



Province of Alberta

The 29th Legislature
Fourth Session

Alberta Hansard

Monday afternoon, June 4, 2018

Day 37

The Honourable Robert E. Wanner, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of Alberta
The 29th Legislature

Fourth Session

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Sweet, Heather, Edmonton-Manning (NDP), Deputy Chair of Committees

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Anderson, Wayne, Highwood (UCP)
Babcock, Erin D., Stony Plain (NDP)
Barnes, Drew, Cypress-Medicine Hat (UCP)
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)
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Westhead, Cameron, Banff-Cochrane (NDP),
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New Democratic: 54 United Conservative: 25 Alberta Party: 3 Alberta Liberal: 1 Progressive Conservative: 1 Independent Conservative: 1 Vacant: 2

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Legislative Assembly of Alberta

1:30 p.m.

Monday, June 4, 2018

[The Speaker in the chair]

Prayers

The Speaker: Good afternoon.

Hon. members, as some of you may be aware, on May 29 it was International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers, and yesterday, June 3, was Canadian Armed Forces Day. Let us each in our own way pray or reflect on those who serve in our military and our peacekeeping forces and their families, who, in so doing, afford us the privilege of serving as democratically elected representatives.

Hon. members, ladies and gentlemen, we will now be led in the singing of our national anthem by Mr. R.J. Chambers, and I would invite all to participate in the language of their choice.

Hon. Members:

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

The Speaker: Please be seated.

Introduction of Guests

The Speaker: The Minister of Labour and minister responsible for democratic renewal.

Ms Gray: Merci. M. le Président, c'est avec fierté que je me lève à la Chambre aujourd'hui pour introduire les étudiants de l'école Frère Antoine. The students are from a French immersion school in the Catholic school system located in the Tipaskan neighbourhood of Mill Woods. They are here participating in School at the Legislature this week, and I hope their Monday morning has been off to a great start so far. We have 26 students with us and their teacher, Georgette Alwan. They are in our members' gallery, and I would like all of the students to please stand and receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

The Speaker: Bonjour.
 The Minister of Health.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm very proud to recognize guests who are seated in the members' gallery, who are here from the policy, special projects, and communications unit in the Department of Health. These staff and this unit work hard to develop operational Alberta health care insurance plan policy according to government legislation and act as a liaison with federal, provincial, and territorial governments to optimize and uphold our interprovincial agreements. I'm proud to recognize the work they do behind the scenes to support the health care system in making lives better for Albertans. I now invite Ekua Affum, Jan Robertson, Sharon Romanowski, and Lorraine Smart to please rise and receive the warm welcome of our Assembly.

Secondly, I have additional guests who are here today from the Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus Association of Northern Alberta, who are seated, again, in the members' gallery. They work to

provide the best possible health and quality of life for those living with spina bifida and hydrocephalus through education, support, and advocacy, and I want to thank them for their advocacy, dedication, and partnership with our government on this work. Their support and compassion are essential to the health of our communities. I ask that they rise or wave if they're unable to: Cindy Smith, Nathan Smith, Danielle Schmidt, Alexandra Karatairis, Sean Bouffard, and Ken Godbeer. If there are any others, please join me in recognizing them in the gallery.

Thank you.

The Speaker: Welcome.

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark.

Mr. Carson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to introduce the Estigoy family, who own and operate GoldenBucks bakery in the La Perle community. Earlier this session I had the opportunity to share their story. After being laid off in 2016, Evan and his wife, Edna, turned to their passion of baking and cooking and to their Filipino heritage for inspiration. Today the Estigoys shared an update with me that they have been offered the opportunity to produce their delicious empanadas at the Food Processing Development Centre in Leduc and have also expanded distribution into Manitoba. Congratulations to them. I ask Edna, Evan, Erin, and Elie Estigoy to now rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

The Speaker: Welcome.

The hon. Minister of Advanced Education.

Mr. Schmidt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to introduce to all members of the Assembly a guest from the most humble constituency of Edmonton-Gold Bar, Ms Cheryl Purpur. Cheryl Purpur is a constituent. She has a background in special education. She did groundbreaking work in the field of special education and has been a consultant with Alberta social services in the past. For eight years she's advocated to the Alberta government to change the regulations regarding service dogs. I'm pleased to be part of a government that finally got that work done. She wants to make special mention of her relationship with the hon. David Russell, former Deputy Premier of Alberta, for guiding her in how to advocate to the government on this very important issue. With her today is her dog companion, Scarlet O'Hara, who carries a number of titles: best puppy in special show and grand Canadian champion. I'm sure that she's a very good girl. I want all members of the Assembly to please give the warm welcome of this Assembly to Cheryl and her pet, Scarlet.

The Speaker: Welcome.

Members' Statements

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

Canadian Armed Forces Day

Ms Goehring: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I'm honoured to mark Canadian Armed Forces Day, which occurred on Sunday, June 3. In my role as Alberta's liaison to the Canadian Armed Forces I've been privileged to meet with serving members of the Canadian Armed Forces, veterans, and cadets. I have always been impressed by the remarkable sense of duty, outstanding professionalism, and the sacrifices that they have made and continue to make to defend the values that we cherish.

Alberta is home to the Canadian 3rd Division, the largest military division in Canada. Headquartered out of the Edmonton Garrison,

it commands from Thunder Bay to Victoria and north to Yukon. Tens of thousands of regular and reserve CAF members, civilians, and their families live and work throughout Alberta. In Canada and around the world, whether restoring peace and security in conflict zones or providing relief in response to natural disasters, we know that we can count on the sense of duty and unwavering dedication of our women and men in uniform.

It is also a time to recognize the greatest supporters of our Canadian Armed Forces, their families. Their efforts behind the scenes often go unrecognized. Canadian Armed Forces Day is a time to recognize them, too. Yesterday the annual Loops for the Troops at Edmonton's Military Family Resource Centre on the base raised money for the MFRC. Participants have raised more than \$120,000 over the past decade. It allows the MFRC to provide programs and services that enhance the strength and resiliency of our military families.

It gives me great pleasure to join with all Albertans in offering our sincere thanks for your outstanding service. My thoughts also turn to those that are no longer with us and to their loved ones. I know I speak on behalf of all in expressing the utmost respect and appreciation for our military personnel and for their families.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

1:40 Off-highway Vehicle Users' Backcountry Access

Mr. Schneider: Mr. Speaker, due to circumstances, I didn't have any opportunities as a kid to embrace the freedom of the backcountry that we could actually see from where I lived. Since becoming an adult, though, I have spent many decades enjoying the Livingstone Range. My family spent many summers random camping out there, and I learned to leave it better than I found it. Admittedly, there are some people that use this beautiful area, then leave their garbage strewn around for the next responsible camper to pick up. It's a minority of campers that act this way, but I believe it's something that can be fixed.

For the last 10 years I've been riding a quad or side-by-side on trails in the areas of Dutch Creek, the Oldman, and Racehorse. Those that I ride with respect the area and stay out of creeks and off areas that don't have trails and certainly stay away from wetland areas, but admittedly there are some that don't. Have things gotten out of hand with regard to OHVs back there? Maybe. But maybe they haven't either. Maybe it's a small percentage that have abused the area while the majority of responsible users have been ignored and lumped in with the irresponsible.

Federal and provincial governments have partnered with and given grants to organizations like the Quad Squad down south for many years. They and other OHV groups have spent thousands of volunteer hours in stewardship of the trails, education of users, and construction of bridges over creeks and streams that are of concern. It seems so short sighted to take it all away. The area needs a balance so that all Albertans can enjoy it. In this government's eye the pendulum has swung too far one way, but this same government is determined to swing it too far the other way. Isn't there something in the middle that works for everyone? My constituents have said this: the best path forward is to ensure the existing laws and get rid of the troublemakers. Strict enforcement.

Responsible users are being punished here. It's up to everyone, including government, to make sure that users now and in the future get a chance to recreate in these areas responsibly.

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

East Town Get Down Calgary Music Festival

Ms Luff: Thank you. On May 26 I had the opportunity to attend an incredible new music festival in the heart of east Calgary, the East Town Get Down. This festival brought over 70 bands to eight venues along International Avenue and hosted over 1,000 fans. It was copresented by the Major Minor Music Project and the International Avenue BRZ. Over 100 volunteers went above and beyond to ensure the success of this festival. It's inspiring when people come together. Each gives so much more in collaboration.

The festival focused on inclusion. Seven of the eight venues were all ages, and the music ranged from hip hop to punk rock to heavy metal, soul, and singer-songwriter. There was also an indigenous resilience in music showcase featuring traditional group Eya-Hey Nakoda and a hip hop duo from Vancouver, the Snotty Nose Rez Kids. Also, the price point made it possible for anybody to attend, with wristbands going for only \$30.

The venues were eclectic and a true representation of everything International Avenue has to offer: the back lot of Fuse 33 makerspace, Paradise Lanes bowling alley, Jane Bond BBQ, the Border Crossing Pub, and three Ethiopian restaurants – Fassil's, Ensira, and TG juice – because it's not a party in east Calgary without injera.

Highlights of the night for me included the Tamil Calgarian hip hop duo Cartel Madras; teenage rockers with my favourite name ever, Gratuitous Platypus; and the Edmonton 11-piece funk-punk ensemble Klusterfunk, who are amazing. You should go see them.

Everyone I spoke with had an amazing time, with folks from Forest Lawn commenting on how proud they were to have this in their neighbourhood and folks from elsewhere in Calgary talking about the experience of finding new venues and new bands they'd never heard before.

I have so much appreciation for the International Avenue BRZ team for the great work they've done in Forest Lawn building an exciting, vibrant, and safe neighbourhood. The people, communities, and businesses I see every day make me proud to live in east Calgary. Amazing things are happening in Forest Lawn, and I urge everyone to come visit and to mark the last weekend in May on your calendar for next year to come to the East Town Get Down.

Thank you.

Parental Choice in Education

Mrs. Pitt: Mr. Speaker, Airdrie is a vibrant community, home to many families with school-aged children, my family, too. Some of the most important and difficult decisions that parents make in the course of raising their children are decisions pertaining to their education. I'm proud of the freedom that parents have in this province when it comes to these decisions, whether they end up pursuing public, private, charter, or home-based education. Parents know their children and their needs better than anyone else.

Since I was elected, three years ago, I've been proud to work alongside my UCP colleagues supporting parental choice in education. Unfortunately, this NDP government has made several decisions that have prompted parents to reach out to me with concerns that the government is undermining our education system. For example, I received numerous calls from Airdrie's home-schooling community when the NDP abruptly shut down the province's largest home-school program. This left thousands of students hanging and resulted in a messy court dispute. The NDP also changed school busing fees for the worse, and they brought in a costly carbon tax, that schools need to divert funds to pay for.

The Rocky View school board recently had to make a difficult decision on how to address a \$1 million transportation shortfall caused by this NDP government's policies.

Moreover, the NDP government announced in 2016 that they are rewriting our school curriculum for all grades and all subject areas. The government has been less than transparent about this process, and Albertans have reason to be uneasy that the NDP are using this as an opportunity to infuse the curriculum with their ideologies.

Mr. Speaker, I will continue to celebrate and defend choice in education in this province. I will continue to stand up for the loving moms and dads raising their children the way that they think is right.

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

Rural Economic Development

Mr. Hinkley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Almost every day we hear the opposition members give their version of reality, and that version almost always contains doom and gloom. Maybe if they looked beyond their own narrative, they would see the evidence of things going well in our rural areas, evidence like what was said at a recent Wetaskiwin Regional Chamber of Commerce meeting, May 2, and reported in the *Leduc-Wetaskiwin Pipestone Flyer*.

The county of Wetaskiwin reeve, Kathy Rooyakkers, spoke about the 284 development permits, valued at \$30 million; 14 new business approvals; and the G3 grain terminal, worth millions of dollars, which will create jobs and benefit farmers. Also, she mentioned that \$1.8 million of our government funding is provided for work on a bridge that had been a concern for years and that the Pigeon Lake waste-water system's second phase would be starting soon, a project also funded with \$12.8 million through our government's water for life program.

At the same time, Mayor Tony Wadsworth of Millet spoke in glowing terms about how great the town's last year, 2017, had been, including the new Lakeside Meadows development for 1,200 new homes, the annexation of industrial land from the county, and the potential for new industrial development.

The mayor of Wetaskiwin, Tyler Gandam, spoke about a business retention and expansion program that was meeting with success and that its main street and Jubilee park projects were completed and that the new fire department training facility was operating, an important plus for the city.

Again and again, Mr. Speaker, we hear optimism from the people who run our rural towns and municipalities. We know that total farm cash receipts hit a record high in 2017. We know that our deficit is going down. We know that the Trans Mountain expansion will help our economy and our energy sector expand even more. I, for one, am proud of rural Alberta, its dynamic people, and its potential.

Thank you.

Port of Churchill Oil and Gas Transport Project

Mr. Panda: Mr. Speaker, given the deteriorating trade relationships between Canada and the U.S.A. the UCP caucus is committed to exploring alternative market access, pipelines or no pipelines. That's why last week I travelled to Winnipeg and Churchill, Manitoba, to meet Premier Pallister's team and the locals to discuss market access via the port of Churchill. I'm most pleased that there are not one but two private-sector offers to purchase the Hudson Bay Railway and the port of Churchill from OmniTrax.

The first one is a letter of intent between Alberta-based iChurchill and the Peguis First Nation. The second is an agreement in principle

between the consortium led by Toronto-based Fairfax and the First Nation businesses. But, Mr. Speaker, it appears that Ottawa is meddling in the transaction between private enterprises, again picking winners and losers and favouring one proponent over another. It means another year will be missed repairing the railway and the shipping window. No matter whom OmniTrax decides to sell to, Ottawa needs to act fairly, impartially, swiftly to keep their promises to Manitoba's First Nations.

The port of Churchill is two days shorter sailing time to going over the St. Lawrence to Europe. Alberta shippers of grain, canola, pulses, and forest products will be interested in exploring this gateway to the world, but it is the energy products that will provide the new sources of revenue to keep the port and the railway open and sustained. Alberta stands ready to meet the world's growing energy demand for petroleum in 2018 and beyond.

Canada's current reputation is that we can't get anything done. Let's prove it wrong. Let's get the railway repaired and get moving our exports.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

1:50

Oral Question Period

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

Eagle Spirit Pipeline Project

Mr. Kenney: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There's a consortium of First Nations groups proposing an alternative coastal pipeline, called the Eagle Spirit project, that would take Alberta oil to the northwest B.C. coast and from there to global markets. Will the government of Alberta agree with me that this is an excellent initiative, and will the government reach out to the Eagle Spirit proponents to seek ways in which we could help them with this nascent proposal to get market access for Alberta oil under aboriginal ownership?

The Speaker: The hon. Deputy Premier.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker and to the member for the question. Certainly, this is an interesting project. Our Minister of Energy has been in meetings with the consortium, and we certainly are interested in the work that they're proposing. This won't back down on the fact that we've never been as close to tidewater as we are today and the success that we've seen with Trans Mountain, especially last week, with the significant signal and the investment by the federal government. We're proud of the work we've done to access new markets, and that will continue.

Mr. Kenney: I'd like to thank the hon. the Deputy Premier for her comments and the government's apparent interest. The challenge, however, Mr. Speaker, is that the Premier told us in this place a few weeks ago that she indicated to Prime Minister Trudeau that this government was only seeking one coastal pipeline, not two. It seems to me that two is better than one or none.

But, Mr. Speaker, the real problem is Bill C-48, the federal bill that would seek to impose a tanker ban on the northern B.C. coast, that would kill this vital aboriginal initiative, the Eagle Spirit pipeline. Will the government agree with me and the proponents of Eagle Spirit that the federal government should reconsider the legislation banning tanker traffic on the B.C. coast?

