



Province of Alberta

The 29th Legislature
Fourth Session

Alberta Hansard

Monday afternoon, May 28, 2018

Day 33

The Honourable Robert E. Wanner, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of Alberta
The 29th Legislature

Fourth Session

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Jabbour, Deborah C., Peace River (NDP), Deputy Speaker and Chair of Committees
Sweet, Heather, Edmonton-Manning (NDP), Deputy Chair of Committees

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Anderson, Wayne, Highwood (UCP)
Babcock, Erin D., Stony Plain (NDP)
Barnes, Drew, Cypress-Medicine Hat (UCP)
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Yao, Tany, Fort McMurray-Wood Buffalo (UCP)
Vacant, Fort McMurray-Conklin
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Party standings:

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

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Legislative Assembly of Alberta

1:30 p.m.

Monday, May 28, 2018

[The Speaker in the chair]

The Speaker: Good afternoon. Hon. members, I know that I speak for all of you. It is, with humility, an honour and privilege to be a part of this historic reconciliation. At my request Elder Herman Many Guns from the Piikani Treaty 7 territory has provided me with a prayer. I would ask that each of you reflect and/or pray, each in your own way.

Prayers

The Speaker: Creator gave us life to live in harmony. Creator created and gave us our Mother Earth. Creator taught us how to share with all walks of life. Our way of life was darkened, and we had to walk in the shadows of a foreign way of life that destroyed our beliefs and that of future generations. Today our children of tomorrow may see the new and true life of the future, so we have to adapt to change. We start by acknowledgement of ceremony and begin healing the darkened wound of our souls that have gone before us. We pray for a new tomorrow for all of the '60s scoop survivors, past and present, and continue to work with government on truth and reconciliation for a better future and continue building better relations for tomorrow.

Hon. members, ladies and gentlemen, we will now be led in the singing of our national anthem by Debbie Houle, Sherry Sewepagahan, and Sarah Pocklington. Together they are the group Asani in the gallery today. I would invite all of you to participate 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.
nohtâwînan kanawêyihta.
Kakanata, kinîpawîstamâtinân;
Kakanata, kinîpawîstamâtinân.

The Speaker: Thank you.
Please be seated.

Introduction of Visitors

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Children's Services.

Ms Larivee: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my profound honour to introduce to you and through you special guests who are joining me to bear witness to a historic day in Alberta history. Sitting in the Speaker's gallery are members of the Sixties Scoop Indigenous Society of Alberta, which was formed to represent survivors throughout Alberta and to advance the work of true reconciliation and healing. It's difficult to understate the role that SSISA has had in getting us here today or my gratitude. On this long-awaited day I ask the board members to rise: Adam North Peigan, president; Sharon Gladue-Paskimin, vice-president; Sandra Relling, treasurer; Kathy Hamelin, director; Orlando Alexis, director; Lena Wildman, secretary; and Lew Jobs, former director. Several family members are also in the Speaker's gallery to bear witness and support their

loved ones. I ask that they also rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of this Assembly.

The Speaker: Welcome.

Ms Larivee: Mr. Speaker, I have to admit that I was a little bit unclear as to who are visitors and who are guests. I think, in my mind, they're all visitors, so I'm going to step in and say that I also want to acknowledge several elders in the public and members' and Speaker's galleries. These elders have guided us through individual '60s scoop engagement sessions throughout the province or led us in ceremonies so integral to those sessions. I ask that the elders who were able to be here today stand to be acknowledged by the Assembly.

The Speaker: Welcome.

Ms Larivee: Lastly, Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you and through you several representatives from First Nations in Treaty 8 territory who join us today to witness the apology. We have Chief Albert Thunder from the Whitefish Lake First Nation, and we have Councillor April Isadore from Driftpile First Nation. Please join me in honouring these guests and offering the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

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

Ms Hoffman: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour to introduce to you and through you a number of special visitors who are here to join us in witnessing the '60s scoop apology. These visitors that I'm introducing are from the First Nations in Treaty 6 territory, upon which we are gathered here today. I'd like to acknowledge Chief Bill Morin, chief of the Enoch First Nation; Irvin Bull, chief of the Louis Bull First Nation; Chief Kurt Burnstick and Marsha Arcand from Alexander First Nation; Bernice Martial, chief of the Cold Lake First Nation; Chief Tony Alexis from Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation; on behalf of Chief Craig Makinaw councillors Cheryl Montour and Daniel Wildcat from the Ermineskin First Nation; representing the Montana First Nation Councillor Bradley Terrance Rabbit; and Faron Bull from the Paul First Nation. It's my honour to ask them all to please rise and receive the warm welcome of this Assembly.

1:40

The Speaker: Welcome.

The hon. Minister of Indigenous Relations.

Mr. Feehan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To continue our acknowledgement of our special visitors here to witness the '60s scoop apology, I would like to begin by introducing the AFN regional chief, Marlene Poitras. From First Nations in Treaty 7 territory I'd like to acknowledge Chief Stanley Grier of the Piikani Nation and Chief Lee Crowchild of Tsut'ina Nation. As well, representing the Metis Settlements General Council we have Gerald Cunningham, president, from East Prairie Métis settlement; Ken Noskey, representing the Peavine Métis settlement; and Herb Lehr, representing the Fishing Lake Métis settlement. Finally, representing the Métis Nation of Alberta, I would like to introduce Audrey Poitras, the MNA provincial president; Diane Scoville, region 1 president; Cecil Bellrose, region 4 president; and Sylvia Johnson, region 6 president. I would ask all of my guests to please rise and receive the warm reception of this House.

The Speaker: Welcome.

Ms McKittrick: Mr. Speaker, on this important day it's my pleasure to introduce to you and through you Jim Gurnett. Jim Gurnett has been a Member of the Legislative Assembly and has worked in staff positions with other members. In community work and friendships over the years he has been aware of and troubled by the '60s scoop and is happy to see its dark history being addressed. He has had a special focus on supporting connections between indigenous people and recent newcomers from around the world. As the MLA for Sherwood Park it is an honour and a privilege to represent constituents like Jim who have demonstrated a deep and long-standing commitment to social justice and serving our community. Jim, I ask you to please rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Peace River.

Ms Jabbour: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On your behalf I would like to introduce to the Assembly a special guest of yours seated in the Speaker's gallery. Lewis Cardinal is a long-time advocate and educator on indigenous issues in Alberta. Most recently Mr. Cardinal has been working with your office on creating a better understanding of indigenous culture and incorporating it into the Legislative Assembly. He's received a number of recognitions for his work both provincially and nationally. I would ask Mr. Cardinal to please rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of the House.

The Speaker: Welcome.

Introduction of Guests

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Energy.

Ms McCuaig-Boyd: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour on behalf of the Minister of Environment and Parks and minister responsible for the climate change office to rise and introduce to you and to this Assembly a team of individuals helping to ensure dam safety in our province. The team from Environment and Parks is responsible for the regulation of dams and canals in this province under the Water Act and the ministerial water regulation, excluding energy-related projects. The regulation provides oversight to ensure dam and canal owners can take active responsibility for the integrity and safe operation of their structures. In total we have about 1,500 dams that fall within these requirements in our province. I would like to introduce the members of this team who are joining us today. We have Garry Bucharski, Gary Titosky, Jenna Montgomery, Kaisie Moxam, and Shannon Higgins. I thank them on behalf of my colleague and all of us for their hard work and ask members to join me in the traditional welcome of this Assembly.

The Speaker: Welcome.

Ministerial Statements

The Speaker: I recognize the hon. Premier.

'60s Scoop Apology

Ms Notley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to begin by acknowledging that we are gathered here today on the traditional territory of Treaty 6, and I'd also like to acknowledge the Métis people of Alberta, who share a very deep connection with this land.

I rise today in the spirit of truth and reconciliation. Before we begin, I'd like us all to take a moment and just look up. When we speak about colonialism and its vestiges, when we speak about the

need for truth and reconciliation here in Alberta and across Canada, when we speak about healing, we must remember always that we speak about people. Above us today are survivors of the '60s scoop: women and men, children and grandchildren, parents and grandparents, all of them survivors. As we speak today in their presence, we are mindful that their presence carries with it also a terrible absence: parents lost; children taken; families destroyed; cultures shamed, ignored, and forgotten; by force, a proud way of life taken away.

The decisions that led to that personal trauma: many of those decisions, Mr. Speaker, were made right here on this floor in this Chamber. The government of Alberta owes these people an apology, and today that's what we are here to do. But for that apology to have the meaning that these women and men deserve, these women and men deserve to know that their experiences were heard and are heard and are understood as best we can. These women and men deserve to know that we stand here today looking up at them not only with hearts of reconciliation but with eyes that see the wrongs of the past as clearly as we can. So before we can offer our apology, please allow me to speak to the work done to make this apology meaningful for these brave women and men, because they deserve nothing less.

The '60s scoop is the colloquial name for the government practices perpetuated in Alberta and across Canada from the 1950s to the 1980s. Indigenous children were taken from their birth families, from their communities, put in nonindigenous homes, without meaningful steps, in some cases without any steps at all, to preserve their culture, their identity, their relationship with their community, and, even most importantly, with their family.

To speak of the '60s scoop in these terms is to speak merely of the broadest and the most impersonal strokes. To appreciate the trauma these women and men lived through, we need to hear it from them in their voices, and that's what we set out to do. Over 800 courageous survivors of the '60s scoop shared with us their heartbreaking experiences, and I want to thank each and every person who participated in that. All of you who came forward and shared your experiences did so with courage beyond measure. You didn't just share the trauma of what was done to you; you spoke truth to power. You spoke truth to the same power, the same institution, the government, that inflicted this trauma on you in the first place. So to all of you, thank you.

The stories that you, the survivors, shared with us are heartbreaking. These stories transcend generations: children – kids, babies, toddlers, teens – ripped from your families; parents unable to see through the tears as they took your children away from you; grandparents forced aside as your families were destroyed. We heard stories of how you were lied to and told that your families didn't want you or couldn't care for you. We heard how many of you were never told where your children had gone, where your parents had gone, where your brothers or sisters had gone. Many of you were placed into foster care, with no linkages to your culture, bounced from home to home, place to place, with no stability or sense of who you are and the proud place that you came from.

We also heard clearly that some of those foster homes were also not safe. Many of you faced terrible abuse – physical abuse, sexual abuse, mental and emotional abuse – forced labour, starvation, and neglect. A survivor shared this quote with us, and I want to share it today because I believe it reveals the horror and the tragedy of what was done to these children. That person said: "I was abused in every home. The worst part was that we actually had a family that loved us." Many of you shared that even as children you contemplated suicide.

1:50

Those feelings were often compounded by the isolation that you experienced. When you were placed in nonindigenous homes and communities, the dominance of colonial thinking meant that you regularly faced racism and discrimination. Some of you were forbidden to speak your own language, forced instead to speak English or French. Many of you were not allowed to honour or express your culture. Make no mistake. The '60s scoop was an assault on indigenous identity, your sense of self and who you are. As a result, many of you never felt at home anywhere, not in the homes and communities where you were fostered or adopted and not even when you returned home. One survivor remembered: "At 19 I went back to the reserve. One minute I am white. One minute I am red. I never knew which side I belonged on." Another said: "I lost my spirit. It was taken away from me."

The impacts of these government actions are still felt by you and your families today. The scars of this tragedy still linger, some as fresh as they were a generation ago. Many of you told us that you still experience family dysfunction and difficult relationships as a result of what was done to you. Some survivors shared that they never felt love during childhood. One survivor said, "I couldn't understand what real love was." Many of you struggle with self-identity due to losing your culture, your language, and the connection to your families. Many of you spoke about ongoing challenges with government systems and education and police and justice. When we look clearly at what was done to you, what we did to you, it is no wonder that it is so hard for so many of you to trust again.

Many survivors spoke about poor physical and mental health, about drug and alcohol addiction, about depression and suicide and early deaths amongst families and friends. The legacy of residential schools was and is a constant shadow over your lives. Many of you had parents and grandparents who were traumatized by residential schools. These traumas were often passed on to you, and many survivors spoke of the ongoing trauma their parents experienced. Many fear that they passed this trauma on to their children. A survivor told us, "The cycle needs to stop," and we agree.

I ask again for the members of this Assembly to look up, to see these survivors, to honour them and their ancestors with our full attention. To you, the survivors of the '60s scoop, to your children, to your parents, to the rest of your families, and to your communities, from me as Premier of Alberta, from all of us here as the elected representatives of the people of Alberta, and on behalf of the government of Alberta, we are sorry. For the loss of families, of stability, of love, we are sorry. For the loss of identity, of language and culture, we are sorry. For the loneliness, the anger, the confusion, and the frustration, we are sorry. For the government practice that left you indigenous people estranged from your families and your communities and your history, we are sorry. For this trauma, this pain, this suffering, alienation, and sadness, we are sorry. To all of you, I am sorry.

In Cree the word is *ni mihtâtam*. In Dene the word is *bek'e nasdlj*. In Beaver the word is *sekaa-tah*. In Nakota the word is *wéčã ptač*. In Blackfoot the closest term is *tsik skâp(h) tsap spinaa'n*. In Saulteaux the closest term is *gaween-ouchi-dahh-do-taw-naan*. In Michif the term is *ni mihtatayn*. We are sorry.

For an apology to be worth anything, it must also carry with it a promise. Here is my promise, our promise, to the survivors of the '60s scoop. We will work with indigenous communities, with each of you. We will ensure that your perspectives, your desires, and your priorities for your families and communities are reflected in what we do going forward. No one knows what indigenous children and families need better than First Nation, Métis, and Inuit

communities. We will honour that. We will work together with you, your families, your elders, and your communities to correct historical injustices and find a path to true reconciliation between our government and indigenous Albertans. Together we can help heal the wounds of the past, together we can ensure that indigenous children grow up happy and healthy and connected to their families, their communities, and their cultures, and together we will ensure that all indigenous Albertans enjoy the same privileges and opportunities as every Albertan.

With all of this work we are not starting from a standstill. The work that began with the '60s scoop consultation continues, and the relationship being built through those consultations, a relationship that we hope is a new and growing form of trust, will serve us well as we continue together down the path of reconciliation.

Honoured guests, Mr. Speaker, members of the Assembly, thank you for the privilege of speaking with you today and for the opportunity to express our deepest apologies for the government practice known as the '60s scoop. Before I conclude, I do want to acknowledge the amazing work of the Sixties Scoop Indigenous Society of Alberta and thank them for their guidance and their leadership over the past months. To everyone who participated in the engagement sessions over the past months and told their story, thank you again for your bravery and for putting your trust in us. We will honour that trust.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I would ask that all members of the Assembly rise and join me in offering their thanks and their honour to the survivors who are with us today. [Standing ovation]

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

Mr. Hanson: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. In the spring of 2016 I received a meeting request from Adam North Peigan to discuss the '60s scoop. They were frustrated in their attempts to reach out to the government, so they asked for my help.

The experiences that they related to me of how they and others had been taken from their families and how those that survived were now trying to reconnect with family, community, and culture: I listened to Sharon, who, along with her sisters, was living with her grandparents on reserve land until a social worker came to visit. Shockingly to the social worker, this family was living in a house with no power, no indoor plumbing, and living on wild meat, so the children were removed and separated. Mr. Speaker, that was in the mid-1960s, the same time when I was growing up. Many, many Albertans lived that way. We didn't have running water in our house or indoor plumbing until I was 12 years old, but nobody came to rescue me.

On budget day 2016 I introduced 22 survivors of the '60s scoop here in the Legislature and helped Adam and his group raise awareness and bring this issue to the forefront. Over the last year, sessions were held all across Alberta to meet with and listen to the people affected. I attended the session held at Blue Quills university. I heard many stories of children being removed from their parents or grandparents and then, to make it worse, separated from their siblings.

2:00

One of the most touching stories was related by Eva. She told of walking with her nine children from Saddle Lake to St. Paul, a distance of 30 kilometres, so that she could go to school to further her education and make life better for her family. They walked over 20 kilometres before somebody would stop and pick them up. Eva ended up in Edmonton with her children, trying to go to school and work, but it got too tough for her, so she contacted social services.

Rather than lending a hand so she could keep her family together, they took her children, separated them, sending some to foster homes and others to group homes, depending on their age. She talked of the struggle to reunite her family.

We are here today because of the province's role in decisions that were made that affected thousands of families, intergenerational. I'm sure that those involved at the time thought they were doing the right thing. The troubling thing for me is that while we can look back at the past and say that we were in error, we are allowing this to continue under our watch today.

I had the privilege of standing in for the Member for Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House-Sundre on the child intervention panel on several occasions. At one of these meetings we heard from a number of young people that had recently gone through the system. This was in 2017, Mr. Speaker. A young man named Jessie related how he, now 17 years old, had been through 14 foster homes before finally being adopted. He said that after the third transfer he felt that no one loved or cared for him.

The same day Samantha, also 17, said that she had lived with the same family for over 10 years and was very, very much considered one of the family. They never mentioned the words "foster child" until one day when she was 14 and her foster parents told her that Children's Services would be coming the next day to get her. No explanation was given to her. She was taken from that loving family environment and put into a group home setting. It was only after a FOIP request to view her own file that she discovered the reason that she was removed was her age. Her foster parents were only allowed children in a certain age group.

Many people I've talked to that have survived despite the system are frustrated because they are not allowed access to their own files. Even after many, many years they still have to pay to FOIP their own history, only to have much of the information blacked out, redacted.

On Friday, May 18, I was asked to sit on a panel at the Blanket of Remembrance event in Edmonton to remember a little girl named Serenity. We heard very emotional speeches from both her mom and her dad. Then right at the end of the panel discussion her grandmother stood up and tearfully talked about her recent fight to get her grandchildren back from social services. Why did she, a caring relative, have to fight for years against the system for the right to raise her own grandchildren? She tearfully told us that when she finally got them back, she said: they're ruined.

Back in 1951, when the responsibility was handed off from the federal government to the province, it was handled poorly, to say the least. That is why we're here today to recognize the efforts of people like Adam North Peigan and his group for shining a light on this issue and forcing the government to take responsibility for their role. Here we are in 2018 and, as you can see by the experiences I've related, the system is still very much broken. This is happening now. We need these departments to open up, put away their black markers, and fix this before we can take another step forward, or we'll be back here again in the future addressing another generation.

Hay-hay.

The Speaker: The Deputy Government House Leader.

Ms Ganley: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would request unanimous consent of the House to allow a response on behalf of the Alberta Party and on behalf of the Alberta Liberal Party.

[Unanimous consent granted]

The Speaker: The Member for Calgary-South East.

Mr. Fraser: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is with humility and is a great privilege to address this House on this special day and to address the guests and visitors in this Chamber. Let me start by also acknowledging that we're on the traditional land of Treaty 6 First Nations. I'd also like to thank the Premier for her leadership on this issue, for her heartfelt and thoughtful words.

On behalf of the Alberta Party caucus I rise today to join the government in apologizing for all those affected by the actions of those in power. The '60s scoop was a tragedy on every level. It was a personal tragedy for those that were taken from loving homes; it was a cultural tragedy, where a generation of indigenous peoples were forcibly separated from their traditions, their identities, and families; and it was a societal tragedy, that we allowed and perpetuated such a terrible and callous act against our indigenous brothers and sisters.

