



Province of Alberta

The 30th Legislature
Second Session

Alberta Hansard

Thursday afternoon, November 5, 2020

Day 64

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)
Dreeshen, Hon. Devin, Innisfail-Sylvan Lake (UCP)
Eggen, David, Edmonton-North West (NDP),
Official Opposition Whip
Ellis, Mike, Calgary-West (UCP),
Government Whip
Feehan, Richard, Edmonton-Rutherford (NDP)
Fir, 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	Philip Massolin, Clerk of Committees and Research Services	Amanda LeBlanc, Deputy Editor of <i>Alberta Hansard</i>
Teri Cherkewich, Law Clerk	Nancy Robert, Research Officer	Chris Caughell, Sergeant-at-Arms
Stephanie LeBlanc, Clerk Assistant and Senior Parliamentary Counsel	Janet Schwegel, Director of Parliamentary Programs	Tom Bell, Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms
Trafton Koenig, Senior Parliamentary Counsel		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 Dreeshen	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, November 5, 2020

[The Speaker in the chair]

Prayers

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

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. Deena Hinshaw, please refrain from joining us.

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 Speaker: Hon. members, please be seated.

Hon. members, it seems like a unique time for the Government House Leader to be rising, but I believe that there may be some discussion about perhaps a special tabling or something. The hon. Government House Leader has the call.

Mr. Jason Nixon: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday I received a letter from Windsor Castle. As such, I rise to request unanimous consent of the Assembly to read correspondence received on behalf of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and for the letter to be tabled immediately following it being read and for the text of the letter to be recorded in the Votes and Proceedings of today's sitting.

[Unanimous consent granted]

The Speaker: The hon. the Government House Leader.

Mr. Jason Nixon: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I said, from Windsor Castle, dated the 16th of October, 2020, addressed to myself.

Your Honour,

Thank you for your recent letter regarding the reintroduction of singing of 'God Save the Queen' in the Alberta Legislature. I have shown your letter to The Queen, who was grateful to be kept informed.

This message comes to you with Her Majesty's warm good wishes.

Yours sincerely,

Tom Laing-Baker

Assistant Private Secretary to The Queen.

Long may she reign.

Introduction of Guests

The Speaker: Hon. members, joining us this afternoon we have a number of guests of the Minister of Justice and the Solicitor General. I'd like to welcome Ako Ufodike, likely mispronounced,

from York University. He's the professor and the national chair of the Association of Black Conservatives.

As well, in the gallery this afternoon is a MacEwan University social work placement student from the constituency office of Edmonton-Glenora. Please welcome Destiny Roswell. Please rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

Members' Statements

Remembrance Day

Mr. Nielsen: Mr. Speaker, for more than 100 years on November 11 we pause in a moment of silence to remember the men and women who have served and continue to serve our country through times of war, conflict, and peace. The dedicated members of the nation's military are selfless servants who uphold the values of our nation and protect our freedoms and those of others here at home and around the world. Canada would not be what it is today without the more than 2.3 million individuals who have put themselves in harm's way and the more than 118,000 who have made the ultimate sacrifice.

Historically on November 11 ceremonies take place throughout the province for Albertans to gather to honour and remember our military heroes, but this year will look a bit different due to the pandemic. Large ceremonies have been cancelled and individual ceremonies at local legions have been scaled back to limit the gatherings, but that does not mean we cannot participate. Here in the city of Edmonton the event at city hall will be live streamed. The 100th anniversary ceremony at the Beverly memorial cenotaph will be streamed on their Facebook page. In Calgary services at military museums, field of crosses, and the Hangar Flight Museum will be closed to the public, but all will be live streamed as well. The same will be happening for ceremonies across the province, and I encourage all Albertans to look into what options are available to honour and support our vital military service members next Wednesday.

We cannot forget about the importance of our veterans and legions in our communities. The legions are being hit hard under the pandemic, but we can all support them by making a donation through online or via text.

To all the veterans and the members of the military, thank you. Lest we forget.

Remembrance Day

Mr. Rutherford: Mr. Speaker, 11 a.m. on November 11, 1918, marked the end of the First World War. Since the first Armistice Day a year later we have gathered on what is now Remembrance Day to remember the fallen and those who served Canada. From victory at Vimy Ridge in 1917, a defining moment for a young nation, to the Operation Medusa offensive in Afghanistan in 2006, we honour the service and sacrifice of those who serve in uniform.

Each year rings another anniversary of a pivotal moment in our history. In 2020 we mark the 75th anniversary of the Second World War. More than 1 million Canadians served in uniform from 1939 to 1945. Of those, 42,000 lost their lives. We are fortunate to have 30,000 veterans who served in that war still with us. For these remaining survivors their time to teach us the grim lessons of war grows short.

Remembrance Day 2020 will be different. We will not gather in large numbers or stand shoulder to shoulder to witness this formal and solemn occasion, but in spirit and in personal acts of respect we will remember nonetheless. For instance, beginning October 17 schoolchildren began participating in the No Stone Left Alone event, placing poppies on the headstones of Canadians who served

our country. An inspiring tradition started in Edmonton only eight years ago has since become a national occasion. Last year more than 12,000 students participated, placing more than 64,000 poppies in cemeteries across Canada. By engaging young people with a personal act of remembrance, we are teaching them about the sacrifice and service of our military veterans and building their commitment to take part each year in Remembrance Day activities.

There are other ways to show your respect. Wear your poppy. Reach out to a veteran that you may know. Learn more about the contributions of family members of all Canadians who served. The important thing is that we remain committed to offering our respect and thanks to those who serve our country and those who sacrificed all for Canada.

Lest we forget.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Drayton Valley-Devon.

Remembrance Day

Mr. Smith: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I always remember this time of year with quiet reflection and sorrow but also with immense pride. I feel pride in our Armed Forces for the great work that they've done and continue to do to fight for freedom across this world. Serving in our Armed Forces requires courage to put oneself in harm's way for the sake of others. It also requires sacrifice. It requires the sacrifice of many of the comforts that we often take for granted when they deploy, the sacrifice of time with their family and friends. The brave men and women of our Armed Forces miss birthdays, graduations, anniversaries, and even often the birth of their children. I recognize that these sacrifices are not just theirs but of their families as well.

The trials they face while on duty for our country will often leave them scarred, both physically and mentally. They come back with challenges that many of us can scarcely imagine. Tragically, their service to our country can lead to the ultimate sacrifice, giving their lives for their country.

They serve for me, and they serve for you. They have and continue to serve for all of us in the name of freedom.

1:40

Observe the crosses row by row,
Our Fallen Soldiers lie below.
They fought in fields – some grass, some ice
For freedoms sake they paid the price.
In Flanders Field a flood so red,
Mother Nature tributes, salutes the dead.
Such gallant hearts laid to rest,
Within her great and noble breast.
Once a year we gather near,
To honour a sacrifice so dear.
In air, on land, and by the sea;
Those who upheld our liberty.
Observe the crosses row by row,
Our Fallen Soldiers lie below.
Remember them, forget them not;
For we are why they went and fought.

To the brave service members who have gone before and to those that continue to serve in their service today, thank you from the bottom of my heart for all that you've done.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Manning and the Official Opposition House Leader.

Petrochemicals Diversification

Ms Sweet: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's been over a year since the Finance minister said that economic diversification is a luxury. Since then this government has cancelled several programs to diversify our economy and create jobs. These programs range from tech and AI to renewables and petrochemicals. Most notably, they cancelled several programs to grow our petrochemical industry. It would get more value for our resources, attract investment, and create good-paying jobs in the Industrial Heartland. The UCP cancelled the partial upgrading program and the petrochemical feedstock infrastructure program, and just last week they announced they were cancelling the petrochemical diversification program. This was a suite of programs that attracted \$13 billion in private investment and 10,000 new jobs to the heartland under our government, and we intended to expand these programs in order to unlock \$75 billion in new investment and 70,000 new jobs.

But under the UCP investment into diversification has been drastically cut. They favour giving away \$4.7 billion to already-profitable corporations, only to see them invest elsewhere and lay off hard-working Albertans. Last year investment fell, our economy shrank, and 50,000 Albertans lost their jobs. All of this was before the pandemic. Now we see them doubling down on their no-jobs corporate handout as job losses in our energy sector continue to pile up.

Instead of the old and outdated thinking we see from this government, we need a new economic strategy, one that creates jobs and ensures nobody is left behind and one that treats diversification as a necessity, not a luxury. I invite all Albertans to join us in developing this strategy at albertasfuture.ca.

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

Royal Canadian Legion Poppy Campaign

Mr. Horner: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This year the Royal Canadian Legion is truly facing a new normal with fewer volunteers than usual, fewer locations to fund raise with poppies, and the concern that they will raise significantly less money this year compared to last. Due to COVID, veterans, legion members, and cadets are not setting up tables or travelling around to collect donations and hand out poppies.

Each year the legion raises over \$15 million through their poppy fundraiser, but this year there are concerns that they may not be able to cover their basic costs. The poppy fund is integral to supporting veterans and their families when they're in need. Grants can be made to pay for food, heating costs, prescriptions, essential home repairs, and emergency shelter. It helps support veterans' visits, education bursaries, cadet units, donations for relief of disasters that impact veterans, and the work of the Royal Canadian Legion.

To compensate for the pandemic and loss of volunteers, the legion is now offering touchless donation boxes so that people can pay with their debit card, credit card, or through their phones. Even if you already have your poppy, you can still donate to the poppy fund online at legion.ca/donations. If you're a small-business owner or a community organization and you would like to have a poppy collection box, you can contact the local legion branch.

The poppy is a symbol of remembrance of the brave men and women who have served and for the heroes who gave the ultimate sacrifice so that we can enjoy our freedom, democratic and fundamental rights, and our way of life. It is ironic when the white poppy movement of the left protests the sacrifices of our veterans and their families, using the rights these same veterans and fallen soldiers fought to protect. We will never stop being grateful for the service and courage that

our soldiers and veterans have and are displaying every day. The important thing this year is to wear a poppy, donate, and thank the men and women of our Canadian forces but, most of all, never forget.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Mill Woods.

Festival of Lights

Ms Gray: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of our NDP Official Opposition and as the MLA for Edmonton-Mill Woods I'm very pleased to rise in the House today to recognize that this time of year is a season for festivities for many Albertans belonging to the Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, and Jain faiths. This time of year also marks the start of a new religious year for many around the globe. Many of my constituents and thousands more across Alberta recently celebrated the nine-day religious festivities of Navaratri, followed by Dussehra, and even the festival of Karva Chauth, which just happened yesterday. Coming up soon, on Saturday, November 14, thousands of Albertans will be celebrating Diwali, the festival of lights. On that same date our Sikh neighbours will celebrate their occasion of Bandi Chhor Divas. Members of the Jain faith will also celebrate on that day, recognizing it as the day of attainment of moksha by Lord Mahavira. Similarly, the Buddhist community celebrates the day as Ashok Vijayadashami, the day when Emperor Ashoka became a Buddhist.

Clearly, this date is one of deep reverence for many in our faith communities. As Albertans we recognize it, and we celebrate alongside our neighbours as they exercise their religious freedom, something that is core to our shared Canadian experience and identity. The festival of lights marks the triumph of light over darkness, of good over evil, of hope over despair, of freedom over bondage, and of knowledge over ignorance. These are always important themes and messages but perhaps now more so than ever as COVID-19 still continues to pose serious challenges and health risks around the globe.

In a regular year, during this time, family and friends gather to light diyas, attend religious ceremonies, share meals, and exchange gifts. Things will be different this year, and families will be looking for new ways to celebrate while keeping each other safe from COVID-19. To everyone celebrating: may the festival of lights in all its forms bring hope, good health, and prosperity to all. I wish everyone the happiest of holidays across this important season.

