



Province of Alberta

The 30th Legislature
First Session

Alberta Hansard

Tuesday morning, October 8, 2019

Day 24

The Honourable Nathan M. Cooper, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of Alberta
The 30th Legislature

First Session

Cooper, Hon. Nathan M., Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills (UCP), Speaker
Pitt, Angela D., Airdrie-East (UCP), Deputy Speaker and Chair of Committees
Milliken, Nicholas, Calgary-Currie (UCP), Deputy Chair of Committees

Aheer, Hon. Leela Sharon, Chestermere-Strathmore (UCP)
Allard, Tracy L., Grande Prairie (UCP)
Amery, Mickey K., Calgary-Cross (UCP)
Armstrong-Homeniuk, Jackie,
Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville (UCP)
Barnes, Drew, Cypress-Medicine Hat (UCP)
Bilous, Deron, Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview (NDP),
Official Opposition House Leader
Carson, Jonathon, Edmonton-West Henday (NDP)
Ceci, Joe, Calgary-Buffalo (NDP)
Copping, Hon. Jason C., Calgary-Varsity (UCP)
Dach, Lorne, Edmonton-McClung (NDP)
Dang, Thomas, Edmonton-South (NDP)
Deol, Jasvir, Edmonton-Meadows (NDP)
Dreeshen, Hon. Devin, Innisfail-Sylvan Lake (UCP)
Eggen, David, Edmonton-North West (NDP),
Official Opposition Whip
Ellis, Mike, Calgary-West (UCP),
Government Whip
Feehan, Richard, Edmonton-Rutherford (NDP)
Fir, Hon. Tanya, Calgary-Peigan (UCP)
Ganley, Kathleen T., Calgary-Mountain View (NDP)
Getson, Shane C., Lac Ste. Anne-Parkland (UCP)
Glasgo, Michaela L., Brooks-Medicine Hat (UCP)
Glubish, Hon. Nate, Strathcona-Sherwood Park (UCP)
Goehring, Nicole, Edmonton-Castle Downs (NDP)
Goodridge, Laila, Fort McMurray-Lac La Biche (UCP)
Gotfried, Richard, Calgary-Fish Creek (UCP)
Gray, Christina, Edmonton-Mill Woods (NDP)
Guthrie, Peter F., Airdrie-Cochrane (UCP)
Hanson, David B., Bonnyville-Cold Lake-St. Paul (UCP)
Hoffman, Sarah, Edmonton-Glenora (NDP)
Horner, Nate S., Drumheller-Stettler (UCP)
Hunter, Hon. Grant R., Taber-Warner (UCP)
Irwin, Janis, Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood (NDP),
Official Opposition Deputy Whip
Issik, Whitney, Calgary-Glenmore (UCP)
Jones, Matt, Calgary-South East (UCP)
Kenney, Hon. Jason, PC, Calgary-Lougheed (UCP),
Premier
LaGrange, Hon. Adriana, Red Deer-North (UCP)
Loewen, Todd, Central Peace-Notley (UCP)
Long, Martin M., West Yellowhead (UCP)
Lovely, Jacqueline, Camrose (UCP)
Loyola, Rod, Edmonton-Ellerslie (NDP)
Luan, Hon. Jason, Calgary-Foothills (UCP)
Madu, Hon. Kaycee, Edmonton-South West (UCP)
McIver, Hon. Ric, Calgary-Hays (UCP),
Deputy Government House Leader