It's my hope that this apology is a step towards true reconciliation, that by acknowledging where we have gone wrong in the past, we can continue to work towards healing and true partnership. There are too many lost years, shattered families, stolen childhoods for this to be fixed by words alone, if indeed this can be fixed at all. But as we've heard today, this is about breaking the cycle. It's about naming and recognizing those that have suffered through these horrific policies. This is about ensuring that we do everything we can to ensure that something like this never ever happens again.

To all indigenous Albertans, your families, your communities, your ancestors: we deeply, deeply apologize. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Dr. Swann: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let me add my humble thanks to all those present today, including the Premier, with her very passionate tribute to our indigenous people and Métis community, who have suffered for so long and at such depth and persisted under such difficult circumstances for so long hoping to educate a very slow-learning western culture.

The '60s scoop is one of the many dark chapters in modern Canadian history: indigenous children in alarming numbers taken from their families, their homes, including kinship care, taken from the life they knew, the culture that fostered them, and the most basic experience of security. Governments past have actively undermined their culture and identity as indigenous, appropriately termed cultural genocide, which all of us as treaties people must help redress at every opportunity.

Over many generations the residential school system added to this family violence, and more recently Canadians are recognizing this particular period, the '60s scoop, which actually spanned decades, including our current times, with intergenerational trauma and fostered ongoing racism. We apologize for this profound trauma and commit every one of us today to do what we can do in our personal and public and professional lives to help the healing together.

Even today many indigenous youth in government care are cut off from families and culture as the child care system continues to lack cultural resources, especially on our reserves, for which we have challenged the federal government to step up, to preserve critical connections and indigenous identity and to build the capacity for indigenous health care, indigenous education, indigenous social and child care services. Two-thirds of children in Alberta in care come from our indigenous communities despite indigenous Albertans only comprising 10 per cent of our population. Research from the tenacious Dr. Cindy Blackstock has well demonstrated the discriminatory funding for health, education,

and child and family services on-reserve, something the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal has ruled unacceptable, unlawful, and discriminatory.

2:10

I applaud both levels of government for taking this important step, recognizing not only the '60s scoop but beginning the substantive policy changes and key service changes that I know are coming and that we will be holding them accountable for. With an urgent need in Alberta to implement the recommendations of the Ministerial Panel on Child Intervention of this past six months, it's time for tangible change in all our relations with indigenous communities at all three levels of government: federal, provincial, and municipal. Only then can we confidently say that there will be no more scoops, no millennial scoop that is currently being talked about.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: The hon. Deputy Government House Leader.

Ms Ganley: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise to give notice to the Assembly pursuant to Standing Order 7(8) that the Routine shall continue beyond 3 p.m.

The Speaker: Hon. minister, I've had a request from an independent for unanimous consent to speak.

Ms Ganley: Then I would make that request, Mr. Speaker.

[Unanimous consent granted]

Mr. Fildebrandt: I want to begin by welcoming our brothers and sisters from our First Nations and Métis communities here today, many of which are outside in the rotunda because there's not enough space in this place for everyone to fit. I want to join the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition, the Alberta Party, and the Liberal member in sharing these comments towards peace and reconciliation in Alberta with our First Nations.

The '60s scoop was an attack on families, on individuals, on a culture, and on nations. As the Member for Strathmore-Brooks I've developed a very close and positive relationship with the Siksika First Nation, which is next door to my constituency and is in many ways a sister community to Bassano, Gleichen, Cluny, and Strathmore. The '60s scoop violated treaties, it violated trust, and it violated our own values.

We have come a long way since then. We have come a long way in coming together as common Canadians and Albertans and as just humans, but there is still much to do. Together we take responsibility for what happened, and we ask for your forgiveness as we move forward together.

Thank you.

Oral Question Period

The Speaker: The Leader of the Official Opposition.

Mr. Kenney: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just briefly I would like to thank the Premier for her gracious remarks and the gesture of this important apology and, on behalf of the Official Opposition, join with the government in sharing our highest esteem for the survivors who join us today in the Chamber, in the rotunda, and across the province.

'60s Scoop Survivors Ministerial Panel on Child Intervention

Mr. Kenney: Mr. Speaker, would the Premier care to expand on her remarks and suggest what further measures could be taken to

advance reconciliation with the survivors of this terrible historical injustice?

The Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Ms Notley: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and thank you very much to the hon. Official Opposition leader for that important question. The work that we need to do going forward is fundamentally important. It is a continuation of what our government began when we adopted and committed to moving forward with the principles of the United Nations declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples. As it relates to the survivors of the '60s scoop, we know that there is much we must do to do a better job supporting families and indigenous communities to care as best they can, as they should, for their children and to move forward on a number of different fronts supporting indigenous communities so that they can grow in the years to come. That's the work that we've begun on many different fronts and that we will continue to do in partnership.

Mr. Kenney: I thank the hon. the Premier for her thoughtful response, Mr. Speaker.

Is it the Premier's view that more historical research needs to be done to identify the policies of the government of Alberta that led to this? I understand there have been listening sessions, and I myself have listened to the members of the '60s scoop survivors association. At the federal level I led redress projects with respect to things like the Chinese head tax and found it very important to establish a permanent historical record. Is the government committed to helping to do that through archival research and other projects so that we never forget the lessons of this injustice?

Ms Notley: Well, thank you very much again to the member opposite for that insight. I think that we're certainly open to moving forward on the priorities that are primarily given to us by the survivors themselves and by leaders within indigenous communities across the province, so the work will continue in terms of the consultations between our ministers and the leadership in terms of: what's the best path forward to redress the wrongs of the '60s scoop as well as to move forward on full reconciliation under UNDRIP? Certainly, the suggestion made by the member opposite is worthy of consideration.

Mr. Kenney: Mr. Speaker, members of the '60s scoop survivors association and others, including members of this place, have raised ongoing concerns about the treatment of children in care. That has obviously been a point of great concern for the government and the Legislature through the special Legislature committee that spent well over a year studying this. [Noises in the gallery] I would like to ask the Premier if she would care to update us on the progress of implementing the recommendations of the Legislature committee on children in care.

The Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Ms Notley: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Indeed, our minister of children and families, the Member for Lesser Slave Lake, has been working in a very focused way to move forward with those recommendations. There were a number of very meaningful and substantial recommendations that came from the all-party committee, some of which have short implementation horizons and some of which we need to work on for years and years to come. But we are very committed to moving forward with those recommendations and ensuring that we fund them appropriately so

that we can get at the root causes of many of these concerns that continue with us today.

The Speaker: Thank you.
The second main question.

Mr. Kenney: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm sure, through you to our visitors in the gallery, that we understand if they will absent themselves. I know that all members would look forward to meeting with them afterwards, but the work of democracy continues.

Provincial Response to Pipeline Opposition

Mr. Kenney: Mr. Speaker, in three days we face the possible cancellation of the Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain pipeline expansion project. I'm wondering if the Premier could update the House on whether there are any developments to give us cause for optimism in this respect.

The Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Ms Notley: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. You know, our government has been clear that there is one outcome – and one outcome only – that is acceptable to the people of Alberta, and that outcome is that construction resumes on schedule this summer and that uncertainty is removed and that that pipeline to tidewater is built. It is fundamentally important, obviously, to the people of Alberta and to the energy industry across this country and, frankly, to investment in all sectors across the country of Canada. We are committed to getting it done.

Mr. Kenney: Mr. Speaker, I obviously agree with the hon. the Premier about the importance of this project and thank her for her hard work on this file, but my question was on whether there are any tangible signs of optimism.

Mr. Speaker, the government announced its intention to introduce turn-off-the-taps legislation four months ago and then reinforced that in the throne speech in March. When will that legislation become effective?

The Speaker: The hon. Premier.

2:20

Ms Notley: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Certainly, on the matter of tangible signs, I did forget to mention in answer to the last question that we were very pleased last week when the proponents of the project won not one but two legal decisions at the B.C. Supreme Court, once again supporting the work of everybody who's been working towards getting the pipeline moving forward and doing their due diligence to approve it after considering all the necessary information. That was good news.

Generally speaking, with respect to Bill 12 we will move forward on that at the time that is most strategic, representing the interests of Albertans.

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. Premier.

Mr. Kenney: Mr. Speaker, the Premier decided not to attend the Western Premiers' Conference last week. Why did she not see it as an opportunity on behalf of the Alberta government to look across the table at Premier Horgan and indicate that Alberta will indeed turn off the taps unless we have absolute legal certainty that the government of British Columbia stops its strategy of death by delay through obstruction? Why did she miss that opportunity, and why is this legislation not yet coming into force?

The Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Ms Notley: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As I said in advance of the Western Premiers' Conference, it struck us as quite surreal and quite tone deaf to spend two days to go to a meeting to talk about how to spend money, albeit on very good projects, as opposed to staying back in Edmonton and doing the hard work of ensuring that we have the capacity to earn the money that would pay for those important programs like, for instance, pharmacare. That was the message that we delivered, and it was delivered extremely articulately by the Deputy Premier, and I want to . . .

The Speaker: Thank you, Madam Premier.
Third main question.

Mr. Kenney: Well, Mr. Speaker, as I've said before, a threat is only effective if the other side of the table believes that the threat will be used. Premier Horgan walked away from his meeting with our Premier and the Prime Minister several weeks ago in Ottawa saying that he was given assurances, effectively, that he didn't have to worry about this threat. Given that there are only three days left, when will the government bring Bill 12 into effect? When will they actually follow through on the threat to turn off the taps to defend our vital economic interests?

The Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Ms Notley: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Again, to be very clear, at no time has the Premier of British Columbia ever been assured by anyone that has any line of sight into my strategies that they needn't be worried about Bill 12 being implemented. Let me be perfectly clear. They are fully aware that that is an issue, and they are fully seized of the matter. That being said, we are not in the business of jumping out of a plane without first checking to see if the parachute is in place, and more importantly we only do it when we're over the place we want to be. We will be very strategic, we will be very thoughtful about how we implement this bill, and when it is necessary, we'll let the member opposite know.

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. Premier.

Mr. Kenney: Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm simply quoting the Premier of British Columbia, who said, following that meeting, quote: Alberta didn't necessarily think they were going to act on Bill 12. It seems that the government of British Columbia has called our bluff, and that's why they have not downed tools on their death-by-delay strategy. How many billions of tax dollars is the Premier prepared to risk in her offer to buy the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion?

The Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Ms Notley: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. You know, I think that implicit in that question is the notion that now the member opposite is not actually interested in Albertans investing in Albertans' futures in one fashion or another, yet previously the member was in favour of that. I guess he's only in favour of it when it's the government investing in Ontario jobs, to spend \$9 billion rescuing the auto industry. Let me be clear that the principles are these: we will get the pipeline built, and we will ensure certainty and we will ensure value for Albertans in whatever strategy we adopt.

Mr. Kenney: Mr. Speaker, to correct the hon. the Premier, implicit in that question was that the Official Opposition and the people of

Alberta are not prepared to give the NDP a blank cheque to clean up the political mess that they have created.

Mr. Speaker, is there any sense of fiscal limits in the government's negotiations with Kinder Morgan, or are they so desperate – so desperate – to dig themselves out of this terrible hole that they're giving Kinder Morgan a blank cheque in these negotiations?

The Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Ms Notley: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. One thing I can say for sure is that we won't write a \$9 billion cheque on behalf of Ontario workers. But even though the member opposite seems more concerned about them than Alberta workers, what we will do is that we will move forward with very key principles in place, absolute value for money for Albertans. They need to make money off this. Moreover, we will move forward to ensure that there is certainty on construction and ultimate completion. At the end of the day, this is about standing up for Albertans, standing up for our energy industry, and making sure that we're better off than we were before.

The Speaker: Calgary-South East.

Mr. Fraser: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We all know that facts matter, and for many Albertans the fact that matters the most is that we still don't have any certainty on the future of the Trans Mountain expansion. The reality on the ground is that spending on the project is still suspended, and we're days away from the project being abandoned entirely. Despite all that, this government seems quite confident that they'll succeed on this file. To the Premier: without revealing any more details about the negotiations with Kinder Morgan, can you assure this House that the matter will be resolved by the May 31 deadline?

Ms Notley: Mr. Speaker, what I can assure this House is that this government will never stop fighting to make sure that this pipeline gets built and that, in fact, it will get built. I can tell the member opposite that we are working very hard every day to get this matter across the finish line. We are cautiously optimistic. In fact, I'd go beyond that. We're reasonably confident that we are going to meet the deadlines the member opposite referenced. In any event, we are absolutely sure that we will fight as hard as we need to fight at exactly the right time to get this pipeline built for Albertans.

Mr. Fraser: Well, another place where facts matter is in the courts. B.C. is currently bringing a court challenge over Bill 12, and this government may have given them the ammunition they need to win that challenge. It's a fact that a law can't specifically target the economic prosperity of another province, and while Bill 12 doesn't specifically name British Columbia, it's also a fact that the Minister of Energy said in public, "We're going to be introducing legislation shortly which will inflict pain on British Columbia." To the Premier: why would your government expose Bill 12 to a constitutional challenge just for the sake of political points?

The Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Ms Notley: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. You know, as the member opposite probably knows, the courts will interpret a bill on the basis of what is in the bill. The bill is very clear that the purpose of moving forward on it is to ensure that we maximize the return for Albertans in the way that is best possible. It could include a whole range of options, all of which are allowed for in the bill. That is the way that we will go forward, in a strategic way to ensure that we get the best price possible for Albertans at the right time.

In addition, when it comes to the courts, as I mentioned to the other member, we just won two cases last week. You know, that's a good thing.

Mr. Fraser: Well, we know for a fact that the federal government is able to exercise their authority on things it believes are in the national interest. We only have to look at how they've pledged to impose a carbon tax on provinces that don't come up with their own. In light of that, it's confusing and concerning that they've been so reluctant to exercise their authority on the approval and construction for an interprovincial energy project. Again to the Premier. Minister Morneau is going to be in Calgary this Wednesday, and we all hope that he brings good news to share. What is your government prepared to do if the federal government refuses to put their full support behind this project?

Ms Notley: Well, Mr. Speaker, we have a number of tools that we are very ready to use to ensure that the folks who have the authority to do the thing, to get the pipe built, use their authority and that the thing happens and that the pipe is built. We are looking at all the various people who have a role in that, whether we're talking about the government of British Columbia, whether we're talking about Kinder Morgan, whether we're talking about the federal government. We will always fight for Albertans, we will stand up to defend this province on any front, and you can count on us making sure that this pipeline will get built.

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. Premier.

'60s Scoop Apology

Mr. Hinkley: Mr. Speaker, this afternoon we witnessed a historic apology and acknowledgement of the wrongdoings committed towards indigenous people by the past governments in this province. I've heard from survivors in my constituency about the damage that the '60s scoop caused, and their stories are heartbreaking. To the Deputy Premier: why was this so important, that our government make this apology, and why did it take so long?

The Speaker: The hon. Deputy Premier.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker and to the member for the important question. This apology is an important part of truth and reconciliation, and our government wanted to ensure that we got it right. That's why we worked closely with the Sixties Scoop Indigenous Society of Alberta to plan the engagement that led to this apology. As survivors themselves their goal was to raise awareness about the '60s scoop and support other survivors in Alberta. Their members and especially their president, Adam North Peigan, have shown strong leadership and courage, and we thank them for their wisdom and guidance throughout this process.

2:30

Mr. Hinkley: Mr. Speaker, given that thanks to the advocates and survivors sharing their stories, Albertans are more aware of the impacts of the '60s scoop and why it was so important to apologize, to the same minister: how did you get input from the survivors to ensure that this apology was meaningful to the survivors and their families?

The Speaker: The hon. Deputy Premier.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you. Again, I really want to thank SSISA for their work that they've done to help us get to this point. Together we conducted six engagement sessions across Alberta, and we heard from hundreds of survivors about the impact of the '60s

scoop. The purpose of the engagement was to listen to survivors, to gain a deeper understanding of their diverse lived experiences, and to empower survivors through respectful and inclusive engagement to inform a meaningful apology and a meaningful day rather than just a few seconds of apology. This has been really, I think, a very powerful day, especially for people of indigenous heritage, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Hinkley: Mr. Speaker, given that this apology is only a first step and given that we know it cannot be the only step in the path to reconciliation, again to the Deputy Premier: what are you doing to ensure that this work continues long after the apology today?

Ms Hoffman: Thank you, hon. member. To you and other members of the Assembly who, I know, have a deep connection to this issue and this history: I really want to commend you for your advocacy and recognize that it's just one step in truth, reconciliation, and healing. Our government is also implementing training for the Alberta public service staff to learn about treaties and residential schools and antiracist education for employees of Alberta Health Services. We're revamping the curriculum so that Alberta students learn about indigenous history and contemporary indigenous issues, including the residential school legacy and the '60s scoop legacy. We're working with indigenous communities to co-operate and cocreate an action plan . . .

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

Diversity-related Tax Credits

Mr. Fildebrandt: Buried in the government's agenda is a policy that will mandate gender and racial quotas for businesses in the private sector if they wish to qualify for tax credits. The plan is to take taxes from people and businesses and give some of it back to them only if they hire a proportion of groups designated by the NDP to be worthy. Everyone I know in the private sector hires and fires on the basis of merit only. A business owner's prejudices would only hurt their bottom line. Does the government believe that Albertans are so prejudiced and hateful that quotas are necessary in the private sector?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Economic Development and Trade.

Mr. Bilous: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. You know what? I'm quite proud of the work that our government has been doing to promote diversity and inclusion in the workplace and in the private sector and the public sector. I'm proud that in Bill 2 there is an opportunity to try to encourage people from underrepresented groups to participate more fully in sectors where they traditionally haven't. Quite frankly, I'm curious to know why the member doesn't believe that we should be encouraging diversity as opposed to restricting it.

Mr. Fildebrandt: You don't lift someone up by putting somebody else down, Mr. Speaker.

Given that governments and political parties have long engaged in racial and gender quotas as a way to appear politically correct because government has the resources to hire on a basis other than merit but the private sector does not – the linchpin of government mandating equality of outcomes over equality of opportunity is the neo-Marxist world view that society is a strata of groups and not free individuals – does the government believe that people's group identities should trump their value as individual, free people?

The Speaker: Go ahead.

Mr. Bilous: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Once again, I'm proud of the work that our government has done on a number of different fronts to support and promote the participation of those especially that are part of underrepresented groups. You know, our investor tax credit would have a diversity top-up, something that doesn't exist in other jurisdictions, in order to promote participation of those underrepresented groups, similarly with our digital media tax credit. This is widely celebrated and was asked for by industry when we were designing these programs to ensure that we are promoting inclusion and diversity.

The Speaker: Thank you.

Hon. Member for Strathmore-Brooks, I encourage you to remember the rule about preambles if you would, please.

Mr. Fildebrandt: Given, Mr. Speaker, that privilege exists but in a different way than many members here might believe – some are born into wealth and health and functional families, but the human condition often only gives us two out of these three – and given that someone born into a poor, broken family in a Strathmore trailer park but who happens to not meet some of the identity groups identified by the government is not privileged, does the government believe that the way to build opportunity for the underprivileged is to lump them together into racial and gender groups?

The Speaker: The Minister of Service Alberta and Status of Women.