Ms Hoffman: The real problem, Mr. Speaker, is that the member opposite keeps cheering for Trans Mountain to fail instead of getting onboard and supporting it. Canadians are behind Trans Mountain because they know it will help put people to work, 15,000

people, and lead to billions annually for roads, schools, and hospitals. National support for this project rose 11 per cent from April to May. We aren't going to back down on the good work that's happening with Trans Mountain. It's as close as we've gotten. We know that the member opposite had nine years in Ottawa and failed to do it, but under our Premier this project will get built.

Mr. Kenney: Mr. Speaker, the hon. the minister's answer had precisely nothing to do with the question I asked, which was about the proposed Eagle Spirit aboriginal pipeline project to take Alberta oil to the northern B.C. coast. This is a wonderful initiative of our First Nations communities to pursue economic opportunity, allowing their people to move from poverty to prosperity while allowing Albertans to get a full, fair price for our energy products. So I would invite the minister to try to answer this question. Will she agree on behalf of the government with the concerns expressed by these aboriginal leaders about federal Bill C-48 and the tanker ban?

Ms Hoffman: Well, Mr. Speaker, what I absolutely committed to and will again is that the Minister of Energy has met with this organization. So has the Minister of Indigenous Relations. You know what? On Trans Mountain 43 First Nation communities along the pipeline support that project. They support it because they know that it balances and reaches the appropriate environmental protections and supports jobs and economic prosperity. With regard to the comments from the member opposite, fighting for Alberta's interests and delivering results will always be our Premier's focus. We know the leader has more interest in promoting himself than he does Alberta.

The Speaker: Second main question.

Mr. Kenney: Did you see what just happened there, Mr. Speaker? A serious question, a policy related to an aboriginal initiative; the response was partisan and personal attacks: par for the course.

Pipeline Approval

Mr. Kenney: Mr. Speaker, there's a motion on the Order Paper, Motion 505, that would seek to call on the federal government to respect Alberta's jurisdiction over the regulation of upstream oil and gas emissions and not to regulate pipelines for downstream emissions. Does the government agree that the federal government should respect the provision of the Constitution which gives exclusive jurisdiction over the regulation of oil and gas production to the province of Alberta?

Ms Hoffman: Well, Mr. Speaker, debating motions in this House doesn't get a pipeline built. If it did, we would have done that long ago. Our climate leadership plan already addresses upstream emissions, and we've been clear that downstream emissions do not apply to pipelines. The opposition leader is just trying to score cheap political points, but his own strategy to get this project done is about as credible as his grassroots guarantee. It looks a lot like Astroturf to me.

Mr. Kenney: Mr. Speaker, another nonpartisan policy question with a series of partisan and personal attacks.

Let me try this again, Mr. Speaker. Motion 505 really addresses the problem with Energy East, where it was cancelled because the National Energy Board announced that it was going to begin regulating up- and downstream carbon emissions indirectly associated with the pipeline. Does this provincial government continue to support federal Bill C-69, which would make it even more difficult to get approval for future pipelines?

The Speaker: One moment. Hon. members, I just want to make a reference to both sides of the House. This is with respect to an item that will be dealt with later in the agenda, and I would caution that you avoid the . . .

Mr. Nixon: Point of order.

The Speaker: A point of order.

Ms Hoffman: With regard to C-69, Mr. Speaker, we share the industry's concerns and are working – we're fighting the federal government – to address them. In fact, the environment minister is in Ottawa or has been in Ottawa very recently to direct the federal counterparts on this issue. We believe that the new rules must not stand in the way of developing our resources and getting our products to market. Putting words in our mouths won't work, hon. member. We certainly have a record, and we're proud to stand on it.

Mr. Kenney: Mr. Speaker, just for the record the question was on Bill C-69, which is at the federal Parliament, not this Legislature, but it impacts very directly on our constitutional jurisdiction, jurisdiction that was fought for and won by former Premier Lougheed in 1982. If the provincial government does not support the new federal pipeline regulation, Bill C-69, does it oppose the bill? Does it support it, or does it oppose it? I hope the answer is not a series of partisan attacks but an actual answer.

Ms Hoffman: Well, Mr. Speaker, I made it very clear that there are a number of components within it that our Minister of Energy and minister of environment are standing up to Ottawa and pushing on continuously because we stand up for the people who elected us here in Alberta. I know the member wants to debate federal legislation. He had that opportunity. He gave up his seat. He said he was coming back to Alberta for a number of reasons, but it doesn't feel like he came back for Albertans. It feels like he came back for his own interests.

Mr. Kenney: Mr. Speaker, sadly, my prediction was proven true. It was a series of partisan and personal attacks. The Premier, the Deputy Premier could of course clarify whether the government supports or opposes Bill C-69, which has a huge impact on this province.

Full-day Kindergarten in Calgary

Mr. Kenney: On a different matter, Mr. Speaker, I must correct myself. A month ago I said that the Calgary board of education was spending \$1 million on the carbon tax. It turns out, according to new documents just released, that they're spending \$3 million on the carbon tax while cutting \$1 million in kindergarten funding. Is the government pleased that their carbon tax is resulting in a reduction of access to full-day kindergarten in Calgary?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Education.

Mr. Eggen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, we are very proud of the investments that we're making in education, which includes funding for enrolment in four straight budgets, plus now a \$77 million classroom improvement fund, which is hiring teachers and support staff and making sure that we make life better for our kids in our classrooms as opposed to the cuts that the members opposite are proposing.

Mr. Kenney: Mr. Speaker, the Calgary board of education released its Investing in the Future: Facilities document two weeks ago, which says, "We anticipate the annual cost of the carbon levy to be

over \$3 million and growing.” In April they announced that they’re reducing \$1 million of expenditures on full-day kindergarten. Does the Alberta NDP government not understand that this massive tax imposed on the school board is resulting directly in service cuts for full-day kindergarten in Calgary? If not, why don’t they understand this?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Eggen: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Clearly, the member opposite should read the news because, in fact, the Calgary board of education is investing in full-day kindergarten, as they have done for many, many years. They’re doing it again this year. You know, this idea of somehow putting fissures between government: we work closely with the Calgary board of education on their facilities, on improving their facilities – we’ve built dozens of new schools there that are very energy efficient – and focusing on not just reducing carbon footprint but actually saving money.

Mr. Kenney: Mr. Speaker, with respect, the minister, I think, is misinformed. The Calgary board of education issued a report earlier this year which said, “Full-day kindergarten will continue to be offered but the scope will be reduced” as they seek to reduce \$1 million of expenditures. It just so happens that they’re spending three times that on the NDP carbon tax, \$3 million, according to their most recent budget document. Why did this provincial government decide to punish school boards simply for heating their schools and undergoing their daily operations in Alberta?

2:00

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Eggen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It seems like the member opposite is trying to practise his closure policies that would certainly come true if they ever formed the government, which I sure hope never does happen. You can’t just say that they are clearly closing programs. In fact, CBE is carrying on with their full-day kindergarten program. They’re very proud of the results that they get, and we help to fund and support that every step of the way.

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

Mental Health Supports for Front-line Health Workers

Mr. Fraser: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mental health supports are vital in any workplace, but they’re especially important for high-stress, front-line public health care jobs like EMS. Albertans need to be able to trust that the paramedics showing up at the door in a medical emergency are ready to give it a hundred per cent. As legislators we are responsible for public health care, so we need to do everything we can to ensure that front-line health care workers have the supports that they need. To the Minister of Health: what has your government done to improve access and awareness of mental health supports for front-line health care workers?

The Speaker: The hon. Deputy Premier.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. We are incredibly proud of all the work that our paramedics and all EMS professionals do every day. Just last week we celebrated them and their contributions. One of the things we had a chance to do was meet with some of the staff over at the Alberta Health building and meet with the service dog that actually works to provide additional supports to people on the scene of horrific events as well as to paramedics who are doing the follow-up after. The path to mental

readiness is a big piece, and we’re continuing to invest in it and in our front-line workers instead of moving for deep cuts, that would certainly cause additional stress for front-line workers.

Mr. Fraser: A report in 2015 on the mental health and morale of AHS showed that there was a lot of work that needed to be done to address gaps in mental health support. We’ve learned that another report has been prepared, but that has yet to be released by Alberta Health Services. We need to see that report and evaluate it to make sure that the measures this government has taken have been effective and what our next steps will be. To the same minister: if you’re confident that the measures your government has taken have been effective, will you direct AHS to release these reports they currently have on the state of mental health support in the health care system?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. We certainly know how important it is to provide the right supports and empathy and understanding for everyone who’s dealing with mental health situations in their lives. Of course, that stands true for our front-line health care workers, including paramedics. I have to say that many of them that I met recently either had the semicolon on their hand or talked about mental health in a very open way, and they said that it creates a greater opportunity for them to speak to their patients and to their co-workers about it as well. We stand by paramedics, and that’s why we’ve increased investment by \$23 million to ensure that we can expand supports for them moving forward as well.

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

Mr. Fraser: Front-line health care workers face an incredible amount of stress day in and day out, but unfortunately these issues only come to attention in the wake of a tragedy. We need to do better. We need to take steps to safeguard the mental health of our health care workers before more lives are lost. To the same minister: will you commit to reviewing the mental health supports and guidelines of Alberta Health Services either by referring them to committee or striking an all-party working group to make sure that paramedics are safe?

Ms Hoffman: Mr. Speaker, I’m proud of the work that we are doing as a government and continue to do. We regularly meet with Alberta Health Services to discuss items just like the one the member just mentioned. What helps arguably the most is ensuring that you give the right supports, including front-line resources, to folks who are working in the profession. That’s why I’m proud that our government is investing \$23 million more to help address some of the pressures that paramedics and all EMS providers are facing on the front lines and why we will stand up and won’t give in to the calls from the opposition for deep cuts. We stand with our front-line workers.

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

Affordable Child Care

Mr. Dach: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I’ve heard from constituents in Edmonton-McClung that child care is a major concern, a huge financial burden every month. Given that child care for one child can cost as much as a mortgage payment and given that many parents have to make difficult decisions about child care, to the Minister of Children’s Services: how are the early learning and child care centres making a difference in the lives of children and their families across Alberta?

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

Ms Larivee: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's true. In Edmonton parents can expect to pay nearly \$1,000 per month per child. Even most families that can afford child care can't really afford child care. Conservative governments have done little to help in the past, but the good news is that the monthly bills have changed for 6,000 new \$25-a-day spaces. Parents tell me that it is life changing. We're helping parents make good decisions for their families and Alberta's economy.

The Speaker: First supplemental.

Mr. Dach: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Now, given that there are hundreds of daycares throughout Alberta, to the Minister of Children's Services once more: what kind of applications are you looking for?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms Larivee: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our government wanted to demonstrate what universal \$25-a-day child care could look like. Through an expression-of-interest process we found trusted nonprofits with proven track records. The YMCA, for instance, now has \$25-a-day child care at 25 locations across Alberta. That's more than 1,700 total spaces at the Y, including 195 new spaces and 247 licensed spaces they haven't been able to staff until now. In the member's own riding the Jamie Platz YMCA now has 48 affordable spaces.

The Speaker: Second supplemental.

Mr. Dach: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Now, given that this program does not come with an income test, what should I tell parents in my constituency of Edmonton-McClung about how the early learning and child care program is helping those who most need it?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms Larivee: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We're already helping newcomers, military families, and hundreds of moms hoping to re-enter the workforce. We're adding curriculum improvements to help kids learn and grow, and we're working to ensure vulnerable families have access to other supports. This pilot is allowing the Jamie Platz YMCA to add flexible, part-time child care plus a family resource worker. Affordable child care is a priority for families, and we believe that every family deserves affordable child care.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Spruce Grove-St. Albert.

McMurray Métis Land Purchase

Mr. Horne: Last week the government announced the sale of 9.17 acres of land to the McMurray Métis. As a member of the Métis Nation of Alberta I was very excited to see the government working with the McMurray Métis to make strides in our reconciliation with our indigenous peoples. To the Minister of Infrastructure: can you tell the members of this Assembly why this sale was so important and what it will achieve?

Ms Jansen: Thank you to the member. When the McMurray Métis shared their vision to purchase a piece of land for a cultural centre and a place to celebrate Métis culture, I was very impressed with their plan. The association's plans for the cultural centre include an elder gathering space, a community meeting room, an outdoor healing centre, a youth room, and educational spaces and offices. This land sale is in the spirit of reconciliation. It also supports the

McMurray Métis in participating in the rebuild and recovery of Wood Buffalo.

The Speaker: First supplemental.

Mr. Horne: Thank you. Now, I know that my family has historically had some connections to that land. Can the minister tell the House what the history of this site has been?

Ms Jansen: Thank you to the member. The McMurray Métis have been leasing this site from the provincial government for decades. All of the structures on the site were destroyed by the wildfire in 2016. This quote from Gail Gallupe, the president of the McMurray Métis, sums up the history.

The sale of the land we have been leasing from the Government of Alberta was a long-term goal of the McMurray Métis. It was something that we had requested and couldn't achieve over the course of seven previous governments... This government delivered and we are extremely happy.

The Speaker: Second supplemental.

Mr. Horne: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thanks to the minister for sharing the comments from the president of the McMurray Métis about just how responsive this government has been. To the same minister: can you please elaborate on why this is such a priority?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms Jansen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm proud to be on this side of the House with a cabinet and a Premier that take reconciliation seriously. At a recent UCP convention racist comments were made without a reprimand from the leader, who is actually not even listening right now even though a few minutes ago he professed to be very interested in indigenous rights. Let's not forget that the leader's protegee in the federal Conservatives high-fived another Conservative after voting against the UN declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples. Even though he's not even paying attention, he's certainly...

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

The hon. Member for Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills.

2:10

Government Announcements

Mr. Cooper: Mr. Speaker, last week this government made a b-u-y by-election spending announcement in Fort McMurray. This week it announced it will open the Sylvan Lake ambulatory care centre with a ribbon-cutting ceremony, surprise, surprise, the site of an upcoming by-election. The Premier used to speak strongly against these sorts of by-election announcements. This is just one other example of the NDP's sliding scale on ethics. Why did the NDP oppose these shady ethics in opposition but now seem totally okay with them?

Ms Hoffman: Well, I have to clarify some things here, Mr. Speaker. We announced these projects well over a year ago, when your members who are no longer in this House were still sitting in this House. We invest in communities throughout Alberta. We invest in building long-term care in Fort McMurray, we invest in building urgent care in Sylvan Lake, and I won't apologize for investing in ridings that your members used to represent. We are moving forward on protecting and improving health care throughout this province while members opposite would cut it. Musing about 20 per cent cuts? Not under this government.

Mr. Cooper: Given that a mere six months ago this government passed Bill 32, which placed restrictions on advertising or publishing information during a by-election that “disproportionately affects voters in the electoral division in which the byelection is taking place,” my question to the Premier is one that she asked in 2014 when speaking about by-elections: “to regain integrity and trust with Alberta voters, will [you] commit to amending our elections law so that this can’t ever happen again, and if [you] won’t commit to it, why won’t [you]?”

Ms Hoffman: Well, thanks for that trip down memory lane. At the time the Premier made that comment, there was a sitting member of cabinet who wasn’t elected who decided to do political announcements in the by-election period in the riding he was running for a seat in, Mr. Speaker. We certainly have fixed that. We announced these projects a year ago. We’re moving forward on them. We aren’t in the by-election period yet. It hasn’t been called. We know that members have resigned, but we aren’t in the by-election period. We’re very proud that we’ve amended the laws to reflect that.

Mr. Cooper: Mr. Speaker, given the fact that Albertans don’t care if the by-election hasn’t been called today but that it’ll likely be called tomorrow – they know that you’ve been caught stacking the deck in your favour; that clearly disproportionately affects voters in the electoral district in which a by-election is about to be called, according to your newly passed Bill 32 – and given that you’ve been caught bending the rules in your favour just minutes prior to the actual announcement of the by-election and given that every single day we see a new questionable ethics story from this government, the question is: why won’t this government follow . . .