The Speaker: I see the hon. Member for Calgary-Klein has risen.

Provincial Parks

Mr. Jeremy Nixon: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As a Calgarian, a father, and an outdoorsman I love and cherish Alberta's provincial parks. I've been visiting our parks since I was a small boy, and now I'm blessed to be able to share my love for parks with my children. I'm proud to be serving in a government that is protecting Alberta's parks for future generations.

Of course, if you were to listen to the NDP and the special-interest groups that they're beholden to, you'd believe that our government is shutting down parks, closing them, selling them, industrializing them, but nothing could be further from the truth. Recently we launched a website, My Parks Will Go On, to get the facts out. My parks will go on; my Alberta will go on: it speaks to our resiliency even after the NDP drove us into a financial iceberg during their time in office. Visit their site and you will find one picture and a field to collect data – that's it – zero information about parks.

Visit our site and you will find the facts on parks. Parks are not being sold. They are not closing. Parks remain fully protected and free from industrial development. Alberta's government is investing millions of dollars to improve our parks. That means improved campgrounds, trails, and facilities. The government is seeking more partnerships with not-for-profits, municipalities, and indigenous groups to help manage our parks.

The NDP believe that our government should be the only one managing our parks, but grassroots organizations have been doing this work since 1932, and they're just as capable, actually sometimes more capable than government. Almost 4,000 Albertans have visited our site within the 24 hours that it's been up. Thousands gave their feedback on the future of our parks. The NDP can continue spreading misinformation, but they should know that the truth always prevails. Next time the NDP tries to tell the story of our parks being sold, ask them: where is the bill of sale? Make them prove it. They can't. There's no bill of sale. There won't be a bill of sale. Why? Because our parks are not for sale.

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

Live Events

Ms Issik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic many businesses have been affected as we work to keep people safe. We've been working hard to save lives, and we're laser focused on saving livelihoods. There are, arguably, few businesses that have not been negatively impacted by the triple whammy that our province has experienced: a global economic crisis, the unprecedented price collapse in global oil, and the COVID-19 pandemic. However, no sector has been adversely affected like Alberta's live events industry.

Businesses in the live events industry were some of the first ones to limit operations because of COVID-19, and they are now still operating at minimal capacity. This reality is causing many involved in the live events industry to be concerned about the future viability of their businesses. To put the importance of the live events industry in perspective, 585,000 business events were held in Canada in 2019 alone, and a total of \$29 billion were spent by participants at these events. However, because of COVID-19, more than 11,000 events have been postponed or cancelled in Alberta, resulting in a loss of nearly \$200 million.

1:50

I've been working very closely with stakeholders in Alberta's live events industry, and they're desperate for hope. A special virtual round-table discussion was organized by the ministry of culture to discuss these very concerns just a few weeks ago, where the industry shared that they provide not only enjoyable events but also events that are safe. You see, Mr. Speaker, live event planners are natural risk managers. They're experts in logistics, managing traffic flow and security, adhering to health regulations, and more. This industry is a natural for what we need to do to help bend the curve of COVID-19. I encourage Albertans to support their local event planners to help host safe celebrations, meetings, and gatherings, and I encourage others to work with the industry to provide clarity and encouragement. Let's help our live events industry save lives and livelihoods.

Oral Question Period

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-West Henday has the call.

Automobile Insurance Premiums

Mr. Carson: Can it get any better than this? Mr. Speaker, that's what CIBC had to say about Intact's third-quarter results. Alberta's biggest auto insurer saw operating incomes skyrocket, up 48 per cent, a whopping \$411 million. They're laughing their way to the bank, but Albertans: they're not laughing. Car insurance premiums have skyrocketed 24 per cent, and the costs keep going up. To the Premier: why are you giving \$4.7 billion to profitable insurance companies while Albertans are getting side-swiped on their premiums?

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

Mr. Toews: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Listen, while Intact and other insurers may have been profitable across all of their lines of business across the entire country, the independent federal General Insurance Statistical Agency has reported that Alberta automobile insurance businesses have been losing millions. The behaviour of automobile insurance providers would be consistent with that fact as when the members opposite imposed a rate cap, they started to pull products back, leaving fewer options for Albertans.

Mr. Carson: Outstanding.

Mr. Speaker, in their press release Intact brags about their "healthy premium growth" and "low payout ratio." It was so good that they approved huge dividends for their shareholders. They're not the only ones. This UCP government lifted our cap on premiums, and now insurance companies are cashing in on Albertans at a time when they can least afford it. To the Premier: do Albertans have to own stock in insurance companies just to make back the cost of these jacked up rates you're letting them get away with?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Finance.

Mr. Toews: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, according to the independent federal General Insurance Statistical Agency, Alberta automobile insurers have been losing millions. The reality is that their behaviour spoke to that as they pulled back their products to Alberta consumers because the members opposite simply imposed a rate cap instead of having the courage and fortitude to actually deal with the underlying issues that were driving up insurance costs.

Mr. Carson: Mr. Speaker, there were a lot of words there, unfortunately no answers for Albertans struggling with their premiums.

Sonya wrote to us to say that her insurance was \$707 last year, including collision and comprehensive. This year it's \$1,700, with no collision or comprehensive. That's an increase of \$1,000. She says that it's more than her car is actually worth. That is simply ridiculous. Why is this government letting big insurance companies get away with highway robbery? When will you finally stand up for Albertans?

Mr. Toews: Mr. Speaker, automobile insurance premiums have been going up. Why? Because the members opposite didn't deal with the issue when they were governing. We're bringing forward a number of reforms that will deal with the systemic issues that are driving up insurance costs. It will result in premium relief.

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

Toll Roads and Bill 43

Member Loyola: Let's see if the Premier has real answers today. Yesterday the Premier spoke to leaders at the RMA convention about the challenges facing rural Alberta. He repeatedly said that his infrastructure plan disproportionately helps rural communities. Mr. Speaker, news flash: that's where most of the roads and bridges are. He then praised his toll roads plan as, quote, exciting, telling these leaders that user-pay is the future of rural infrastructure. To the Premier: are you seriously telling rural leaders that they won't get new roads and bridges unless they let you toll Albertans?

The Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Transportation.

Mr. McIver: Well, Mr. Speaker, thank you. The hon. member that just spoke told people on the radio today that he would pay \$200 million for a bridge with 300 people crossing it. Toll roads, when they're used, will add to the infrastructure that Alberta would otherwise get. It's not instead of; it's in addition to. It's another tool that we talked about in our campaign, about alternate ways to finance infrastructure. It's what we promised; it's what we're doing.

Member Loyola: Mr. Speaker, this government claims that this is about one bridge over the Peace. It's not. In fact, this bill lets them toll any highway, thoroughfare, street, road, trail, avenue, parkway, driveway, viaduct, lane, alley, square, causeway, trestle way, or any other place, publicly or privately owned. To the Premier. You've given billions to big corporations and increased costs on Albertans. Why should they trust you with unlimited power to toll the heck out of them?

Mr. McIver: Well, Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member stopped talking long enough to read the legislation, he would know that in the legislation we limit our power pretty severely. We are required to do public consultation. We can't put the money into general revenue. It's only on new and expanded infrastructure. If there's a lane now without a toll, there will always be a lane there without a toll. Maybe before his third question he'll have time to review some of this.

Member Loyola: Mr. Speaker, this bill gives the Premier the power to toll sidewalks and ditches, and if Albertans can't pay, the punishment is immense. He's bringing in fines of \$2,000. If that's not enough, he wants to send collection agencies after Albertans who can't afford his tolls. He wants the power to charge interest on an unpaid toll bill, with no cap. To the Premier: when – not if but when – Albertans refuse to pay your tolls, are you going to take their car, their house? No one wants these toll roads.

Mr. McIver: Mr. Speaker, I haven't heard anything that good at the comedy club. The hon. member doesn't have to clip this question. I may clip it and put it on my website. I can't wait until we come out with a public consultation on tolling a ditch. If that's what the hon. member thinks this is, then I just think he's living in a world where the rest of us don't exist. [interjections]

The Speaker: Order.

The hon. Member for Edmonton-City Centre.

COVID-19 Testing

Mr. Shepherd: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Alberta government website tells us that 7,461 COVID-19 tests were completed on Tuesday. That's almost a thousand fewer than the day before, it's

more than 5,000 fewer tests than a week ago, and it's a staggering drop from the peak of more than 20,000 per day that Alberta has performed at times earlier this year. We've heard multiple versions of why this happened. First, it was a change in eligibility, and yesterday the Premier said that it was a failure of his friends at DynaLife to find enough equipment. Can we expect the numbers to drop again today, and if so, why?

Mr. Shandro: Mr. Speaker, we don't test people against their will. We obviously have the testing capacity for us to be able to respond to the pandemic, and we're going to continue to do that. It's why we invested throughout the spring in new KingFisher equipment, so that we had the testing equipment in the lab system, so that we can invest in our workforce capacity, so we can invest in 3-D printers to print the swabs and can invest in the reagent, so that we knew that we could have the testing capacity throughout the fall as well. We obviously are going to now focus on symptomatic folks as well as their close contacts so that we can make sure that we're spending our money in the best way to respond throughout this pandemic.

Mr. Shepherd: So they're saving money by testing less.

Mass testing is a cornerstone of the Premier's economic relaunch strategy, and Albertans deserve a straight answer about what is holding testing back. They deserve to know if it's simply because this government is turning away people who want to be tested or their failure to maintain the buildings and equipment in our public lab system or simply a failure of DynaLife. Alberta had the testing capacity to keep the NHL playoff bubble safe. We have capacity for a pilot project for international travellers. Why don't we have the testing capacity to keep working Alberta families safe?

Mr. Shandro: Obviously, I'm not speaking loud enough for the hon. member, Mr. Speaker. He wasn't able to hear the answer to the first question. We are not saving money; we're spending more. That's one of the reasons why we have the greatest capacity of any other province, especially on a per capita basis, because we have invested in equipment, invested in the workforce. We invested in the reagent. We have invested in our swabs so that we have the ability to make sure that our test turnaround times are going to continue to be able to be there for us throughout the fall. Again, the member is saying things that are completely untrue. We have invested more and more in our infrastructure and our staff.

2:00

Mr. Shepherd: Yet, Mr. Speaker, we are testing at less than half the goal that this Premier himself set.

Our daily new-case counts have surged. They remain alarmingly high. Four major Edmonton hospitals and three major Calgary hospitals have outbreaks. Surgeries are being delayed. Dozens of seniors' facilities have outbreaks, yet this Premier is sleepwalking into the second wave and not taking the steps Albertans need to prevent another lockdown. Dr. Hinshaw has said that we are at a critical juncture. Why is Alberta's testing output collapsing at a time when it should be stronger than ever?

Mr. Shandro: Not only is that untrue; it's completely irresponsible. I'm tired of hearing throughout this pandemic the NDP attack our health officials, attacking the testing system, attacking our lab professionals who are working so hard to make sure that we have the ability to test for Albertans throughout the pandemic. We can't test people against their will, but we are going to make sure that the testing capacity is there for the symptomatic cases as well as their close contacts, making sure that we have that ability. Stop, please, Mr. Speaker, through you to them; they have to stop undermining

the credibility of the people throughout the system, who are trying their best to respond to the pandemic.

Agent General to Houston

Ms Ganley: In July this government announced that they had appointed Dave Rodney, the former MLA who vacated his seat for the Premier, as agent general to Houston and that he would "start his three-year assignment immediately." But we have obtained documents that reveal that Mr. Rodney was appointed to this position in March and was working from home. By my count, Mr. Rodney earned over \$80,000 before his exorbitant salary was made public. Can the Premier explain why he kept Mr. Rodney's appointment a secret for four months?