Nally, Hon. Dale, Morinville-St. Albert (UCP)
Neudorf, Nathan T., Lethbridge-East (UCP)
Nicolaidis, Hon. Demetrios, Calgary-Bow (UCP)
Nielsen, Christian E., Edmonton-Decore (NDP)
Nixon, Hon. Jason, Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House-Sundre
(UCP), Government House Leader
Nixon, Jeremy P., Calgary-Klein (UCP)
Notley, Rachel, Edmonton-Strathcona (NDP),
Leader of the Official Opposition
Orr, Ronald, Lacombe-Ponoka (UCP)
Pancholi, Rakhi, Edmonton-Whitemud (NDP)
Panda, Hon. Prasad, Calgary-Edgemont (UCP)
Phillips, Shannon, Lethbridge-West (NDP)
Pon, Hon. Josephine, Calgary-Beddington (UCP)
Rehn, Pat, Lesser Slave Lake (UCP)
Reid, Roger W., Livingstone-Macleod (UCP)
Renaud, Marie F., St. Albert (NDP)
Rosin, Miranda D., Banff-Kananaskis (UCP)
Rowswell, Garth, Vermilion-Lloydminster-Wainwright (UCP)
Rutherford, Brad, Leduc-Beaumont (UCP)
Sabir, Irfan, Calgary-McCall (NDP)
Savage, Hon. Sonya, Calgary-North West (UCP),
Deputy Government House Leader
Sawhney, Hon. Rajan, Calgary-North East (UCP)
Schmidt, Marlin, Edmonton-Gold Bar (NDP)
Schow, Joseph R., Cardston-Siksika (UCP),
Deputy Government Whip
Schulz, Hon. Rebecca, Calgary-Shaw (UCP)
Schweitzer, Hon. Doug, Calgary-Elbow (UCP),
Deputy Government House Leader
Shandro, Hon. Tyler, Calgary-Acadia (UCP)
Shepherd, David, Edmonton-City Centre (NDP)
Sigurdson, Lori, Edmonton-Riverview (NDP)
Sigurdson, R.J., Highwood (UCP)
Singh, Peter, Calgary-East (UCP)
Smith, Mark W., Drayton Valley-Devon (UCP)
Stephan, Jason, Red Deer-South (UCP)
Sweet, Heather, Edmonton-Manning (NDP),
Official Opposition Deputy House Leader
Toews, Hon. Travis, Grande Prairie-Wapiti (UCP)
Toor, Devinder, Calgary-Falconridge (UCP)
Turton, Searle, Spruce Grove-Stony Plain (UCP)
van Dijken, Glenn, Athabasca-Barrhead-Westlock (UCP)
Walker, Jordan, Sherwood Park (UCP)
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

Officers and Officials of the Legislative Assembly

Shannon Dean, Clerk
Teri Cherkewich, Law Clerk
Stephanie LeBlanc, Clerk Assistant and
Senior Parliamentary Counsel
Trafton Koenig, Parliamentary Counsel

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

Chris Caughell, Acting Sergeant-at-Arms
Tom Bell, Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms
Paul Link, Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms

Executive Council

Jason Kenney	Premier, President of Executive Council, Minister of Intergovernmental Relations
Leela Aheer	Minister of Culture, Multiculturalism and Status of Women
Jason Copping	Minister of Labour and Immigration
Devin Dreeshen	Minister of Agriculture and Forestry
Tanya Fir	Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Tourism
Nate Glubish	Minister of Service Alberta
Grant Hunter	Associate Minister of Red Tape Reduction
Adriana LaGrange	Minister of Education
Jason Luan	Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions
Kaycee Madu	Minister of Municipal Affairs
Ric McIver	Minister of Transportation
Dale Nally	Associate Minister of Natural Gas
Demetrios Nicolaides	Minister of Advanced Education
Jason Nixon	Minister of Environment and Parks
Prasad Panda	Minister of Infrastructure
Josephine Pon	Minister of Seniors and Housing
Sonya Savage	Minister of Energy
Rajan Sawhney	Minister of Community and Social Services
Rebecca Schulz	Minister of Children's Services
Doug Schweitzer	Minister of Justice and Solicitor General
Tyler Shandro	Minister of Health
Travis Toews	President of Treasury Board and Minister of Finance
Rick Wilson	Minister of Indigenous Relations

Parliamentary Secretaries

Laila Goodridge	Parliamentary Secretary Responsible for Alberta's Francophonie
Muhammad Yaseen	Parliamentary Secretary of Immigration

STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Standing Committee on the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund

Chair: Mr. Orr
Deputy Chair: Mr. Getson

Allard
Eggen
Glasgo
Jones
Loyola
Nielsen
Singh

Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future

Chair: Mr. van Dijken
Deputy Chair: Ms Goehring

Allard
Barnes
Bilous
Dang
Gray
Horner
Irwin
Issik
Jones
Reid
Rowswell
Stephan
Toor

Standing Committee on Families and Communities

Chair: Ms Goodridge
Deputy Chair: Ms Sigurdson

Amery
Carson
Ganley
Glasgo
Guthrie
Long
Neudorf
Nixon, Jeremy
Pancholi
Rutherford
Shepherd
Walker
Yao

Standing Committee on Legislative Offices

Chair: Mr. Ellis
Deputy Chair: Mr. Schow

Goodridge
Gray
Lovely
Nixon, Jeremy
Rutherford
Schmidt
Shepherd
Sigurdson, R.J.
Sweet

Special Standing Committee on Members' Services

Chair: Mr. Cooper
Deputy Chair: Mr. Ellis

Dang
Deol
Goehring
Goodridge
Gotfried
Long
Neudorf
Sweet
Williams

Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills

Chair: Mr. Ellis
Deputy Chair: Mr. Schow

Glasgo
Horner
Irwin
Neudorf
Nielsen
Nixon, Jeremy
Pancholi
Sigurdson, L.
Sigurdson, R.J.

Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections, Standing Orders and Printing

Chair: Mr. Smith
Deputy Chair: Mr. Schow

Carson
Deol
Ganley
Horner
Issik
Jones
Loyola
Neudorf
Rehn
Reid
Renaud
Turton
Yao

Standing Committee on Public Accounts

Chair: Ms Phillips
Deputy Chair: Mr. Gotfried

Barnes
Dach
Feehan
Guthrie
Hoffman
Nixon, Jeremy
Renaud
Rosin
Rowswell
Stephan
Toor
Turton
Walker

Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship

Chair: Mr. Hanson
Deputy Chair: Member Ceci

Dach
Feehan
Getson
Loewen
Rehn
Rosin
Sabir
Schmidt
Sigurdson, R.J.
Singh
Smith
Turton
Yaseen

Legislative Assembly of Alberta

10 a.m.

Tuesday, October 8, 2019

[The Speaker in the chair]

Prayers

The Speaker: Lord, God of righteousness and truth, grant to our Queen and her government, to Members of the Legislative Assembly, and to all in positions of responsibility the guidance of Your spirit. May they never lead the province wrongly through love of power, desire to please, or unworthy ideas but, laying aside all private interests, keep in mind their responsibility to seek to improve the condition of all. Amen.

Please be seated.

Statement by the Speaker

Law Clerk Teri Cherkewich

The Speaker: Hon. members, before we proceed to Orders of the Day, I would like to take a moment to introduce a new table officer to the Assembly, the new Law Clerk, Teri Cherkewich. Teri joins the Alberta table with over 16 years of legal experience in the Yukon government, nine of those most recent years as Legislative Counsel in Yukon's Legislative Counsel office. Teri holds a bachelor of law from the University of Saskatchewan, and her professional experience includes extensive involvement in professional associations, notably the Canadian Study of Parliament Group and the Uniform Law Commission of Canada. Please join me in welcoming Teri to our province and to the table this morning.

Ordres du jour.

Orders of the Day

Government Motions

The Speaker: The hon. Government House Leader has the call.

Mr. Jason Nixon: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Through you to all members of the House, welcome back to the House.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to start off by moving Government Motion 29, which is on the Order Paper. We'll be moving two government motions this morning. I'll seek your direction if you would like me to read it off the Order Paper or if you're fine with me just moving it as Government Motion 29.

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. Government House Leader. I think that in this instance reading Government Motion 29 would be reasonable. I can imagine that the Speaker may have some leniency with respect to additional government motions this morning.

Mr. Jason Nixon: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. With that said, then, I propose the following motion.

Committee Membership Changes

29. Mr. Jason Nixon moved:

Be it resolved that the membership of the Assembly's committees be replaced as follows:

- A. on the Standing Committee on the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund that Mr. Orr replace Mr. Gotfried as chair, Mr. Getson replace Mr. Orr as deputy chair,

- Member Loyola replace Member Irwin, and Mr. Singh replace Mr. Gotfried;
- B. on the Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills that Ms Glasgo replace Mr. Gotfried;
- C. on the Standing Committee on Public Accounts that Mr. Jeremy Nixon replace Mr. Amery;
- D. on the Special Standing Committee on Members' Services that Mr. Neudorf replace Ms Armstrong-Homeniuk;
- E. on the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future that Member Irwin replace Mr. Dach;
- F. on the Standing Committee on Families and Communities that Mr. Shepherd replace Member Irwin;
- G. on the Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship that Mr. Dach replace Member Loyola and Mr. Loewen replace Ms Armstrong-Homeniuk.

The Speaker: Hon. members, under Standing Order 18(1)(h) this is a debatable motion. Anyone wishing to add to the debate? I see the hon. Member for Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview.

Mr. Bilous: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. At the onset I'd like to request a separate vote for Government Motion 29 part A, with the following motions to be voted on as a block but that first motion to be separate, and with your indulgence I will speak to why I'm making this request.

