



Province of Alberta

The 30th Legislature
First Session

Alberta Hansard

Wednesday afternoon, May 22, 2019

Day 1

The Honourable Nathan Cooper, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of Alberta
The 30th Legislature

First Session

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Williams, Dan D.A., Peace River (UCP)
Wilson, Hon. Rick D., Maskwacis-Wetaskiwin (UCP)
Yao, Tany, Fort McMurray-Wood Buffalo (UCP)
Yaseen, Muhammad, Calgary-North (UCP)

Party standings:

United Conservative: 63

New Democrat: 24

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Rick Wilson	Minister of Indigenous Relations

Parliamentary Secretary

Muhammad Yaseen	Parliamentary Secretary of Immigration
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Legislative Assembly of Alberta

3 p.m.

Wednesday, May 22, 2019

The Sergeant-at-Arms: Order! Order! Mr. Speaker.

[Preceded by the Sergeant-at-Arms, the Speaker, accompanied by the officers of the Assembly, entered the Chamber and took the chair]

Prayers

The Speaker: Let us pray. Almighty God, author of wisdom, knowledge, and understanding, we ask your blessing on all here present. We ask your guidance in order that the truth and justice may prevail in all our judgments for the benefit of all Albertans. Amen.

Ladies and gentlemen, I would now invite you to join Cara McLeod, accompanied by the Royal Canadian Artillery Band, leading us in the singing of our national anthem. Please join us in the language of your choice.

Hon. Members and Guests:

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: Thank you. Please be seated.

Entrance of the Lieutenant Governor

[The Premier, the Clerk, and the Sergeant-at-Arms left the Chamber to attend the Lieutenant Governor]

[The Mace was draped]

The Speaker: Ladies and gentlemen, welcome. It's so nice to see all of you. Holy cannoli. Hon. members, the RCA Band will now play a brief musical interlude. The piece to be performed is entitled *Canzon Septimi Toni No. 2*. It is the sprightliest of Giovanni Gabrieli's larger works.

The RCA Band is Canada's oldest regular army band. It was formed in Quebec City in 1879. It was subsequently stationed in Montreal and Halifax and was reconstituted in Edmonton in 1997. It has been in service in both world wars and in Korea, and it has travelled across Canada and beyond our borders.

Please enjoy the performance by the Royal Canadian Artillery Band brass choir.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, Her Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor awaits.

The Speaker: Sergeant-at-Arms, admit Her Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor.

[A fanfare of trumpets sounded]

[Preceded by the Sergeant-at-Arms, Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor of Alberta, Lois Mitchell, CM, AOE, LLD, and Honorary Colonel Douglas Mitchell, their party, the Premier, and the Clerk entered the Chamber. Her Honour took her place upon the throne]

The Speaker: May it please Your Honour, the Legislative Assembly has elected me their Speaker, though I am but little able to fulfill the important duties thus assigned to me. If in the performance of those duties I should at any time fall into error, I pray that the fault may be imputed to me and not to the Assembly, whose servant I am and who through me, the better to enable them to discharge their duty to their Queen and province, humbly claim all their undoubted rights and privileges, especially that they may have freedom of speech in their debates, access to Your Honour's person at all seasonable times, and that their proceedings may receive from Your Honour the most favourable construction.

Mr. Schweitzer (Provincial Secretary): Mr. Speaker, I am commanded by Her Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor to declare to you that she freely confides in the duty and attachment of this Assembly to Her Majesty's person and government, and not doubting that their proceedings will be conducted with wisdom, temper, and prudence, she grants and upon all occasions will recognize and allow their constitutional privileges.

I am commanded also to assure you that the Assembly shall have ready access to Her Honour upon all seasonable occasions and that their proceedings as well as your words and actions will constantly receive from her the most favourable construction.

Her Honour: Please, all, be seated.

Speech from the Throne

Her Honour: Mr. Speaker, ladies and gentlemen of the Legislative Assembly, fellow Albertans:

I speak to you as the province of Alberta's vice-regal representative of Her Majesty Elizabeth II, Queen of Canada.

This province honours its enduring ties to the Royal Family and our democratic tradition of constitutional monarchy. One hundred and fifty years ago this year the Hudson's Bay Company sold Rupert's Land, including much of the territory that became the province of Alberta, to the Dominion of Canada, bringing all of these lands under the Canadian Crown. The same Crown enjoined us in treaties with First Nations to respect the rights, privileges, and traditions of indigenous communities, a duty which we are bound to honour. Last year we renewed our ties to the Crown when we were honoured by the visit of Anne, the Princess Royal. I had the privilege of joining with her to announce Edmonton's Commonwealth walkway.

As Her Majesty's representative it is my honour and duty to open the First Session of the 30th Legislature with the presentation of the legislative program of Her Majesty's government.