Mr. Jason Nixon: Mr. Speaker, what I can tell you is that the entire world is using different mechanisms to go to work. The hon. member may have heard of something called COVID. I admittedly do not know Mr. Rodney's schedule. I do know that he climbed Everest twice. I had the privilege of serving with him in this Chamber. I do know that he is doing an excellent job, making sure that he stands up for jobs. I suspect that the opposition is just upset because they know that Dave Rodney is down there fighting for our oil and gas sector, and they continue to secretly be trying to block our pipelines and block people going back to work. But I feel very comfortable with a guy who climbed Everest on the job, let me tell you, especially not only once but twice.

Ms Ganley: This Premier has spoken extensively about how he was creating the Houston position to help promote Alberta's interests in the United States. The public expects transparency. It's unclear to me how having a secret agent general benefits Albertans, making \$250,000 a year, and how this benefits out-of-work Albertans. Will the Premier table a list of actions and deliverables from Dave Rodney for the four months while his high-paying position was kept a secret from those Albertans?

Mr. Jason Nixon: Mr. Speaker, a secret agent. Those of us who know Dave Rodney, including that member, know there ain't too much secret about Dave. He comes in and he gets 'er – he's very, very vocal when he's there, and he's in fighting for our province. If the hon. member doesn't want a loud, active voice fighting for this province, I would understand why she's upset, but we have a loud, very active voice fighting for this province and for its industries. That member was the Justice minister in a government that appointed Tzeporah Berman to be in charge of the oil sands, an environmental activist who was dedicated to shutting down the oil and gas industry. We won't be lectured by her when it comes to appointments.

Ms Ganley: Mr. Rodney was silent for four months after his appointment. How loud is that?

When Mr. Rodney's hiring was announced, there was concern expressed about his lack of qualification to do this work. It was apparent to many that his only qualification for this highly paid job was quitting as an MLA so the Premier could get a seat in this Legislature, and since we now know that Mr. Rodney was working for Alberta for over four months in secret, to the Premier: did Dave Rodney need four months of training to be able to do his job? Is that why you hid his appointment from the Alberta public?

Mr. Jason Nixon: Mr. Speaker, what a ridiculous question. I'm not even going to waste my time on it. Instead, I'm just going to stand and celebrate on Thursday the fact that that member and her former government are no longer government. You want to talk about

inexperience and being unable to do a job. Look at that member's record when she was a cabinet minister, look at her former government's record when they were in this place. This is all that they can do, focus on fear and smear, attacking people who are not inside this Chamber, who can't even defend themselves. Shame on them. But don't worry. Albertans can relax. The NDP is stuck over there; they're not coming back. [interjections]

The Speaker: Order.

Construction Industry Prompt-payment Legislation

Mr. Neudorf: Mr. Speaker, many Albertans working in construction have faced significant challenges when it comes to getting paid on time for their work. If that wasn't enough, they have also struggled to fight their claims in courts due to a lengthy legal process. I know, from the various roles I've worked in in construction, that this is a persistent problem. This has been a problem for many years, but nobody had taken action until this government recognized the need for action and the Minister of Service Alberta tabled Bill 37, Builders' Lien (Prompt Payment) Amendment Act, 2020. To the Minister of Service Alberta: how does this bill provide structure and guidance to these issues?

The Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Service Alberta.

Mr. Glubish: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to my colleague for the question. You know, we've heard loud and clear from the construction industry that timeliness of payments for work that has been completed has been a growing and serious problem for many, many years. That's why I'm so pleased to have brought forward this bill to address this problem, to give certainty for payment and to ensure it is done in a timely manner. What this bill will do is ensure that when a general contractor is billing a project owner and that invoice is issued – they'll need to be paid within 28 days, and subcontractors below that will need to be paid within seven days of those payments from the owner to the general contractor. This is going to bring certainty and will strengthen our construction industry.

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

Mr. Neudorf: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the minister for the answer. Given that the key to ensuring that government brings forward and, hopefully, passes good legislation is ensuring that affected industries and stakeholders are being thoroughly consulted and given that there are numerous construction trades, covering everything from mechanical to electrical to roofing, painting, concrete, and many more, to the same minister: how was industry consulted in making these numerous changes?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Service Alberta.

Mr. Glubish: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can tell you that this was a very extensive consultation process that began almost a year ago. We've worked with construction companies, big and small, from all across the province. We have worked with every trade association, covering every construction discipline, that represent workers that work in this industry across the province, and we've been listening to them since day one. We know this is a big problem, and I'm so excited to be bringing forward this bill and debating this bill to, hopefully, get this across the finish line soon so that we can bring this much-needed relief to the construction industry. This industry employs 1 in 10 Albertans. It is so critical to

Alberta's recovery plan that we have a strong construction industry. That's what this bill will do.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Neudorf: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you again to the minister. Given that prompt payment is a technical and complicated issue that has been unaddressed for many years and requires a balanced approach in order to strike the right understanding with industry and given that I know from my own experiences that these changes have been universally asked for by members throughout the construction industry and further given the ministry's lengthy and ongoing consultation with those very same members, can the minister tell us why the 28-seven-seven-seven payment timeline is so important?

The Speaker: The minister.

Mr. Glubish: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, it's so important because, number one, it ensures that when a general contractor has issued a proper invoice to the project owner, they must be paid within 28 days. This starts the payment stream, which then needs to flow from general contractors to subcontractors to subcontractors. Everyone who works on a construction project will know that from the time a proper invoice has been issued to an owner, the general contractor must be paid in 28 days, and then within seven days of that payment being received, subcontractors need to be paid, and so on and so forth. This ensures that everyone who works on a construction project will have certainty on when they're going to be paid, and that's why this is such an important change for the construction industry.

Rural Municipalities' Property Taxes

Member Ceci: Minister, this UCP government is downloading costs to rural municipalities and leaving rural homeowners behind. Before this government's latest giveaway they had already increased the bill for rural ratepayers by \$525 per household, but apparently that wasn't enough. Now they're sending the taxman after these rural ratepayers who are struggling to pay their bills, many who have their mortgages in deferral, while giving a free pass to corporate friends and insiders. To the Minister of Municipal Affairs: why the double standard?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs.

Mrs. Allard: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise, and thank you to the member for the question. With respect to increasing costs, I would say this to the member. When I first was sworn in, we went around the province, and we engaged with municipalities and industry to look at this issue, not only from the perspective of viability and sustainability for municipalities and for industry but also for viability and sustainability for their ratepayers. I have urged every municipality to look elsewhere and not to their ratepayers.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Member Ceci: Given that the UCP government is putting rural municipalities in an impossible position by downloading costs, cutting their transfers, and allowing companies to not pay their taxes and given that these municipalities have to either cut their services or drive up taxes on rural ratepayers, many of whom are barely hanging on, and given that the government's approach is a deadly cocktail for the continued prosperity of rural Alberta, to the

minister: what will it take for the government to reverse course on this deeply unfair strategy?

2:10

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs.

Mrs. Allard: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and again to the member. I will say this. I'm going to quote Tristan Goodman of the Explorers and Producers Association of Canada, October 19, and I quote:

From an oil and gas perspective property taxes have to be paid. We understand there's a problem, and it's not acceptable going forward, and it needs to be rectified. I have commitment not only from municipalities but from industry to look at this problem and to find longitudinal solutions.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Member Ceci: Thank you. Given that there's one set of rules for rural ratepayers and another set of rules for corporate friends and given that RMA says that some of these companies already owe more than \$170 million in unpaid taxes, and rural ratepayers likely will be stuck with all of that, and given that so many of these ratepayers are just months away from losing it all, to the minister: what do you have to say to rural ratepayers who are already struggling while the government continues to favour friends and insiders with tax-dollar giveaways?

The Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Municipal Affairs.

Mrs. Allard: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What I have to say is this. We worked collaboratively for the first two months that I was in this office to hear solutions, to listen to not only rural Albertans, rural Alberta leaders but industry leaders as well. We are committed to finding solutions. This conversation has been started; it has not been ended. I will promise rural ratepayers that we are doing everything we can. And I believe that the suite of changes, with everybody on the stage in support, was nothing short of a miracle.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Health Care Contracted Services

Ms Gray: This morning I attended a rally at the Royal Alexandra hospital in support of our health care workers. These rallies are happening across Alberta. I was able to listen to the concerns of front-line workers, and, let me tell you, they have many. One worker who has cleaned at the hospital for over 20 years told me that she's terrified of losing her job and of what will happen to her pension. To the minister. There are thousands of front-line workers who have dedicated their lives to making sure we have a world-class health care system. Why is your government cutting their positions to pay for your \$4.7 billion corporate handout, and why do you persist in doing this during a global pandemic? These workers deserve better.

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health has risen.

Mr. Shandro: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm happy to rise again and speak to the hypocrisy of the NDP. Contracting out, especially within the health system, is something that they did themselves. They contracted out laundry. They contracted out laundry in Edmonton and Calgary. They contracted out 70 per cent of the community labs north of Red Deer. We're doing exactly what the NDP did. Is any of this happening in a pandemic? No. This would take years for the implementation to occur.

But, look, my heart goes out to all those who are working in the – oh. Sorry, Mr. Speaker.

Ms Gray: Given that the NDP absolutely did not do what this minister is doing, never mind during a pandemic, and given that during the rally workers from the Royal Alexandra hospital shared with me the fact that they struggle to keep up with medical imaging, pharmacy requirements, lab testing, cleaning, and sanitizing during the added pressures of this pandemic and given that these people are heroes – there's no other way to put it – and given that they felt like they had to walk off the job to try to send a message to this government, to the minister. You got to see first-hand that these are front-line health care workers and a critical part of the health care teams in our hospitals. You also saw the damage you will cause if you . . .

The Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Health.

Mr. Shandro: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Previously in the House we played a little bit of a game. I was reading out names of private companies that the NDP had contracted out to in the health system, inviting them to shout at me and let me be interrupted whenever I got to a corporation with shareholders and dividends. These are ones that they cancelled the contract for: Sodexo, Good Earth, Aramark – nobody is going to interrupt yet? – K-Bro Linen, MIC Medical Imaging, RADS group, Extencicare, Bayshore. We're doing exactly what the NDP did.

Ms Gray: Given that the NDP did not contract out a single new job, given that we did not put this type of fear and terror in people working through a pandemic, given that we are talking about people who are working their careers, 20 years, at the same hospital, and given that we are talking about mostly women, mostly people of colour, people making between \$17 an hour and \$23 an hour, why does this minister think it's okay to balance his budget on their backs?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health.

Mr. Shandro: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, let's focus on the hypocrisy of the NDP: 68 per cent of laundry contracted out under the NDP in Edmonton and Calgary, 70 per cent of all the community lab north of Red Deer contracted out under the NDP. Look, of course we want to make sure that we work with AHS. We worked with them throughout 2019 on a performance review. We're going to take the recommendations. We're working, as we are in the middle of a pandemic, very cautiously with AHS to make sure that only a portion of that implementation plan will be continuing, and we're going to make sure that it's done so, making sure that patient care is top of mind.

COVID-19 Protective Measures

Mr. Stephan: Funerals and weddings are life-defining events of shared joy and healing for families. By public health order, attendance for friends and family to come together at these sacred services is capped at 100 regardless of a venue's physical distancing capacities. However, stores are not subject to any cap on customers provided physical distancing recommendations are followed. To the minister: why aren't healthy adults given the choice to attend a wedding or funeral as they respect physical distancing recommendations similar to day-to-day activities?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health.