Ms McLean: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our government recognizes that there are intersectional factors that affect some particular groups more than others. In Alberta we have the largest gender wage gap in Canada. This is unacceptable, and we must do better. There are grassroots organizations across the province working very hard to ensure that people of diverse backgrounds, including women and other minorities underrepresented in the STEM fields in particular, have a fighting chance. That's what this does. It was asked for by the business community. Quite frankly, it's shocking that we would see anyone speaking against something that works towards improving the outcomes for women in this province.

Premier's Former Chief of Staff's Consulting Contract

Mr. Cooper: Mr. Speaker, last fall the NDP quietly rehired John Heaney, former chief of staff to the Premier, just weeks after he tendered his resignation to return to B.C., where he still resides. According to his contract he barely even came off the government payroll, quietly transitioning directly into the role of executive adviser to the ministers of Energy and Finance, earning over \$130,000 a year. Mr. Heaney is currently the subject of an ongoing investigation by the Privacy Commissioner for political interference. To the Premier: do you honestly not see any ethical issues with Mr. Heaney's continued employment?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Finance.

Mr. Ceci: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To address this question and to unpack some of it, let me just say that after leaving his position as the chief of staff for the Premier, Mr. Heaney was retained as the executive adviser to both the Energy minister and myself. He's been tasked with providing legal advice related to pipelines and market access, working specifically on the Trans Mountain pipeline to make sure we get that expansion to tidewater and assisting me on our path to balance, which was new this year from this government.

Mr. Cooper: Well, Mr. Speaker, given that in addition to being the subject of a political interference investigation, Mr. Heaney is also a registered lobbyist in B.C. and given that the code of conduct for political staffers states that employees may not engage “in any business or undertaking other than his or her employment with the government” and given that Mr. Heaney registered to lobby for a B.C. client in January 2018, months after the new contract started, can the Premier please explain why she would allow this blatant violation of the code of conduct?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Finance.

Mr. Ceci: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The contract that is referenced here also comes with an exemption to work outside of government. Again, there’s mudslinging from that side with no relevance at all. Mr. Heaney is on contract with the government of Alberta. As such, he’s not permitted to lobby government members or employees of the government of Alberta.

Mr. Cooper: Special rules for the government.

Given that Mr. Heaney has quietly been working for your administration since October despite very publicly resigning from his position as the chief of staff to the Premier to, according to the *Calgary Herald*, spend more time with his family, to the Premier: did your office deliberately mislead Albertans when it announced Mr. Heaney’s resignation, or did misleading Albertans happen accidentally?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Ceci: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. When structuring the addendum to Mr. Heaney’s contract, we actively sought the advice of the Ethics Commissioner of Alberta. Of course, we’re happy to follow up with any further information the commissioner requires. We have been complying with the Privacy Commissioner on the FOIP investigation, and we’re happy to provide information there as well.

Mr. Panda: Mr. Speaker, during the Energy estimates debate the minister indicated that she added a staff member to deal with things like the off-coal agreements, the coal-to-gas conversions, the electricity price gap, renewable electricity, the transition to the capacity market, the methane reduction strategy, and output-based allocations. My question to the Premier: who is the real Minister of Energy, the MLA for Dunvegan-Central Peace-Notley or the B.C. NDP Premier’s best friend John Heaney?

2:40

Ms Hoffman: Really nice to see the new tone that’s been set under the new leadership here in the Official Opposition.

I have to say that I am so proud of the strong women on the front bench in this government. We have some pretty great guys, too, but we have strong women leading on important files. Of course, the Member for Dunvegan-Central Peace-Notley is the minister. She’s doing a tremendous job. No government has ever been as close to accessing new markets and tidewater as this government with this Minister of Energy, and I couldn’t be more proud of her work, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Panda: Given, Mr. Speaker, that the Premier’s director of communications said that John Heaney has been tasked with providing legal advice in spite of not being registered here in Alberta for giving legal advice and given that another NDP lawyer, Joseph Arvai, who handled the PPA lawsuits for the NDP, is now fighting against Alberta, defending B.C. on Bill 12, Premier, are

you and John Horgan channelling Cicero and crafting some real political theatre that only serves to . . .

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

Ms Hoffman: Mr. Speaker, I’m so proud of the work that this government has done to make sure that we are moving forward on construction of line 3 moving to the east and, of course, getting a pipeline to tidewater. Members opposite like to talk about the progress they made. Let me tell you that a pipeline to Jasper is not a pipeline to tidewater. This side of the House is going to get that job done. This side of the House is making sure we’re moving forward to ensure that people get the jobs and the economic benefits that come with those and that we continue to invest in the people of this province instead of mudslinging like the members opposite.

Mr. Panda: Given, Mr. Speaker, that John Heaney returned to Victoria to be with his family in August 2017 but that this new contract was inked in October 2017, less than two months after his departure from the Premier’s office, can the Premier confirm or deny that John Heaney has been working for the Minister of Energy and the Minister of Finance from home in Victoria, B.C., this whole time?

Ms Hoffman: Mr. Speaker, the opposition couldn’t find tidewater if they were standing on the pier in Victoria. This side of the House is employing the appropriate people to ensure that we get the job done, and we won’t be lectured by people who had nine years in government in Alberta and nine years in government in Ontario at the same time to make sure that they could have gotten this project done. We’re working hard here in Alberta. We’re working hard in B.C. Feel free to spend your time in Ontario, but this side of the House is getting results, and we’re going to get that pipeline.

Mr. Kenney: Mr. Speaker, the Member for Calgary-Foothills just asked the Minister of Energy about the terms of the contract with Mr. Heaney, the Premier’s former chief of staff. She didn’t even pretend to try to answer the question. She offered a typical partisan rant instead. So let’s come back to the issue because hopefully the government understands that it has to be accountable to taxpayers. How much is this contract for, when was it signed, and where has Mr. Heaney been working from?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Finance.

Mr. Ceci: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The annual sunshine list is due to be released in late June. Mr. Heaney’s contract took effect this past February. There hasn’t been a sunshine list released in that time, but it will be released in June. He has been giving us advice on the Trans Mountain pipeline, he has been in consultation with Energy, and he has been in consultation with members of Treasury Board and Finance. We have done a number of things to make that happen to get his advice.

Mr. Kenney: Mr. Speaker, did Mr. Heaney receive a severance payment from the government of Alberta after his termination as chief of staff to the hon. the Premier?

Ms Hoffman: You know what? Fair question, Mr. Speaker. I know that under Conservative governments in this province, many times people did get insane severance payments. What we did in our government is that we haven’t been writing those kinds of contracts that have those kinds of nice victory lap, gold-plated pension plans that pay out, like Conservatives did in this province many, many times. Mr. Heaney left his position of his own volition. He has taken a different position in an advisory capacity, and we thank him for

the work he's doing because – you know what? – it's going to get us a pipeline.

Mr. Kenney: Mr. Speaker, I'm listening with the earpiece to try to get every word here, but I think I still missed an answer to the question, which was whether Mr. Heaney, the Premier's former chief of staff, received a severance payment after he left the Premier's office. Let me ask the question a third time just for the sake of absolute clarity. Did Mr. Heaney receive a severance payment from the government of Alberta after he left the Premier's office, and if so, how much was it?

Ms Hoffman: Mr. Speaker, severance, I believe, is what happened many, many times under the Redford government and many other governments when people were fired. Mr. Heaney left of his own volition. He did not get terminated. Certainly, we respect the fact that he wanted to spend more time with his family and still wants to serve. He quit that position. My understanding is that he did not receive any severance. If that's not the fact, I will make sure that I correct the record. He quit instead of being fired, like we saw with many scandals under the former government. That certainly wasn't the case here in the province of Alberta. We respect the fact that he chose to leave, and he did so of his own volition.

Champion Lakes Wildfire

Mr. Westhead: Mr. Speaker, residents of the MD of Foothills, Rocky View county, and the hamlet of Bragg Creek are concerned about a wildfire that started over the weekend near the McLean Creek provincial recreation area. To the Minister of Agriculture and Forestry: can you please update residents on the status of this fire?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Carlier: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and to the member for the important question. Wildfires are often scary events, and we empathize with residents in the member's constituency that are currently facing these issues. This wildfire has been named the Champion Lakes wildfire and is currently about 100 hectares in size. While it is moving slowly, Alberta Wildfire is taking this fire very seriously. It is currently the number one provincial priority for the wildfire management branch, and the province has dispatched many resources to manage it as best we can. There is no immediate threat to the town of Bragg Creek, but I urge all residents of the area, including rural residents, to be vigilant and use all information resources available.

Mr. Westhead: Given that residents are concerned about their safety and property and given that the conditions continue to be quite dry, to the same minister: can you tell us what resources you've committed to this fire?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Carlier: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Member. This is our number one priority right now, and we have put substantial assets into fighting the fire and protecting communities and property. In addition to air tanker support we have dispatched dozens of firefighters, eight helicopters, and many pieces of heavy equipment. The office of the fire commissioner has also dispatched a wildland urban interface structural protection team. We'll continue to monitor the situation and are working with local officials to ensure that we're doing what we can to protect the member's constituents.

The Speaker: Second supplemental.

Mr. Westhead: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that the wildfire risk is very high and given that many communities across the province have had tragic experiences with wildfire, what is the government doing to prepare communities for the threat of wildfire and to prevent fires from starting in the first place?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Carlier: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and to the member. We all know that we need to do our best to prevent wildfires. It helps to focus resources and stop the threat from happening in the first place. That's why last week we instituted a fire ban in many parts of the province to further attempt to prevent fires. It is the same reason we amended the Forest and Prairie Protection Act, to give officers more tools to discourage risky behaviour and restrict the use of items like incendiary targets and other high-risk products. We've also been working with communities through the FireSmart program and have tripled investment in that program so that communities can undertake planning, manage fuel and education, and perform other preparedness activities.

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

NDP and Pipeline Development

Mr. Gotfried: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This government remains steadfastly committed to a punitive carbon tax. Part of this devotion arises from the false belief that it has or will grant social licence, yet we have NDP Premier John Horgan continuing to unlawfully obstruct an approved project and federal NDP leader Jagmeet Singh saying that the approval process was rigged, the science was ignored, and that it is clear that the pipeline should not be built. To the Premier: how can you continue to believe in your so-called social licence when you can't even convince your own fellow travellers to support Canadian pipelines?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Energy.

Ms McCuaig-Boyd: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, we developed a made-in-Alberta plan rather than an Ottawa-imposed plan, and we're very proud of that. I wish the opposition would quit cheering for us on a number of fronts to fail. The reality is that we are winning the hearts and minds of not just people in B.C. but, in fact, in Canada. Make no mistake. This pipeline is going to be built, and it's going to be built because of our climate leadership plan.

The Speaker: First supplemental.

Mr. Gotfried: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that in 2016, amid opposition observations that the NDP social licence wasn't working, the Premier said, and I quote, that that's just wrong and it's also quite silly, and given that today we see yet more prominent NDP politicians openly opposing pipelines than in 2016 despite pipelines generating significant dollars for public treasuries, something spendthrift NDP leaders should be most conscious of given their proven inability to control government spending, again to the Premier: how can you maintain that social licence is working when your own party is leading the charge against Alberta's constitutional rights?

2:50

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms McCuaig-Boyd: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, I'm very proud of the leadership our Premier has shown on this and indeed many of my colleague ministers. We know that \$40 million a day

is being left out of our economy here in Canada because of the lack of capacity, and that's money that could be spent on roads, hospitals, schools, and a lot of programs that all of us in this House would agree are important. This climate leadership plan has gotten us the approvals, and the work we're doing is going to continue. We are going to get that pipeline built.

The Speaker: Second supplemental.

Mr. Gotfried: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess on Thursday we hope the answer is a positive one.

Given that this government remains steadfast in its belief in social licence despite mounting evidence that your plan has failed and given that the minister of economic development stated in April 2016, "We've also introduced the most robust climate leadership plan in the country that . . . will get the social licence to get pipelines approved and our product to tidewater," again to the Premier: why are Albertans still paying an all-economic-pain, no-environmental-gain carbon tax, that has clearly failed to get a so-called social licence to build much-needed pipeline capacity?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Economic Development and Trade.

Mr. Bilous: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for the question. I'll walk him briefly down memory lane. It was the work that the Premier and the Minister of Environment and Parks did building our climate leadership plan, which is something that we're very proud of, which led to the Prime Minister giving approval of several pipelines, including the Trans Mountain pipeline. I would argue, in fact, that the climate leadership plan has been successful. At the same time, we're showing that the economy and the environment go hand in hand. We're working very closely with industry across sectors to ensure that Alberta continues to remain the best place to invest and to do business, and we will continue to fight on behalf of businesses to ensure that there is economic prosperity shared by all Albertans.

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

Carbon Levy Revenue Utilization

Mr. Barnes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. "Every penny raised by the carbon levy will be rebated back to Albertans or put back to work for our economy in new economic initiatives." That was the Premier in 2016 attempting to pass off her job-killing carbon tax as revenue neutral. Albertans weren't fooled in 2016, and they aren't fooled now. To the Premier: why did you mislead Albertans when you said that the carbon tax was revenue neutral?

Mr. Ceci: Mr. Speaker, the carbon levy that is part of the climate leadership plan is reinvested back into Alberta through a number of mechanisms. Rebates that Albertans get are one mechanism, and innovation investment is another. Those companies that need to turn over their coal-fired generating plants to gas fired: that's another way it's getting reinvested. We're doing the job that Albertans need to reduce GHGs, and we'll continue to do that. I just wish that they would get onboard with believing in climate change and things like that. They don't seem to. Lookit, they're totally . . .

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

Mr. Barnes: Given that when their ally Justin Trudeau raises the carbon tax to \$40, then \$50 in 2023, and who knows after that, the NDP will direct all carbon tax revenue into general revenue and given that a carbon tax is a tax on everything and a PST is a tax on

everything, a carbon tax is regressive and a PST is regressive, Albertans don't want a carbon tax and Albertans don't want a PST – Albertans are having trouble understanding the difference – to the minister: what is the difference between the two taxes?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Ceci: Thank you for the question, Mr. Speaker. We have been fully upfront every step of the way. We've said that up to \$30: those monies will go back to Albertans, be reinvested into the various programs I mentioned in the answer to the first question. After that, you know, it's contingent on the Trans Mountain pipeline being under construction and built and finished and all that sort of thing and delivering product to the coast. Those monies that come as a result of the federally imposed increase to the carbon levy will go to bring us closer to back to balance and reduce the deficit.

Mr. Barnes: So it is a PST.

Given that specific estimates vary but the consensus is that a provincial sales tax would raise around \$1 billion for every percentage point and given that last year the government raised over a billion dollars in revenue from the carbon tax – the difference is that a carbon tax allowed the NDP to skirt the law and forgo a referendum – to the minister: why won't you be straight with Albertans, admit the carbon tax is just a ploy to circumvent the law, and call a referendum to scrap the carbon tax?

Mr. Ceci: Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure where the talking points from that side are coming from. What we are doing is addressing GHGs with regard to the carbon levy and the climate leadership plan that is in this province. We have been clear. We're not bringing in a sales tax or a PST. We haven't done anything to make that happen. That side seems to want to talk about PSTs. Well, then bring in a platform. Put it in your platform that you don't seem to provide, that you don't give us in terms of a shadow budget. No shadow budget from anyone on that side. Where are your thoughts? Where are your abilities?

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

Mountain Pine Beetle

Mr. Drysdale: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Pine beetles are threatening 15 million acres of Alberta's forests, putting \$8 billion of pure pine stands at risk as well as the operations of major forest companies. We must contain this infestation because Alberta is the final barrier before the beetle begins a devastating march across Canada. To the Minister of Agriculture and Forestry: what do the preliminary results show about the survival rate of the pine beetle from this long, hard winter?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Agriculture and Forestry.

Mr. Carlier: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and to the member for the very important question. This past year there was indeed a survey. Those results are still being compiled, still being analyzed, and will be available later this summer. I'll be happy to share with the member once those results are available. It's important to note that this goes a long ways to ensure that we have all the necessary tools we need in our tool box to continue this fight with the pine beetle. The member is absolutely correct. This is the western front for the battle with the pine beetle, a battle we've been fighting for some years and currently are able to keep on top of.

The Speaker: First supplemental.

Mr. Drysdale: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that the mountain pine beetles are on a rampage through Jasper national park, which means the Hinton area is their next feeding ground, and given that if the beetles survived this winter, just one day of strong summer winds could transport millions of them into the foothills east of Jasper, to the same minister: what progress are you making in convincing the federal government to help battle the beetle infestation in Jasper national park?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Carlier: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and the member for the important question. You know, the province has had a very aggressive management strategy throughout the years when it was very bad in the northeast in 2006 and 2009. We have seen a 50 per cent decline in the number of affected trees, so the programs we have in place are necessary. The member is correct. In the Hinton area now it is the worst in the province. About 50 per cent of all the control we're doing now is in that area. We'll continue working with the communities. We've had grant programs to Hinton, to Whitecourt, Canmore, and other areas to ensure that those communities as well do what they can.

The Speaker: Thank you.
Second supplemental.

Mr. Drysdale: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that the province has announced funding for suppressing pine beetles discovered on municipal land and in the Hinton area due to the infestation occurring next door to Jasper national park and given that the vast majority of the pine forests in that area are actually on provincial Crown land, to the same minister: what is your government's containment plan for beetles that appear on Crown land in this critical area?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Carlier: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Absolutely, it continues to be important working with all our stakeholders, including the communities, including the forest industry. It's important to note that those stakeholders have played a big role over the years in helping to combat this pest. It is about combatting this pest. We're probably not going to get rid of the beetle, but we can, with proper management, control. The province has allocated again this year \$25 million to do just so. Even though it is a threat, it is an imminent threat to our communities, to our forest industry, I do believe that this government is on the right track to do what we can to make sure that we control the pest.

The Speaker: Barrhead-Morinville-Westlock.

Carbon Levy and Methane Regulations

Mr. van Dijken: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Every day Albertans are forced to pay the carbon tax just to go to work and heat their homes in a failed attempt to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. On top of that, methane regulations can have serious impacts on some of Alberta's biggest employers, potentially impacting future job creation. On May 17 the Minister of Energy claimed that they've had talks back and forth with their federal counterparts on methane regulations. To the minister: what assurances have you received that Alberta will be able to continue to regulate its own jurisdiction?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Energy.

Ms McCuaig-Boyd: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, protecting jobs for our oil sector in Alberta has been job number one for us and a top priority. We've engaged them, as I mentioned, along with other stakeholders to develop a made-in-Alberta plan to deal with methane, and that's exactly what we've done. The draft regulations have been open for 30 days to the public and to industry, and we look forward to seeing that feedback and working towards our final regulations.

3:00

Mr. van Dijken: Given, Mr. Speaker, that the true effect of the carbon tax would be measured by the amount of emissions being reduced in Alberta and given that information does not seem to be available anywhere and that baseline and scientific measurements are not being reported and given that the carbon tax has clearly failed to result in shovels in the ground for a pipeline, contrary to this government's claims, to the minister: why won't this government stop punishing everyday Albertans and scrap this all-pain, no-gain carbon tax?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms McCuaig-Boyd: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Nothing could be further from the truth. We've worked with industry from day one on a number of matters, whether it was the royalty review, climate leadership plan, methane, any number of issues, and we continue to do that. We have a great relationship with our industry. We understand that we need to be competitive, but we also understand that we need to deal with climate, and that's why we have a very robust climate leadership plan that's guiding us in all of those matters.