Spring is the season of renewal. For all the people blessed to call Alberta home, from the First Peoples who have built vital communities on these lands for millennia to recent newcomers from across Canada and around the world, spring arrives with an explosion of nature's irrepressible energy. Every spring we experience the breathtaking vitality of nature's rush to renewal and are invigorated by it. So it is with our democracy. Once again, this spring Albertans participated in the great democratic ritual of a free election bequeathed to us by the Westminster parliamentary tradition, and they voted decisively for democratic and economic renewal through a change in government.

Recognizing that our province is beset by severe external political and economic constraints and consequently saddled with serious internal fiscal challenges requiring urgent action, my government will bring in a legislative program focused on three main priorities. First, a relentless focus on policies designed to create jobs, growth, and economic diversification: Alberta must show the world that we are open for business to restore investor confidence while carefully restoring balance to our province's finances. Second, standing up for our province's right to control and develop our natural resources and compete freely and fairly in the national and international economies: this requires securing pipeline access for Alberta oil and gas to world markets. And third, making life better for all Albertans by ensuring the quality and effectiveness of our public services, especially in health care and education, and by supporting the most vulnerable in our society.

Bill 1, as promised, will be the Carbon Tax Repeal Act. In providing \$1.4 billion in tax relief, it will make everything more affordable for Albertans. If needed, my ministers will take legal action to protect Albertans from a federal carbon tax and to support other provinces doing the same.

Bill 2 will be the Open for Business Act. It will strengthen the rights of Alberta workers within unions, promote job creation for young Albertans, and retain recent advancements in compassionate leave. This will be followed in the autumn by further labour reforms to protect workers and help employers create more jobs.

This spring my government will also introduce Bill 3, the Job Creation Tax Cut Act. It will lower the tax burden on employers by one-third, from 12 per cent to 8 per cent. This will give Alberta businesses the lowest tax rate in Canada and among the lowest rates in North America, renewing Alberta as a magnet for job-creating investment. Economists estimate that this reduction will generate 55,000 new full-time jobs and increase the size of our economy by \$12.7 billion.

My government will bring forward Bill 4, the Red Tape Reduction Act. This will provide the means to lower the regulatory burden on Alberta's economy by one-third, reducing costs, speeding up approvals, and freeing job creators to get more Albertans back to work.

Estimates for the interim supply of public services will be presented in an Appropriation Act, to be followed by a full budget this fall. That budget will be informed by the report of the fiscal review panel chaired by former Saskatchewan Finance minister Janice MacKinnon, which will make recommendations on how to restore balance to our province's finances so that we stop encumbering future generations with debt. My government will also engage in widespread public consultations on how best to end deficit spending while protecting front-line public services.

My government will also present a Tax Statutes Amendment Act.

My government will propose amendments to the Municipal Government Act. These will enable municipalities to use property tax incentives to attract investment and create jobs.

My government will table a Royalties Guarantee Act. Part of a plan to restore the competitiveness of the Alberta energy sector and win back the confidence of investors, this legislation will provide certainty that the royalty structure in place when a well is drilled remains in place for the life of the well.

My government will introduce the Fair Access to Regulated Professions and Trades Act. This legislation will renew and reinforce Alberta's historic role as a place of economic opportunity by making it easier and fairer for newcomers to be credentialed in their professions, work at their skill level, and contribute to our shared prosperity.

Her Majesty's government, on the very day it was sworn in, proclaimed the Preserving Canada's Economic Prosperity Act. It

will be used as necessary to ensure the value of Alberta's energy products is maximized.

Also, in the spring session my government will present amendments to the Education Act. These will include implementing the will of the Legislature as expressed in legislation passed in 2012 so that these well-considered reforms are in place for the start of the new school year in September of this year. They will also include a commitment to curriculum reform based on proven pedagogy that teaches essential knowledge needed to achieve foundational competences and to prepare young Albertans to succeed in the future.

My ministers will also undertake important nonlegislative actions this spring. These include standing up for Alberta's interests within the Canadian federation by seeking the Legislature's support for a motion calling for the complete rejection of federal Bill C-48, which seeks to block access for Alberta's bitumen resources to British Columbia's northwest coast. A motion will also be proposed rejecting in its current form federal Bill C-69, the proposed Impact Assessment Act, which threatens Alberta's exclusive jurisdiction over nonrenewable natural resources and is damaging investor confidence. In bringing forward these and other initiatives, we will seek unity amongst Alberta's political parties, wherever possible, to speak with one voice.

In a world where the demand for energy will continue to rise, Alberta can, should, and will be one of the largest suppliers. That is why my government will create an agency mandated to proactively tell the truth about how we produce energy with the highest environmental, labour, and human rights standards on earth. My government will also challenge those who have for too long misrepresented these facts. In part this will be done by launching a public inquiry into the foreign sources of funds responsible for the campaign to land-lock Alberta's energy.