Mr. Shandro: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Dr. Hinshaw and health officials have been closely investigating the spread of the virus, especially in zones where we have high case count and hospital admissions. As of last Thursday approximately 43 per cent of actives in Calgary and Edmonton are associated with household or social gatherings. We're following the evidence, which is why we've adjusted our restrictions in these zones to limit social gatherings. The problem is that hospital admissions are following the increase in the cases, so we're taking a cautious approach. We continue to listen to the expert advice, and we'll continue to adjust our approach as needed.

Mr. Stephan: Given that in a Red Deer high school one student was diagnosed with COVID and given that this resulted in 118 students being ordered to self-isolate as a result of officials deeming students to be in close contact with the diagnosed, including students on the opposite side of the class, more than two metres and with no personal interactions, to the minister: will Health provide direction to officials on what constitutes a close contact to prevent inconsistent, impractical interpretations?

The Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Health.

Mr. Shandro: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Now, if a school has a confirmed positive case, AHS public health works with the school to identify and follow up with the close contacts. To date .6 per cent of all cases since September 1 have been acquired through in-school transmission. Alberta children with only a sore throat or runny nose no longer have to self-isolate for 10 days or get tested. These changes align with B.C., Ontario, and Quebec. The medical evidence has shown that these symptoms are not an effective way of identifying if a child has COVID-19.

Mr. Stephan: Given that Albertans are prevented from international travel as a result of a mandatory 14-day self-isolation requirement upon return to Canada and given that, starting this week, our government secured the opportunity for Canadians returning through Coutts and the Calgary International Airport to participate in a pilot which can allow for a shorter self-isolation period, to the minister: how can this pilot reduce hardship for Albertans returning from international travel while also supporting this airport, its supporting businesses, and their workers?

The Speaker: I might just remind the hon. Member for Red Deer-South that the first two questions certainly appeared to be about education and the third about travel. The custom in the Assembly is for all of the questions to have some connection. I had a difficulty making that connection.

But if the hon. Minister of Health would like to answer the question, he's welcome to do so.

Mr. Shandro: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, this initiative is an example of the approach that we've taken throughout the pandemic. We're following the evidence and balancing safety with the need to keep the economy working. It's not one or the other, and that means ensuring safety but also recognizing that restrictions have a heavy cost for the economy and people's health and well-being. This is a critical step to support a key industry, and the results will help inform the response to COVID in Alberta and, quite frankly, across Canada as a result.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Manning and Official Opposition House Leader.

Student Mental Health Supports

Ms Sweet: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The University of Calgary recently surveyed the well-being of Alberta students during the pandemic. More than a third are very or extremely worried about the health risk of COVID-19, and almost half are very or extremely worried about the family confinement and social isolation. There are thousands of Alberta students in isolation right now due to this government's failure to limit class sizes. Does the associate minister for mental health believe he has the resources to support these growing numbers of students under mental health pressure?

2:20

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

Mr. Jason Nixon: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the hon. member for the question. Certainly, mental health is a top priority for this government. It's why this Premier and this government took the historical step of putting in an Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions. I'm very proud of that minister and that ministry, who are doing significant work on both of those issues, creating beds, investing throughout the province. It will remain a top priority for that minister and for the government. I have recently spoken to the minister, and he's indicated to me that he feels that he has adequate resources. He's going to continue with this important mandate for the province.

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

Ms Sweet: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that the question is about students' mental health and not about beds and given that the significant number of students reported feeling sad, withdrawn, worried, or nervous and given that these are formative years for children and teens as they develop their identities and learn to navigate social relationships and given that almost half the population of one of Calgary's high schools is in isolation, what specific mental health measures is the associate minister providing for students that have to deal with isolation?

The Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Health.

Mr. Shandro: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's one of the reasons why we increased our spending in mental health and addiction throughout COVID by \$53 million. Now, if you take the additional funding that every other province in the country increased for mental health throughout COVID and multiplied it by two, that's the amount that we have increased for mental health and addiction for the pandemic. Part of it is to be able to provide increased resources through telephone lines and virtual supports that can be provided, including to students and children in particular. I'm happy to speak more about this.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Ms Sweet: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that many of the mental health supports that were in schools were actually cut under the educational funding and then given that many of the social support structures that young people rely on are actually online and given that families in rural areas do not have the same access to Internet services that families in cities do, what specific measures has the associate minister taken to support the mental health of students in rural communities that don't have the same access to online resources?

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

Ms Schulz: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do want to point out that every school authority across the province is seeing an increase in funding this year. We do certainly know that few aspects of our society have been left untouched by COVID-19. Schools are just one aspect of that. We know that's why it was important to give children and families the opportunity to safely reopen schools across the province. This plan was developed in partnership with school and education partners right across this province. It is working well, and we think it's very important, obviously, for the mental health and well-being of students to have those educational and community supports in place.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Glenora now has an opportunity to ask a question.

Provincial Diploma Examination Exemptions

Ms Hoffman: Alberta students are under extraordinary, unprecedented levels of stress. They're preparing to launch their careers and their lives as young adults while also trying to keep safe from a deadly pandemic and overcrowded classrooms. The Minister of Education made diploma exams optional for this current quarter, and that was the right thing to do. COVID-19 will obviously be just as bad or even worse in the coming months. Will the minister commit to making all diploma exams optional for the rest of this school year?

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

Ms Schulz: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I know the Minister of Education has shared in this House that diploma exams are optional for October and November 2020. As we continue to listen to students, parents, and education partners right across this province, it's clear that some students may not feel comfortable or be in the best position to write exams at this time. We know these are challenging times, and that's why we want to ensure that students and their parents have flexibility and are heard.

Ms Hoffman: Given that school councils like Ross Shep high school in my own riding wrote the minister to strongly urge her to make diploma exams optional for the school year and given that these parents wrote that the pandemic has created extreme stress on students and that academic excellence can only be achieved by reducing this burden, why won't the minister listen to parents and make all diploma exams for the remainder of this school year, not just this month or last month, optional?

Ms Schulz: Mr. Speaker, we absolutely know that these times are unprecedented and that there is so much uncertainty, and that is why my colleague the Minister of Education has been one hundred per cent committed to listening to parents, the concerns of students as well as the concerns being brought forward by education partners right across Alberta. That is, in fact, why diploma exams were made optional for October and November 2020, and I know that my colleague will continue to listen to partners as we move through this unprecedented time.

Ms Hoffman: Given that numerous school districts, including ones in the minister's own riding and in mine, have also called on the minister to make this common-sense step and given that the Edmonton public vice-chair said, quote, that it's unhealthy to act as though things are normal when they aren't, that it could be a recipe for fatigue, exhaustion, and burnout, why won't this minister listen to Alberta school trustees, teachers, and parents, as she claims she is? Why won't she act and make diploma exams optional? Do it. Today is the day.

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

Ms Schulz: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As I said in my first two responses, we recognize that this time is anything but normal, and there are very few aspects of our society that have been left untouched by this pandemic. I will say it again for the member opposite. I've said it once, twice, and I know the minister has said it before. We will continue to listen to parents as well as school partners. They have been made optional – diploma exams, that is – for October and November. We'll continue to take that feedback, and the Minister of Education will continue to listen to those concerns.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Peace River.

Public Health Act Emergency Powers

Mr. Williams: Thank you. I've heard from hundreds of Albertans in my riding, Mr. Speaker, as I'm sure you have as well, with concerns about how this government discharges its responsibility to protect our public health. These are normal Albertans who cherish their freedoms because those freedoms, when protected by law and respected by government, bring order and liberty to our province. Albertans have always valued their freedoms because we understand those immutable rights were gained through so much sacrifice. Can the minister please inform this House about the government's intentions surrounding the Public Health Act and Bill 10?

The Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Health.

Mr. Shandro: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the spring there was a real concern that the Legislative Assembly would be unable to operate as normal, impacting an effective pandemic response. Thankfully, the worst case scenario didn't materialize in the spring. With the right protocols in place, the Assembly can work quickly to respond to the needs of our province. As a result, we will be repealing the emergency powers in the Public Health Act. That will mean that we will be repealing the power of a minister to modify enactments, which was added to the Public Health Act in 2002 in the wake of the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Peace River.

Mr. Williams: Mr. Speaker, through you to the minister, thank you for the answer.

Given that this government has always been committed to balancing the personal freedoms of Albertans with the appropriate public health response and given that the principles of limited government and the protection of personal rights and freedoms are enshrined in our Constitution and our customs and given that Alberta has one of the best responses to COVID-19 from a public health perspective while maintaining more freedoms than almost every other western democratic jurisdiction in the world, can the minister please compare Alberta's balancing of public health with personal freedoms in similar jurisdictions?

The Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Health.

Mr. Shandro: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Since the start of the pandemic Alberta's government has been a leader in Canada in protecting lives and livelihoods. Our testing and contact tracing systems have been widely cited as among the best in the world, and we've aggressively secured the PPE and medical equipment that our health system needs for this pandemic. We've had better outcomes than the Canadian average in terms of hospitals and

continuing care facilities, and we're committed to using the lightest regulatory touch that we can while we put a priority on protecting the capacity of the health care system.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Williams: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Through you to the minister, given that Dr. Hinshaw has already stated publicly that she would be comfortable with Alberta repealing the section of the Public Health Act that allows our government to make vaccines mandatory and given that this government strongly respects the rights and freedoms of Albertans and is empowering them to make responsible choices about health care for them and their families, Minister, why was this particular segment of the Public Health Act so important for our government to look at removing?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health.

Mr. Shandro: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. The pandemic has raised questions around the Public Health Act and the powers that have existed since 1984 regarding forced immunizations. Now, Dr. Hinshaw has said that forced immunizations have never been used in our history. She believes that that particular piece of the legislation can be removed, and I support Dr. Hinshaw's position. Our government will be repealing that portion of the Public Health Act. Look, I fully support and encourage the immunization of children. My kids have received their vaccinations, and our family got our flu shots this year.

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

Calgary Storm Damage Recovery Funding

Mr. Sabir: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's been almost five months since the devastating hailstorm hit northeast Calgary, the fourth-worst natural disaster in Canadian history, yet thousands of people have literally been left out in the cold by this government. They continue to struggle with boarded-up windows and holes in their roofs. Why does this government continue to ignore and do nothing for those impacted by the June 13 hailstorm?

2:30

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Community and Social Services has risen.

Mrs. Sawhney: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Nothing could be further from the truth than that statement. Since June 13 my government colleagues and I were on the ground helping affected residents and constituents navigate through the insurance process. Shortly thereafter the DRP program was announced, providing additional funding for uninsured damages. I can tell you that I have received more than 600 calls and e-mails and correspondences, and we have helped every one of those individuals navigate through the insurance process and connect them to any other services that were required. [interjections]

The Speaker: Order.

Mr. Sabir: Given that the city of Calgary has stepped up to provide assistance by allowing residents to defer their property taxes until next year and given that councillor George Chahal said, and I quote, "disaster relief is a provincial responsibility; I firmly believe that they have abdicated their responsibility in regard to supporting these residents," why is this UCP government downloading its responsibility to provide disaster relief onto the people of northeast Calgary?

Mrs. Sawhney: Mr. Speaker, that is another statement that I disagree with absolutely, completely, categorically. The fact of the matter is that the predominant issue that residents are facing is with their insurance companies. [interjections]

The Speaker: Order. Order. I had no problem hearing the question. I'm having a real challenge hearing the answer. The hon. minister will be heard.