Mr. van Dijken: Given, Mr. Speaker, that just over two years ago the Minister of Economic Development and Trade stood here and said that the carbon tax would, quote, get the social licence to get our product to tidewater and given that the federal Liberal government has failed to deliver on their promise to assert federal jurisdiction on the pipeline against B.C.'s obstruction, why is this government still forcing Albertans to go along with Ottawa's 67 per cent carbon tax increase?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms McCuaig-Boyd: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, we have a plan that's made in Alberta rather than made in Ottawa and imposed from Ottawa. We're going to continue with that. But I would challenge the opposition: we hear nothing from your side on a number of matters. We don't see a platform. We don't know where you stand on anything. All you do is complain about the climate leadership plan, but we hear zero from you. Looking forward to hearing it soon.

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

Classroom Improvement Fund

Mr. Malkinson: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Class size is important. Parents want to make sure that there are appropriate supports in the classroom to ensure that their children get the best education possible. I've heard that the classroom improvement fund is supposed to help with this. To the hon. Minister of Education: what are some of the best ways that you've seen this funding being spent in the classroom?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Education.

Mr. Eggen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Certainly, we've seen lots of innovation around the province. For example, in Fort Saskatchewan they hired reading specialists, and they can see a measurable increase in improvement for young children within even the first year. That's why we were glad to put it back in this year as well. In Calgary we saw the Calgary board of education focus on math, hiring math specialists. Again, we can see lots of progress taking place there. So you put the money into the classroom, you make sure you invest responsibly, working with teachers and parents, and results will happen.

The Speaker: First supplemental.

Mr. Malkinson: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I understand that there are some changes to the funding being provided this year. What can the \$77 million classroom improvement fund now be spent on?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Eggen: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. This year we realized from the last year that the best way that you can invest is to have teachers and support staff in the classrooms in front of kids, so we have \$77 million in the classroom improvement fund this year focusing on hiring teachers and support staff. We expect to see more than 450 new positions as a result of the classroom improvement fund this year.

The Speaker: Second supplemental.

Mr. Malkinson: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I've heard from teachers how beneficial this program is, but I've also heard some concern from the ATA about whether the funding is permanent. Again to the same minister: are you looking to make this a permanent funding arrangement?

Mr. Eggen: Well, you know, Mr. Speaker, when you are making a study of a phenomenon, you look for patterns. We have delivered four budgets in a row for education that have funded for increased enrolment across the province. I'm very proud of that. We saw how great this classroom improvement fund is in the first year. Now we're putting it back in for the second year. I have to go back to my caucus and cabinet and Premier, but I can show definable scientific results that we are improving education here in the province of Alberta.

The Speaker: Hon. members, in 30 seconds we will continue.

Members' Statements

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

Official Opposition Leader

Mr. Piquette: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Albertans like politicians who say what they mean and who mean what they say. They like straight shooters, leaders who they can respect even if they don't agree with everything that they stand for. What they don't like are leaders who talk out of both sides of their mouths. One of these Albertans is a former Wildrose member and activist. This is what he had to say in a letter that he wrote to me recently.

I'm thoroughly disgusted with [the Leader of the Official Opposition]. He and the UCP MLAs are being paid by us people to conduct the province's business. Yet they walk out whenever they don't like an NDP motion. That's like an employee of a

supermarket walking out if a lousy song comes over the public address system. We pay them to work, not to walk.

I'm also disgusted with [the Leader of the Official Opposition's] flip-flopping about grass roots support. He's proven that he uses his members for his own ends, not to make Alberta a better place for all. He made a big show about letting the grass roots members make policy and then he acts like an old style politician and claims his is the final decision. I'd snap his pen in half if I could.

Remember too that most of the grass roots support came to Brian Jean. [The Leader of the Opposition] parachuted in and won the leadership race with his big donor money. Now he's repaying them by behaving like the old boys of the PC days. This isn't what I supported with my 2015 vote.

Mr. Speaker, I'm sure that this constituent speaks for many who went to Red Deer expecting to be part of a populist grassroots movement and then found out that the new UCP is the same top-down, big-money-dominated party they left the PCs for being. If this is how this new party is starting out, where will they end up? Who knows? What I know is that if Albertans want a government that has taken big money out of politics and that makes the tough choices necessary to secure our continuing future prosperity and can be trusted to stand up for regular Albertans and the services they depend on, there is one clear choice, and that is our NDP government.

Finally, I'd like to thank this honest and frank constituent for his letter. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Provincial Intergenerational Debt

Mr. Barnes: Mr. Speaker, since the Second World War the west embraced the value of permanent progress. The idea that each generation should be better off than its parents can be found at the very core of our economic and political systems. We invest in modern infrastructure, technology, and education because we know it will improve our children's ability to compete and succeed. We value progress because we want to leave more freedom and more opportunity for the next generation.

However, when we finance paying for modern infrastructure, technology, and education through debt by running deficit budgets, we are not leaving our children better off. We are in fact setting them up for failure. Borrowing, once reserved for emergencies, is now being used to fund the day-to-day operations of this NDP government. According to the NDP's most recent financial plans Alberta's budget will not be balanced until at least 2024, at which time the debt will have reached a staggering \$96 billion. That's when the bill really comes due, Mr. Speaker. According to a team of researchers at the University of Calgary Albertans will eventually be forced to shell out \$3.8 billion annually just to cover the interest on this massive pile of debt.

Who will ultimately be responsible for paying for this fiscal mess? According to the researchers our province's young people. A typical 16-year-old in 2023 will be forced to pay an additional \$42,252 over the remainder of his or her life just to cover the interest on the NDP's debt, and according to the U of C's research team those aged 16 to 25 will pay 20 per cent – 20 per cent – of the additional tax compared to just 2.4 per cent for seniors. Today's youth, who were given no democratic voice in this government's reckless and irresponsible spending, will ultimately be stuck with the consequences of today's political decisions, less freedom and less opportunity. That's bad news.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Mill Creek.

Support for Immigrant Women

Ms Woollard: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. People in the great constituency of Edmonton-Mill Creek are very aware of the wide range of cultural and ethnic diversity brought to us by people from all around the world moving to Alberta over the years. Many of these newcomer groups often support and help each other as they adapt to their new country and new ways of life. One notable organization is the Indo-Canadian Women's Association, formed in 1984 by a small group of determined, resourceful, and courageous women. I had the privilege of meeting a few of the founders of this group, who described some of the issues that they and other immigrant women were facing when they formed the group. They took it upon themselves at that time to meet weekly and support other women who were struggling in a strange and new landscape.

3:10

The Indo-Canadian Women's Association has grown to be a thriving and well-respected nonprofit in Edmonton, providing evidence-driven, outcome-based services to newcomers and expertise for all who wish to learn about the challenges faced by immigrant women and their families. The organization also works to challenge gender stereotypes and biases, to promote visibility of women, and to be an advocate for uplifting women and celebrating women's achievements.

Another group working to provide support to immigrant women is called Tea Connection. This group focuses on women who are socially isolated and need support to meet people other than their families. The women who attend Tea Connection help each other figure out how to get around Edmonton, practise speaking English, understand how schools here work, and learn what other supports are available. This group provides a secure space for people to develop skills and a safe place to talk about their concerns. For many older immigrant women who do not work outside the home, this is . . .

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

Air Ambulance Service in Northern Alberta

Mr. W. Anderson: Mr. Speaker, at various times the Minister of Health has referred to questions on the air ambulance issue as mudslinging, irresponsible, and fake questions. She's also stated that there would be no base location changes and that the contract would only be assigned to a proponent that could secure hangar space. Alberta Health Services issued an air ambulance service update on March 15 stating that it will base one plane in Peace River on the tarmac, exposed to Alberta's unpredictable weather, because the successful proponent does not have a hangar, with a second plane based out of Grande Prairie to service that region. This was followed with an assertion by AHS on March 16 that this was an improvement to patient care. Yet AHS met with the town's representatives on March 15, and according to the town they were, quote, completely blindsided by their plan as they totally contradicted every assurance they gave us. End of quote.

We asked the Minister of Health if she could explain how one plane stationed on the Peace River Airport tarmac is equivalent to the levels of service being provided by the current supplier, being two planes stationed in a fully serviced hangar. No answer. On May 14 this minister stated:

I also want to set the facts straight on some questions that were asked last week. The member said that things were shut down for two and a half hours with regard to an air ambulance. It was [only] 10 minutes. Mr. Speaker, I'm sick of the mudslinging in

this House. If you want to talk facts in improving health care, I'm there. I'm willing to do it with you. I welcome you to the table.

Well, here are the facts. In response to this statement I was informed in an e-mail from the town chief administrative officer that on Saturday, April 29, at approximately 10 a.m. a Can-West plane was stuck in the mud at the airport. The town security cameras captured video of the entire incident. The medics were dispatched at 9:30, and based on AHS's wheels-up requirement, the aircraft should have been in the air by 10 a.m. The aircraft departed after 12 p.m., approximately one hour and 40 minutes late. A second plane had to be brought in. I was further informed that the town has pictures, videos, and e-mails which document both the incident and the efforts to alleviate the situation.

In the words of the town's CEO, this is a ticking time bomb . . .

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. member. Thank you.

The Member for Edmonton-South West.

Premier and Official Opposition Leader

Mr. Dang: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Now it is my pleasure to rise today to point out a contrast between leaders. I am so proud to sit on this side of the House, where we have a leader that makes promises and sticks by them. On the other side of the House we have a leader who guaranteed that "the policies of the United Conservative Party must be developed democratically by its grassroots members, not imposed by its Leader." I know that I wouldn't buy a car with a guarantee that can be tossed out at the whim of the dealer. And during the PC leadership campaign the leader opposite said that his campaign finances would be disclosed after the contest. Another broken promise. I sure wouldn't trust a financial institution which changed its rules after my money was already in its hands. So we have a pattern.

On this side of the House we have a leader with a different kind of pattern, a pattern of making tough and fair decisions, a pattern of sticking to her guns. When the international price of oil plunged more than 50 per cent, our leader promised to have the backs of Albertans during a difficult economic time. The opposition screamed for cuts and voted against schools and hospitals and roads and jobs for Albertans.

Now, our leader is keeping her promise to support everyday Albertans. We're opening new safe and caring spaces for seniors in their communities; building and modernizing schools across the province, with 20 new school projects scheduled to start this year; protecting women from harassment when accessing legal health care services; enhancing safety in workspaces; creating affordable child care spaces for families; and supporting the fight against rural crime. The list goes on and on, Mr. Speaker.

On this side of the House our promises won't shift in the direction in which the political wind blows. We promise to clean up Conservative waste and corruption, fight for pipelines, and build an economic recovery that will last, Mr. Speaker, and that's exactly what we will continue to do.

Pregnancy Pathways Program for Homeless Women

Mrs. Aheer: For a moment imagine expecting a baby. Now imagine that you live on the street. You don't know where to turn, you don't have any home, no support, you may not have a job or a family, and your only thought is: how am I going to take care of my baby? You would feel completely alone, you feel afraid, you feel ashamed, and you feel like the odds are stacked against you in this seemingly insurmountable situation.

I had the pleasure of meeting with Pregnancy Pathways. They are an amazing, dedicated group assisting vulnerable pregnant women in the city of Edmonton through affordable housing, services co-ordination support, and mentorship. Too often vulnerable women do not access care for essential services, and you might ask: why? It's because of shame and fear that their baby will be taken away from them. Together with community organization partnerships, Pregnancy Pathways works to connect these women with essential mental health and addiction supports, security, prenatal care, life skills, financial literacy, and to connect them to available services to empower them, to give them and their children the best possible start in life. Pregnancy Pathways is supporting five extraordinary women with culturally sensitive resources as they grow to their full potential. One of those resources is the amazing wellness co-ordinator, who during a recent meeting noticed that a client was extremely anxious and was able to perform a smudge ceremony on the spot.

There are approximately 100 homeless pregnant women in Edmonton a year that desperately need the help and guidance of Pregnancy Pathways. This groundbreaking pilot project is making a real-world impact. Pregnancy Pathways has been made possible thanks to the generous support of a variety of donors, and I would encourage all of my colleagues in this House to support this remarkable initiative, like by donating to the Boyle McCauley health centre or the Royal Alexandra hospital.

Thank you.

Tabling Returns and Reports

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

Dr. Swann: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to table five copies of a letter I received from a group called the Clearwater Coalition, who have raised two major concerns about water extraction from the Clearwater River by a number of oil and gas companies and also about the long-term impacts of fracking in the area on not only drinking water but on earthquakes.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Panda: Mr. Speaker, I rise to table the requisite number of copies of a petition of thanks and gratitude from the students, staff, teachers, administrators, and parents of Bearspaw Christian School in my riding for "continuing to maintain stable funding through the 2018 Provincial Budget."

Mr. Speaker, I also have other tablings. The first one, by Andrew Khouri, is entitled *Lawsuits Filed Against L.A. County, Lenders over Green Energy Program* and is from the *Los Angeles Times*, April 12, 2018.

The second one, by Kirsten Grind, is from the *Wall Street Journal*, January 10, 2017, and is entitled *America's Fastest-Growing Loan Category Has Eerie Echoes of Subprime Crisis*.

Thank you.

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

Mr. Gotfried: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to table the requisite number of copies of a *Calgary Herald* article from September 2016 titled *Notley Remains Confident 'Social Licence' Will Work*, in which it dismisses the notion the NDP government's strategy to win support for pipelines is failing.

3:20

Orders of the Day

Public Bills and Orders Other than Government Bills and Orders Committee of the Whole

[Ms Sweet in the chair]

The Deputy Chair: Hon. members, I'd like to call the committee to order.

Bill 203

Long Term Care Information Act

The Deputy Chair: Are there any amendments, comments, or questions to be offered on this bill? The hon. Member for Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville.

Mrs. Littlewood: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. It's my pleasure to stand up and make some comments and to ask a couple of questions about Bill 203, the Long Term Care Information Act. Having had the experience of looking for an assisted living facility for my mother after she was assessed by a home-care nurse to see that she did in fact qualify for level 4 assisted living, it was an interesting process of trying to figure out what places she qualified for as well as how much it would cost. We did have some help, having that home-care nurse do some advocacy within Alberta Health Services as well as working with my mother's social worker, that deals with her AISH file, but it was a really convoluted system to try and navigate. One of our biggest concerns – this was just a few years ago, when we were starting the process – was how she would be able to afford it.

Not having a lot of experience in actually finding housing for someone who was in need of it – I worked in that field, in long-term care, when I was in my early 20s, so I knew what it looked like from the inside, but I didn't know what that system looked like from the outside – going through living facilities to try and figure out where she qualified to live, because she was a few years shy of 65 and needed intensive care that could not be delivered fully with my mother still staying at home, was a real challenge. That, of course, was, you know, just another step along the way in an entire life of trying to help look after my mom with my two sisters.

When we were trying to figure out places that she would qualify for, there were different places that saw to complex mental health issues, complex addiction issues. We were trying to find a place that would allow her to have more independence but that would allow her to have a better quality of life. At the time my mom was in an apartment that was one storey below ground level, and stairs became very, very difficult for her to traverse on her own. Just to go to the store was becoming a larger and larger challenge as time went on.

When we were looking at different places, it was absolutely impossible to find information about what different facilities were available aside from working within and trying to get information from Alberta Health Services. Even now I can see that going online and trying to figure out how much extra costs can amount to when someone goes to live in assisted living or long-term care is virtually impossible.

There are facilities that say that they do have the allowance to charge more for certain services, whether it's laundry, assistance to and from meals, medication costs, looking after the management of cigarettes. All of these things became a big concern because when someone goes into care and they're on government assistance with their finances, whether it's AISH or whether it's seniors' benefits

income, you are only allowed now – and I think it increased by \$30 under our government – \$315 at the end of the month every month.

To worry about my mom and whether she would be able to meet the needs of her life with \$315 became a massive source of stress, and that was with having the assistance of her three daughters. You know, I've heard a lot more stories now, since being elected, about people basically being impoverished by this because their medications might not be fully covered and that they might need all of these extra costs. I know that my mom has a monitoring device that she wears around her neck every day, and that has an extra cost added to it as well.

When the seasons and the weather change and you only have \$315 at the end of the month every month to try and plan for expenses, whether it's something as simple as deodorant and toilet paper and shampoo and lotion, these things, you know, pile up and make it more difficult for people to have what we would commonly accept as a quality of life that someone, especially as they are aging, should have a right to.

I'm very pleased to see this legislation coming forward. [interjections] I certainly would hope that the members opposite would be as interested in this legislation as I am. Maybe they could keep it down just a little bit, Madam Chair. I'm sorry. I can't hear over them. Okay.

At any rate, it's incredibly difficult to try and find the information for this, so I'm glad that there will be legislation that will compel care providers to be able to provide this for people. You know, it's another complication of aging in our province. It shouldn't be another extra burden on the individual that's going into an assisted living facility or be a burden on the family to try and traverse that all by themselves without any sort of central information gathering. I'm glad that the Member for Red Deer-North is putting this forward. If I could ask her to give us some information on this and on how the bill will address it and perhaps on currently what some of those extra costs are that people are burdened with, I would appreciate just some information from the member about that, please.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. member.

Are there any other members wishing to speak? The hon. Member for Red Deer-North.

3:30

Mrs. Schreiner: Thank you, Madam Chair, and I thank the member for the question. First of all, I'd just like to thank the Member for Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville for bringing forward her story, her experience that she as well as her sisters endured when it came to their mother's care. That's just one story of thousands. Right now there are 15,000 Alberta seniors that are living in roughly 170 institutions all across Alberta that offer long-term care in over 100 communities across our great province. The member brings forward just one story of thousands of stories: here you are living your life, and all of a sudden you get a phone call from a doctor, perhaps your mother's doctor, saying that your mother's health has deteriorated and that maybe you might want to look into long-term care. And there you are, like so many other hundreds and thousands of Albertans: "Where do I go? What do I do?"

I brought this bill forward to be able to address where you would go looking for an easily accessible long-term care website that people can go to and it has all their options. They can look at a community, maybe the community of Fort Saskatchewan, and see what their options are there. Maybe they want to look in the community of Stettler or the community of Red Deer. They can go online, and they can find out all the basic information that would be

pertinent to be able to make the decision as to where to place their mother.

Some of the information that this bill talks about is, of course, the contact information like the address, phone number, and e-mail address. Some of the other information would be how many beds the facility offers. Some people maybe would like to live in a facility that has many different options available in a bigger facility whereas some people might feel more comfortable living in a smaller facility. We each have our own needs, what makes home for us, what makes it special for us.

I want to thank the member for bringing her story forward. Exactly what this bill will do is just outline the different services, what's available in each long-term care facility and auxiliary hospital across our great province. Hopefully, that'll make the hard decision that many of us have to make in our lives a little bit easier.

Thank you.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. member.

The hon. Member for Calgary-Mountain View.

Dr. Swann: Thanks very much, Madam Chair. I believe we're speaking in general to third reading, and I'm happy to give my comments.

The Deputy Chair: Hon. member, just to clarify, we're in Committee of the Whole, not third reading yet.