This year Her Majesty's government will also create the indigenous opportunities corporation. Alberta's First Peoples have played a crucial role in the development of this province, symbolized by Siksika Chief Crowfoot, who as leader of the Blackfoot peoples 150 years ago led his people into peaceful cooperation with the Crown, including the signing of Treaty 7. But while Alberta's natural resource wealth has been greatly developed since then, indigenous peoples have not fully participated in that prosperity. The indigenous opportunities corporation will support First Nations' and other indigenous groups' financial participation in natural resource development and infrastructure projects here and in other parts of Canada. We have a moral obligation to empower First Nations to be full partners in the development of the resources that lie below the lands which their ancestors first inhabited and to become partners in prosperity.

In the fall session my government will bring forward several other important bills. These include the Farm Freedom and Safety Act, which will reduce the tax and regulatory burden on farmers, strengthen their property rights and competitiveness, and restore balance, fairness, and common sense to regulation of Alberta's agricultural sector.

My government will further improve Alberta's education system by presenting the Choice in Education Act. It will renew the Alberta advantage in education by restoring and expanding the choices available to parents and children.

My government will take action to address climate change by introducing legislation to replace the carbon competitiveness incentive regulation with a technology innovation and emissions reduction fund. This will be a balanced, environmentally responsible, and economically efficient approach to reducing greenhouse gas emissions in Alberta through regulation at the

primary source, large industrial emitters. Further, it will ensure investment in new emissions-reducing technologies which can be exported around the world.

To help protect vulnerable Albertans, my government will introduce the Saving the Girl Next Door Act and table legislation to give effect to Clare's law. The former will introduce protections for victims of human trafficking, and the latter will expand protections for victims of domestic violence. My government will implement a strategy to combat the wave of crime that has victimized too many Albertans, in part by hiring more Crown prosecutors and providing additional resources to police to respond to such terrible crimes as the exploitation of children.

And in order to improve decorum in this Assembly and civility in our politics, my government will propose amendments to the standing orders.

Members of the Legislative Assembly, this summarizes my government's legislative program for the spring and fall sessions. Further legislation anticipated for 2020 will address matters related to democratic reform, economic growth and environmental protection, public infrastructure, charitable giving, municipal governance, the economic rights of artists, conservation and outdoor recreation, and family law.

Renewal is the animating theme of my government's immediate legislative priorities. It is the appropriate and necessary response to the fiscal and economic setbacks Albertans have experienced in recent years, and it is only fitting to look to our history, the magnificent endowment of our natural resources and environment, and above all the values and character of our people to inspire and achieve this renewal.

The scale and pace of social and economic progress in Alberta over the last 114 years exceeds that of virtually any other polity on earth. We should always be grateful for those who have gone before us, who have been stewards of a great tradition of ordered liberty. Albertans have consistently applied the principles of free enterprise, free markets, equality of opportunity, and prudent stewardship to optimize our God-given gifts. No economic hardship has ever ruined us. No political enmity has ever defeated us. No natural disaster has ever stopped us. Our success, our resiliency, and our yet-untapped potential is a powerful magnet that continues to attract ambitious and talented newcomers from across Canada and the world.

The political forces standing in the way of this inevitable destiny today are external and temporary. Her Majesty's government has a strong mandate to stand up for Alberta against those forces, powered by the unstoppable will, energy, and talent of Albertans. Few places on earth provide such freedom of opportunity to achieve so much upward social and economic mobility. This in turn fuels our economic growth and generates wealth that spills far beyond our borders and secures the prosperity and welfare of Confederation. It is our duty and our destiny to renew Alberta's role as an economic and political leader within Canada.

Members of the Legislative Assembly, if you would indulge my passion for Alberta history, I will leave you with the closing words of our province's very first Speech from the Throne, on March 15, 1906, delivered by His Honour Lieutenant Governor George Hedley Vicars Bulyea:

To the several matters herein referred to and to all others that may be brought before you, I invite your careful attention, with the fullest confidence that the result of your deliberations will be beneficial to the Province and to the Dominion as a whole.

May the blessings of Almighty God rest upon your counsels as you work to renew an Alberta that is, in the words of our province's official motto, strong and free.

The Sergeant-at-Arms: Order! All rise, please.

The Speaker: Ladies and gentlemen, I would now invite you to join Cara McLeod, accompanied by the Royal Canadian Artillery Band, leading us in the singing of *God Save the Queen*. Please remain standing at the conclusion.

Hon. Members and Guests:

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

The Sergeant-at-Arms: Order!

[Preceded by the Sergeant-at-Arms, Their Honours, their party, and the Premier left the Chamber as a fanfare of trumpets sounded]

The Speaker: Please be seated.