Mrs. Sawhney: I was saying that the predominant issues that constituents are experiencing are those with their insurance companies. My staff and I have been working with the Insurance Bureau of Canada to help individuals connect with their insurance companies and get the resolve that they are looking for.

Mr. Sabir: Given that the province has provided disaster relief to victims of other disasters, including the 2013 Calgary flood, the 2016 Fort McMurray wildfires, and Fort McMurray floods this past spring, and given that when talking about this year's hailstorm, councillor Carra said, and I quote, "the response has been shockingly different; anything we can do as a city to support these members of our community who have literally been sort of ignored and overlooked, we have to," why is this government treating the people of northeast Calgary differently? What is so different about this hailstorm?

Mrs. Sawhney: Mr. Speaker, the government of Alberta is not treating residents of northeast Calgary differently, not at all. I can tell you that the superintendent of insurance from the government of Alberta did issue a letter to all insurance companies asking them to make sure that they treat all claims ethically and within the realm of the legal requirements that they are supposed to operate in. As well, there are reasons as to why some of these damages haven't been repaired yet. That includes a supply chain disruption and also claims that have not been closed by the residents themselves. [interjections]

The Speaker: Order.

Programs for Persons with Developmental Disabilities

Ms Renaud: "You can cut anything and everything you want as premier, but why should it [ever] come at the cost of someone who can't even defend himself?" Those are the words of Mr. James Bast, who wrote to this Premier about the decision of the UCP to slash funding at Camp L.G. Barnes, which has supported Albertans with disabilities for years. James's son had been attending the camp for over 10 years, and now the minister of social services is removing that funding. The minister told Albertans with disabilities to trust her. Since clearly they cannot, what is this minister's message to those reeling from the cruelty of the cuts?

Mrs. Sawhney: Mr. Speaker, Camp L.G. Barnes is not a government facility. The camp, buildings, and land are owned by the parents and friends of Michener society, and they have been since 1955. Community and Social Services provides four staff and operating funds to the facility in partnership with the society. It was originally intended to serve the residents of Michener Centre, but as the residents have aged and their health needs have changed, fewer and fewer are using the facility right now. Seventy per cent of the campers are no longer from Michener Centre.

Ms Renaud: Given that this minister's priorities are clear – austerity for Albertans with disabilities while UCP friends get

handouts, trips on private jets, and taxpayer-funded avocado toast – and given that we know the UCP is also closing down Hub on Ross in Red Deer, which provided disabled Albertans opportunities to be included in the arts community, and given that a resident hurt by this decision said, and I quote, the UCP could make their cuts elsewhere instead of starting at the bottom with people that have few choices, Minister: will you listen to them? Are you listening to them? How are you going to go forward in listening to them?

Mrs. Sawhney: Mr. Speaker, of course I'm listening and consulting as well. In regard to the Red Deer hub, that facility was put in place at a time when there weren't too many spaces available for persons with developmental disabilities to gather. Since then society has changed, and we have become more inclusive. We will work with the impacted clients and families and guardians to make sure that alternate spaces are available. The reality is that that centre is closed right now, and it will continue to be closed because of COVID. It makes sense to put that quarter of a million dollars back into the PDD program.

Ms Renaud: Given that the thing about inclusion is that you have to work towards it doesn't mean that you cut everything and then say, "Oh, yes, we believe in inclusion; we're going to go forward," and given this minister has already cut AISH payments by deindexing, changing payment dates, causing chaos, systematically cutting supplemental benefits of income support, tell me, Minister: are you really listening? Do you really have them front and centre? Are they your priority? They really want to know. They're not feeling heard.

The Speaker: I might just remind the hon. Member for St. Albert that just because you use the word "given" at the front of a preamble, it doesn't change the fact that it's still a preamble.

The hon. minister.

Mrs. Sawhney: Mr. Speaker, I can tell you that I'm deeply committed to serving vulnerable Albertans, as is everybody, as are my government colleagues as well. I can tell you that – like the Red Deer hub example. That facility is closed right now, and it's going to be closed for at least the next six months because of COVID-19. It costs a quarter of a million dollars to run an empty facility. That is a disservice to taxpayers. It's a disservice to the clients receiving these supports. We are going to take those funds, and we are going to reinvest back into the PDD program. These are responsible, fiscally important decisions that have to be made, and they are compassionate in nature. [interjection]

The Speaker: Order. The hon. Member for Edmonton-Decore will come to order.

The hon. Member for Fort McMurray-Wood Buffalo.

COVID-19 Testing

(continued)

Mr. Yao: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's cold and flu season, and it's compounded with COVID-19. A child gets sent home from school for a runny nose. Now the parents have to leave their work to manage their ward. Parents must isolate for fear of spreading this viral disease to their workmates. They have to schedule a test and then wait. Some get the results the next day; however, others are waiting a week. The impacts on businesses and individuals is enormously negative. My question is: does this government truly understand the impact of COVID-19 on businesses and personal lives?

The Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Health.

Mr. Shandro: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can assure the member that this government understands the impact COVID has had on families and businesses in Alberta. As we've been doing throughout the pandemic, we're following the evidence and balancing safety with the need to keep the economy working. We are committed to using the lightest regulatory touch while protecting capacity in our health system. We've had better outcomes than the Canadian average in terms of hospitals and facilities, and we continue to use restrictions in the most targeted way possible based on the best evidence of where spread is actually happening in our communities.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Fort McMurray-Wood Buffalo.

Mr. Yao: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is given that in the past few days, we're seeing record numbers of positive test results across Alberta. Last week alone in Wood Buffalo we hit our threshold of 52 current active cases, and that triggered our local mask bylaw. Again, the impact on businesses and services will be impaired due to workers having to isolate as they await testing and results. To the Minister of Health: what is being done to ensure Albertans can negate the impact of COVID-19 and the requirements around it?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health.

Mr. Shandro: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We've been working to expand quick access to testing for Fort McMurray and residents across Alberta. In fact, Fort McMurray has opened a new COVID assessment centre to increase the testing capacity there. Alberta has the most dynamic testing program in Canada, as I said earlier today. Our online self-assessment tool is world class. The bottom line is that we need people to take COVID seriously, and we need to reduce their contacts and slow the spread of the virus throughout our community.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

2:40

Mr. Yao: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is given that other nations like Germany and the United States have approved different tests than are here in Canada. These tests can be provided by more agencies, can be done quickly, and they appear to take less time to get the results. Here in Canada we have nongovernment agencies with qualified and registered health professionals that have access to these very same tests as other nations, yet we can't access these to address our COVID issues. Is this something that this government can support as we move forward?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health.

Mr. Shandro: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We continue to expand our province's remarkable testing system. AHS is using additional staff, extending hours at assessment centres, enabling online booking, texting results, and incorporating other innovative technologies into our testing system. We're focusing testing where it's the most impactful, and we're also launching a first-of-its-kind border pilot. We're working closely with the federal government, as is every other province, and we will integrate those rapid tests into the health system as soon as we're able to.

The Speaker: Oh. Unfortunately, that concludes the time for Oral Question Period. In 30 seconds or less we will return to Members' Statements.

Members' Statements

(continued)

Socialism

Mr. Yao: Socialism. If you look at the dictionaries and encyclopedias, you'll read about the concepts of public or government ownership of property and natural resources and its association with Communism and Marxism. There are views, I believe, that it's about the equality of all people and that government will provide all benefits. I worry about this attitude because, you see, it's about creating a population that is dependent on government. In the socialist world there are no mom-and-pop stores or restaurants. There are no entrepreneurs, no creativity, nothing to motivate the individual to work harder to get ahead. It's a culture that strives to drag exceptional individuals down. Socialism even frowns upon the volunteer as demonstrated during elections when the NDP paid all their door knockers.

Recently I've experienced a lot of attention from folks on the hard left like BloodWatch and Friends of Medicare, union-funded organizations working to reinforce socialism, simple bludgeons used to attack conservative-minded politicians. Friends of Medicare recently emphasized the comment: blood is a public resource. I had to think about that comment, and it scares me greatly. Why? Because I stand across from the New Democrat Party, socialist by nature, aligned with their best friend Canada's Prime Minister, and, like the PM, they respect and admire socialist countries. Prime Minister Trudeau preached: there's a level of admiration I actually have for China because their basic dictatorship allows them to – and he rambles on. This is admiration for the ability to make decisions for the general population at the whim of a few, regardless of the consequences.

This one such country, the most populated, is a socialist paradise that our labour groups aspire to be, a country that has been criticized for harvesting organs from prisoners for their population. They treat organs like a public resource to be mined at the will of the authorities. For those that don't think that there are different classes in socialist nations who would benefit, think again. So when my comrades from across the way claim that this member hopes to sell plasma to China, when they support the Prime Minister's socialist views and comments like "blood is a public resource," I wonder where our society is headed with folks like them.

Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Cardston-Siksika.

Mr. Schow: Why, thank you, Mr. Speaker. As deputy chair of the Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills I am pleased to table the committee's final report on Bill 205, Genocide Remembrance, Condemnation and Prevention Month Act, sponsored by the hon. Member for Calgary-East. This bill was referred to the committee on October 26, 2020. The committee's final report recommends that Bill 205 proceed. I request concurrence of the Assembly in the final report on Bill 205.

The Speaker: Hon. members, the motion for concurrence in the report on Bill 205, Genocide Remembrance, Condemnation and Prevention Month Act, is debatable pursuant to Standing Order 18(1)(b). Are there any members who wish to speak to the motion for concurrence? If so, please rise.

[Motion for concurrence carried]

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

Mr. Neudorf: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As chair of the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future I'm pleased to table two reports from the committee. The first is the report respecting the presentation received from the Alberta Construction Association by the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future on July 31, 2020. The second is a report respecting the presentation received from the Tourism Industry Association of Alberta by the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future on October 21, 2020. I would like to thank these organizations for taking the time to present to the committee. These reports will be posted to the committee's website shortly.

Thank you.

Introduction of Bills

The Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Labour and Immigration.

Bill 47

Ensuring Safety and Cutting Red Tape Act, 2020

Mr. Copping: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to introduce Bill 47, the Ensuring Safety and Cutting Red Tape Act, 2020. This being a money bill, Her Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor, having been informed of the contents of this bill, recommends the same to the Assembly.

I would also like to acknowledge the hard-working staff in the gallery today, who have contributed countless hours to working on this bill. Mr. Speaker, through Bill 47 we are updating labour legislation to make workplace safety laws easier to understand, creating a more sustainable workers' compensation system to support Albertans now and into the future, and establishing a heroes fund to recognize our first responders who have made the ultimate sacrifice.

Bill 47 proposes a number of changes to occupational health and safety laws to add clarity, streamline processes, and improve health and safety outcomes. In addition, it will give workers and employers the flexibility they need to identify and address issues in the workplace. Radiation protection laws will be incorporated into the OHS Act to provide clarity for job creators and employees. Modernizing a 35-year-old radiation law will ensure it aligns with the latest workplace health and safety standards.

Now, we all know that the financial cost of workplace injuries and illnesses is far too high, but this does not capture the human cost, which is far greater and immeasurable. Mr. Speaker, Bill 47 also proposes changes to the Workers' Compensation Act that will ensure the system is sustainable, affordable, and fair. The proposed amendments will help Alberta's job creators be competitive and support the province's economic recovery by improving processes and reducing red tape. These changes will ensure job creators can continue to provide jobs for hard-working Albertans. The changes will also ensure the workers' compensation system will be more sustainable, affordable, and fair so that workers can stay employed and have access to financial support when they need it. This bill is about restoring balance to Alberta's labour laws and improving health and safety. It will also provide sustainability and remove unnecessary barriers to job creation to get Albertans back to work.

