



Province of Alberta

The 30th Legislature
Second Session

Alberta Hansard

Thursday afternoon, October 29, 2020

Day 60

The Honourable Nathan M. Cooper, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of Alberta The 30th Legislature

Second 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, Hon. 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)
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)
Dreeschen, 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, 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),
Official Opposition Deputy House Leader
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, QC, Edmonton-South West (UCP),
Deputy Government House Leader
McIver, Hon. Ric, Calgary-Hays (UCP),
Deputy Government House Leader
Nally, Hon. Dale, Morinville-St. Albert (UCP),
Deputy Government House Leader

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),
Official Opposition Deputy House Leader
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, QC, Calgary-Elbow (UCP),
Deputy Government House Leader
Shandro, Hon. Tyler, QC, 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 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, QC, Clerk
Teri Cherkewich, Law Clerk
Stephanie LeBlanc, Clerk Assistant and
Senior Parliamentary Counsel
Trafton Koenig, Senior Parliamentary
Counsel

Philip Massolin, Clerk of Committees and
Research Services
Nancy Robert, Research Officer
Janet Schwegel, Director of Parliamentary
Programs

Amanda LeBlanc, Deputy Editor of *Alberta
Hansard*
Chris Caughell, 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
Tracy L. Allard	Minister of Municipal Affairs
Jason Copping	Minister of Labour and Immigration
Devin Dreesen	Minister of Agriculture and Forestry
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 Justice and Solicitor General
Ric McIver	Minister of Transportation
Dale Nally	Associate Minister of Natural Gas and Electricity
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 Jobs, Economy and Innovation
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
Martin Long	Parliamentary Secretary for Small Business and Tourism
Jeremy Nixon	Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Community and Social Services
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

Eggen
Glasgo
Gray
Jones
Phillips
Singh
Turton

Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future

Chair: Mr. Neudorf
Deputy Chair: Ms Goehring

Armstrong-Homeniuk
Barnes
Bilous
Dang
Horner
Irwin
Reid
Rosin
Stephan
Toor

Select Special Democratic Accountability Committee

Chair: Mr. Schow
Deputy Chair: Mr. Horner

Ceci
Dang
Fir
Goodridge
Nixon, Jeremy
Pancholi
Rutherford
Sigurdson, R.J.
Smith
Sweet

Standing Committee on Families and Communities

Chair: Ms Goodridge
Deputy Chair: Ms Sigurdson

Amery
Carson
Glasgo
Guthrie
Neudorf
Nixon, Jeremy
Pancholi
Rutherford
Sabir
Yao

Standing Committee on Legislative Offices

Chair: Mr. Schow
Deputy Chair: Mr. Sigurdson

Ceci
Lovely
Loyola
Nixon, Jeremy
Rutherford
Shepherd
Sweet
van Dijken
Walker

Special Standing Committee on Members' Services

Chair: Mr. Cooper
Deputy Chair: Mr. Ellis

Dang
Deol
Goehring
Goodridge
Long
Neudorf
Sabir
Walker
Williams

Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills

Chair: Mr. Ellis
Deputy Chair: Mr. Schow

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

Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections, Standing Orders and Printing

Chair: Mr. Smith
Deputy Chair: Mr. Reid

Armstrong-Homeniuk
Deol
Issik
Jones
Lovely
Loyola
Pancholi
Rehn
Reid
Renaud
Yao

Standing Committee on Public Accounts

Chair: Ms Phillips
Deputy Chair: Mr. Gotfried

Barnes
Dach
Guthrie
Reid
Renaud
Rosin
Rowswell
Schmidt
Stephan
Toor

Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship

Chair: Mr. Hanson
Deputy Chair: Member Ceci

Dach
Feehan
Fir
Ganley
Getson
Loewen
Rehn
Singh
Smith
Yaseen

Legislative Assembly of Alberta

1:30 p.m.

Thursday, October 29, 2020

[Mr. Milliken in the chair]

Prayers

The Acting Speaker: Lord, the 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 ideals but, laying aside all private interests and prejudices, keep in mind their responsibility to seek to improve the condition of all. May Your kingdom come and Your name be hallowed. Amen.

Hon. members, we will now be led in the singing of *God Save the Queen* by Ms Brooklyn Elhard. In observation of the COVID-19 public health guidelines outlined by Dr. Hinshaw, please refrain from joining us out loud this afternoon.

Ms Elhard:

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 Acting Speaker: Thank you, Brooklyn.
Please be seated.

Introduction of Visitors

The Acting Speaker: Hon. members, I am very happy to welcome back a familiar face to many in this Chamber, former Minister of Agriculture and Forestry and Member for Whitecourt-St. Anne Mr. Oneil Carlier. Welcome, and thank you very much for joining us. Please rise and receive the warm welcome from the Assembly.

Introduction of Guests

The Acting Speaker: Hon. members, joining us this afternoon are guests of the Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar visiting from the Athabasca area. Welcome to the Save Chain Lakes North Action Group. Thank you very much for joining us today. Please rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

Members' Statements

Job Creation

Mr. Dang: Mr. Speaker, this government is completely out of touch when it comes to what Albertans are going through during this pandemic and recession. Instead of a jobs plan to get Albertans back to work, all the UCP could come up with was taking their already failed jobs plan and speeding it up. That's right. The UCP took their plan, that had already caused over 50,000 job losses before the pandemic, and hit the gas. It wasn't working then, and it isn't working now. Albertans see that this government is out of ideas.

I know that many of the Albertans who have been laid off or who are facing layoffs as a result of this UCP recession were shocked to watch the Member for Lacombe-Ponoka lecturing Albertans about how good the economy was doing. He said: "There's a new day

dawning in Alberta. It's in the headlines of 2020 in Calgary." Mr. Speaker, what's actually in the headlines of Calgary is the 2,000 layoffs at Cenovus, the 2,000 layoffs at Suncor, and the list goes on and on. Yet the member maintains: "People are getting new jobs. There's a new day."

I don't know what he's read or what planet he's living on, but thousands of Albertans have lost their jobs this week alone, and the UCP bench is celebrating. This government showed out-of-work Albertans that they are as lacking in competence as they are in compassion. We have a Finance minister who, rather than doing the work to create a real jobs plan, is betting the livelihoods of millions of Albertans on his failed \$4.7 billion corporate handout.

But while the Finance minister twiddles his thumbs and hopes that his job-killing plan will work, our caucus is working on a real solution. We are speaking with Albertans. We are getting their ideas and thoughts to build and plan for a future. I encourage every single Albertan to join that conversation at albertasfuture.ca.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

Next, I believe I see the hon. Member for Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville.

Rt. Hon. Don Mazankowski

Ms Armstrong-Homeniuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a heavy heart today, but I'm honoured to speak on the passing of former MP and Deputy Prime Minister the Rt. Hon. Don Mazankowski. Don Mazankowski, or Maz, was the MP for the riding of Vegreville, where he won seven elections, starting in 1968. Serving as House leader and minister in portfolios such as Transport, Finance, and the minister responsible for Alberta, he was often called the Minister of Everything, serving as Deputy Prime Minister from 1986 to 1993 under Prime Ministers Clark and Mulroney.

The first time I met him, I was in grade 12, and I was at my awards night. I did not know that I was going to be receiving the Don Mazankowski scholarship for a student with the highest mark in trades. I was shocked and surprised when they called my name. I walked up to the mic, and I thanked him, just like I'm doing today.

Don was more than my MP; he was a friend. When I was a salon owner, Don and his wife were my clients. After appointments we discussed politics of the day, and he shared stories from the Hill. I remember watching him on TV, making sure his sideburns were even, and trying to gauge when he would be in for his next haircut.

He was a small-business owner and taught me many valuable lessons about business. I listened carefully since I know he spoke from a place of experience, which I respected. He encouraged me to get involved in politics. Looking back, he was so correct when he said that my small-business experience would provide me with a good understanding of politics. I hope he knew how right he was.

He was the chair of many boards. The one he is best known for is the Mazankowski Alberta Heart Institute. He was also recognized as an officer of the Order of Canada, Alberta Order of Excellence, as a champion in Canada and Alberta politics, and the insignia of the companion of the Order of Canada. He received honorary doctorates of law and engineering.

Canada and Alberta lost a great man that was devoted to serving. My condolences to his wife, Lorraine, and their family.

Thank you for your service, Don. May you rest in peace.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

I believe I see the hon. Member for Peace River has a member's statement.

NDP and the Alberta Federation of Labour

Mr. Williams: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, 2020 has been a tough year for Albertans. Not only have we faced a global corona pandemic; we also face the tremendous economic fallout of the predatory price war between Saudi Arabia and Russia. These factors have meant that Albertan families have faced great uncertainty, and we don't need any more.

Unfortunately, close NDP ally and union boss Gil McGowan and the NDP affiliate Alberta Federation of Labour seem intent on doing just that, creating more uncertainty and instability in the lives of Albertans. A few weeks ago Mr. McGowan launched his campaign to attack Alberta businesses. This was a contemptible attack on small businesses, and it was an attack on the workers employed there, workers that Mr. McGowan cynically claims to represent.

What was the response from Gil McGowan and his friends at the NDP? Complete silence, Mr. Speaker, even today in this Chamber. But silence speaks volumes, and in this case it screams that the NDP cares more about their radical friends at the AFL than they do about the average working Albertan. It's sad to see that a party that once stood for blue-collar workers now only stands for fancy union elite bosses.

Mr. Speaker, that isn't even the end of it. After seeing illegal strikes earlier this week, something which Mr. McGowan and the AFL participated in, we now see them advocating for illegal general strikes that would hurt your family. They want widespread disruption of Alberta's schools, health care, and government services. They're calling for chaos, and it's selfish. Again, the response from the NDP: have they condemned it? Have they disavowed Gil and the radical AFL? No. No condemnation, just silence and approval.

Mr. Speaker, the reality is that unions like the AFL and the NDP are one and the same. The AFL sits on the NDP provincial council. They even share the same treasurer. Sometimes it makes me wonder who's really in charge over there. Is it the Leader of the Opposition, or is it the AFL and their agenda of chaos?

The Acting Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

I see the hon. Member for Calgary-Mountain View has a member's statement.

Hydrogen Strategy

Ms Ganley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The UCP loves to talk a big game about their business acumen, but if they do genuinely understand business, then I can only assume that their hydrogen strategy was always intended to fail. Deciding to think about capitalizing on this opportunity in 20 years is no plan at all. Do they expect the rest of the world to stand still in the meantime? Given the minister of gas' comments that we released a hydrogen strategy "masquerading as economic development," it's clear he doesn't genuinely believe that there is potential there. He also said pretty clearly that he sees no potential to develop green hydrogen at all.

1:40

The associate minister of natural gas even went so far as to mock the suggestion that Alberta might be able to keep up with other jurisdictions. He thinks that we are so incapable in this province that it would be nearly impossible to come in less than a decade behind Australia and Norway. Alberta is in a jobs crisis right now. We have trillions of dollars in global investment looking for a renewables home right now. The associate minister of natural gas mocking the idea that Alberta could possibly keep up in the renewables space is chasing away that investment, global investment that could start creating jobs, jobs that Albertans desperately need right now.

Well, Mr. Speaker, my colleagues and I believe it is possible. We believe that Alberta can continue to be an energy leader, even in an environment where financial institutions are considering environmental impact when investing. If you believe that, too, I invite you to read our proposal and add your comments at albertasfuture.ca. Alberta can compete and be a global energy leader well into the future.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

I see the hon. Member for Calgary-Peigan has a member's statement.

Child Care

Ms Fir: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to take this opportunity to thank our early childhood educators for the great work they do in supporting the development and early learning of children and allowing parents to get back to work. They truly deserve to be commended for their efforts and contributions. After all, they work to shape the minds and futures of our youngest citizens every single day.

Mr. Speaker, last week the Member for Edmonton-Whitemud rose in support of Early Child Care Worker and Early Childhood Educator Appreciation Day. However, the member opposite rose to celebrate this day on October 22, which would be fine if we were in Ontario, but we're in Alberta, and in Alberta this day is actually celebrated in May. The Member for Edmonton-Whitemud stood in support of an appreciation day sponsored by Ontario's labour movement, proving once again that she doesn't support Albertan workers or their best interests. I would say that this mix-up is a bit unnerving, but I also can't say that I'm entirely surprised because this same member also missed an opportunity to submit a written submission during the child care consultation. Actually, it wasn't missed; it just wasn't taken.

But that's fine because this government ensured that amendments were informed through feedback from parents and caregivers, educators, operators, and licensing staff. For the first time in over a decade anyone with an interest in child care in Alberta was invited to the table to consult. In this legislation you will see informed and modernized changes that will improve the safety and quality of child care while reducing red tape on operators, educators, and parents. Although the Member for Edmonton-Whitemud continues to put her personal agenda over listening to the voices of Albertans, this government does not.

Thank you.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you.

Alberta Separatism

Member Loyola: Albertans know that on this side of the House we believe that Alberta is better off as part of Canada. While there is work to be done with the federal government so Albertans get a better deal, we know that flirting with separation is not an option. I'm happy to see that the Premier seems to agree with us. He continuously states that he is a federalist and just recently spoke about the economic problems if Canada breaks up. He has also said that he does not want to go down the political rabbit hole that will result if we pursue separatism.

But not all UCP members agree with the Premier's belief. There are members in the government caucus that are determined to bring Alberta separatism to the forefront. The Member for Cypress-Medicine Hat continuously looks for every opportunity to voice his opinion in opposition to the federation. The Member for Cypress-Medicine Hat recently claimed that Alberta will be better as a landlocked nation instead of remaining as part of Canada. This goes

against every credible opinion on the matter. He goes on to claim that an independent Alberta will be able to turn B.C. “into a proverbial East Prussia.” This is absolutely delusional.

I am not sure why this member and others are playing up the separatist ideology. Maybe because they read Donald Trump’s *The Art of the Deal* one too many times or they idealize his divisive politics. But the Premier needs to clarify to all Albertans where his party truly stands. He will be able to set the record straight next week with the motion I’m bringing forward. He’ll be able to show everyone whether he stands up for what he knows is best and stop pandering to Alberta separatists, or he will let the most radical part of his caucus dictate his party.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

Next, I believe I see the hon. Member for Fort McMurray-Lac La Biche.

French Policy Action Plan

Ms Goodridge: Merci, M. le Président. Comme secrétaire parlementaire à la francophonie albertaine je peux attester de première main le dévouement des Franco-Albertains envers nos communautés et notre province. Les francophones ont un rôle clé à jouer dans la relance économique albertaine parce que le bilinguisme commence à être un avantage économique.

Supporting a workforce that is vibrant and multilingual will help Alberta diversify trade, boost exports and imports, and create jobs and growth.

C’est pourquoi, par l’entremise de sa politique en matière de francophonie, le gouvernement de l’Alberta a pris des mesures concrètes pour mieux répondre aux besoins de cette population importante et croissante. La population albertaine francophone peut maintenant avoir accès à plus de services et de mesures de soutien en français qu’elle ne le pouvait pas il y a des années seulement.

Un nombre croissant de ressources numériques du gouvernement de l’Alberta est maintenant offert en ligne en Alberta. De plus, nous mettons davantage l’accent sur la mise en valeur et la promotion du patrimoine de la francophonie albertaine.

As important as these changes are, there is still more work to do. Today, Mr. Speaker, we will unveil the French policy action plan for the period 2020-2023.

Ce plan d’action actualisé dresse une liste d’une centaine d’initiatives nouvelles et en cours mises de l’avant par toutes les ministères de notre gouvernement. L’élaboration de nouveaux services et de mesures de soutien en français et l’amélioration de l’accès à ces services sont le fruit d’une véritable collaboration entre le gouvernement de l’Alberta et le vaste réseau d’organismes de la francophonie dans toute la province.

Je suis extrêmement fière de tout ce que nous et la francophonie avons pu réaliser ensemble, et je me réjouis à l’idée de réaliser de grandes choses à l’avenir.

Merci, M. le Président.

The Acting Speaker: Merci beaucoup pour cela.

For the benefit of all members in the Chamber today, there is also an English version of that member’s statement at the side tables should you choose to look for it there.

Next, I believe I see that the hon. Member for West Yellowhead has a member’s statement.

Alberta Newsprint Company

Mr. Long: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I’d like to stand and acknowledge the Alberta Newsprint Company, or ANC, as it is

commonly called. ANC is Alberta’s only pulp and paper mill and is located in West Yellowhead on the outskirts of Whitecourt. Alberta Newsprint celebrated their 30th anniversary this year, an important milestone for such a dedicated company. A forestry company being around for 30 years speaks volumes on the ability to adapt to changing conditions as well as to the resiliency displayed by the owners, leaders, and employees.

In 30 years ANC has contributed immensely to the sustainability of the local communities and has provided hundreds of thousands of dollars to local nonprofits. Alberta Newsprint directly employs over 200 people in my riding and supports 1,000 jobs indirectly. ANC has consistently been a top-five performer in safety metrics in the pulp and paper industry across the country. ANC’s environmental stewardship sets them apart from most companies. This was confirmed in 1998, when ANC became the first forest products company in the province to win the prestigious Emerald environmental award. They are a true leader in responsible and sustainable forest practices. In fact, over their 30 years of operation Alberta Newsprint has planted over 82 million trees.

While they continue to be a successful newsprint company, even in challenging markets, they are aware of the need to diversify in order to continue to have success for years to come. With that in mind, they have started numerous other ventures in recent years, including ANC Power, ANC Transloading, and ANC Timber. They will continue to push forward with other ways to diversify and ensure a bright future for the employees, families, and communities that rely on ANC’s success.

ANC should be looked upon as a guide for up-and-coming forestry companies due to their professional business practices, their stellar safety record, environmental stewardship, and vision for the future.

I am proud to stand here today to congratulate Alberta Newsprint on 30 years of outstanding achievements and wish them many more years of success moving forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

I see that the hon. Member for Red Deer-South has a member’s statement.

Self-reliance and Preparedness

Mr. Stephan: Thank you. I stand not in anger but to raise a voice of warning. The tragic and ironic truth is that the actions of our federal government are a threat to the freedom and prosperity of Alberta families and businesses. Canada is spending itself into oblivion, adopting socialist policies of economic self-destruction, attacking the capacity of its rainmaker partner, Alberta businesses and families, to provide for themselves and others. Socialism is an enemy of self-reliance. The public interest imperative compels Alberta to act and not to be acted upon, to seek freedom from a socialist government bankrupt of a principled vision of hope.