Mr. Speaker, I have great concerns with the appointment of the Member for Calgary-East to Heritage Savings Trust Fund. The committee approves the annual report and quarterly reports on the fund, including public meetings with Albertans on its investments, investment activities, and performance. Now, my concerns: last we heard, the Election Commissioner was investigating the MLA for Calgary-East, and we've yet to hear if these investigations have been concluded. Further, his business was raided by the RCMP. We've yet to hear the conclusion of that. As well, for a member who is being investigated for allegations of fraud, forgery, and bribery to be put on a committee for overseeing Alberta's future is a slap in the face to Albertans. We believe another member should be put on this committee instead or the existing Member for Calgary-Fish Creek should remain on that committee. That's up to the government. We're calling on the UCP government to take these allegations seriously and abstain from rewarding members who are the focus of very serious allegations.

The Speaker: Hon. members, in this instance this motion can be divided for multiple votes, recorded or not, so I'll be happy to proceed in such a manner, where part A will be voted on separately from the additional portions of the motion.

Having said that, are there any other members wishing to add to the debate this morning with respect to Government Motion 29? Seeing none.

[The voice vote indicated that Government Motion 29 part A carried]

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 10:06 a.m.]

[Fifteen minutes having elapsed, the Assembly divided]

[The Speaker in the chair]

For the motion:

Aheer Lovely Rosin

Allard	Madu	Rowswell
Amery	McIver	Rutherford
Barnes	Milliken	Sawhney
Dreeshen	Neudorf	Schow
Ellis	Nixon, Jason	Schulz
Fir	Nixon, Jeremy	Schweitzer
Glasgo	Orr	Sigurdson, R.J.
Gotfried	Panda	Singh
Guthrie	Pitt	Stephan
Hanson	Rehn	Walker
Horner	Reid	Yao
Hunter		

Against the motion:

Bilous	Gray	Phillips
Carson	Hoffman	Renaud
Ceci	Irwin	Sabir
Dach	Loyola	Shepherd
Dang	Nielsen	Sigurdson, L.
Deol	Pancholi	Sweet
Feehan		

Totals: For – 37 Against – 19

[Government Motion 29 part A carried]

The Speaker: Hon. members, we are at Government Motion 29 parts B through G.

[Government Motion 29 parts B through G carried]

The Speaker: The hon. Government House Leader has the call.

Amendments to Standing Orders

30. Mr. Jason Nixon moved:

A. Be it resolved that the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta effective May 30, 2019, be amended as follows:

1. Standing Order 3(4) is amended by striking out “Unless otherwise ordered” and substituting “Unless otherwise ordered or varied under suborder (5), (5.1), (8) or (9)”.
2. Standing Order 7(4) is amended by striking out “6 Members” and substituting “9 Members”.
3. Standing Order 8(7)(c) is amended by striking out “8 sitting days” wherever it occurs and substituting “4 sitting days”.
4. Standing Order 41(1) is struck out and the following is substituted:
41(1) The sequence of motions other than Government motions shall be determined by a random draw of the names of all Members except for
 - (a) the Speaker,
 - (b) members of the Executive Council, and
 - (c) any Member who has submitted written notice to the Clerk no later than 3 days prior to the date of the draw of the Member’s intention to be excluded from the draw.
5. Standing Order 56(2.4) is struck out and the following is substituted:
(2.4) A temporary substitution may be terminated at any time by the original Member of the committee and shall not be in effect during any portion of a committee meeting that the original Member attends.
6. The following is added after Standing Order 61:

Voting – interim and supplementary estimates

61.1(1) At the end of consideration of interim or supplementary estimates there shall be one vote in Committee of Supply on the estimates of the Legislative Assembly and the officers of the Legislature followed by one vote on the estimates of the Government unless

- (a) additional votes are required on amendments pursuant to suborder (3) prior to calling the vote on the interim or supplementary estimates, or
 - (b) on at least one day’s notice a Member has provided written notification to the Chair and the Clerk of the Member’s desire that the estimates of a particular ministry be voted upon separately, in which case that ministry’s estimates shall be voted separately and the final vote for the interim or supplementary estimates shall consist of the estimates of any ministries not yet voted upon.
- (2) The votes under suborder (1) shall be taken without debate or amendment except as provided in suborder (3).
- (3) When an amendment to the interim or supplementary estimates is moved in Committee of Supply, the vote on the amendment stands deferred until the end of consideration of the interim or supplementary estimates.
7. Standing Order 65(1)(b) is amended by striking out “in committees of the whole Assembly” and substituting “subject to Standing Order 29(3)(b) and (c), in committees of the whole Assembly”.
8. Standing Order 72(1) is struck out and the following is substituted:
72(1) The sequence of Public Bills and Orders other than Government Bills and Orders shall be determined by a random draw of the names of all Members except for
 - (a) the Speaker,
 - (b) members of the Executive Council, and
 - (c) any Member who has submitted written notice to Parliamentary Counsel no later than 3 days prior to the date of the draw of the Member’s intention to be excluded from the draw.
9. Standing Order 108 is struck out and the following is substituted:

Duties of Clerk Assistant

108 The Clerk Assistant of the Assembly shall

- (a) assist the Clerk of the Assembly in fulfilling the Clerk’s duties in the Assembly, in divisions, and in the general administration of the Legislative Assembly, and
- (b) in the absence of the Clerk, substitute for the Clerk and exercise the authority and discharge the responsibilities normally vested in the Clerk

subject to such orders that may be received from the Speaker or the Clerk.

Duties of Clerk of Committees

108.1 The Clerk of Committees

- (a) is responsible for administrative support to all committees of the Assembly and the

- safekeeping of all committee papers and records, and
- (b) in the absence of the Clerk and the Clerk Assistant, substitute for the Clerk and exercise the authority and discharge the responsibilities normally vested in the Clerk subject to such orders that may be received from the Speaker or the Clerk.
10. The heading to Standing Order 109 is amended by striking out “Parliamentary Counsel” and substituting “the Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel”.
11. Standing Order 109 is amended
- (a) by renumbering Standing Order 109 as Standing Order 109(1),
- (b) in suborder (1)(c) by striking out “Clerk and the Clerk Assistant” and substituting “Clerk, Clerk Assistant, and Clerk of Committees”, and
- (c) by adding the following after suborder (1):
- (2) The Law Clerk shall serve as head of the office of Parliamentary Counsel.
- B. And be it further resolved that the amendments in this motion shall come into force on passage.

Mr. Jason Nixon: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A number of these standing order changes are housekeeping and help to standardize current practice. One of the changes I’m very pleased to propose is an increase in the number of members’ statements from six to nine. These additional statements were something I committed to deliver in the spring in order to increase the opportunities for private members, including the opposition, to highlight topics of concern for their constituents. It’s my hope to pass this before lunch so that we can give members that opportunity today during question period. As such, I ask for support from the Chamber for that motion, and I will seek your direction if you would like me to read it. It’s rather lengthy.

The Speaker: Hon. members, given that I am always in support of an effective and smooth-running Legislative Assembly – I know that all of you have had the opportunity to review the Order Paper that has been circulated. I also notice that it may have been tweeted this morning as well to provide Albertans the opportunity to review the Order Paper. As such, I think we will allow the Government House Leader the opportunity to not read the lengthy change to the standing orders.

This is a debatable motion, and any member wishing to add to the debate would be welcome to do so now. I see the hon. Member for Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview has risen.

Mr. Bilous: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I, too, appreciate finding ways to be a little more efficient with our time, so I won’t take up too, too much time. Just a few comments on this. I mean, first of all, I do want to thank the government in their efforts to work with the opposition to identify some standing order changes that we feel are acceptable. I’ll say at the onset that I will be supporting this change or suite of changes to our standing orders. But just a few comments for Albertans to know specifically what’s in here and what it does mean for members of the Assembly.

We know that Standing Order 3(4) really codifies how the government has the right to change the different sitting dates and the different tools that they have at their disposal. We recognize that these were always available to government. This is nothing new but just putting it into the standing orders.

I’m going to jump over 7(4).

As far as 8(7)(c), this is referring to reducing the sitting days from eight to four. It’s a curious one, to which we still haven’t receive an adequate response from the government as to why they’re making this change. Currently the government can bring private members’ bills back from second reading to committee within four days. I mean, it currently reads: within eight days. Four days is within eight days, so they have the same ability. What it does is to reduce the time that they could take, so they’re losing an additional four days. Now, if the reason for this is to be a little more expeditious with private members’ bills, to try to bring them back to the Assembly quicker, then that is something that I and we can get behind. We know that private members have limited time for debate. Our Monday afternoons are the only day of the week that are devoted to private members. We know that there are a significant number of members on both sides of the House. Obviously, this applies to government private members as well. If it is with the intention to expedite bills, bring them back for quicker turnarounds for debate, then that is something that we can support.