Mr. Speaker, we know that there is no higher form of public service than to risk one's life to maintain public safety, and first responders take tremendous risks every day to help keep Albertans safe. Last year we promised additional supports for first responders, and today we are keeping that promise. Bill 47 will also establish the Alberta heroes fund for first responders, a one-time, tax-free payment of \$100,000 to families of first responders who pass away as a result of performing their duties.

Mr. Speaker, this act encompasses several key elements that are critical to the future of our province, to first responders and their families, and to all working Albertans.

Thank you.

The Speaker: Thank you to the hon. Minister of Labour and Immigration for that very, very thorough and robust first reading speech. It's almost like we were at second reading there. I was a little unsure. Perhaps he might stick to the traditions of the Assembly in future first readings of bills and legislation presented.

[Motion carried; Bill 47 read a first time]

The Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Health.

Mr. Shandro: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. My first reading speech is only going to be about 46 pages.

2:50

Bill 46

Health Statutes Amendment Act, 2020 (No. 2)

Mr. Shandro: I'm honoured to rise and request leave to introduce Bill 46, the Health Statutes Amendment Act, 2020 (No. 2).

Now, this bill is the next step in modernizing our province's health legislation to better reflect our current health system and to support patient-centred care. The proposed amendments will ensure that the health system and health professionals are more responsive to Albertans and their evolving care requirements, with stronger protections for patients and process efficiencies. Proposed changes will also allow for broader use of the electronic health record, or as we call it here in Alberta, Netcare, to support better patient outcomes while increasing penalties for unauthorized use of patient health information. Lastly, the proposed amendments will update several pieces of legislation so that the system's legal framework is more efficient and responsive to changing needs and best practices.

I hereby move first reading of the Health Statutes Amendment Act, 2020 (No. 2).

Thank you.

The Speaker: Much better. I'm glad that the Minister of Labour and Immigration was here to observe.

[Motion carried; Bill 46 read a first time]

Tabling Returns and Reports

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Glenora, followed by Cardston-Siksika.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I have two tablings that relate directly to the questions I asked today. The first is a letter to the Minister of Education from the Ross Shep school council. The second is an article where the Edmonton public school board is quoted asking for the changes I called for today in my question.

Then my other tabling is on behalf of the Member for Edmonton-West Henday, documents referred to in his question today and titled Can It Get Any Better Than This? detailing a 46 per cent increase in operating income, a whopping \$411 million, for one insurance company alone.

Thank you.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Cardston-Siksika, followed by the hon. Member for Edmonton-Decore.

Mr. Schow: Why, thank you, Mr. Speaker. In accordance with section 19(5) of the Auditor General Act as chair of the Standing Committee on Legislative Offices I am pleased to table the report of the Auditor General of Alberta, November 2020. Electronic copies of this report will be provided to all members.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Decore, followed by Calgary-McCall.

Mr. Nielsen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On Tuesday evening I referenced a news article during the debate on Bill 35, and I have the appropriate number of copies of that article titled 'I Felt Betrayed': Gaming Companies Unsure of Future in Alberta after Tax Credit Axed.

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

Mr. Sabir: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of my colleague from Calgary-Mountain View I'm tabling the requisite number of copies of the document she referenced today in question period while asking a question.

The Speaker: Are there other tablings? The hon. Member for St. Albert has a tabling.

Ms Renaud: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have five copies of a letter written by Suzanne Hermary from the Red Deer Arts Council urging the government to reverse their decision to close the Hub on Ross in downtown Red Deer.

Tablings to the Clerk

The Clerk: I wish to advise the Assembly that the following documents were deposited with the office of the Clerk. On behalf of hon. Mrs. Allard, Minister of Municipal Affairs, pursuant to the Municipal Government Act the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board 2019-20 annual report, pursuant to the Municipal Government Act the Calgary Metropolitan Region Board 2019 annual report, and pursuant to the Special Areas Act the Special Areas Trust Account 2019 financial statements.

On behalf of hon. Mr. Dreeshen, Minister of Agriculture and Forestry, pursuant to the Farm Implement Act the annual report of the Farmers' Advocate office 2019-20.

On behalf of hon. Mr. Madu, Minister of Justice and Solicitor General, the Law Enforcement Review Board 2019 annual report.

The Speaker: Hon. members, we are at Ordres du jour.

Orders of the Day

Government Bills and Orders Third Reading

Bill 42

North Saskatchewan River Basin Water Authorization Act

The Speaker: The hon. the Deputy Government House Leader and Associate Minister of Natural Gas and Electricity.

Mr. Nally: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to move on behalf of the minister of environment third reading of Bill 42, the North Saskatchewan River Basin Water Authorization Act. You can try to say that three times backwards.

Mr. Speaker, this is a special act of the Legislature to approve two interbasin transfers from the North Saskatchewan River basin to the Athabasca River basin to address drinking water challenges

in the hamlet of Entwistle and the summer village of Nakamun Park. The act will allow these two small communities to connect to the regional waterline operated by the West Inter Lake District Regional Water Services Commission, providing residents with a reliable supply of high-quality drinking water.

[Mr. Hanson in the chair]

Plans to connect Entwistle and Nakamun Park to the regional waterline are strongly supported by residents, local leaders, and stakeholders in the area. This is also an environmentally sustainable solution as the interbasin transfer would see a relatively small amount of water, approximately 175,000 cubic metres per year, drawn from the North Saskatchewan River to supply these two communities with drinking water treated by EPCOR Utilities in Edmonton.

With that, I move third reading of Bill 42. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you, Member.

Any other members wishing to speak? The Member for Edmonton-Ellerslie.

Member Loyola: Right on, Mr. Speaker. You hit it right on the head. That's me.

For me, it's absolutely a pleasure to stand up and speak about Bill 42, the North Saskatchewan River Basin Water Authorization Act, and I just want to state unequivocally how much our entire caucus is in support of this particular bill.

But before I go into the particulars about supporting this specific bill, I just want to highlight something. This was commented on before by the Member for Edmonton-Rutherford, and it had to do, specifically, with access to clean drinking water for indigenous communities all around this province. As some of the members that were present here while we were in government, you know that we made it part of our mandate to make sure that every reserve would be able to work together with local municipalities from all around the province in order to get clean drinking water.

Why do I stress this? Mr. Speaker, think about it. When we put that through – I believe it was 2018 if I'm not mistaken. It was 2018, and people within the province of Alberta still didn't have access to clean drinking water. Like, this is something where, when we look at the global south, when we look at underdeveloped nations from around the world, we think about and criticize the fact that their governments haven't been able to provide clean drinking water to all of their citizens. I've always found that ironic, you know, coming from an undeveloped nation myself that had to go through military violence and people talking to me about that, and then I'm looking here at Alberta thinking: well, indigenous communities all across Alberta and all across Canada have to boil their water, and they don't have access to clean drinking water, and we call ourselves the First World.

So, unequivocally, I stand before this entire House and I say how much I support this here bill, because, of course, this is about providing clean drinking water for rural communities and the residents of Parkland county and Lac Ste. Anne county specifically. But I want to encourage this government that for the remainder of its term they continue to focus on not just these rural communities but all rural communities and indigenous communities specifically within the province of Alberta to make sure that they also have access to clean drinking water.

I'm sure that it's important for the members from the other side – I would hope that they would agree with me – when it comes to making sure that all communities, including indigenous communities, would have access to clean drinking water. For us,

it's really important here on the opposition side that we support this here bill because, if passed, it will approve the interbasin transfer required to supply about 500 residents in Entwistle and Nakamun Park with drinking water treated by EPCOR Utilities via connection to the west interlake district regional waterline in Parkland county. Entwistle currently uses groundwater as the source of its drinking water while residents of Nakamun Park usually have personal wells or truck in potable water. It's just incredible to think that, you know, we're in the year 2020 and people from across Alberta have this to deal with. I mean, it is what it is, but it's important that we focus on making sure that we make it more feasible.

With that being said, Mr. Speaker, I will leave my remarks at that for right now and just once again state how unequivocally we support this bill. Thank you.

3:00

The Acting Speaker: Thank you, Member.

Are there any other members wishing to speak to the bill?

Seeing none, the hon. Minister of Environment and Parks to close debate.

[Motion carried; Bill 42 read a third time]

Government Bills and Orders Second Reading

Bill 35

Tax Statutes (Creating Jobs and Driving Innovation) Amendment Act, 2020

[Debate adjourned November 3: Mrs. Savage speaking]

The Acting Speaker: Any members wishing to speak to Bill 35, the Tax Statutes (Creating Jobs and Driving Innovation) Amendment Act, 2020? The Member for Edmonton-Ellerslie.

Member Loyola: Thank you once again, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to get up. I promise you that this will probably be the last time that I will subject you all to my voice today, you know, although the people on this side love it. [interjections] Okay. Because I could stay all night if you want me to. I could, you know. We can go to the wee hours of the morning if you all like, and I'll stay and I'll talk more.

Mr. Speaker, it's with a sad heart that I tell you that, you know, we oppose this bill, Bill 35, this tax statutes amendment act. Of course, what we are in opposition to is the particular method in which this government believes that it is helping Albertans. Now, on this side of the House we believe that in order to help those Albertans, you need to be able to invest directly in them. See, this is where we fundamentally disagree with the United Conservative Party, because it is their belief that by putting more money, in fact, \$4.7 billion, in the hands of corporations, that's somehow going to trickle down to the rest of Albertans and that it's actually going to improve the standard of living and livelihood of the very people that we are here to represent. What we believe is that you should be putting that money into programs. You should be putting it into child care. You should be able to make sure that people can get access to the actual economy.

I mean, when we were focused on our \$25-a-day daycare program, this was fundamentally about getting women back into the workplace because, unfortunately, historically speaking, the tendency is, Mr. Speaker, that under our current economy, the fact is that women are less likely to enter the workforce because of the fact that child care costs so much. Now, I can't tell you the number of times that I've heard constituents from Edmonton-Ellerslie, mothers, in fact, come and tell me: "Why am I going to work if more than half of what I'm earning is going to pay for child care? I

might as well just stay home.” This is the reality that we continue to face here in the province of Alberta.

Now, when you get more people, specifically, now – and I’m talking about the tendency; it’s not the rule overall, but it is the tendency. If we get more women back to work, for those people that’s going to mean more money in their pockets. It’s going to mean that they’re going to go out and they’re going to spend that money; they’re going to help the economy move forward. This is what we’re after. By investing directly in programs that are actually going to help people, that actually encourages economic growth, it gets people back to work, and – you know what, Mr. Speaker? – it’s more than just getting that person back to work.

It’s about that individual working in what they love to do, contributing to the province of Alberta, contributing, not only to the economy but holistically contributing to the overall political, social, economic, and I would even say cultural makeup of our province, making it a better place to live for all of us Albertans. Now, we get more of those people to work. We just had the Member for Edmonton-Mill Woods tell us about how she went to visit the front line of workers who were demonstrating this morning, and they were talking about how they were in fear about not having a job.

You see, this is about a fundamental difference in ideology. Yes, it is. You know what? The members from the other side get up constantly, and they say: look, when the Alberta NDP was in power, they did X, Y, and Z, and they did it because of their ideology. Well, guess what, Mr. Speaker, and guess what to all those people who are watching us at home? This government gets up and with bill after bill after bill that they introduce into this House, they do it on their own ideological platform, which at the end of the day, as I have firmly expressed, they believe that by investing and giving the money to corporations, \$4.7 billion, in fact, that that’s going to create jobs and it’s going to make for a more prosperous economy. But what have we seen to date? Even before the pandemic started, there was a loss of 50,000 jobs here in the province of Alberta. Since the pandemic it’s only made a bad situation worse, making us go into a tailspin and creating an economic crisis. This government, based firmly on its ideological platform, continues to introduce legislation after legislation after legislation that is only going to make it worse.