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

Ms Hoffman: The questions I’ve been asked over and over and over again are: “Why when Conservatives were in government and we had Conservative MLAs in these ridings did our urgent care not get built in Sylvan Lake? Why didn’t our long-term care get built in Fort McMurray?” Mr. Speaker, our government made good on these communities. We moved these projects forward while members of your own caucus at the time were lobbying for them. We’re proud that we’re moving forward on these projects, and we aren’t going to back down. [interjections]

The Speaker: Hon. members, we have been with each other for many weeks now, and my sense is that that is leading to a certain tone and anxiety in the House, which I would hope that you would keep in check.

Amazon Distribution Centre in Balzac

Mrs. Pitt: Mr. Speaker, at the start of the year the Premier expressed disappointment that Calgary was not on the short list of communities that Amazon was considering for their second North American headquarters. However, it was announced last fall that Amazon would still be opening a 600,000 square foot distribution centre in Balzac. Construction was to be completed this year. Some residents are getting anxious because they have not yet heard when Amazon is actually moving in. To the minister of economic development: are you able to state unequivocally that the Amazon fulfillment centre in the Nose Creek Business Park is still a go, and when is it set to open?

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

Mr. Bilous: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I’m very proud of the work that our government has done and continues to do on a daily basis attracting key international investments back here into our province. We know that Alberta is the best province in Canada to invest in. We maintain the lowest taxes. We have the highest talent, the most skilled workers, incredible postsecondary institutions, a high quality of life. Businesses from around the world see Alberta as a key province to invest in. The Amazon fulfillment centre is going ahead.

Mrs. Pitt: Now, Mr. Speaker, given that it’s been more than half a year since the announcement was made – so this is a fair question – and given that this project has received great community support and is something the Official Opposition supports and given that this government has previously declared victory on job-creating projects the taxpayers then had to buy to prevent them from being cancelled, Minister, what assurances can you offer us that this government’s policies won’t send Amazon running away, too?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Bilous: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Once again, I will remind the hon. member that Amazon is one of many companies that have chosen to invest in Alberta. We have Cavendish Farms making the largest investment in the company’s history and in Lethbridge’s history, in that area in southern Alberta. We have Champion Petfoods. We have Swoop. We have Google DeepMind, that is investing in the AI lab here in Edmonton because Alberta, Edmonton, is the third-best artificial intelligence community in the world. Why is that? Because we continue to invest and diversify our economy, something the opposition . . .

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

Mrs. Pitt: Mr. Speaker, given that investment has been fleeing Alberta, evident with the pipeline, under this NDP government’s watch and that there are still many unemployed people in Airdrie and area that are still looking for stable jobs and given that commercial property vacancies in southern Alberta are at an all-time high and given that the carbon tax and minimum wage increases are shutting down small businesses – Airdrie residents have a right to remain skeptical about future investments based on this NDP government’s broken promises – Minister, what specifically have you changed to give investors certainty and to stop their flight from our province?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Bilous: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, first of all, there isn’t a flight; there’s actually an influx of new capital in our province. That’s, first and foremost, because our government listened to industry. We listened to the Chambers of Commerce and introduced two different tax credits, tax credits which the member opposite, who’s asking me, actually voted in favour of when we were on Bill 30 a year and a half ago. But under the new leader suddenly the opposition doesn’t believe in the tax credits and wants to kill these programs, that have resulted in billions of dollars of investment in our province, have provided an opportunity for Albertans to invest in their own backyard, and are helping to diversify our economy.

Occupational Health and Safety Code Changes

Mr. Hunter: Mr. Speaker, no one can argue that Alberta businesses haven’t had a very difficult time during this recession. That’s why I was left scratching my head after reading a recent news release

from the Canadian Federation of Independent Business. According to the release on June 1, just three days ago, penalties for the new occupational health and safety rules came into effect. What's surprising is that 84 per cent of Alberta businesses feel that they have not received adequate information about the new safety rules. To the Minister of Labour: do you feel that businesses have had adequate notification on these new rules?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Labour.

Ms Gray: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm very proud that just last Friday, on June 1, our new occupational health and safety rules, that will better protect workers and employers, came into effect. This is a change, particularly given that a major review of this had not happened in 40 years. To support employers, we've made information available online. We've also been doing in-person sessions with anyone who requests, whether it's four people or 250. The occupational health and safety contact centre is available for anyone who wants to call and ask questions. We will continue to support employers as they adapt to these new legislative rules.

Mr. Hunter: Mr. Speaker, given that businesses are saying that the minister has not given them adequate time to read about let alone digest and implement these new changes, will you be willing to release timelines, and if not, will you take our job creators' advice and delay implementation for six months?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms Gray: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. These rules are in place today. We are interested in working with employers to help them adhere to the new legislation to make sure that the rights of workers – the right to know about hazards, the right to participate in health and safety at their work site, and the right to refuse work – can be protected. We have also implemented rules that will protect workers from bullying and harassment, things that employers have asked us to assist them with. Any employer who would like further assistance in implementing this can download example plans from our website or can contact us for assistance. These rules are good for Alberta.

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

Mr. Hunter: Mr. Speaker, given that the minister is unwilling to delay the implementation of the new OHS rules, will the minister at least commit to the members of this House and to concerned business owners across Alberta that OHS offices will be judicious in their writing of fines for another six months, until businesses have had time to digest and implement these new rules?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms Gray: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The question is misleading. Occupational health and safety officers have always worked with employers. When they come to a work site, they are there as a partner in health and safety. I can tell you that Alberta has some fantastic employers, who care about the health and safety of their workers, so it is a great partnership. What is likely to happen when an occupational health and safety officer visits is a conversation, perhaps an order asking them to follow a plan or to create a procedure. Our officers have never and will not use punitive fines. Rather, we will be working with . . .

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.
The hon. Member for Lethbridge-East.

2:20 Highway 3 Oldman River Bridge Repair

Ms Fitzpatrick: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Highway 3 is an important corridor in the Lethbridge region. To the Minister of Transportation: what is the cost of the current project to repair the bridge over the Oldman River in Lethbridge?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Transportation.

Mr. Mason: Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the hon. member for the question. The current estimated cost of the project to repair the bridge is \$4.2 million. We want to make sure that our infrastructure is maintained and that it's safe. We want to make sure that industry can get their products to their markets and families can get home safely and to work safely. The project to rehabilitate the bridge over the Oldman River in Lethbridge will make sure that the bridge is safe and reliable for another 15 to 20 years.

The Speaker: First supplemental.

Ms Fitzpatrick: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again to the same minister: what is the cost of adding the third eastbound lane in five years?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Mason: Well, thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. Well, it's a rough estimate. The estimated cost could be up to a hundred million dollars, and that would include changes to the Bridge Drive interchange. It would take a considerable amount of time. We're working to make sure that the bridge is safe for the next 15 to 20 years or until a widened bridge is needed.

The Speaker: Second supplemental.

Ms Fitzpatrick: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again to the same minister: why is the government proceeding now with restoration of the 1960 bridge rather than implementing the recommendations of the 2009 AE engineering report to enhance the Bridge Drive on-ramp and widen the eastbound bridge to three lanes?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Mason: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker and for that question. The simple answer is that traffic volumes have not risen except slightly since that report was written. Replacing and widening the bridge would cost up to a hundred million dollars, and the timing of construction will depend on available funding and need.

Access to Information

Mr. Loewen: Transparency and openness are critical to good government, and the people of this province deserve nothing less. Unfortunately, under this government these values have all too often been pushed aside. An affidavit from one sheriff has shown us that at least some sheriffs have been internally directed to delete their e-mails to avoid FOIP requests. Quote: delete everything you have because if someone FOIPs it, nothing is there; you can't FOIP what you don't have. End quote. To the Minister of Justice: is avoiding transparency and accountability standard practice in your ministry?

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

Ms Ganley: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Of course, I'm not familiar with the specific situation the member references, but

it certainly isn't our policy to avoid transparency. In fact, the biggest challenge in the Justice ministry when we took government, coming into it, was the fact that we had very insufficient staff to handle the number of FOIP requests we were getting. In order to clear that backlog, we've been hiring individuals to make sure that we can process those requests and make sure that we are delivering the transparency that the people of Alberta deserve.

Mr. Loewen: Given that this is not the only example of wilful suppression of transparency within the Ministry of Justice and given that in relation to the same case of bullying FOIPed e-mails show that Ministry of Justice officials, quote, were going to share the full report in the beginning, that we just decided not to, end quote, to the minister: is this aversion to transparency something inherent in the bureaucracy, or is it a result of a directive from political leadership?

Ms Ganley: Well, Mr. Speaker, it's certainly the case that our government would never direct anyone to be less transparent. Certainly, we've taken a number of steps, including ensuring that we have the appropriate number of staff to process those requests, to increase transparency as well as a number of other legislative changes. Again, it's often the case that these things coming from the opposition are not completely grounded in fact, so I'm absolutely happy to look into the situation and get back to the House.

Mr. Loewen: Given that in just this case there are two clear examples of government employees going out of their way to avoid accountability and given that this hurts Albertans like the sheriff, who was simply trying to access records from his own file, and given that this government was already investigated by the Privacy Commissioner for the deletion of more than 800,000 e-mails and given that we received a FOIP last week that was outstanding for more than three years, not to mention many exceeding one year, can the government tell us what actions they are taking to deal with this culture of secrecy and lack of accountability that is growing under their watch?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Service Alberta.

Ms McLean: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We believe that government should be open and transparent. That's why we're taking this issue seriously. We've improved turnaround times for FOIP requests, and we're proactively sharing more information than has ever been shared in the history of the government of Alberta. We're very proud of the work that we're doing, and we're continuing to do it.

The real question, Mr. Speaker, is why the Leader of the Opposition won't even disclose his campaign contributors nor why they intend on keeping their election plans extremely secret.

Time-share Lease Consumer Protection

Mr. Gotfried: Mr. Speaker, the Consumer Protection Act applies to unfair business practices if the supplier or consumer is a resident of Alberta. Northmont Resort Properties Ltd. is an Alberta-based and registered company dealing in resort time-share with Alberta residents, with its head office in Calgary. In a February 7, 2018, letter to my constituent an assistant deputy minister concluded that the matters of concern to him and hundreds of other Alberta consumers were "outside the mandate and jurisdiction of Service Alberta's Consumer Investigations Unit." To the Minister of Service Alberta: what can I tell my constituent about your apparent lack of interest and failure to protect consumers?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms McLean: Thank you for the question, Mr. Speaker. Certainly, this is the first conversation that I've had with the hon. member with respect to this particular issue. I'd be happy to follow up with him on this specific issue and get him information, though he has not personally contacted me for information outside of question period.

Thank you.

Mr. Gotfried: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This follows on many, many letters from my constituent.

Given that the company referenced sells time-share lease contracts to Alberta residents – transactions are conducted in Alberta, sent to the consumer by supply representatives in Alberta, with offers and incentives also taking place in Alberta – and given that this would clearly indicate that the Alberta Consumer Protection Act should apply to these transactions and given the company in question has allegedly engaged in unfair practices as defined in the act, again to the minister: how can you say that the consumer concerns expressed do not fall clearly within both your jurisdiction and your mandate?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms McLean: Thank you for the question, Mr. Speaker. We take consumer protection very seriously. That's why I've overhauled the prior Fair Trading Act to make it the Consumer Protection Act. I've done a lot of work on this front. The member is now putting words in my mouth that I never said. I think that's very untoward behaviour, not appropriate for this House. Furthermore, I would appreciate it, if the member is getting letters, that he actually transmit them to my office so that I can help his constituents, instead of using them for cheap political points.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Gotfried: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Actually, many letters came from your office, and many, many came to your office.

Mr. Speaker, given that the Consumer Protection Act would apply if a company was engaging in unfair practices such as performing unilateral amendments to contracts without the approval of Alberta consumers or imposing cancellation provisions that were not in the original contracts and given that if the Alberta government has a law on its books to protect consumers from unfair practices, surely it also has a responsibility to enforce such laws, again to the minister: what justification can you provide for not enforcing the Consumer Protection Act to actually protect Alberta consumers in this case?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms McLean: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I've said, if there's information that the member has, I would be happy to look at it.

Additionally, I'm not sure what he's talking about when he says that I have sent him letters as I have done no such thing. However, Mr. Speaker, I do know some general details about the situation, and to my knowledge this falls under B.C. jurisdiction. Again, if he has issues that he would like to bring to me to actually receive help with instead of trying to achieve cheap political points, I would love to help his constituents.

Thank you.

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

Rural Crime Reduction

Mr. Strankman: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I recently received a disturbing first-hand account of how this rural crime epidemic is getting out of hand. Just over a week ago a band of thieves converged on a small community, with no other purpose but to wreak havoc. These perpetrators went on a robbing and destruction spree, the tally of which was over \$100,000. Despite repeated calls to the RCMP, hours away they were unable to help. Minister, you recently stated that almost half of the 39 new RCMP are already in place in Alberta. Can you share with us where these members have been stationed?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms Ganley: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker and to the member for the question. It is absolutely critical to our government and, I think, to all members in this House that all Albertans feel safe in their homes. That's why we're investing in ensuring that we can respond to rural crime. A great many of these individuals are in what are called crime reduction units, which are intended to target exactly what the member is raising. These units are able to focus on prolific offenders who are creating havoc in our communities, and they are already achieving results, as I've illustrated just recently. I'm sure I'll have more to say in just a moment.

2:30

The Speaker: First supplemental.

Mr. Strankman: Thank you again, Mr. Speaker. Given that over the course of the day these thieves were spotted at various locations, but with the RCMP an extensive time away, they were not to be apprehended and given that sometime over the course of the day they showed up at another farmer's yard and threatened his life over a tank of gasoline and given the community was understandably on edge until they were arrested with the community's help, again I ask: Minister, you continually talk about boots on the ground; of the 39 new RCMP slated for Alberta, how many have been assigned duties in rural Alberta on a permanent basis, and were they actually able to improve . . .

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

The hon. minister.

Ms Ganley: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Just to clarify, those RCMP officers as announced in the rural crime strategy are all in rural Alberta. Many of those individuals are being put into what we call crime reduction units.

The member has illustrated some incredibly disturbing events. Those are exactly the sorts of events that I've been hearing about and that our MLAs have been hearing about as well. That's why we've taken this proactive step to create these crime reduction units that can target exactly the sorts of prolific offenders that the member raises.

Mr. Strankman: Mr. Speaker, given that in the incident I just referenced, these perpetrators were out of jail days after, on \$3,000 bail, and given that this catch-and-release philosophy is simply compounding this rural crime problem, Minister, when will this government and your ministry get tough on rural crime?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms Ganley: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Again, the episode that the member is illustrating is the same as many episodes that we've heard about from many rural Albertans. That's why

we've taken the steps to ensure that we are making the necessary investments in these crime reduction units so that they can gather evidence on these individuals and build a stronger case. This is about proactive policing, about ensuring that we have the requisite number of resources in place to ensure that we can target these offenders, because all Albertans deserve to feel safe in their homes.

The Speaker: Thank you.

Northern Lights Gas Co-op Capacity

Mr. van Dijken: Mr. Speaker, on March 22 I asked about a very good situation that resulted in a very significant problem in Mackenzie county. It seems the population growth has been so great that it has outstripped the ability of the Northern Lights Gas Co-op to finance the \$45 million needed to construct a 65-kilometre second natural gas line in a timely manner. Residents already faced almost a week-long low-pressure emergency this past winter. To the Agriculture and Forestry minister: since March what progress has your government made to help fix this problem?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs.

Mr. S. Anderson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for the question. I've actually been up there and discussed that with Mackenzie county before. We do know that over the last few winters the gas supply has become a vital issue up there with the growth, which is a good thing. We do understand that, you know, the heating fuel in the winter is super important. It's the reason we fund the remote area heating allowance program and why we invest capital grants into gas co-ops. We've been having conversations with the stakeholders and folks in the area, in the region. I know the minister of agriculture has been personally engaging on the issue in conference calls and meetings up there and will continue to do so.

