



Province of Alberta

The 29th Legislature
Fourth Session

Alberta Hansard

Tuesday evening, May 29, 2018

Day 34

The Honourable Robert E. Wanner, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of Alberta The 29th Legislature

Fourth Session

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

Aheer, Leela Sharon, Chestermere-Rocky View (UCP),
Deputy Leader of the Official Opposition
Anderson, Hon. Shaye, Leduc-Beaumont (NDP)
Anderson, Wayne, Highwood (UCP)
Babcock, Erin D., Stony Plain (NDP)
Barnes, Drew, Cypress-Medicine Hat (UCP)
Bilous, Hon. Deron, Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview (NDP)
Carlier, Hon. Oneil, Whitecourt-St. Anne (NDP)
Carson, Jonathon, Edmonton-Meadowlark (NDP)
Ceci, Hon. Joe, Calgary-Fort (NDP)
Clark, Greg, Calgary-Elbow (AP),
Alberta Party Opposition House Leader
Connolly, Michael R.D., Calgary-Hawkwood (NDP)
Coolahan, Craig, Calgary-Klein (NDP)
Cooper, Nathan, Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills (UCP)
Cortes-Vargas, Estefania, Strathcona-Sherwood Park (NDP),
Government Whip
Cyr, Scott J., Bonnyville-Cold Lake (UCP)
Dach, Lorne, Edmonton-McClung (NDP)
Dang, Thomas, Edmonton-South West (NDP)
Drever, Deborah, Calgary-Bow (NDP)
Drysdale, Wayne, Grande Prairie-Wapiti (UCP)
Eggen, Hon. David, Edmonton-Calder (NDP)
Ellis, Mike, Calgary-West (UCP)
Feehan, Hon. Richard, Edmonton-Rutherford (NDP),
Deputy Government House Leader
Fildebrandt, Derek Gerhard, Strathmore-Brooks (IC)
Fitzpatrick, Maria M., Lethbridge-East (NDP)
Fraser, Rick, Calgary-South East (AP)
Ganley, Hon. Kathleen T., Calgary-Buffalo (NDP),
Deputy Government House Leader
Gill, Prab, Calgary-Greenway (UCP),
Official Opposition Deputy Whip
Goehring, Nicole, Edmonton-Castle Downs (NDP)
Gotfried, Richard, Calgary-Fish Creek (UCP)
Gray, Hon. Christina, Edmonton-Mill Woods (NDP)
Hanson, David B., Lac La Biche-St. Paul-Two Hills (UCP)
Hinkley, Bruce, Wetaskiwin-Camrose (NDP)
Hoffman, Hon. Sarah, Edmonton-Glenora (NDP)
Horne, Trevor A.R., Spruce Grove-St. Albert (NDP)
Hunter, Grant R., Cardston-Taber-Warner (UCP)
Jansen, Hon. Sandra, Calgary-North West (NDP)
Kazim, Anam, Calgary-Glenmore (NDP)
Kenney, Hon. Jason, PC, Calgary-Lougheed (UCP),
Leader of the Official Opposition
Kleinstauber, Jamie, Calgary-Northern Hills (NDP)
Larivee, Hon. Danielle, Lesser Slave Lake (NDP),
Deputy Government House Leader
Littlewood, Jessica, Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville (NDP)

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

Party standings:

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

Officers and Officials of the Legislative Assembly

Robert H. Reynolds, QC, Clerk
Shannon Dean, Law Clerk and Director of
House Services
Stephanie LeBlanc, Senior Parliamentary
Counsel
Trafton Koenig, Parliamentary Counsel

Philip Massolin, Manager of Research and
Committee Services
Nancy Robert, Research Officer
Janet Schwegel, Managing Editor of
Alberta Hansard

Brian G. Hodgson, Sergeant-at-Arms
Chris Caughell, Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms
Paul Link, Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms
Gareth Scott, Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms

Executive Council

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

Parliamentary Secretaries

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

STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Standing Committee on the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund

Chair: Mr. Coolahan
Deputy Chair: Mrs. Schreiner

Cyr	Luff
Dang	McPherson
Ellis	Turner
Horne	

Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future

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

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

Standing Committee on Families and Communities

Chair: Ms Goehring
Deputy Chair: Mr. Smith

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

Standing Committee on Legislative Offices

Chair: Mr. Shepherd
Deputy Chair: Mr. Malkinson

Aheer	McKitrick
Gill	Pitt
Horne	van Dijken
Kleinsteinuber	Woollard
Littlewood	

Special Standing Committee on Members' Services

Chair: Mr. Wanner
Deputy Chair: Cortes-Vargas

Babcock	Nixon
Cooper	Piquette
Dang	Pitt
Drever	Westhead
McIver	

Standing Committee on Private Bills

Chair: Ms Kazim
Deputy Chair: Connolly

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

Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections, Standing Orders and Printing

Chair: Ms Fitzpatrick
Deputy Chair: Ms Babcock

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

Standing Committee on Public Accounts

Chair: Mr. Cyr
Deputy Chair: Mr. Dach

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

Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship

Chair: Loyola
Deputy Chair: Mr. Drysdale

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

Legislative Assembly of Alberta

7:30 p.m.

Tuesday, May 29, 2018

Government Bills and Orders Committee of the Whole

[Ms Sweet in the chair]

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

Bill 16 Election Finances and Contributions Disclosure Statutes Amendment Act, 2018

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

Seeing none, I will call the question on Bill 16. Are you ready for the question?

Hon. Members: Question.

[The clauses of Bill 16 agreed to]

[Title and preamble agreed to]

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

Hon. Members: Agreed.

The Deputy Chair: Opposed? Carried.

The hon. Deputy Government House Leader.

Ms Larivee: Thank you, Madam Chair. At this moment I would like to move that the committee rise and report progress on bills 1, 10, and 2, and report on Bill 16.

[Motion carried]

[Ms Sweet in the chair]

The Acting Speaker: The hon. Member for Wetaskiwin-Camrose.

Mr. Hinkley: Thank you, Madam Speaker. The Committee of the Whole has had under consideration certain bills. The committee reports the following bill: Bill 16. The committee reports progress on the following bills: Bill 1, Bill 10, Bill 2. I wish to table copies of all amendments considered by the Committee of the Whole on this date for the official records of the Assembly.

Thank you.

The Acting Speaker: Having heard the report as proposed by the hon. Member for Wetaskiwin-Camrose, all in favour, please say aye.

Hon. Members: Aye.

The Acting Speaker: Opposed, please say no. Ordered.

The hon. Deputy Government House Leader.

Ms Larivee: Thank you, Madam Chair. At this time I would like to seek unanimous consent to shorten the bells for all bills for the duration of Committee of the Whole for this evening to one minute.

[Unanimous consent granted]

Government Bills and Orders Committee of the Whole (continued)

[Ms Sweet in the chair]

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

Bill 7 Supporting Alberta's Local Food Sector Act

The Deputy Chair: Are there any comments, questions, or amendments to be offered with respect to this bill? The hon. Member for Drumheller-Stettler.

Mr. Strankman: Thank you, Madam Chair. It's a pleasure to rise in the House and present some additional thoughts surrounding Bill 7, Supporting Alberta's Local Food Sector Act. Now, we have established that this bill has a primary focus to standardize the use of organic labelling and certification. This goes to ensure that any food products grown or produced here in Alberta will comply with current CFIA standards in labelling and certification.

Certainly, there is no one recognized threshold for products produced locally for sale within Alberta. This act will now make a uniform minimum standard. It's my understanding that the overall purpose of this act will be to encourage the development of our local food sector throughout the province and to regulate agricultural products that are produced or processed in the province and marketed and sold as organic products within the province. This will be achieved, Madam Chair, primarily through three parts of this act, starting with establishing organic standards; creation of a local food week to coincide with Open Farm Days in August; and, finally, this act proposes to establish a local food council.

I'm going to quickly focus on the organic aspect of this bill. As I understand it, previous to this products sold within Alberta had no established common criteria for organic labelling or standards. However, if you exported these same products outside of Alberta, you had to comply with CFIA standards for labelling and certification. Going forward, these CFIA standards will have to be met within Alberta in order to use the term "certified organic" on these products. This now puts us to the same standard of other jurisdictions excluding I'm thinking at this point in time Quebec and Saskatchewan, who currently don't have the same requirements.

But it has been brought to my attention that the act, specifically on page 4 under Application, 3(a), seems to have consequences that far outreach what the bill has presented. This section (a) talks about all agricultural products.

3 This Act applies to

(a) agricultural products produced or processed in the Province.

Madam Chair, my question is: why does an act that is identified to be primarily about organic labelling and certification include subsections (a) and (b), which separate organic products and all other agricultural products? Why the distinction? Is that a needed distinction? I would argue that subsection (a) may not be needed.

Madam Chair, you know, we live and breathe in a descriptive wording atmosphere in this place, and we've seen a lot of that demonstrated here today and on other days in the Chamber. In that vein, I'd like to propose an amendment, and I have the requisite copies here for the pages.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. member. If you could just wait until I have a copy at the table. Thank you very much.

Hon. member, your amendment will be referred to as A1. Please go ahead.

Mr. Strankman: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'd like to read my amendment. Mr. Strankman to move that Bill 7, Supporting Alberta's Local Food Sector Act, be amended by renumbering section 6 as section 6(1) and adding the following after subsection (1) . . .

The Deputy Chair: Hon. member, I just want to clarify. The amendment that I have in front of me is about appointments.

Mr. Strankman: I would have to apologize, then, Madam Chair. There may be some error. That was the information that I was given.

The Deputy Chair: Hon. member, I think the table has two different amendments, so we may have mixed your piles.

Mr. Strankman: I may have mistakenly given you what I perceived – I gave you the two. I may have spoken about the . . .

The Deputy Chair: Do you want me to send them back to you so you can clarify which one you would like to speak to first?

Mr. Strankman: Yes, if you don't mind. I'd appreciate that.
The amendment applies to section 3. I'm sorry, Madam Chair. "Section 3 is amended by striking out clause (a)."

The Deputy Chair: Is that the one you would like to start with first?

Mr. Strankman: Yes, please.

The Deputy Chair: Okay. Can I please just have a copy of the one the hon. member is speaking to?

Mr. Strankman: I apologize, Madam Chair.

The Deputy Chair: No. That's fine.
That one will be referred to as A1. If you could please just clarify for the House which one you'd like to start with.

Mr. Strankman: Yes. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Mr. Nixon: She needs to know which one you'd like to start with.

Mr. Strankman: I said the one that's talking about section 3.

The Deputy Chair: So you're looking for: "Section 3 is amended by striking out clause (a)," and "(b) section 6 is struck out"?

Mr. Strankman: Yes, Madam Chair.

The Deputy Chair: Okay. Thank you very much. Please go ahead.
7:40

Mr. Strankman: Mr. Strankman to move that Bill 7, Supporting Alberta's Local Food Sector Act, be amended as follows: (a) section 3 is amended by striking out clause (a) and (b) section 6 is struck out.

The reason for this amendment is straightforward. I apologize again for the mix-up in the paperwork going forward here. The minister does not need power over all agricultural products produced or processed in the province. As I stated earlier in my dissertation here, we're simply trying to clarify and be more exact in the wording going forward. This act is primarily about setting standards for organic products, not all products produced and manufactured. As you know, Madam Chair and to the minister,

there are other commercial entities, whether they be JBS or Cargill, that commercially process beef, for example, in large commercial standards, and they would fit under the process of all products but not necessarily organic. My goal here is to simply have a clear set of well-defined rules for organic certification, singularly, everybody on the same page. What isn't needed is giving the act absolute power over all agricultural products, again with the emphasis on the word "all," be they organic or not. It's overreaching, it's too ambiguous, and it's not necessary, so I'm highly doubtful I would support this act and this bill without the amendment.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. member.

Are there any other members wishing to speak to amendment A1? The hon. Minister of Agriculture and Forestry.