1:50

When the world is in commotion, there is safety in true principles to carry us through to better days, allowing us to act and not be acted upon. One such virtue is the virtue of preparation. Personal storehouses of physical preparedness increase self-reliance. Personal storehouses of spiritual preparation, available to all, increase resilience. Prudent preparation is an antidote to fear. We need not be discouraged if we are not perfectly prepared; none of us are. Because none of us are perfect, success is found in intentional effort. As we seek opportunities to improve our individual and family preparedness, we will be blessed with a peace of conscience and a capacity to encourage and serve those around us in love.

Thank you.

Oral Question Period

The Acting Speaker: I see the hon. Member for Edmonton-City Centre has risen with a question.

COVID-19 Testing

Mr. Shepherd: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. COVID cases are up, but testing is down. On Saturday we had 576 cases on 17,106 tests. On Tuesday we only did 9,978 tests, a decrease of more than 40 per cent. If we adjusted yesterday's case counts for testing levels achieved on Saturday, we'd have 739 new cases, a huge increase. To the Minister of Health. You promised to ramp up testing, but it's going in the wrong direction. What is happening, and what are you doing to fix it?

Mr. Shandro: I disagree, Mr. Speaker. It's going in exactly the right direction. We've increased our capacity with our equipment, with our supply, with our workforce. What's happened is that we have now focused on the symptomatic folks and the close contacts as we go into the flu season, to focus on those people, as well as to catch up on any backlog so that we're prepared for that part of the season, exactly what we're going to continue to do to make sure that Alberta continues to be a leader in testing on the continent.

Mr. Shepherd: I'm still confused, Mr. Speaker, because new cases are nearly double the levels that we saw early in the pandemic. The Premier's strategy to get control of this deadly virus was to increase testing and contact tracing, but now they're nowhere near their targets. He set a goal to consistently do 20,000 tests per day in mid-May. It's been five months. Yesterday we were at 50 per cent of that target. That's a failing grade. We can't afford another lockdown. Albertans want answers. Can the minister explain why we are seeing such a dramatic decline in testing at the exact time when we should in fact be testing more?

Mr. Shandro: Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to answer the question a second time. It's because right now we're not testing asymptomatic people. We're focusing on the symptomatic folks as well as the close contacts, which is the right thing to do right now, in the middle of flu season. We're going to continue to do that instead of focusing on the asymptomatic folks. Yes, there is going to be a period of time when we're going to have a small decline in the tests that are done in a given day so that we have the capacity, going forward through the flu season, to make sure that Alberta continues to be a leader in testing throughout the continent.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you.

Mr. Shepherd: What the minister is saying, Mr. Speaker, is that they reduced access and now are testing at less than half the capacity.

Testing, contact tracing, and personal responsibility: that was the Premier's strategy to get a hold on this deadly virus. Now, Albertans are doing their part, but it seems the government is not keeping pace. We know that the contact tracing system is overwhelmed. Yesterday the testing system was operating at 50 per cent of its target. How can this government expect Albertans to do their part when it seems the UCP government is failing at theirs? To the minister. You're asking Albertans to show some personal responsibility. Will you do the same and take even one small bit of personal responsibility for being five months behind schedule on your testing targets?

The Acting Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Shandro: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That is completely untrue. That is not at all what I said. We are going to continue to increase access to testing throughout the system. We are leaders on the continent here in Alberta in increasing our equipment capacity, our workforce capacity, our supply capacity to make sure that we are leaders in testing on this continent. We're going to continue to do that. When it comes to contact tracing, we are now at 800 contact tracers. We're leaders in that area as well. Prepandemic we had 50 contact tracers throughout the province. We're going to continue to hire more and more folks so we can continue to be leaders in that area as well.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you.

I see the hon. Member for Edmonton-Glenora.

COVID-19 Cases in Schools

Ms Hoffman: Yesterday I told the government about 2,400 Calgary Catholic students forced to isolate. Last night they told parents that that number is up to over 3,000 current students in isolation due to a close school contact with COVID-19. Now Edmonton Catholic schools reports that they also have more than 3,000 students self-isolating. I'll ask the minister: how many Alberta students, staff, and parents have been pushed into isolation because you've failed to put in a class size cap?

The Acting Speaker: I recognize the hon. Minister of Education.

Member LaGrange: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is unavoidable that we do have cases showing up in school, and it is very reflective of what's happening in the community. But I'm happy to share with all of the Assembly here that we have .08 per cent of students and staff actually testing positive, which means that we have 99.92 per cent who are not.

Ms Hoffman: COVID cases are growing at breakneck speeds, especially among kids and teens. Increased close contact and case counts put huge strains on testing and on tracing. Several schools have informed me that they are learning about COVID-positive cases from their parents or staff days before AHS notifies them, up to five days later, Mr. Speaker, five days where students and staff continue to be in close contact when they should be isolating and getting tested. How many Albertans is this government putting at risk by failing to give schools timely notification of confirmed COVID cases in schools?

The Acting Speaker: The hon. Minister of Education.

Member LaGrange: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to inform you that we do have a very clear and effective process to respond to cases in schools. Parents are always the first to know when there is a case in their school. We are one of the first provinces that began publicly tracking outbreaks in our schools. We're very transparent. So thank you to everyone who has been working so hard in our schools to ensure that they stay open, because we know how important that is to every parent and to the economy being able to recover.

Ms Hoffman: The minister cut per-pupil funding, meaning that Edmonton Catholic schools can't even keep up with the near-normal scenario that she thinks is happening in schools. Five days, Minister, five days where they know they have positive cases in their schools, and AHS and the minister are failing to follow up with them. It's only October. The district says that they will run out of money to keep their kids safe in their schools. Will the minister

finally commit to reversing the cuts that she brought in on per-pupil funding across Alberta schools and actually fight at the cabinet table for timely, same-day notification to schools for AHS notification about positive COVID cases? We shouldn't have to rely on parents or staff voluntarily disclosing. You're the government. Step up and be in charge.

Member LaGrange: Mr. Speaker, we do have a process in place if a school needs to temporarily shift for operational reasons to another learning scenario, and thus far it's only occurred in three to four cases. The safety of students and school staff remains the Alberta government's number one priority throughout the whole school year. We will continue to rely on the advice of Alberta's public health officials, which the opposite side continues to disregard. We are ready to make changes as needed. We are in constant contact with school authorities, and I would like to inform the member opposite that I was in contact with Edmonton public schools just yesterday.

Thank you.

The Acting Speaker: I see the hon. Member for Calgary-Mountain View has a question.

Climate Change Strategy

Ms Ganley: Mr. Speaker, the world's largest energy producers are diversifying and decarbonizing in what is a generational transition to cleaner, less emission intensive energy production and use. The time is now, the opportunity is real, and we need the jobs that come with it more than we ever did. That's why it's infuriating to hear the Member for Vermilion-Lloydminster-Wainwright deny the science of climate change in this House. Will the government denounce these reckless, irresponsible views that undermine our energy sector and endanger global investment?

The Acting Speaker: I see the hon. Government House Leader has risen.

Mr. Jason Nixon: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What was infuriating was how little the NDP supported the largest employer in this province while they were in government.

Member Loyola: Climate change denier.

Mr. Jason Nixon: Alberta's government takes climate change seriously.

Member Loyola: Answer the question. Climate change denier.

Mr. Jason Nixon: The Premier and myself as the environment minister have been clear that our government is taking climate change on. In fact, Alberta was the first province to take it on.

Member Loyola: Not everyone in your caucus.

Mr. Jason Nixon: This year alone the Alberta government in partnership with industry . . .

Member Loyola: Just like the separatists you've got hiding over there.

Mr. Jason Nixon: . . . is investing \$1.9 billion inside emission management programs and in partnership with our industry. We're focused not on pie-in-the-sky numbers like the NDP; we're focused on actually getting something done.

Point of order.

2:00

The Acting Speaker: I recognize that a point of order has been noted at 2 o'clock.

Ms Ganley: Mr. Speaker, this is serious. Thousands of families across this province have been devastated by job losses in this sector. They deserve better. The climate denial and lack of action from the members opposite are already costing us. "Investors and customers are increasingly looking for jurisdictions to have a framework in place that reconciles resource development and climate change . . . This does not yet exist here." That was Teck talking about the UCP. Why won't this government admit that their climate denial is costing jobs, over 7,000 so far?

Mr. Jason Nixon: Mr. Speaker, Alberta's government does have a climate change plan that we are working on diligently. In fact, that \$1.9 billion that I referred to is going to result in 40 megatonnes in GHG reductions by 2030 and in 45 GHG megatonne reductions by 2050. Now, compare that to the former NDP government, whose leader, on her signature policy issue of climate change, in the CBC interview could not even name one megatonne that would be reduced under the NDP plan. You know why the NDP is mad? It's because our plan includes a future for hydrocarbons, and they just want to shut down the energy industry. [some applause]

Ms Ganley: And yet they continue to applaud climate change denial.

The world's biggest banks are tying investment to environmental goals. Enbridge is now one of the largest renewable energy companies in the world. Cenovus and Husky both committed to being net zero by 2050, before the merger. This is not a fad; it is the future, and every time they deny it, they risk Alberta being left behind. One more time: will you denounce the climate denial and regressive rhetoric coming from your caucus?

Mr. Jason Nixon: Mr. Speaker, it's no secret that the NDP doesn't believe in free speech or freedom within this Chamber, but let me be very clear. Alberta's government and Alberta's Premier believe in each member of this Chamber having the right to be able to have free speech in this Chamber and to private views being expressed by MLAs in this Chamber.

But also to be clear, Alberta's government takes climate change seriously, Mr. Speaker. We are committed to meeting our environmental obligations, but we're committed to doing it in partnership with industry, unlike the socialists across from me, whose focus is on attempting to try to shut down the hydrocarbon industry inside our country. We reject that.

Mr. Schmidt: Reading, researching, recognizing bias. Mr. Speaker, critical thinking is a necessary skill for understanding and exploring complex topics, yet if the Member for Vermilion-Lloydminster-Wainwright had looked a bit deeper into the letter he cited to spread his climate change denial, he would have discovered this: it makes false statements, it contains unscientific arguments, and those who signed the letter are well-known climate deniers not actively involved in direct research on climate change causes or impacts. It's 2020. Why does the government allow and endorse this kind of climate change denial in this House?

Mr. Jason Nixon: Mr. Speaker, that hon. member having concerns with what any other member says inside this place is rich, coming from a member who once celebrated the death of a female politician inside this place.

Again, Mr. Speaker, Alberta's government is committed to meeting our environmental obligations, including to manage climate.

Our province is the first province in the country to take this on, and we're going to continue to work on technology and to innovate our way into meeting our environmental obligations. We're going to work in partnership with industry. We're getting things done, real results: as I said, \$1.9 billion invested between Alberta's government and industry this year alone. What's the NDP done?

The Acting Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar.

Mr. Schmidt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What the member opposite fails to mention is that we're also the first province to weaken climate change regulations because they believe that climate change isn't happening. They've buried internal government reports showing the dire impacts to Alberta. They've gutted environmental research and programs that reduce emissions. Their members attend antiscience conferences and share climate denial posts on Facebook. The Premier refuses to stand up to it and says there's, quote, a spectrum of views. Pretty weak. Climate change is here, it's happening, and it's harming our province. Why won't this government stop embarrassing itself and start taking climate change seriously?

Mr. Jason Nixon: Mr. Speaker, again, the hon. member and his party, who spend their time with organizations like Ecojustice and the Tides Foundation trying to stop our largest industry from succeeding and going against the people that work inside that industry, should have no business lecturing anybody inside this House on what they may attend or what they may speak to.

Again, to be very, very clear, Alberta's government is investing significantly in managing GHG emissions, but we're doing it our way, not the NDP's way, which was to tax Albertans as they brought their kids to hockey games. Instead, we're focused on working with our largest industry to find innovative ways to be able to solve the climate change dilemma.

The Acting Speaker: The hon. member with his second supplemental.

Mr. Schmidt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, because of their way, the Teck project failed, and 7,000 people who would have had jobs don't have jobs today.

Here are two opinions on climate change. Quote: climate change is science and economics; we know climate change is happening; clearly, we all have a shared interest in finding solutions. Also, quote: some folks in northern Russia think climate change is absolutely wonderful; they've never been so warm in their life, and they're happy about it. One of those quotes is from a CEO of a multibillion-dollar energy firm employing tens of thousands of Albertans. The other one, embarrassingly enough, is a member from that side of the House. Can the government tell us who's right and who's wrong?

Mr. Jason Nixon: Mr. Speaker, I can tell you who's wrong. The NDP is wrong. If you want to know why energy projects have failed inside this province over the last few years, you can look right there at the Official Opposition, people who say they represent Albertans but then came here and protested against their very jobs. Their own leader spoke against Energy East, spoke against Keystone, spoke against Northern Gateway. They protest pipelines. They've tried to stop our product from getting to market. They have no business lecturing anybody. That hon. member's goal is clear – he makes it clear in this House every day – to try to shut down industry. We've got a different approach.

The Acting Speaker: I see the hon. Member for Calgary-Klein has a question.

Child Care

Mr. Jeremy Nixon: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Child care is an integral part of the Alberta economic recovery because quality child care will get Alberta parents back to work, and it's going to keep kids safe. This past week the opposition introduced a supposed child care plan that would bring Quebec-style child care into Alberta. Given that this plan is not a plan that Albertans even asked for and given that 60 per cent of child care operators are small-business owners who would be put out of business through this NDP plan, can the Minister of Children's Services please update this House as to how her plan for child care actually meets the needs of Alberta families?

The Acting Speaker: I see the hon. Minister of Children's Services has risen.

Ms Schulz: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to my colleague for the question. My colleagues and I are undertaking transformational change to make sure that government works for Albertans, and that's exactly what we're doing in Children's Services. For example, earlier this year 28,000 Albertans received an increase in their child care subsidy for their child care costs, with some low-income families paying as low as \$13 a day in the centre of their choice. We've also directed continuous supports to these centres so that they can make it through this difficult time with the pandemic and stay afloat and stay safe for parents. I'm incredibly proud of the work we've done.

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

Mr. Jeremy Nixon: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the minister for her diligent work on this. Given that just yesterday the Minister of Children's Services introduced the early learning and child care act in this House and given that, among many improvements, this legislation will modernize and streamline child care in Alberta, to the Minister of Children's Services: please update this House as to how the early learning and child care act will help support our economic recovery and families.

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

Ms Schulz: Absolutely, Mr. Speaker. The early learning and child care act increases flexibility and reduces red tape. What that means for child care centres is that every single day they can focus their resources on the kids and families who need them, not on things like paying for storage units full of government-mandated paperwork. Instead of trying to mandate how 60 per cent of child care operators across this province run their business, we are proposing common-sense proposals like allowing siblings to be together in a centre or a room. We're giving operators flexibility to make decisions that work best for the kids they care for and the parents they support.

The Acting Speaker: The hon. member, with his second supplemental.

Mr. Jeremy Nixon: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and again thank you to the minister. Given that reducing red tape is extremely important, something I campaigned on and given that parents need to know that their children are safe and that they have high-quality child care centres, again, something that I talked to constituents of Calgary-Klein about, to the Minister of Children's Services: what measures are you taking in legislation, regulation, or policy to ensure excellent child care is available to all parents across this province?

2:10

The Acting Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms Schulz: Thank you so much, Mr. Speaker, and thank you again to the member for the excellent question. This is another incredibly important part of our plan. We are embedding quality directly into the legislation through guiding principles and matters to be considered. These include the safety, well-being, and development of children, the inclusion of all children, and many others. Programs will be required to outline how they're following these guiding principles in their program plan, and licensing officers will be able to ensure that they can see these plans in action. This means high-quality child care will become the norm right across the province.

Automobile Insurance Premiums

Mr. Carson: Insurance premiums keep rising while it gets harder for Albertans to make it by and meet their basic needs. Today is the day where the Finance minister claims that he will fix auto insurance, which is a good thing given that rates have shot up 24 per cent since he took office. Some Albertans are paying literally hundreds more to keep their cars on the road due to the terrible management of that minister. To the minister: can you promise Albertans that the changes you introduce today will drop insurance costs by at least 24 per cent for Albertans? Will you fully correct the damage that you have caused?

The Acting Speaker: I see the Minister of Finance has risen to respond.

Mr. Toews: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Automobile insurance premiums are too high in this province, and in fact it's because the members opposite, when they were governing, did nothing to deal with the fundamental causes of increased automobile insurance premiums. I will be presenting and introducing measures that this government will take that will deal with the systemic issues that are driving costs higher. This government will have the courage to deal with this issue.

Mr. Carson: Well, given that yesterday and just now the minister said the rate cap of 5 per cent introduced by our NDP government was the real problem and given that it was only once he removed that cap that insurance rates skyrocketed by 24 per cent and given that the minister's inability to understand basic numbers makes me question whether he should really even be a minister – it's simple; 5 per cent increases are smaller than 24 per cent increases, Minister – to this same minister: do you understand that? Do you get the harm that you've caused my constituents and so many other Albertans who need to keep their cars on the road?

Mr. Toews: Mr. Speaker, the members opposite are for two things: rate caps – we know that – and they're also for a nationalized automobile insurance system. We have a province to the west of us that delivers both. According to the Fraser Institute, British Columbia's Attorney General described the state of government-owned Insurance Corporation of B.C. as a dumpster fire. The cap on rates has caused ICBC to lose \$1.3 billion in 2018 and \$1.2 billion in 2019. The member's recommendations belong in a dumpster fire.

Mr. Carson: Well, given that this minister's biggest contribution to Alberta's economy is a failed \$4.7 billion handout that has created zero jobs and given that insurance companies now stand to net nearly a billion dollars in profit this year while Albertans I'm hearing from don't have two pennies to rub together, Mr. Speaker,

Minister, for the record of this House, are you here to represent Albertans, or are you simply just a mouthpiece for insurance CEOs and backroom lobbyists?

Mr. Toews: Mr. Speaker, the members opposite had four years to deal with the insurance issue, and they never did. They put a Band-Aid solution on the problem instead of dealing with the fundamental issues. As a result of that, our government will bring in real reforms that will result in a reduction of insurance premiums.

Support for Small Businesses Affected by COVID-19

Member Loyola: According to a new CFIB survey the Alberta small-business owners have the least amount of faith in their government compared to all provinces across Canada. Only 35 per cent of small-business owners surveyed felt that this government has done enough to balance business and health concerns around preventing a second wave. To the minister. Your government didn't support small businesses when COVID-19 first hit Alberta, and they still aren't now. Now, before you turn to your dried-up talking points, remember we actually called on you for a range of small-business supports during this pandemic. Will you now implement what we demanded on behalf of small businesses?

The Acting Speaker: The hon. Minister of Finance has risen to respond.