Mr. van Dijken: Mr. Speaker, given that the government did not budget for any financial assistance for this situation despite knowing about it since at least the end of December and given that the minister said that ministry colleagues would work together to ensure that we do have a plan and that they would have the gas they need, Minister, what other resources have been made available to Mackenzie county to help the Northern Lights Gas Co-op fix this critical infrastructure so that residents can be certain they will have the gas that they need?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. S. Anderson: Thank you. Thank you to the member for the question. Together with the co-op and the county we are developing short-term, medium-, and long-term solutions so that northwestern Alberta can continue to grow and prosper, as it has been. We are continuing these conversations, and we are now identifying low-interest financing through AFSC and other sources. We are connecting local stakeholders with federal and provincial agencies that may be able to help and encouraging stakeholders to approach those agencies like Western Economic Diversification Canada or Indigenous Services Canada to understand what's available to them.

Mr. van Dijken: Mr. Speaker, given that other regions are fighting for improved broadband Internet yet Mackenzie county is being left behind on this basic need that other regions take for granted and given that Mackenzie county has been forced to turn down business proposals because there is not enough natural gas to support the

demands of any development, to the Minister of Economic Development and Trade: what has your department done to look after making sure this basic energy infrastructure is in place for economic growth in Mackenzie county?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs.

Mr. S. Anderson: Thank you, and thank you to the member for the question. You know, being in Municipal Affairs, everything happens in municipalities. One of my interests is rural broadband and, you know, economic development, gas, and working with the co-ops. This is kind of a crossministry endeavour, I would say, an initiative for one broadband across rural.

For the gas in particular we are working with stakeholders in the region to help enhance the gas network. AltaGas is planning to install two new compressors by November 2018, which I think is really good news. There are also plans to include other compressors in the system to keep pace with the growth over the next 10 years.

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

Filipino Community

Loyola: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today Alberta is home to over 175,000 Filipinos and Filipinas, making up more than 4 per cent of our province's population. That's the second-largest Filipino community in Canada. With over 60,000 Albertans of Filipino descent calling Edmonton home, many of them who live in the constituency of Edmonton-Ellerslie, I've heard from many of them asking our government to celebrate their contributions to our province. To the Deputy Premier: how is our government recognizing generations of Filipinos enriching Alberta's culture?

The Speaker: The hon. Deputy Premier.

Ms Hoffman: [Remarks in Tagalog] Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker and to the member for the important question. I was honoured this past weekend to join Filipino community leaders both in Edmonton and Calgary as our government officially proclaimed June Philippine Heritage Month in Alberta. That means that every June in the future will be a time for Albertans to celebrate the tremendous contributions of generations of Filipinos. Whether it be faith, civic, and cultural contributions, Filipinos make this province a brighter, more caring, and vibrant place to be, and we're proud to work with them to do that.

The Speaker: First supplemental.

Loyola: Thank you, and thank you to the Deputy Premier for this historic proclamation. I know that many Filipino Albertans across Alberta will be very excited. Given that the Filipino community embraces the values of compassion, hard work, family, and fun, which are values our government shares, to the Deputy Premier: what is our government doing to support Alberta's Filipino community?

Ms Hoffman: Our government knows that family is one of the core tenets of many Filipino Albertans when they talk about why it is that they're here and what they believe is most important moving forward. Mr. Speaker, when I heard from a number of Filipino leaders shortly after election that temporary foreign workers weren't bringing their children to health care facilities because they didn't think they were entitled to, I worked diligently to ensure that that was no longer the case. We're proud that every child who lives in this province has access to health care, whether their parents are

here permanently or not. That's one example. We're also investing in families through daycare, education, seniors' care . . .

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

Loyola: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the minister. Given that Filipinos run hundreds of organizations that reach out to Albertans of all ages and backgrounds, guided by the values of [Remarks in Tagalog], or empathy and solidarity, to the Deputy Premier: how will our government work with the Filipino community, guided by our shared values, to make life better for all Albertans?

Ms Hoffman: You know, Mr. Speaker, they've taught me a phrase in Tagalog. [Remarks in Tagalog] It means strength and unity. We know that we are stronger when we work together, and it's something that we all believe. When we work together, when we support one another, when we support communities, we have stronger outcomes. One of the things that the members of the Filipino community have raised with me is how disappointed they were when the now Leader of the Opposition was in the federal government that grandparents were no longer able to come and provide child care when their families moved here. That's shameful. We're working with the community to try to unite families and keep them supported and stronger together.

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

Mr. Kenney: Personal attacks even when I'm not asking the questions, Mr. Speaker. That last comment was untrue.

Canadian Senate Vacancies

Mr. Kenney: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank the Hon. Claudette Tardif for her service representing Alberta in the Senate of Canada. She retired in March of this year, so there's a vacancy for Alberta's allotment in the Senate of Canada. Will the government of Alberta agree with me in encouraging the federal government to appoint Mr. Mike Shaikh, who was the third-place finisher in the last Alberta Senate election, in which he received 310,000 votes?

2:40

Ms Hoffman: Mr. Speaker, we have removed the election process. Certainly, this is a question, again, that's geared towards federal politics and federal appointments. I understand that the member wants to spend a lot of time discussing federal issues in this House. We're keen on discussing Alberta issues.

Mr. Kenney: Mr. Speaker, Mr. Shaikh was elected in an Alberta election, held under an Alberta statute, to represent Alberta in Ottawa in a seat that is now vacant. Does the government agree with the basic principle of democracy insofar as Senators Doug Black and Scott Tannas, the first- and second-place candidates in that election, were appointed to the Senate by Prime Minister Harper? Does she not agree that this precedent should be followed by appointing Mr. Mike Shaikh, who won 310,000 votes in an Alberta election conducted by the government of Alberta?

Ms Hoffman: I'll take this one again, and then I'll turn it to my colleague for democratic renewal. Mr. Speaker, again, this is a federal appointment, not a provincial appointment. I understand the member has spent a great deal of time in Ottawa, but these appointments are made by the federal government. They're the ones that appoint these folks. I understand that you want to discuss federal issues, hon. member, but again I urge you to consider

discussing the matters at hand that relate directly to the province of Alberta, our polices and what we do to move this province forward.

Mr. Kenney: Mr. Speaker, I'll take it from that answer that the government does not believe that the election should be respected.

Mr. Speaker, another vacancy will be occurring as a result of the hon. Senator Unger reaching the age of 75 later this year, so will the government agree with us that this Legislature should renew the now-lapsed Alberta senate elections act so that Albertans can have an opportunity to propose to the federal government the next Senator to be appointed to represent the people of Alberta in the upper Chamber?

The Speaker: The hon. minister of democratic renewal.

Ms Gray: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I and this government are very proud of what we've done to renew democracy here in our province, getting big money out of politics and a number of other changes. I believe that the member asking the question was a member of government while vacancies were available and did not appoint the person that he is referring to. That seems to contradict his statement that all governments should react so strongly to the elections as he's put forward. But I will say that this government will continue to make sure that democracy in Alberta remains strong by getting big money out of . . .

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

Hon. members, we will proceed in 30 seconds.

Tabling Returns and Reports

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

Mr. Hanson: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I have two letters today from concerned parents regarding the situation at l'école du Sommet that I've brought up in the House. I would urge the Minister of Education to read them and please respond to these folks. They've been waiting for answers for over 75 days.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House-Sundre.

Mr. Nixon: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to table the appropriate copies of hundreds of letters to the minister of environment in regard to her land-use framework policy changes, all of which have not been responded to by the minister or her office despite the minister saying to this Assembly that she is consulting with Albertans on this important issue.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Sherwood Park.

Ms McKittrick: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to table the five requisite copies of three articles that I referenced in my question period questions on Wednesday, May 30. The first is an article from the *Edmonton Journal* containing the quote from the UCP convention equating the issues that hold women back to socialist crap. The second article, which fits in very well with the question from the MLA for Airdrie today, is from the *Calgary Herald* and contains a quote from the Leader of the Opposition about putting Alberta's revised school curriculum through the shredder. The third article, from the *Ponoka News*, cites the Leader of the Opposition stating that Alberta's revised curriculum is being written by committed socialists.

The Speaker: The Member for Calgary-Fish Creek.

Mr. Gotfried: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to table the requisite number of copies of a letter from Mary MacDonald, who is the assistant deputy minister, resolution and court administration services, at Justice and Solicitor General, in which she says that they conclude that the matters with respect to the issue I raised earlier "were outside the mandate and jurisdiction of Service Alberta's Consumer Investigations Unit." This letter was copied to the Premier, to the Minister of Justice and Solicitor General, to the Minister of Service Alberta, and to the MLA for Calgary-Shaw.

The Speaker: Hon. members, I believe there was a point of order, but I'm advised that it's been withdrawn.

Orders of the Day

Public Bills and Orders Other than Government Bills and Orders Third Reading

Bill 203

Long Term Care Information Act

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

Drever: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is a pleasure to rise in the House today on behalf of my colleague from Red Deer-North and move third reading of Bill 203, the Long Term Care Information Act.

This private member's bill focuses on creating a one-stop shop resource for those looking into long-term care options. It serves to provide a tool for those who are looking into which facility may serve their needs according to their preferences. Mr. Speaker, when you're looking at deciding which facility is your forever home, that is a very important decision. Fellow members, we have heard many members speak to this bill before in terms of having witnessed first-hand the tremendous stress that this decision can cause. Without this tool the options currently available do not assist with easing the stress but, rather, contribute to it. I have seen families look at specific long-term care options. I have seen them having to physically visit facilities because the ability to compare them online is a very difficult process. When families or individuals are looking into long-term care options, the time frame is limited and having an online resource would ease the stress of making these incredibly important decisions.

Mr. Speaker, I know that the Member for Red Deer-North held public consultations in her community of Red Deer to hear about the perspectives of individuals she was elected to serve. Suffice it to say, the support for this private member's bill was very strong. This highly correlates with what I've seen myself, with what people are saying in terms of the difficulties our current options are presenting.

Mr. Speaker, I did hear that there was no need to make this a private member's bill and that the Member for Red Deer-North could just simply ask the minister to establish this. In fact, I believe that it was coined as a squandered opportunity recently in this Chamber. Establishing private member's Bill 203, the Long Term Care Information Act, gives a stronger backing to the focus of providing reliable, up-to-date information that is centralized to one spot. It provides a strong commitment to providing an invaluable resource to those who are making decisions regarding their forever home. It allows for easy navigation of long-term care facilities that can be compared based on information that is important to those who are looking for specifics which are important to them and their lifestyles. This is sound governance that not only supports that we are listening to the needs of Albertans but that we are willing to provide easy and accessible answers to them as well.

2:50

I know that the Member for Red Deer-North also did some research on other jurisdictions, and each province has recognized that data regarding long-term care is important. The amount of information that each province requires varies. However, there are attempts to support those investigating long-term care options within each region. In B.C., Saskatchewan, Ontario, New Brunswick, and Newfoundland website access is presented in a drop-down menu form, but it also includes all types of continuing care facilities. With such information available, it is imperative that those searching have a strong understanding of the language used to designate which facility is best suited for the care required.

Each province presents by region to enable ease of search. Within each link the information extent varies from basic address and contacts to what extra services are provided, amenities on-site, if it is pet friendly, or whether smoking is permitted and where. Additional costs are detailed. However, the amount of specific information about costs is not reported on a consistent basis. For example, B.C. includes information about extra meal costs. Inspection reports are available and updated regularly but are available through a link that is not specifically connected to the website or long-term care options. As a result, information is piecemeal and difficult to navigate.

Recognizing the importance of this information, Saskatchewan is currently revamping its website but has kept links to regional health authority websites, which provide this information. This information overhaul has taken the responsibility from regional health care authorities and made it the responsibility of the province. Manitoba, P.E.I., and Nova Scotia have listings of facilities, but these facilities deliver all kinds of health care, so a one-stop model for long-term care is not in place.

The information presented by region. Some are presented as a PDF directory, with access to varying information. What we know is that there is a strong need to make this information available and easy to understand. Currently data available in Alberta is available in a piecemeal style and is listed by diagnosis. It is the goal of this bill to simplify the process by choosing a facility that meets individual needs and to ease the burden of stress that can accompany this highly delicate decision.

Additionally, the Member for Red Deer-North has sought out feedback from agencies that serve to assist our seniors and their families and received resounding support for this tool, and they agree on the difficulty of accessing information regarding long-term care facilities.

This opportunity for the Member for Red Deer-North to present a private member's bill echoes the needs of her community and, I am sure, many of the communities represented in this House. This bill will enable and empower Albertans to make sound choices based on current, reliable, and transparent information, and, Mr. Speaker, that serves to make life better for all Albertans.

On behalf of the Member for Red Deer-North I welcome the response and debate in third reading. Thank you.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills.

Mr. Cooper: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise and speak to Bill 203, the Long Term Care Information Act. I want to take just a brief moment to thank the Member for Red Deer-North for her work on this file and her advocacy on behalf of our seniors. You know, I think there's not too, too much that every single member of the House can agree on, but certainly on this there isn't a single member in the House who isn't willing to try to do everything that we can in our power to support our seniors, who deserve the very best that this province can offer as they enter their

golden years. These are the folks that have built our province through hard work, grit, and determination, and we owe a great debt of gratitude to them for those efforts. They have given this province so much, and the very least that we can do as they transition into the next phase of their lives is to try to make that seamless, to be supportive, and to allow them as much choice as possible.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this bill has the right idea, and I thank the member for her reasoning behind it. I think that any opportunity we have to look at ways to improve access to information, accountability, and to make life easier for Albertans is worthy of supporting, which is why my colleagues and I on this side of the House are in fact supportive of Bill 203. But in the interests of fulfilling our role as the opposition, I want to take an opportunity to have an informed discussion and perhaps suggest some additional pieces that could have been added to strengthen the legislation and truly further ensure that it serves the purposes that it was set out to conclude.

The purpose of this legislation, from what I see, based on my reading of the bill, is to create a publicly accessible online registry for long-term care facilities in Alberta that is updated periodically to ensure that seniors and their families have all of the information that they need to make informed decisions about their futures as they access the different options available to them.

Now, as my colleagues have noted, this does to some extent already exist online. The Alberta Health website does in fact have a search engine for information regarding supportive living or long-term care accommodations that has the following information: accommodation name; operator contact address; accommodation type as well as a button for each housing option which lists how facilities are funded; details on licensing information, including the licence issue and expiry date; detailed inspection reports. There is also a helpful function which allows you to compare, side by side, different facilities that families may be interested in.

So, Mr. Speaker, I just want to ensure that this private member's bill, which has had such great intent and highlights a really important issue, expands on the great work that's already been done rather than reinventing the wheel that already exists. On behalf of stakeholders that I have reached out to or have reached out to us regarding this legislation, I would have liked and continue to make the following suggestions that would have enhanced this great piece of legislation.

The registry should include all facilities, whether private, public, nonprofit, voluntary, or any other designation. I think this is a really fantastic point, that there are so many different options when it comes to supporting our seniors. Some families want to be able to care for their elderly within their own home and simply need an extra hand, some seniors are fully independent but unable to drive, some seniors function best in a community environment such as a lodge, and some prefer to live independently, away from others.

The point is that seniors are diverse and their needs are diverse and that the options for care facilities should also be diverse. That's why having this bill mandate all continuing care options that are available to families and seniors and their families – given that all the above, from public to private to voluntary, are options in Alberta, I feel that all of those options should be built into the registry so that seniors and families really can compare those options side by side and make the most informed decision for them and their families.

The registry list should provide information specific to palliative or respite care. It would also be helpful to track the number of facilities offering palliative and respite care and see what other types of fees they may or may not be charging for palliative residents. The registry should have a description of palliative care options included in the online registry.