Mr. Carlier: Yeah. Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you to the member for what he's trying to propose here. He is right in one sense that, obviously, not all foods produced in Alberta are organic or can be considered organic, but that's what is going to be captured here. Are those products going to be marketed separately or differently from organic? You know, there are opportunities to market your products in many other different ways and making sure that that is not lost, not lost on the consumers, not lost on the producers, that they're able to market their products as perhaps grass fed or raised naturally or raised without antibiotics or raised without hormones. There are many different labels they're able to do, and we're looking at making sure that with those labels we don't lose anything there, that we're able to continue with the good products of local food that is grown in Alberta, wherever it might be in Alberta, and that they're able to use those other labels, if you will, to market their products right across the province, maybe across the country or around the world, using those labels that are not necessarily organic.

I think it raises a level of confidence not only with consumers but with producers as well that they're able to do so. That is what, you know, this will capture, those opportunities for those producers to be able to do so. Looking for the advice from the local food council, to be clear, Madam Chair, is not the same as an agency, board, or commission. It's quite separate from that, but legislation allows us to set up committees to be able to look at one-offs, to have reports back on. That's what we're looking for even for the local food council, to have a report on what these other marketing tools might have for producers. I think it's an opportunity for confidence within the consumers themselves and within the producers to be able to do so.

I hope that clears the air a little bit for the member with the amendment. Thank you.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. member.

Are there any other members wishing to speak to amendment A1? The hon. Member for Fort McMurray-Wood Buffalo.

Mr. Yao: Why, thank you, Madam Chair. I rise to speak in support of my colleague's amendment to Bill 7. This amendment will allow Bill 7 to be amended by striking out clause (a) in section 3 and striking out section 6. The section that will be removed will be:

- 3 This Act applies to
 - (a) agricultural products produced or processed in the Province.

The remaining section will read: "agricultural products produced or processed in the Province that are intended to be marketed and sold within the Province as organic products."

It is important to state that this bill emphasizes the local food movement and specifically the move towards organic products. The main purpose of this bill is to bring organic standards in line with federal organic standards. Now, with that being said, it is important that we allow this bill to regulate only organic products. It's quite an overreach for all agriculture products to fall under this act, when, really, only organic products are being targeted. While I support the main purpose of this bill, I don't think it's necessary to go beyond what needs to be done. We should move provincial organic regulations in line with federal ones, but let's not get ahead of ourselves and put all agriculture products under the act.

Therefore, I do support the good Member for Drumheller-Stettler's amendment removing section 3(a) from this bill and section 6. Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. member.

The hon. Opposition House Leader.

Mr. Nixon: Well, thank you, Madam Chair. I rise to speak in support of my colleague from Drumheller-Stettler's amendment to Bill 7. To be clear, this amendment will allow Bill 7 to be amended by striking out clause (a) in section 3 and striking out section 6. The section that will be removed will be: "agricultural products produced or processed in the Province." The remaining section will read: "agricultural products produced or processed in the Province that are intended to be marketed and sold within the Province as organic products."

It's important to state that this bill emphasizes the local food movement and specifically the move towards organic products. The main purpose of this bill is to bring our organic standards in line with federal organic standards. With that being said, it's important that we allow this bill to regulate only organic products. It's quite an overreach for all agricultural products to fall under this act when, really, only organic products are being targeted. While I support the main purpose of this bill, I don't think it's necessary to go beyond what needs to be done. We should move provincial organic regulations in line with federal ones, but let's not get ahead of ourselves and put all agricultural products under the act.

Therefore, I support the amendment from the hon. member, and I think it's incumbent on the agriculture minister to explain in more detail why he would not support this amendment.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. member.

Are there any other members wishing to speak? The hon. Member for Calgary-Shaw.

Mr. Sucha: Thank you, Madam Chair. One thing I want to touch on is in relation to how we kind of got to this bill here. I serve as the chair of the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future. One of the things that we did was – and this came from the Minister of Municipal Affairs. Before he was a minister, he was sitting as a member of this committee. He brought forth a motion for us to look at ways that we can expand and explore and grow our agriculture and agribusiness sector as it was a sector that was emerging and, as we saw during the low price of oil and downturn that came from that, a sector that could absorb some of the shock that we were facing.

I have to admit that I was pretty moved by how efficient the committee actually served and worked in that process. We unanimously passed about 13 different motions that the committee report cited. Members like the Member for Little Bow and the Member for Barrhead-Morinville-Westlock had some very good insights in this meeting.

One of the motions that was passed was:

That the Government expand the Explore Local [food] initiative to include a made-in-Alberta brand to assist in expanding and

promoting local [food] market demand for local products as well as creating a recognizable brand that signifies sustainable, responsible, and quality food products.

Another thing that was cited in this report is looking at organic foods, which has been addressed in this bill.

One of the reasons why I cannot support this amendment, simply looking at section 4 as one of many examples, is local food week. If we're looking at striking out this clause that promotes "agricultural products produced or processed in the Province," and then we tie it into local food week, the concern, the big challenge I have in relation to that is that it would create a situation in which celebrating local food week becomes extraordinarily broad. You can't necessarily define what local is without that clause being in this bill. At the end of the day, could we define local as being Montana? Could we define local as being North America as a continent? It leaves too much up in the air. As the member alluded to, wording is very important.

So I cannot support this amendment at this time.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. member.

Are there any other members wishing to speak to the amendment? The hon. Member for Calgary-Hays.

Mr. McIver: Thank you, Madam Chair. I appreciate the opportunity to talk to this amendment on Bill 7. The mover, the hon. Member for Drumheller-Stettler, makes a good point. I know the previous speaker was talking about the amendment being poorly worded. I would actually go back and say that the reason for the amendment is because the bill, frankly, is poorly worded. It leaves the minister with a great deal of overreach beyond just organic food production and market and actually gives the minister the opportunity through this local food sector act to reach into all areas.

7:50

Now, the previous member talked about: what does that mean? Well, I think, essentially, after spending 25 years in the meat business on the inspection side, the whole time I was working in the industry – it's probably the same way today, but it's been a few years since I've been out of it. The fact is that there's federal inspection for meat and there's provincial inspection. Frankly, it's pretty clear. If you have provincial inspection, you can sell it across the province. If you want to go beyond the provincial borders, you need federal inspection. I think it's quite clear. Of course, if you want to go internationally, then you need HACCP and potentially a bunch of other approvals to sell your product that way.

This actually is an important amendment in terms of making the bill supportable. I wouldn't be surprised if all members of the House are okay with doing things for the local food sector. The problem is that when the bill is written in such a fashion that it allows the minister to automatically overreach, then you could reasonably start questioning the true intention behind the bill, whether the bill isn't really about local food, whether it's about other things. It's certainly not in the spirit of the title of the bill, the local food sector act. So this amendment is actually quite important. Actually, it's well thought out. It removes some of the overreach that's in the bill for the minister.

You know what? Albertans that are buying food deserve to know what they're buying. Frankly, there's a variety of opinions, and in my view all of those opinions are legitimate. There are probably people that would say: "I don't believe in organic. I'll never buy it." There are other Albertans that would say: "I'll only buy organic. It's the best thing. It's the only thing." And there's probably a variety of opinions in between: "I'll pay for it as long as I don't have to pay too much more for it than nonorganic." In my view, all of those opinions are legitimate, how people think about the food

they feed themselves and their families. They're entitled to be pro-organic, they're entitled to be antiorganic, and they're entitled to only buy organic if it's within 5 or 10 per cent of the price of the other products that are available.

So not giving the minister overreach in order to take pieces of the food industry that are functioning well now and allowing the minister the arbitrary authority to change things that are operating well now, I think, is a reasonable limitation to put on the legislation. I think it's part of what my hon. colleague is suggesting. As a result, I support this amendment. I think that if the government side looks at it, they'll see that it's actually an improvement to the bill as it's written right now, and I'm hopeful that they will consider supporting it.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. member.

Are there any other members wishing to speak to amendment A1?

Seeing none, I will call the question.

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

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 7:54 p.m.]

[One minute having elapsed, the committee divided]

[Ms Sweet in the chair]

For the motion:

Cooper	McIver	Strankman
Gotfried	Nixon	Yao
Hanson	Smith	

Against the motion:

Carlier	Kleinstauber	Piquette
Ceci	Larivee	Renaud
Connolly	Loyola	Sabir
Dach	Malkinson	Schmidt
Drever	McCuaig-Boyd	Schreiner
Fitzpatrick	McKitrick	Shepherd
Gray	McLean	Sucha
Hinkley	Miller	Turner
Horne	Miranda	Westhead
Jansen	Nielsen	Woollard
Kazim		

Totals:	For – 8	Against – 31
---------	---------	--------------

[Motion on amendment A1 lost]

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

Mr. Strankman: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'd like to seek your pleasure to bring forward another amendment, please, in regard to this bill. I understand that the table has the original copy. I've given the requisite copies to the pages, and I'll await your direction.

The Deputy Chair: Hon. member, you can please proceed. Your amendment will be referred to as A2.

Mr. Strankman: Madam Chair, I move that Bill 7, Supporting Alberta's Local Food Sector Act, be amended in section 5 by striking out subsection (2) and substituting the following:

(2) The Minister shall appoint members to the Council on the recommendation of a nominating committee that is representative of Alberta's agricultural producers, which shall include large producers, the local food sector, small producers and processors.

The act currently reads:

(2) The Minister shall ensure that the members appointed to the Council are representative of Alberta's local food sector, including small producers and processors.

As a result of this, Madam Chair, it creates a good deal of uncertainty on who would be on the council at this point in time other than that the minister would ensure that the members appointed to the council are representative of Alberta's local food sector.

We have concerns, Madam Chair, about the council being dominated by one sector. In our reaching out to stakeholders, small producers, and large producers, the small producers worry that the council could be controlled by large producers, and vice versa, the large producers are concerned about the council being controlled by niche producers. The idea with this amendment is that the minister would choose the council from a list of candidates submitted by any Alberta producer group or council that wishes to participate in the local food council.

8:00

While still not as openly democratic, I believe that this achieves a balance of costs and that the minister could make his selections and allow people who participate the opportunity to do so of their own free will. It also gives the minister a ready list of groups that are interested in this council and its work. It allows for a degree of openness if the council is chosen from a known list of potential candidates, and this list could be made public. It also strives to be inclusive, fair, and transparent.

It has been discussed in committee, Alberta's Economic Future, as my colleague from Calgary-Shaw talked about, that there would be work done in creating a uniform, made-in-Alberta designation or label. There would be certain standards, et cetera, in order that they be allowed to use such a designation or certification. This amendment would ensure that producer groups are consulted prior to any sort of identifier or certification so that their concerns or ideas could be taken into consideration prior to regulation being developed.

Again, Madam Chair, this is about transparency as this bill primarily deals with and is meant to deal with organics. It's a vital aspect of any legislation that deals with agricultural products that need to be fully discussed openly with producer groups so they may share their input and have an opportunity for public input.

I rest my case, Madam Chair.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. member.

Are there any other members wishing to speak to amendment A2? The hon. Member for Fort McMurray-Wood Buffalo.

Mr. Yao: Why, thank you, Madam Chair. I rise to speak in support of my colleague from Drumheller-Stettler's amendment to Bill 7. This amendment substitutes this wording for subsection (2):

The Minister shall appoint members to the council on the recommendation of a nominating committee that is representative of Alberta's agricultural producers, which shall include large producers, the local food sector, small producers and processors.

This amendment allows the makeup of the council to be slightly more democratic, and while this is not as democratic as we would like, this would allow those that wish to participate the opportunity to do so. This amendment would also address some of the concerns we have heard from stakeholders, where small producers were concerned over the council being dominated by large producers and vice versa. The idea behind this amendment is that the minister would choose from a list of candidates submitted from any Alberta producer group or any council that wishes to participate. This helps

give a voice and a seat at the table to groups that may otherwise be left out. It further allows for a degree of openness if the candidates are chosen from a list. It is a good goal to be inclusive, fair, and transparent – I know those concepts are foreign to you all – which is why I'm supporting my colleague's amendment.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. member.

Are there any other members wishing to speak to amendment A2? The hon. Minister of Forestry – of Agriculture and Forestry.

Mr. Carlier: Thank you, Madam Chair. You can say "Forestry" ahead of "Agriculture" once in a while. I think the forestry guys would probably like that.