I could go on about how the insurance companies have this government in their back pocket. I could go on about the tolls, the fees that they’re going to start charging Albertans just to move from one part of this province to another. I could go into the tuition fees. I could go into higher school fees. Mr. Speaker, you even have to pay more for a photoradar ticket under this particular government. Albertans are going to have to make up their minds about whether this government continues to reach deeper and deeper into their pockets, affecting their livelihood, their standard of living, and whether they’re going to allow this government to continue to give money, give the taxpayers’ dollars to these corporations when, in fact, we’ve seen that they haven’t created one job to date.

With that being said, Mr. Speaker, I have an amendment that I would like to introduce to the House. If you’d like, I can wait until it’s handed out.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you, Member. Pass it off to the page, and then go ahead. Go ahead, sir.

3:10

Member Loyola: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. With your permission, I will actually read the notice of amendment into the record.

I, the Member for Edmonton-Ellerslie, to move that the motion for second reading of Bill 35, Tax Statutes (Creating Jobs and

Driving Innovation) Amendment Act, 2020, be amended by deleting all of the words after “that” and substituting the following:

Bill 35, Tax Statutes (Creating Jobs and Driving Innovation) Amendment Act, 2020, be not now read a second time because the Assembly is of the view that a reduction in the corporate income tax rate that rewards foreign shareholders is an ineffective strategy to create jobs, relative to the alternatives.

Mr. Speaker, as I was stating, we have a fundamental difference in our ideological perspectives, but at the end of the day we need to be able to demonstrate with clear numbers – with clear numbers – and with statistics on how these ideological approaches are actually benefiting Albertans.

Now, the Member for Edmonton-Whitemud has done a stellar job of demonstrating how child care is going to incredibly benefit the people of Alberta, not only the individuals who it will help directly but the indirect benefits of having child care here in the province of Alberta. It’s well known – I’m not too sure if I have the statistic correct, but I believe for every dollar that you invest in child care it’s . . .

Ms Pancholi: Six.

Member Loyola: . . . six dollars. Thank you very much, Member for Edmonton-Whitemud.

It’s actually \$6 that you get in return.

Now, I didn’t have the actual statistic a hundred per cent right – I’ll be honest with you – but when I shared it with other people in the community, my constituents were like: “This is a no-brainer. This is a no-brainer. Why wouldn’t we move towards a \$25-a-day child care program if it’s going to have that kind of return?”

See, Mr. Speaker? This is the problem. This is the problem with Conservative ideology. Talk to any economist, and they will talk to you about externalities. This is what this government, with their ideological approach, refuses to understand, that when you’re talking about the economy, you have to understand what those externalities are. Not everything has a monetary value to it. There are also other qualities to the benefits that people may have within a particular economic approach.

This is what we need to talk about more. You know what? I’m not here to try to convince you that our ideological approach is the best one, but I am here to demonstrate to you with numbers that there are things that are more beneficial to Albertans, and I would hope that from across the aisle we could at least agree on the numbers and move legislation forward that would actually be more of a benefit to Albertans, like the work that is being done by the Member for Edmonton-Whitemud in demonstrating that child care is absolutely essential for the people of Alberta as we move forward into a more modern economy.

Mr. Speaker, I’m getting to the end of my comments here. If you don’t mind, how many minutes do I have left?

The Acting Speaker: Four.

Member Loyola: I’ve got four. Thank you very much.

This is what we’re doing, Mr. Speaker. On this side of the House we’ve actually invested time in reaching out to as many Albertans as we possibly can. We believe in diversity. We believe in a modern economy. We believe that we can take advantage of all of us and our collective mindset and work towards alternatives that are going to build a stronger economy for all Albertans for generations and generations to come.

Now, don’t get me wrong; the petroleum industry is always going to be there. [interjections] Of course. We agree with you. It’s the members from the other side that keep bashing us with the misinformation that we somehow do not want a petroleum industry.

They bash us and they bash and they bash us. Well, what was the word that they like to use against us?

Ms Hoffman: Fear and smear.

Member Loyola: Oh, yeah. Fear and smear.

It's those members on that side of the House that try to convince Albertans that we are not in favour of the petroleum industry, when we were, in fact, the government that put in the petroleum diversification program. Now, if you're not going to get as much money per barrel of oil on the product that you're actually extracting from the ground, then why not add value to it, Mr. Speaker? That's what the petroleum diversification plan was all about. I don't even have to get into the tax credits that we introduced, the corporate tax credit and all those, that were actually created in order to help us diversify the economy and move it forward.

I want to invite all Albertans to come and join this Alberta NDP Official Opposition, because we're coming up with alternatives.

Ms Hoffman: Alberta's future.

Member Loyola: Come and visit albertasfuture.ca, where we're actually putting proposals together, working with researchers, working with the most intelligent minds that are willing to work with us, because, of course, this is what it's all about. It's bringing together industry. It's bringing together postsecondary educational institutions and the great minds that work there together with government to come up with real alternatives to build this economy as we move forward. That's vision, Mr. Speaker, and we're not doing it by ourselves. We're doing it with other Albertans while the members on the other side continue to throw their rocks of: oh, all that you guys do is ideological.

Ms Hoffman: Fear and smear.

Member Loyola: Fear and smear, right? Just more misinformation from those members on the other side.

Now, as I stated before, yes, it is ideological, and I am not going to negate that. But so are you. This is the reality of what we're living here. But the question then becomes: are you working with Albertans, are you working with industry, are you working with postsecondary institutions and the great minds that work there in order to come up with viable alternatives to strengthen our economy or not? That's what it's about. I can give you an ideological principle, but at the end of the day it has to be based in real facts, in the reality that Albertans are living or else my ideology serves nothing.

Again, I go back to the premise, Mr. Speaker, and with this, I will conclude.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you, Member.

The proposed reasoned amendment will be referred to as RA1. Are there any other members wishing to speak to RA1? The Member for Edmonton-South.

Mr. Dang: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise today and speak to amendment RA1, the reasoned amendment on Bill 35, the Tax Statutes (Creating Jobs and Driving Innovation) Amendment Act, 2020. I'd like to thank my colleague from Edmonton-Ellerslie for introducing this amendment. I think that he's made some considerable points already in this place with quite some passion. I aspire to have the same amount of passion and energy as he does as we move forward here, with some apologies to *Hansard*.

Mr. Speaker, I think that certainly when we look at Bill 35, when we look at the implementation that's going on, when we look at

what this government has been doing for months and months and months now, as we navigate through what is truly one of the most difficult times this province has ever seen, an economic recession that is unparalleled in Alberta's history, and we look at the actual plans that this is putting forward in terms of fighting for a recovery, a recovery that works for every single Albertan, we see no plan. Indeed, in Bill 35 we see that the lack of a plan actually is celebrated. Basically, what we're seeing is that every single day this government stands up and screams from the rooftop about how their \$4.7 billion corporate giveaway is going to create new jobs.

Mr. Speaker, they can believe that. They can believe that all they want. However, the truth is that even before the pandemic, even before this global recession and global contraction of the economy, we saw 50,000 jobs lost because of this government's implementation of that plan, because of this government's failure to take actual economic action, because of this government's failure to actually fight for everyday families. Because of that, 50,000 jobs were lost before the pandemic began.

3:20

Then as the global economy began to contract and as Alberta's economy contracted even more and we entered the recession stage, what we found is that this government said that, well, the plan that didn't work, the plan that resulted in 50,000 jobs being lost, now that we're losing more jobs, thousands of jobs every single day: they should accelerate that. That's what the government actually decided to do. They accelerated one of the most reckless mismanagements of the economy that we've ever seen in this province. Mr. Speaker, the deficit in this province has doubled. This government's credit rating continues to be downgraded at almost every assessment. The government's plan is failing, and now they want to double down. They want to make this terrible situation significantly worse.

Mr. Speaker, this piece of legislation: what it does is that it gives corporate giveaways to foreign shareholders. It drives jobs out of Alberta. We saw this in Calgary. We saw this in Fort McMurray. We saw this across the entire province almost immediately after some of these companies posted record profits. Some of these companies that are receiving this corporate giveaway posted profits of hundreds of millions of dollars. They dropped and laid off and fired thousands of people here in the province of Alberta, right here in Calgary, right here in Edmonton, and across the rest of the province, right in the constituencies of every single member of this place.

We can't let this happen. This government's mismanagement is resulting in families hurting, Mr. Speaker. This government's mismanagement is resulting in families losing their jobs. That's why this amendment is so important. That's why this reasoned amendment is so important. This Legislature can do better because Albertans deserve better. Albertans deserve a government who actually is looking at policy that works for them. Albertans deserve a government who will actually fight to implement policy that will protect their jobs and protect their families. We can come up with better legislation. We can come up with a better plan because we know that the current plan is absolutely failing. Just recently we saw 2,000 jobs lost at Suncor, another 2,000 at Cenovus, and the headlines just keep coming and coming and coming.

Mr. Speaker, members of the government bench stand up and talk about how they're seeing new jobs in Calgary and new jobs in their constituencies, and that is simply false. It simply is not true. Instead, what we see is that families across this province are losing their jobs and losing their livelihoods because of the policies of this government, because this government does not have a real jobs strategy, because this government is instead giving \$4.7 billion away to wealthy and profitable corporations, sending the money

overseas instead of sending it into the pockets of Albertans. This province deserves better. This province needs a real strategy. We can and we should do better.

Mr. Speaker, the opposition is willing to help. The opposition has presented some options and indeed continues to present options. Indeed, we're doing consultations on some of these policies every single day. You can read about it yourself at albertasfuture.ca because at albertasfuture.ca we are actually listening to Albertans. We're actually hearing from Albertans on issues such as hydrogen, on issues such as geothermal, on issues such as agriculture and actually trying to understand where the difficulties are and how we can diversify the economy. We know the Finance minister thinks diversification is a luxury, and we know that Albertans know better. We know that Albertans know that to create a real plan that creates jobs, you don't just give \$4.7 billion away to profitable corporations, and, really, you don't accelerate a plan to give \$4.7 billion away to profitable corporations.

Mr. Speaker, it simply cannot make sense that Bill 35 be passed at this time. We have to move forward with this reasoned amendment. We have to delay this bill, and we have to come back with policies that actually will create jobs, that actually will help families, and will actually attract investment here in Alberta.

The Finance minister has already done so much damage to this province. He cut the interactive digital media tax credit, he cut the Alberta investor tax credit, he cut the Alberta capital investment tax credit, and what were the results? Well, the reality was that tech firms pulled out of Alberta, jobs were lost, and the economy continued to contract. The economy continued to contract.

Mr. Speaker, for a Premier who ran on jobs, economy, and pipelines, the Premier appears to be failing at every single part of that plan, and the failure runs right through these government benches because when this Finance minister comes to this place and accelerates a failed \$4.7 billion corporate giveaway that already resulted in 50,000 jobs being lost, then every single member is to blame. Every single member of the government is to blame if they continue to support such disastrous policy, disastrous policy that's resulting in jobs being lost in their own constituencies, in my constituency, and in constituencies across the entire province.

Families are hurting. Families know that their government needs to do more. Families know that their government needs a real plan to diversify the economy. They need a plan such as the one on albertasfuture.ca. They don't need to give \$4.7 billion away to already wealthy and profitable corporations.

