friend, as a social worker I've had first-hand experience assisting those who both work professionally and have had to use abortion services here in the province of Alberta. I was a young mom, and I had several friends that had to make that decision when faced with an unplanned pregnancy, and I can say that it's not an easy decision.

Being a young person and having to come to a decision and then being forced to go to a clinic where you're being yelled at and threatened and told that you are an absolutely horrible person because of a decision that you have to make, accessing health care, is absolutely unacceptable.

Early on in my career I chose to work with young parents. I worked at an organization called Terra. This organization supported young parents and/or pregnant teens. Not all of us chose to parent. Some chose to place for adoption, some chose an abortion, some had miscarriages, but we all came together as a community, and we supported each other. Seeing these young women and young dads was absolutely remarkable. The thing that was really heartbreaking was when a young woman had to decide that she needed to have an abortion for her own personal choices and then had to run a gauntlet of protesters, who were horrible. Seeing the aftermath of that as their friend, as a counsellor was absolutely devastating.

5:00

When I was a social work student in my second year, I chose to do my practicum at Planned Parenthood, and to me it was one of the most amazing experiences that I could have had as a social worker. I had the privilege of hearing first-hand from women who were struggling with an unplanned pregnancy. As staff at Planned Parenthood we received horrible, horrible messages, hate mail from people that were just disgusting in the language that they sent to us as staff that were supporting women that were able to access health care. In talking to staff that worked in the abortion clinics, they were terrified sometimes to go to work, had been accosted on ski hills out with their family during vacation, had people that knew where they lived and would come to their home. It was absolutely terrifying, and my heart went out to so many people that were doing their job, essentially, every day.

That was in the '90s, Madam Chair, and to hear that they had asked government for protection, for bubble zone legislation, and that the government turned their back on them is horrible. I am so proud that our government listened to the women and to the health care providers and that we came forward with legislation that's going to help protect those people that need to access their employment and need to access health care services.

I remember a woman when I was working in a women's shelter. She was pregnant, and she was terrified that her husband would find out, and she chose to access abortion services. She went to the clinic and came back in tears to the shelter. She was horrified. She didn't feel safe and was terrified that somehow her husband was going to find out that she was pregnant just simply by going to the doctor. She struggled a long time about how she would make that decision to simply walk through the doors. That's not okay. This was a woman who needed for her own personal safety to access health services and was afraid because of the protesting that was happening right out front of that clinic.

I stand here in disappointment that there aren't more members listening to some of these stories and standing up for what they believe in regardless of whether they're supporting it or not. I stand

here proud of our government and what we're doing to help women. This is simply about making it safe for women to access health care. They need to be able to walk into a place where they can access health care and feel safe and secure and not abused, Madam Chair, just for having an appointment at a clinic.

I would really strongly suggest that all members of this House stand with the women of Alberta and stand with the health care professionals that go to work every day and have a right to go to work and access services without being harassed, threatened, ridiculed. It's our right, Madam Chair, and I'm pleading: please, please support this bill.

Thank you.

The Chair: The hon. Member for Strathmore-Brooks.

Mr. Fildebrandt: Thank you, Madam Chair. I want to thank the Member for Edmonton-Castle Downs for her comments.

Madam Chair, certainly, it'll be a change in tone, but if you and the members would indulge me for just a moment to go completely off topic – I'll try to tie it in – I want to get on the record after meeting members of different parties during the bells as we chatted. I think there will probably be all-party agreement if the Minister of Finance, responsible for the AGLC, were to extend opening hours for places that serve alcohol on the 19th of May so that all Albertans can join in celebrating the royal wedding as good, loyal subjects of the Commonwealth. We did this during the World Cup when it was on, and I greatly appreciated it. We may have done it during hockey games as well. I know I'm completely off topic, so I appreciate members' indulgence on this. I think there'll be a great deal of crossparty support, and I would encourage the Minister of Finance to consider it.

Back to the more serious matter at hand, though, I have another amendment to put forward, that I'll distribute to members before continuing.

The Chair: This will be known as amendment A6.

Go ahead, hon. member.

Mr. Fildebrandt: Thank you, Madam Chair. In the amendment put forward, I move that Bill 9, Protecting Choice for Women Accessing Health Care Act, be amended in section 2(1) by striking out clause (b). This is striking out three words in the bill: "engage in protest."