Dr. Swann: Yeah, committee. Sorry.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you.

Dr. Swann: The bill obviously fills a tremendous need in this province. Many of us in our roles as MLAs would be hearing from families and individuals who recognize a need for change and are terrified by either delays or lack of clarity around what the options are, everything from, of course, improved home-care services to hiring personal care attendants, many of whom have questionable training, right to the full gamut of 24-hour, seven-day-a-week nursing care. This is a much needed support to people making these decisions without having to travel the province or to find individuals who have either lived there or worked there and get personal testimonials. It does importantly put this information online.

With over 170 institutions across the province that are providing these kinds of services, it's critical that people have some ability to evaluate what the options are both in terms of the quality of care and in the other amenities that are associated with that particular setting. It provides the basic data, including whether it's public, private, nonprofit, and the type of the facility, what services are provided, the total number of residents, the details of the services, the charges, including extra charges for extra services, how old the institution or service is, and a description of the status of the resident and family council if it exists, which is another great contributor to comfort and understanding of what to expect.

Also, there is the accreditation status. Clearly, if there's anything more common for me to get calls about, it's the accreditation status: what it means, how authentic an accreditation is, whether it has actually been done by people who have themselves appropriate credentials, whether or not it's being done frequently enough, whether it's being done unannounced so that they can actually see how things work when people haven't prepared for the accreditation. I think that's all part of what people are looking for in terms of valid reviews.

I understand that the minister will ensure that information contained in the registry is updated periodically, every six months.

I guess it raises the question of whether client and family evaluation is going to be actually included there. Like with some of the travel websites or some of the other websites – hotels and doctors – where people can register their own personal experience, good and bad, whether those will be part of it is, I think, an important question. There should be no fear of individuals and families registering their evaluation of an experience here because, surely, that's part of what is needed to objectively evaluate what happens there on a day-to-day basis.

Many of these places will never live up to the expectations of individuals and families, but we at least have to be open to the fact that if people have had negative experiences and if a number of people have had negative experiences, the public has a right to know something about those and what the nature of the concerns were, whether it was staff time, whether it was staffing, whether it was attitudes, whether it was language issues that were barriers to appropriate care, whether there were, you know, issues with the physical plant or renovations that were delayed, access to extra supportive services when changes in a person's condition arise. These kinds of stories and anecdotes and experiences should be part of an online – and maybe that's something that hasn't yet been considered, but I hope it will be. This is a very progressive and much overdue opportunity for people and should help significantly in both improving the targeting of individuals and their families to the right place but also in holding those institutions more accountable. With more scrutiny comes more accountability and a higher standard of care; I have no doubt.

I'll certainly be supporting this and appreciate the member for this private member's bill.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. member.

Are there any other members wishing to speak? The hon. Member for Battle River-Wainwright.

Mr. Taylor: Yes. Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm pleased to rise today to speak to Bill 203, the Long Term Care Information Act, at Committee of the Whole. This bill seeks to create a publicly accessible online registry to provide information on long-term care facilities in Alberta. You know, our seniors are remarkable. They have given so much to every aspect of this province and serve as pillars of our communities, sources of enormous wisdom and knowledge, and they also make up a group of people in my own life who I'm proud to call friends. I think that bears repeating, that our seniors deserve nothing but excellence as they go into their golden years. They have worked hard to build this province that we all enjoy, and they have paid their dues.

3:40

It is also worth noting that families want to provide for their aging relatives with the best of the best when it comes to a home in which they can retire in peace and comfort. It is their opportunity to give back to their loved ones, so it's understandable that this process can be a daunting task, and unfortunately, as many of us in this Chamber know, it can also be a frustrating task that is fraught with systematic failures on the part of the health care system. The Auditor General has made a variety of recommendations regarding long-term care facilities, which have highlighted long-standing issues such as wait-lists, overcharging, or exceeding allotment of care. In October of 2014 the Auditor General released a report stating that the government needed to work to

- develop a system to periodically verify that facilities provide residents with an adequate number and level of staff, every day of their operation [and]

- develop a system to periodically verify that facilities deliver the right care every day by implementing individual resident care plans and meeting basic needs of residents.

As of the most recent AG report those recommendations remain unimplemented.

We also know that the wait-lists for long-term care facilities are substantially backlogged and that divorce by nursing home remains a concern for many Albertan families. I have had a number of constituents come to my constituency office at a loss for how to protect their elderly loved ones. I have heard from adult children whose parents required different levels of care and due to this were separated and had to be put into different facilities.

One constituent cried while telling about the stress the separation had caused her parents and the toll that had been taken on their mental health. Her parents had been married for over 50 years and had never slept in different beds until they were separated by the lack of options for long-term care facilities. This also puts an enormous amount of stress on their own marriages and children as they attempt to see both their parents after work every day. This constituent talked about the extreme guilt she felt whenever one left one parent to go to the other, knowing that whoever she left would be lonely. It's a problem. It's a problem that's out there, a problem we need to address, of course.

I was also shocked to hear my colleague from Fort McMurray-Wood Buffalo point out the story of Ethel in his constituency, who went to visit her husband of several decades to find out he was in a state of disarray, soiled, and uncomfortable. When she asked why her husband had been left in such a shocking, inhumane state, she was told that her husband had exceeded his allotment of care.

Madam Chair, these instances of what constitute senior abuse are completely unacceptable and should never be allowed to happen. So you can understand my disappointment when instead of this private member's bill being one of substance that can actually address the numerous systematic issues our seniors and families are facing in regard to long-term care facilities in Alberta, as the Member for Red Deer-North brought forward in this piece of legislation, to be honest, this bill is fine, but it's innocuous, and it doesn't rock the boat. I'll vote in favour of it; it just doesn't have a lot of substance. This bill doesn't make any meaningful change. It doesn't solve a problem. It wouldn't make life easier for our seniors and their families.

I am disappointed about this because all of us in this Assembly have a duty to work hard to bring forward legislation that impacts the lives of Albertans for the better. Drawing a private member's bill is a gift. My friend and colleague from Bonnyville-Cold Lake is someone who has had his own private member's bill passed. From my conversations with him he's quite proud of the fact that his bill passed, and he should be. The bill I'm referring to is PMB 202 – I believe that's correct; he's nodding – Protecting Victims of Non-consensual Distribution of Intimate Images Act. This bill has addressed a real problem.

It is truly a remarkable opportunity to make the changes that we need to see here in Alberta, and there are so few private members' bills that actually get to the floor for debate, Madam Chair. There have been so many amazing ideas for legislation that won't be implemented because they weren't high enough on the private member bill draft. It feels like this is such an opportunity, and it has been squandered on solving a problem that was already solved. I remain confused. Instead of addressing one of the numerous real issues facing our seniors, the Member for Red Deer-North chose legislation on an issue that, one, was not a problem that needed fixing and, two, even if it was a problem, could have been implemented through the Department of Health without a

legislative debate, which draws out the timeline for this initiative being implemented.

Mostly, I feel confused by this bill. Now, Madam Chair, I'm happy to be corrected on part of the reason why I'm confused by this bill that will create a website, that will create a registry to provide information on long-term care facilities in Alberta. After 30 seconds or so, if you do a Google search, you can already see that there are two such registries, information pages that already exist through Alberta Health. I found a document entitled List of Publicly Funded Designated Supportive Living Accommodations and Long-term Care Facilities, an open Alberta website, as well as a searchable page with information on supportive and long-term care accommodations in Alberta, which is even broader than the mandate of this bill. So what does this bill do that is not already being done? What will this new registry provide that is not already being provided to Albertan families? I'm happy to admit if I misunderstood and this is a huge problem, but from a simple search it appears that this problem was already solved a long time ago.

I don't understand why we're not legislating on actual issues in this House. I think that if the member felt that this was an issue, she could have worked with the Ministry of Health – I mean, you have that direct access to work with the Ministry of Health – to have it addressed outside the Chamber. The only way that I could see this bill improving the lives of Albertans is if the website is a one-stop shop for Albertans considering moving to a continuing care facility. Since this bill only mandates the creation of a registry of long-term care facilities, namely nursing homes and auxiliary hospitals, without including supportive care facilities and other types of assisted living facilities without long-term care facilities, a potential user of the registry will only have a portion of the information available to them, somewhat defeating the purpose of the registry.

I'll be voting for the legislation, but I would caution my colleagues with future PMBs to ensure that they are using them as a valuable tool and a meaningful way to solve problems for Albertans here in Alberta.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. member.

Are there any other members wishing to speak to the bill? The hon. Member for Red Deer-North.

Mrs. Schreiner: Well, thank you, Madam Chair. I'd like to thank the Member for Battle River-Wainwright for getting up and speaking today. I will say that there are a few things I agree with you on. I very strongly agree that our seniors are indeed very remarkable, and, yes, they have worked hard to make this province the absolute best place in the world to live and to work and to raise a family.

3:50

But some of the language that was used I take offence at, the word "squandered," when it comes to my private member's bill. I have to say that I take this private member's bill very seriously. I have worked in long-term care for my entire adult life. I have worked with seniors, and they mean so much to me. When I have people coming into my office that say, "Can you come to my house because I can't bring my parents here and you need to have a conversation with them? They're looking for long-term care" and I drive to their house, I meet a very lovely couple that have been married for over 70 years and now find themselves where they need long-term care. They're living with a daughter, and they feel guilty living with the daughter because the daughter is working full-time as well as taking care of them. She had been working for five

months to try and find a long-term care facility that would be comfortable for both of her parents.

You talked about a simple search. It is not a simple search, and I hear that over and over and over again from my constituents. I have people that call my office, come into my office as an MLA. But when I worked in long-term care, it broke my heart to see people coming into the long-term care facility just to see what it was about, what you have to offer, because they went online and tried to find that simple search. It is not a simple search. It is very difficult to navigate, and if you don't come from health care, you may not know all of the language and what it means, dementia and level 3 and level 4. It's very complicated, and these people are at a time in their lives where we should be, as legislators, taking care of them. That is why I took this bill very seriously. I wanted to have something that was easy for Albertans, an easily accessible online tool for them to go on and find where would be the best place for them to live out the rest of the days of their lives.

I take offence at some of your language, but this is an actual issue. I quote you as saying that it was not an actual issue. This is an issue. I hear it from my constituents. I had consultations, and I heard over and over again from my constituents not only in Red Deer but surrounding Red Deer. This is something that they've been wanting to do for a very long time. I've reached out to just about every resident and family council in all of Red Deer and met with them to explain about the new act, the Resident and Family Councils Act, as well as my private member's bill. These are people that have just placed their loved ones, a mother or father, into a long-term care facility. They just went through months and months of trying to navigate through this system. They are very happy with the bill.

I just have to say on behalf of all Albertans and our seniors that I am very proud to bring this bill forward. Thank you.

The Deputy Chair: Are there any other members wishing to speak to the bill? The hon. Member for Bonnyville-Cold Lake.

Mr. Cyr: Thank you, Madam Chair. I am very pleased to see this bill, and I do believe that the Member for Red Deer-North should be very proud of it.

I did a little bit of research, and I came up with an article. It's Long-term Health Care: A Look Inside the Often-baffling System. This was written by Theresa Boyle on June 21, 2013. I think that this article, even though it's out of Ontario, does a good job of explaining the struggles for people that are trying to get into seniors' homes. I'm going to go through some of this article to really reflect what an actual person is going through when they're trying to find that nursing home. Now, right off the top it says:

You're turned upside down. This is a priority because in five days' time you have got to choose where your loved one will live for the rest of their life and probably will die. You [will] want to make sure it's the best and that you can advocate for them.

That's quite a statement right there. Let's unpack it. This was by Howard Cohen, and he's actually trying to find a place for his mother. What happened here is that when the hospital decides that you need to go to long-term care, you've got five days in Ontario to find that long-term care. Trying to find a place without online access would be a struggle. In this specific case it's even worse. I have to say that whenever you add layers of burden in order for seniors to be able to find those homes, it's not good for any one of us.

Now, this bill – and I think it's important to touch on – is going on to what it does, and I think we need to describe what this bill is actually trying to do. We'll go through the descriptions here. "Operator name and contact information, including a mailing address and telephone number." What we've got here now is that

we've got a list of institutions, and you can choose the institution that is closest to you. This is important. This is one thing that has come up in my constituency a lot. When you finally made that decision, that one facility in my constituency may not have the spaces. It just might not be there. Right now one of my seniors' facilities has an 80-person wait-list. You can see where that is challenging. So then having facilities around Bonnyville that can take them until they have a space for somebody in Bonnyville is what's important here. Making sure that that senior knows all the options for them is what's important here, making sure that that senior who has made that choice to go into long-term care, because that's a big decision, is provided for.

Now, what we've got here is a "description of the type of operator." For me, I have found through my career, already three years as an MLA, that it can be publicly operated, nonprofit, or privately operated. For myself, so far I have found that there have been flaws in all of them, but there have also been successes with all of them. In my constituency I am very proud of every one of my seniors' homes, each and every one of them, whether they're nonprofit, private, or public, because they are out there doing their job.

On Mother's Day I take my family and I go out and I give a pink rose to all of the wonderful senior ladies at the seniors' homes. It's an opportunity for me to ask each one of those seniors: "What do you think this facility is like? Do you feel you're being treated well? How is it that this facility is meeting your needs?" And you know what? A resounding, incredible reinforcement says: the staff is wonderful; the food is good; they are doing an incredible job. That is success. That is success that I think we can all take home. The problem in my case is finding a facility you can get into. That is the problem.

Going back to this bill, trying to address the fact that we may have some good facilities – we do have excellent facilities out there. We may have poor facilities out there. But, in the end, identifying the facility that best fits you is what we all need to aim towards.

Now, it goes on to "description of the type of facility" and the "total number of residents that may reside at the operator's facility and a description of the intake process for that facility." One thing that I have noticed is that there is confusion on how exactly you can get into the facility. That is one thing that comes into my office. Unfortunately, not all of our seniors are Internet savvy, if you will. They're not able to just go and start clicking stuff, and that, unfortunately, seems to be the place that they need to go in order to get the resources they need. So having a place for them or their family where they can go and see all of this compiled into one spot is probably good for everybody.

Moving on, "details of the services provided at the operator's facility." Let's talk about the different levels. Let's say that your parent has dementia. You found that wonderful facility that is a neighbour. Everybody is talking about how great it is. What if it isn't a 4D? What if it's a 3, right? Or, in some cases, what if it's a 5? It's important to make sure that you identify what facility type your parent, grandparent should be in. Having this listed is actually good for everybody so that we know what they're rated for.

4:00

Now, one thing that is a barrier for most – and this is a really good point – is the accommodation charges payable by residents. If there's extra cost, let's make sure they're aware of it. I think that's a reasonable thing that we can all say, that if we've got a senior that is struggling financially that they're able to know what they're getting into before they get there. And if we have problems – you know what? It is important that if you need to get into a facility and you're having trouble, your MLA will always be there to help you.

I cannot speak for everybody here, but I am sure that no senior will be turned away from an MLA's office.

Now, moving on, the date on which the operator's facility was established. This is important because what we're trying to see is: is the facility new? Is it old? What state is this facility in? What happens is that you may need to have – it gives you an idea of what age and what type of facility. Is it old? Is it new? Is it something that you really would want to live in? I think that's another great point in there.

Description of the status of the resident and family council. Here's something that is saying that if you've got a resident council there, how is it operating? That's the way I understand that one to work out. This is important because we saw in the Lacombe facility, where they didn't have one, that we had a clear, unfortunate breakdown with the Alberta government when it was about taking care of those seniors. I'm not here to put down any of the facilities, but I am saying that there was a breakdown, and it could have been solved by having a very strong resident and family council. So making sure that this is implemented and how involved I think is a great idea.

The accreditation status I think is another good point, which is what I brought up.

The results of the inspections conducted under section 12 of the Nursing Homes Act. Now, this one the member may need to clarify, but what happens here from the way I understand it – and if she can clarify this for me – is that what Alberta Health would do is that they would go in and do an inspection, and if they find any deviation from the rules, they would post that online so that you could find out what infractions they've had and whether they've been corrected or not. If that is the case, I believe this is a great idea because in the end if you've got a seniors' home that has significant infractions that have not been corrected, I want to know about it.

Now, moving on to this article that I was talking about earlier, the long-term health care:

Cohen . . .

He's the gentleman that's putting his mother into the institution.

. . . started to climb what would be a steep learning curve, researching and touring homes. He was perplexed by the disparities, particularly when it came to what the homes had to offer residents with dementia. These same disparities result in some homes having empty beds, while others have [wait times] as long as 14 years.

That's quite lengthy.

He was stunned to discover, he says, that he had been misinformed and given inadequate information about how to select a home by a hospital social worker and a case manager from one of the province's 14 community-care access centres (CCACs), which control entry into LTC homes.

After intense research that involved talking to seniors' advocates and even consulting the Long-Term Care Homes Act, Cohen discovered . . .

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. member.

Are there any other members wishing to speak? The hon. Member for Edmonton-Centre.

Mr. Shepherd: Thank you, Madam Chair. I appreciate the opportunity to rise and speak to Bill 203, the Long Term Care Information Act. I'd like to thank my colleague the MLA for Red Deer-North for bringing this bill forward and indeed echo her comments earlier regarding the comments from the MLA for Battle River-Wainwright. I found those comments to be in fairly poor taste, especially considering that to suggest that any member's concerns that they are bringing forward from their constituents are not worthy of consideration in this House, that somehow that is

being squandered, that somehow it is not as worthy of consideration and debate as anything else that has been brought forward before this House by members on either side of the aisle is frankly insulting, condescending, particularly considering that the Leader of the Opposition not that long ago, a few weeks ago, took over a private member's bill for the sheer purpose of grandstanding regarding the pipeline, bringing forward a private member's bill that all knew would not pass in this House, and using up an opportunity to perhaps bring forward something, as the MLA who was speaking earlier might have considered, in his words, more substantive.

That said, I'd like to take the opportunity to debate the bill that is before us. Not too long after my election I received a letter from a constituent named Sally. As the Member for Bonnyville-Cold Lake noted, often when individuals need to select a place for a loved one to go to receive long-term care, this can occur very suddenly. It can occur without much warning. In those situations people can find themselves with a matter of days to review a wide number of facilities and make what may be one of the most important decisions of their life, where their loved one is going to spend the final years of their life in care. Having a codified, online registry, as proposed by the Member for Red Deer-North, could make this a much easier process for families. Indeed, if families have some advance notice, if they're aware of the deteriorating health of a loved one, whether that's mental or physical or perhaps both, they would have that opportunity to be perhaps better informed and better prepared.

Now, when Sally wrote to me, she told me about the circumstances with herself and her husband, who had been diagnosed with Parkinson's disease and Lewy body dementia. She'd been taking care of him for about over a decade at home, and he'd been attending a day treatment program. He was seeing a neurologist, a psychiatrist, a family doctor, and they all gave him clearance to take a vacation with his wife to Mexico in January 2016. It seemed like a great opportunity for them, but two days into that trip he began to fall. He began to show signs that his Lewy body dementia was indeed getting worse. He ended up in a hospital in Puerto Vallarta for 12 days. He received good care there, and eventually their insurance company was able to help them get back to Edmonton. Arriving back in Edmonton, unfortunately, they were caught in the emergency department for a while but were eventually able to move from there into a hospital bed. After evaluation and after having been looked at there, it was determined that he was going to require long-term care.