Mr. Toews: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Many small businesses are challenged right now with Alberta's economy. The reality is that we're facing a global pandemic within our borders as well as the largest contraction in the global economy since the Great Depression. That is why this government immediately moved to provide relief through the WCB program, deferring all premium costs till 2021 and covering 50 per cent of premiums for small and mid-sized companies. That's also why we introduced the small-business relaunch grant.

Member Loyola: You let Ottawa take the lead.

The Acting Speaker: Hon. member. I see the hon. Member for Edmonton-Ellerslie has a question. You were very quick to jump onto it.

Member Loyola: Given that Alberta is also dead last in the country when it comes to revenue returning to pre-COVID levels, with 79 per cent of small businesses reporting that their revenues have not returned to normal, and given that 59 per cent of small businesses are reporting that they're losing money every day they're open and given that 17 per cent of small-business owners are currently considering closing or filing for bankruptcy due to COVID-19, to the minister. Big corporations got a \$4.7 billion handout from your government. Why do small businesses only qualify for a couple of thousand dollars? Do you just not care, or are you really . . .

The Acting Speaker: I see the hon. Minister of Finance has risen.

Mr. Toews: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Alberta's economy was challenged because of four years of mismanagement by the members opposite. Again, that's why we immediately brought in measures, relief through our Workers' Compensation Board program. We also brought in the small-business relaunch grant. We've also been the first province to introduce an economic recovery plan, announced in June. This is a detailed plan that will ensure that we can attract disproportionately investment into this province, create jobs and opportunities. It includes a significant infrastructure investment that will create tens of thousands of jobs.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

I see the hon. member has risen with his second supplemental.

Member Loyola: Given that 53 per cent of small-business owners have reported to have already seen a further drop in revenue because of the potential second wave and given that our NDP opposition believes we need to do more to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and prevent having businesses forced to shut down again, we've called for more contact tracers, more testing, and faster testing results. To the minister: will you at least try to convince the Minister of Health and the Premier to take the second wave of COVID-19 seriously? Are you really going to sleepwalk into the second wave and risk more businesses closing for good?

The Acting Speaker: I see the hon. Minister of Health has risen to respond.

Mr. Shandro: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Isn't it rich that the hon. member is pretending to care about small businesses and then turning around and calling for blanket restrictions that would disrupt those very businesses. We are taking measures in this province that are targeted, that are focused, that are based on evidence – not based on hysteria but based on evidence – that would minimize business disruption, as opposed to the NDP, which would ask for blanket restrictions that would disrupt businesses throughout the province.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

I see the hon. Member for Vermilion-Lloydminster-Wainwright has risen with a question.

Provincial Diploma Examination Exemptions

Mr. Rowswell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, students are back in the classroom, where they learn best, and getting some much-needed in-person social interaction with their peers and teachers. These successes are being overshadowed by the combined anxiety produced by upcoming diploma exams and the COVID pandemic. Recently the Minister of Education announced that the students will have the ability to choose whether or not to do their diploma exams this year. To the Minister of Education: what does this decision process look like, and are parents to be included in this decision as well?

The Acting Speaker: The Minister of Education has risen to respond.

Member LaGrange: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for the question. As we continue to listen to students, parents, and education partners, it has become clear that some students just may not feel comfortable or be in the best position to write exams at this time. As such, I made the decision to allow students and their parents to choose if they write diploma exams in October and November. Students should talk to their parents to come to a decision that works best for their family. If a family chooses to not have a student write the exam, all they need to do is inform their school division prior to the exam date, and they will be granted an exemption.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

The hon. Member for Vermilion-Lloydminster-Wainwright has it.

Mr. Rowswell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the minister for the answer. Given that diploma exams are a very important part of a student's educational career and given that in recent years these have been shifted from being worth 50 per cent

of the student's grade down to 30 per cent and given that this still constitutes a significant portion of the student's total mark, to the same minister: what effect will choosing not to take the diploma exam have on a student's grade?

2:20

Member LaGrange: We know these are challenging times, Mr. Speaker, and that's why we want to ensure that students and their parents have the flexibility to make the best decision for their own situation in this exam session. If the choice is made not to write a diploma exam, students will receive an exemption. This means they will receive their course mark as their final mark, and they will not face any academic repercussions. We are continuing to monitor the situation, and we will make decisions on future iterations of diploma exams prior to their admission.

The Acting Speaker: The hon. member has the call.

Mr. Rowswell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you again to the minister. Given that grade 12 students rely on doing well on their diploma exams to gain admission into postsecondary education and given that applying to attend a university or technical college comes with its own stress and anxiety, to the same minister: are postsecondary institutions aware of these optional diplomas, and if so, how will these institutions view this during their deliberations on who to accept?

The Acting Speaker: The hon. minister.

Member LaGrange: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know this is a very serious question on the minds of students. Postsecondary institutions are aware of the changes that we've made for the November-December iteration of the exams. The U of A and the U of C have both stated that they will accept the final grade that appears on the student's transcript regardless of if they have written the diploma exam or not. Admission policies are set by postsecondary institutions, and I would encourage students to check with their schools that they are applying to for any additional information on their admittance process. I don't want to confuse anyone, so make sure that they check that out. I can assure you that my department is working . . .

The Acting Speaker: I see the hon. Member for Edmonton-North West has a question.

Postsecondary Education Funding

Mr. Eggen: Mr. Speaker, over the last year this government has implemented funding cuts in postsecondary amounting to hundreds of millions of dollars. These devastating cuts are causing chaos for faculty, staff, and students alike, yet the government keeps saying that they're actually creating jobs in this sector. This is pure, unadulterated baloney. To the Minister of Jobs, Economy and Innovation: can you state clearly for the record how many jobs have been cut in postsecondary since the UCP took power, and how can you explain how this fits into your so-called jobs plan?

Mr. Nicolaidis: Mr. Speaker, the only thing that is pure, unadulterated baloney are the things that come out of the member's mouth. You know, last week the member opposite made representations in this House about the position of Olds College with respect to our government's agenda. In response, the president of Olds College actually e-mailed me and said, quote, that his comments are categorically misplaced and inaccurate. Now, I can't, of course, use unparliamentary language in this House and call anyone a liar, but I think the facts speak for themselves.

Mr. Eggen: Well, let me tell you, Minister, that the number of jobs lost in postsecondary is approaching 4,000 people so far. Given that this government keeps telling us that they are creating jobs and given that in postsecondary all that we're seeing are these reannouncements of funds that we already saw in the last budget and given that there are no new jobs that are actually going to be created by these microscopic announcements, to the same minister: will you admit here and now that the tiny sprinkling of funding that you're putting back into postsecondary is merely there to distract from the destruction that your government has caused through cuts?

The Acting Speaker: The hon. Minister of Advanced Education.

I would remind all members that you cannot do indirectly what you are not allowed to do directly in this House.

Please, the hon. minister.

Mr. Nicolaides: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We're working very closely with our postsecondary institutions to modernize postsecondary programming across the province. We have a number of challenges. We have an inefficient system that we're working with our institutions to improve. As well, of course, the top priority is to ensure that we have a system that delivers the skills and competencies that our students need when they graduate so that they can find successful careers. We're working through Alberta 2030, which is a plan to develop a 10-year strategic plan for the postsecondary system to ensure that we address the challenges that those members neglected to address.

The Acting Speaker: The hon. member with his second supplemental.

Mr. Eggen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, given that the postsecondary system is making cuts to programming not to modernize, because this minister took the money away, and given that job losses in postsecondary put economic recovery of this province at risk given that the job uncertainty in the sector will drive talent out of the province as well – we're talking about a brain drain – why don't you stand in this House right now and replace the funding that you've cut from postsecondary before you ruin advanced education for an entire generation?

The Acting Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Nicolaides: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to follow up on another point as well. You know, last week the Leader of the Opposition and the member himself as well made comments suggesting that over a billion dollars had been cut from Advanced Education. I'm still searching, but I can't find the billion dollars, so maybe the member opposite can tell me where it is. You know, I've searched everywhere. I looked in my desk drawer. I've looked through all the budget documents. I might have to put it on the back of a milk carton.

Unfortunately, all we continue to see from those members, Mr. Speaker, is misinformation, inaccuracies, fear, and division. We will improve and strengthen our postsecondary system to deliver better results.

South Edmonton Hospital Construction Project

Mr. Dang: The long-needed hospital in south Edmonton was postponed by this UCP government. This hospital, if this government ever actually builds it, will be the first new facility to open since the Grey Nuns in 1988. Despite all the evidence that the Edmonton region is in desperate need of a new hospital, this government chose to delay the hospital, so the earliest it will be

built is 2030. To the minister: since we are in a recession and tens of thousands of Albertans are looking for good-paying jobs and this crucial project would have been shovel-ready soon, did you even consider reversing the delays and starting construction as soon as possible?

The Acting Speaker: I see the Minister of Energy has risen to respond.

Mrs. Savage: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the Minister of Infrastructure I can advise that there are 23 health facility projects under way throughout Alberta. Eight are in construction, and 15 are in planning and design. We're getting infrastructure projects done. We need them now more than ever during the COVID pandemic and as we need jobs to be created throughout.

Thank you.

Mr. Dang: Given that the minister basically just said that they are ignoring south and southwest Edmonton and given that this government has attacked our public health care system at every chance they got and given that this government has already prioritized rushing a private orthopaedic surgical facility over building the new south Edmonton hospital and given that at the UCP convention they approved a policy to create an American-style health care system in Alberta, to the minister: what morsel of evidence do you think my constituents have to think that you will not postpone this hospital again or even cancel or possibly privatize the hospital altogether?

Mr. Shandro: This is again, Mr. Speaker, the NDP's continued campaign of disinformation when it comes to health. It's so disappointing. None of that was true.

But, look, when we're talking about public funding of the universal health system, like we have here, I'll point out that with the treatment system that we used to have under the NDP, you could only get treatment if you were in either Alberta Works or if you were rich or if you had to mortgage your house. Now one hundred per cent of our beds are publicly funded, Mr. Speaker. That's what the UCP government is committed to doing, supporting our publicly funded universal health care system.

Mr. Dang: Given that the minister has completely ignored questions about the south Edmonton hospital and given that the Alberta government still has a sign on location at the hospital build site, where it says that construction is going to start in 2020, and given that there are only two months left in 2020 and myself or any of my constituents have not seen any form of construction on that property, to the minister: since my constituents have no guarantee as to when construction will begin, will you at least take down that embarrassing sign, or do you simply live to embarrass yourself?

The Acting Speaker: I see the hon. Minister of Energy has risen.

Mrs. Savage: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the Infrastructure minister we are building dozens, hundreds of infrastructure projects across Alberta, getting people back to work. [interjections] Billions of dollars.

The Acting Speaker: Hon. members, we've had the question; let's hear the answer.

Mrs. Savage: Yes, Mr. Speaker. We can hear them over there cackling and heckling and hissing and howling. But while they're doing that and disrupting the Chamber, we're getting people back to work.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you.

I see the hon. Member for Central Peace-Notley has risen.

Skilled Trades

Mr. Loewen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Alberta recovery plan promises to revitalize our economy, attract investment, and get Albertans back to work. We all know that in order to grow the economy and to be attractive to investors, we need an educated workforce that includes, of course, an educated, trained, and skilled workforce in the trades. To the minister: how does support for the trades and expansion of trades education fit in with our Alberta recovery plan?

The Acting Speaker: I see the hon. Minister of Advanced Education has risen.

Mr. Nicolaides: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's great to have a very intelligent question on advanced education once in a while.

With respect to trades education and our economic recovery plan, of course, as you know, our government has put forward a comprehensive economic recovery plan designed to help get Albertans back to work. An important pillar of that is building skills for jobs; that is, to ensure that our students and our economy have the skill set that is needed. A critical component of that has to do with promoting and developing skilled trades. We recognize that we have an upcoming shortage in skilled trades professionals, and we're working to address that proactively.

2:30

Mr. Loewen: Given that our government has at length voiced its support for the trades and made it a major campaign commitment and a major part of our recovery plan and given that more trade opportunities means more interest and higher enrolment in the trades, which are needed to grow our economy and serve the needs of Albertans, to the minister: are there extra supports for the trades as part of our campaign commitment to increase trades opportunities?

The Acting Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Nicolaides: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The short answer for the member is: yes, there are a number of supports that our government has implemented to support postsecondary students through trades and apprenticeship programming. For example, we've convened an apprenticeship task force, which has just completed their report and provided it to me, that I'll be making public very soon. We've also invested over \$10 million to Women Building Futures, as well as further \$10 million to Careers: the Next Generation to help more young Albertans enjoy opportunities in trades-related programming in their K to 12 education, and there's more.

Mr. Loewen: Given that trade colleges are an integral part of rural Alberta, especially the Peace Country, and given that it is rural Alberta where many of the trades jobs are located, so educating tradespeople in those rural areas is not only important but common sense, to the minister: do small rural colleges like Fairview College have an important role to play in our commitment to the trades?

The Acting Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Nicolaides: Thank you again, Mr. Speaker. Our small rural colleges have an incredibly critical and vital role to play in the economic recovery of the province. Of course, our colleges serve very important roles in the postsecondary system. One of their critical roles is to ensure adequate access opportunities for local communities and subsequently to ensure that the local community

has the skills that are needed for regional economic growth. As we move forward in our economic recovery, ensuring that our colleges will play a role in that will be essential to our long-term plan.

The Acting Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Whitemud has the call.

Child Care (continued)

Ms Pancholi: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The new early learning and child care amendment act is smoke and mirrors. There are no big changes here. It's just the continuing failure of the UCP to do what's needed for economic recovery. The number one issue educators, operators, and parents asked for in this legislation is to ensure that the quality of early learning is protected. The act only references early learning once, in its name. The quality standards that this government threw away when it cancelled accreditation don't show up here, and what is there is not mandatory, is unenforceable, and is not supported. To the minister. We know you don't care about affordability like thousands of working parents in Alberta. Is quality early learning also not important to you?

The Acting Speaker: I see the hon. Minister of Children's Services has risen.

Ms Schulz: Thank you so much, Mr. Speaker. We are so excited to introduce the new early learning and child care act. For the first time in over a decade – yes, I said over a decade – we conducted a broad consultation with parents and caregivers, early childhood educators, child care operators and directors, licensing staff, and all Albertans with an interest in this topic. We are embedding the need for high quality directly into legislation while protecting the health and safety of children, increasing transparency for parents, reducing red tape for operators, and providing better guidance for parents looking to find child care. We're doing exactly as operators and educators asked us to do and are so glad to move child care in Alberta forward.

Ms Pancholi: Well, given that one of the minister's main talking points is that this bill will allow overnight child care but that nothing in the current act or regulations actually prevents programs from doing that right now and nothing in Bill 39 actually addresses that and given that overnight care without adequate financial support to centres to staff it properly or without addressing the needs of the children is meaningless and potentially harmful and given that this bill still doesn't address the primary barrier to accessing child care in Alberta, which is affordability, when will the minister finally listen to Albertans and take real action to provide access to safe, affordable child care so working parents can get back to work?

Ms Schulz: Mr. Speaker, the most important thing we can do to ensure that child care is able to get Alberta working parents back to work is to listen to operators, whether that's in preschool, out of school care, child care, or day homes. I will say that the previous regulations prevented 24-hour-a-day child care, which is something that we were asked for specifically in communities that have a need for shift-working parents, so we made sure that the act now enables that to happen.

The Acting Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Whitemud.

Ms Pancholi: Thank you. Again, Bill 39 doesn't even address overnight care.

Given that we need to invest in our children today because they will lead us tomorrow and given that to get families of young

children, particularly women, back to work, child care and early learning is key and given that this bill proves this government is not listening to operators, educators, and parents about the need for real investment in quality, affordable, and accessible early learning and given that I've put forward a proposal at albertasfuture.ca that we believe far better meets the needs of Alberta working families and economic recovery for all, Minister, are you really trying to suggest that this empty bill is an adequate plan for early learning and child care in Alberta?

Ms Schulz: Mr. Speaker, the member opposite put forward a rinse-and-repeat plan that we've seen not once, not twice, but now three times. If we want to know how Alberta operators are feeling about this introduced legislation, please let me quote Tricia Cunningham, executive director of SIGIS Child Care Society, who said:

I can definitively say that the updates to the Child Care Licensing Act will improve the safety and quality of child care while decreasing unnecessary burdens on parents and operators. These changes are much-needed and very welcome in child care.

I ask the member opposite to put politics aside and work better to support working parents across Alberta.

Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped

Ms Renaud: This month I chose to live on a typical budget of an AISH recipient, just over \$1,600 for 30 days. This government brags that AISH is the most generous benefit in Canada, which is patently untrue, as they defend their cuts and reductions to 70,000 Albertans who rely on these benefits to survive. By the end of the month I only had \$19, like many other recipients. They, on the other hand, have to use credit they can't afford, pawn possessions, or take high-interest loans. Since the UCP took away the cost-of-living increase through deindexing, it's gotten worse. Will the minister acknowledge these facts and commit to reindexing AISH immediately?

The Acting Speaker: I see the Minister of Children's Services has risen to respond.

Ms Schulz: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. AISH funding levels have not changed, and benefits and eligibility remain the same. Our government has in fact, as the member opposite suggested, changed the date AISH payments are made every month to ensure that these payments are provided on the same day each month. We will continue to make changes to make this program more efficient, but benefits and eligibility have not changed.

Ms Renaud: Given that this Premier thinks that some people living on \$1,600 a month is too high but this Premier lives on \$16,000 a month, 10 times what an AISH recipient does, and given that this Premier is actually taking away the cost-of-living increase for AISH, clawing back federal emergency benefits during a pandemic, will the Premier explain: why is he so fixated on taking away supports from people who live on one-tenth of what he does? Will he at least stop clawing back federal emergency benefits from disabled Albertans and their spouses?

Ms Schulz: Mr. Speaker, our government continues to provide supports for those who need it most in our province. Similar to Children's Services, for those who are on programs within Community and Social Services, individuals who have specific needs also have caseworkers who they can contact to help access supports to meet their individual needs, so we'd encourage them to reach out.

Ms Renaud: Given that I understand that it can be hard to answer these questions, I would suggest the minister put down the notes and listen to the question because it's an important one. [interjections]

The Acting Speaker: I hesitate to interrupt the hon. member. However, I will give her an opportunity to restart her question because I could not hear the question.

Ms Renaud: Given that this government has upended the lives of AISH recipients by changing payment dates – essentially, they moved it three days. When you're living on very little, another three days is not manageable. They are not making it. My question is simple. What are you doing to ensure that every single AISH recipient is paid on time so there are no NSF fees, there are no eviction notices, and they can eat for the last few days of the month?