[The Mace was uncovered]

The Speaker: Well, ladies and gentlemen, former Premiers, Members, family, friends, MPs, thank you all for joining us today so, so very much on this very exciting occasion for all of us here today and, in fact, all of us in this province. On April 16, 2019, over 1.894 million votes were cast in 87 constituencies throughout the province of Alberta. As a result, 46 new members have joined a very select group of individuals to serve in this storied Chamber. Since 1905 a grand total of only 954 members have been elected to serve in this venerable Chamber here at the Legislative Assembly of Alberta.

It's important that we let Albertans know just a little bit more about the 61 men and the 26 women who are serving here as MLAs. In addition to the 46 new members, 35 members are serving their second term in office, four members are serving their third term, and two members are serving their fourth term in office. I think they call that long suffering. Based on the information available to us, the average age at the time of the general election was approximately 46 years, which is unchanged from the 29th Legislature. As of April 16, 2019, there were four members in their 20s; 18 members in their 30s, a very esteemed group of individuals; 24 members in their 40s; 25 members in their 50s; and eight members – they happen to be my favourite – in their 60s.

Alberta is a dynamic province that welcomes people from other cultures and countries. The majority of members were born here in Alberta. However, there are members who were born in other Canadian provinces as well as Brazil, Chile, China, Hong Kong, Fiji, India, Nigeria, and Pakistan. In addition to English, members also communicate in the languages of French, Arabic, Cantonese, Mandarin, Cree, German, Greek, Hindi, Italian, Japanese, Punjabi, Spanish, and, with apologies to the Filipinos, Tagalog.

Diversity is also reflected in members' previous work experience. The occupational backgrounds of members vary from musicians to economists, engineers to hairstylists, investment bankers to hydrologists. To be more specific, there are 35 entrepreneurs or businesspeople; 11 lawyers – that's probably enough – 11 teachers and postsecondary instructors; eight ranchers and farmers; and six social workers. One member was formerly a Member of Parliament. Seven members previously held positions in local government as councillors or school board trustees.

From an educational standpoint members collectively hold 66 bachelor's degrees, 25 master's, one doctorate, and 57 other diplomas or certificates and professional designations.

Members of the 30th Legislature notably have some interesting family ties. There are, for the first time in history, in the Legislative Assembly of Alberta two brothers serving at the same time, one of them slightly taller than the other. In fact, we're currently doing some research to determine whether or not we are the tallest Legislative Assembly of all time. There are two members whose fathers have previously served in this Assembly. One member's great-grandfather served in the 1930s. There are three members whose great-uncles or great-uncles-in-law served in our Assembly. Finally, we have three members who have cousins who have also served as MLAs.

To conclude, the members of the 30th Legislature are a diverse and capable group whose knowledge and experience will assist us in carrying out our responsibilities as parliamentarians and elected representatives in the service of this great province of Alberta.

[The Premier returned to the Chamber]

Tablings

The Speaker: I have the honour to table a copy of the speech graciously given by Her Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor.

Introduction of Bills

The Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Bill 1 An Act to Repeal the Carbon Tax

Mr. Kenney: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Congratulations on your election. I request leave to introduce Bill 1, An Act to Repeal the Carbon Tax.

Mr. Speaker, our government is taking action to deliver on the commitment that we made to Albertans to repeal this tax grab, which is all economic pain and no environmental gain. This measure, if adopted, will lift a burden of \$1.4 billion off the Alberta economy, will save families as much as \$1,150 per year, will save

small businesses on average \$4,500 per year, and will, according to economists, lead to the creation of at least 6,000 new full-time jobs.

Mr. Speaker, a recent study indicates that Albertans have been paying the second-highest carbon tax in Canada, far more than our fellow Canadians, and this has not secured for us so-called social licence or market access for our world-class energy. We therefore propose in this measure to provide important tax relief to Albertans. Albertans have been waiting for this relief, which is why consistently two-thirds of Albertans have expressed opposition to the tax that will be repealed by Bill 1. Promise made, promise kept.

This being a money bill, Her Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor, having been informed of the contents of the bill, recommends the same to the Assembly.

With that, I move first reading of Bill 1.

[Motion carried; Bill 1 read a first time]

Certificates of Election

The Clerk: Mr. Speaker, I have received from the Chief Electoral Officer of Alberta pursuant to the Election Act a report containing the results of the general election conducted on the 16th day of April, 2019, which states that an election was conducted in the following electoral divisions, and the said report further shows that the following members were duly elected.

[The Clerk read the election returns]

Motions

The Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Mr. Kenney: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that the speech of Her Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor to this Assembly be taken into consideration the week of May 27.

[Motion carried]

The Speaker: The hon. Government House Leader.

Mr. Jason Nixon: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that the Assembly stand adjourned until Thursday, May 23, at 9 a.m.

[Motion carried; the Assembly adjourned at 3:46 p.m.]

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