The registry should include information on specialized training and staff levels; for example, dementia-specific training or qualifications as well as details on types of staff as well as numbers at each facility. As you can imagine, if my mother has Alzheimer's and I'm looking at different facilities, it would be helpful to know if there are nurses or other staff in the facility that are particularly specialized in handling those specific needs. Personally, that would be a large factor in deciding what kind of care facility to place a loved one in. It is important for families to be able to select a facility that can best provide the specialized care that their loved ones may require. This would provide additional peace of mind for families.

It was suggested that regulations could flesh out the details of the services provided that must be disclosed in the regulation. Examples are: if they provide palliative care, the number of rooms or beds designated for complex patients, if they provide respite care, et cetera. This would have given a very clear breakdown of any individual strengths, the pros of each facilities, and allowed families to choose facilities that specialize in the care that their loved ones may specifically require.

3:00

If we look at this example in other areas of society and health care, we see it at work. For example, if I live in the Edmonton area and I have a sick child, yes, I could realistically go to any hospital to receive treatment for my sick child, but I would probably go straight to the Stollery hospital because I know that they specialize in children.

Similarly, most of our seniors could probably live in any continuing care facility, but if there's a particular facility that specializes in a particular area that is important to them, don't we owe it to our seniors and to their families that this information on the facility's specialization clearly be listed on the registry so that they can help make that choice earlier on in their decision-making process?

The registry could provide a further description of what an accommodation charge or additional charge means. Providing transparency around pricing is so important with respect to facilities.

Smoking policies at each facility should be included in the registry. Just as we see in hotels and other public facilities, the requirements around smoking should be made available on the registry.

I think the point that I'm trying to convey, Mr. Speaker, is that this bill had such a fantastic opportunity to really provide our seniors and their families with much-needed information and as many tools as possible to inform their critical decision. The more information that we can provide to them, the better. There is already some great info out there, and the bill provides us with a fantastic opportunity to expand on that information and really take a look at what additional information could be provided to enhance transparency to families.

I would like to thank again the Member for Red Deer-North for her advocacy and her work and hope that collaboratively we can continue to work across party lines to ensure that legislation like this, that will additionally help our seniors and their families, will make that information as accessible as possible and that the registry in its final form will be as full and robust as possible, as such providing the best possible information to Albertans.

The Speaker: The Member for Calgary-Glenmore.

Ms Kazim: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am very pleased to rise in the House today to support Bill 203, the long-term care transparency act, presented by the Member for Red Deer-North. I would

like to commend her for her work and for standing up for our seniors, who have played such a vital role in our communities and in our society. I've got many long-term seniors' care homes in my riding, and I interact with seniors quite a lot. Based on my interactions with them, I continuously hear how they are seeking information about different services available to them, different options that are available to them.

One of the challenges that they experience is to have access to the information, and to provide that platform is necessary so that they can have all the resources they need to make decisions for themselves. As human beings we all have individual needs. All of us have choices based on our individual needs, and we look for opportunities to make those choices. In this bill the platform that is being provided will allow seniors to make the best choices about long-term care. Albertans need information about options in an easily understandable and accessible format. The easier the information is to comprehend, the better it will make sense to people, and that's when they are able to make the right choices for themselves.

I would like to read a quote by Bertrand Russell. He says, "The good life is one inspired by love and guided by knowledge." If we have the knowledge, we are able to make good decisions, we have better inspirations, and then we can move forward in the right direction for ourselves, whatever that is.

Also, I was reading a blog about how it is important for human beings to have the ability to make a choice. This blog I'm referring to is from huffingtonpost.ca, and it talks about Having the Freedom to Make Choices Can Empower Lives. In this blog they are referring to studies that show that feelings of powerlessness can lead to depression and anxiety. In 2011 researchers at the U.K.'s London Business School found a fascinating link between choice and empowerment. Study participants were presented with scenarios where they had various amounts of power, such as being a boss versus an employee. They were then asked to make decisions with varying options. The researchers proved what has long been suspected, that having more choice counterbalances feelings of powerlessness and also improves psychological well-being by giving people a greater sense of control over their lives.

A person could be living in different circumstances, in different situations, and as long as they have the sense of being empowered, then they define a good quality of life, they feel they are having a good life. That empowerment, as we can see from the research, is very much linked to their ability to make choices. When they have that sense that they can make a choice, then they feel more empowered. Recognizing the importance of having options, some charitable and community groups across North America are giving the most vulnerable a say in the aid and little comforts they receive and discovering that it can have almost as much impact as the hand up itself.

Basically, this research is very much relevant to this bill as well because when we are talking about our seniors, all seniors have got different needs based on their situation and what phase of life they are in. By giving them the option to make choices, we are empowering our seniors, and we can only do that when we provide them the information, the knowledge they need to make those choices. Through this bill, what will happen is that all long-term care facilities in Alberta will be required to provide information about services and costs to all Albertans. This will allow Albertans to make decisions about long-term care that are suitable for them. This will basically be a helpful tool for the seniors and their families to identify what kind of lifestyle they can have and, once they select a long-term care facility or the care that they are seeking, how it is going to make a difference in their lives.

Long-term care is something that most of us are going to need in our lifetimes. For example, my parents are aging as well, Mr. Speaker, and I currently think about what their future is going to look like, how their needs are going to change over time. Even today I'm concerned about what would be the best option for them. Being a family member, it is very important for me that they have a comfortable life and for me to gather that information in terms of what is available to them. I won't be able to figure out what would be the right decisions to make down the road or how their planning process could be started in the first place if I do not have enough information for them.

If seniors themselves are looking for options, they are confused or perplexed most of the time because they don't know where to go, how to access information, and what's available to them.

The programs that Seniors and Housing offers – for example, the Alberta seniors' benefit program, special-needs assistance, property tax deferral, seniors' home adaptation and repair program, and seniors' housing – really make a difference in the lives of all Albertans because we either have seniors in our families now or will be seniors ourselves someday.

3:10

Having that information in one place, in an organized manner, and making sure that there is a standard in all the institutions that are providing services to seniors gives certainty to our seniors that they will have a good quality of life and that they will be provided whatever they're being promised in the first place. If this bill is passed, Mr. Speaker, the long-term care transparency act will create a publicly accessible online registry to provide Albertans with information about auxiliary hospitals and nursing homes in the province. This would include type of operator, facility capacity, services provided, additional charges if applicable, and results of any inspections or investigations conducted under the Nursing Homes Act or the Hospitals Act.

The Member for Red Deer-North has consulted with Albertan families, long-term care residents, and stakeholder groups, who are widely supportive of the proposed changes because there have been many incidents, Mr. Speaker. After engaging with seniors, I hear quite often that when they sign up for a long-term care facility or for a certain service, they have a certain picture in their mind, but once they are experiencing it themselves, it's different from what they thought. This adds more pressure and more stress to their lives, and it does not really help with their transition or their well-being overall.

Basically, they feel a lack of empowerment. Again I refer to what I was talking about in the beginning, that we want to ensure that our senior citizens feel empowered, and that empowerment comes through the options that are given to them and letting them have the ability to make choices. They can make those choices once they have the information available to them, once they have that knowledge.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I would highly encourage all the members in this House to vote in favour of this bill so that we can empower our senior citizens and their families to ensure that they have access to quality services and that they can make choices that will fit their individual needs.

Thank you very much.

The Speaker: The Member for Edmonton-Decore. Sorry; Edmonton-McClung.

Mr. Dach: Nellie. Think Nellie McClung.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure this afternoon to rise to also speak to Bill 203, the long-term care transparency act,

to add what I think is a bit of a valuable addition to some of the arguments that have been made, to applaud the introduction of this bill and be glad that it is actually going to become, if passed, another addition to the tool box for families who are looking to serve their elderly members while they look to transition from either one level of seniors' care or from their own home into long-term care.

At an early age and over a number of phases of my working career, Mr. Speaker, I was exposed to the decision-making process that many families and, in fact, most families in Alberta will have to go through to determine where to place a family member into long-term care once they're no longer able to function at the level of care that they're at or in their own home.

First of all, at age 17, as some members will know, I actually trained as a nursing orderly. I trained and was in a practicum at the old Colonel Mewburn vets' home. It's no longer in existence. It's been replaced, really, by the Kipnes Centre here in Edmonton as a home for veterans. With that particular location, the choice was a bit of a no-brainer for families of veterans, and they were very happy to have the option to place their family member in long-term care in the vets' home. Now, of course, the Kipnes Centre, back then the Colonel Mewburn, had a high level of care, and it was dedicated to veterans, and they knew that the needs of those veterans would be looked after. In my case, it was only male veterans who were in the Colonel Mewburn.

They actually had special needs looked after there. I know that when I was operating there, they actually could still smoke – in fact, I remember helping people with Parkinson's disease smoke their afternoon cigarette – and on Thursdays they got to have a beer as veterans in their own facility. So people were happy to have their family members in the veterans' hospital, the Mewburn, back in 1977, when I worked there, because they knew that there were levels of specialized care that they wouldn't get elsewhere.

Mr. Speaker, I also knew, from families even at that point in time who didn't have the option to get their family member into a veterans' hospital because they weren't a veteran, that the opportunities were difficult to decipher because there wasn't a system of registration for the long-term care facilities, that this bill contemplates putting in place. That early exposure to the decision-making process, though, made it abundantly clear to me how necessary it was for families to know what all their options were.

[The Deputy Speaker in the chair]

The second phase at which I became aware of the importance for families to have good information when they're making a decision about where to place their loved one in long-term care came, of course, as a result of my 30-year career as a real estate agent. One of the major reasons that a family member, an individual, a homeowner will sell their property or, if they're renting, will decide to move away from a rental situation is that they, of course, no longer can function properly in the accommodation that they're in. Often real estate agents were called upon, as I was, to counsel a family member on what the next steps would be. I found, as I mentioned in the House before, I believe, that it was something that was a little more complex than I had first contemplated when I met with families who were making these decisions.

When you talk to a family who's relying upon you for advice as a real estate professional, you soon learn that you'd better do some research. That research was fairly extensive and wasn't the easiest thing to accomplish and still isn't because the registry is incomplete. It doesn't necessarily have all the information in one place, that Bill 203 contemplates, making it much easier for real estate professionals and family members to access a full array of all of the facilities that might be available to suit their family member's

needs in one place. That's one of the major successes of this piece of legislation, Bill 203, that it will be a one-stop shopping centre for not only real estate professionals but family members, who don't want to miss any potential opportunity to make the best decision for their family member when they're looking at a long-term care choice.

Now, of course, a third phase that I went through in this decision-making process and understanding what the benefits of Bill 203 would be was, of course, as a family member myself, trying to place parents and grandparents in long-term care. That direct experience was helped by my real estate experience in that I'd been down that road many times with other members, my clients' families, but it's a different kettle of fish when you're dealing with your own parents or your own grandparents. I found that even though, of course, you have a high level of care and concern for your clients, other things come into play when it's your own family member, because you know intimately what that family member's needs are and what things will no longer be available to that family member in a long-term care situation. You want to know, you know, if there is a particular need that may or may not be addressed in a given long-term care facility.

This registry will go a long way towards allowing those family members to feel some peace of mind by investigating properly an institution that is in the registry and knowing for sure that their family member's needs are going to be met to the best of their ability as they've done the research. Now, finally, Madam Speaker, as an MLA I actually get to help this process along. I'm really proud to be here and to assist with the debate and promote the adoption, I hope, of Bill 203. As I mentioned before, this bill would require all long-term care facilities to provide information about services and costs to all Albertans.

3:20

Now, after four decades in power, Madam Speaker, the Conservatives never introduced legislation to help Albertans make this kind of difficult decision. The opposition is calling for deep cuts to core services across the board, and that would create and have a direct impact on Albertans receiving and who need long-term care.

Mr. Malkinson: That doesn't help seniors.

Mr. Dach: No. I agree that it doesn't help families in the deepest time of need when the consideration is to get a family member placed in a long-term care situation that's going to be helpful and that's going to extend their lifespan. Really, what the family member is looking to do is to make sure that they have the highest quality of life and the longest life possible once they have to leave their family home or their rental accommodation.

I'm proud today to stand in support of Bill 203. I've had the opportunity now to work beside my colleague from Red Deer-North for three years, and I've come to respect her greatly. I know the dedication and the integrity that she expresses every day in this House and how much she cares deeply for the people in her constituency. I know that her background in the health care system has certainly driven her to do her very best to find these gaps that are in the legislation, that she's addressing now with Bill 203 to ensure that family members have the one-stop shopping registrar that this bill will put in place.

Now, despite the work that our government is doing to make it easier for seniors to stay in their homes as long as possible, we all know that the demand for long-term care is going to increase over the next 20 years. Some of the things that our government has done

I've actually been able to participate in, as a cosponsor, for example, of the SHARP program, the seniors' home adaptation and repair program, whereby seniors are able to access their home equity and invest it in their property to make renovations and repairs which make the house more accessible and allow them to live in it longer, thus prolonging the decision-making process that Bill 203 contemplates. But at a certain point in time, even with all the renovations and adaptations and repairs and so forth that the seniors' home adaptation and repair program allows seniors to do, many seniors will no longer be able to live in their own homes.

We do owe a debt of gratitude to those seniors, to our aging population, assisting them in living in their homes as long as possible, but when the decision has to be made to leave that home of theirs to go to long-term care, I'm very happy to know that Bill 203 will be in place.

Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: Any other members wishing to speak to Bill 203? The hon. Member for Calgary-East.

Ms Luff: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I'm very pleased to be able to rise today to speak in favour of Bill 203. I haven't yet had the opportunity in the House to speak to this, and I'm very pleased to do so. I want to take the opportunity to thank my colleague from Red Deer-North for bringing this forward. I know that this is an issue that she's absolutely passionate about and has a lot of experience in and was able to look for something that is maybe a small change, but it's a change that will certainly make a large difference in the lives of people in Alberta and will make a positive change for folks. I really want to thank her for her efforts on this piece of legislation.

[The Speaker in the chair]

This is absolutely an issue that I hear about in my community. It's something I hear from constituents and friends. I have many health care aides who work in my constituency, and it's something that I hear about from them.

When folks are looking for long-term care for their parents or their relatives, it's often a very challenging decision, and people making those decisions make them for a wide variety of reasons. Everybody is unique. As people have said before, all of our seniors are diverse, and people are looking for different things. Some people want their parents to be close to them and so want to try and find a facility that's in their neighbourhood. Some people want their parents to be able to live in the community where they've always lived. I know that some folks want to continue to live in their community rather than move close to their children because that's where they've always lived and that's where they're comfortable. Those are certainly things that people consider.

People also consider – the issue of extra charges is something that I hear about a lot because, depending on where you're located, you could be charged for any number of extra things, whether that's extra care time or whether it's for someone to cut your mom's toenails or whether it's for a bath. Having those extra charges as something that's included in this database, I think, is really important and something that will be really helpful.

This is something that my family has had to deal with, not here in Alberta but in British Columbia, with my maternal grandmother, who was a wonderful, wonderful lady, who is, sadly, no longer with us, and I miss her very much. When the time came for her to have to move out of her house – you know, she lived in a lovely house on a lake, so it had a view, so something with a view was really important to her. And she was notorious. We would often thank her

for meals and say, like, “Oh, Grammy, that was delicious,” and she would say: “Of course it was. I cooked it myself.” Food was something that was also really important to her.

We spent a lot of time looking. At that time, when we were looking, you often heard about things via word of mouth – you had friends who had had a good experience – or you had, you know, just driven by a place that looked good and you needed to check into it, but it wasn’t all available in one spot. Certainly, as a younger person myself I like to be able to find information all in one spot, so the idea of having a database where you could just look for these things relatively quickly is extremely appealing.

You know, after my grandmother moved out of supportive living and had to move into long-term care, we were fortunate to find a place near our home, but I know that my mom still spent many hours travelling back and forth to do things like laundry and to cook my grandmother poached eggs on toast because she, again, was picky about food.