Ms Schulz: Mr. Speaker, as I've said before, AISH funding levels as well as benefits and eligibility have not changed. The payment date change was made to ensure that the payments are provided on the same day each and every month. We've also improved online access to applications, streamlined the process to make it easier for those who need these programs to navigate, and also provided personal support to help ensure clients know how to complete their applications.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

I see the hon. Member for Calgary-South East has risen.

2:40 Educational Curriculum Review and Redesign

Mr. Jones: Thank you, and well done, Mr. Speaker. The provincial curriculum is critical to the success of our students as it defines what students are expected to know, understand, and do in each subject and grade. School authorities and teachers have the freedom to determine how students achieve the learning outcomes set by the curriculum, utilizing their professional judgment to select appropriate resources and supports for their students and schools. Can the Minister of Education discuss the role the advisers she has mentioned previously are playing in the development of the curriculum?

The Acting Speaker: The Minister of Education has risen to respond.

Member LaGrange: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for the question. To support the development of the K to 12 curriculum, Alberta Education brought on 17 advisers to provide recommendations and advice based on their expertise to build upon the work already done. These individuals have expertise in areas such as literacy, mathematics, social studies, financial literacy, French, language arts, and science. There were also four indigenous elders involved, providing advice on indigenous content. These advisers are only providing recommendations. They are not writing the curriculum.

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

Mr. Jones: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the minister for her answer. Given that Albertans have had concerns with previous curricula, their outcomes, and how they were developed and given that the current process has included consultations to hear a wider range of perspectives from parents, teachers, and subject matter experts and given that the draft curriculum will be moving forward to curriculum working groups this fall, can the minister

discuss what the curriculum working group is and their role in the curriculum development process?

Member LaGrange: Absolutely. Happy to, Mr. Speaker. The curriculum working group is made up of current teachers, including indigenous teachers and francophone teachers, and they will be supported by my Alberta Education staff. A draft version of the curriculum will be brought to them this fall for their review, and the draft will be further refined prior to public distribution, which will occur early next year. We value the role teachers play in our education system, and the curriculum working group is an important step in our curriculum development process. I'm happy to share that with everyone.

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

Mr. Jones: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you again to the minister. Given that once the drafting process is complete, a number of schools across the province will have the opportunity to pilot the draft curriculum through a classroom validation process, can the minister please highlight the process curriculum development will be moving forward through following the curriculum working group?

The Acting Speaker: The hon. minister.

Member LaGrange: Yes. After the curriculum is reviewed by the curriculum working group and the draft is further refined, we will be releasing a draft K to 6 curriculum for public engagement in early '21. Following public engagement, schools would begin piloting a new K to 6 curriculum in September, and by September 2022 we anticipate that every K to 6 student will be learning from our new curriculum. While the pilot is ongoing, Alberta Education will be continuing to refine the elementary curriculum while also developing a new curriculum for later grades. I'm happy to bring this forward. This is a great news story for Alberta Education.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

That concludes Oral Question Period. In 30 seconds or less we will return to the daily rotation.

[Mr. Hanson in the chair]

Presenting Petitions

The Acting Speaker: The Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar has a petition.

Mr. Schmidt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to present a petition organized by the Save Chain Lakes North Action Group, who are in the gallery today. This petition has signatures from over 1,500 Albertans from communities like Stony Plain, Athabasca, Smith, Boyle, and Slave Lake, just to name a few. The petition urges the government of Alberta to

- 1) halt the removal of any provincial parks, recreation areas and natural areas from Alberta's parks system or any of the associated closures, sales or transfers of infrastructure at these areas to third party managers, as announced by the Alberta government on March 3, 2020.
- 2) keep Chain Lakes, Lawrence Lake, and Fawcett Lake Provincial Recreation Areas fully open within the parks system.
- 3) keep Alberta's parks publicly managed, open, and protected under the Provincial Parks Act so that recreation areas are available for everyone to enjoy and appreciate nature thereby enhancing health and well-being, and honouring the ancestors who cared enough to preserve these beautiful natural areas for future generation.

Introduction of Bills

The Acting Speaker: The hon. President of Treasury Board and Minister of Finance.

Bill 41

Insurance (Enhancing Driver Affordability and Care) Amendment Act, 2020

Mr. Toews: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 41, which is proposing several amendments to the Insurance Act specifically related to automobile insurance.

The proposed amendments are part of a larger package of short-term measures intended to stabilize costs, enhance medical benefits, and modernize the delivery of auto insurance to Albertans.

Mr. Speaker, Albertans as well as the auto insurance industry have waited far too long for some real action on issues that are hurting the entire marketplace. Our government is making smart moves to stabilize costs in the system and make auto insurance more affordable for Albertans.

Among the changes proposed by this bill are introduction of direct compensation for property damage, which should lead to better customer service as Albertans needing to repair vehicles after collision will be dealing with their own auto insurers. Changes to the prejudgment interest payable in bodily injury claims will relieve some of the cost pressures in the system without significantly impacting injured claimants. This bill also includes provisions to limit the number of experts that can be used in costly bodily injury claims arising from collisions.

Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to move Bill 41 for first reading.

Thank you.

[Motion carried; Bill 41 read a first time]

Tabling Returns and Reports

The Acting Speaker: The Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar.

Mr. Schmidt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With your indulgence, I have two tablings today. My first tabling is the requisite five copies of documents containing the names of people, 214 individuals, who support the petition that I tabled earlier.

Then my second tabling is the requisite five copies of an annotated version of the letter referenced by the Member for Vermilion-Lloydminster-Wainwright yesterday that contains comments from actual scientists refuting the information in the letter.

The Acting Speaker: The Member for Edmonton-Glenora has a tabling.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have the requisite number of copies, that I'll be happy to leave on the table on my way out, of letters sent from the chief superintendent to all Calgary families under the Calgary Catholic school division talking about the district having 3,000 students and staff isolating, which is significantly more than the update at the same time last week.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you.

Do any other members wish to make a tabling at this point? The Member for Vermilion-Lloydminster-Wainwright.

Mr. Rowsell: Yeah. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to table the requisite number of copies of a report I mentioned in my member's statement yesterday about the climate emergency.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you, Member.

Any other members with tablings? The Member for Drumheller-Stettler.

Mr. Horner: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to table the requisite five copies of two separate documents. The first document is an article from the *Edmonton Journal* by David Staples entitled *Lockdowns Will Cause 10 Times More Harm to Human Health than COVID-19 Itself, Says Infectious Disease Expert*, that I referenced in my statement on Tuesday this week.

The second is a *Journal* article I also quoted from written by Dr. Ari Joffe, MD, of the Stollery children's hospital, entitled *COVID-19: Rethinking the Lockdown Groupthink*.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you.

I'd just like to remind all members that if you have a tabling, please place it on the table so that the pages don't have to come around and grab them.

Ladies and gentlemen, we're at points of order. I believe there was a point of order raised at 2 o'clock, and it has been withdrawn.

We are at Ordres du jour. I always wanted to say that.

Orders of the Day

Government Bills and Orders Second Reading

Bill 39

Child Care Licensing (Early Learning and Child Care) Amendment Act, 2020

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

Ms Schulz: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to move second reading of Bill 39, Child Care Licensing (Early Learning and Child Care) Amendment Act, 2020.

Mr. Speaker, child care is an important part of Alberta's economic recovery, and updated child care legislation will ensure operators will be able to better meet the needs of children and families across this province. Quote: it's the best news I've ever heard.

I've worked in child care for 32 years, and never before have I been consulted – and listened to – in the way that I have by this government and this Minister... These changes are much-needed and very welcome in child care.

Mr. Speaker, these are just a couple of things we heard from Tricia Cunningham, the executive director at SIGIS daycare society in St. Albert yesterday. As the minister introducing this legislation, hearing those words was incredibly humbling.

2:50

For the first time in more than a decade I and my colleague the MLA for Grande Prairie and now Minister of Municipal Affairs consulted with parents and caregivers, early childhood educators, child care, out of school care and preschool operators and directors, day home providers as well as all Albertans with an interest in child care. We truly took the time to make sure that their feedback is reflected in this bill, and it's why so many operators and educators are now stepping up to support it. These include, Mr. Speaker, Shannon McArthur, the owner and director at Ponoka Child Care Centre, who said, quote: the Ministry of Children's Services is doing a fantastic job getting feedback from child care operators and educators; it's great to see our government actually consulting with the community prior to making legislative changes. End quote.

Mr. Speaker, it's clear that consultation with our child care, day home, and preschool partners was long overdue, and this honest and purposeful feedback really, truly helped us develop the changes in

the act but also the regulations and policies that will come to support it.

Mr. Speaker, much has changed since the last amendments were made to this piece of legislation. One of the things we heard again and again was how we could bring this legislation into 2020. It was clear to me that through safe and thoughtful decisions we can improve the quality of child care for children in Alberta. Amendments in the act centre on quality child care; protecting the health and safety of children; increasing transparency, accessibility, and flexibility; reducing red tape; and providing better guidance for parents when choosing child care.

One priority for me, Mr. Speaker, was to balance the need for simplified and streamlined legislation while maintaining safety and quality standards. This included taking the most important elements of accreditation, the focus on high-quality child care, and embedding them into legislation without all the subjectivity and piles of paperwork. The theory and principles of accreditation are incredibly valuable, but the process was time consuming, and operators found they were spending more time filling binders with paper than spending that time with children.

Mr. Speaker, in this legislation you'll see that commitment to quality through guiding principles and matters to be considered. From the importance of high-quality programming to the inclusion of children of all needs and abilities, this is modern legislation.

Mr. Speaker, Arlene McMillan, agency co-ordinator for Northalta Family Day Care Service, had this to say. Quote: I'm pleased to see the amendments to the Child Care Licensing Act will embed standards of accreditation such as child care staff, family, community, and diversity as guiding principles; the principles will continue to support child care educators in the delivery of quality programming in approved child care.

Mr. Speaker, we've also renamed the act to further emphasize the importance of early childhood learning and development and to acknowledge that child care workers are much more than caregivers; they are educators and experts in shaping young minds.

Mr. Speaker, one director, Harman Kaur of Wheaton-Penney Childcare Centre, said, quote: this demonstrates that early childhood development is critical for the long-term success of children and that it begins with quality child care centres.

While parents value quality in early learning and child care, first and foremost, they need to be sure that their children are safe. That's why this legislation enables us to move toward a new model of licensing. This risk-based licensing approach, Mr. Speaker, will mean our licensing officers and their teams can spend much more time with those centres that need attention and monitoring to be compliant with the regulations. I want to emphasize that these changes will absolutely not in any way compromise the safety of children and youth in child care. In fact, with risk-based licensing, enforcement will actually improve.

This was, again, something that was welcomed by many child care operators, including, Mr. Speaker, Heather Gomme, director at It's a Child's World. She said, quote: the shift to a risk-based licensing approach is a great change for the child care sector because it will allow licensing staff to focus valuable time and resources on programs that truly need that help; this will in turn create safer environments for children to be in and enable high-functioning programs to continue delivering high-quality programming.

We're also amending the licensing process by allowing initial licences for already established operators to be provided for up to three years instead of one. This can simplify, Mr. Speaker, that process for new centres opening up to meet the needs of Alberta working families.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, safety also means ensuring that parents have access to the information they need to make good decisions.

To accompany this act, in early 2021 there will be improved resources, including an online tool kit for parents to use when making decisions about their child's care. Also, for parents who choose unlicensed care, they'll be able to call into the ministry to ensure that their provider has not been issued a stop order within the last 24 months. We've also included a tool kit for operators in unlicensed care to outline the supports that they can access and answer questions they may have about operating an unlicensed day home.

Safety, Mr. Speaker, is also enhanced by transparency. As a mother of two young children, now five and almost three, I know that pickups and drop-offs can be a very busy time. Carrying a baby in a bucket on one arm, holding the hand of a toddler in the other at 7 in the morning, I can tell you I wasn't paying attention to the bulletin boards at the front door of the centre. So for those unlicensed centres there will be a new requirement to directly notify parents of any changes to their licence rather than just a post on a wall that a busy parent may never notice.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation also addresses the urgent need to reduce red tape. This was one of the things that we heard most through the red tape portal when it pertained to our ministry, Children's Services. Many operators told us that they spend a lot of time checking boxes and filling out paperwork without a clear purpose. They needed Children's Services to allow them to be more flexible and more efficient, and that's exactly what we're going to do. Under the previous and current models we had accredited, approved, regulated, and licensed centres and spaces, but parents often had no idea what those meant, and why should they?

Imagine being a new parent, wanting to put your child in the best possible centre but having no earthly clue what the practical difference between licensed, approved, accredited, and regulated really meant. Add to that that the existing regulation had five different schedules outlining requirements for child care: out of school care, day homes, and preschools plus subcategories under all of those around each type of daycare. Now, instead of trying to determine which one of the five licences a centre needs to be licensed under, we've simplified that whole situation to simply this: you are unlicensed or licensed, and you are a facility-based or a home-based child care program. You're either licensed or you're not, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we also know that many parents have more than one child in child care, and a request we heard over and over – and this was tested over the first couple of months during the COVID pandemic – was for mixed-age ratios. Enabling the use of mixed-age ratios will provide flexibility for child care programs to use their expertise to support safety and appropriate child development while allowing parents to have their children cared for in the same place.

Mr. Speaker, as I said at the beginning of my remarks, this legislation hasn't been updated in a long time. Previously centres were required to keep paper records, and now we'll allow them to keep those records digitally. Also, instead of just using fax, we're allowing them to move into 2020 and use e-mail as a way of communicating both with the ministry and with centres. When it comes to those digital records, paying for storage units full of filing cabinets: centres can now get rid of that expense and also save a few trees.

We're also modernizing the language to reflect how we and early childhood educators speak today. In keeping the language simple, we also hope to reduce the confusion that was felt by operators and our licensing officers and make it easier for centres to adhere to the act.

Mr. Speaker, as I've said, in addition to this legislation, we will introduce regulations this fall and changes in policy to reflect these

shifts towards a smarter, simpler legislation that keeps kids safe. Examples of changes being made in the regulations and policy are things like allowing centres to include supervisors in ratios at the beginning and end of the day, expanding the use of accessible outdoor spaces, enabling 24-hour care, and allowing one-time consent forms for centres that go on regular and short outings.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, not only as the Minister of Children's Services but also as a parent of two young children that have used multiple forms of child care, I remain committed to high-quality, accessible, accountable, and affordable child care for those parents who need it most here in Alberta. I really, truly want to thank the thousands of parents and operators and educators in child care, out of school care, preschools, and day homes who took the time to weigh in on this incredibly important work. It was very important for me to give them a voice in this legislation as well as in the regulations and policies that will follow.

3:00

To Minister Allard, thank you so incredibly much for heading up the various consultations. This work could absolutely not have been done without my colleague. I also want to thank our child care working group, who helped to finalize these decisions and narrow down the feedback we received.

This legislation, Mr. Speaker, is a major step towards a strengthened child care system that will better meet the needs of Alberta's children and families. A stronger child care system benefits all Albertans and is an important part of our economic recovery. Most importantly, this legislation is not political. It's modern, it's inclusive, it's flexible, and it's transparent. With these changes parents across Alberta will know their children are safe and supported in daycares, out of school care, preschools, and day homes alike.

I want to leave you with one last quote from Janet Riopel, president and CEO of the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce, who said this, quote: increasing flexibility for child care providers will help to make child care more affordable and expand the options available to Alberta families; this legislation will help to ensure more Albertans can fully participate in our much-needed economic recovery. As Ms Riopel so clearly explains, regulations directly impact affordability, and thoughtfully reducing them means centres won't incur additional costs that then force them to raise fees.

Mr. Speaker, maintaining our high-quality safety standards while breaking down barriers will give centres the room to bring new solutions to the unprecedented problems we all face today. Alberta's government will continue to look for ways to make life simpler for Alberta's working families.

Thank you so much, Mr. Speaker, for giving me this opportunity today. I do encourage my colleagues to support Bill 39, the early learning and child care act, 2020.

With that, I move to adjourn debate.

[Motion to adjourn debate carried]

Bill 38

Justice Statutes Amendment Act, 2020

[Adjourned debate October 28: Mr. Sabir]

The Acting Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Rutherford.

Mr. Feehan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the opportunity to join the House this afternoon to talk about this bill. I'm also pleased to be able to start my conversations about this bill with some commendations to the government. I'll not always get a chance to do that, but I certainly am well known for standing up and

expressing my deep concern when I think the First Nations in this province are neglected here in this House, so I want to take the opportunity to say that I appreciate that in this case I find that some information, a part of this bill, at least, addresses a concern that a number of First Nations have. So I want to thank the government.

I want to thank the minister involved for having introduced the piece of this legislation that allows the recognition of First Nations police forces. I know this is something that many of the First Nations have been seeking, and I'm happy to be able to support at least this piece of this particular bill. I'm glad that they have spent some time with the First Nations and got to a good place in terms of recognizing First Nations requests for policing.

You know, having said that, I also just have a few questions that I'm hoping somewhere along the way could be answered for me because it is a complex issue. Having multiple police forces in any jurisdiction is always problematic if the organization of how those police forces work together is not well constructed. The protocols and communication between those police forces really needs to be at the highest possible level. I guess I am just wondering if the minister happens to have an opportunity at some point in the future to address a little bit about the nature of the relationship between the on-reserve First Nations police forces and those police forces that may or may not find themselves needing to move on or off the First Nations in order to conduct their business and, of course, backwards and forwards as well.

If a First Nation does have its own police force and a crime has been committed on the First Nation and the First Nation is seeking to leave that First Nation in order to locate someone who may have been involved in the crime, are there protocols established in this case as there are with other, you know – for example, the city of Edmonton and the RCMP have those kinds of protocols. Are those protocols in existence, are they simply adopting the ones that are used in other jurisdictions, and will it allow members of First Nations police forces to actually pursue their work outside of the police force, whether it be actually arresting someone off the First Nation or perhaps just even investigating off the First Nation? And, of course, it goes the other way around. If someone commits a crime off the First Nations, do they have the processes in place to allow RCMP or other municipal police forces to come onto the First Nations, and is there a mechanism for them working together to ensure that this all goes well?

You know, I feel confident that this is not a problem. It's just a question that I have. I do know that police forces are quite experienced at this type of communication and protocol arrangement between themselves and respect that the answer is there. I'm just wondering if this legislation in any way is required to enhance that, to identify that, or to support that so that when it comes time for practise, that the practice is at its highest possible level.