This is important because this is keeping everything in the bill about intimidation and harassment. The Member for Edmonton-Castle Downs spoke to her experience and the experience of people she knows of horrible intimidation and harassment, things that are unacceptable, really, anywhere but in particular when someone is going through such a difficult time. But "engage in protest" is an overly broad term. Protest can range from aggressive shouting, which I believe should not be permitted – I think we would consider that harassment in the context of outside an abortion clinic – but it can also include peaceful and respectful protest. It can include protests, which are actually more common in these places, of just silent prayer.

I won't belabour the point, but as I spoke to earlier, if someone is engaging in silent prayer somewhere, this legislation would probably consider that protest. It may be a form of protest, but I think it's not intimidation. It's not harassment. It's someone expressing their religious freedoms, freedom of expression, and freedom of assembly in a way that I don't believe is worthy of being struck down. It's not a kind of protest I would engage in or even encourage at that place. I think there are better places for it. But if someone is engaging even in silent prayer as a form of protest, I

think it would be a gross overreach and violation of freedom of expression, assembly, and religion to ban that.

I think all members, on all sides of this House, should stand up for those basic liberties. This is a part of the bill where the balance is completely wrong. If we're trying to protect people from harassment and intimidation, we can do that, but we should not be unduly infringing on people's basic Charter rights. The Criminal Code already prohibits harassment, intimidation, threats, and assaults. The Member for Edmonton-Castle Downs spoke to that. Those things are already against the law. If this bill wants to further clarify and entrench those things in legislation, I think that is positive, but this is where the bill goes completely off script, where it goes completely off balance in balancing important Charter rights.

This is a very simple amendment to better balance this legislation. It keeps in place everything on harassment, intimidation, threats, and assaults but strikes out only three words: "engage in protest." I'd encourage all members to support it.

Thank you.

The Chair: Any other members wishing to speak to the amendment? Seeing none, are you ready for the vote?

[The voice vote indicated that the motion on amendment A6 lost]

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 5:10 p.m.]

[One minute having elapsed, the committee divided]

[Ms Jabbour in the chair]

For the motion:
Fildebrandt

Against the motion:

Carlier	Goehring	Miranda
Carson	Hinkley	Nielsen
Clark	Hoffman	Piquette
Connolly	Kazim	Renaud
Coolahan	Kleinstauber	Sabir
Cortes-Vargas	Larivee	Schmidt
Dach	Littlewood	Schreiner
Dang	Loyola	Shepherd
Drever	Luff	Starke
Eggen	McKitrick	Sucha
Feehan	McPherson	Swann
Fitzpatrick	Miller	Woollard
Fraser		

Totals: For – 1 Against – 37

[Motion on amendment A6 lost]

The Chair: Are there any further questions, comments, or amendments with respect to the bill? The hon. Member for Strathmore-Brooks.

Mr. Fildebrandt: Thank you, Madam Chair. Let's try again. I'll try to be brief, which I am sure members will surely appreciate. I'll distribute this amendment before continuing.

The Chair: This will be known as amendment A7.
Go ahead, hon. member.

Mr. Fildebrandt: Thank you, Madam Chair. The amendment I propose is to move that Bill 9, Protecting Choice for Women

Accessing Health Care Act, be amended in section 13 by striking out:

(4) Where a corporation commits an offence under this Act, any officer, director or agent of the corporation who directed, authorized, assented to, acquiesced in or participated in the commission of the offence is guilty of that offence and liable to the penalty provided under subsection (2)(a) or (3)(a), as the case may be, whether or not the corporation has been prosecuted or convicted of that offence.

Now, this is more of a housekeeping part of the bill. The last amendment I moved dealt with the substance of the bill, I think, trying to better balance Charter rights and freedoms. This amendment is more housekeeping in nature, just trying to improve the wording of the legislation.

Corporations are already subject to the Criminal Code. The definition in section 2 of "every one, person and owner" includes public bodies, bodies corporate, societies, and companies. Corporations can only act through their employees and agents. Under current Canadian law officers and directors of a corporation cannot be convicted of a crime for the acts of the corporation solely because of their status as a director or officer. That's a basic principle of Canadian corporate law and societies law. If they are directing the corporation to commit crimes that will benefit the corporation or otherwise participate in criminal activities within the corporation's context, they can already be held criminally responsible. In those circumstances, though, it is highly likely that the directors and officers would be charged with the offence jointly with the corporation, not singled out.