You know, with all due respect to the member who is proposing this amendment, I think what he's basically suggesting here is that we strike a committee to strike a committee. I think that's probably a little bit more red tape than I would normally see from the members across the way, but I understand what they're getting at. I understand what their concerns are; that is, ensuring that the council itself is well represented.

You know, in the wording of the legislation, in subsection (2) of section 5, it does say that "the Minister shall ensure that the members appointed to the Council are representative of Alberta's local food sector, including small producers and processors." So I think it well captures what the member is trying to allude to, and that is that it's representative of all producers, all the types of producers, processors right across the province. I think that adding a layer of red tape by striking a committee to strike a committee gets a little too onerous for a council that I hope, if this bill is passed, will be able to be quite nimble to be able to come up with some of those recommendations, including on what other marketing tools local food might have across Alberta, not just organic but others, as I mentioned earlier, Madam Chair.

With that, you know, I can't support it. I understand the nature of what the member is trying to achieve, but because of that, what we have here already in the bill is sufficient. I believe it is very sufficient. Therefore, I can't support this amendment.

Thank you.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. member.

Are there any other members wishing to speak? The Member for Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills.

Mr. Cooper: Why, thank you, Madam Chair. It's a pleasure to rise this evening and talk about the finer points of springtime in rural Alberta with respect to calving and branding and other activities that take place, that I know the minister of agriculture is very familiar with, very, very familiar with. One thing he's not familiar with, though, is this amendment. At no point in time did my colleague recommend that there needs to be a committee for a committee, just merely stated that the minister shall appoint members to the council on the recommendations.

I think that it is of critical importance – of critical importance – that they have a widespread representation of producers on the committee. Goodness knows that we've seen the type of appointments that this government has made. In fact, I think one of them, Tzeporah Berman, was tweeting again today about how there are 22,000 people ready for all hell to break loose in British Columbia. These are the type of people that this government has produced and has appointed, people like Karen Mahon. They appointed folks like that.

All that my colleague is trying to prevent is this sort of thing from happening again in the future. This is exactly the problem, and there's no reason why we shouldn't put some checks and balances in place so that we don't wind up with a council full of folks who

aren't accountable to producers, who aren't accountable to Albertans, and so that we don't have a real dominance of one sector over another on what is a very, very, very important council.

I hope that the minister will reconsider his poor choice this evening, make better choices in the future, and encourage his colleagues to do the same.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. member.

Are there any other members wishing to speak to the amendment? The hon. Member for Drayton Valley-Devon.

Mr. Smith: Thank you, Madam Chair. I rise to speak to amendment A2 to Bill 7, Supporting Alberta's Local Food Sector Act. The amendment is pretty straightforward here, and I think it speaks to good democratic practice in that one of the things that we want to try to do at times when appointing people is to get free from the politics of life and of business. Sometimes that can dominate government decisions. I don't think this is unique to any one particular party. Here we have an opportunity, with this amendment, to address this in a nonpartisan way, a way that doesn't necessarily affect any one political party but all of us, I would argue, at some point in time or another in the future. Obviously, we have examples of poor choices made by the government in some of their appointments, but this would help to address that.

One of the things about a democracy is that you need to have checks and balances at times to ensure that the government is representative of the will of the people, and I believe that this amendment speaks to that by making sure that a wide range of stakeholders are involved in decisions as a part of this act. One of the things that this amendment does is that it asks to include large producers. While I respect the opinion of the hon. Minister of Agriculture and Forestry, that he believes that it is a full encompassing of stakeholders, I would argue that it's clear from this amendment that it adds at least one more set of stakeholders for consideration when it comes to this committee.

I would speak in favour of it. I think that there are times when we need to remove the politics from the situation, and I believe that by having a committee that lists and puts forward the names of individuals and a broad range of individuals, it just speaks to some common sense, and I would encourage everyone in this House to support this amendment.

8:10

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. member.

Are there any other members wishing to speak to amendment A2? The hon. Member for Calgary-Hays.

Mr. McIver: Well, thank you, Madam Chair. I appreciate the opportunity. Now, I know the minister was trying to be clever and maybe even meant what he said about having a committee to arrange a committee, but the fact is that the government already appoints people to lots of agencies, boards, and committees. In many, many cases the government appoints people to agencies, boards, and committees out of organizations that already exist; for example, in this amendment – and it's spelled out here – through "agricultural producers." It could be large producers. It could be out of the livestock industry. You've already got cattle producers, pork producers, chicken producers, turkey producers, and maybe those people would put one or two people on the board. You've already got pulse growers. You've already got the Barley Commission, different grain commissions, and maybe out of those already.

In other words, we're not creating a committee to create a committee. We're talking about creating this new committee out of existing organizations to make sure that all the weight in this new committee doesn't come from one area of the agricultural

community. You understand that, Minister? I think it's a legitimate concern. I know that the government's intention is not to do that, to give all of the power to the grain growers over the livestock producers or to the livestock producers over the grain growers or any of the other combinations thereof.

I think my hon. colleague, through this amendment, points out that it's actually worth it to put some parameters around it, not to create a committee to create a committee, which the minister I think incorrectly stated, but to create some structure out of currently existing agricultural organizations and pick from each segment of the currently existing, not new, agricultural organizations and say, "This group of one or two or three organizations appoints one person, and this group of three or four existing organizations appoints another" and so on so that one sector or more of those who produce food are not left unrepresented and, consequently, unfairly treated.

With that perspective, I sincerely hope that the minister would reconsider what I'm just hoping he hadn't thought of when he spoke earlier and see the wisdom of making sure that this well-intentioned local food group is representative of all the producers so that no one is left out. I don't think the minister's intention is to unfairly have a sector of those that produce food in Alberta unfairly put upon, unfairly ignored, or to have rules put in place to somehow restrict or eliminate the marketing opportunities of a sector of the food industry.

I don't believe for a second that that is the minister's intention. I don't think it ever was and I don't expect it ever will be the minister's intention. I hope the minister will think about the fact that if you pick from the currently existing organizations to create this new local food organization, it will actually probably make the minister's job easier. It will probably make the minister less susceptible to criticism by producers of food whose sectors are not included in the selection of the local food organization and probably also get better and more balanced results, which I actually think the minister wants.

Again, there's nothing partisan about this amendment. I think it's truly meant to be helpful, and I think that if the minister thinks about it, he might actually see that it could be truly helpful. I hope he changes the position that he took a few minutes ago as a result.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. member.

Are there any other members wishing to speak to amendment A2?

Seeing none, I will call the question.

[The voice vote indicated that the motion on amendment A2 lost]

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 8:15 p.m.]

[One minute having elapsed, the committee divided]

[Ms Sweet in the chair]

For the motion:

Cooper	Nixon	Strankman
Gotfried	Smith	van Dijken
Hanson	Starke	Yao
McIver		

Against the motion:

Carlier	Jansen	Nielsen
Ceci	Kazim	Piquette
Coolahan	Kleinstauber	Renaud
Dach	Larivee	Sabir
Dang	Loyola	Schmidt

Drever	Malkinson	Schreiner
Eggen	McCuaig-Boyd	Shepherd
Fitzpatrick	McKittrick	Sucha
Gray	McLean	Turner
Hinkley	Miller	Westhead
Horne	Miranda	Woollard
Totals:	For – 10	Against – 33

[Motion on amendment A2 lost]

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

Mr. Strankman: Possibly, Madam Chair, three times may be the charm. I don't know. I'd like to move an amendment. We have a copy here for you and for the pages.

The Deputy Chair: Hon. member, your amendment will be referred to as A3. Please go ahead.

Mr. Strankman: Thank you, Madam Chair. Again, I'd like to see the Supporting Alberta's Local Food Sector Act amended by renumbering section 6 as section 6(1) and adding the following after subsection (1):

- (2) The Minister shall consult with producers and processors for a period of not less than 60 days and consider any comments or feedback provided prior to making a regulation under subsection (1).

The act currently reads, Madam Chair, under section 6:

The Minister may make regulations

- (a) establishing a certification program for agricultural products other than those certified as organic products under Part 2;
- (b) respecting the creation of a protected label, the use of which may be restricted or prohibited.

Madam Chair, we're simply trying to achieve government consultation. I know that, as we've said before, sometimes there's a lack of definitive wording. We're simply trying to create public notice to those that are affected by this legislation.

8:20

This ensures that prior to enacting any regulations dealing with certification, there would be a public consultation period, rather than just special-interest groups at the whim of the minister. That would allow that there be certain standards in order to be achieving a special designation or certification. This amendment would ensure that producer groups are consulted prior to any sort of special identifier or certification so that their concerns or ideas could be taken into consideration prior to regulations being developed. That's part of the legislation.

Finally, to almost sound redundant, Madam Chair and to the minister, this is about transparency. The intention of the bill is to deal with organics, and it is vital that any aspect of this legislation that deals with agricultural products be fully discussed with those producer groups so that they may share their input. We're simply trying to achieve that as we move forward with the amendments.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. member.

Are there any other members wishing to speak to amendment A3? The hon. Minister of Agriculture and Forestry.

Mr. Carlier: Thank you, Madam Chair. You know, I absolutely understand what the mover of the amendment is attempting to do. I would even consider supporting the amendment if not for the fact that the bill already stipulates the formation of a local food council. What he is asking in the amendment is what a local food council

would already be representing, what the producers and processors across the province would actually be considering. So any considerations they have on establishing some type of certification program for foods other than what's stipulated in the legislation around organic, might that be grass fed to cage free, whatever that might be, whatever recommendations that might come out of the council, that then would hit the minister's desk, would be considerations that are already deliberated by the council that is already made up of various producers and processors.

So I think adding another layer of red tape isn't necessary only because of the fact that we do have, you know, the feedback from the local food council already. Though I understand the nature of the amendment, to ensure that producers and processors have that feedback on any proposed possible different certifications for different agricultural products, I think that is already built into the fact that a local food council will be struck and then will report back to the minister within 12 months. There is a period there where, obviously, they will have an opportunity to discuss and talk to other producers and processors as well.

Again, you know, I can't support this amendment. It's close. I would suggest that the member is getting closer but just a little bit off the mark on this one.

Thank you.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. member.

Are there any other members wishing to speak? The hon. Official Opposition House Leader.

Mr. Nixon: Well, thank you, Madam Chair. It never ceases to amaze me the things that will come out of this government at a certain point. I mean, red tape, the NDP government talking about red tape. There are all sorts of jokes there. But the night becomes late, so I won't touch that. But the fact that the minister of agriculture is saying that if he is required to consult with the agriculture industry, that is red tape: I think that given the track record of this government, maybe what the minister of agriculture is saying is that it's red tape for him to be able to continue to unilaterally make decisions for the agriculture industry without talking to them because that's what this ag minister has done for the last three years.

Let's talk about this government's ability to consult and whether or not the hon. Member for Drumheller-Stettler has a reasonable point by bringing forward this amendment to the Legislature tonight. This government's signature piece of legislation associated with the agriculture industry was a bill called Bill 6, Madam Chair. You may remember that piece of legislation. Maybe you don't. Maybe you've forgotten as time has gone by. I can tell you that the farmers and ranchers in my communities have not forgotten that.

Now, what was the biggest concern that came out of that process? The number one concern was that this government made a decision to bring forward significant legislation that impacted the agriculture community and family farms in particular, and they never talked to them. In fact, the first that most of those family farms and those people began to hear about that was at a meeting of that minister and the Minister of Labour's staff in the Grande Prairie area, I believe, in which a very famous thing was said within that debate. When there were some questions about what would happen when calving was happening at night, how that would work within occupational health and safety regulations, the response from that minister's staff was: don't let the bull out anymore with the cows at night, and the calves will not go through.

Now, my friend the hon. Member for Vermilion-Lloydminster is a veterinarian, and he may be able to take it offline and explain to

you why that strategy won't work. I will leave it to him to discuss the science of that because I suspect, Madam Chair, that that would be difficult to do in *Hansard*. But that does not work. That's the point.

That is the consultation that we see from the minister of agriculture. Now, he calls that red tape.

The Deputy Chair: Hon. member, you are going to link this back?

Mr. Nixon: Absolutely. We're going back to his comments about that the hon. Member for Drumheller-Stettler's amendment is red tape because it would require that minister to actually talk to the people that he is responsible for governing.