It can be a really difficult situation for a family to be in, and it can be something that is extremely personal and a lot of work and something that many, you know, baby boomers are starting to deal with right now, where they have parents who are needing this extra assistance. Certainly, I was fortunate to be able to help a little bit. I was in university at the time that this was happening, so I was able to help out where I could, but I know that it was a lot of burden that was placed on my mom to look after her mom. It’s something that a lot of people are going through right now.

Having quality long-term care facilities near your house or in a community of choice is very important. There are, as was mentioned, over 170 such facilities here in Alberta. Making this decision is an incredibly difficult decision for people, and this is something that, you know, just makes a little bit of a difference.

I know that navigating the health care system in general in Alberta can sometimes be challenging, challenging to find the information that you need. You know, recently I went through having a couple of children. All of the decisions that are available within the health care system in Alberta in terms of having children, whether you want to have a midwife or whether you want to have an ob-gyn, whether you want to have a home birth or a birth in a hospital, what other facilities are available, what classes you want to take – there are any number of decisions that you need to make, and those decisions aren’t always able to be found in one spot.

Something as important as putting a parent in or having a parent choose a long-term care facility: having all that information in one spot is really, I think, something that’s essential and important and will make a difference. You know, moving forward, I think that more information being available is always better. The more transparent we can be, the more information people can have accessible at their fingertips, it is always a better thing.

I just want to, you know, congratulate my colleague from Red Deer-North for bringing this idea forward, and I want to congratulate her for the extensive consultation that she did. From what I understand, this is something that’s widely supported. Certainly, when I speak to my constituents about this idea, it’s something that I hear is widely supported, so I would encourage everyone to vote for this. Again, thank you to the Member for Red Deer-North for bringing this forward.

Thank you.

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

Ms Renaud: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It’s my pleasure to also stand up and speak to Bill 203, Long Term Care Information Act, for the first time. I have been a fan of the Member for Red Deer-North for a long time. She is very quiet, but she has a wealth of

knowledge, and she brings years of experience in this particular sector. I think this bill is perfect. I couldn’t imagine a more perfect bill, so I’m so happy to be able to support it.

3:30

Last week we heard I think it was the Member for Battle River-Wainwright tell the Member for Red Deer-North that this was a squandered opportunity. He couldn’t be more wrong. This is absolutely essential. Part of the reason that it is essential is that any time that you can compile information and keep it together in one place so that it’s easily accessible, it’s a win.

I wanted to go through some of the points that the member put together for the online registry and just talk a little bit about them. Once this bill is passed, if it’s passed, there will be an online registry to disseminate information. Some of that information includes, obviously, the operator name, contact information, mailing address, phone number, and the description of the type of operator. Now, you might not think that’s too important, but it actually is. There are people out there that are looking for private operators, for-profit operators, and there are some that are looking for nonprofit operators. The reason that they might be looking for a nonprofit that offers this sort of support is because there’s a different framework. It’s managed in a different way. There are different opportunities for families or for people receiving support to become involved. So there’s a general membership, there are meetings, there are bylaws that are easily accessible, and there’s quite a bit of information.

Obviously, (c) is description of the facility.

Then (d) is also really quite interesting. It’s the “total number of residents that may reside at the operator’s facility and a description of the intake process.” First of all, I think it’s really important, when people are looking for a place to live or looking for a place to assist their loved ones to move into, to know how big it is. Some people are quite comfortable living in a setting where there are a lot of people to interact with – there are a lot of staff; it’s obviously noisier, busier – and some people are looking for a small environment, a quiet environment.

The intake process is very important. I’m speaking to this because I was obviously heavily involved in the intake process in my previous role. I was the director of an organization that provided support for people with disabilities, and why the intake process was so key was that it was the time to assess the types of supports that people needed. Does the intake process in the organization that you’re looking at putting your loved one in take the time to actually assess the medical needs, the emotional needs, the mental health needs, the family needs? Do they look at all of these things in the initial process? Also, is there a matching component at all? Are people perhaps paired up or put next door to people with similar interests? All of those things are actually quite important.

Clauses (e) and (f) talk about details of the services provided. I think we’ve all spoken at length about that, which is really important. Some people are looking for personal care services or recreation services, and then, certainly, people with complex medical needs are going to be looking for specific medical assistance.

Additional charges. That’s vital. We know that, for the most part, there are a lot of people that are doing quite well in their retirement or when they get to the point that they need long-term care, but a lot of people are not. A lot of our seniors are living on a very fixed income, so they really do need to know what those extra charges are.

The date that the operator was established is, of course, important. It might not seem like it, but it is. It’s good to know that there’s a track record. I’m not saying that new ones aren’t good, but it is good to know.

Description of the status of the resident and family council. We did pass some legislation that talks about the resident and family council. But was there one ahead of time? Was there one before that, or did it just start now? There are many, many, many organizations that have been undertaking activities like this for a very long time. Organizations that identify the need to give input into the daily operations of the facility to the people that are living there through either their friends or family is key.

Finally, we get to the sort of more specifics around accreditation and oversight, and that's where I think this is so important. Now, it is possible to get this information in other places online, but to have this information all together is absolutely vital.

At one time the organization that I used to work for, obviously, had to comply with a number of levels of accreditation, licensing, inspection. And it's important, particularly for long-term care facilities. It is vitally important that every aspect of the facility have some oversight. This will allow people to see right away. It's as important as looking at how the menu is decided. Who gets to decide about the menu? Is there a family council? How big is it? Where is it? How old is it? How did they do in their inspection? You will learn pretty much everything you need to know about an organization by looking through their inspection report. What were the recommendations that were made? What was the laundry like? Were things kept separately? Was there infection control? All of these things are so incredibly important. They also will talk about staffing. What are the staffing ratios like in the long-term care facility? What are the additional medical supports? All of these things are very important.

Under the accreditation they also look at things like – I'm sure you've heard of the tragic cases of people being scalded. So it also looks at: are the staff trained with the equipment that is used to bathe people? Are there protocols in place to address water temperature? More than that, are there protocols, training, and oversights in place to prevent any kind of abuse? That's really key, and that information can also be found there.

I could go on and on thrilling people with all of these specifics, but I'm going to stop here. I would just like to thank the Member for Red Deer-North for using the opportunity with her private member's bill to truly give a gift to Albertans who are for themselves or for their families or friends looking for the right facility. To have all of this information in one place is so incredibly vital, and I'm thankful for that.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Are there any other members who wish to speak to Bill 203, the Long Term Care Information Act? The Member for Athabasca-Sturgeon-Redwater.

Mr. Piquette: All right. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have to say that I'm gratified that you've consistently gotten my riding right since the very beginning, so thank you very much.

It's my honour and privilege to rise today in support of Bill 203. You know, like my colleagues, I would also like to commend the Member for Red Deer-North for bringing this forward. I think that it really speaks well of, you know, how close she is to her constituents that she was able to identify this issue. I think it also speaks to the kind of value that having, actually, a diverse caucus brings to the province in general, because the MLA for Red Deer-North does have a background in nursing and long-term care, and I'm quite sure that her original expertise in this field has also informed this. That's the benefit of having people from diverse walks of life and having a government that's actually representative of the people that they serve. You get good policy out of it, and I think that this is good policy.

I guess I'd also like to concur with the opinion expressed by my colleague from St. Albert. I'm also a fan of the MLA for Red Deer-North. She's been really helpful to us rural members by taking an active role in issues that impact rural residents. As I'll talk about in a couple of moments, I think this is one that has particular resonance for seniors in rural areas.

Of course, what Bill 203 does, basically – and details have been expressed by other members – is that it does provide a central sort of one-stop shop for seniors looking for long-term care and families helping to advise them, where they can find all the pertinent information they'd need to be able to make the correct choice for themselves.

3:40

I think this is something that is really, really helpful and particularly helpful in situations such as I encountered more than once in my own previous career as an insurance agent in small rural communities. You know, as an insurance agent sometimes you end up being almost the early warning for seniors that need to be looking at long-term care. When you have, say, clients that phone you every month asking if they've paid their annual insurance premium, for example, that sometimes can be a real sign that perhaps something is amiss.

There's been more than once where you'd have to talk to families about the situation that their parent or a loved one is in. What you'll find is that these families very often really want to have a constructive role to play in this decision, but it's something that can be quite difficult for them to do and can actually cause acrimony among them because what you'll see is that very often with these families, you know, the senior may live in this local area, but their family is going to be spread all over the province. This family has to somehow get information. Somehow they have to find a way to be on the same page when they're trying to get the best advice for their loved one. By having it where they don't have to go to many different places to find disparate pieces of information, where it's becoming not even just an organizational challenge to provide that information, I think is maybe an extra benefit of having this there.

Of course, for seniors that make their own minds up, make their own decisions and don't look for consultation, it's also helpful as well because, of course . . . [Mr. Piquette's speaking time expired] Oh, jeez. I guess we're out of time.

The Speaker: Hon. members, Standing Order 8(7)(a)(iii) provides for up to five minutes for the sponsor of a private member's public bill to close debate.

I would invite the Member for Red Deer-North to close debate on Bill 203.

Mrs. Schreiner: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am very proud and honoured today to stand and close debate on Bill 203, the Long Term Care Information Act. Some of the members opposite do not believe that we need this legislation to protect and help our seniors, but I have heard loud and clear from my constituents, from my colleagues, and from associations who deal with seniors' care that this bill is worth while and necessary.

A piece of legislation like this provides consistent and accurate information that enables those searching to have the majority of their questions answered easily and online. From the cross-jurisdictional research we can realize the importance of having this information available within a one-stop resource, and I'm sure the Minister of Health will look at the variety of approaches in other jurisdictions when building our service.

Mr. Speaker, this bill serves to support a framework that enables Albertans looking into long-term care to identify the qualitative

information immediately. This bill serves to provide the basic contact information, operator and facility type, total resident capacity, additional fees and services, inspections and results, as well as accreditation status. Additionally, regular updates will be legislated to ensure the integrity of the information is accurate.

The ministry will also have the flexibility to include additional information that Albertans deem necessary and required. Transparency regarding inspections and outcomes also serves to provide opportunity for corrective measures to be implemented.

My Long Term Care Information Act is aimed at easing the stress and streamlining the information required when a loved one is determining which long-term care facility best serves their needs, and that, Mr. Speaker, makes life easier for Albertans. As individuals choosing their forever homes, the individuals' needs are the most important criteria in making the best decision, and having that information available in one location enables and empowers the right decision-making process. I have completed the research, spoken to governing agencies as well as enlisted feedback from constituents, and there is strong support for a resource that provides ease of access to this information.

My Long Term Care Information Act is an opportunity to make important information available to those who need it and to the general public. What it also does, Mr. Speaker, is ensure that information about long-term care is standardized and that comparisons between facilities are made easier. While there are numerous items that this website will disclose, it is important to remember that the availability of specific items such as special diets or cultural or language amenities can also be included at the discretion of the ministry. We should also remember the great work that has already been done by enabling and supporting resident and family councils.

I was glad to debate this bill in the Chamber with my colleagues. Those of us who are private members do have opportunities to make a positive change in the lives of Albertans, and I am proud that I had a chance to do so. All of us should work every day to make life better for Albertans in the way we know best. This is what I have done through bringing this bill forward, and I am proud of my work. I sincerely hope that every senior, their families, and their caregivers will be able to find the information they need with ease and accuracy and without hassle.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[The voice vote indicated that the motion for third reading carried]

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 3:47 p.m.]

[Fifteen minutes having elapsed, the Assembly divided]

[The Speaker in the chair]

For the motion:

Anderson, W.	Goehring	Miller
Bilous	Gray	Nixon
Carlier	Hinkley	Piquette
Ceci	Horne	Renaud
Clark	Hunter	Rosendahl
Connolly	Jabbour	Sabir
Coolahan	Kazim	Schmidt
Cooper	Kleinsteuber	Schreiner
Dach	Larivee	Shepherd
Dang	Littlewood	Stier
Drever	Luff	Sucha
Drysdale	Malkinson	Swann
Eggen	McCuaig-Boyd	Sweet
Feehan	McIver	Turner

Fitzpatrick	McKittrick	Woollard
Ganley	McLean	Yao
Gill		

Totals:	For – 49	Against – 0
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[Motion carried unanimously; Bill 203 read a third time]

The Speaker: Hon. members, I continue to be impressed by democracy and how it works.

I've had a request for unanimous consent to introduce a guest.

[Unanimous consent granted]

Introduction of Guests

(reversion)

The Speaker: The Member for Calgary-Elbow.

Mr. Clark: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour to introduce to you and through you to members of the Assembly my best friend's sister Anne Cataford, who is here visiting from the beautiful, remarkable, tremendous constituency of Calgary-Elbow. Anne is an engineer with the city of Calgary, working in the transportation department, helping to make sure that Calgarians get to where they need to go. We're tremendously privileged to have Anne's incredible engineering skills in the city of Calgary. I'd ask Anne to please rise, and I'd ask the members to please give the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

The Speaker: Welcome.

Public Bills and Orders Other than Government Bills and Orders Second Reading

Bill 206

Societies (Preventing the Promotion of Hate) Amendment Act, 2018

[Debate adjourned May 14: Mr. Shepherd speaking]

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Sherwood Park.

Ms McKittrick: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I often reflect on my role as an MLA, and one of the things that I often say is that the things that have the most impact as an MLA sometimes are the little things. The bill that my colleague from Calgary-Klein has proposed is one of those things that only require a three-sentence addition to the Societies Act. It's a little thing, just three extra sentences in the Societies Act, but it's going to have a profound impact in our communities to prevent hate.

Bill 206 proposes adding wording to prevent groups that advocate or promote genocide, as defined in section 318(2) of the Criminal Code of Canada, or publicly incite hatred in a manner which could constitute an offence under section 319(1) of the Criminal Code of Canada from registering as a not-for-profit society. They are very small sentences. It's not a great deal of change. It's one of those little things that we as MLAs have the chance to do that is going to have a huge impact in the lives of our communities.

I want to thank him for doing this because Alberta has seen a rise in organized hate groups with racist and extremist views. I am constantly flooded by hateful and racist letters to the editor, including in my own community, social media posts, comments and discussions, and racist incidents in our communities. I'm also very weary of how some politicians use the fact that we're a very diverse

community to really incite people who may have racist and extremist views.

I was really amazed, through the work that my colleague had done, to discover that the KKK was actually registered as a not-for-profit society here in Alberta, something that just floored me. I personally didn't even know that they existed in Alberta or in Canada. It appears that they lost their status not because somebody in the registrar's office recognized it was wrong for them to be a not-for-profit society but only because they failed to file the proper documents three years in a row.

Mr. Speaker, our government has been proactive in addressing systemic racism, and we have done a number of initiatives from addressing the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to working with police officers and judges to ensure that officers are trained to recognize bias and cultural competency. We have acknowledged past wrongs such as the '60s scoop, and we are honouring days that are important to our diverse ethnocultural communities.

The Minister of Education was charged by the Premier to lead an initiative consulting groups and Albertans throughout the province to establish what needs to be done to combat racism and discrimination. His leadership not only in the consultation but in ensuring that the revised curriculum reflects students in ethnocultural communities, including the First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities in Alberta, should provide or help to provide students with tools and strategies to combat racism.

Like the MLA for Calgary-Klein, my own family consists of children who are not white and who have faced name-calling and unpleasant remarks. When your children face hatred, you know the importance of removing the possibility of groups that promote hate, like the KKK, from being registered as a not-for-profit society. Even though I chose to live in that community on purpose, which was a very, very mixed community, it did not prevent hatred and really horrible remarks from being addressed to my children.

4:10

I felt that the initiative of the Minister of Education to revise the curriculum so that it really reflects everyone in Alberta, especially the contribution of everyone in Alberta, including our black pioneers, is a really good step. And I wanted to thank the MLA for Edmonton-Centre for his advocacy to have the province promote Black History Month and reflect the importance of our black pioneers here in Alberta. I'm also really so supportive of the way that our new curriculum will see our First Nation, Métis, and Inuit contribution and culture reflected in the curriculum. Students throughout Alberta will also understand how discrimination, violence, and name-calling were part of the history of how settlers treated First Nations.