So if that conduct is what the government is targeting in Bill 9, it would be supplementing the Criminal Code, meaning that Bill 9 is potentially encroaching on federal jurisdiction. I think that that is an issue with the way this legislation is written. This particular amendment is not trying to change the spirit of the bill, the intent of the bill, or even the strength of the bill from the government's perspective but is simply trying to clarify important distinctions between individuals and corporations here, to clean up the wording there.

I would encourage all members to support this amendment.

The Chair: Any other members wishing to speak to amendment A7?

Seeing none, are you ready for the question?

[The voice vote indicated that the motion on amendment A7 lost]

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 5:18 p.m.]

[One minute having elapsed, the committee divided]

[Ms Jabbour in the chair]

For the motion:
Fildebrandt

5:20

Against the motion:

Carlier	Goehring	Miranda
Carson	Hinkley	Nielsen
Clark	Hoffman	Piquette
Connolly	Kazim	Renaud
Coolahan	Kleinstauber	Sabir
Cortes-Vargas	Larivee	Schmidt
Dach	Littlewood	Schreiner
Dang	Loyola	Shepherd
Drever	Luff	Starke

Eggen	McKitrick	Sucha
Feehan	McPherson	Swann
Fitzpatrick	Miller	Woollard
Fraser		
Totals:	For – 1	Against – 37

[Motion on amendment A7 lost]

The Chair: Any further questions, comments, or amendments with respect to this bill? Strathmore-Brooks.

Mr. Fildebrandt: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'll distribute the next amendment before commencing to speak.

The Chair: This will be amendment A8.
Go ahead, hon. member.

Mr. Fildebrandt: Thank you, Madam Chair. I move that Bill 9, Protecting Choice for Women Accessing Health Care Act, be amended in section 5(1) by striking out clause (c).

The section that I'm proposing be stricken out says "persistently request that another person refrain from providing, or facilitating the provision of, abortion services." I consider this part to be a direct assault on freedom of expression. It is not necessarily harassing somebody or intimidating somebody or assaulting to express your viewpoint to someone. Members across the way tell me not to do things all the time. I may not listen to them all the time, but they have a right to express themselves. As the opposition it's nearly our job to tell the government not to do things, but they are not obliged to listen to us.

Someone expressing their point of view about what you're doing is not violating their rights. Freedom of expression is the right to express yourself, but someone does not have the right to make you listen. That's what the block feature is for on most social media platforms. You don't have to listen to somebody.

In this case, this amendment, if taken in isolation, would keep the bill intact. It would achieve, I think, most of or all of what the government is intending to do except that if, you know, someone were to politely ask someone: would you like to talk about this? Again, it's not something I would encourage at an abortion clinic. I don't think you're going to talk someone out of it, but if someone simply wants to talk about something, I don't think we should be stopping them for simply asking if someone wants to talk about it. To request that someone refrain from doing it I think is an overreach of the law. So I believe that this amendment would better balance security of the person, a Charter right to protect women accessing these services, with the competing Charter rights in this bill of freedom of expression and freedom of assembly.

I'd encourage all members to consider supporting this particular amendment.

The Chair: The hon. Minister of Health.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. I want to thank the member for being very clear and open about where he stands on this and for the work that he's done in this Assembly to make sure that he is present and active in debate regarding something that women have been asking for government to act on in this province for about 30 years. They only asked this government about a year ago.

When I toured Woman's Health Options here in Edmonton and when I toured Kensington clinic in Calgary, the staff there said that what they were most excited about with this legislation – there were lots of pieces, but when I said, "You may have heard. Our Premier wants us every day to get up and do something that day to make life

better for Albertans. I know that you've told me this legislation will help make your life better. Tell me one way this will help you personally," some of the staff said: "I'm really looking forward to not having to spend an hour every day deleting e-mails from my inbox. I'm really looking forward to not having to answer hateful phone calls when I start my day."

People have the right to make their opinions known. I believe just last week there was a protest at the Legislature regarding legislation around this work, but: "People shouldn't be coming to my place of work day in and day out and harassing me for doing my job." Part of it was that they were saying that they feel like this government for the first time in the history of those clinics respects what they do. Part of that is not allowing harassing behaviour that really is beyond reason.