I know that right now there are only three First Nations that do have active police forces on the nation, but I also have spoken to a number of First Nations. Even as recently as two weeks ago I was down speaking with some people in Siksika First Nation. While they do not currently have a police force, they have had in the past, and when there were some problems, the decision was made to disband the whole police force. The individuals that I was talking to were discouraged by that because they did agree that problems existed – that wasn't, you know, in dispute – but, rather, they were concerned at the heavy-handed manner in which the problems were resolved. [A cellphone rang] I'm glad it just wasn't me for once.

They were discouraged at the fact that the whole police force got disbanded because there were some problems with some individuals. You know, quite reasonably, what they were suggesting was that if there are some problems with some police members on a First Nations police force, there really should be a mechanism of dealing

with those individual members and not moving to disband the whole police force. I guess I just wonder if the Minister of Justice has some list of measures or protocols or regulations that will look at: once a police force does come into existence, what are the mechanisms for ensuring that the police practice is maintained at the appropriate level and that when there are problems in the practice of the policing, they get addressed in a proportionate manner and not in the manner that, unfortunately, Siksika First Nation experienced when their whole police force was disbanded?

I guess that most of my comments, as you can see, are not critical of the act but, rather, just asking questions about whether or not the act is the appropriate place for us to be ... [interjections] I don't seem to be the only one speaking here.

The Acting Speaker: Gentlemen, please.

Go ahead, Member.

Mr. Feehan: Thank you. Just wondering whether or not this act is the appropriate place for some of this work to be laid out so that the First Nations know with clarity and have some assurance that if they put all of the energy that it takes to create a police force, in fact that police force will be appropriately supported by the government of Alberta and that they won't find themselves having invested tons of money into recruiting and training and establishing a police force only to have it disbanded the first time that there's some problem, given the experience that I learned about at Siksika just a few weeks ago.

3:10

I guess that the rest of my comments around this particular aspect of this particular act are, again, questions about the possibilities. Now, when I spent time down with the police force, spending kind of the better part of a day with them and going through some information processes with them, they described to me a number of the issues that were experienced on Blood Tribe. They talked about a number of different things and the fact that one of the big problems is the movement of drugs on- and off-reserve. As a result, they would really clearly need to have some clarity about the role and relationship of the police force in dealing with – I don't know what to call them – gangs, I guess, groups of people who are functioning off-reserve but are coming on-reserve just for the purpose of trafficking drugs because, of course, they would not have jurisdiction over the locale where these gangs are situated if they're in other towns or cities, but they certainly are dealing with the consequence of these people coming on-reserve.

A number of the reserves have made decisions, for example, like instituting laws that allow them to ban anybody from coming onto the First Nations, to allow them to shut down houses on the First Nations if that kind of activity is occurring there, and so on. I just want to make sure that if the First Nations actually do bring in laws that they feel are important and necessary for their community that would not be laws that would normally be in existence off the First Nations, will there be problems in those areas, or, you know, is this, again, something that police forces are quite used to dealing with? Are the mechanisms in place?

Further, I know from my time with the Blood Tribe and talking about their police force and their court system that they have specifically asked for the actual location of courts to be on the First Nations, for the establishment of a court centre where all of the trials would take place and where the judges would attend to the First Nation, and all of the practice would happen there. I guess I'm just wondering whether or not this act or this minister intends to actually work with the First Nations to allow that to happen. Is there, in other words, a natural movement from having your police

force to ultimately having your court system on the First Nations, and is there something we can do to facilitate that in a useful and appropriate manner? I know that when it was addressed with me, we took the question seriously but weren't able to get quite to a point where we were able to push it across that bar. I'm hoping that I can help this government to do that piece of work because I still think it's important and that it's out there.

The Blood Tribe not only, of course, wanted a court on their nation, but they actually wanted a community reconciliation process to occur because the process of dealing with misbehaviour in First Nations communities can be different than the process of dealing with that kind of misbehaviour outside of the community of First Nations. As such, what they would have liked is a system where they have a courtroom on one half of the building and a community conflict resolution program on the other half of the building and the two working together so that the judge who appears in the courtroom could refer people to the community dispute resolution process and would honour the outcome of the community dispute resolution process in terms of the trials. Again, my question is: is there room, now that you're looking at police forces and recognizing police forces, to look at the whole range of possible interventions, police, court, and community intervention, and dispute resolution processes?

Those are just some general questions put out to the minister. I'm hoping that at some point he gets a chance to speak to some of these issues. I certainly hope that, you know, if there's anything I can do or anything we can do on our side of the House to provide support or assistance in framing this work and moving this work forward, I certainly offer all of our services to do that.

Now, just with the last few minutes that I have available to me left in my talk, I'd like to talk about a few of the other things. I know this is a bit of an omnibus legislation, with a number of different issues or at least involved in it, all linked, of course, by justice, but the second piece that I wanted to speak about, which I think, again, also has implications for First Nations, is the establishment of referendums.

Now, I'm concerned about the process that allows referendums to be tied into municipal elections. First of all, I am concerned because both the AUMA and the RMA, all of the municipalities in the province of Alberta explicitly have asked for the government not to do this. They have appeared in front of the Democratic Accountability Committee saying that this, for them, very much clouds the issue, very much divides the community, and puts extra costs onto the municipalities. So I think there must be some very, very strong reason why the government would choose to do this when the two organizations that represent a hundred per cent of the municipalities in this province have asked you explicitly not to do this. I certainly would like to hear some understanding about that.

Given that, you know, over the last little while the government has really gone after municipalities in significant ways – they have cut linear assessments, they've given breaks to corporations to pay their taxes to municipalities for two years, they have increased police without increasing funding to the RCMP, and they've done a number of things that really are a direct assault on many small municipalities in this province – I guess I'm just wondering if this government is slowly moving to take over the role of municipal governments and to remove that local jurisdiction from the community. They certainly are making decisions that are almost making municipal governments redundant.

I guess I'm worried about the direction that they're going here, and of course I'm worried about what the implication is here for First Nations because many people will know that First Nations do not vote in municipal elections. They cannot vote. They do not reside within municipalities. So if you have a referendum that is occurring with the municipalities, then you are effectively

excluding 48 First Nations from voting because they are not members of municipalities. To take a whole section of our province, of our citizens, and tell them that they cannot vote on a referendum or other things that you're bringing forward in this government because they are First Nations is really something I cannot support.

The Acting Speaker: Standing Order 29(2)(a) is available. Under 29(2)(a)?

Member Loyola: Yes.

The Acting Speaker: The Member for Edmonton-Ellerslie.

Member Loyola: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I believe that the Member for Edmonton-Rutherford had a number of interesting questions, and he was just starting to get a roll on this last particular one. I believe that he didn't actually have the opportunity to complete his thoughts around this very important question, so I would ask the Member for Edmonton-Rutherford if he would continue, please.

Mr. Feehan: Thank you. I appreciate the Member for Edmonton-Ellerslie asking for a few more words on this particular piece here. I certainly know that with regard to the referendum, you know, arrangements can be made to ensure that referendums are also established in First Nations at the same time as they're established in municipalities. I would just really like to see that, in fact, we have the mechanisms to ensure that the First Nations are not excluded in this process.

Again, I'd be happy to hear from members opposite if they were able to tell me at some point later in the debate: "That's been handled. No problem. Here's the mechanism for doing it." As I said with all my other points, these are inquiries. I really want to understand the intention of the government, and I actually look forward to the opportunities that I can support the government. So I hope that they have a chance to speak to that.

I think I'll also take a few moments to move on to talk about some of the other parts of the legislation that just, again, leave me with very serious questions. I notice that there is a significant expansion of the civil forfeiture regulations and laws, and that is that the police and the court systems can now, under this new legislation, expand the number of situations in which they can take the personal private property of people who are in front of the courts in response to some misdeed that they have engaged in.

3:20

Now, my concerns are twofold. One of them is the issue of civil liberties in that the bar or the measure for when a civil forfeiture can be employed is different than the bar for conviction, so there certainly will be times when the individual will arrive in court, not be convicted of the charges before them but still be subject to civil forfeiture. I guess my question is: does this pass the test of constitutionality, and are we setting ourselves up for difficulties if we do this? Again, because I'm not a lawyer, I have to ask the question, and I certainly await some instruction from the lawyers in the crowd who will help me understand, you know, if this is likely to be problematic or not.

But then I also begin to worry about the apparent intention for the benefits of that civil forfeiture, that what we see is the government taking in more personal property and therefore obtaining the value of that personal property and then making decisions on what happens with that.

Now, I notice it is not going to victims, for example. We don't see an increase here in the victims restitution fund. In fact, my understanding is that the victims restitution fund is going to be decreasing,

not increasing. It seems odd that if you're going to, you know, take property away from people who have committed a misdeed, you would not then use that money to appropriately compensate victims. Perhaps the government can address that as an issue as well and explain why it is that this money is being used in other ways.

Now, of course, they are using some of the money to support and aid police forces, and that may be an appropriate use of the monies. I certainly support police forces. In my years as a social worker I frequently worked with members of both the city of Edmonton police and the RCMP in working with kids that had been sexually abused. I have deep respect for them. I certainly hope they have the resources to continue what I found to be an excellent quality of work in those forces. I do think there's an appropriate use of the monies for that.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you, Member.

Are there any other members wishing to speak to Bill 38? The Member for St. Albert.

Ms Renaud: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise and speak to Bill 38, Justice Statutes Amendment Act, 2020. I'm just going to go over a couple of things that my colleague said just to reinforce that I certainly have similar concerns. I think it's important to note that this is, again, another piece of legislation, really an omnibus bill, and this one, I believe, is covering six acts. This particular bill, Bill 38, makes changes to six different acts.

I think this is fast becoming a pattern, Mr. Speaker. I certainly understood the need to make some changes very quickly as we were facing a lot of really unique scenarios and situations as we started to deal with COVID. I think we all understood the need to move quickly in some of those areas, but I think this is more of a pattern of trying to make a lot of changes very quickly. Legislation is really shoved through and hurried through, and the danger in that, really, is that we aren't giving ourselves the time to review and debate this legislation, I think, the way that every piece of legislation deserves to be debated.

As my colleague said, I'm certainly not a lawyer, as he is not a lawyer as well, and I think that for us to have the time to go out and speak to people that can actually give us some insight on this piece of legislation – certainly, when you look at it just on its face, it seems reasonable. You know, I can understand why a number of the things are being amended or changed, but I think a responsible legislator would take the time to find the other side, to find out what the weaknesses are and then how we can fix that. I think that when we jam through a piece of legislation that covers such really important topics and really important pieces of legislation, we're not doing the people of Alberta any favours.

Really, primarily, I have questions on this piece of legislation because, you know, just reading through the bill, I couldn't find the answers. I certainly don't have access to the information that government members do or cabinet or the Premier. I don't have access to that data, so we are reliant, like Albertans, on the government MLAs or the cabinet ministers or the Premier to answer our questions and share information. I would suggest that if this is a really positive piece of legislation, as the members have indicated, they'll do everything in their power to let all Albertans know: here's what we're doing, here's why, here's how it makes life better, here are some of the concerns people have, and here's how we address them. It is my hope that somebody is paying attention and somebody will, hopefully, come back to us with some answers so that we can all, as my colleague said, support the government if they are indeed making changes that are positive.

My colleague talked a little bit about the Police Act or changes that are being made to the Police Act, so I'm not going to focus

much time there, but I do have a number of questions on the Jury Act. You know, I think there are some things that just make sense. Allowing a jury to be summoned by electronic means: that makes a lot of sense. There are a lot of common-sense things in here, but one of my colleagues, actually, the other day did bring it up, and I just wanted to repeat – I think it was the Member for Calgary-Mountain View; I'm not sure, actually. She talked about junk e-mail filters. I think it makes total sense that we're going to move to electronic means. I think that if COVID has taught us anything, it's that there are a lot of things we can do differently. I have no problem with that, but I think I would like some reassurance so that all of the little technical things that we perhaps maybe don't think about will be answered for us and addressed.

[Mr. Milliken in the chair]

I'm going to go on. There is another section where, again, I'm going to rely on the lawyers, either in our caucus or in government benches, particularly the minister, to commit to getting us some answers because I think they're questions that we have about the changes being made to the Queen's Counsel Act. What we do know is that it adds entitlement to QC status for 10 years' practice in superior courts in Commonwealth common-law jurisdictions. Automatic revocation of QC status upon disbarment or resignation pending disciplinary action makes total sense.

Here are my questions. Why is it that the UCP government is choosing to amend QC status right now? I'm assuming that there was a degree of urgency that this piece of this act was included in this omnibus bill. I'm assuming there's a good reason that the government – I would hope they don't do things that don't need to be done. It would be quite helpful to know: why is it that in these really challenging times – and I think we can all agree that we are in incredibly challenging times. We are dealing with a virus that certainly hasn't gone away. We are dealing with economic stresses that I don't think any of us envisioned a year ago. Certainly, we saw the pressures coming, but we did not see, you know, a lockdown or changes to business or the loss of so many small businesses in our future. It would be quite helpful to know from the government: why is it that they chose this particular piece of legislation to amend now during a pandemic, during an economic downturn? I think we all in this place have ideas about what priorities are and what we could be doing to make life better for Albertans, so I would like to know from the government: what is it about this that will make life better for Albertans?

I'd also like to know: how many more lawyers will be eligible for QC status with this change? I'm assuming there are some things that go along with changes like this, so it would be enlightening, I think, to know: is there a cap, is there a suggested number, and how will that change? I guess, you know, this is actually something I've never spent much time thinking about, but why do we feel the need to continue awarding QC status when this government has used it as a token for donors? It seems to me – I've not spent much time looking at how it is that this designation is awarded, so it would be quite helpful to get that information.

Those are my questions around that piece, and again there are six different acts that are being amended by this piece of legislation. Those are some questions that I have for that.

3:30

The next section: again, I think I just have more questions than comments about it. It's about the Victim Restitution and Compensation Payment Act. What we do know is that this piece of legislation in Bill 38 applies to civil forfeiture of breaches of any laws around the world. That would include Alberta laws, Canadian, territorial laws, foreign laws. It removes power from the LG in

Council to decide which laws or regulations civil forfeiture applies to.

Again, I would suggest that most Albertans likely don't spend much of their daily lives thinking about this kind of legislation, but I think that it impacts people's lives. Sadly, I don't think we think about victim impact or restitution and those kinds of things until, unfortunately, we are in a case where we ourselves are that victim or we know somebody and we're having to support them.

Like I said earlier, I am assuming that there is a very good reason why the government chose to include this piece of legislation in Bill 38, and it would be most helpful to know why that is. What is the goal of the change? What is it that the government is hoping that this legislation will do for the people of Alberta?

Some of the questions around this piece, the Victims Restitution and Compensation Payment Act, some of the other questions – I heard some of them also reiterated by some of my colleagues. Here's a question that I really don't understand, and possibly there's a very simple answer to this, and it would be really helpful to know what that is. Given this current government's fixation or focus on property rights, I would like to know why it is that they're opening up the law to allow the government to take that property of people for the breach of any law in the world. I guess that just to reconcile those views or those actions would be quite helpful.

Also, has the government examined the legal precedents established through the courts regarding civil forfeiture in other provinces? If an offence occurs in Saskatchewan based on an enactment of that province but which is not an act in Alberta, this law will allow the Attorney General to claim the individual's property. How does this amount to justice for Albertans? I guess, going back to the original question or the theme of the questions, again, I'm assuming that the government had reasons to make these changes or alterations. It would just be helpful to know why, and what is it that this legislation will do to make life better for Albertans?

Obviously, we have a list of questions or things that we just, after reading the legislation, could not answer or could not understand, and I am quite certain that you will hear some other questions from my colleagues. Again, it would be quite helpful to get some clarity.

I'm going to move along to another piece, and it's a piece, actually, that I think I've spent some time thinking about because, especially when we made changes to local elections, we talked a lot about not just the Senator elections but referendums. So I would like to talk a little bit about the Referendum Act and some of the concerns and questions that I have.

Obviously, what this does is that it allows referendums to be held through the mechanisms of a municipal election. I also want to thank my colleague for talking about, you know, who would be missed in a referendum, and I actually didn't realize that there would be so many people that would not be able to participate in a referendum that was aligned with a municipal election. I think that right now we've certainly heard the UCP talk about – and this was definitely in their platform. I get that. I am fully aware that there was discussion about referendums, especially around equalization. I do completely understand that. This government has a majority, and it is certainly their right to propose whatever legislation they choose. But I also think they have a responsibility to the people of Alberta and the people they represent to answer the questions, to provide as much clarity as possible about: why are you doing this, and what is it that you hope to do?

Around referendums, you know, one of the things – I guess I really wanted to specifically talk about this move and the danger of aligning referendums, politically motivated or partisan referendums, with municipal elections. I think we had hours of debate last time we talked about putting a referendum together with local municipal

elections. We talked about the danger of adding another level of partisanship to, I think, a level of election that has traditionally, for the most part, been nonpartisan. It's not perfect, certainly, but I think what we can say or what we do know, for the most part, is that local elections are less about party affiliation and that power that sort of comes from outside, and they are more about local ideas, which is really the beauty of local elections.

They're very focused on the issues that are important to the people that live and work there. I always think about the community that I represent, which is St. Albert. You know, it's really great when people that are trying to earn a spot on council or the mayoral race – you go to the debate, and you listen to the questions and the answers. They're a hundred per cent focused on what is local, which is amazing. They're focused on local development, and they're focused on the health and wellness of seniors that live there. They're focused, well, on a lot of other things that I won't get into, but they are very much focused on local issues.

Now, when you bring in things like the senatorial election and referendums – I think that we are all sort of political people – we understand that that motivates people to get out and vote, so perhaps you have voters that for whatever reason weren't going to participate that year or weren't as motivated to do that. That's a shame because I think that we all should be exercising that democratic right. I think that introducing something like equalization, for example, as a referendum topic can introduce a level of partisanship that is, ah, kind of a slippery slope to go down.

I think the particular example here is that – you know, reading through some of the articles, just trying to refresh my memory about what some of the concerns or discussion have been around equalization, which is obviously one of the focuses if a referendum is brought forward, I think that we can all agree what a complex issue equalization is. I think we probably all have met constituents that we've had to have a discussion with to explain even just the basics of what equalization is, that it's not that money is being taken from Alberta taxpayers in Alberta and directly given to people in Quebec. Actually, it's federal taxes that we all pay. It's the way that it's divided up, but it's so much more than that. It's very complex.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

I see the hon. Member for Edmonton-Ellerslie has risen under 29(2)(a).

Member Loyola: Yes, Mr. Speaker. You know, for me, it's a pleasure to hear the facts when it comes to equalization payments, so I'm hoping that the hon. Member for St. Albert will continue and share the rest of her thoughts with us.

The Acting Speaker: The hon. Member for St. Albert has the call.