This government has a terrible track record when it comes to consultation. There's no doubt about it. They can't hide from that. It is not unreasonable for the hon. Member for Drumheller-Stettler, who is a producer himself, to point out that the industry wants to be consulted before they make significant decisions. So the minister, who belongs at least to a government that has the worst record of consultation with the people of this province in the history of this province, should at least turn that back over to the people of Alberta. Instead, though, it appears by his own words that he wants to avoid the red tape of consulting with farmers and ranchers inside the province of Alberta, and that is a shame.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. member.

Are there any other members wishing to speak to amendment A3? The hon. Member for Vermilion-Lloydminster, followed by the hon. Member for Fort McMurray-Wood Buffalo.

Dr. Starke: Well, thank you, Madam Chair. It's with some interest that I address the amendment that is being proposed to Bill 7 with regard to requiring consultation prior to the invocation of a certification program. I really worry in a lot of instances with regard to this bill but specifically with regard to the certification. I would really appreciate the Minister of Agriculture and Forestry actually addressing this; that is, what is his familiarity with certification programs as it deals with food production, whether it be animal or plant production? I'd really like to know what that level of familiarity is because I will tell you that I have a considerable degree of familiarity with certification programs, how they work and how they don't work.

I'll provide an example that I'm very familiar with, and that is the pork quality assurance program that was brought in by the pork producers of Alberta some 15 years or so ago. Now, the pork producers, being a very progressive and forward-thinking lot, realized that it was important that consumers are given assurance that the pork that was being produced within Alberta is of high quality and that it removed a number of the potential hazards that could occur, including the presence of antibiotic residues, including the presence of broken needles in the pork meat, and a number of other things. They recognized this before it was demanded by consumers, before it was mandated by government. This was something that was led by the producers themselves. They developed a pork quality certification program within the industry, and that certification program was then expanded a number of years later to include animal welfare issues. That certification program was in fact run by the pork industry.

8:30

My concern with what is present within this act right here is that that would clearly fall outside of the organic food production section, starting with section 7 in the act, and a program like the pork quality assurance program could be mandated by government as a certification program. When the Minister of Agriculture and

Forestry assures us that that's what the local food council would look at, my concern is: what if there are no pork producers on that local food council? That could easily happen. There is no mandated requirement that specific producer groups be included. What if during the course of the recruitment of the local food council no pork producers stepped forward or were in fact nominated or appointed to this local food council?

Now, the local food council may decide: hey, it's a good idea for us to develop a certification program. Or it might not even be the council that thinks that. Maybe someone in government would say: let's have a pork quality assurance certification program. The minister would then go to his local food council and say: well, what do you think? There being no pork producers on said council, they might say – well, first of all, they would have really no idea as to what sort of impact that would have. But they might say: "Sure, Minister. That sounds good. Go ahead with that." This amendment requires the minister to actually go to the pork producers of the province and say: hey, I need your feedback on this. But without this amendment that certification program or any other certification program that the government of the day deems desirable could be put in place, and it could be implemented without feedback from the directly impacted producer group.

That, Madam Chair, is a flaw in this legislation. It is a flaw that the Member for Drumheller-Stettler is, I think, honestly trying to help the minister with in terms of improving the legislation, yet the minister says that it is not needed. Well, it's a little bit like insurance; you don't know how good it is until you actually need it. In this case you don't know how good this legislation will be until something like this comes up.

Now, I've used the example of pork certification because I'm very familiar with it. It was a program, as I said, run by the pork council of Alberta, and the certification was performed by certified registered veterinarians across the province who had to take specific training as far as being auditors and validators of pork production in the province. But no, the government thinks that it can just institute a certification program and go ahead with it. My concern is: what if we're talking about a small producer group, a relatively tiny niche group that somebody, though, decides, "Wow. We should have this certification program," and that niche group is not represented on the minister's local food council? Who speaks for that producer group? Who will tell the minister, "Whoa. This certification is either unnecessary, a duplication of what already exists, or running contrary to what happens"? None of those safeguards or checks and balances will be in place because this legislation does not provide for them.

So, Madam Chair, this is a flaw in this legislation. Now, I would hope that the minister would recognize that this amendment attempts to address this flaw and attempts to address a situation that could become extremely problematic for a specific producer group. I can only conclude that if the minister does not see that as being a potential flaw, if the minister does not see the need for this amendment, he is satisfied with the legislation as it stands. But I will tell you that the legislation as it stands leaves significant potential for a certification program to be introduced that would be specifically detrimental to a sector of agricultural production, and there are no checks and balances in place to prevent that from happening. So I would certainly encourage the minister to rethink this, to take this back to his ministry officials if need be, to adjourn debate on this amendment if need be, but this amendment is a good measure to try to close what potentially could be a very detrimental part of this legislation.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. member.

Are there any other members wishing to speak to the bill? Is the hon. Member for Fort McMurray-Wood Buffalo still wishing to speak?

Mr. Yao: Sorry. There was a list.

The Deputy Chair: Please go ahead.

Mr. Yao: Madam Chair, it's hard to follow Vermilion-Lloydminster because, quite honestly, he's a great orator, so I will just stick to my speech. I rise to speak in support of my colleague's amendment to Bill 7. This amendment will add the following subsection to section 6: "The minister shall consult with producers and processors for a period of not less than 60 days and consider any comments or feedback provided prior to making a regulation under subsection (1)."

Now, Madam Chair, you know, my colleagues are correct. This is about consultation, and quite honestly we've been trying to teach the government side consultation for the last three years to no avail. I should not say that. I give due credit where credit is due. For the daylight savings time bill they consulted, and they consulted very thoroughly. They set the bar there for consultation because they sent it to committee, and they did a proper communication with the public. They got people from all over to speak on that, and it was good.

All right. Anyways, the point is that it was great consultation. It set the bar for consultation. We thought they had learned, but they did not. My good friend from Drumheller-Stettler has provided a good amendment that is really trying to cover the bases for the good minister. You know, too often this government lacks real consultation with those affected by the legislation, but this amendment would allow for more proper consultation with stakeholders prior to any new regulation being enacted. This is a very important amendment, as we want to be sure that those that are affected most by this legislation are consulted before any changes are made. Again, this bill is about transparency and giving groups a proper voice so that any changes made are done with the support of the industry and for the benefit of Albertans.

Madam Chair, I encourage all members to vote in favour of this amendment. Thank you so much.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. member.

Are there any other members wishing to speak to amendment A3? The hon. Member for Calgary-Hays.

Mr. McIver: Thank you, Madam Chair. I appreciate this opportunity. This amendment truly is about consultation, something the government could actually use a reminder of. Bill 6 was raised here. I understand that there was a time not that long ago where the minister was at a beef meeting in Red Deer. He picked up an apparatus and suggested that it might be for piercing ears. He learned later on that it was for use on the other end of the animal, that it assisted with the transition from bull to steer. Had there been consultation before that, had he actually consulted before this particular event, the minister might not have gone through that embarrassing little question-and-answer period. I'm sure his colleagues will all want to ask him about this particular incident after this evening's proceedings.

It's about consultation. It matters. Now, listen, the government, with all due respect, has embarrassed itself constantly in the last three years by bringing out a piece of legislation without talking to people and then having to follow up with another piece of legislation to fix what the first piece of legislation did and then having to bring up another piece of legislation to fix what the first and second pieces of legislation did and in some cases even having

to bring a fourth piece of legislation to fix what the first, second, and third pieces of legislation didn't get right.

What comes to mind right now as another example are the election finance bylaws, where they seem to have to change it twice a year even though every time they do it, they claim that it's the best ever and it's perfect. Why? Because they don't consult before they make the decisions and commit them to legislation. You know what? Everybody that works with something every day is an expert. If you live on one side of the street and go to the other side, you're an expert at crossing the street at that corner.

They're about to make legislation now about food producers, food producers in a whole range of areas. You would think they would have figured this out after the Bill 6 fiasco that they authored. They're dealing with a whole range of producers. All this is saying is: take 60 days. Talk to those producers before you put the regulations into place so you don't have unintended consequences, so the government doesn't have to come back here in the fall embarrassed for the mistake that they made in the spring.

8:40

Now – you know what? – in the best world maybe this is perfect, but the government's track record is not one of being perfect. Their track record is of botching the job and having to come back two and three times to fix what the first piece of legislation got wrong, and in almost every case because they didn't ask the people that the legislation was affecting. All this amendment is asking the government to do is take a little time, talk to the food producers, the livestock producers, the crop producers and say: before we put these rules into place that are going to affect your life, how is it going to work for you? They might be pleasantly surprised. They might be surprised, whether it's pleasantly or not, about the suggestions that people might make. Whether it's a pleasant surprise or not, it might prevent the government from being humiliated and having to come back and fix what they say doesn't need fixing, again, because it's happened so many times.

You know what? In consultation, it says here, with some organic producers, some have said that this is far from perfect, this legislation, but it's a start. Well, if it's far from perfect, perhaps it would be incumbent upon the government before they put the regulations in place to spend 60 days and make it a little bit closer to perfect since it's already been stated that it's far from perfect.

Again, unintended consequences. We've heard from producers, a former Calgary greenhouse owner that said, referring to the carbon tax, something that they've had to come back and change three or four times for all the mistakes they've made, "You couldn't come up with better policies to crush not only small farms, but I think small Alberta businesses in general." That quote was from Global on December 15, 2016.

At what cost to producers is certification, one has to ask. Well, if you ask the producers, they might tell you. Minister, we're trying to throw you a lifeline here. We're the best friends you've got, because you keep botching the job, and we keep giving you great suggestions on how to not botch the job, and you're drowning, frankly, and you keep pushing the flotation device away. Grab onto this one. This is a good idea. You'll be happier. You'll be happier when you don't have to come back and bring in another piece of legislation to fix it because you made a whole bunch of food producers angry because you put them out of business or made it harder for them to stay in business.

This is an opportunity for the minister to get it right. This is an opportunity for the minister to actually – what's really crazy is that this is about talking to Albertans. The minister has just said that he considers talking to Albertans to be red tape. It's actually his job. This is just a polite suggestion. I'm probably being less polite than

the amendment actually is, but the polite suggestion of the amendment is that talking to the Albertans whose lives you're going to change is not red tape; it's a good idea, which is why I'm going to vote for this amendment and I sincerely hope the government does, too.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. member.

I will now call on the hon. Member for Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills.

Mr. Cooper: Well, thank you. A pleasure to rise and speak to the amendment this evening. I'd just like to point out a couple of things. You know, this evening many of us had the pleasure of eating some local food. It was so kindly provided by the Alberta Beef Producers. I think some of them have joined us here in the gallery this evening to witness the proceedings in this very important bill debate, interestingly enough on a piece of legislation that will be very, very likely to affect beef producers in the province of Alberta, along with a whole swath of other producers, including barley producers. I understand that there was some . . .

Mr. McIver: Bless the barley producers.

Mr. Cooper: Bless the barley producers.

. . . barley production that also took place at the dinner this evening and was consumed, some good Alberta barley. Liquid barley.

I don't know. I think that if you were to go up to the gallery this evening and ask the beef producers, "Would you like to be consulted prior to regulations being changed on a piece of legislation that directly affects you?" I'll almost give you a 10 out of 10 that they will answer, "Yes, we would like to be consulted." I heard the minister this evening say: "Well, that's what the council is for. It's to talk to them about consultation. Trust us. We'll talk; we'll talk to them; we'll talk to the council. Don't worry. We've got it all covered. I'm from the government; I'm here to help." What we ought to do is trust but verify, and that's exactly what this amendment does. We trust that the minister will consult, but this amendment produces verification that, in fact, consultation will take place for at least 60 days prior to the changing of a regulation.

Now, this particular amendment isn't even all that prescriptive. It doesn't specify the type of consultation. It doesn't require notification. It still leaves even more ability to the minister than perhaps I would have if I was writing the amendment, but I know that my colleague from Drumheller-Stettler is kind and gracious and wants to allow the minister to make sure that he still has the tools to do his important work. So he wasn't overly prescriptive of the minister in this particular case but merely asked for 60 days. I can tell you that nothing this government does gets done in 60 days anyway. I mean, look: the most important piece of legislation that they had to introduce, Bill 12, was introduced probably close to 60 days ago, never received royal assent. You know, even the most important thing they do takes longer than 60 days. The member isn't asking for six months on every single regulation change, merely 60 days of consultation.