I have to say that I believe that removing the words that are in this clause would remove one of the benefits that these staff said will indeed make their lives better. For those reasons, I won't be voting in support of the amendment, and I would encourage colleagues to also oppose it.

Again, through you, Madam Chair, to the hon. member, I do want to say that I appreciate how open he's been about what his views are on this legislation. Clearly, he is engaging in this process and has opinions, as I'm sure many Albertans do. He's right. Sometimes this is a contentious issue for folks, but I appreciate that he's showing up to his job and doing it in a way that he feels safe, respected, and honoured. Certainly, we won't necessarily agree, but you can't deny the fact that he is giving his job his all. I want to give that to the women who are entering these clinics as well, whether they're staff or – I imagine there's probably been a man or two working in these clinics. I've only met women when I've visited them, so I use that gendered language, I guess, when I'm referring to it. I have to say how much I want to make their lives better.

I imagine that many of us in this House signed up for this work because we wanted to have an opportunity to influence public policy and make our opinions heard. Certainly, to that hon. member: your opinion is heard. You joked I think a few days ago about being the Leader of the Opposition, and I have to say that you are certainly holding government to account and doing your job. While I won't be voting for your amendment, I certainly respect that you've brought it forward and the way that you've been open about your opinions on this issue.

Thank you.

The Chair: Any other members to speak? Strathmore-Brooks.

Mr. Fildebrandt: I want to thank the hon. Deputy Premier for her comments, but for the sake of my popularity in Strathmore-Brooks please stop complimenting me.

Ms Hoffman: Sorry. This is just too much fun. I won't drag this on much longer. I appreciate the focus that has been given to this item.

I do want to say: don't worry. I think you're up soon for a rotation in question period, and I'm sure you'll have an opportunity to highlight just how much we differ in our opinions on many items. Certainly, you being the lone vote on this for many items I think bodes well for your reputation as well.

5:30

Again, I imagine that there are people in this Chamber that have strong opinions on this and might not feel so safe or supported. I imagine sometimes it cannot necessarily feel safe or supportive to be a lone member, an independent member, but I certainly do respect that you have shown up to do your job and that you have said that nobody is going to stop you from doing that. I can tell from

your tenacity with these amendments that you're committed to trying to do everything through your powers as a Member of the Legislative Assembly and the responsibility that comes with that to do your job.

Again, to the hon. member, I'll bring the gloves tomorrow, but I respect, certainly, the work that you've done on this today and in the many days that have been previous and, I imagine, forthcoming as well. Thanks again.

The Chair: Any other members wishing to speak to amendment A8?

Seeing none, I'll call the vote.

[The voice vote indicated that the motion on amendment A8 lost]

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 5:31 p.m.]

[One minute having elapsed, the committee divided]

[Ms Jabbour in the chair]

For the motion:
Fildebrandt

Against the motion:

Carlier	Goehring	Miranda
Carson	Hinkley	Nielsen
Clark	Hoffman	Piquette
Connolly	Kazim	Renaud
Coolahan	Kleinstauber	Sabir
Cortes-Vargas	Larivee	Schmidt
Dach	Littlewood	Schreiner
Dang	Loyola	Shepherd
Drever	Luff	Starke
Eggen	McKittrick	Sucha
Feehan	McPherson	Swann
Fitzpatrick	Miller	Woollard
Fraser		

Totals: For – 1 Against – 37

[Motion on amendment A8 lost]

The Chair: Are there any further questions, comments, or amendments with respect to this bill? Strathmore-Brooks.

Mr. Fildebrandt: Well, Madam Chair, I have the pleasure of announcing to members that this will be my last amendment to the bill. Sorry to disappoint some. I'll distribute it before speaking further.

The Chair: This will be known as amendment A9.

Go ahead, hon. member.

Mr. Fildebrandt: Thank you, Madam Chair. The amendment is as follows. I move that Bill 9, Protecting Choice for Women Accessing Health Care Act, be amended as follows: in part A section 1(d) is amended by striking out the word "or" at the end of subclause (iii), by adding "or" at the end of subclause (ii), and by striking out subclause (iv), and in part B section 15 is amended by striking out clause (a).