My favourite standing order change in this package, Mr. Speaker, is Standing Order 41(1), and that is where all private members are automatically – their names are placed in for draws on bills and motions. It’d be interesting to look at the history of this place as to why it was an opt-in instead of an opt-out, which is challenging, I think, for members that have to, you know, get it in before a certain date. I’m happy to see that now all private members will be in the draws unless they choose to opt out. That one gets a gold star, in our opinion, our humble opinion.

The next one, I think, is also a very sensible one, Standing Order 56(2.4), that allows members, if you have committee meetings, if a member is unavailable for a portion of the meeting and lines up a substitute, if they are available to come in halfway through the meeting, to in fact take their chair and take over voting. I think that absolutely makes sense. That, in fact, encourages members, if they only have to miss a portion of a meeting, to get to a committee meeting, which makes absolute sense. Very happy with that change, Mr. Speaker.

I do want to talk a little bit about the change to Standing Order 61.1(1). This is talking about votes for interim and sup supply. In the past, Mr. Speaker, every line item for every ministry was pulled out and voted on separately. Now, I appreciate that this can be a little tedious, it can be lengthy, but we know that it’s important for Albertans to see exactly what the budgeted amounts for interim and sup supply are. So I think this was a great example of a compromise between the government and the opposition in that we will have the ability to identify which ministries we’d like voted on separately. Those that we are okay with voting on as a block will be voted on as a block. A great example of finding a system that enhances efficiency but gives us the ability at the same time to highlight certain ministries and their spending.

10:30

The next one is Standing Order 65(1)(b), and that is really codifying how much time members would agree to during Committee of the Whole debate for private members’ bills. We’re codifying this for 10 minutes per member. Really, the reason behind this – this always was worked out through House leaders’ agreements – is because, again, there is limited time to debate private members’ bills. Members of all the parties would agree that they would shorten their time so that more people could get up and speak. Now we are codifying this, and now it’ll be up to 10 minutes. That’s good, too.

The only other one that I jumped over and I’ll come back to is Standing Order 7(4). This is increasing the number of members’ statements per day. Now, at the onset, of course, I’m in favour of

members having more opportunities and of more members to get up and give a two-minute address to the Assembly to talk about issues and topics and subjects that are important to them as members, important to their constituents and constituencies. But for me, Mr. Speaker, the sore spot on this one is the fact that the reason we have so much more time at the start of our Routine at 1:30 is because the government decided to eliminate introductions. I think that was wrong. I think that decision was wrong. The opportunity for Albertans to come to this place, to be recognized, to have their names written in *Hansard*, to be in Alberta's history books forever is now an opportunity that has been taken away from them. I think that there was a middle-of-the-road solution.

I appreciate conversations that we had with the government. Some introductions went on at length, and that interfered with other members being able to do their introductions or members' statements. I appreciate that. We were open to negotiating a limit on how long introductions could be to ensure we expedite the process. Instead, this government is deciding to, really, pull the carpet out from under not just Albertans but, you know, the tradition of introductions in this building that has gone on for many, many, many years. For me, Ottawa doesn't do everything better, and I appreciate that in the House of Commons they don't have introductions. I think that's sad. I think they've missed out on an opportunity for Canadians or visitors to be introduced in this place.

Mr. Speaker, you know, I've had the privilege and honour of being a member since 2012, and there's still not a single day that I've walked through these doors and I'm not feeling humbled and in awe of being a member, being elected to this Chamber, and how special it is. There are, I believe, fewer than a thousand Albertans in the history of this province who have been a member. It is an extreme honour, and I know that I have constituents, as do my colleagues, who are disappointed that they can't come into the Legislature: many, many seniors who loved to come here to be introduced. It develops a personal connection.

If you look especially at young people coming in – we want them to get interested. We want them to be future candidates and members representing our great province. Although I support the fact that we now have more members' statements to make good use of our time in this place, I can't help but be reminded how disappointing it is that introductions are now taken away.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the sound of your voice and know that you do introductions on behalf of the school groups, but I do think that what's lacking and what's missing now is the connection between members and their own guests to give a little bit of backstory. The other thing, quite frankly, that I've enjoyed over the last seven years is learning more about the members in this Assembly when they come and introduce their families, when they introduce friends of theirs, when they introduce their constituents. This is how we get to know each other.

Mr. Jason Nixon: Mr. Speaker, point of order.