It behooves the minister . . .

Mr. McIver: Hooves. I like what you did with that.

Mr. Cooper: It behooves the minister . . .

An Hon. Member: Another one. Very good. He's on a roll.

Mr. Cooper: That one was an accident.

... to take stock about where exactly they're at with respect to interacting with producers, with a wide variety of producers, in allowing folks who are going to be affected by legislation to provide feedback.

I don't need to remind this House, because a number of my colleagues have, of the debacles in the past. I don't need to remind this House of the missteps that the minister has made. I don't need to remind the House how the government has continually turned its back on rural Alberta. I don't need to remind the House that the situation in rural Alberta with respect to crime has been outrageous and that the government did nothing for way over 60 days. You know, I don't need to remind the House about all of these negative situations that the government has been responsible for, but this type of amendment right here is exactly – exactly – what can prevent these sorts of actions in the future.

I encourage members of the government to act on your own accord, not just the accord of the minister. Act on your own accord. I only see a few ministers here present today, so here's your opportunity. [interjections] I didn't refer to the absence of any minister, just that there are only a few here.

Mr. Westhead: Point of order.

The Deputy Chair: Hon. member, a point of order has been called. The hon. Member for Banff-Cochrane.

Point of Order

Referring to the Absence of Members

Mr. Westhead: Thank you, Madam Chair. It's against good parliamentary practice to refer to a member's presence or absence, and I think the hon. Member for Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills should know better. I would like him to retract that and apologize.

The Deputy Chair: The hon. – what are you? – Official Opposition House Leader. My apologies.

Mr. Nixon: Well, thank you, Madam Chair. I blend in with the rest of my colleagues. I understand.

First off, I notice there's no citation from the hon. deputy government whip. As would certainly be the tradition in this place, you should rise with a standing order citation.

That said, the hon. Member for Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills did not refer to any specific minister's absence and therefore did not break the tradition of this House. While I understand that the deputy whip would really like to just avoid the core point of the fact that this government doesn't want to consult with people, he should probably listen to what the member has to say. It will help him out.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. member.

Hon. members, there is no point of order, but I would caution all members of the House. I recognize that we're enjoying the debate this evening, but maybe we could try to refocus on the amendment at hand and refrain from deviation.

8:50

Mr. Cooper: Well, in the name of reaching across the aisle, I'll be happy to withdraw my remarks.

An Hon. Member: All of them?

Mr. Cooper: Not all of them because 99 per cent of them were really, really excellent.

Debate Continued

Mr. Cooper: The point remains the same, Madam Chair. The goal here is to save the minister from himself. The goal is to require consultation with the very, very, very important producers that are all across the province. That's exactly what this does.

I encourage all members to act on their own accord and not on behalf of the minister. I see that we may have the numbers in order to pass this this evening if everyone wanted to vote with the opposition on this. Do the right thing, and support consultation.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. member.

Are there any other members wishing to speak to amendment A3? The hon. Member for Barrhead-Morinville-Westlock.

Mr. van Dijken: Yes. Thank you, Madam Chair. I will be brief. I do feel it important to stand up and speak to amendment A3 to Supporting Alberta's Local Food Sector Act. Essentially, my colleague from Drumheller-Stettler is bringing forth an amendment that makes a lot of sense, to try and close some of the holes within this bill. I believe that the minister has a responsibility to properly consult with the public, with the industry, with the stakeholders that are being affected by legislation that's being brought forward, and I do not see anywhere in the bill that it is protecting stakeholders, industry from government sticking their fingers in the business of industry. We need to be careful that we're not doing something from the government side that will interfere with what is naturally occurring quite often at the industry level.

I reflect back on debacles of the past without proper consultation and how that has affected this government. But I also reflect back on the Member for Vermilion-Lloydminster's comments with regard to the pork quality assurance program. Having been in the pork industry for a couple of decades and then some, I was able to be part of that whole process as a producer. That consultation and that development of the quality assurance program within the pork industry was a very healthy development of a program that brought certainty to consumers about the quality of the product that they were going to be able to buy and purchase. It was a healthy development of the program because the people, the stakeholders that were directly involved got to have their say.

We had many town halls right across the province – I attended a few of them – and we had open discussion on the best way forward. The fact that that education took place alongside that consultation became very effective in the buy-in from producers to realize the need for such a program and for such regulations that they would have to put in practice on their operations. It is critical that we have producer buy-in, that we have industry buy-in.

You know, we have the bill in front of us. The local food council is being put in place by the minister. We really don't have any parameters on the structure of the local food council, who will be participating, who will not be participating. It's completely under the guise of the minister to make those decisions, to make those appointments. In that regard I would suggest that it's very important that the minister recognize that there is quite likely the possibility that the local food council is not going to be able to cover all the bases of the different segments of food production that are currently in Alberta.

When regulations are being brought forward by the minister, we have a small segment of food production that's being represented on the local food council. We have that small segment of food production being appointed by the minister, so it does concern me as a food producer that the minister is receiving a fair bit of leeway in the appointment of the council and also the development of the regulations that will be put in place with regard to local food.

I do know that the minister is regularly consulting with producers. In fact, this morning on my way into work I met with some of the dairy industry and the Alberta vet and pork industry representatives and beef industry representatives who were going to meet with the minister on concerns with regard to some prescription drugs and the availability of these. I know that this is happening at this time. I believe it's a healthy discussion that continues to happen, but I have concerns where we have the potential for the asparagus producers of this province that they might not get heard. I would suggest that quite likely the asparagus producers of this province will not be part of the local food council.

You might say: well, yeah, we don't grow asparagus in Alberta, do we? Actually, there are asparagus farmers in Alberta. I was privileged to tour one of the farms in the Olds-Didsbury area and learned a lot about asparagus growth in Alberta. These are the types of individuals that might get blindsided by regulations put forward where the minister and the government feel that it's in the best interests of that individual, of that producer group, yet they are not fully aware of all of the aspects of what those businesses, what those producers are facing on a day-to-day basis and how these regulations could impact their businesses and their bottom lines.

We have to be very careful how we move forward as governments and not to stick our fingers into the business of industry and potentially create damage to an already healthy – we want to try and improve and continually try and move forward with industry. I believe that this is a very healthy, a very good way to try and close off some of the loopholes within Bill 7, and I would encourage all members of the House to vote in favour of this amendment.

Thank you.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. member.

Are there any other members wishing to speak to amendment A3? The hon. Member for Lac La Biche-St. Paul-Two Hills.

Mr. Hanson: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. I just wanted to stand up and briefly speak in support of the amendment from our senior member here from Drumheller-Stettler.

I just find it a little bit ironic that we're actually having this conversation tonight, being that a lot of us here in the House from both sides attended a very nice meeting and greeting with some great Alberta beef and some great beers. I remember the minister actually getting up and speaking about the respect that he has for the producers and the ag industry in our province. He talked about the importance of those industries, and I think you're absolutely right, sir, that they are very, very important to us.

We also talked about the idea that there were 1,400, I believe, different brewery products that were around the province and his desire to go out and with the help of one of the other ministers try all 1,400. I think that would be a great opportunity to get out and meet with these producers, and maybe we could go to different areas of the province and sample that while we're consulting with these folks on some of this regulation. I don't think it would be all that unpleasant, Minister, if we got out and actually met with these folks.

9:00

What I want to do is that I just want to read this amendment, and then if the minister could please comment on exactly which part of that he has a problem with. Here it is.

(2) The Minister shall consult with producers and processors for a period of not less than 60 days and consider any comments or feedback provided prior to making a regulation under subsection (1).

If the minister would please clarify for us exactly what part of that statement you have an issue with. Thanks.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. member.

Are there any other members wishing to speak to the amendment? Seeing none, I will call the question.

[The voice vote indicated that the motion on amendment A3 lost]

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 9:01 p.m.]

[One minute having elapsed, the committee divided]

[Ms Sweet in the chair]

For the motion:

Cooper	McIver	Starke
Fraser	Nixon	Strankman
Gotfried	Panda	van Dijken
Hanson	Smith	Yao

Against the motion:

Carlier	Jansen	Nielsen
Ceci	Kazim	Piquette
Connolly	Kleinstauber	Renaud
Coolahan	Larivee	Sabir
Dach	Littlewood	Schmidt
Dang	Loyola	Schreiner
Drever	Malkinson	Shepherd
Eggen	McCuaig-Boyd	Sucha
Fitzpatrick	McKitrick	Turner
Gray	McLean	Westhead
Hinkley	Miller	Woollard
Horne	Miranda	

Totals:	For – 12	Against – 35
---------	----------	--------------

[Motion on amendment A3 lost]

The Deputy Chair: We are now back on the original bill, Bill 7. Are there any comments? The hon. Member for Vermilion-Lloydminster.

Dr. Starke: Well, thank you, Madam Chair. It's my pleasure to speak to Bill 7 at the committee stage. You know, I will share with the Assembly once again, as I have in the past, that when it comes to food production, this is an area that as a veterinarian I've had significant involvement with, and the veterinarians take very seriously their role in ensuring the wholesomeness, safety, and nutritional value of the food that is produced from the animals that are raised in Alberta. I think it's been said before – and it bears repeating – that the food products that we produce in Alberta are sought after the world over. The minister will know this from his trips abroad, that the products we produce are of high value and are highly sought out the world over. But we also have a burgeoning local food market. We have a burgeoning local food movement, and that was certainly discussed in a previous private member's bill, when we talked about a local food act and promotion of local food.

I think the point that I'm raising here is that this increase in interest and in consumption of local food is happening – it's interesting that we would use this term – “organically.” It's happening on its own. It is happening without the assistance of government. It is happening without, in fact, the interference of government.

My concern with Bill 7 is that, as this government has done so many times in the past because it has a government-knows-best attitude, it is a solution looking for a problem to solve. There is no problem that needs solving here, yet the government has come up

with this bill to ostensibly solve a problem that has been undefined and does not in fact exist. Local food production, local food consumption, the interest in local food by consumers, by restaurants, by various other quarters within the province of Alberta, is exploding without the government's assistance or, in fact, their interference. So the need for the government to intervene here is questionable.

You know, again, we were just at, as has been referenced earlier, a reception where Alberta locally produced beef was provided as well as some of the beer that is brewed in Alberta today. A lot of that expansion is happening without a local food act, and my question, in fact, is on how the government thinks that, of course, you can bring something like this piece of legislation in, and it just will make things go better because the government's assumption, specifically, this party's assumption, is that things go better when they're run by government. Well, they don't always.

I will offer specifically an area that I have, again, some knowledge and expertise on, and that is starting with section 10 of this act. I would really appreciate if the Minister of Agriculture and Forestry would actually listen to my comments. I know he's engaged in a very active conversation with his colleagues there. I can appreciate it's very important, yet I'm trying to point out some flaws in your legislation, Minister, as they relate specifically to the process of complaints and verification of certification status.

It relates to the topic, Madam Chair, of biosecurity. I'm not as familiar with plant producers, but I will tell you that with regard to the production of animals in this province, many producers in our province conduct very strict and stringent biosecurity rules in their production. In fact, I have been the consulting veterinarian, for example, once again, in the pork industry for a pork barn, and I could not have any contact with live pigs for 72 hours prior to setting foot in that farm. Prior to going into the barn, I had to shower and change my clothes completely. It was a shower-in, shower-out facility. You know, that's not unusual. There are lots of facilities in Alberta that run like that. That is true in the poultry industry. That is true in the turkey production industry. That is true in many, many operations in this province.

9:10

Yet in this bill in the certification section there is absolutely no provision for respecting the biosecurity of the facilities to be inspected. In fact, I would suggest to the minister that because these are organic facilities and many of these facilities do not use antibiotics, will not use antibiotics, then in some ways those animals are in fact more susceptible to disease and that if a disease was accidentally introduced by an inspector, the government could be liable in that situation, yet there are no safeguards in the legislation whatsoever to protect against that happening.