What this does is that it essentially strikes out sections that say:

The Lieutenant Governor in Council may make regulations

- (a) specifying or describing premises as a facility for the purposes of section 1(d).

This is an amendment, again, I think, from just a better legislative perspective. It is not changing the intent of the bill, it is not

changing the spirit of the bill, and it's not even changing, I think, probably in the minister's view, the strength of the bill. What this is doing is ensuring that this is legislative, that they are legislating very clearly here that the cabinet through order in council cannot simply expand the definition of what types of facilities here are protected through the back door. I think the bill is pretty clear about what it means for these kinds of facilities that they're trying to keep protests or dissent away from. They've been pretty clear on that. They've spelled it out in the legislation. My fear is that by simply granting the government the power through a simple decree, through order in council, the government may expand this to other kinds of facilities not really intended to be covered by this. This is, I think, just better legislative writing.

You know, regardless of where you fall on the political spectrum, what party you're in, we should always be careful to write laws that will be good regardless of what side of the aisle you're on. In the freak accident that the NDP were not re-elected in a year, they may regret giving a different party power through order in council to essentially change this bill. That's a very dangerous thing to do, to give unreasonable power to government through order in council.

There are appropriate times for orders in council for the government. I think that we've all demonstrated that in our support for the bill giving the right to the government to potentially stop oil shipments to unnamed provinces that try to stop our exports. That's a reasonable power to give government through order in council in cabinet, and the government has accepted a sunset clause to that. It's important that we restrain the arbitrary power of the executive, and that's why I believe that this amendment, which will keep the entire bill intact but remove the ability of the executive level of government to arbitrarily change the definitions of the protected facilities, is an appropriate move.

Dr. Swann: What would be an example of a misuse?

Mr. Fildebrandt: The Member for Calgary-Mountain View has asked for an example of it. You know, perhaps there is a pro-choice activist organization that has a building with a headquarters somewhere, but they do not provide abortion services there, there are no abortion doctors, and there are no patients seeking abortions or health services of any kind. It might be simply an activist headquarters of some kind.

5:40

It might simply involve organizations that support abortion access but aren't providing abortions themselves, and there's therefore no purpose to saying that you can't protest there. You know, if X organization supports abortion rights but they're not actually performing any there – there are no patients, there are no doctors, and it is simply a political activism group of some kind – disagree with them you might, but I think it would be unreasonable to restrict someone's right to protest that facility if there are no doctors or patients who can be affected. It is, then, simply a matter of political and social disagreement on issues, and I don't believe that the government would be right to limit that. That is one particular example.

But when you grant governments powers that are virtually unlimited to expand the definition of something beyond the legislation, it is always a dangerous road to go down. I hope that the government and other opposition members will recognize that it is always a very dangerous thing to grant the executive powers to change something arbitrarily.

I hope that they'll give this due consideration as an amendment to maintain the spirit and intent and powers of the bill but ensure

that it does not exceed what they intend themselves for it to include. Thank you.

The Chair: The hon. minister.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you very much. I think that I am not inclined to vote for the amendment for the reason that, for example, 30 years ago, when other jurisdictions were considering this, hospitals and clinics were the only places where abortion services were provided. We've since expanded to include pharmacies because of the addition of Mifegymiso across Canada, with recent approvals. Again, it is very clear in sub (iv): "premises specified or described in the regulations in which abortion services are provided." So it's not a pro-choice organization that isn't actually providing abortion services. This would be a specific place.

Again, with the evolution of science and with medicine, we didn't want to require a House of the day, whether it be in one year or 10 years from now, to have to come back and reopen this legislation to protect another site where this might be happening. We tried to be very careful in the choosing of these words to ensure that it was only about addition, that it wasn't about retraction of the types of locations that are included. But the addition could only be for facilities or premises where abortion services are provided.

I think the intent of the mover is acknowledged in the original legislation. Therefore, I would discourage my colleagues from voting for the amendment.

Thank you.

The Chair: Strathmore-Brooks.

Mr. Fildebrandt: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'll thank the Minister of Health for her comments. I just have a couple of questions around this, though. Is she able to cite examples where there have been protests, that involved harassment or not, outside of pharmacies in the last year or two? I know that most pharmacies will provide certain prescriptions and medications that can terminate pregnancies. Some of that might be considered abortion, some of it not. If she can provide whether there have been examples of people protesting outside of pharmacies: that is my first question.