Ms Renaud: Thank you for the question. You know, going back to equalization, I think that we can all agree that it's very complex. I don't believe that I understand all of the nuances of equalization. I think that to use a politically infused question like that or a really hot question like that is questionable.

I think that if you were to survey people in your communities or people in your circles and ask them and measure how much they understand about this issue, we probably would all come back with similar answers. For the most part, people are focused on their lives and what's in front of them, whether it's school or work or kids or whatever, right now the pandemic. Equalization isn't, you know, high on the list of things that they want to research after supper.

I think that using something like that can be a little, for lack of a better word, sneaky. It's not clear. It's not transparent. I think that for a referendum question to be fair, it would provide an explainer.

What is it? It's all about the question. Make sure that people understand what they're answering. I am concerned that referendums will be blended into municipal elections.

3:40

Maybe there's a simple answer to this, and I look forward to hearing from whichever minister has the ability to answer questions: who's going to pay for this? There's actually a significant expense to a referendum. I think we all know that. At a time when we've got a \$24 billion deficit, it can seem like a drop in the bucket, but every drop is important, and that includes municipalities. I think municipalities are very, very stressed right now. I'm sure we all understand this, that they're dealing with added pressures related to the pandemic and then all of that fallout as well. We do know that on its own – of course, this is not what this legislation is referring to – a referendum is in the neighbourhood of over \$20 million. When it is aligned with a municipal election, I think the estimate is between \$2 million and \$6 million. Now, this could be from a couple of years ago, so if I'm incorrect, I'm happy to be corrected.

You know, I guess this goes back to what I was saying earlier. It's all about priorities. I would truly appreciate, honestly, I would very much appreciate hearing from the government. I'm assuming that there is a good reason. Why is it that these acts were put together in this piece of legislation? Why is it that they were a priority? What is it that's going to make life better for Albertans right now, when they're struggling so much in a variety of ways? What is it about these acts and this piece of legislation that was so essential that we're all here debating it? As my colleagues said, we are certainly happy to support good legislation. We're happy to support or even change our minds. If there are really solid answers as to why this is essential, what it's going to do for people, just let us know. Just answer the questions. That would be it.

I think, you know, some of the other questions I just wanted to get on the record as well in terms of relating to the Referendum Act. What are the estimated costs? I was just going by some estimates that I think are probably a couple of years old right now. Are there financial estimates that the government was using as they reviewed information to put this legislation together? Having access to government information would be great. What oversight – and this is quite important – will Elections Alberta have on these changes? I think we certainly understand the kinds of things that can go sideways in an election: leadership elections, general elections. I think we're all pretty aware of that. We all want to do our best to protect the integrity of elections. Who was consulted and what information? I understand that the government can't share all information they have for whatever confidentiality reasons, but it would certainly be most helpful to understand: what are the structures? How can you reassure Albertans that you, this government, are doing everything in your power to . . . [Ms Renaud's speaking time expired] I'll stop there.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

I see the hon. Member for Edmonton-McClung has risen to join debate on second reading of Bill 38.

Mr. Dach: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for recognizing me here this afternoon, on a lovely Thursday afternoon in October. I'm quite pleased to speak to Bill 38, Justice Statutes Amendment Act, 2020. I'll begin by reflecting on how important it is for all of us members who have in the past, without exception, I'm sure, participated in some way as volunteers in our community. I know in reading the bios of MLAs that members of the public will see that, without exception, there have been efforts made to volunteer in the community by members of this Legislature throughout its

history, and the reason I mention that is because an element of my volunteer history leads me to bring some insight to this particular piece of legislation, Bill 38, when it comes to the quality of justice and what I might call e-creep or a potential virtual vacuum that gives me some concern when I think about some of the elements of the implementation of bits of the technology that this bill contemplates.

As I alluded to, Mr. Speaker, my concern revolves around the quality of justice. I speak of the human interaction that is so endemic to the processes that our justice system relies upon. I know that in this time of pandemic not only the justice system but all of us in every walk of life have had to rely upon a greater level of technology and virtual communications, and this piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker, reflects the reality today that we are able to communicate in a virtual way and that human communications, in many instances, are becoming replaced by virtual, electronic communications.

But I think there's a high degree of caution that we should all exercise in adopting this, as I call it, e-creep into our systems because there is value in the human interaction, the communications, and the nuances that emanate from that. The quality of justice may be strained by not being able to make adjustments afterwards. That's what I would highly recommend this piece of legislation have built into it, that indeed there should be an ongoing ability to analyze and react to deficiencies in the quality of justice as we see the implementation of electronic and virtual media into the communications in the justice system.

I bring that up because of my past experience as a volunteer within the justice system. As I've noted before in this House, for two years I volunteered as a probation officer in the court intake unit here at the Edmonton courts. A couple of mornings, sometimes three mornings a week I would attend at courtrooms 65 and 68, as they were then known. They were courts of first appearance, Mr. Speaker, so generally speaking, their trials didn't take place, but sometimes, on occasion, they would. An individual would actually be sentenced to a period of probation, and that would be where my role would fit in.

In the course of those mornings watching the proceedings, you would see the Crown prosecutors and defence counsel or duty counsel of the day have quick discussions on files that they may have only moments ago first had an opportunity to take a look at. Those quick discussions that they were able to have in person, in a quick meeting just on the fly, were so elementary and so critical to what happened in the next moment, when that individual was brought forward before the judge to either make a decision on plea or to decide whether to ask for reservation of plea. Any number of things could come up as far as requesting action on the part of the judge with respect to the accused, and it was those few vital seconds of human interaction between the defence counsel and the prosecution and perhaps a social worker who might have been in court as well that made all the difference and a huge difference in the life of that individual who was appearing before them in that court of first appearance.

Having a reliance only upon a virtual appearance raises a lot of questions as to what opportunity there might have been for some tidbits of information to be transmitted between the accused and duty counsel, for example. The hallway conferences that duty counsel has just in advance of a first appearance in court with an accused are invaluable. Many individuals will – and I've witnessed this – decide for simplicity's sake just to plead guilty, and quite often a judge is kind of hamstrung by that, and it ends up in a conviction and a sentence possibly to probation. A lot of changes in that person's life took place just as a result of that decision whereas a slight human communication and interaction with duty counsel

just prior would have perhaps caused that individual to make a different decision, to say: look, I'll reserve my plea, and I'll take the opportunity to speak with counsel at greater length.

The quality of justice is something that I have great concerns about. If we see as we go forward, if indeed this legislation is adopted, Mr. Speaker, that the quality of justice is being negatively affected by implementation of measures contained in this bill to adopt a greater level of virtual communication and electronic communication, replacing the human communications we have historically had, I hope that the legislation will enable, without fear of embarrassment, the government and the bureaucracy to put the brakes on a certain practice and say: look, let's actually go back to the practice of human communications in these certain areas because it's having a negative effect on the lives of individuals who aren't really being given the true and full value of their rights under the justice system because they're cloistered; they're in a virtual vacuum of communication.

3:50

I have that fear, Mr. Speaker. We should have an overarching ability to make sure that if problems do arise, the legislation enables us to revert to a greater level of human interaction and also that the ability to revert to in-person meetings versus a virtual communications system still exists and is still a legitimate practice so that we don't cut off that human practice and say: well, that's it; we're going to virtual communications in this particular situation, and there's no option to go back to human interaction. That would be a mistake, in my view, if indeed that was the case because we are all experimenting right now with virtual communications and new ways, and it's evolving. It's definitely an evolution, and there's not necessarily going to be a pathway without some nooks and crannies that we should be stopping at and really deciding whether or not this is the way that we want to go and not being afraid to admit that there is real value in maintaining the humanity of our justice system and that human, interpersonal communication.

That's one element, Mr. Speaker, that I wanted to speak about with respect to Bill 38. There are many, many corridors that one could go down when looking at this piece of legislation. It is a wide and long package of amendments. We, hopefully, will be spending adequate time in this House really looking at them closely, because there are a lot of things that I think deserve to be considered very much in depth before moving forward, and this legislation, I think, deserves the full scrutiny of this House, to say the least.

I want to also talk a little bit about a concern I had with respect to service of documents and verification of receipt and so forth, where it's proposed that e-mailed documents, official documents, could be served by the courts and that would be considered official service. Now, typically, of course, in my background as a real estate agent, we've seen documents served with respect to mortgage proceedings and so forth by officers of the courts or sheriffs, or even there are private service companies which are delegated to do that. It actually can lead up to and include posting a notice to the door of the domicile of the individual who is being served. That record is definitely something that can be verified, that it was actually served to the right person's door.

Whether or not we have the same legitimacy in an e-mail service is something that I think remains to be tested. I have concerns about individuals being improperly served or being mis-served or not getting served or the inability of the courts to verify that, in fact, the service went to the right person. Or are there means by which that individual can perhaps say: "Look, it went to my junk mailbox. I don't look at that very often," or "That's not an e-mail address that I use anymore"? There's a certain degree of limitation that I don't think is properly yet dealt with by this legislation, as is proposed

with respect to the verification of service of documents by the courts.

As I said before, this is definitely an evolution of technology, but we want to make sure that adoption of it by amending legislation is not in stone, that we have the ability to recognize errors, recognize injustices, and then be able to either revert temporarily to the old practice by having them still in place and legitimate or by being able to make adjustments to them by regulation. That is something that I think the legislation should recognize and have in its practise, an ability to respond to problems as they arise and perhaps a built-in mechanism, Mr. Speaker, for those who are working in the justice system to bring forward those conflicts, as they may see it, with the rights of the victims or rights of the accused, rights of those within the justice system whose processes touch upon their lives, and the ability of the justice system to properly address those rights and make sure that it doesn't end up with a serious clogging of the courts by way of appeals.

I'm certain that defence counsel, Mr. Speaker, is not going to stand for what they may feel is a loss of the rights or an infringement upon the rights of their clients. That probably will be the backstop, but I think that if indeed elements of this legislation that seem to be causing problems in the justice system, if it is passed and implemented, could be brought forward via a mechanism that's built into the regulations, perhaps we could avoid lengthy arguments by defence talking about infringements upon the rights of their clients in the future. That's something we should avoid if we possibly can. I hope that the words I'm saying are not falling on deaf ears across the way.

I'd also like to speak a little bit, Mr. Speaker, about the portion of the act which refers to allowing referendums to be held during and through the mechanism of a municipal election. I have some serious and grave concerns about this. Now, not only this provincial government, the current rendition, the UCP provincial government in Alberta; others prior to it and right across the country, of course, are rightly protective of their own jurisdiction vis-à-vis the federal government. There is nothing if not a blood sport in this country between the federal and provincial governments regularly on jurisdictional disputes, which is not an uncommon thing in a federated nation.

But it goes two ways, Mr. Speaker. Municipal governments and provincial governments also can be found at odds with each other. I think that it's incumbent upon the provincial government to say that what's sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander. In other words, why indeed involve oneself as a provincial government in a very patronizing and antagonizing way to infringe upon the rights and practices of the municipal governments?

The Acting Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

Standing Order 29(2)(a) is available, and I see the hon. Member for Edmonton-Ellerslie has risen.

Member Loyola: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do believe that the member was in mid-thought. He was providing us with some very interesting insight, and I would hope that he would continue with his comments, please.

The Acting Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Dach: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would indeed appreciate the opportunity to continue speaking about the concerns I have with respect to attaching referendums to municipal elections. As my colleague from St. Albert recently spoke in the House concerning this issue, she was concerned about politicizing the process of municipal elections, which have a long and proud history in this province, Mr. Speaker, of being nonpartisan for the most part and

proudly so. That is something that we have guarded in this province quite judiciously because it's served us well in municipalities. The municipal level of government is so close to the population. We're talking about, you know, back alleys and sewers and streets and local roads and community issues and so forth, and to have that local government coloured and flavoured and poisoned by partisan politics is something that we've rightly guarded against, and I think that we should guard against it still.

4:00

The Member for St. Albert concerned herself with talking about how it may politicize the process, but I'll take that argument a step or two further, Mr. Speaker, and suggest that there are other outcomes that can be accomplished by implementing a system whereby referendums may be held in conjunction with a municipal election. One may have heard about the process of gerrymandering whereby a level of government would hold a process where a jurisdiction or a riding or a political geographic area or a ward would be carved out on a map according to certain rules and regulations.

Of course, gerrymandering is a term that's now used to describe a process whereby a government of the day would orchestrate that process to its own benefit and carve out a riding that had a majority of its own followers in that particular constituency to thereby influence an upcoming vote. Of course, evidence of that is quite clear in the United States in particular. If you look at the electoral maps in some of the jurisdictions, in some of the counties there, they look like they are QR codes with the way they're rigged and jiggled.

That's the type of thing that I want to avoid, Mr. Speaker, in our municipal election process as far as manipulation of the voter turnout is concerned because that's what I'm getting at. What it allows a government to do, if indeed we have a referendum that's attached to a municipal election, is to, of course, as a government – the government of the day, no matter what political stripe, is able to choose the referendum topic and the referendum question. Of course, based on that question – whatever the question may happen to be, it can be framed and designed in a way that attracts a certain element of the electorate versus another. In other words, one can use that referendum process to motivate one's base to vote in larger numbers than perhaps your opponent's base and thereby unduly influence a municipal election.

It's certainly, I'm sure, occurred to the government that this might be a way that a referendum could be used in a municipal election process. I mean, the government could have chosen to have referendums attached to a provincial election. I'm sure that that may already be potentially, technically possible. But specifically this legislation, this bit of this omnibus legislation, goes to the heart of municipal elections and specifically says: no; we want to attach referendums to municipal elections. There are reasons for doing that. One of them is to potentially influence the outcome of municipal elections, and that is something that I think is a pretty nefarious thing to consider.

The Acting Speaker: I see the hon. Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar has risen to join debate.

Mr. Schmidt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise and offer a few comments on Bill 38, Justice Statutes Amendment Act, 2020. I want to thank all of my colleagues for their insightful interventions on this legislation that's before us today. I hope to add a few concerns about this legislation that I've been hearing from the constituents of Edmonton-Gold Bar.

I want to first start out by addressing the changes that the government is bringing forward with respect to the Police Act. I would

agree with my friend from Edmonton-Rutherford that the recognition of First Nations policing, I think, is a significant step forward in taking the concerns of First Nations seriously, and we are pleased to see that that change to the Police Act is in this legislation. But I also want to echo the concerns that my friend from Edmonton-Rutherford made with respect to the additional justice system reforms that First Nations have been looking for for a very long time. I would join my friend from Edmonton-Rutherford in urging the government to give serious considerations to those other justice reforms that he so clearly set out for the government to consider.

I will say, though, Mr. Speaker, that a lot of the constituents that I represent from Edmonton-Gold Bar were a little bit confused about the changes that were brought forward in the Police Act and, more importantly, some of the changes that were not brought forward in the Police Act at this time. Earlier this year, of course, as we all know, the then Justice minister, now minister of jobs and other things, I suppose, announced a review of the Police Act in response to the popular protests against discriminatory police actions, that were most forcefully brought forward in the public consciousness by the death of George Floyd in the United States. Those resonated strongly with communities of colour, marginalized communities here in Alberta because they've had those kinds of experiences with police forces, too.

Certainly, when the minister announced a review of the Police Act, he indicated that he was going to consult with members of those communities to bring forward appropriate reforms to the Police Act to address these long-standing concerns. On July 7, 2020, I wrote to the then minister to indicate that a number of the Franco-African communities that reside in Edmonton-Gold Bar had not been consulted yet and had not been even made aware that the consultations were going to start. At that time I wrote to the minister informing him of the existence of a number of Franco-African communities based in my constituency and urged him to reach out to those communities to make sure that they were included in the consultation processes that were announced at that time.

I was incredibly disappointed, Mr. Speaker, that that Justice minister never got back to me and never contacted any of the Franco-African community organizations that I mentioned in the letter, which was a surprise because I clearly recall, when that member was the Justice minister, him inviting us to Rocky Mountain House to consult with people about issues around justice and policing. It's incredibly surprising to me that when we were asking for his invitation to be included in these things, so forcefully asking for this invitation to be included in these processes, those good-faith requests for invitations went completely ignored by that minister.

Thankfully for the constituents that I represent in Edmonton-Gold Bar, that member is no longer the Minister of Justice, and I will say that the current Minister of Justice has at least responded to my letter. When that minister was sworn in, I sent a follow-up letter on August 27, 2020, to that minister's office congratulating him on his new role and reiterating the request that I had made to the previous Justice minister that went ignored, to include the Franco-African communities in his review of the Police Act. Now, to his credit the current Justice minister did finally respond to me. I mean, it only took two months and a day, but at least he did get back to me, and I appreciate that. He's committed to including a number of the Franco-African communities that reside in Edmonton-Gold Bar in his consultations on the Police Act. I'm grateful for that, and the community organizations that I represent have told me that they're also looking forward to participating in these consultations, Mr. Speaker.

But there are a couple of concerns that I have with respect to those consultations that I hope that the minister hears and will keep in mind when he's considering how to reform the Police Act in the future. First is to make sure that everybody's expectations of what will be consulted on and what is not under consideration will be expressed clearly. Now, I haven't been invited to the consultations, Mr. Speaker, nor do I expect an invitation to the consultations. I don't believe that I'm the right person to speak on behalf of the Franco-African communities in these kinds of consultations. They need to have their own voices heard. But there has been no consultation document that I'm aware of sent out to any of these communities. We have no timelines for consultation. So these communities are reaching out to me and asking what they can expect from this consultation that the government keeps talking about but fails to provide any meaningful detail on.

4:10

The second and even more important piece that I hope the Justice minister and his office and department keep in mind when engaging in the consultation is to make sure that the resources are available for Franco-Africans to participate in the language of their choice in these consultations. Mr. Speaker, the Franco-African community is one of the fastest growing communities in this province, and they have a significant stake in the future of policing in this province. They need to be able to participate meaningfully in the consultation process in the language of their choice so that they can not only make their voices heard but also understand the questions that they're being asked and what is expected of them in the consultation process. If they can only participate in French and the Justice minister and the department do not make resources available for the Justice department to undertake those consultations in French, I'm really afraid that the significant concerns that the Franco-African community has raised with respect to policing in this province will go unheard.

So I urge the minister and his department to make use of the significant resources that the provincial government has to engage in these consultations in French so that Franco-African communities from all across the province can participate meaningfully in these consultations. I look forward to the minister providing my constituents and all constituents who have a stake in this process much more meaningful detail with respect to how future consultations will be undertaken and ensuring that French language resources are available so that those communities can participate meaningfully in the consultation process.

I do want to move on now, if I may, to some of the concerns that my friends here on this side have raised with respect to some of the changes that the government is making to civil forfeiture in this province. A number of the concerns that have been raised are not new to this Chamber.