Madam Chair, this is not some esoteric or theoretical threat to producers. In fact, you know, during the consultations on Bill 6 – and the Member for Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville will remember this because it was in Vegreville – this point was raised about biosecurity, and one producer, who talked about the level of biosecurity on her premises, indicated that if an occupational health and safety inspector came to her farm gate, she would force that inspector to strip to his underwear before she allowed him on the farm. She said that, depending on her mood of the day, she might not even be that fussy about him leaving his underwear on.

[Mr. Hinkley in the chair]

Now, Mr. Chair, that may all sound humorous to some members on the other side, but the truth of the matter is that that is just how serious our producers treat biosecurity on their premises. They have specific protocols in place to ensure that infectious and contagious

disease organisms are not introduced inadvertently by inspectors or people that come onto the farm. You don't go onto these farms just casually to try to sell something to the farmer. You don't just pull up to the barn door and say: hey, I've got this new piece of equipment or this new feed I'd like to sell you. That doesn't happen because these Alberta producers are very concerned about biosecurity.

The provisions in this bill, Minister, do not safeguard producers against breaches in biosecurity. There's nothing in here. And the regulations that you might draw up are unknown to this point, and they give producers absolutely no comfort in this regard.

Mr. Chair, I pointed out the broader difficulties that I have with this bill. This bill is not necessary, and in fact this bill has greater potential to do harm. The local food sector is doing very well. Organic food is doing very, very well in this province. My younger son works at a Planet Organic grocery store in Calgary, and they are very, very busy. That sector is doing very well. The consumers do their research, and they're very, very careful about how and where they source their products. I just am very concerned that we have found in this legislation enough examples of flaws that in now trying to have government regulate a sector which is already growing, which is already expanding, which is already having great success, the government is simply going to get in the way of all of that.

[Ms Sweet in the chair]

Madam Chair, I can't support Bill 7, but specifically I would like to hear from the minister what measures are going to be in place as he sends out these verifiers, these inspectors to go onto farms to inspect the different areas of verification that are described within section 13 of the bill. How is he going to assure the producers of Alberta, those who have adopted high-level biosecurity practices, that from these casual visitors the production facilities aren't then going to be susceptible to the introduction of a contagious or infectious disease that could spell disaster for that production unit? How are you going to prevent the introduction of porcine epidemic diarrhea where that doesn't occur in a production facility? What about transmissible gastroenteritis? How are you going to protect against that? It's highly contagious. It can easily be transmitted by vectors, vectors being things like vehicles, clothing, and that sort of thing.

Madam Chair, these are not theoretical, esoteric considerations. These are very real-world considerations. The minister, by introducing this bill, has brought forward a mechanism which threatens some of our highest level producers in the province because it allows for inspection of facilities with no provision for the respect of biosecurity. I think the minister needs to answer to that. I think Alberta producers deserve some response from this minister, whether he does that now or whether he does that at third reading, to ensure that these biosecurity protocols will not be violated and that these producers will not inadvertently fall victim to the introduction of a contagious or infectious disease that could spell the end of their production facility.

I'm not overstating this. Producers have been ruined by the introduction of a contagious or infectious disease. It was one of the risks of being a practising veterinarian. It was one of my worst nightmares, that a producer could be rendered basically bankrupt because I inadvertently introduced an organism into their production facility. I can tell you that we took very, very, very careful steps to make sure that never happened.

Madam Chair, again, I'm opposed to this piece of legislation, but with the specific provision of these inspectors I need to hear from this minister how he intends to assure Alberta producers that their livelihood will not be threatened by an inadvertent, accidental

introduction of contagious or infectious disease into their production facilities.

Thank you.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. member.

Are there any other members that are wishing to speak to Bill 7?
The hon. Member for Calgary-Hays.

Mr. McIver: Yeah. Well, Madam Chair, this is a sad point because the government brought a bill that, if they had taken a little more time, has the potential of doing some good things, but it's clear that that isn't the case. My hon. colleague from Drumheller-Stettler put on the floor three amendments, all of which could have improved it, and the government shot them all down, which is their right to do. The problem is that now we're left with a bill that while the government could have made it supportable, it has chosen not to do so, has chosen to put a bill in place without committing to consulting with the industry members that will be affected. They've not committed to dealing with the industry committees that already exist before creating the local food councils to make sure that no important sectors or segments of the food producing industry are left out.

For the producers what are they to think except: "While this might be a good idea, what if the government leaves my sector out? What if I produce a particular crop that isn't represented on the local food committee? What if I produce a type of livestock or egg that isn't represented on the food products marketing council, and they put in rules that make it impossible for me to do business? I don't even have that 60-day period to talk to the government to say: hey, what about me? What about my family? What about my job? What about all the people that work for my farm, for my ranch, in my business?"

We've got a minister that in the debate complained about red tape on a bill which is essentially creating red tape. He talked about a committee creating committees. This is a bill creating red tape. The silly thing is that the red tape or regulations potentially don't have to be bad. They could be helpful if the minister would commit to doing it right, but after multiple efforts to correct it, all of them rebuffed, they've made it impossible to support this bill.

The Chair: Are there any other members wishing to speak to the bill?

Seeing none, I will call the question.

[The voice vote indicated that the remaining clauses of Bill 7 were agreed to]

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 9:20 p.m.]

[One minute having elapsed, the committee divided]

[Ms Sweet in the chair]

For the motion:

Carlier	Kazim	Miranda
Ceci	Kleinstauber	Nielsen
Connolly	Larivee	Sabir
Coolahan	Littlewood	Schmidt
Dach	Loyola	Schreiner
Dang	Malkinson	Shepherd
Eggen	McCuaig-Boyd	Sucha
Gray	McKittrick	Turner
Hinkley	McLean	Westhead
Horne	Miller	Woollard
Jansen		

Against the motion:

Cooper	McIver	Strankman
Fraser	Nixon	van Dijken
Gotfried	Panda	Yao
Hanson	Starke	

Totals: For – 31 Against – 11

[The remaining clauses of Bill 7 agreed to]

[Title and preamble agreed to]

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

Hon. Members: Agreed.

The Deputy Chair: Opposed? Carried.

Bill 1

Energy Diversification Act

The Deputy Chair: Hon. members, we are now on amendment A2. Are there any members wishing to speak to the amendment? The hon. Minister of Energy.

Ms McCuaig-Boyd: Thank you, Madam Chair. I want to thank the Member for Calgary-Elbow for bringing forward this amendment. I certainly think that there's a laudable sentiment behind it, one that the government shares, which is to increase the participation of underrepresented groups in our energy sector. I also want to see communities from all regions and all groups of people in our province benefit from these programs.

You know, Madam Chair, there's a tendency when we talk about these programs to only focus on the immediate construction jobs that will build them and then the full-time staff who will be hired to operate the facilities once they're built. It's one reason that people focus on the locations where the facilities are built, and that's perfectly understandable. But the fact is that projects of this scale have enormous spinoff benefits for other businesses, and projects like these create many jobs for those contractors as well.

During a recent visit to Fort Saskatchewan with the Member for Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville I had the opportunity to meet with some of the contractors working with Inter Pipeline, who the members know was one of the successful candidates in the first round of PDP. I learned first-hand how widely spread the benefits of the Inter Pipeline investment are. I met the head of an indigenous company from out of Peace River. I heard that Cleantek, which is based out of Balzac, near Calgary, has been manufacturing light towers being used for the construction site. A few weeks ago the Premier and I visited Trade Winds, a subcontractor to the Inter Pipeline project, that currently employs a couple of hundred staff and is poised to hire another hundred merely for the increased business of Inter Pipeline. So I'm very excited by the possibilities I see for these programs to generate opportunities for companies right across the province.

Madam Chair, the current bill refers to programs for improving participation in the energy economy by underrepresented groups, which could include indigenous in some cases. The draft evaluation criteria for the program, separate and apart from the bill, specifically encourage indigenous community participation in the projects. I'm sure all members will agree that we need to encourage more indigenous participation in the energy sector.

That said, Madam Chair, I'm concerned about adding more specific requirements into this bill. One thing we did right in the first round of the PDP was evaluate specific applications on their merits,

and the integrity of that first round was independently verified by a fairness monitor. We want to replicate that process again. We want to be sure that we are looking at the best projects to achieve the government's objectives. A big part of the process of evaluating each project is its economic viability. That means such factors as access to feedstocks, utilities, water; access to a trained labour force; transportation to markets; and infrastructure support. All of that needs to be considered. For that reason, I think it's best that the programs remain neutral on geographic location and that we leave it up to industry proponents to demonstrate how their location sets out the best possible location that derives the greatest benefits to Albertans.

Again, I thank the member for his amendment, and I want to assure him that I did reflect carefully on the intent behind it because it is one I share. We do want to ensure that the benefits of these programs are as widespread as possible, but I believe we need to avoid adding further conditions to these programs at this time. So I will be voting no to this amendment, and I am encouraging other members of this Assembly to do the same.

Thank you.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. minister.

Are there any other members wishing to speak to the amendment? Seeing none, I will call the question.

[Motion on amendment A2 lost]

The Deputy Chair: We are now back on the original bill, Bill 1. Are there any other members wishing to speak to the bill? The hon. Member for Calgary-Foothills.

Mr. Panda: Madam Chair, thank you so much for the opportunity to speak again at the Committee of the Whole stage of Bill 1. A couple of hours ago my colleague from Calgary-Elbow and I tried to reason with the government and tried to make Bill 1 a better bill. I'm so disappointed that the NDP would not pass those amendments.

I have another amendment here, which I'll give to you shortly.

9:30

The Deputy Chair: Hon. member, your amendment will be referred to as A3. Please go ahead.

Mr. Panda: Okay. Thank you, Madam Chair. I move that Bill 1, Energy Diversification Act, be amended in section 2(3) by striking out "to use any financial tools available to the Commission under the Petroleum Marketing Act, including, but not limited to, loan guarantees and equity investments" and substituting "to use any financial tools available to the Commission under the Petroleum Marketing Act, with the exception of loan guarantees and equity investments".

Madam Chair, we fundamentally disagree with the use of loan guarantees and equity positions in businesses except if it is an emergency situation like the Trans Mountain expansion. When the government policies fail the investors, then there is no other way other than supporting, backstopping losses to the businesses. Other than that, in normal course we fundamentally disagree with the use of loan guarantees and equity positions.

We know the minister can still use these tools under the Petroleum Marketing Act, and that act is not being opened here. We also disagree with the minister being able to use any financial tools available. By restricting taking an equity position to businesses that produce dividends, it would be a matter of mitigating that risk. Madam Chair, that's why I brought this amendment. Businesses that produce dividends typically have a stronger financial position. For example, you know, the New Brunswick Liberal government

got into big trouble by handing out loans and loan guarantees to Atcon Construction, and they did that knowing the company was near the brink of insolvency, and the New Brunswick government is on the hook for tens of millions of dollars that they don't have.

We don't want the same situation here. We understand the intent of this bill, but at the same time this government failed all those businesses. No one wants to invest in petrochemical diversification because of the record of this NDP government and their ideological policies. That's why they need this Bill 1, which has some good intentions, but, you know, if we keep doing this, then investors will lose confidence, and there are no private investments coming based on the good policies. Businesses are leaving Alberta, so that's why I brought this amendment. I hope this House will pass this amendment.

Thank you.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. member.

Are there any other members wishing to speak to the amendment? The hon. Minister of Energy.

Ms McCuaig-Boyd: I'll be brief, Madam Chair. You know, this whole bill was formed on advice that we got through the EDAC committee, who did consult a wide breadth of Albertans and industry and indeed did some studies of what was done in other areas. They did this consultation over about 16 months, so I think we have some fairly solid advice on that.

I will be voting against the amendment, and I would ask members to also join me in that.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. member.

Are there any other members wishing to speak to amendment A3?

Seeing none, I will call the question.

[The voice vote indicated that the motion on amendment A3 lost]

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 9:35 p.m.]