The second, though, would be: in her view, are pharmacies already included in the definitions that she has prescribed in the bill that she's put forward here? If pharmacies are in fact included in the definitions that she's highlighted, why would it be necessary to give the government the power to expand the definitions to other kinds of facilities if clinics, hospitals, and pharmacies are all covered? Perhaps she can correct me if I'm wrong, but I can't think of other kinds of facilities that could be – yes. The Member for Vermilion-Lloydminster has highlighted the section very specifically. Pharmacies are included right now.

This is not seeking to remove pharmacies from the legislation. It keeps it in there. Clinics, hospitals, pharmacies are all there. She can correct me if I'm wrong, but I can't think of other kinds of facilities that provide abortion or abortion-related services. Because they've been quite broad in the kinds of facilities that they seek to keep protest or dissent away from on this issue, I have a hard time seeing why the executive would want to grant itself extensive powers to expand the definition if it's already very broad and does include things like pharmacies already.

Ms Hoffman: In other jurisdictions it specifically referred to hospitals and clinics because at the time when these laws were brought in – it was a number of years ago – other jurisdictions, including Alberta, didn't have abortion services provided anywhere other than a hospital and clinic. We wrote in "pharmacy" because of the evolution over the last year of Mifegymiso coming on and

our government making the choice to make that fully funded and publicly available for those who choose to access it. That's why we added in "pharmacy."

It's that same rationale that drove us to add in section 1(d)(iv), because nobody foreshadowed that "pharmacy" was going to be included. Now, in those other jurisdictions should the pharmacist feel that there is unreasonable protesting outside their pharmacy, they don't have the ability through an order in council to be able to protect those pharmacies from those types of protests. That's exactly why we added (iv), because science and medicine continue to evolve, and should there be – again, it's not any building – "premises specified or described in the regulations in which abortion services are provided," that's the type of building it could be expanded to.

Just like we didn't foresee "pharmacy" 20 years ago, I don't want to compel the House – we know that some members don't think this issue is worth debating today. We certainly envision that they might not feel it's worth debating in five or 20 years from today. I don't want to require a business or a premises where this service is provided to compel any government to have to come back to debate this legislation. As long as they meet the criterion of (iv), they could be expanded through an order in council to protect that space as well.

Again, I will be voting no on this amendment. Thank you.

The Chair: Go ahead, Calgary-MacKay-Nose Hill.

Ms McPherson: Thank you, Madam Chair. Just a couple of things regarding this amendment. The first one has to do with language. The Member for Strathmore-Brooks referred to abortion doctors. Those are actually called gynecologists, and they're doctors that specialize in women's reproductive health care. That's a whole spectrum of things. It could be things from menstruation to having babies, conceiving babies, having a hysterectomy because of health issues. I think it's incumbent on us to use the correct language when we're speaking about matters like this. This is an important discussion, an important debate, and I'd really encourage us all to use the correct terms.

The second point that I wanted to make was that I agree wholeheartedly with the minister on this. I think it's very smart, actually, to leave it a little bit more open ended. This doesn't empower the government to make a change through an order in council to a wide range of health care services. This is specifically related to abortions.

Something that I've kept in mind throughout this whole debate and especially in listening to a number of these amendments: I would make a correlation to how generally we would expect people to react if it was a man going to fill a prescription for Viagra. Imagine the hue and cry if people were protesting and harassing somebody that was going to get a prescription for something that is legal. For some reason we – not "we" generally, but a lot of people – seem to think it's okay to protest against women who are securing legal health care procedures. I would really hope that everyone keeps that in mind. It's obvious for the people who are voting on these amendments. This is something that has occurred to them. There shouldn't be any sort of differentiation between the health care services men receive and the health care services women receive. If they're legal, people should be able to access them unfettered.

For those reasons, I would certainly encourage people to vote against this amendment.

Mr. Fildebrandt: I've said it before, but again: thank you to the member for getting up. To her point around the terminology of

“gynecologist,” she is correct. These are gynecologists, but not all gynecologists perform abortions. Some of them provide these kinds of services, but not every gynecologist does. I think there is an important differentiation, and I’m not sure if there is a very specific term to single that out. But I want to thank her for her comments.