Mr. Speaker, apart from the efforts that our government has been doing to ensure that racism and the promotion of genocide and violence towards those that are different from us isn't happening and isn't being supported by the work of the government, I think it is important for us to recognize that in Alberta we have a diversity of not-for-profit organizations and that these not-for-profit organizations are key community builders. They provide social services, affordable housing, seniors' lodges. They do advocacy work. They run hockey teams and recreation teams for our young people. We have such a great wealth of not-for-profit organizations. This bill has nothing to do with the work that not-for-profit associations are doing and how we need to continue to support our not-for-profit associations. Really, what this bill is all about is just ensuring that those organizations that are registered do not promote those purposes of hate or genocide.

You know, Mr. Speaker, I've shared in this House that my own father was Jewish and the impact that had on my family and how the kind of stuff that was rampant in Europe at the time when he grew up really impacted him and my own family. This is why it's so important that we don't have any not-for-profit organizations in Alberta whose purpose is to promote genocide or hatred.

I know that some religious groups may be a bit worried about this bill, and I just wanted to emphasize that this bill, again, is not against religious groups. This bill would only limit registration for groups that promote hate against a person or a class of persons as the core principle of their organization or engage in activities that break federal hate speech laws. Groups that advocate for a policy change on a particular issue within the bounds of the law will not be affected. Religious organizations would be free to continue to preach and operate as they see fit as long as their activities are not in violation of federal hate speech laws.

I think it's really important to emphasize that this bill always refers to the federal Criminal Code, section 318 of the Criminal Code of Canada and section 319 of the Criminal Code of Canada, as the activities or the purposes that will be limited by this bill. I think it's always important because when bills like this come to the House, very often we see so much more in the bill than what is really the purpose of the bill.

Mr. Speaker, at the beginning of my speech I mentioned how small things can have a really great impact, and I want to emphasize this point because as MLAs we have the opportunity to do great things for our communities through very small things. Some of the small things that we need to do are to make sure that when we are able to make some changes that will reflect who we are as Albertans and the values that we have, we do those things.

Mr. Speaker, I also think it's really important, in the small things that we do as MLAs, not to get caught up in a lot of thinking about something and not move forward with voting positively about this change with the bill. I want to remind members, as we start discussing this bill, that you have the possibility, by voting for this bill, to ensure that we no longer have in Alberta groups like the KKK that have destroyed so many lives and continue to destroy those lives in the U.S. and possibly in other parts of Canada.

Thank you.

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

Are there other members who wish to speak? The Member for Edmonton-McClung.

Mr. Dach: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure once again to rise in the Assembly this afternoon to speak to Bill 206, the Societies (Preventing the Promotion of Hate) Amendment Act, 2018. I'm reminded of a stunning moment that I had last year while driving to an event in Rundle park in Edmonton. It was in 2017. I was participating in the closing ceremonies of the Alberta Indigenous Games. On the way to that ceremony in Rundle park I passed a number of vehicles that were parked, with people milling around and gathered around the vehicles that I had to pass by in order to get to these closing ceremonies for the Alberta Indigenous Games. I won't mention the name of the organization because they certainly don't deserve any more oxygen than they might already have, but it was an organization which festooned the pickup trucks that they were driving with banners describing their name and that had some flags with their name emblazoned on them as well.

I found out later that it was one of these hate groups that have surfaced in our province in recent times. I thought: my goodness, individuals who are going to attend the Alberta Indigenous Games, hundreds and hundreds of them – in fact, last year there were 1,427 athletes and their families and so forth – have to pass by this group

of individuals who at that time, without the legislation now being promoted as Bill 206, were able to legally organize themselves under the Societies Act and legitimize their hatred within the Societies Act as a group that would receive the benefits of those who have registration under the Societies Act. That group could legitimize themselves under the Societies Act and promote themselves in a way that would really be a travesty.

It was shocking enough to me to know that they existed, period, and to know that the hundreds of young people participating in the Alberta Indigenous Games had to pass by that group, knowing what they were, knowing that they were hoping to have a society that was one that discriminated against people of colour or people of different cultures than their own, that they were looking to maybe go backward to a time when there were no people other than Caucasian people in Alberta.

That's not the type of thing that we in Alberta ascribe to. We are very much an inclusive and a diverse province, and this province and 99 per cent of the people in this province think that that diversity is a strength. That strength is something that we herald and we will enshrine by passing Bill 206, making sure that anyone involved in an organized hate group with racist and extremist views knows that these views are not welcome in this province, knows that they will receive no legitimization by any legislation that we have in this province, and that means the Societies Act as well. If passed, this bill will also prevent new hate groups, that may seek greater legitimacy, from being incorporated under the Societies Act.

4:20

I certainly have lived a privileged life in this province, Mr. Speaker. Coming from a Caucasian background, I didn't have to suffer the slings and arrows that many of my colleagues in this Legislature and many Albertans have had when they are visible minorities or from the non-WASP culture, the white Anglo-Saxon Protestant establishment culture. That's something that I'm very much aware of as I stand here to ensure that anybody who wishes to promote hate based on their desire to discriminate on the basis of race or colour is untenable in this province.

The closest, I guess, I can come to personal experience is with my dad's parents, of Ukrainian background, where they did suffer, you know, significant discrimination in small-town Alberta as an underclass, as they were always reminded they were. Those family stories I can certainly relate to, but to know that in this province the KKK still exists and that it actually had a large presence in this province in the area where my father's parents were homesteading was something that I'm sure in the back of their minds made them feel pretty uncomfortable and wondering, really, how welcoming this western Canadian province was.

We look to really make a statement with this piece of legislation. As my colleague from Sherwood Park has indicated, it may only be three sentences, but they speak very loud and very proudly that the province of Alberta is a defender of diversity, and whenever we do find elements who are looking to separate us by way of following through with their notions of hatred and indicating that no one in Alberta is welcome other than their own creed, their own background, we'll stand up to that by eliminating the anomalies in legislation such as the Societies Act, where people will no longer be allowed to promote hatred and belong to an organization that seeks to be governed under the Societies Act.

Societies exist in Alberta, Mr. Speaker, as a way to help people do good things, whether that's through sport, arts, culture, or a myriad of other things, and I don't see how giving legitimacy to an organization like the Ku Klux Klan does any good for Albertans.

This bill would not impact the free speech rights of these organizations. The Klan can keep being the Klan, but they should not get the same recognition from the government as your child's soccer team or your local curling club.

I'll never forget driving past that group of pickup trucks with their banners emblazoned on them as I went to the Alberta Indigenous Games in Rundle park last year. This year, when we're working on having them situated in my riding, Edmonton-McClung, in the west end, I'm going to do everything I can to make sure that there are no such demonstrations around that particular location. I would be remiss if I didn't make every effort possible to know that those students, those athletes who attend – and there are expected to be well over 1,500 this August – shouldn't have to run a gauntlet of hate as they go to participate in games that are meant to bring people together, to demonstrate the diversity of our province, and to celebrate the indigenous culture that is part of our community, in our urban areas as well as our more rural parts of the province. That goes for any identifiable group who might suffer at the hands of people who wish to promote hate in our province.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot allow this hate to spread in this province, and the government has a role in preventing that. I remember growing up, and in my elementary school there were virtually no people of colour, maybe one or two in the whole school out of 300 or 400 students. The province has changed. We welcome people from all over the world with open arms, and that is the way we want to continue to be seen throughout the world, as a very welcoming place. Those that would counter that attitude and who would besmirch our reputation with hatred and discrimination are people that we should be opposing without hesitation at every step of the way. This is one small way that Bill 206 does that. It makes a statement of saying that we will not stand for hate in this province.

If passed, this bill will deter hate groups from gaining society status in two ways. First, it'll require, Mr. Speaker, that societies that are applying for status have to have a lawful purpose, meaning that the stated purpose on their application must be legal. This means that any group that exists for the purpose of promoting hate speech will not be allowed to register because they would violate federal hate speech laws.

Second, it would require the directors of a society to ensure that the activities of their society are lawful and continue to be lawful. Mr. Speaker, organizations such as the KKK and the other that I referenced, who were demonstrating in the parking lot of Rundle park last year, clearly do not stand up to the scrutiny that this legislation suggests will be in place, and they would not be allowed under the Societies Act to register.

Beyond the registration, Mr. Speaker, we have all got a responsibility to stand up to racism and hatred in the Assembly and in our daily lives. As I mentioned before, if passed, private member's Bill 206 would require application for society status.

Thank you.

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

Mr. Clark: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It really is an honour to rise to speak to Bill 206, the Societies (Preventing the Promotion of Hate) Amendment Act, 2018. One of the great strengths of our society, without question, is our diversity and multiculturalism. I don't think it's a stretch to say that Canada, and Alberta in particular, is one of if not the most successful multicultural communities in the entire world. It is a source of great pride in my constituency. It's a source of great pride – I think it should be for all of us – that people will choose to make Canada home and choose to raise their families here, choose to contribute to community, choose to start a business. This is, you know, one of

the things that I think would cause rare unanimous consent in this Assembly. We would all absolutely agree with that.

But, troublingly, racism in Alberta and around the world seems to be on the rise. I met recently with representatives of Calgary's Muslim community who were deeply unsettled by a hateful rally that took place on the steps of Calgary city hall and were shocked by, frankly, the number of people who attended that rally. The, I suppose, positive aspect of that was that the antiracism protesters far outnumbered the anti-Muslim protesters, but it doesn't change the fact that that had a real, real chilling effect on the Muslim community. We sat, and they asked that I bring that before the Legislature. I've done so previously, but I'll do it again.

As much as we may think that debating a bill that is relatively short, that would simply ensure that any society incorporated under the Societies Act, in fact, has a lawful purpose – so far as we know, currently no organizations like the KKK, as the Member for Calgary-Klein has talked about previously, are in fact registered under the Societies Act. They were at one point in this province registered under the Societies Act, which gives them a level of legitimacy which, frankly, they do not deserve. This bill prevents that from happening in the future. I commend very much the Member for Calgary-Klein for bringing this forward. I think it is very, very important that we provide that protection. It sends a strong message from the Assembly that hateful behaviour is not acceptable. If it just creates one more barrier for any organization that has a hateful purpose from being provided any sort of legitimacy, which they absolutely do not deserve, then I think the bill has served its purpose.

The member previous had talked about the racism his parents suffered growing up as Ukrainians. Those of us of Ukrainian heritage living in 2018 may think: how could that possibly be? But my mother will tell many stories of actively being discriminated against. You know, for a good long time she did everything she could to try to fit in, to not celebrate her heritage as much as she may otherwise have. That was really upsetting to observe. It's been nice, as the years have moved on, that she's able now again to embrace her cultural heritage. It's unfortunate that she didn't teach me any Ukrainian, but I could always still learn.

4:30

You know, it's something that we need to remember, that it is never that far away and it's there below the surface. That level of racism can bubble up. Fortunately, I think we're safe to say that it is not rampant in our society, but it's not nonexistent either. Anything we can do to prevent racist organizations from existing, from being legitimized, I think we absolutely need to enthusiastically pursue. I again commend the member for bringing it forward.

I will say that I have heard some concerns from organizations that this may present a chilling effect on legitimate free speech. I think that's not the case. When we look at the definition in the bill itself, it's actually a very narrow definition: "advocating or promoting genocide, as defined in section 318(2) of the Criminal Code (Canada)" or "publicly inciting hatred, in a manner which could constitute an offence under section 319(1) of the Criminal Code (Canada)." That's a very stringent test, which would capture only very specific, overtly hateful activities. So any organization that has a lawful purpose, be that a religious or a civil society organization, has nothing to worry about from this bill.

I have no concern that this will overburden the system in terms of the registrar being required to retroactively look at every single one of the applications. I don't believe that. In fact, I know that's not part of the bill, but it would apply as new registrations are made

or registrations are renewed. The registrar would ensure that there is a lawful purpose.

I feel that the bill is welcome. I feel that it takes Alberta forward, and really the cost, if any at all, is absolutely worth it. So I encourage every member of the Assembly to support the legislation.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Dr. Swann: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Also pleased to speak to Bill 206, Societies (Preventing the Promotion of Hate) Amendment Act, 2018, and commend the member for bringing this forward.

A couple of concerns that have been raised with me that could have made this a more comprehensive bill and that have to do with the Societies Act in general, which has very little ability for recourse: if a society, for example, is following its own bylaws even if they're not very legitimate issues within the realm that they have chosen as targets – fundraising, recreation, sport, whatever – if they're not holding proper elections, if they happen to be using public funds for purposes that are not actually intended by the spirit of the act, it's very difficult to hold them to account. They have internal audit procedures that are allowed under the Societies Act.

What I have learned since having some connection with societies over the years is that the whole Societies Act needs to be reviewed and given a more robust oversight because there have been a number that limp along because either the members don't have the courage or the opportunity to blow the whistle on some things that are going on in their society. Indeed, apart from breaking the law, there doesn't appear to be robust accountability for many of these societies. We have thousands of societies in Alberta, some of which are not fulfilling either the spirit or the letter of their own bylaws and may be self-serving, may be serving the executive and, to some extent, contracted employees but not actually serving society or the full purposes of the Societies Act. So that was one question, that I would have liked to see this bill be a little broader and ensure that we do a full review of the Societies Act. At some point I hope this government will consider that.

Apart from that, I think it's eminently appropriate that we have strong proscription and block the ability of such organizations that promote hate and violence, that they not be registered once that's proven. I would certainly support this in the event that either they are already registered and they can then be revoked or they are proposing to be registered. It's a pretty common-sense issue, I think, especially having learned about the Ku Klux Klan in Alberta and the supremacists out of central Alberta. I don't know if any of them were actually registered or not, but it certainly raised questions, and this limited bill will go some distance, a great distance, in fact, in ensuring that these organizations don't go very far at all.

Apart from those minor concerns, I think it's very appropriate for us as a Legislature to support this and take one step further in trying to quell, in some cases, the ethnic groups that have historic challenges from their countries of origin or, indeed, folks within this country that have inappropriate, alienating approaches to new Canadians or, indeed, to indigenous people.

Very often, of course, these are individuals who are doing things that are hateful and smearing cultures or religions or ways of life, and I wonder if it's possible, then, to link individuals in some cases to their society. If they say that they're not speaking on behalf of their society, how, in fact, does one make that connection? If there are individuals who are members of certain societies yet as an individual they're speaking in ways that incite hatred or, in fact, violence, that may be a wrinkle that one would have to work

through the Human Rights Commission or, in fact, legal channels. There are a number of people who continue to incite such abhorrent language and activity and are in fact associated with certain organizations but are not speaking on behalf of those organizations. So we do need to have ways of, I guess, taking that next step, if not at an individual level, helping to make the connections between an organization and an individual who's outright speaking hatefully and vengefully.

Apart from those concerns, I think this is progress, and I'll certainly be supporting this bill. Thanks, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Are there any other members? The Member for Edmonton-Whitemud.

Dr. Turner: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It is indeed an honour and a pleasure for me to rise to speak to this private member's bill, Bill 206, the Societies (Preventing the Promotion of Hate) Amendment Act, 2018, sponsored by my colleague from Calgary-Klein. I actually want to express my appreciation to the previous speakers, particularly the last two speakers from Calgary.

I'm reminded, actually, of the debate on Bill 9 here. We seem to have a consensus among this side of the House and perhaps that end of the House over there about the value of it, but I don't hear anything from the Official Opposition. I'm actually wondering, when it comes time for a vote, whether those folks there will disappear into the cloakroom, but let's wait and see.

I said that this is a really important piece of legislation. Alberta has seen a rise in organized hate groups with racist and very extremist views, and it's something that we have to be vigilant that we stamp out. We can't be supporting that or facilitating that in any way. The bill is going to make sure that organizations that exist solely to promote hate, like the KKK, will not be able to be revived as Alberta societies. It's already been spoken to, that there are two societies that are sort of KKK-related that are on the books, that could be revived with the filling in of a piece of paper.