[One minute having elapsed, the committee divided]

[Ms Sweet in the chair]

For the motion:

Cooper	McIver	Strankman
Fraser	Nixon	van Dijken
Gotfried	Panda	Yao
Hanson	Smith	

Against the motion:

Carlier	Horne	Miranda
Ceci	Jansen	Piquette
Connolly	Kleinstaub	Renaud
Coolahan	Larivee	Sabir
Dach	Littlewood	Schmidt
Dang	Loyola	Shepherd
Drever	Malkinson	Sucha
Eggen	McCuaig-Boyd	Turner
Fitzpatrick	McLean	Westhead
Gray	Miller	Woollard
Hinkley		

Totals:	For – 11	Against – 31
---------	----------	--------------

[Motion on amendment A3 lost]

The Deputy Chair: Are there any other members wishing to speak to the bill? The hon. Member for Calgary-South East.

Mr. Fraser: Thank you, Madam Chair. I just have an amendment to move on behalf of the Member for Calgary-Elbow.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. member. Please go ahead. Your amendment will be referred to as A4.

Mr. Fraser: Thank you, Madam Chair. It's my honour to stand and rise and speak to this House on behalf of my colleague the Member for Calgary-Elbow. I have to say that when he comes up with these amendments and he works on these amendments, he's typically nonpartisan when he's looking at it. It's in earnest. He's trying to come up with better ways not necessarily to help the government but to help Albertans, and that's what we really should be here for.

My amendment on behalf of Mr. Clark is to move that Bill 1, Energy Diversification Act [interjections] . . .

The Deputy Chair: Hon. members, he's reading the amendment out loud. Please give him the floor.

9:40

Mr. Fraser: Yes. Thank you, Madam Chair. Member, let's all get along tonight.

. . . be amended in section 2(1) by striking out "and" at the end of clause (e), by adding "and" at the end of clause (f), and adding the following after clause (f):

(g) promote and encourage domestic and international consumption of products supported under these programs.

This amendment aims to make Bill 1 more robust by looking for more opportunities to export energy in new ways as in the amendment I just stated. Although section 2(1) already states that the economic growth and energy diversification programs may be established under this act without limitation, the government saw fit to explicitly list a number of areas of focus. I believe that we can do better for Albertans by including diversification of export markets in energy diversification. One of the weaknesses that has been brought to the fore recently is our dependence on pipelines to export our energy products. We really want this bill to help Albertans develop and export energy products in ways other than fluids through pipelines or electricity through power lines. We want to help uncap Alberta's full energy potential.

Alberta is blessed with an abundance of relatively inexpensive electricity and natural gas, which can be combined to make a variety of value-added materials that embed carbon in objects that will last for centuries. We could also make this hydrogen gas for fuel cells, producing next to no environmental contamination if spilled. We can use our potential clean energy wealth to build our electric-intensive manufacturing or chemical treatment. We could use our electricity wealth to export computational capacity, which is critical for our data-intensive artificial intelligence and machine learning futures. Today we might not conceive of what inventions and discoveries will come in the world of energy future, but we can prepare Alberta to become a full participant and a leader.

We must do better for Albertans by considering and developing a platform for energy innovation for our future, and I urge all members to support the inclusion of more export opportunities in developing the future of Alberta's energy industry. Thank you.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. member.

Are there any other members wishing to speak to amendment A4? The hon. Minister of Energy.

Ms McCuaig-Boyd: Thank you, Madam Chair, and I would like to thank the hon. member for presenting that on behalf of the Member for Calgary-Elbow. I agree that it's well thought out, but I do have concerns that it fundamentally changes the intent of the bill. I think

some of what has been described can be captured under Bill 2, and some of the work we are doing in market access within my department and some that is being done in some of the others it covers.

Again I will not be voting for this amendment, but I do thank him for the thought put into it.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. minister.

Are there any other members wishing to speak to amendment A4?

Seeing none, I will call the question.

[Motion on amendment A4 lost]

The Deputy Chair: We are now on the original bill, Bill 1.

Hon. members, are there any speakers to the bill? The hon. Member for Calgary-Foothills.

Mr. Panda: Yeah. I'm speaking to Bill 1 again, Madam Chair. We tried a couple of amendments and were not successful. I have another amendment here, and I have enough copies here. I'll give them to the page.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. member. Your amendment will be referred to as A5. Please go ahead.

Mr. Panda: I didn't keep the copy. Sorry.

The Deputy Chair: Okay. If we can just get one of the pages to bring you back a copy.

Mr. Panda: Yeah. I've got one. Okay. Don't worry.

The Deputy Chair: Oh. You found it. Okay.

Mr. Panda: Madam Chair, I move that Bill 1, Energy Diversification Act, be amended by striking out section 2(2) and substituting the following:

(2) Financial support made available by the Minister for a program referred to in subsection (1) shall, subject to section 3(2), be limited to the use of royalty credits and tax credits.

Madam Chair, for the reasons I explained in my previous amendment, fundamentally I disagree with handing out grants to businesses. Also, the free money without government having some hold over the business is a recipe for abuse and disaster with the province's finances. Government gets into the business of picking winners and losers. That's what happened. If we allow the minister to use this bill, then it will end up picking winners and losers.

In the normal course, businesses should be able to find financing from a bank or a private lender, but because this government has issues with their economic policies, no one is investing here. That's why they had to bring in these bills to provide grants and loans and all sorts of handouts to keep the businesses in Alberta. I'm against that policy. When governments hand out free money to business, it's called corporate welfare. This party is supposed to be looking after the common people and looking after regular Albertans' interests rather than, you know, helping out their big businesses. That's the reason I would encourage them to look at their economic policies.

The minister mentioned the EDAC report. In that EDAC report the advisory committee actually advised the minister to look at the red tape, the regulatory red tape, and asked her to reduce the regulatory burden on the businesses, and in this Bill 1 that's not addressed.

There are so many things they could do before they give out loans and grants to the businesses. That's why I'm proposing to amend this Bill 1 to remove those options.

I'm asking this Assembly to support the amendment unanimously. Thank you.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. member.

Are there any other members wishing to speak to amendment A5? The hon. Minister of Energy.

Ms McCuaig-Boyd: Thank you, Madam Chair. For reasons I mentioned two amendments ago, this would change the intent of the bill. I want to point out that there is a fairness monitor, who is a third-party validator, for the process, so the concern about choosing winners and losers isn't valid. There's a solid set of criteria. Again, this would fundamentally change the bill, so I will be voting against it.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. minister.

Are there any other members wishing to speak to amendment A5?

Seeing none, I will call the question.

[Motion on amendment A5 lost]

The Deputy Chair: We are now back on the original bill. Are there any other members wishing to speak to the bill?

Mr. Fraser: Madam Chair, I have another amendment on behalf of the Member for Calgary-Elbow.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. member. Your amendment will be referred to as A6. Please go ahead.

Mr. Fraser: Thank you, Madam Chair. Again it's an honour to rise on behalf of the Member for Calgary-Elbow, to move that Bill 1, Energy Diversification Act, be amended in section 4(1) by striking out "Executive Council" and substituting "Legislative Assembly."

This is a simple amendment which changes the Energy minister's reporting to cabinet to reporting to the House on the progress of programs affiliated with this act. As the amendment states, it's simply just making things more transparent. It's important that we do our best for Albertans by keeping them up to date, through their MLAs, on an initiative as important as this one. This amendment in no way prevents the Energy minister from reporting to cabinet as frequently as the Premier requests. I hope all members of this House support this small but impactful improvement to this bill.

Thank you.

9:50

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. member.

Are there any members wishing to speak to the amendment? The hon. Minister of Energy.

Ms McCuaig-Boyd: Thank you, Madam Chair. It is similar to, I think, an amendment from yesterday or previously about reporting. I want to point out that there is annual reporting that would be online and could be submitted to the Legislative Assembly, but I think it's more important that cabinet stays in there as the one making decisions. But there certainly is a requirement already. It's called an annual report, and I think that's more than transparent.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. minister.

Are there any other members wishing to speak to amendment A6?

Seeing none, I will call the question.

[Motion on amendment A6 lost]

The Deputy Chair: Are there any other members wishing to speak to Bill 1?

Mr. Panda: Madam Chair, I have another amendment to improve this Bill 1. I have the requisite copies here.

The Deputy Chair: Hon. member, if you'd like to proceed, your amendment is A7.

Mr. Panda: Thank you, Madam Chair. I move to amend Bill 1 as follows: section 1 is struck out, and the following is substituted: "Definitions" – I mean, everyone has a copy. They can read this.

The reason I brought this amendment, Madam Chair, is that if grants must be handed out to keep the businesses that are running away from Alberta because of NDP policies, we have to make sure that they're there for things that can still be used on the industrial site if the businesses getting the grant go bankrupt. What it means is that when this government picks winners and losers and if some of those business are not sound and they lose money and they go out of business, at least if we are giving out grants, they should be spent on things like roads; railway sidings, spurs, or yards; telecommunications like towers and fibre optics; water and watershed drainage because we can't build on swamps; ground levelling; electrical transmission or distribution to the site to energize it; or natural gas distribution lines to heat the buildings; but not to provide feedstock for industrial operations.

Madam Chair, as I explained, if an industrial site goes bankrupt after receiving grants from the NDP – and we have one in the heartland – at least the site services can be used by someone else taking over that site. When others come forward to take over that business and if the money that we've given as grants is used on infrastructure, that money will be put to use for a good purpose. This kind of infrastructure does not go to waste and can be accounted for.

Another thing we can use the grants for is job training. If the money is spent on job training, then they're also accountable in that the funds can flow directly to the college or trade school to support the workers of the facility who need training. The NDP is supposed to look after working-class people. This way, if we put a condition on when we give grants to these companies that that money should be used for job training, that money is well spent.

For those reasons, I'm just hoping the minister would support this amendment and ask all her colleagues to work in favour of this amendment. Thank you.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. member.

Are there any other members wishing to speak to amendment A7? The hon. Minister of Energy.

Ms McCuaig-Boyd: Thank you, Madam Chair. You know, all the criteria that, as mentioned, are part of the application process for these companies: companies are checked for viability, that they are a good, solid company; their records; their means of operating; how many trained staff they have. All of that kind of thing is encompassed in the application process, so I don't feel it's necessary to put it in the bill. It's a bit redundant. Again, all of the health of the company – and there's quite a bit of criteria for them to get the project, and they have to meet milestones before they even get the grants. All of that is in place already, so I will be voting against it.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. minister.

Are there any other members wishing to speak to amendment A7?

Seeing none, I will call the question.

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

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 9:56 p.m.]

[One minute having elapsed, the committee divided]

[Ms Sweet in the chair]

For the motion:

Cooper	McIver	Smith
Fraser	Nixon	Strankman
Gotfried	Panda	Yao
Hanson		

Against the motion:

Carlier	Horne	Miranda
Ceci	Jansen	Piquette
Connolly	Kazim	Renaud
Coolahan	Kleinstauber	Sabir
Dach	Larivee	Schmidt
Dang	Littlewood	Shepherd
Drever	Loyola	Sucha
Eggen	Malkinson	Turner
Fitzpatrick	McCuaig-Boyd	Westhead
Gray	McLean	Woollard
Hinkley	Miller	

Totals:	For – 10	Against – 32
---------	----------	--------------

[Motion on amendment A7 lost]

The Deputy Chair: Are there any other speakers to the bill? The hon. Member for Calgary-Foothills.

10:00

Mr. Panda: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm getting really, really encouraged in this House to move amendments unsuccessfully. I have another amendment. I'm sending you the copies.

The Deputy Chair: Once I have a copy at the table, you can proceed. It will be referred to as A8.

Mr. Panda: Okay.

The Deputy Chair: Hon. member, you can go ahead. I now have a copy at the table.

Mr. Panda: Thank you. Madam Chair, this amendment is to cover NAFTA, the North American free trade agreement, and the comprehensive economic and trade agreement in compliance. It's too late in the night, so I'm forgetting the abbreviations.

Any support the government is going to provide to a business should complement our international trade agreements, like NAFTA and CETA. At the same time, we need to make sure that our competitors for the petrochemical sector play fair. When I say "play fair," we don't want this government to pick winners and losers. At the same time, the businesses that are receiving grants and loan guarantees from Bill 1 should not be unfair to their business competitors. That's why our minister needs to stand up and go after Pennsylvania and other states in the U.S. like Texas if they're playing games and using unfair practices to lure businesses to their jurisdiction. When we have trade agreements like that, we have to be fair to our trading partners. That's why I'm asking the minister to go through this amendment and support this, because any new petrochemical facility is of no use to Alberta if they don't play the game fairly with their business competition from other businesses in other jurisdictions that are partners in NAFTA and CETA.