Now, they faced some challenges there in the system, and I had the chance to meet with Sally and talk through them with her and hear from her directly and to indeed pass her feedback on her experience on to the Minister of Health for consideration. One of the challenges they faced was that indeed they had to make within a number of days a tour of care facilities across the city to evaluate their top choices, to try to find the right place for him, a place where he could stay, where he could receive the care he would need, a place where he would likely spend the remainder of his life. It was incredibly difficult for them. Not only did she and her children have to watch the deterioration of a husband, father, grandfather, but they were also then faced with these challenges of trying to find a place for him to stay and the challenge of having limited information and being put under a good deal of pressure and feeling that they did not have much support in making that decision.

This bill, Madam Chair, provides the opportunity for families to in advance know what is available in the province of Alberta, to know indeed what each of those facilities offers: what type of operator, the facility's capacity, the services that they provide, any

additional charges that might apply, results of any inspections or investigations that might have taken place.

4:10

I know that my colleague consulted considerably on this bill, speaking with Alberta families, speaking with the long-term care facilities themselves, with a number of stakeholder groups to ensure that within the reach of what she was able to within this bill, as a private member, she provided as much substance and indeed action as possible because we recognize, Madam Chair, that not all changes we get to make in this House are major. We don't always get to make the big decisions. A lot of that falls to the hands of the ministers. Frankly, I am deeply appreciative of the work that our Minister of Health has done to advance the number of long-term care beds available in this province. We are well on our way to fulfilling our promise of 2,000 new long-term care beds to support Alberta seniors, Alberta families, because the experience of my constituent is one that is all still far too common. Unfortunately, it is due to years of neglect by previous government who failed to make the investments to put us in a position where we were prepared to offer dignified, appropriate care in community for what we knew was a rapidly aging population.

We are taking every step we can now, Madam Chair, to try to fulfill that backlog, to take responsible action. Indeed, that is the province of the minister, and she is doing that well. But I appreciate that my colleague has done what many private members' bills do, and that is to identify smaller gaps in the system which can be addressed through a private member's bill, which are within our grasp and focused in scope, and that allow us to indeed, sometimes even in just smaller ways, make a difference, to make life better for Albertans.

I'd like to thank my colleague for bringing this forward and see if she has any further thoughts as to how this bill might further address some of the concerns that were brought forward by my constituents.

Thank you.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. member.

Are there any other members wishing to speak to the bill? The hon. Member for Red Deer-North.

Mrs. Schreiner: Thank you, Madam Chair, and I'd like to thank the Member for Edmonton-Centre for his words and for the story that he brought forward. I'd just like to say that in working in long-term care over many years, I've seen so many members of the public walk in looking for those answers, looking to see what the different facilities offered. It was heartbreaking to see seniors come in with their walkers or their wheelchairs. You could tell that some of them were in pain when they walked in with their canes just to find out the answers that could be so easily accessible at home, in the comfort of their own homes. The information that this online website will have is information that is already there. All the operators, operator-owners already have all of the information that will be on the website. It's just a matter of putting it in place and the minister setting it up.

This will make the lives of Albertans and our seniors so much better, and I'm very proud to be able to do that for them. You know, they are the ones that made this country, this province as great as it is today, and just even having something like this put in place that will make life better for them, I am very proud to do.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. member.

Are there any other members wishing to speak to the bill? The hon. Member for Peace River.

Ms Jabbour: Thank you, Madam Chair. I also want to just express my disappointment at the words of the Member for Battle River-Wainwright, who has clearly never had to go through the process, that he would make the comment that this is not a necessary bill or not important. I consider this an extremely important bill, and I'm so grateful to the Member for Red Deer-North for bringing it forward. I think that, in a nutshell, the reason why this bill is so important is because we're not out there looking for a facility; we're out there looking for a home.

I'd like to just share the experience that we went through with my parents, with my dad in particular, to help illustrate just why that is so, so very important. I'll give you a little bit of background and tell you about my dad. My grandparents actually had a homestead on the southeast end of Edmonton. There weren't very many properties out there at the time. There was the refinery and then their farm and a few other farms around there. My dad grew up in that area. He rode his bike. He delivered newspapers. He went over the Beverly Bridge to deliver papers to the north side. He was an integral part of that community right from the time it was growing, from the time that there was nobody there. It was home to him.

After he got married to my mom, they initially lived in what she would always call a shack. I don't remember it. I wasn't there yet, so I don't know what it really was. It was very small. Then he built a trailer. My dad was very good with his hands. He was able to pretty much do anything, fix anything, build anything, so he built a trailer. By the time I came along, that's where I grew up. My first early years were in this trailer. Of course, after my brother and then my other sister and my younger brother were born, we needed some place bigger, so my dad then built a house. Again he did this himself, with help from members of the family who were in construction. It was important to him. This was his home. He invested his own blood, sweat, and tears into building this home. And that's where we grew up. We spent all our time and my grandkids spent their young years in this home and just loved it.

When the time came that my mom had terminal cancer, she tried to stay at home as long as she could. My dad took care of her until finally she knew that there were only a few more days left. The process of getting her into hospice was complicated, but it was relatively straightforward. There was support, and there was help.

Once she was gone, my dad tried to stay on his own in this home that he had built. He succeeded for a little while. I was already living up in High Level, so a lot of the bulk of having to take care of all kinds of things like this fell to my sister. He managed for a while. We got in home care for a while. We had somebody actually come and live in, and then later on we found out that a number of his credit cards were missing and a few valuable items, so that one didn't turn out so well. He'd tried really hard. We tried to support him. We wanted very much for him to be able to live out his days in his home. But the time came when he had a fall, and he ended up in the hospital. There we were faced with suddenly having to make a really quick decision on what was going to happen.

I think that we already sort of knew that the time was going to come, so my sister had been doing some research and having discussions with him about what his alternatives might be. She sort of had a sense of where he wanted to go, but my dad was fiercely independent, of course, and he didn't want to have to be anywhere where he'd have to rely on people to do things for him. It was important that he was able to be independent in the decision-making. But when we went, my sister and I, and started to look online and tried to see what was there, yeah, there was a list, but it really didn't help much. It didn't give us all of the details. It didn't tell us what was in this particular facility that would truly make it a home, a place where my dad would be well taken care of, where we could be confident and know, when I'm up in High Level, far away,

that he would be safe and be taken care of and be treated with dignity in his home. Those kinds of details weren't in the website list that we found, and they only covered certain facilities. They didn't cover everything that was out there.

In our searching around, we discovered that there were some smaller I guess you'd call them private facilities, that were almost like a home. There were maybe five or six residents only that lived there. Then it ran the whole gamut, from larger facilities to small. To have had a centralized registry, where all of these things were in one place, where we could have gone and said, "Okay; we can compare this; we can see what this is like, where it's at, how this one compares to the other one," would have been so helpful, and how much I wish this bill would have passed a couple of years ago.

I'll take a step back just to explain how traumatizing it is for families. When we had to pack up my dad's house, I wept all the time. My sister kept looking at me and saying: "Why are you crying? He's not dying." But, for me, it was a form of death. We were leaving the home that we had grown up in. It was such an integral part of our family. So it was important that we be supported through that process and not be traumatized further by struggling to find a place and not knowing where was going to be a good place for my dad to call home. That's what families are facing. We need to make that decision as easy and as smooth as possible for them. That's how we make their lives better.

4:20

But even once we chose the place – and he eventually did end up in a facility that was pretty good – there were problems. You know, they had difficulties with staff. It was one of the better facilities in the city, but he told me some real horror stories. I'll tell you just one because it just blew me away. The cleaning lady would come in. She'd put on her gloves, and she would go around and clean the toilet, clean the bathroom. His roommate was very sick and was coughing all the time. She'd go clean up his bed. Then she'd come with her gloves and pick up his water glass at the edge of the rim, wipe the table underneath, and put his water glass back down. My dad, of course, got around that by drinking out of a straw. But he was terrified to say anything. I said: "Dad, why don't you complain? Why don't you bring this up?" He said, "No, because then I'm afraid they'll treat me badly or that something negative will happen." So he would not speak up when these kinds of things happened. Had there been a family council available, at least maybe he would have had the confidence to know that he could say something safely.

If these things were online, if the reviews of facilities were online, at least residents and people like my dad would be able to go and say: "Okay. There are some negatives here, but I'm free to speak up. I can have the confidence that if I say something, I'm not going to be punished, because it's going to be out there. It's public." It protects people. It's really, really important as a way to empower the people that are living there. I think this bill is incredibly, incredibly important.

I envision what this might look like. The other day I was looking to buy property on a real estate website, and I was blown away. I hadn't looked for property for years and years. This website had everything. You go on there, and you can tour the house. You can see the vicinity. You can see the neighbourhood, a 360-degree view. You can see what's close by. You know, it's an amazing thing. If we can have that for real estate, to purchase a home, why can we not have something like this for the home for us at the end of our lives? It's a no-brainer as far as I'm concerned.

I do want to just comment a little bit about – this was our personal experience with my dad, but in my constituency, being a rural constituency, some of these decisions are even more difficult. The

residents up there don't have as many options. Sometimes they are faced with having to go a long way from home to find a place to stay, so it's even more important that they have some kind of facility to be able to look at and say: "This is how I can compare this place to this place. This is where I'd like to be. This is where I want to have the last years of my life." It's incredibly important for rural residents as well to have this.

I did want to comment a little bit about how, you know, we are playing catch-up, absolutely. Up in High Level we're thrilled because, finally, we're going to have a seniors' facility. After years and years and years of the previous government promising and promising and then just making the announcement and then never ever coming through, finally we're going to be breaking ground next month in High Level, and people are so excited.

Fort Vermilion is working on a facility for them, but they're planning now because the need is growing, and they know they're going to need it in a few more years. This is part of good planning. We are planning right now to have this registry so that as we finally catch up and have the number of facilities that we actually need to meet the needs of our seniors, then this will already be in place, and people can make informed choices about the home that they're going to go and live in.

I think this is absolutely essential, and I really, really appreciate the hon. Member for Red Deer-North for doing this. I really look forward to seeing it implemented. Hopefully, it'll be very soon. One day my kids are going to be looking for a place for me, so I'm hoping it'll all be there.

Thank you very much.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. member.

Are there any other members wishing to speak to the bill? The hon. Member for Bonnyville-Cold Lake.

Mr. Cyr: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes. I was interrupted in my last speech, so I'm just going to continue on from where I was there. I was talking about Mr. Cohen. What he was saying was that he went through a lot of process to find out if the information that was given to him by the government was accurate, and at the end here what he says is, "I felt pressured, there is no question about it, in trying to make a decision."

What we've got here is that it's important that we choose a facility for our loved ones, but it has to be the right facility. We need to make sure we have the right information sitting in front of us to be able to at least give us a place to start. In this case here Mr. Cohen goes in and says that he was told that he had three institutions that he could pick from a short list, if you will. Then what would happen is that they would more or less choose where his mother was going from there. Clearly, that's not a good way of finding a place for your loved ones. I think it's important here to be clear that we respect our seniors, who have worked and built this incredible province we all live in and enjoy, that they are taken seriously and given the dignity that they deserve. What we've got here is that he went through a lot, actually. This is actually quite a lengthy article.

To bring up one point that is important in this article, it's that this actually is something that appeals to the Conservative in me. In this article – and I don't know if it's the same in Alberta, but I have to suspect that it's fairly constant – it says:

One day in a hospital costs \$1,000; one day in LTC . . .

That's a long-term care unit.

. . . costs \$130; and a day of home care or community care costs \$55.

The auditor . . .

That's the Auditor General of the province.

. . . said that by freeing up beds occupied by patients waiting for [long-term care], there would be more available for other patients, including those coming in through the ER, where [wait times] can be long.

What it's saying here is that finding people the appropriate place to be able to reside actually saves the government money, significant amounts of money if we can get them out of the hospitals. That is actually one of the things that attracts me to this bill, I have to say. It brings dignity to our seniors and saves money. How can you go wrong with a bill that's going along that road?

Now, unfortunately, I do have some criticism but not regarding this bill. More or less, I have the 2017 government of Alberta's 2016-2017 Health annual report. On page 28 of the report are performance measures and indicators, performance measure 1(a), which is "Access to continuing care: Percentage of clients placed in continuing care within 30 days of being assessed." Now, what we've got here is a bar graph. In 2012-2013 it was at 67 per cent. What happens is that that slowly degrades over time. What we've got is that for '16-17 it is sitting at about 56 per cent, so we're showing that we're holding more seniors within our hospitals for longer periods of time.

Now, the government, to their credit, is saying that we want to at least bring it up to 62 per cent from the existing 56 per cent, but clearly they need better ideas on how to get our seniors out of the hospitals into more comfortable atmospheres that they actually would want to live in, what I would want to live in. I'm waiting patiently to find out when the next Health annual report comes out because I'm curious if they actually met this target or if it went down. I speculate here that we probably haven't seen a lot of change there, and that is problematic.

The Member for Red Deer-North at least is actually trying and has a concrete plan to possibly bring down the wait times, and I think that's something that she should get some important recognition for. When we see that this trend is actually happening right now, when you've got ideas that more or less cost almost nothing to implement, it just makes sense.

To go on in this report, under Results Analysis:

A number of factors have contributed to this year's lower than targeted result, including an ongoing need for capacity expansion due to an aging population as well as some unanticipated continuing care capacity and facility issues that arose in 2016-17. These challenges have driven longer waits and higher waitlists for placement into continuing care living options.

4:30

Right now what we've got, more or less, is no list. We don't know which facilities are currently needing some potential help from the government because we don't have a complete list. This is one thing that is obviously problematic. Whenever you see the government bring forward a performance measure that says that they're going to get better but they don't actually seem to have any real plan on how to do that, that's troublesome.

Now, I do understand that the government always wants to protect our seniors, and I would give this government that same reasonable expectation that they're trying to do that as well. When I see these performance measures at 62 per cent, I think we can do a lot better and I would hope that we do a lot better because in the end we're trying to save money when it comes to trying to get people out and into more comfortable positions.

To finish up here, I think that this bill has some real valuable parts in it, and I do look forward to seeing it implemented. Again, I want to thank the Member for Red Deer-North for putting forward this bill.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. member.

Are there any other members wishing to speak to the bill? The hon. Member for Sherwood Park.

Ms McKittrick: Thank you. I'm delighted to speak to this bill. I wanted to start off first by expressing my disappointment in the remarks that were made earlier today but especially by reading this other thing that I read on Twitter recently where members of the UCP or their allies were commenting on the background of MLAs in this House. I have to say that I am very proud to be here as an MLA with at least three MLAs on our side who've actually worked in long-term care, and I think we're really representing . . .

The Deputy Chair: Hon. member, sorry to interrupt. Are you speaking to the bill?

Ms McKittrick: I am. I'm addressing the expertise . . .

The Deputy Chair: Okay. Please go ahead.

Ms McKittrick: . . . of MLAs to be able to speak to this bill.

We actually have MLAs on this side of the House – I don't know about the opposite side – who've actually worked in long-term care and who really understand thoroughly the issues around long-term care and the dilemmas that elderly people and their families face. I am very confident that the bill that the MLA for Red Deer-North has proposed really meets the needs of those seniors that we've been talking about all afternoon.

I'm really thankful to her because she has acknowledged that this is something that she's worked on for many years and that she learned from experience in working in these places. I have never worked in a long-term care hospital. I haven't worked with elderly people very much, but I also know that the work that happens by the staff requires someone to be not only caring but also to be involved in doing a lot of things that are not always the most pleasant. You really have to work with elderly people and make sure that they're fed, that they have proper hygiene, and that their emotional, spiritual, and physical comforts are met.

I think this bill comes from some very powerful experiences. It comes from the experience of someone who has experienced first-hand what it means to be either a patient or a family member in these facilities. I wanted to thank her, and I wanted us to be reminded that in this House our private members' bills and the things that we're passionate about come from our own experiences and the lives that we've led and the expertise we have by doing that. So I wanted to start off by saying that.

I did a little bit of research, like most of the members, and I realized that I could not find any place where I would find the whole list of available facilities in the Edmonton area, because I happened to be the MLA for Sherwood Park, that included the name of the facility; the website; if it was private, public, or not-for-profit; who had the ownership – was the ownership local if it was private, or was it a multinational? – and the kind of staff that you had and the staff ratio and the quality; and especially the cost of the extra services that are provided or what will be the costs, because all of the time it says to you: well, you need to contact the facilities, and then the costs will become apparent.

Last weekend – the MLA for Strathcona-Sherwood Park was with me – we went to visit a seniors' facility. In talking with one of the seniors, the first thing she said to me: you know, I really, really like this place, but I don't know if I can afford it for a very long time. She said: my children put me in this place, but it's very, very expensive. This really was a great reminder to me that if I was going to put any elderly relatives into long-term care, I would really need to make sure that I knew the costs, especially the costs of extra

services, and that I would have to evaluate carefully what the costs are over the long term.

I think that probably the year after I was elected, an elderly gentleman came to visit me in my office, and he begged me to go visit his wife in one of these long-term care places in Sherwood Park. He had to pay over \$1,200 a month so that his wife would be fed. She had dementia. She could no longer feed herself, and if he was going to have somebody feed her three times a day, he had to pay for that service. Of course, his budget had not accounted for it. So the gentleman every single day prepared food for his wife that she liked and went every single mealtime to feed her because he could not afford the cost of having somebody else feed his wife. I went with him, and I visited him as he fed his wife. It was a very moving experience for me not only because this gentleman obviously cared for his wife deeply but because when his wife had to go to this place, nobody had told him that if her dementia got progressively worse, then he would be on the hook for paying to have her fed.

So I'm very concerned about these issues.

I'm also very concerned about the fact that couples are often split. If I was putting a couple in a facility, I would want to know: what are the policies for these couples in the facility? What is going to happen when they do require two levels of care? Will the facility split them up? Do they have arrangements? Do they have any special policies that will allow elderly couples to be together? I think that as MLAs we've all heard of the really sad stories when an elderly couple is separated. I recently dealt with one of those cases, that I'm still working on to see if something can be done.

What I would like to ask the Member for Red Deer-North – I have actually, really, two questions because none of my research on the Internet has allowed me to know the answers. I'm really hoping that the bill will provide these answers to me. My two main questions that I'm hoping this bill will cover are: in your research have you found a website that has all of these long-term care facilities that are available in one place with all of the information that we're talking about? Then my second question is – I'm particularly interested in this – is there any place that you've found where the additional charges to the families or to the patient are outlined? I think that, for me, too, one of the questions that I'm really wondering about: on a website is there any place where the level of the staff, the training of the staff, the number of staff, staff ratio are and also what's available 24 hours, what's available only at night, and what's available during the day?

Thank you.

4:40

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. member.

Are there any other members wishing to speak? The hon. Member for Red Deer-North.

Mrs. Schreiner: Well, thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you to the Member for Sherwood Park. I appreciate very much your comments and your questions.