I want to thank all members who have participated in the debate. It’s been a lonely debate here in the Valhalla section, but it’s certainly been a privilege to do so.

I have no other amendments going forward, and I’m sure all members are anxious to get out for the 6 o’clock bells, so I would ask that we put the question.

The Chair: Any other members wishing to speak to the amendment?

[The voice vote indicated that the motion on amendment A9 lost]

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 5:50 p.m.]

[One minute having elapsed, the committee divided]

[Ms Jabbour in the chair]

For the motion:
Fildebrandt

Against the motion:

Carlier	Goehring	Miranda
Carson	Hinkley	Nielsen
Clark	Hoffman	Piquette
Connolly	Kazim	Renaud
Coolahan	Kleinstauber	Sabir
Cortes-Vargas	Larivee	Schmidt
Dach	Littlewood	Schreiner
Dang	Loyola	Shepherd
Drever	Luff	Starke
Eggen	McKitrick	Sucha
Fitzpatrick	McPherson	Swann
Fraser	Miller	Woollard
Ganley		

Totals: For – 1 Against – 37

[Motion on amendment A9 lost]

The Chair: Are there any further questions, comments, or amendments with respect to this bill?

Seeing none, are you ready for the question?

[The remaining clauses of Bill 9 agreed to]

[Title and preamble agreed to]

The Chair: Shall the bill be reported? Are you agreed?

Hon. Members: Agreed.

The Chair: Opposed? That’s carried.

The hon. Deputy Government House Leader.

Ms Larivee: Thank you, Madam Chair. At this moment I’d like to move that the committee rise and report progress on Bill 5 and report Bill 9.

[Motion carried]

[The Deputy Speaker in the chair]

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-Northern Hills.

Mr. Kleinstauber: Well, thank you, Madam Speaker. The Committee of the Whole has had under consideration certain bills. The committee reports the following bill with some amendments: Bill 9. The committee reports progress on the following bill: Bill 5. I wish to table copies of all amendments considered by the Committee of the Whole on this date for the official records of the Assembly.

The Deputy Speaker: Does the Assembly concur with the report? Say aye.

Hon. Members: Aye.

The Deputy Speaker: Opposed, say no. So ordered.

The hon. Deputy Government House Leader.

Ms Larivee: Thank you, Madam Speaker. At this time, having made great progress this afternoon, I would like to move that we adjourn, returning at 7:30 this evening.

[Motion carried; the Assembly adjourned at 5:56 p.m.]

Table of Contents

Address to the Legislative Assembly by Her Excellency the Right Honourable Julie Payette	1070
Introduction of Visitors	1071
Introduction of Guests	1072, 1082
Oral Question Period	
Federal Response to Pipeline Opposition	1073, 1074
Federal and Provincial Energy Policies	1073
Unemployment and Job Creation	1074
Calgary LRT Green Line	1075
Workplace Safety and Employment Standards	1075
Provincial Fiscal Policies	1076
Physicians' Disciplinary Policies	1076
Adverse Possession of Property	1077
Seniors' Mobile Blood Collection Service in St. Paul	1077
Home-care Services	1078
Serenity and Her Siblings	1079
Schoolchildren's Transportation	1079
Medical Laboratory Construction in Edmonton	1080
Indigenous Relations	1080
Tobacco Reduction and Industry Lobbyists	1081
Members' Statements	
Ramadan	1081
Provincial Election Third Anniversary Reflections	1082
Flood Mitigation	1082
Farmers	1082
Northern Hills Connect Social Enterprise Support	1083
Serenity's Siblings	1083
Tabling Returns and Reports	1083
Tablings to the Clerk	1084
Orders of the Day	1084
Government Bills and Orders	
Committee of the Whole	
Bill 5 An Act to Strengthen Financial Security for Persons with Disabilities	1084
Division	1087
Bill 9 Protecting Choice for Women Accessing Health Care Act	1088
Division	1090
Division	1092
Division	1092
Division	1094
Division	1096

Alberta Hansard is available online at www.assembly.ab.ca

For inquiries contact:

Managing Editor

Alberta Hansard

3rd Floor, 9820 – 107 St

EDMONTON, AB T5K 1E7

Telephone: 780.427.1875