It's also true that there are groups – and my colleague from Edmonton-McClung brought this up – operating in this province right now that are basically hate groups. We should not be in a situation where those folks can become a society, where they wouldn't be responsible for their debts. Certainly, if they were to become a society, the directors of that society should be held responsible for their vile and pernicious views.

4:40

You know, this government, our government, that I'm very proud of, has been active in addressing systemic racism, including Islamophobia, that was brought up by the MLA for Calgary-Elbow. Islamophobia is relatively recent in this province, largely because there haven't been a lot of targets of that particular faith living in Alberta, but as we are becoming a more multicultural province, there is a need to protect that very valuable part of our population, our citizenry, from this kind of hate activity. Any group that espouses Islamophobia should not become a society and should be held accountable for their views.

One of the most emotive episodes in my work as an MLA this past year was attending, with the MLA for Edmonton-Centre, a very impressive event at city hall here in Edmonton, and this was to recognize, I believe, the 15th anniversary of the Rwandan genocide. You know, I'm sure that all of the MLAs in the House are generally familiar with that, but basically this was a civilized country that fell into a miasma of ethnic hate based upon politicians and societies within the Rwandan nation fomenting hatred and, ultimately, genocidal activity between the Tutsis and Hutus.

You know, there is a Canadian hero in all of this, and I would really recommend that all of us heed the words of General Dallaire. General Dallaire is a hero to me and, I'm sure, to all members here. He wrote a memoir in 2016 that's called *Waiting for First Light*. Even that title gives me a shiver. The memoir was largely about PTSD and about how he had to deal with that. In fact, he got to the point that he considered seriously and, I think, actually made the first steps towards suicide but then pulled himself back from that and has made tremendous contributions since that time. General Dallaire basically pointed out that these were recognized individuals with some social power within the community that had decided, for reasons that still I personally do not understand, that they would basically vilify and demonize their opposition.

I mean, I can't think of it here in Alberta, how it would happen, but it would be as if the Official Opposition decided to say that socialists were evil and were non-Christian and didn't deserve to live. Have I heard that comment? I don't think I have heard that comment before, but I sometimes get that impression, that sort of thing. That sort of speech can be magnified. I'm not saying that that's hate speech, but that kind of speech can be magnified. We need to have things in place that will make sure that groups or associations or fraternal organizations or whatever you want to call them cannot get registered under the Societies Act of this province.

The Speaker: Hon. member, you were making very eloquent remarks, but the comments about the opposition were a little over the top.

Please continue.

Dr. Turner: Well, I will certainly withdraw any portion of that that was over the top. I sincerely apologize if there was that implication. I was trying to avoid doing that, actually.

This comes back to this situation where this act is necessary. It has been said and I've heard commentary that, really, this isn't necessary: "We're good people here in this province. Why should we have this on the books? This is another regulation, perhaps, that really isn't necessary, and maybe it's going to cost a little bit of money to set up the administration of this act." In fact, I don't want Alberta to become a Rwanda. I know that's a bit over the top, too. That's a bit hyperbolic.

We do have an example in this province where well-meaning people went far beyond reason, and that was in what I call the Leilani Muir situation, where people that were considered to be mentally defective were sterilized. This was done by the government. In fact, it was defended by the Progressive Conservative governments right up until the 1990s. Fortunately, the Supreme Court of Canada helped Alberta get out of that trouble.

I mean, I'm just using that as an example of where we Albertans might need to have some limits on what we're doing. I believe that the bill proposed by my colleague from Calgary-Klein really does help with that.

What I do want to do is talk a little bit more about this situation that the Member for Edmonton-McClung was talking about. There is a group of people in this province that call themselves a militia. I think that they pattern themselves on American militias, on the situation in the States, which has a very different – you know, their second amendment, that protects . . .

The Speaker: Are there any other members who'd like to speak to Bill 206? Edmonton-Mill Creek.

Ms Woollard: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The first thing I'll do is applaud everyone who has spoken already on this bill, the Societies (Preventing the Promotion of Hate) Amendment Act, 2018, because

there were a lot of really good points having to do with this bill, and it sounds generally very supportive.

I come at it, maybe, from a slightly different point of view. I think back to teaching, especially junior high, where students are getting the idea of free speech and their right to have free speech, without understanding any consequences and limits on it. That's an interesting stage in people's development and one that's really important to deal with.

One thing you learn very quickly – and in being a parent or a teacher, you learn it – is that you cannot make everyone think the way you'd like them to think or believe what you'd like them to believe. But you can teach them that every action has a consequence and that the only people in charge of their actions are themselves. You can't do something and say: well, I didn't mean to. You did it, and therefore you've got to deal with it.

4:50

One of the things you also learn along the way is that when people group together with similar beliefs and similar mindsets, it gives them a feeling of rightness and a feeling of legitimacy, and that can be very dangerous. That kind of amplifies the rhetoric. So anything we do here that can help to make sure that people are not legitimized and are not given the feeling that this is acceptable and they have – what is it? – the right to belong, to be a legitimate group, that they can speak what they like, and that that's all protected under free rights legislation is really important.

I noticed in some of the comments made that nowadays the hate groups, the ones that basically preach negativity about others, whatever their others are, are becoming emboldened. There's a lot of feeling that it's acceptable to be anti this group and anti that group, that group of people based on their race, their religion, their ethnicity.

When the member was talking about his grandparents coming here as homesteaders from Ukraine, I was thinking that people who were here before the homesteaders would sometimes be very critical of them because they were different. They spoke a different language, they had different customs, and therefore they were regarded negatively. It took a long time before people learned to be able to see what was the same, that they had the same goals in mind and the same reason for being here.

When groups become, as I said, legitimized, they get a gain in confidence and a desire to entrench themselves, and having recognition from the government makes it easier for them to do that. The government has such an important role to play in preventing the spread of hate and in making sure that people understand that this is not okay, that this is not a legitimate reason for getting together: get together if you like, but don't want outward legitimizing of your endeavours. The bill doesn't infringe on anyone's ability to say what they want to say. It just prevents them from forming an association expressly for sharing their hatred or figuring out a way to express it.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. McIver: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to stand on Bill 206. Now, as I understand this bill, if I understand it correctly, it purports to be against the promotion of hate and bigotry in our society. I can tell you that on this side of the House we believe that hate and bigotry are unacceptable at all times and without exception. The United Conservative Party stands resolutely against hate and bigotry.

Let me just say that my experience is that this province has been a welcoming place for people of all backgrounds for a long time.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to suggest that the experience in Alberta has been perfect because it has not. There have been cases where people have been badly treated. As has been said in this House, at one point the KKK was apparently even registered here, which seems completely – I understand it's a fact, but it's not a fact that I believe anybody in this House should be proud of or is proud of or ever would have been proud of.

Mr. Speaker, I have to also say that this is an issue where we should stand together. When it comes to being against hatred and bigotry, I think it's a nonpartisan issue. I think it's something where people on all sides of this House and of all stripes in this House should make sure that we stand against hatred and bigotry together.

I have to say that I was pretty disappointed a few minutes ago to hear what I thought was a member of the House talking right on the edge of hatred and bigotry, perhaps suggesting that members of this House might think that other members of this House didn't deserve to live. Beyond the pale. Mr. Speaker, I'm grateful that you called the member to account. I thought you did your job well when you did that, and I compliment you on that. I have to say that those comments were entirely, in my view, against what I believe the spirit of the bill brought forward by the hon. member was, entirely against it. To suggest that any member of this House, because of a political disagreement – to even suggest that it's possible that they might think that somebody with a different political background or agreement doesn't deserve to live is shameful. I was ashamed to hear those remarks uttered in this House, where I serve.

Mr. Speaker, if we are going to build the Alberta that I believe we all want, where every Albertan is welcome and equal and is able to live their lives securely, without fear, and is protected regardless of their background, their race, creed, colour, religion, sexual orientation, or any other difference that somebody can add onto how you describe a human being, then we need to be part of a positive conversation about those things. I'm not suggesting at all that we should deny negative historical things that have happened. I'm not suggesting that at all. In fact, that's one of the ways that we learn from the negative past and create a more positive future.

Mr. Speaker, while we consider this legislation – on this side of the House we obviously are of the strong, strong opinion that any piece of legislation that stands resolutely against bigotry and hatred is a positive thing and something that we feel strongly about – we need to make sure that as we have this debate, we can make the bill as good as it can be. On this side we commend the sponsoring member. I think what he's saying is that we must be vigilant. Even in some of the speaker's comments and in some of the comments that I've heard – he's actually made reference to some of the negative past, and I compliment him on that, too, because the hon. member did it in a way to point out what was wrong in the past, to point out . . .

An Hon. Member: Make things better.

Mr. McIver: We need to make things better. Exactly right.

. . . why we need to move to a positive future.

This is something where I think that when the Legislative Assembly sets a positive example, it puts us in a position where we can set an example for our children, those in school, to learn lessons. You know, just the other day, Mr. Speaker, I was at an event with the hon. Member for Calgary-Mountain View at the Boys & Girls Clubs in Calgary. He might remind me of what the program is. It's one that I went to learn about – roots of empathy – where they bring young mothers with their children into a classroom. The children watch the mother and the young child, sometimes a toddler, sometimes brand new babies, react and talk about empathy; for example, you know, having discussions about:

if the child cries, is the child bad? Well, no, the child is not bad; that's how the child communicates. The whole idea is to get people thinking about other people's feelings, too.

I think that's at the root of fighting hatred and bigotry: people caring not just about themselves but about the other human being in their presence, the other human beings that they are with here in Alberta, having concern and care for the other person's feelings, the other person's place in society, the other person's place in the room and not just their own. These are things where, frankly, the more we get people to think about these things, the better our society will be, the safer our society will be, the more secure our society will be, the more proud we can be of the society that we are and the society that we can be in the future.

As we continue with the debate on this bill, I would like to make it clear that those things are important to members on this side of the House and, I believe, on all sides of this House, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Hon. member, I need to interrupt the discussion on this as the time has lapsed and we need to move on.

5:00 Motions Other than Government Motions

Upstream and Downstream Emissions

505. Mr. Kenney moved:

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

[Debate adjourned May 28: Mr. Shepherd speaking]

Mr. Panda: Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak in favour of the motion brought forward by the hon. Member for Calgary-Lougheed. The reason it was necessitated is that the NDP's federal allies the Trudeau Liberals are attacking Alberta with bills like bills C-48 and C-69. The Leader of the Official Opposition and all of us on this side of the House asked the government to actually table if they have written to the standing committees in opposition to those bills and in support of Alberta. They didn't table any of it, other than partisan rhetoric, in this House.

Mr. Speaker, even if and when the Trans Mountain is built, it's only 600,000 barrels that we can ship to the coast. The other 4 million barrels we are selling to one single customer. Based on the current trade relationships we have with the U.S.A., if the U.S. decides to turn the tap or shut the wall, the inlet down, we will need alternate pipelines. With bills like C-48 and C-69 we can never get any other pipeline built to the coast, to tidewater in Canada. That's why this Motion 505 is really important.

When the Minister of Energy spoke – when she said that she's going to oppose without any valid reasons, that means she's opposing, and she's supporting when the Trudeau Liberals are attacking Alberta, so that means she's supporting the attacks on Alberta. She has to decide, she and her caucus, whether they stand up and fight for Albertans or not.

The Speaker: Hon. members, Standing Order 8(3) provides for up to five minutes for the sponsor of the motion to close debate.

I would invite the hon. member to close debate.

Mr. Kenney: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to thank all members who participated in debate on Motion 505 for their thoughtful interventions. As I said at the beginning of this debate last week, this motion speaks to an issue that is existential for

Alberta and our economic future. Our jurisdiction in the Constitution to regulate the production of oil and gas is something I spoke to at great length, a right – a hard-fought right – won by the late, great Premier Peter Lougheed in the repatriation of the Constitution in 1982.

Mr. Speaker, I thank, commend, and appreciate the NDP government for having raised some objections to the intrusion of the federal government, through the National Energy Board, into the indirect regulation of downstream carbon emissions in the assessment of proposed pipeline projects. I wish, however, that their opposition to that were more vigorous. The government, for example, while it says that it has, quote, raised concerns with the federal Minister of Natural Resources with respect to Bill C-69 before the federal Parliament, has refused to state outright opposition to that bill or call on the federal government to repeal it even though it makes worse and cements in law the policy adopted by the National Energy Board in 2017 with respect to downstream emissions.

I think they are missing the target in defending Alberta given that the Canadian Energy Pipeline Association and virtually all other major voices in Alberta's energy industry have indicated that the more burdensome process represented by the Trudeau government's Bill C-69 effectively means that we will not be able to get approval for another major pipeline in the future. This makes us even more dependent on now federal ownership of the one and only prospective coastal pipeline project.

Earlier today, Mr. Speaker, I raised a wonderful initiative by a consortium of First Nations groups to build an alternative coastal pipeline, called the Eagle Spirit pipeline, to the west coast from Alberta. The problem here is that even that pipeline proposal, if it were to come to fruition, would be assessed today based on the expanded writ of the National Energy Board, as articulated in its August 23, 2017, interpretive letter to TransCanada PipeLines with respect to the proposed Energy East pipeline route, where the NEB got into the business of up- and downstream carbon emissions. If the Eagle Spirit pipeline were to be proposed, say, a year from now, following the prospective adoption of Bill C-69, the federal environmental impact assessment act, it would become virtually impossible to get approval.

You see what this is doing? The opponents of our energy wealth, Mr. Speaker, are trying to land lock us. One way in which they are doing so is through these new regulatory mandates, currently, I believe, arbitrarily imposed by the National Energy Board but now, worse, sanctioned by legislation under Bill C-69. That is why this Motion 505 is so important, and that is why I regret that the government appears to oppose it.

I've addressed so far the question – I thank the government for their kind of, I would say, modest opposition to the National Energy Board's intrusion into downstream emissions and the regulation of pipelines. But what really puzzles me, Mr. Speaker, is their stubborn refusal to object to the Trudeau government and the National Energy Board intruding into the regulation of upstream oil and gas production. I've quoted at length the relevant section of the Constitution, which says under section 92A, "In each province, the legislature may exclusively make laws in relation to . . . development, conservation and management of non-renewable natural resources." Not partial or shared jurisdiction but exclusive jurisdiction.

Mr. Speaker, I would call upon our friends in the New Democrat Party to reconsider their position, to stand in the defence of these hard-fought and historic rights, which are essential for our economy and our future. Please join with us in defending section 92 of the Constitution, join in the legacy of Peter Lougheed and the defence

of our right to regulate our natural resources without unjustified federal intrusion by voting yes on this motion today.

[The voice vote indicated that Motion Other than Government Motion 505 lost]

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 5:08 p.m.]

[Fifteen minutes having elapsed, the Assembly divided]

[The Speaker in the chair]

For the motion:

Aheer	Fraser	Nixon
Anderson, W.	Gill	Panda
Clark	Gotfried	Schneider
Cooper	Hunter	Smith
Cyr	Kenney	Stier
Drysdale	McIver	Yao
Ellis		

Against the motion:

Anderson, S.	Gray	Piquette
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Bilous	Hinkley	Renaud
Carlier	Horne	Rosendahl
Ceci	Kleinsteuber	Sabir
Connolly	Larivee	Schmidt
Coolahan	Littlewood	Schreiner
Dach	Luff	Shepherd
Dang	Malkinson	Sucha
Feehan	McCuaig-Boyd	Swann
Fitzpatrick	McKitrick	Turner
Ganley	McLean	Woollard
Goehring	Miller	

Totals:	For – 19	Against – 35
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[Motion Other than Government Motion 505 lost]

The Speaker: The Deputy Government House Leader.

Ms Larivee: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At this time, seeing as we've completed our agenda for the afternoon, I'd like to move that we adjourn until 7:30 this evening.

[Motion carried; the Assembly adjourned at 5:26 p.m.]

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