I have a very easy answer to your question. Is there a website available right now with all of that important information that seniors and their loved ones are looking for when they want to put a loved one in a long-term care facility? Absolutely not. That's why we're bringing this bill forward. That's why this bill needs to actually be a bill, because that information is not available right now. There are different websites that offer piecemeal information, but there's not a website with all of the facilities, the over 170 facilities that we have in Alberta in over 100 communities. There is not a website that has all of those facilities entered and what services they offer and what those sites look like, how many beds,

whether they're accredited. So to answer your question, no, there is not a website.

The additional charges. There are a few jurisdictions across the country that have additional charges online, but this is something that we need to have in Alberta as well so that when a loved one is going into long-term care, we know exactly how much money it's going to cost them to live there month to month, whether there's an additional charge, like you were saying, to take someone to the dining room, whether there's an additional charge for foot care or an additional charge for the beauty salon, what all those additional charges are. I hear over and over and over again from my constituents that they were shocked to see a bill at the end of the month with these additional charges that they were not informed about and had no idea about.

I thank you very much for bringing those concerns forward, and you're absolutely right. There is nothing right now, and this is what we're trying to do with this bill, to have that easily accessible online website that has all the information that seniors are looking for, including additional charges and how many beds the facility has.

Thank you.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. member.

Are there any other members wishing to speak to the bill? The hon. Member for Sherwood Park.

Ms McKittrick: Yeah. Thank you for your answer, but you didn't really address the whole issue of staff qualification. I think this is an issue that loved ones really want to know about, the qualification of the staff, who they're supervised by. And some other questions have also come to my attention. Is there a doctor that visits? Do you have to have your own doctor? So what other information do you think is not currently available in one place that, from your own experience, would really benefit ourselves as possible people who will be in long-term care or family members?

Thank you.

The Deputy Chair: The hon. Member for Red Deer-North.

Mrs. Schreiner: Well, thank you to the Member for Sherwood Park for asking that question. You're absolutely right. This is something that's important to seniors and their loved ones. When they're looking to place someone into long-term care, they want to know if there will be doctors' visits in the facility. They want to know if there's a registered nurse there in the facility 24/7. They want to know if there are licensed practical nurses and health care aides to make sure that their loved ones are getting all of their needs met as well as if there is a dietary professional to be able to assess their loved ones. Will there be recreation therapy that will, you know, help keep their loved ones happy? They want to know what the staff ratios are. This is something that is absolutely very important.

I know that this bill will enable to have that information online so people can look to see that, yes, there's a registered nurse that's there 24/7; yes, the doctors come and visit at least once a week and do their doctor's report. It's very important information. Whether or not there's a dentist that comes to the facility to look after their loved ones, whether there's a wound care specialist, nurse practitioners: all that information will be right there readily accessible on that online website, a very important website.

Thank you. Thank you for the question.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. member.

Are there any other members wishing to speak to the bill? The hon. Member for Edmonton-McClung.

Mr. Dach: Thank you, Madam Chair. I am pleased to rise today to speak briefly on the matter before us. I wanted to make it known to the House that it's not only family members who are faced with counselling a couple or an individual who may be going into long-term care. It's also a number of professionals who really are placed in a position of trust and need to give good counsel and good guidance to individuals who, for reasons usually due to health or age, find themselves with increasing difficulty staying in their own home, whether it be rented or owned.

My personal experience, of course, typically, over the past 30 years, as a real estate agent formerly, has been to assist families who owned their properties with making the decision about where to go when they were no longer able to function properly in their existing property. That is something that I, of course, willingly agreed to do, and I said, "Yes, I can help you with that," not knowing exactly how big a job I was undertaking. When I first offered to help families which were facing a family member going into long-term care and were wanting to list and sell their property, doing a bit of research, I found it was a wide open minefield and not something that was easily undertaken. So I'm really, really glad to see that this website is going to be available online for professionals in the real estate world, who are now able to go online much more easily to find out reliably what options exist for their clients.

I guess others have already asked this question. I mean, I think this is self-evident. This website exists because of need. I for one would have really been grateful to have seen this much earlier than it has come forward, and I'm happy to see it now.

Thank you.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. member.

Are there any other members wishing to speak to the bill?

Seeing none, I will call the question.

[The clauses of Bill 203 agreed to]

[Title and preamble agreed to]

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

[The voice vote indicated that the request to report Bill 203 carried]

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 4:49 p.m.]

[Fifteen minutes having elapsed, the committee divided]

[Ms Sweet in the chair]

For the motion:

Anderson, S.	Gray	Panda
Barnes	Hinkley	Piquette
Bilous	Hoffman	Renaud
Carlier	Jabbour	Sabir
Ceci	Jansen	Schmidt
Clark	Kazim	Schneider
Connolly	Kenney	Schreiner
Coolahan	Kleinstaub	Shepherd
Cortes-Vargas	Littlewood	Smith
Cyr	Malkinson	Sucha
Dach	McCuaig-Boyd	Swann
Dang	McKittrick	Taylor
Drever	McLean	Turner
Eggen	Miller	van Dijken
Ellis	Miranda	Westhead
Ganley	Nielsen	Woollard
Gill	Nixon	Yao
Gotfried	Orr	

Totals: For – 53 Against – 0

[Request to report Bill 203 carried unanimously]

The Deputy Chair: The hon. Deputy Government House Leader.

Ms Ganley: Thank you, Madam Chair. I move that the committee rise and report.

[Motion carried]

[Ms Sweet in the chair]

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

Mr. Sucha: Thank you, Madam Speaker. The Committee of the Whole has had under consideration a certain bill. The committee reports the following bill: Bill 203.

The Acting Speaker: Does the Assembly concur with the report? All in favour, please say aye.

Hon. Members: Aye.

The Acting Speaker: Opposed? Ordered.

Motions Other than Government Motions

The Acting Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Official Opposition.

Upstream and Downstream Emissions

505. Mr. Kenney moved:

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to immediately demand that the government of Canada introduce any necessary legislative changes that would prohibit the consideration of upstream and downstream emissions by a federal energy regulator at any stage of the pipeline approval process.

Mr. Kenney: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am pleased to rise in support of my own motion, Motion 505. Let me begin by offering some historical context. In the history of our federation it was not clear in 1867 that provinces had regulatory authority or indeed ownership of subterranean, subsurface resources because this was not an active issue in 1867. But in the 20th century provinces began to realize that they had vast wealth to be developed in mines with heavy metals plus oil and gas. This was clearly the case here in Alberta. Our provincial government in the 1920s succeeded in establishing that by getting an amendment to the Constitution Act recognizing provincial ownership of subsurface natural resources.

[The Deputy Speaker in the chair]

However, the federal government did not surrender a putative claim of regulatory authority over provincial resources later in our history. This is what led to the national energy program, the infamous design of former Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau, which sought effectively to micromanage Alberta's oil and gas sector from Ottawa and which, of course, led to a catastrophic failure of that industry, leading to what until recently has been the longest and deepest recession in Alberta history, in the early 1980s.

This is precisely why the late, great Premier Peter Lougheed brought forward the original version of Bill 12, which this Legislature has recently adopted. This is why he brought forward the legislative tools to allow the Alberta government to stop the shipment of oil to central Canada at that time in order to send a message to a different Trudeau federal Liberal government that

Alberta would use every tool at its disposal to defend our resources, our wealth, our economy, and our way of life. He used the threat of turning off the taps in order to force the federal government to the negotiating table, which occurred throughout the negotiations on repatriation of the Constitution, the British North America Act, in 1981.

5:10

In those negotiations, because of his threat, Premier Lougheed managed to secure a new section in the Constitution Act, under section 92A, under the delineation of federal and provincial powers, so that it now reads and has read for the last 36 years:

(1) In each province, the legislature may exclusively . . .

Key word: "exclusively."

. . . make laws in relation to . . .

(b) development, conservation and management of non-renewable natural resources.

Let me just recap that for the sake of clarity, Madam Speaker. Since 1982, thanks to Peter Lougheed's threat to turn off the taps, we have established in the Constitution that this Legislature has not shared but exclusive jurisdictional authority to make laws in relation to the development, conservation, and management of nonrenewable natural resources. That's a critically important historic gain by an Alberta government. Frankly, this is something that provincial governments had fought for for decades and failed to obtain until Peter Lougheed was willing to go to the wall, with the support of this Legislature, 38 years ago.

So, Madam Speaker, the clock moves forward to 2017. Now we have another Trudeau Liberal government in Ottawa that decides it's going to ignore the Constitution. More than that, they've decided that they will not just ignore it; they will violate the black-and-white meaning of section 92A(1)(b) of the Constitution Act. They will disregard this historic, hard-fought strategic victory for this province to manage the resources that belong not to Ottawa but to the people of Alberta, these resources that fuel so much of our prosperity, our quality of life, our social programs, our public finances.

How did they do so, Madam Speaker? Well, the Trudeau government in its unbalanced zeal, a government with a Prime Minister whose principal secretary, Gerald Butts, once said that he does not want any pipelines, any alternative pipelines, that he wants an alternative economy with zero hydrocarbons, a government led by a Prime Minister who has said that he wants to phase out the oil sands, a government that vetoed the Northern Gateway pipeline, a government that surrendered to Barack Obama's veto of Keystone XL – both of those pipelines, by the way, opposed inexplicably by the Alberta New Democrat Party.

Then it came to Energy East. Now, Madam Speaker, Energy East was a proposal made by a great Alberta company, TransCanada PipeLines, several years ago, and it was really the achievement of a new national dream. We often speak about the Canadian Pacific Railway, that bound Canada together with ties of iron from the Atlantic coast to the Pacific coast. It was the condition precedent of Confederation, of British Columbia joining the federation, of Canada maintaining sovereignty over what was then the North-West Territories. Without that railway, Alberta could very well have ended up like the rest of Canada's northwest, having become part of America's expansionism, of manifest destiny. That was the national dream of the 19th century. Many of us have shared a national dream in the 20th century of a country that shares its resources, its wealth, and its energy so that we could displace our dependence on foreign oil imports from some of the world's worst regimes.

TransCanada was prepared, with good partners like Irving Oil in New Brunswick, to make this dream a reality by reversing a series of long-existing pipelines and building additional infrastructure to allow us to effectively ship Alberta heavy crude to Canada's east coast, to refineries in New Brunswick and in Montreal and in Quebec City, to effectively displace the billions of dollars of foreign oil imported by our fellow Canadians. It was a great proposal. It was a \$15.7 billion proposed capital investment that would have increased our capacity to ship Canadian oil by 1.1 million barrels per day, which is about a third of our total current production. It would have also allowed not just for the displacement of energy imports but for Canada to become a net exporter, a major exporter, to substantially reduce the price discount, which is currently costing us \$40 million a day.

But, Madam Speaker, something happened. Something happened called the Trudeau Liberal government, which, since coming to office in the fall of 2015, was determined to do everything it could to damage Canada's energy sector. As I mentioned, they vetoed the Northern Gateway pipeline. Our Premier admitted in question period two weeks ago that her close ally Justin Trudeau did so at the invitation of the Alberta government, that said: we were only looking for one coastal pipeline. It killed Northern Gateway.

Then the Trudeau government instructed the notionally independent, quasi-judicial regulator the National Energy Board to get into the business of assessing up- and downstream carbon emissions notionally associated with proposed new pipeline projects. The National Energy Board clarified this in black and white in their letter to TransCanada on the Energy East proposal on August 23, 2017, in which the NEB said:

Given increasing public interest in GHG emissions . . . That's greenhouse gas emissions.

. . . together with increasing governmental actions and commitments (including the federal government's stated interest in assessing upstream GHG emissions associated with major pipelines), the Board is of the view that it should also consider indirect GHG emissions in its NEB Act public interest determination for each of the Projects [associated with Energy East].

I have the letter right here, Madam Speaker. This was the death knell of Energy East. This is why we are now just three days away from the potential cancellation of the last remaining coastal pipeline project. The NEB, black on white, told TransCanada PipeLines that "the federal government's stated interest in assessing upstream GHG emissions associated with major pipelines" means that the board will now consider "indirect . . . emissions in its NEB Act public interest determination for each of the Projects" associated with Energy East.

Well, it only took two weeks before TransCanada responded. They issued a statement on September 7 of last year saying that they were pausing the project subject to further review "due to the significant changes to the regulatory process introduced by the [National Energy Board]" on August 23. Of course, as we know, TransCanada went on later, in October of last year, to cancel the project. Lest there's any doubt, there's a direct line: Trudeau government commitment to get into the regulation of GHG emissions on pipelines; the NEB telling TransCanada that they are following their orders getting into the regulation of even indirect emissions on pipeline projects, including Energy East; TransCanada hitting the pause button because of the regulatory uncertainty created by this decision; TransCanada cancelling Energy East and, with it, a \$16 billion project and the dream of energy independence.

5:20

Now, why do I walk through that so deliberately? Because for some inexplicable reason our Premier, a very capable, intelligent, and committed person, I believe has been misbriefed by – I don't know – somebody, by her office, her officials because repeatedly she has misstated the facts, I'm sure in good faith, Madam Speaker. She said in response to a question from me on March 12 in this place that "the outcome with respect to Energy East had nothing to do with the NEB decision."

She further said, under questioning from me at Executive Council estimates on April 18, that "I think it's really important to put that on the record, that Energy East was never meant to be covered – and it was very clear that it was never meant to be covered – by the proposed policy changes that the NEB voted." So our Premier does not understand the simple, undeniable, factual record about what happened here.

Now, Madam Speaker, I have asked – in fact, we have put forward requests on multiple occasions – for unanimous consent for consideration of motions calling on the government of Canada to amend the National Energy Board Act to respect section 92A of the Constitution Act and our exclusive jurisdiction over the regulation of the production of oil and gas by precluding the NEB or its successor agency, the environmental impact assessment agency, from intruding in our jurisdiction.

Now, Madam Speaker, when the NEB talks about considering indirect GHG emissions, upstream and downstream emissions, in a pipeline application, let's break this down. Upstream emissions are emissions – first of all, a pipeline itself produces virtually no emissions. A pipeline ships energy. There are trace elements of emissions, much lower, by the way, than emissions generated, for example, by train cars, according to two exhaustive studies done by the United States State Department under the leadership of former secretary Hillary Clinton. So pipelines themselves are not a significant contributor to GHG emissions.

But the board wasn't saying that they were going to consider the pipeline's emissions but indirect emissions, by which they meant that every barrel of Alberta crude that might end up being shipped by that pipeline from Hardisty to Saint John should be taken into consideration in terms of the GHG emissions associated with its production in Alberta. In Alberta. But, Madam Speaker, I quoted the Constitution, which says:

- (1) In each province, the legislature may exclusively make laws in relation to . . .
- (b) development, conservation and management of non-renewable natural resources.

Oil, bitumen, is a nonrenewable natural resource. Its development, environmental conservation, environmental and resource management, obviously, includes any regulation with respect to emissions. So this decision by the National Energy Board was a gross and obvious violation of our province's jurisdiction.

Now, we've been trying to get the government's – I really, you know, with respect to my colleagues opposite, don't imagine that there's any ideological, or there should not be, or any deep policy difference between my party and theirs, between the opposition and the government on this. I can't imagine that. Obviously, we have honest disagreements on a number of issues. I can't imagine why this would be one of them, Madam Speaker. I can't honestly imagine why this government would be indifferent to or indeed, at worst, invite the federal government to intrude into this Legislature's exclusive constitutional jurisdiction on the production, conservation, development, and management of our bitumen, of our oil and gas. So I would ask them honestly to maybe

just go back and check the record. Maybe they just haven't followed the track here on what the National Energy Board did.

Maybe I'm wrong, Madam Speaker. Maybe I'm wrong, and they can prove me wrong and debate on this. But maybe the documentary record and I are correct, and maybe TransCanada was correct in the way it read the threat created by the NEB.

Donald Savoie is considered the leading academic scholar on public administration in Canada, de l'Université du New Brunswick à Moncton, and he said:

Politics, not market conditions, killed the Energy East pipeline. If government and regulatory agencies drag the puck long enough and if they keep changing the rules of the game and adding new requirements along the way, market conditions will surely kick in. The Energy East initiative is a case in point. Not only was the approval process changed . . .

on up- and downstream emissions

. . . and requirements added, [but] it was done so retroactively.

Dennis McConaghy, former TransCanada senior executive, said that we have an utterly dysfunctional regulatory system for projects like this; the company had spent billions of dollars, and the hearing process hadn't even started when this was killed.

The Canadian Energy Pipeline Association also confirms my understanding of the documentary record.

Madam Speaker, as I begin to wrap up, this motion is an opportunity for Albertans to speak with one voice in defence of our hard-fought exclusive constitutional jurisdiction to be the masters of our resources. If we choose to do so in co-operation with the dominion government, that is our choice, not Ottawa's choice.

Madam Speaker, in closing, it's not only a question of upstream emissions about which I am particularly concerned but also the downstream emissions because I'll tell you this much. The oil tankers coming in from Venezuela, Nigeria, Iran, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia are not regulated for their GHG emissions, direct or indirect. The cement factory that the Quebec government built recently with half a billion dollars of subsidies and loan guarantees, that was exempted from environmental review, produces 2 million tonnes of GHG emissions. Bombardier, associated with that cement factory, the same ownership, is not limited based on its GHG emissions.

Madam Speaker, if we as a province are going to be the engine of Canada's prosperity, then we need to be able to develop these resources without a federal government violating our constitutional jurisdiction to do so.

The Deputy Speaker: Any other members wishing to speak? The hon. Minister of Energy.

Ms McCuaig-Boyd: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I'm pleased to rise today to speak to Motion 505. You know, I'm pleased to see the opposition finally engaging in a debate that we've been having with the government of Canada for well over a year, starting with a letter and a technical submission from my department in March 2017, a debate that's carried on through a number of subsequent submissions, including a letter last June, a second letter in August, and a letter last October. Copies of all these letters, by the way, were tabled in this Legislature on October 30 last year.

Madam Speaker, we would love nothing more than a unanimous motion from this Assembly on Alberta's position on this issue provided it was based in fact. That's why we proposed to the opposition an amendment which more accurately reflects the work our government has done on Bill C-69. That motion as amended would have read as follows:

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to immediately demand that the government of Canada introduce any necessary legislative changes that would prohibit the consideration of downstream emissions by a federal energy

regulator at any stage of the pipeline process and recognize Alberta's climate leadership plan, including a legislated oil sands emissions limit, as sufficient for evaluating upstream emissions.

Unfortunately, they've chosen to pass on the opportunity for a unanimous, fact-based statement from this Legislature on Alberta's position on Bill C-69 in favour of their usual brand of political theatre.

Madam Speaker, we've been clear all along that we do not need federal government regulation on upstream emissions. That is because Alberta's climate leadership plan, which includes a hard cap on oil sands emissions, is sufficient to meet this need. That plan effectively delinks pipelines from increased greenhouse emissions.

Madam Speaker, if the members opposite aren't prepared to present a clear position to the government of Canada based on the facts of the matter, then they leave us no choice. We would have supported the motion as we proposed to amend it, but we cannot support the motion in this form. It's not factual, it's not useful, and it adds no value to this important national conversation. So I will be voting no to this motion, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Thank you.

5:30

Mr. van Dijken: Madam Speaker, I stand to speak in favour of Motion 505, and I want to thank the hon. Leader of the Official Opposition, the Member for Calgary-Lougheed, for bringing the motion forward. The motion reads:

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to immediately demand that the government of Canada introduce any necessary legislative changes that would prohibit the consideration of upstream and downstream emissions by a federal energy regulator at any stage of the pipeline approval process.