Point of Order Repetition Items Previously Decided

The Speaker: A point of order has been called. I'll recognize the hon. Government House Leader.

Mr. Jason Nixon: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Everybody is on 23(c): persistent and "needless repetition or raises matters that have been decided during the current session." This has absolutely nothing to do with the standing order package that we're debating. The hon.

Opposition House Leader has admitted that in his own remarks and should get back to the task that is at hand.

The Speaker: The hon. Official Opposition House Leader, if he chooses to add to this very important point of order.

Mr. Bilous: Oh, I'm always happy to.

Mr. Speaker, this is not a point of order. I've made it very clear how my point relates back to why we have additional members' statements. In this place past Speakers have given members the swath and ability to be able to express their point. I think what the Government House Leader is attempting to do – and we've seen this before – is to try to stifle debate and limit what members can say when they are talking to express their point. Quite frankly, my point applies to every member in this House. This is not a point of order. I appreciate that the Government House Leader is already tired of hearing my voice after 15 minutes, but, again, this is not a point of order. I'd love to continue to talk.

The Speaker: Thank you for your interjections. I would tend to agree with the Opposition House Leader that this isn't, in fact, a point of order, and we will continue with his remarks.

Debate Continued

Mr. Bilous: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I was kind of hoping that maybe we'd get by one day without a point of order, but that's okay. My hopes are dashed.

Ms Phillips: Your presence is a point of order.

Mr. Bilous: Okay. Well, that was witty. I need to say that for *Hansard*. The Member for Lethbridge-West said that my presence creates points of order.

I will wrap up my comments. This package – I will say, Mr. Speaker, that we know that there are more changes to the standing orders that the government is proposing, and I'll hold my comments for those changes at that time. This suite of changes, again, codifies a number of different practices that we already have in place.

As well, the one that I didn't talk about but that I appreciate is very much a housekeeping item is that the positions for the table officers are codified along with their responsibilities. I appreciate all of the work that they do, and now it'll be codified forever in the standing orders.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I think I made my point. In fact, thank you to the Government House Leader for jumping up on a point of order. That means that I have made my point on the additional members' statements.

With this, I will be supporting these standing order changes. Thank you.

The Speaker: Hon. members, we all know that we all have a favourite standing order, so I appreciate you sharing yours.

Are there others wishing to speak to Government Motion 30? I see the hon. Member for Edmonton-Glenora. Is that right? It's my first day.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I suspect you will have it memorized again very quickly.

I want to thank the Opposition House Leader for highlighting some important points, and I appreciate what the Government House Leader added to the debate as well. I do want to say that the question of introductions is absolutely connected to a decision that was made in the last session to rush through other standing order changes, and while I think that these probably, by and large, are

improvements to today's standing orders, I think the reason why we have to consider them is because the government rushed so quickly last session to bring forward standing order changes that seriously stifled the ability of private members on both sides of the House to engage fully in the business of this place. This place is, of course, one that deals with a significant amount of government business, but it also is a place that is intended to deal with private members' business.

I do want to touch on one piece that relates to something that the Opposition House Leader mentioned previously, and that was when he was talking about introductions. I remember the day that you, Mr. Speaker, introduced your grandmother in this place. I think it was a moment that touched many of us and helped us get to know you on a slightly deeper level and see your grandmother's pride in having you say her name in this place. I remember the day that I introduced a constituent, Vera Saunders, who at the time was 105 – now she's 107 – sitting in this place. You know, she worked to help me get here, and seeing me say her name was something that she helped accomplish. That was one of her successes beyond her 100 years, that she was still able to contribute to having somebody elected and having that elected person be in their place speaking about something that mattered to her, her 105th birthday. What a nice thing to be able to have, a moment to honour with her and her family.

I think that when we rush things through this place instead of taking the time to go through the proper processes and procedures, like sending them to a committee that actually has the mandate to develop standing orders, we end up having to play catch-up.

10:40

I know that there were some members of the then Wildrose caucus who used to say that there are unintended consequences when you don't take things through full and appropriate process. One of the unintended consequences – or maybe it was intended; maybe people love hearing the opposition speak in the mornings in the House to things like standing orders. But by rushing things through in the last session, we were left in a situation where, now, here we are debating further standing order amendments. Again, don't love the process, don't love that it didn't go to the committee to be worked on that actually has a mandate to address this.