In fact, in doing a little bit of research for my comments on this bill, I found an *Edmonton Journal* column written by now Senator Paula Simons, dated March 26, 2015. At that time the Progressive Conservative government under Jim Prentice was considering changes to the civil forfeiture act, making significant changes to the process of civil forfeiture. In that column, Mr. Speaker, she notes that when civil forfeiture was first enacted in this province, in 2008, the victims of crime were made big promises with respect to financial resources that would be made available to them as a result of enacting civil forfeiture and using the proceeds of the civil forfeiture process to support victims of crime. As of 2015, when then columnist Paula Simons wrote the column, those promises had largely been unkept. Then, in 2015, at that time the Prentice government was considering expanding civil forfeiture in the province, so she was asking the question as to whether or not the

promises that had been made to victims of crime would be met this time.

I think it bears repeating the question now. Will victims of crime be the beneficiaries of the proceeds of civil forfeiture? We know that this government has made significant changes to the victims of crime fund. They've taken money out of the victims of crime fund. They've significantly increased the competition for the existing funds in the victims of crime fund by changing the legislation, allowing many more organizations to compete for very scarce funds. I hope that somebody, the Justice minister or members of Executive Council, can tell us exactly what they plan to do in terms of supporting victims of crime, if anything at all, with the proceeds of the expanded powers of civil forfeiture that they're bringing forward here.

One of the other issues that Paula Simons raised in that column is the perverse incentives that civil forfeiture could potentially create for police forces in this province to use those powers improperly. In her column she points to a U.S. example of Ferguson, Missouri, a jurisdiction that at that time had undergone significant police funding cuts from its government, and that police department turned to using the proceeds of civil forfeiture to fund its ongoing operations. Paula Simons, in that column, raises some concerns that experts had raised with that issue of creating the perverse incentive for police services to actively pursue these kinds of civil forfeiture proceedings so that they could fund their own operations.

The problem with that, Mr. Speaker, is that, you know, declaring civil forfeiture, getting a – not a conviction. Forgive me. I'm not a lawyer, so I don't get the words right all the time. But in order to have a successful claim of civil forfeiture, you only need to prove on the balance of probabilities that the person who owns the property under consideration is guilty of a crime. One lawyer that I saw commenting on civil forfeiture in general is saying that under the civil forfeiture process, your money is presumed guilty until it's proven innocent, which is very different from the criminal presumption of innocence, right? So it's much easier to successfully complete a civil forfeiture claim and get that person's property and not necessarily even charge that person with a crime or successfully convict that person of a crime.

The risk that Paula Simons and a number of experts on civil forfeiture raised at that time, and that I think still hasn't been adequately addressed by the Justice minister or members of Executive Council, is whether or not expanding the processes of civil forfeiture will enhance this perverse incentive that police forces may have to use this process to fund their ongoing operations. It's certainly a relevant question now, given the fact that the government has significantly reduced police budgets over the last year and a half. I'm only asking the question of whether or not the government is using this process of . . .

The Acting Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

Standing Order 29(2)(a) is available. I see the hon. Member for Edmonton-Ellerslie has risen.

Member Loyola: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the member was in the middle of his thoughts regarding civil forfeiture, and I think that they're very important concerns that he has, that he's trying to bring to the attention of this front bench, I would ask that he continue with his remarks, please.

The Acting Speaker: The hon. member, should you choose to accept.

Mr. Schmidt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I want to thank my friend from Edmonton-Ellerslie for asking me the question that will

allow me to complete my thought on this matter. I was raising the issue of the significant police force budget cuts that this government has imposed upon police forces in this province and just asking the question of whether or not this is the government's way of getting out of their responsibility of funding police services properly and then creating this incentive through expanding the processes of civil forfeiture to allow police to find the money to keep the lights on and keep officers on the road through this process of seizing people's property through civil forfeiture.

4:20

These are legitimate concerns. We've raised them all here several times already this afternoon and in previous debate around this bill, and I really look forward to somebody from Executive Council and even the Justice minister, should he choose to, to answer some of these questions because my constituents would really like to know.

Thank you.

The Acting Speaker: Any other takers, with about three minutes left?

Seeing none, are there any other members looking to join debate. I see the hon. Member for Edmonton-Ellerslie has risen.

Member Loyola: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to, first, begin by concentrating my remarks on the fact that on this side of the House we support – unequivocally we support – indigenous self-determination. I believe that something really important for all of us to understand is that with the imposition of the Indian Act over indigenous communities across Canada, essentially what was happening was that these communities were being oppressed. Now, regardless of the fact that treaties were signed and that it was a nation-to-nation agreement that we were supposed to live on this land together, work towards a common future for all of us together, that's not the way that things worked out.

It had to do with the fact that because of a Eurocentric perspective, when it came to actually negotiating and then relating with First Nations people, that Eurocentric mindset was then imposed upon them, and with that came the fact that if the government of the time was actually going to enter into any kind of discussion, consultation with indigenous communities, it had to be through chief and council. Not a lot of people know that, in fact, that was an imposition of the Indian Act by the Canadian government at the time.

So I think it's really important that when we talk about indigenous self-determination, we also – and I say this as treaty people – take the time to understand the political, cultural, and even the spiritual understanding and vision that isn't necessarily homogeneous across Canada. I understand that that makes it difficult. When we decided that we were going to respectfully enter into treaty with indigenous nations across this land, then we should have done the homework to make sure that we relate to them in the way that they are used to organizing themselves socially, culturally, politically, and economically. The reason why I state this is because, as we all know – and I'm sure that members on the other side know this well –

elders play such an important role in indigenous communities. When discussions are being had, elders are always there. In some specifically it's the clan mothers that are there and are actually making the decisions; it's not the person that they named as chief. I mean, yes, that person has a legitimate role.

The other aspect that I want to share with you all is the fact that in a lot of indigenous communities there were different leaders and leaders for different tasks – how could I put it? – leaders for different aspects of the daily living. The decision-making was a lot more spread out throughout the community, and one could even say more democratic than what was being imposed by the Indian Act, which was requesting that every community have but one chief and a council, and they were going to be the only ones that were going to be consulted when it came to relating and understanding and the way that the law was going to affect indigenous people across Canada.

I respectfully ask members of this House that – I know that they know some things, but, you know, here's the thing with knowledge, as we well know. We know what we know, and we even know certain things that we don't know, but the amazing thing about it all is that there are certain things that we don't even know that we don't know. This is where we need to explore, not only as human beings, what we don't know that we don't know, but as elected representatives we have the responsibility, and we need to do the due diligence. The way that we do that is by interacting and having conversations, consulting with our constituents because they are bringing perspectives to us that perhaps we have not had the opportunity to even consider.

This is really, in my humble opinion, Mr. Speaker, what our role as elected representatives should be. I would even go so far as to say that, yes, I stand before you as a human being with a specific religion and even a specific ideology, but I'm not here in this House to only push my own ideology. I have the added responsibility of going out there and expanding and opening my mind and learning about the things that at this time I don't even know that I don't know.

When it comes to indigenous culture, when it comes to indigenous cosmology, when it comes to indigenous spiritual understanding about how they are connected to the earth, our Mother Earth, I think it's imperative that all members of this House and members of all Legislatures and parliaments take that responsibility seriously when it comes to consulting and having relationships with indigenous peoples in those indigenous communities across this land because it's the only way that we're really going to understand how the laws that we come up with in this House impact those very communities. If we truly want to be respectful when it comes to the calls to action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, then we need to have that firm understanding as we move forward.

The Acting Speaker: I hesitate to interrupt the hon. member. However, taking note of the time, it is 4:30. Under Standing Order 4(2) we are adjourned until Monday afternoon at 1:30.

[The Assembly adjourned at 4:30 p.m.]

Bill Status Report for the 30th Legislature - 2nd Session (2020)

Activity to Thursday, October 29, 2020

The Bill sponsor's name is in brackets following the Bill title. If it is a money Bill, (\$) will appear between the title and the sponsor's name. Numbers following each Reading refer to Hansard pages where the text of debates is found; dates for each Reading are in brackets following the page numbers. Bills numbered 1 to 200 are Government Bills. Bills numbered 201 or higher are Private Members' Public Bills. Bills numbered with a "Pr" prefix are Private Bills.

* An asterisk beside a Bill number indicates an amendment was passed to that Bill; the Committee line shows the precise date of the amendment.

The date a Bill comes into force is indicated in square brackets after the date of Royal Assent. If a Bill comes into force "on proclamation," "with exceptions," or "on various dates," please contact Legislative Counsel, Alberta Justice, for details at 780.427.2217. The chapter number assigned to the Bill is entered immediately following the date the Bill comes into force. SA indicates Statutes of Alberta; this is followed by the year in which it is included in the statutes, and its chapter number. Please note, Private Bills are not assigned chapter number until the conclusion of the Fall Sittings.

Bill 1 — Critical Infrastructure Defence Act (Kenney)

First Reading — 4 (*Feb. 25, 2020 aft., passed*)
Second Reading — 12-18 (*Feb. 26, 2020 morn.*), 96-98 (*Mar. 2, 2020 aft.*), 791-98 (*May 27, 2020 morn., passed*)
Committee of the Whole — 859-91 (*May 28, 2020 morn., passed*)
Third Reading — 861-69 (*May 28, 2020 morn., passed on division*)
Royal Assent — (*Jun. 17, 2020 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force June 17, 2020; SA 2020 cC-32.7]

Bill 2* — Gaming, Liquor and Cannabis Amendment Act, 2020 (Hunter)

First Reading — 30 (*Feb. 26, 2020 aft., passed*)
Second Reading — 857-58 (*May 28, 2020 morn.*), 1004-09 (*Jun. 2, 2020 aft., passed*)
Committee of the Whole — 1238-44 (*Jun. 9, 2020 eve., passed with amendments*)
Third Reading — 1364-70 (*Jun. 15, 2020 eve., passed*)
Royal Assent — (*Jun. 17, 2020 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force June 17, 2020; SA 2020 c9]

Bill 3 — Mobile Home Sites Tenancies Amendment Act, 2020 (Glubish)

First Reading — 30 (*Feb. 26, 2020 aft., passed*)
Second Reading — 431-46 (*Apr. 7, 2020 morn.*), 458-65 (*Apr. 7, 2020 aft., passed*)
Committee of the Whole — 465-76 (*Apr. 7, 2020 aft.*), 477-507 (*Apr. 7, 2020 eve.*), 572-83 (*Apr. 8, 2020 eve.*), 659-66 (*May 6, 2020 morn., passed*)
Third Reading — 703-09 (*May 7, 2020 morn., passed*)
Royal Assent — (*May 12, 2020 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2020 c8]

Bill 4 — Fiscal Planning and Transparency (Fixed Budget Period) Amendment Act, 2020 (Toews)

First Reading — 62 (*Feb. 27, 2020 aft., passed*)
Second Reading — 858 (*May 28, 2020 morn.*), 869-75 (*May 28, 2020 morn.*), 933-35 (*Jun. 1, 2020 aft.*), 970-72 (*Jun. 1, 2020 eve.*), 1040-43 (*Jun. 2, 2020 eve.*), 1077 (*Jun. 3, 2020 aft., passed*)
Committee of the Whole — 1257-66 (*Jun. 10, 2020 aft.*), 1311-16 (*Jun. 11, 2020 aft., passed*)
Third Reading — 1442 (*Jun. 17, 2020 aft.*), 1452-55 (*Jun. 17, 2020 aft., passed on division*)
Royal Assent — (*Jun. 26, 2020 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force June 26, 2020; SA 2020 c14]

Bill 5 — Fiscal Measures and Taxation Act, 2020 (Toews)

First Reading — 110 (*Mar. 3, 2020 aft., passed*)
Second Reading — 224-32 (*Mar. 17, 2020 aft., passed on division*), 222-23 (*Mar. 17, 2020 aft.*)
Committee of the Whole — 232-33 (*Mar. 17, 2020 aft.*), 234-41 (*Mar. 17, 2020 aft., passed*)
Third Reading — 241 (*Mar. 17, 2020 aft.*), 242-48 (*Mar. 17, 2020 aft., passed*)
Royal Assent — (*Mar. 20, 2020 outside of House Sitting*) [Comes into force on various dates; SA 2020 c3]

Bill 6 — Appropriation Act, 2020 (\$) (Toews)

First Reading — 215 (*Mar. 17, 2020 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 216-22 (*Mar. 17, 2020 aft., passed on division*)

Committee of the Whole — 222 (*Mar. 17, 2020 aft., deemed passed on division*)

Third Reading — 222 (*Mar. 17, 2020 aft., deemed passed on division*)

Royal Assent — (*Mar. 20, 2020 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force March 20, 2020; SA 2020 c1]

Bill 7 — Responsible Energy Development Amendment Act, 2020 (Savage)

First Reading — 827 (*May 27, 2020 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 858-59 (*May 28, 2020 morn.*), 891-99 (*May 28, 2020 aft.*), 972-76 (*Jun. 1, 2020 eve., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 1266-72 (*Jun. 10, 2020 aft.*), 1370-75 (*Jun. 15, 2020 eve.*), 1406-11 (*Jun. 16, 2020 aft.*), 1413 (*Jun. 16, 2020 eve.*), 1479-81 (*Jun. 17, 2020 eve.*), 1539-40 (*Jun. 22, 2020 eve., passed*)

Third Reading — 1636-37 (*Jun. 24, 2020 aft., adjourned*), 1678-79 (*Jun. 25, 2020 aft., passed*)

Royal Assent — (*Jun. 26, 2020 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force June 26, 2020; SA 2020 c16]

Bill 8* — Protecting Survivors of Human Trafficking Act (Schweitzer)

First Reading — 431 (*Apr. 7, 2020 morn., passed*)

Second Reading — 509-21 (*Apr. 8, 2020 morn.*), 551-58 (*Apr. 8, 2020 aft.*), 559-72 (*Apr. 8, 2020 eve., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 593-618 (*Apr. 8, 2020 eve.*), 671-73 (*May 6, 2020 morn., passed with amendments*)

Third Reading — 709-12 (*May 7, 2020 morn., passed*)

Royal Assent — (*May 12, 2020 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force May 12, 2020, except Part 2, which comes into force on July 1, 2020; SA 2020 cP-26.87]

Bill 9 — Emergency Management Amendment Act, 2020 (Madu)

First Reading — 276 (*Mar. 20, 2020 morn., passed*)

Second Reading — 277-80 (*Mar. 20, 2020 morn., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 280-82 (*Mar. 20, 2020 morn., passed*)

Third Reading — 282-83 (*Mar. 20, 2020 morn., passed*)

Royal Assent — (*Mar. 20, 2020 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force March 20, 2020; SA 2020 c2]

Bill 10 — Public Health (Emergency Powers) Amendment Act, 2020 (Shandro)

First Reading — 296-97 (*Mar. 31, 2020 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 307-20 (*Apr. 1, 2020 morn.*), 337-44 (*Apr. 1, 2020 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 354-57 (*Apr. 1, 2020 aft.*), 407-09 (*Apr. 2, 2020 morn.*), 426-28 (*Apr. 2, 2020 aft., passed*)

Third Reading — 428-29 (*Apr. 2, 2020 aft., passed on division*)

Royal Assent — (*Apr. 2, 2020 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force April 2, 2020; certain sections took effect on earlier dates; SA 2020 c5]

Bill 11 — Tenancies Statutes (Emergency Provisions) Amendment Act, 2020 (Glubish)

First Reading — 297 (*Mar. 31, 2020 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 298-301 (*Mar. 31, 2020 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 301-03 (*Mar. 31, 2020 aft., passed*)

Third Reading — 303-05 (*Mar. 31, 2020 aft., passed*)

Royal Assent — (*Apr. 2, 2020 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force on various dates; SA 2020 c6]

Bill 12 — Liabilities Management Statutes Amendment Act, 2020 (Savage)

First Reading — 297 (*Mar. 31, 2020 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 320-25 (*Apr. 1, 2020 morn.*), 344-49 (*Apr. 1, 2020 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 350-54 (*Apr. 1, 2020 aft.*), 401-05 (*Apr. 2, 2020 morn., passed*)

Third Reading — 406 (*Apr. 2, 2020 morn., passed*)

Royal Assent — (*Apr. 2, 2020 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2020 c4]

Bill 13 — Emergency Management Amendment Act, 2020 (No. 2) (Madu)

First Reading — 431 (*Apr. 7, 2020 morn., passed*)

Second Reading — 521-26 (*Apr. 8, 2020 morn.*), 537-51 (*Apr. 8, 2020 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 583-93 (*Apr. 8, 2020 eve.*), 619-35 (*Apr. 9, 2020 morn.*), 648-57 (*Apr. 9, 2020 aft.*), 673-74 (*May 6, 2020 morn.*), 688-99 (*May 6, 2020 aft., passed*)

Third Reading — 699-701 (*May 6, 2020 aft., passed*)

Royal Assent — (*May 12, 2020 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force May 12, 2020, with exceptions; SA 2020 c7]

Bill 14 — Utility Payment Deferral Program Act (Nally)

First Reading — 687 (*May 6, 2020 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 724-45 (*May 7, 2020 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 758-86 (*May 8, 2020 morn., passed*)

Third Reading — 786-90 (*May 8, 2020 morn., passed on division*)

Royal Assent — (*May 12, 2020 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force May 12, 2020, with certain provisions having effect as of March 18, 2020; SA 2020 cU-4]

Bill 15 — Choice in Education Act, 2020 (LaGrange)

First Reading — 887-88 (*May 28, 2020 aft, passed*)

Second Reading — 937-54 (*Jun. 1, 2020 eve.*), 1011-40 (*Jun. 2, 2020 eve.*), 1058-67 (*Jun. 3, 2020 aft.*), 1228-38 (*Jun. 9, 2020 eve., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 1375-78 (*Jun. 15, 2020 eve.*), 1470-79 (*Jun. 17, 2020 eve.*), 1541-51 (*Jun. 22, 2020 eve.*), 1575-88 (*Jun. 23, 2020 aft.*), 1620-25 (*Jun. 24, 2020 aft.*), 1639-47 (*Jun. 24, 2020 eve., passed*)

Third Reading — 1657-59 (*Jun. 24, 2020 eve., passed on division*)

Royal Assent — (*Jun. 26, 2020 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force September 1, 2020; SA 2020 c11]

Bill 16 — Victims of Crime (Strengthening Public Safety) Amendment Act, 2020 (Schweitzer)

First Reading — 888 (*May 28, 2020 aft, passed*)