I hope everyone in the Assembly agrees to this amendment and passes this.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. member.

The hon. Minister of Energy.

Ms McCuaig-Boyd: Thank you, Madam Chair. I can assure the House that in the drafting of this bill we did it in conjunction with the Minister of Economic Development and Trade. Canada, as you know, is a signatory to several trade agreements, so we did make sure that all of these programs are trade compliant. We also did through the EDAC report look at jurisdictions like Louisiana and Texas, who have incentives. We may not have the same types of incentives, but we have ensured that they will be trade compliant. This work has already been done.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. minister.

Are there any other members wishing to speak to amendment A8?

Seeing none, I will call the question.

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

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 10:05 p.m.]

[One minute having elapsed, the committee divided]

[Ms Sweet in the chair]

For the motion:

Cooper	Hanson	Panda
Fraser	McIver	Strankman
Gotfried	Nixon	Yao

Against the motion:

Carlier	Horne	Miranda
Ceci	Jansen	Piquette
Connolly	Kazim	Renaud
Coolahan	Kleinstauber	Sabir
Dach	Larivee	Schmidt
Dang	Littlewood	Schreiner
Drever	Loyola	Shepherd
Eggen	Malkinson	Sucha
Fitzpatrick	McCuaig-Boyd	Turner
Gray	McLean	Westhead
Hinkley	Miller	Woollard

Totals:	For – 9	Against – 33
---------	---------	--------------

[Motion on amendment A8 lost]

The Deputy Chair: We are now back on Bill 1. Are there any other members wishing to speak to the bill? The hon. Member for Calgary-Foothills.

Mr. Panda: Thank you, Madam Chair. I have another amendment. I'm sending you the requisite number of copies.

The Deputy Chair: Hon. member, please go ahead. Your amendment will be referred to as A9.

10:10

Mr. Panda: Thank you, Madam Chair. This amendment which everyone has now deals with the economic impact assessment of partial upgrading. Partial upgrading is proposed in this bill, that they would receive about \$800 million or \$1 billion. The Alberta Chambers of Commerce had many questions about the assumption in the Energy Diversification Advisory Committee report that more

refining in Alberta makes economic sense. We have to validate that assumption.

That's why I'm asking for an economic impact assessment of doing refining here versus elsewhere. Madam Chair, we need an economic impact assessment that proves or disproves that there is a greater economic benefit to Alberta as a result of refining in Alberta versus removing the discount on our bitumen products and refining where it makes more sense, where the refineries already exist.

Madam Chair, this has been a huge debate for more than 10 years in Alberta, and it needs to be resolved once and for all. All I'm asking the minister is: "Show us the numbers. If you have done the economic impact assessment on this particular policy, especially how many jobs it would create or how much pipeline space it will free up, if you have that information, please share with this Assembly." We don't want to blindly accept the NDP's friend and the president of the Alberta Federation of Labour's support for such refining projects as a ringing endorsement because of ideological reasons. That's why I brought this amendment.

I have some personal experience. Back in 2008 just north of Edmonton there was an Upgrader Alley created during former Premier Ed Stelmach's time. At that time I was working at Suncor, and I worked on the Voyageur upgrader. That is exactly partial upgrading technology that was employed on that upgrader. It's accepted as full upgrading, not partial upgrading. But after sinking \$5 billion, that project was shelved. The same thing happened with legacy Petro-Canada's Fort Hills north upgrader. The numbers didn't work. It didn't make economic sense for the management of Petro-Canada, so they cancelled that upgrader. Like that there was another one. Value Creation Inc. and BA Energy had their upgrader planned. The economics didn't work. There was no business case, so they cancelled that project.

That's why I just don't want to blindly support this Bill 1 giving out grants and loan guarantees for partial upgrading. I'm asking the minister to present the economic impact analysis if you have it. If you don't have it, why don't you do that and provide that to the members of this Assembly? Till then please accept this amendment as presented.

Thank you.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. member.

Are there any other members wishing to speak to amendment A9? The hon. Minister of Energy.

Ms McCuaig-Boyd: Thank you, Madam Chair. I want to refer back to the process again. These are incentives of different forms for partial upgrading as one of the things. I want to remind the Assembly here that this is a competitive process. In that process there are a number of criteria, and one is the health of the business. They have to present a business case and a number of things. A reminder that they don't get these incentives until they are building and in production. I think that's already built in. I'm frankly quite surprised that the opposition is so against the diversification of anything in Alberta. It feels like it.

Anyway, I also want to remind that in EDAC a number of those things are all outlined. The expertise of the thing you mentioned, hon. member, one member of a bigger group, EDAC. There were economists and people who had the same expertise as the member across, and there were a number of subgroups all consisting of industry and businesspeople and economists. So I think a number of those things have been well covered. Again, it's a competitive process, a third-party evaluator. They have to be building, and they have milestones to reach before they get any money in particular, so I think a lot of that is covered. Again, I would refer people to the

full EDAC report to look at the biographies of the members of the council and all the subcommittees.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. minister.

Are there any other members wishing to speak to amendment A9?

Seeing none, I will call the question on amendment A9 as proposed by the hon. Member for Calgary-Foothills.

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

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 10:16 p.m.]

[One minute having elapsed, the committee divided]

[Ms Sweet in the chair]

For the motion:

Cooper	Hanson	Panda
Fraser	McIver	Strankman
Gotfried	Nixon	Yao

Against the motion:

Carlier	Horne	Miranda
Ceci	Jansen	Piquette
Connolly	Kazim	Renaud
Coolahan	Kleinsteuber	Sabir
Dach	Larivee	Schmidt
Dang	Littlewood	Shepherd
Drever	Loyola	Sucha
Eggen	Malkinson	Turner
Fitzpatrick	McCuaig-Boyd	Westhead
Gray	McLean	Woollard
Hinkley	Miller	
Totals:	For – 9	Against – 32

[Motion on amendment A9 lost]

The Deputy Chair: We are now back on Bill 1. Are there any other members wishing to speak to the bill? The hon. Member for Calgary-Foothills.

10:20

Mr. Panda: Thank you, Madam Chair. I just received advice from the Energy minister that I should read the EDAC report, that I've read, and I actually talked about the recommendation in that report that asked the minister to focus on reducing red tape. In Bill 1 I haven't seen any provision to reduce the red tape.

Anyway, having said that, the minister also said that we don't support diversification. That is really rich coming from the party and from the minister who, I mean, were actually not supportive of pipelines until the other day, and now suddenly they're pipeline champions. This is the party which never campaigned on the carbon tax, not even once. Then they implemented the job-killing carbon tax without realizing their actions and the impacts of their actions that are causing businesses to leave Alberta. Actually, they're fleeing Alberta, running away from Alberta because of the economic conditions created by the NDP.

Mr. Cooper: Running just as fast as we can.

Mr. Panda: Yeah. Then, shamelessly, they're pointing to the opposition. We're not the government. Our job is to make their bills better. Tonight everyone watched how hard I tried to make their bad bill a better bill, but they wouldn't support that, so I'll try one more time, Madam Chair. I have one more amendment, please.

The Deputy Chair: Hon. member, if you could wait until I have a copy at the table, that would be great.

Thank you, hon. member. Your amendment will be referred to as A10. Please go ahead.

Mr. Panda: Thank you, Madam Chair. This particular amendment, although it talks about economic impact assessment, is a different economic impact assessment. The previous amendment was about a partial upgrading economic impact assessment. This particular one is an economic impact assessment on each project that's getting support. When we talk about support, Bill 1 is providing grants, loans, loan guarantees, tax credits, and royalty credits, all those things that are received in a particular project. We have to measure the performance of that investment after we hand out grants and loans to those companies. If that business goes under after receiving these grants, that's not a good investment for Alberta and Albertans. That's why we have to measure the economic impact of the business that receives the grants one year after that business is up and running, or after one year if that business goes into bankruptcy, to show the impact of the government's spending. That's why I brought this amendment.

I ask the Assembly to pass this amendment. Thank you, Madam Chair.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. member.

Are there any other members wishing to speak to the amendment? The hon. Minister of Energy.

Ms McCuaig-Boyd: Thank you, Madam Chair. Again, I won't belabour some points, but I'll just remind that this is a competitive process. When the successful proponents are chosen, there are milestones set, and they must meet those milestones before they get any kind of incentive, whether it's a grant or a royalty in kind or anything like that. If they don't meet the milestone, they don't get the incentive. So I would be voting against this one as well.

The Deputy Chair: Thank you, hon. minister.

Are there any other members wishing to speak to amendment A10?

Seeing none, I'll call the question.

[The voice vote indicated that the motion on amendment A10 lost]

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 10:25 p.m.]

[One minute having elapsed, the committee divided]

[Ms Sweet in the chair]

For the motion:

Cooper	McIver	Smith
Fraser	Nixon	Strankman
Gotfried	Panda	Yao
Hanson		

Against the motion:

Carlier	Horne	Miranda
Ceci	Jansen	Piquette
Connolly	Kazim	Renaud
Coolahan	Kleinstauber	Sabir
Dach	Larivee	Schmidt
Dang	Littlewood	Shepherd
Drever	Loyola	Sucha
Eggen	Malkinson	Turner
Fitzpatrick	McCuaig-Boyd	Westhead

Gray	McLean	Woollard
Hinkley	Miller	
Totals:	For – 10	Against – 32

[Motion on amendment A10 lost]

The Deputy Chair: We are now back on the original bill, Bill 1. Are there any other members wishing to speak to the bill?

Seeing none, are you ready for the question on Bill 1, the Energy Diversification Act?

[The remaining clauses of Bill 1 agreed to]

[The voice vote indicated that the title and preamble were agreed to]

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 10:30 p.m.]

[One minute having elapsed, the committee divided]

[Ms Sweet in the chair]

For:		
Carlier	Hinkley	Miller
Ceci	Horne	Miranda
Connolly	Jansen	Piquette
Coolahan	Kazim	Renaud
Dach	Kleinstauber	Sabir
Dang	Larivee	Schmidt
Drever	Littlewood	Shepherd
Eggen	Loyola	Sucha
Fitzpatrick	Malkinson	Turner
Fraser	McCuaig-Boyd	Westhead
Gray	McLean	Woollard

Against:		
Cooper	McIver	Smith
Gotfried	Nixon	Strankman
Hanson	Panda	Yao

Totals:	For – 33	Against – 9
---------	----------	-------------

[Title and preamble agreed to]

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

Hon. Members: Agreed.

The Deputy Chair: Opposed? Carried.

The hon. Deputy Government House Leader.

Ms Larivee: Thank you, Madam Chair. At this time I would like to move that the committee rise and report bills 7 and 1.

[Motion carried]

[Ms Sweet in the chair]

The Acting Speaker: The hon. Member for Wetaskiwin-Camrose.

Mr. Hinkley: Thank you, Madam Speaker. The Committee of the Whole has had under consideration certain bills. The committee reports the following bills: Bill 7, Bill 1. I wish to table copies of all of the amendments considered by the Committee of the Whole on this date for the official records of the Assembly.

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

Hon. Members: Aye.

The Acting Speaker: Opposed? So ordered.
The hon. Deputy Government House Leader.

Ms Larivee: Thank you, Madam Speaker. At this time I would like to move that the House adjourn until 9 a.m. tomorrow.

[Motion carried; the Assembly adjourned at 10:36 p.m.]

Table of Contents

Government Bills and Orders

Committee of the Whole

Bill 16	Election Finances and Contributions Disclosure Statutes Amendment Act, 2018.....	1299
Bill 7	Supporting Alberta's Local Food Sector Act.....	1299
	Division	1302
	Division	1304
	Division	1309
	Division	1311
Bill 1	Energy Diversification Act.....	1311
	Division	1312
	Division	1315
	Division	1315
	Division	1316
	Division	1317
	Division	1317

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

For inquiries contact:

Managing Editor

Alberta Hansard

3rd Floor, 9820 – 107 St

EDMONTON, AB T5K 1E7

Telephone: 780.427.1875