If the government front bench is going to make decisions about what is actually the mandate of a committee, I wonder what the role is of private members on those committees. I wonder if it's just to rubber-stamp something that's being sent through folks, through Executive Council. I don't think that that is the best way to show respect to private members on either side of the House, and I don't think it's the best way to show respect to Albertans who democratically elect all of us to come to this place and do our job.

I think that the bulk of these amendments are fine, but I am, again, deeply concerned about how much power and control seems to be consolidated on the front bench and how much the rest of us are left to react. I appreciate that the Order Paper was tweeted out. I appreciate that, you know, we got some notice in the morning. That's lovely. I definitely watch Twitter. I guess I have to watch it even more to find out what government business will be in coming days. I think that's not the intended role of this place, nor the intended role of Twitter, but I guess we adapt in ways that we must. But I do want to, again, restate that there are committees. There is one that specifically has a mandate of examining standing orders. And there are ways that we can show respect to the people of Alberta and to one another by actually allowing those committees to do their jobs.

Again, that being said, in large part I think that these are fine today, but what about other standing orders that might be coming in the future? What about other bills that might be coming forward in the future? What about the work of other committees that should be done in a democratic way that enables all private members to have their voices heard, Mr. Speaker? These are the questions that I'm left to grapple with this morning.

Thank you.

The Speaker: Hon. members, Standing Order 29(2)(a) is available if anyone has a brief question or comment.

Seeing none, the hon. Member for Edmonton-Whitemud.

Ms Pancholi: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise today to speak to this motion. I just wanted to actually thank my colleagues the Member for Edmonton-Glenora and especially the Member for Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview because what we saw this morning was really that – I, as well, like the Member for Edmonton-Glenora, do watch Twitter, but I did not see the Order Paper tweeted out. I don't look to Twitter for my indication of what the government is going to be doing and presenting in the House.

I note that because the Government House Leader did not have to rise and even actually read out the motion before us today, we actually had absolutely no explanation from this government – Albertans had no explanation from this government – about what the purpose of this motion is. In fact, that clarity and that detail came from the members of the opposition, in particular the Opposition House Leader.

So I'd just like to thank my colleagues for standing up and explaining the government's own motion to Albertans. I think it's a shame that nobody on the government side had to even read out what it says in the motion. I have no particular concerns other than those expressed by my colleagues with respect to the content, but I do think that if the government is going to be introducing motions and legislation, they should be accountable for speaking to Albertans about what the content of that motion or that bill is and explaining the purpose behind it. We're happy to do that job for the government, but I really think that that is their role. I'm a little disappointed that this is how we started, that we're now doing the government's job to explain their own motion to Albertans, but we'll be happy to continue to do it.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Hon. members, Standing Order 29(2)(a) is available if anyone has a brief question or a comment for the Member for Edmonton-Whitemud. I see the hon. Associate Minister of Red Tape Reduction has risen on 29(2)(a).

Mr. Hunter: Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to say that our Government House Leader did say that he would be willing to read it out, but you said that it would be not necessary. So I think that the member needs to realize that this was actually a Speaker's decision. It was not a decision that was made by the government side.

Ms Hoffman: Thanks for that clarity. That's really helpful.

The Speaker: Is there anyone else? Sounds like the Member for Edmonton-Glenora might like to add to 29(2)(a).

Seeing none, for clarity's sake just for all members, I know that many of you are new here. With respect to the Order Paper, the Order Paper is actually posted online in advance of the session. In this case it was an early Order Paper, so it was posted yesterday and was available for all members to peruse.

The regular process that takes place – the Speaker has chosen to try to engage more Albertans in our process here by tweeting it, but

it certainly isn't a requirement of the Speaker or any member to inform themselves of where the Order Paper can be found.

With that said, is there anyone else that would like to engage in this very important matter around standing orders?

Seeing none, I am prepared to call the question. The Deputy Government House Leader could close debate if he would like to do so on behalf of the Government House Leader.

Mr. Schweitzer: Mr. Speaker, I move to close debate on this and call the vote.

[Government Motion 30 carried]

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Justice and Solicitor General and the Deputy Government House Leader.

Mr. Schweitzer: I've got a few titles, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much. We've made some immense progress here this morning. It feels like June all over again in some contexts, but I'm looking forward to engaging further. I move that we adjourn debate until 1:30 this afternoon.

The Speaker: I'll clarify from the Deputy Government House Leader that he's adjourning the House until 1:30.

[Motion carried; the Assembly adjourned at 10:47 a.m.]

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