It appears to be very clear to me that the motion that's being put forward is to recognize that the government of Canada has been interfering with some of the provincial jurisdictions that we have protecting provinces with regard to regulatory approval and so on with their resources. The Minister of Energy might claim that this motion is not factually accurate, but I would suggest that it is very clear to me that it is accurate and can be moved upon without any delay.

It does concern me, Madam Speaker, that we seem to see that unity in Canada takes a nosedive any time we see the Liberals and especially a Trudeau take power in Ottawa. They always seem to find some crevice of national discord to try and wedge open and fan the flames that erupt and then act like heroes when they try to solve the crisis. It is really easy to do when you disrespect the Constitution and when the federal government goes playing around in the domain of the provinces in sections 92 and 92A.

Former Premier Lougheed fought to stand up for our province and our energy industry by securing section 92A of the Constitution, and we must do the same. It is plain to see that the federal Liberal government remains unwilling to stand up for our energy industry beyond empty platitudes. It's time for the NDP to stand up for Albertans, not to stand up alongside their federal Liberal allies.

By their deeds you shall know them, and under the federal Liberal government's watch the much-needed \$15.7 billion job-creating Energy East project was scrapped following an outrageous mid-review mandate expansion from the federal regulatory agency. This should be very troubling to anyone in Canada, where we have politics getting in the way of due diligence and proper regulatory oversight.

I would suggest that some of the quotes that we have heard from industry are very accurate on the concerns with regard to the past and the regulatory changes with upstream and downstream

emissions and also going forward with Bill C-69. To quote TransCanada, the Energy East project was scrapped “due to the significant changes to the regulatory process introduced by the [National Energy Board].” That’s a quote from September 7, 2017. Yes, Ottawa imposed upstream emissions tests and got playing around in provincial regulatory domain.

Dennis McConaghy, a former TransCanada executive, said that we have an utterly dysfunctional regulatory system for projects like this; the company had spent a billion dollars, and the hearing process hadn’t even started. That’s in the *Globe and Mail*, October 10, 2017.

What’s troubling, Madam Speaker, is: where was the NDP in fighting this invasion into provincial jurisdictions by the federal government? Is that the sound of crickets chirping? Where were they? Do you know how angry the cancellation of Energy East made the industry? The cancellation of Energy East made the Irving family of New Brunswick very angry. The Irvings got so angry that their newspaper, the New Brunswick *Telegraph-Journal*, ran a column, written by our very own Member for Calgary-Foothills, excoriating the latest plea for help for Bombardier by Premier Couillard of Quebec while the Montreal elite chose to stick a fork in Energy East.

Changing the rules mid-game is not the only thing the federal Liberals are doing. The federal Liberal government’s new approvals process, Bill C-69, the impact assessment act, as I referred to earlier, continues down the same troubling action. According to June Warren-Nickle’s 2018 oil and gas industry outlook survey 62 per cent say that the NEB modernization, Bill C-69, will limit new projects. Bill C-69 is a disaster for the Alberta energy sector, let alone the Canadian energy sector. Again, the NDP government sits here and mouths platitudes.

Madam Speaker, meanwhile the world wants more oil. All of these climate change do-good policies do not change the fact that demand for oil will continue for the foreseeable future. It will continue to rise, and someone has to supply it. We have a perfectly legal commodity that is in high demand around the world, and here we are putting in regulatory reviews and accepting product from outside of our country into our country that does not have to even undergo the same reviews that our own domestic production has to go through. Utterly irresponsible, in my opinion. Canada is being the proverbial Boy Scout by trying to shut down our own production not necessarily in order to allow but in allowing products coming from dictators in the Middle East, from Vladimir Putin’s Russia, from frackers in Texas, North Dakota, from all around the world, allowing that to supply the world’s petroleum needs.

According to the International Energy Agency the global oil demand growth for 2018 will be 1.4 million barrels per day. That’s oil demand growth for 2018, 1.4 million barrels per day. That’s huge growth, and it continues to grow. We need to recognize that we have the product available that can supply that demand. If we don’t supply it, somebody else will. The most environmentally friendly produced oil is produced right here in our backyard. The Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain expansion pipeline could solve half of that demand. Energy East could have solved 79 per cent of that demand. These are projects that, in my opinion, the federal government has made a mess of, and our provincial government has not stood up and ensured that our industry is being heard and that they’re being fairly represented.

Madam Speaker, the words of Peter Lougheed, the late Premier of Alberta, come to mind: the Ottawa government has without negotiation, without agreement simply walked into our home and occupied the living room. Quebec doesn’t put up with that. Alberta used to not put up with that. But the NDP just rolled over and let

Ottawa mess around in our jurisdiction. It’s as if the thieves have broken in, and the owners, not knowing any better, have welcomed them in with beer and munchies and have started a party. Meanwhile no one sees the big screen TV and grandmother’s jewellery going out the front door.

But it gets better yet, Madam Speaker. You see, because of the confusion and dissension sown, we now have two sets of regulations coming in to reduce methane emissions, one federal, one provincial. It continues to get skewed. It continues to get messed up. Industry doesn’t know who to follow anymore. Ottawa? Alberta? Neither? Or both? We need to recognize that when the federal government starts getting involved in what would be considered provincial jurisdictions, the provincial government needs to have the backbone to stand up and say: no, this is not acceptable.

So while Ottawa has been taking time consulting on these regulations . . .

5:40

The Deputy Speaker: Any other members wishing to speak to the bill? The hon. Member for Calgary-Elbow.

Mr. Clark: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. It is an honour to rise to speak in this Assembly. I have to say that I’m a little surprised by the government’s reluctance to support this motion. Obviously, I am not now nor will ever be a member of the UCP. I differ with that party on many things. But listening to the Minister of Energy, this feels like a very, very thin argument as to why she and, I assume, the government side would vote against this motion. I can only assume that they don’t want to give the UCP a win somehow on this.

I would hope that of all the issues this Assembly deals with, this would be an issue of great national importance, that we get pipelines built, that we advocate to the federal government that their regulatory structures are predictable, consistent, and fair around the country, and that all members of this Assembly would want to do something like that. This is not legislation that we’re talking about passing here. This is a motion urging the government to take certain actions. I would hope that the government would take those very actions in doing that. It’s a shame, Madam Speaker, to see the partisanship gone wild on this particular issue.

Let’s talk, though, about the substance of the motion itself and the federal government’s attempts to consider both upstream and downstream emissions from pipeline projects and in particular downstream emissions. I can’t help but notice that every time Ottawa provides a grant or a subsidy to a car plant, I don’t see any consideration of downstream emissions. It’s remarkable, you know, that automobiles in this country and around the world are the ones that consume the product that Alberta produces, that we ship very safely and responsibly through pipelines, yet the federal government seems reluctant, not even considering downstream emissions when they would fund a project like that, like an auto plant.

Let’s talk about another example. One of the great products that comes out of Alberta’s oil sands is jet fuel. A company called Bombardier produces airplanes that consume jet fuel, yet I see absolutely no mention of the carbon emissions that are caused by the production of those airplanes themselves or, of course, of the fuel that the airplanes themselves produce.

So it’s deeply hypocritical for Ottawa to be imposing such restrictions on an industry that is specific primarily to Alberta, not exclusively. Other parts of this great country produce oil and gas. Pipelines certainly benefit the people of Alberta, but I would say, without question, that they benefit the entire nation in many, many different ways.

The other great concern with the shifting rules that seem to be coming out of Ottawa these days is that they are having a tremendous impact on investment, foreign investment in this country and domestic investment by energy companies. You know, although Canada is geographically large, we simply don't have the population base, we don't have the business base to generate all of the investment that we need to unlock all of the natural resources in particular that we have in this country available to us, so we need foreign capital to support that.

If we have an inconsistent regulatory system – what had historically been a strength of Canada is that investors were very keen to invest in a country that has tremendous political stability, that has regulatory predictability, and that follows the rule of law – we will see the problems that we're having with the constant barriers that British Columbia is attempting to put up, to constantly question a legitimate project in Kinder Morgan that has been rigorously, rigorously approved and reviewed, with 157 conditions. I can assure you that not a single project in some of the other oil sands producing regions of the world like Nigeria, Venezuela, or some of the traditional oil production that happens in Russia or Saudi – I'll bet you that collectively those projects have not had 157 conditions imposed upon them in terms of their regulatory structure. This is a single pipeline.

I am fiercely proud of the regulatory regime in this country. But, unfortunately, adding upstream and downstream emissions as part of the consideration for pipeline projects is just another barrier to investment, another barrier to job creation, another barrier to the legitimate and responsible energy industry that has become and has been such a big part of what Alberta is. Instead of putting these artificial barriers in the way, our federal government ought to be proud of what it is in this country, and I would hope that this government in Alberta also is proud of what Alberta has delivered in terms of our energy industry.

For those who may construe this as some sort of anti-environmental argument, let me be very, very clear. The Alberta Party believes that climate change is real, it is human caused, and it is a problem that we need to address. We need to have solutions that can and should include a properly constructed and responsible carbon tax as part of that overall package in addressing and tackling climate change. We should not just be looking at it as some barrier to be overcome; we should be looking at it, in fact, as the single greatest economic opportunity of our lifetimes if we do it properly. It is absolutely possible.

Alberta can solve carbon. That is going to help support our base industry in energy, oil, and gas, and it is going to help diversify our economy by creating companies and technologies that we can sell to the rest of the world, which is exactly what's happening just outside of Calgary at the Shepard natural gas power plant, the new Enmax power plant. Just recently a two-year pilot project kicked off with five different companies with different carbon reuse technologies, a long-term pilot project supported, yes, by carbon tax dollars from here in Alberta and by the federal government. This is precisely the kind of thing. It's the only example of its kind anywhere in North America.

Anyone who says that Alberta is some sort of environmental laggard or is irresponsible doesn't know the story, doesn't know the facts. It is Alberta that is going to solve carbon for the rest of the world. We are going to therefore enable the continued responsible development of our energy industry, and we're going to diversify our economy. It's absolutely possible, and it's happening right here in Alberta.

So a motion like this, I think, is exactly the right way to go. It allows us to send a strong message to Ottawa that, in fact, Alberta is doing the right thing, that we shouldn't be punished, that the

companies that have made their home in this province, that responsibly develop pipelines, that responsibly develop the oil sands and traditional oil and gas resources, should not be land locked, should not be punished. We need to send that strong message, and I believe that's exactly what this motion does. I would really urge the Minister of Energy and the entire government side to reconsider their opposition to this reasonable motion.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: Any members wishing to speak to the motion? The hon. Member for Lacombe-Ponoka.

Mr. Orr: Thank you, Madam Speaker. It's my privilege to rise this afternoon and to express support for the Member for Calgary-Lougheed's private member's Motion 505, which urges

the government to immediately demand that the government of Canada introduce any necessary legislative changes that would prohibit the consideration of upstream and downstream emissions by a federal energy regulator at any stage of the pipeline approval process.

I appreciate the previous member's comments. Quite frankly, I'm deeply disappointed that the government has decided for purely partisan reasons that they will not support this, they will not express a united front for Alberta on this very, very important issue. The motion really depicts an intent to stand up for and to protect Alberta's oil and gas sector against federal intrusion into provincial jurisdiction. I still want to express hope that all members of the Assembly will vote in support of this motion and prove that we are together to stand up in the gap to protect Alberta's interests. The intent of this motion is really not only just for the pipeline approval process, but without a doubt it's about restoring Alberta's economy, about restoring jobs in our province, about restoring the authority of our legal jurisdiction, and restoring our prosperity in this province.

We've had a little bit of a history lesson. I'd like to add just one little bit more to that. Even going back a bit farther, when this province was first created, the federal government challenged the future authority and success of our province. What are now Saskatchewan and Alberta were to be one province, but Ottawa chose to divide them into two to keep them weaker, to keep them smaller lest we would somehow challenge their authority. Then in the 1920s we had to fight again for the right of ownership of our resources, the affirmation of that. Then in the 1980s Ottawa attacked us again with a national energy policy, when in reality the truth is, as has been said, that the Constitution recognizes the exclusive power of provincial Legislatures to make laws with regard to the development and conservation and management of provincial nonrenewable resources.

5:50

These are our resources. They belong to the people of Alberta, and I think that the government of Alberta needs to stand up for our people rather than hide behind some partisan quibbling over the wording of the intent of the bill. What happened in 1982 is that Premier Lougheed, through section 92A, challenged the federal government, pressed them to the wall on it, and actually won some success for Alberta in that tremendous success. That's part of his legacy, something that we need again and something that now Bill C-69, the impact assessment act, completely contradicts and goes against.

It seems to me a bit interesting that earlier this year our Premier and the NDP went to great efforts to align themselves with Premier Lougheed. The Premier even mentioned in her throne speech in March: "In the past when workers in our energy industry were attacked and when the resources we own were threatened, Premier

Peter Lougheed took bold action.” Oh, that we had such a Premier today, Madam Speaker. The reality is that if the NDP want to wrap themselves in the cloak of Peter Lougheed and want to claim the kind of glory and honour that he had, then they need to do the same kinds of actions.

Premier Lougheed actually cut oil shipments to the east. He did things that were more than just comfortable little phrases and talking about it. In the Premier’s speech she cited him and referred to him, and we’ve heard it again in this House numerous times how they want to be like Premier Lougheed. Well, with two days left, which is all we’ve got left till the cut-off date, I would assume that it’s more necessary than just to invoke idle sentiments. Bill 12, that’s supposed to be acting like Premier Lougheed, is still unproclaimed. It’s just a bluff. There’s nothing coming of it.

If they want to compare themselves to Premier Lougheed, who was a protector of Alberta’s resources, then it would only make sense for all of us to stand united, to stand up with Premier Lougheed for our province, for our energy industry, and support this motion to demand that the government of Canada introduce any legislation necessary to prohibit the consideration of upstream and downstream industry emissions by a federal regulatory agency.

The reality is that we are standing at a crossroads in our history, where the federal Liberal government have proven themselves opposed to the energy industry, and now they’ve blatantly brought forth this process in the middle of the development, C-69, the impact assessment act, which includes upstream and downstream emissions. According to the Canadian Energy Pipeline Association it will make it significantly less likely that future projects will get approved.

I think it’s patently unfair and unjust that these things are applied to Alberta but not applied to other parts of our country. Tanker oil comes into Canada every day. It’s drilled in another hole down in some other part of the world rather than drilled in an oil hole here in Alberta, and they don’t have to pay any of that. There are no emissions attached to them. There’s no carbon tax attached to them. They are completely free in terms of bringing in tanker after tanker after tanker of oil, and if we try to send one railroad tanker car of oil out, we get all of these things assessed against us. It’s unfair. It’s completely unfair to the people of Alberta, and the government of Alberta should be standing up for our people.

We all watched how last year, under the federal Liberal government’s watch, the \$15.7 billion job-creating Energy East pipeline was scrapped precisely because in the mid-term of their working through on that one, mid-review, the rules were all changed.

Now, you know, when my grandkids get together and they start playing a game and partway through the game somebody wants to change the rules, inevitably it’s viewed as unfair and unjust, and it creates a great hue and cry. It isn’t fair to change the rules to suit me or somebody else halfway through the game. Well, that’s exactly what the federal government has done here with regard to Bill C-69 and the Energy East project. No wonder, when you change the rules halfway through like my grandkids do, they get mad and they walk off and they won’t participate.

You know, this is far more important than a child’s game, yet the federal government is changing the rules midway through, driving industry and investment and the hope out of Canada. This is not what should be happening in Canada. It’s making us the laughingstock of the world, and as we’ve heard, our regulatory process is completely broken when, like little kids, they can change it halfway through and totally stack the game in their own favour.

It should be no shock that the Canadian Energy Pipeline Association said that now, with the built-in climate change tests only for Alberta oil, not tanker oil, but only for ours, covering

upstream and downstream greenhouse gas emissions, that it is the federal Liberal government’s intent, declared purpose, to curtail oil and gas production as an attack on Alberta. This will mean that no more pipelines will be built, at least here in Canada, and that Bill C-69 sure has hit the mark to make sure that no more of it happens here in Canada.

We need to stand up for this. Our government needs to stand up for our people instead of hiding on this issue. What happened to Energy East was senseless. It’s an important, job-creating project, and now we’re doing even more of it, and the government won’t stand up for the people. The NDP promised that a massive carbon tax and caps on our upstream industry inflicted on Albertans by large emitters would buy us social licence somehow, an approval for pipelines from our federal cohorts, but we have seen none of that, and two days from now Kinder Morgan may very well just walk away from the whole thing.

Our leader, along with UCP caucus members and others, has repeatedly discussed our concerns with the federal government with regard to the federal government’s efforts to force upstream and downstream emissions consideration and that energy investors will be discouraged. Investment will effectively be extinguished, a squelch on our industry, and the NDP refuse to stand up and vote for it. This energy industry is our strength. It’s the thing that gives us the income, the energy, and the resources by which to actually make investments in green development, and we’re going to cut that opportunity off from ourselves.

This action by the federal government to include upstream and downstream emissions is a direct intrusion into provincial jurisdiction, and it should not be tolerated by us. We should not simply roll over and allow them to do this. We need to restore investor confidence. We need to restore our jurisdiction on our authority and our economic stability.

Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: Any other members wishing to speak to the motion? The hon. Member for Edmonton-Centre.

Mr. Shepherd: Thank you, Madam Speaker. We have but a brief moment left, so I’ll just quickly note some quotes from a letter written by the Minister of Energy to ministers McKenna and Carr. Actually, this is a joint letter from the Minister of Energy and the Minister of Environment and Parks.

The Government of Alberta submits that our Climate Leadership Plan should be recognized as sufficient for evaluating upstream greenhouse gas emissions associated with pipeline projects originating in Alberta.

It goes on to outline then the specific steps we have taken as a government under our climate leadership plan.

That was sent on August 28, 2017, and followed on October 2, 2017, with a further letter expressing our continued and growing worry regarding the potential impact on Energy East, in which the minister notes:

It is our government’s position that the inclusion of downstream uses in the scope of the Energy East review is an historic over-reach. In our view, this is simply not an appropriate issue to include in the review.

Later in the letter she also wrote:

I am asking for clarity on whether the scope of review for the Energy East project can be seen as precedent-setting for what the regulator will be mandated to review for future projects in the new legislation.

On upstream emissions, Madam Speaker, she noted: Alberta’s climate leadership plan and in particular the oil sands emissions limit should satisfy concerns about upstream emissions; the Prime

Minister directly cited our climate plan in his approval of two new pipelines last fall.

Indeed, Madam Speaker, our Minister of Energy has, in these particular letters and in her continued conversations with the ministers and in continued communication with the Prime Minister, continued to raise our concerns regarding this evaluation and this approach. This is severely problematic in considering downstream

emissions because, indeed, as other members have capably explained, the consideration of downstream emissions simply is not a reasonable option in that it forces . . .

The Deputy Speaker: I hesitate to interrupt, hon. member, but the House stands adjourned until 7:30 p.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 6. p.m.]

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For inquiries contact:

Managing Editor

Alberta Hansard

3rd Floor, 9820 – 107 St

EDMONTON, AB T5K 1E7

Telephone: 780.427.1875