Second Reading — 954-70 (*Jun. 1, 2020 eve.*), 1109-12 (*Jun. 3, 2020 eve.*), 1127-35 (*Jun. 4, 2020 aft.*), 1179-81 (*Jun. 8, 2020 eve.*), 1209-22 (*Jun. 9, 2020 aft.*), 1285-96 (*Jun. 10, 2020 eve., passed on division*)

Committee of the Whole — 1428-29 (*Jun. 16, 2020 eve.*), 1455-59 (*Jun. 17, 2020 aft.*), 1551-55 (*Jun. 22, 2020 eve.*), 1588-90 (*Jun. 23, 2020 aft.*), 1647-50 (*Jun. 24, 2020 eve., passed*)

Third Reading — 1676-78 (*Jun. 25, 2020 aft., passed on division*)

Royal Assent — (*Jun. 26, 2020 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force June 26, 2020, with exceptions; SA 2020 c18]

Bill 17 — Mental Health Amendment Act, 2020 (Shandro)

First Reading — 1125 (*Jun. 4, 2020 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1203-09 (*Jun. 9, 2020 aft.*), 1272-74 (*Jun. 10, 2020 aft.*), 1316-23 (*Jun. 11, 2020 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 1396-1406 (*Jun. 16, 2020 aft.*), 1413 (*Jun. 16, 2020 eve.*), 1461-70 (*Jun. 17, 2020 eve.*), 1605-08 (*Jun. 23, 2020 eve.*), 1630-36 (*Jun. 24, 2020 aft.*), 1650-54 (*Jun. 24, 2020 eve., passed*)

Third Reading — 1675-76 (*Jun. 25, 2020 aft., passed*)

Royal Assent — (*Jun. 26, 2020 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force on proclamation, with exceptions; certain sections come into force on June 26, 2020; SA 2020 c15]

Bill 18 — Corrections (Alberta Parole Board) Amendment Act, 2020 (Schweitzer)

First Reading — 912 (*Jun. 1, 2020 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 989-1004 (*Jun. 2, 2020 aft.*), 1011 (*Jun. 2, 2020 eve., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 1413-24 (*Jun. 16, 2020 eve., passed*)

Third Reading — 1655 (*Jun. 24, 2020 eve., passed*)

Royal Assent — (*Jun. 26, 2020 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2020 c12]

Bill 19 — Tobacco and Smoking Reduction Amendment Act, 2020 (Shandro)

First Reading — 989 (*Jun. 2, 2020 aft, passed*)

Second Reading — 1079-98 (*Jun. 3, 2020 eve., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 1424-28 (*Jun. 16, 2020 eve., passed*)

Third Reading — 1495-97 (*Jun. 18, 2020 aft.*), 1555-56 (*Jun. 22, 2020 eve., passed*)

Royal Assent — (*Jun. 26, 2020 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2020 c17]

Bill 20 — Real Estate Amendment Act, 2020 (Glubish)

First Reading — 1057 (*Jun. 3, 2020 aft, passed*)

Second Reading — 1125-27 (*Jun. 4, 2020 aft.*), 1169-79 (*Jun. 8, 2020 eve., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 1185-90 (*Jun. 8, 2020 eve., passed*)

Third Reading — 1279-85 (*Jun. 10, 2020 eve., passed*)

Royal Assent — (*Jun. 17, 2020 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2020 c10]

Bill 21* — Provincial Administrative Penalties Act (Schweitzer)

First Reading — 1125 (*Jun. 4, 2020 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1181-85 (*Jun. 8, 2020 eve.*), 1296-97 (*Jun. 10, 2020 eve.*), 1355-57 (*Jun. 15, 2020 aft.*), 1442-52 (*Jun. 17, 2020 aft.*), 1819-22 (*Jul. 8, 2020 morn., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 1983-99 (*Jul. 14, 2020 aft.*), 2071-74 (*Jul. 15, 2020 eve., passed with amendments*)

Third Reading — 2264-68 (*Jul. 21, 2020 eve., passed*)

Royal Assent — (*Jul. 23, 2020 aft.*) [Comes into force on proclamation, with exceptions; SA 2020 cP-30.8]

Bill 22 — Red Tape Reduction Implementation Act, 2020 (Hunter)

First Reading — 1301-02 (*Jun. 11, 2020 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1591-95 (*Jun. 23, 2020 eve.*), 1655-57 (*Jun. 24, 2020 eve., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 1798-1804 (*Jul. 7, 2020 eve.*), 1879 (*Jul. 8, 2020 eve.*), 1939-57 (*Jul. 13, 2020 eve.*), 1965-66 (*Jul. 13, 2020 eve., passed*)

Third Reading — 2050-51 (*Jul. 15, 2020 aft.*), 2053-59 (*Jul. 15, 2020 aft., passed*)

Royal Assent — (*Jul. 23, 2020 aft.*) [Comes into force on various dates; SA 2020 c25]

Bill 23* — Commercial Tenancies Protection Act (Fir)

First Reading — 1392 (*Jun. 16, 2020 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1529-35 (*Jun. 22, 2020 aft.*), 1601-05 (*Jun. 23, 2020 eve., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 1879-80 (*Jul. 8, 2020 eve., passed with amendments*)

Third Reading — 2181-83 (*Jul. 20, 2020 eve., passed*)

Royal Assent — (*Jul. 23, 2020 aft.*) [Comes into force July 23, 2020, with certain sections taking effect March 17, 2020; SA 2020 cC-19.5]

Bill 24 — COVID-19 Pandemic Response Statutes Amendment Act, 2020 (Shandro)

First Reading — 1494 (*Jun. 18, 2020 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1537-39 (*Jun. 22, 2020 eve.*), 1569-75 (*Jun. 23, 2020 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 1625-30 (*Jun. 24, 2020 aft., passed*)

Third Reading — 1679-81 (*Jun. 25, 2020 aft., passed on division*)

Royal Assent — (*Jun. 26, 2020 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force June 26, 2020, with certain sections taking effect on earlier dates; SA 2020 c13]

Bill 25 — Protecting Alberta Industry From Theft Act, 2020 (Schweitzer)

First Reading — 1494 (*Jun. 18, 2020 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1719-35 (*Jul. 6, 2020 eve., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 1804-05 (*Jul. 7, 2020 eve., passed*)

Third Reading — 1904-05 (*Jul. 9, 2020 aft.*), 2031-32 (*Jul. 14, 2020 eve., passed*)

Royal Assent — (*Jul. 23, 2020 aft.*) [Comes into force on various dates; SA 2020 c24]

Bill 26 — Constitutional Referendum Amendment Act, 2020 (Schweitzer)

First Reading — 1568 (*Jun. 23, 2020 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1735-41 (*Jul. 6, 2020 eve.*), 1764-72 (*Jul. 7, 2020 aft.*), 1845-56 (*Jul. 8, 2020 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 1964-65 (*Jul. 13, 2020 eve., passed*)

Third Reading — 2081-86 (*Jul. 15, 2020 eve., passed*)

Royal Assent — (*Jul. 23, 2020 aft.*) [Comes into force July 23, 2020; SA 2020 c20]

Bill 27 — Alberta Senate Election Amendment Act, 2020 (Schweitzer)

First Reading — 1568 (*Jun. 23, 2020 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1741-47 (*Jul. 6, 2020 eve.*), 1772-79 (*Jul. 7, 2020 aft.*), 1822-27 (*Jul. 8, 2020 morn.*), 1899-1904 (*Jul. 9, 2020 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 1999-2001 (*Jul. 14, 2020 aft.*), 2074-76 (*Jul. 15, 2020 eve., passed*)

Third Reading — 2076-81 (*Jul. 15, 2020 eve., passed*)

Royal Assent — (*Jul. 23, 2020 aft.*) [Comes into force July 23, 2020; SA 2020 c19]

Bill 28 — Vital Statistics (Protecting Albertans from Convicted Sex Offenders) Amendment Act, 2020 (Glubish)

First Reading — 1619 (*Jun. 24, 2020 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1704-17 (*Jul. 6, 2020 aft.*), 1779-82 (*Jul. 7, 2020 aft.*), 1856-60 (*Jul. 8, 2020 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 1880-82 (*Jul. 8, 2020 eve., passed*)

Third Reading — 1896-99 (*Jul. 9, 2020 aft., passed*)

Royal Assent — (*Jul. 23, 2020 aft.*) [Comes into force July 23, 2020; SA 2020 c26]

Bill 29 — Local Authorities Election Amendment Act, 2020 (Madu)

First Reading — 1619-20 (*Jun. 24, 2020 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1784-97 (*Jul. 7, 2020 eve.*), 1962-63 (*Jul. 13, 2020 eve., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 2163-81 (*Jul. 20, 2020 eve., passed*)

Third Reading — 2239-64 (*Jul. 21, 2020 eve., passed on division*)

Royal Assent — (*Jul. 23, 2020 aft.*) [Comes into force September 1, 2020; SA 2020 c22]

Bill 30* — Health Statutes Amendment Act, 2020 (Shandro)

First Reading — 1695 (*Jul. 6, 2020 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1783-84 (*Jul. 7, 2020 eve.*), 2032-37 (*Jul. 14, 2020 eve.*), 2086-2103 (*Jul. 15, 2020 eve.*), 2189-97 (*Jul. 20, 2020 eve.*), 2210-27 (*Jul. 21, 2020 aft.*), 2289-96 (*Jul. 22, 2020 aft.*), 2313-28 (*Jul. 22, 2020 eve.*), 2360-61 (*Jul. 23, 2020 aft., passed on division*)

Committee of the Whole — 2432-475 (*Jul. 27, 2020 eve.*), 2512-20 (*Jul. 28, 2020 aft.*), 2523-31 (*Jul. 28, 2020 eve., passed with amendments*)

Third Reading — 2539-61 (*Jul. 28, 2020 eve.*), 2562-69 (*Jul. 28, 2020 eve., passed on division*)

Royal Assent — (*Jul. 29, 2020 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force July 29, 2020, with exceptions; SA 2020 c27]

Bill 31 — Environmental Protection Statutes Amendment Act, 2020 (Nixon, JJ)

First Reading — 1760 (*Jul. 7, 2020 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1878 (*Jul. 8, 2020 eve.*), 2023-31 (*Jul. 14, 2020 eve., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 2233-39 (*Jul. 21, 2020 eve., passed*)

Third Reading — 2309-12 (*Jul. 22, 2020 eve., passed*)

Royal Assent — (*Jul. 23, 2020 aft.*) [Comes into force July 23, 2020; SA 2020 c21]

Bill 32 — Restoring Balance in Alberta's Workplaces Act, 2020 (Copping)

First Reading — 1760 (*Jul. 7, 2020 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1861-63 (*Jul. 8, 2020 eve.*), 2003-23 (*Jul. 14, 2020 eve.*), 2051-53 (*Jul. 15, 2020 aft.*), 2059-69 (*Jul. 15, 2020 aft.*), 2147-62 (*Jul. 20, 2020 aft.*), 2268-73 (*Jul. 21, 2020 eve.*), 2296-307 (*Jul. 22, 2020 aft.*), 2328-40 (*Jul. 22, 2020 eve.*), 2361-63 (*Jul. 23, 2020 aft., passed on division*)

Committee of the Whole — 2404-32 (*Jul. 27, 2020 eve.*), 2475-85 (*Jul. 27, 2020 eve.*), 2502-12 (*Jul. 28, 2020 aft.*), 2531-39 (*Jul. 28, 2020 eve., passed*)

Third Reading — 2569-78 (*Jul. 28, 2020 eve.*), 2579-86 (*Jul. 28, 2020 eve., passed on division*)

Royal Assent — (*Jul. 29, 2020 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force on various dates; SA 2020 c28]

Bill 33* — Alberta Investment Attraction Act (Fir)

First Reading — 1760-61 (*Jul. 7, 2020 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1807-19 (*Jul. 8, 2020 morn.*), 1927-37 (*Jul. 13, 2020 aft.*), 2117-27 (*Jul. 16, 2020 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 2227-31 (*Jul. 21, 2020 aft.*), 2233 (*Jul. 21, 2020 eve.*), 2340-44 (*Jul. 22, 2020 eve.*), 2312-13 (*Jul. 22, 2020 eve.*), 2363-65 (*Jul. 23, 2020 aft., passed with amendments*)

Third Reading — 2401-04 (*Jul. 27, 2020 eve.*), 2485-88 (*Jul. 27, 2020 eve., passed on division*)

Royal Assent — (*Jul. 29, 2020 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2020 cA-26.4]

Bill 34 — Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, 2020 (Nixon, JJ)

First Reading — 1839 (*Jul. 8, 2020 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1966-69 (*Jul. 13, 2020 eve.*), 2116-17 (*Jul. 16, 2020 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 2117 (*Jul. 16, 2020 aft., passed*)

Third Reading — 2312 (*Jul. 22, 2020 eve., passed*)

Royal Assent — (*Jul. 23, 2020 aft.*) [Comes into force on various dates; SA 2020 c23]

Bill 35 — Tax Statutes (Creating Jobs and Driving Innovation) Amendment Act, 2020 (Toews)

First Reading — 2616 (*Oct. 20, 2020 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 2666-81 (*Oct. 21, 2020 aft.*), 2741-55 (*Oct. 26, 2020 eve.*), 2803-15 (*Oct. 27, 2020 eve.*), 2841-47 (*Oct. 28, 2020 aft.*), 2860-69 (*Oct. 28, 2020 eve., adjourned on amendment*)

Bill 36 — Geothermal Resource Development Act (Savage)

First Reading — 2616 (*Oct. 20, 2020 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 2696-2706 (*Oct. 22, 2020 aft.*), 2755-60 (*Oct. 26, 2020 eve., adjourned*)

Bill 37 — Builders' Lien (Prompt Payment) Amendment Act, 2020 (Glubish)

First Reading — 2665 (*Oct. 21, 2020 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 2774-84 (*Oct. 27, 2020 aft.*), 2828-38 (*Oct. 28, 2020 aft., passed*)

Bill 38 — Justice Statutes Amendment Act, 2020 (Madu)

First Reading — 2665-66 (*Oct. 21, 2020 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 2795-2800 (*Oct. 27, 2020 eve.*), 2838-41 (*Oct. 28, 2020 aft.*), 2884-93 (*Oct. 29, 2020 aft., adjourned*)

Bill 39 — Child Care Licensing (Early Learning and Child Care) Amendment Act, 2020 (Schulz)

First Reading — 2827 (*Oct. 28, 2020 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 2883-84 (*Oct. 29, 2020 aft., adjourned*)

Bill 40 — Forests (Growing Alberta's Forest Sector) Amendment Act, 2020 (Dreeshen)

First Reading — 2696 (*Oct. 22, 2020 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 2784-93 (*Oct. 27, 2020 aft.*), 2800-03 (*Oct. 27, 2020 eve.*), 2849-59 (*Oct. 28, 2020 eve., adjourned*)

Bill 41 — Insurance (Enhancing Driver Affordability and Care) Amendment Act, 2020 (Toews)

First Reading — 2882 (*Oct. 29, 2020 aft., passed*)

Bill 201 — Strategic Aviation Advisory Council Act (Gotfried)

First Reading — 62 (*Feb. 27, 2020 aft., passed; referred to the Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills*), 136 (*Mar. 5, 2020 aft., reported to Assembly*)

Second Reading — 914-26 (*Jun. 1, 2020 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 1156-61 (*Jun. 8, 2020 aft.*), 1337-47 (*Jun. 15, 2020 aft., passed*)

Third Reading — 1514-22 (*Jun. 22, 2020 aft., passed*)

Royal Assent — (*Jun. 26, 2020 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force December 31, 2020; SA 2020 cS-19.8]

Bill 202 — Conflicts of Interest (Protecting the Rule of Law) Amendment Act, 2020 (Ganley)

First Reading — 136 (*Mar. 5, 2020 aft., passed; referred to the Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills*), 1149-56 (*Jun. 2, 2020 aft., reported to Assembly;*), 1156 (*Jun. 8, 2020 aft., not proceeded with on division*)

Bill 203 — Pension Protection Act (Gray)

First Reading — 1148 (*Jun. 8, 2020 aft., passed; referred to the Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills*), 1839 (*Jul. 8, 2020 aft., reported to Assembly; not proceeded with*)

Bill 204 — Voluntary Blood Donations Repeal Act (Yao)

First Reading — 1839 (*Jul. 8, 2020 aft., passed; referred to the Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills*), 2288 (*Jul. 22, 2020 aft., reported to Assembly*)

Second Reading — 2379-93 (*Jul. 27, 2020 aft., passed on division*)

Committee of the Whole — 2720-33 (*Oct. 26, 2020 aft., adjourned*)

Bill 205 — Genocide Remembrance, Condemnation and Prevention Month Act (Singh)

First Reading — 2718 (*Oct. 26, 2020 aft., passed; referred to the Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills*)

Bill 206 — Property Rights Statutes Amendment Act, 2020 (Barnes)

First Reading — 2827 (*Oct. 28, 2020 aft.*)

Bill Pr1 — The Sisters of the Precious Blood of Edmonton Repeal Act (Williams)

First Reading — 1125 (*Jun. 4, 2020 aft., passed*)

Table of Contents

Prayers	2871
Introduction of Visitors	2871
Introduction of Guests	2871
Members' Statements	
Job Creation	2871
Rt. Hon. Don Mazankowski	2871
NDP and the Alberta Federation of Labour	2872
Hydrogen Strategy	2872
Child Care	2872
Alberta Separatism	2872
French Policy Action Plan	2873
Alberta Newsprint Company	2873
Self-reliance and Preparedness	2873
Oral Question Period	
COVID-19 Testing	2874
COVID-19 Cases in Schools	2874
Climate Change Strategy	2875
Child Care	2876, 2880
Automobile Insurance Premiums	2877
Support for Small Businesses Affected by COVID-19	2877
Provincial Diploma Examination Exemptions	2878
Postsecondary Education Funding	2878
South Edmonton Hospital Construction Project	2879
Skilled Trades	2880
Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped	2881
Educational Curriculum Review and Redesign	2881
Presenting Petitions	2882
Introduction of Bills	
Bill 41 Insurance (Enhancing Driver Affordability and Care) Amendment Act, 2020	2882
Tabling Returns and Reports	2882
Orders of the Day	2883
Government Bills and Orders	
Second Reading	
Bill 39 Child Care Licensing (Early Learning and Child Care) Amendment Act, 2020	2883
Bill 38 Justice Statutes Amendment Act, 2020	2884

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

For inquiries contact:

Editor

Alberta Hansard

3rd Floor, 9820 – 107 St

EDMONTON, AB T5K 1E7

Telephone: 780.427.1875

E-mail: AlbertaHansard@assembly.ab.ca