Mr. Speaker, the government claims that it's working, and the government thinks that the \$4.7 billion giveaway will create jobs and expand the economy and attract investment. We know that's not true. How do we know that's not true? Because we actually FOIPed, and we asked for the documents to say: "Where is the proof? Show us the proof that you've done the actual economic analysis, that you've done modelling, that you've done analysis to show that accelerating this \$4.7 billion corporate giveaway would create a single new job, would create any new investment in Alberta, would attract any new investment to Alberta." Instead of actually being able to provide any documents, the opposition, as a result of that FOIP, the freedom of information request, got four blank pages. That was the sum total of the analysis this government had done on their \$4.7 billion corporate giveaway to profitable corporations and why they should be accelerating it, which is what's happening in Bill 35.

They are accelerating a giveaway to profitable, wealthy corporations, sending money overseas, resulting in already over 4,000 jobs lost directly in the last month here. Before the pandemic even began, we saw over 50,000 jobs lost. Now this government is touting it and saying: this is the jobs-economy-pipeline plan. That's

the plan, Mr. Speaker, as they're losing tens of thousands of jobs. That's what they're doing with this bill, and we know Albertans deserve better.

We know that we have to use this reasoned amendment, we have to stop this in its tracks, and we need to present something that will actually help families – that will actually help families – and actually create new jobs, actually attract new investment because, Mr. Speaker, Albertans deserve better. Albertans deserve better than a government who is looking out for their wealthy foreign shareholders instead of families. Albertans deserve better than a government who is fighting for their donors and friends instead of Alberta families. Albertans deserve a plan that will actually diversify our economy. Albertans deserve a plan that actually works for families.

Mr. Speaker, the Finance minister simply either does not understand or does not care. It's pretty clear that members of the government benches also either do not understand or do not care because they can read the numbers the same as everybody else. The numbers from the Finance ministry itself show tens of thousands of jobs being lost. This year alone before the pandemic: 50,000 jobs lost. The numbers from this government's own reports show that these jobs are being lost every day across this province. And then when we ask to say, "Show your work; prove that the \$4.7 billion you're giving away will create a single new job," the government can only present four blank pages. That's all the government can present. It's an absolute failure of this government. It's an absolute failure of this government to do any planning, to manage the economy in any meaningful way, to do anything that would actually help families, to do anything that would actually attract investment, to do anything that would create a single new job.

Mr. Speaker, that is something that every single member of this Assembly, every single private member, whether you're in the opposition or on the government bench, should be concerned about because those jobs are in every single one of our ridings. Those jobs are in every single corner of this province, the jobs that are being lost every day because of this government's fiscal mismanagement, because of this government's inability to look out for families, because this government's ideology seems to be to look out for their friends and donors.

That's what's particularly concerning about this bill. That's why this bill must be stopped in its tracks. That's why we must move forward with this reasoned amendment. That's why we have to look at this and actually understand the impacts we're having across this province. We have to understand the impacts we're having to families in this province. We have to understand the impacts we're having to jobs in this province. Mr. Speaker, if the government was confident, was sure they were going to be creating jobs, if the government was sure that Bill 35, the acceleration of the \$4.7 billion giveaway to already wealthy and profitable corporations – if the government was so sure, it would be simple for them to release those documents. It would be simple for the government to show us the tables, to actually say: well, here is the proof.

Then we wouldn't have seen at the beginning of this year, before the pandemic, 50,000 jobs lost, we wouldn't have seen Cenovus and Suncor lay off 2,000 jobs each here in Alberta, and we wouldn't have seen companies take hundreds of millions of dollars in additional profit from the Alberta tax regime, additional profit from the corporate giveaway, and then immediately pull out of this province, immediately retract the amount of investment they were doing in this province, immediately cut jobs in this province.

3:30

Mr. Speaker, those are families that live in every single one of our ridings. Those are families that live in Calgary. Those are families

that live in Edmonton. Those are families that live in Fort McMurray. Those are families that live in Lethbridge. Those are families that live in Medicine Hat. Every single one of those families is worse off because of the policies of this government. Every single one of those families. Over 50,000 families have basically become worse off because this government insists on giving \$4.7 billion away to wealthy and profitable corporations, to their friends and donors, instead of actually trying to attract investment here to Alberta, instead of actually proving that they could attract a single dollar here to Alberta, instead of actually proving that they could create a single job here in Alberta.

Mr. Speaker, that is something that every single private member in this place, opposition or government, should be extremely concerned about because we were sent here to represent our constituents. We were sent here to try and make Alberta a better place. We were sent here to propose policies that would create jobs in Alberta, propose policies that would help us navigate through this difficult economic time.

Instead of doing any of that, instead of creating any policies that would be able to create new jobs, this government touts that their jobs-economy-pipeline plan is to give \$4.7 billion away to profitable corporations. This Premier's only plan, this Finance minister's only plan appears to be to give \$4.7 billion away to profitable corporations and then to lose tens of thousands of jobs this year. That seems to be the plan. Mr. Speaker, why would we accelerate it? Why would we speed it up? Why would we come in here and agree that we should speed up these job losses? Why wouldn't we look at alternative measures to create diversification here in the province? Why wouldn't we look at alternative measures to attract investment to this province? Why wouldn't we look at creating new jobs in this province?

Again, we saw companies like Suncor, like Cenovus and others lay off people immediately after taking record profits, hundreds of millions of dollars, away from Albertans. They took hundreds of millions of dollars away from Albertans because of this government's, this Premier's \$4.7 billion corporate giveaway, and then they turned around, laid off those families, and ran. That's what this government is enabling. This government is enabling profitable, wealthy, foreign shareholders to profit on the backs of our families, Mr. Speaker. That's what this government is actually proposing with Bill 35.

That's why we have to move forward with a reasoned amendment. That's why we have to look forward and actually have a plan that diversifies the economy. Diversification, unlike what the Finance minister thinks, is not a luxury. Diversification is not a luxury. It's something we must excel at if we want this province to be able to have jobs in the next 20, 30 years and beyond that, of course. If we want an economy that works for families, if we want an economy that works for Albertans, we need a real plan. We need a plan that includes hydrogen. We need a plan that includes geothermal. We need a plan that includes agriculture. We need a plan that includes petrochemical diversification. We need a plan that includes all of these things, and the government isn't talking about a single one of those.

Instead, the opposition is forced to bring in, through our consultation process, albertasfuture.ca, talking to people to actually have these programs, talking to people to actually bring in diversification strategies so we can create new jobs – what this government does instead is that they give \$4.7 billion away to profitable, wealthy corporations. They give \$4.7 billion away, and then we see tens of thousands of jobs being lost. We see tens of thousands of jobs being lost all across this province.

Thank you.

The Acting Speaker: Standing Order 29(2)(a) is available. I recognize the Associate Minister of Red Tape Reduction.

Mr. Hunter: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's been a while since I've stood up in the House here, but the hon. Member for Edmonton-South always motivates me. I'd like to be able to just chat a little bit about some of the things he said. First of all, I wanted to just read to you a quote by Carroll Bryant. "Some people make things happen. Some people watch things happen. And then there are those who wonder . . . just [what] happened?" Which one do you think the NDP is?

What's happened is that back last year, on April 16, they lost terribly in the last election, and they are still, a year and a half later, arguing with Albertans about why they would have the audacity to send them to the opposition benches. The truth is, Mr. Speaker – here's what happened. The NDP still haven't learned that their vehement hatred of our job creators in this province put them into the benches that they're sitting in now. The reality is that when I listen to the Member for Edmonton-South, he has a hatred of the job creators of this province.

Mr. Sabir: Point of order.

Mr. Hunter: More importantly, Mr. Speaker . . .

The Acting Speaker: A point of order has been called.

Go ahead, Member for Calgary-McCall.

Point of Order Imputing Motives

Mr. Sabir: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise on 23(h), (i), and (j). Basically, the Associate Minister of Red Tape Reduction is using language which is saying that the Member for Edmonton-South has hatred towards job creators, which is, I guess, language that will cause disorder. He is also imputing false motives towards that member. We are all here to represent our constituents, and he made the case that that \$4.7 billion plan that the government brought forward didn't deliver, didn't create jobs. We don't have any hatred against any job creators – we don't – and imputing such motives is clearly out of order.

Thank you.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you.

A response? The associate minister of natural gas and deputy House leader.

Mr. Nally: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, we've been here for a while now, and we heard from that side of the House not too long ago. We were accused of being in the pockets of the insurance companies, and we said nothing. We didn't call it a point of order because we want to have a meaningful, collaborative debate with our colleagues and partners across the aisle, so we gave them some leniency on that one.

But in terms of this argument here, you know, I have to say that this is a debatable point. We're dealing with a caucus over here that, when they came into government, came up with the single-largest tax in this province's history, drove away business. They drove away \$100 billion worth of investment from this province, and do you know what else, Mr. Speaker? Fifty billion dollars of that investment they chased away was nonresident investment. That means that when it's gone, there's no footprint. It is gone. They chased those job creators away.

When we came in and we wanted to stimulate the economy and we wanted to create an incentive to get that money back, they lit their hair on fire.

The Acting Speaker: Member, if you could speak to the point of order, I would appreciate it.

Mr. Nally: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our point is that this is a debatable point. It's an absolute debatable point, so we don't think it's a point of order whatsoever.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you.

Anybody else wishing to speak directly to the point of order? The Member for Edmonton-South.

Mr. Dang: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think we heard basically no points against the point of order from the Deputy Government House Leader. However, under 23(h), (i), and (j) the minister was clearly imputing false motives. He used specific terminology, referred specifically to myself as a member in this place, and said that I had certain motivations, including hating job creators. I think that clearly imputes false motives. We have seen rulings from multiple Speakers in this place, including the current Speaker, the current Deputy Speaker as well as previous Speaker Wanner, that it is acceptable, say, to create generalizations about members of other caucuses. However, it is unacceptable to do direct, targeted attacks against an individual member in this place, and I ask you to rule the minister out of order accordingly.

Thank you.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you.

Any other rebuttals?

Thank you. I'm prepared to rule. Thursday afternoons are always very interesting, one of the best times of the week, but I will say that I have heard insinuations from both sides over the last couple of weeks. I do consider this a matter of debate, and I consider the matter concluded.

Associate minister of red tape, you have three minutes and 40 seconds.

Point of Clarification

Mr. Dang: Point of order, Mr. Speaker. Under 13(2) I ask for clarity from the Speaker because I believe that a matter of debate – under previous rulings made by the chair in this place, made by the Speaker in this place, matters of debate include policy and facts, but this is certainly a matter of opinion. Matters of opinion impugned as motives are not matters of debate. I wish for clarity as to whether in this case, for example, I'd be able to say that the minister indeed hates families due to his policies. Would that then be acceptable as well?

The Acting Speaker: Thank you.

The Member for Calgary-McCall.

Mr. Sabir: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Also under 13(2) I'm just requesting that you explain the ruling a bit further because, as I said, the minister clearly stated that the Member for Edmonton-South has a hatred against job creators here. It's very specific language directed at the Member for Edmonton-South and false motives. That will clearly, in my opinion, fall under 23(h), (i), and (j). Under 13(2) it would be helpful if you would explain your ruling further.

3:40

The Acting Speaker: Absolutely.

The Associate Minister of Red Tape Reduction for rebuttal?

Mr. Hunter: I obviously have hurt their tender feelings on that side, so I would like to withdraw and apologize for that. In order to be able to continue on – look, I did not want to impugn their good sense of the work that they're doing and how they love Albertans and all sectors, in fact, how they love the oil and gas sector. They prove that when they actually go onto the steps and they go with their environmental groups to go against oil and gas. You know what, Mr. Speaker? I have offended them, and I have zero interest in offending them here today, so I do apologize and retract that statement.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you, Associate Minister.

But I will respond to the question that was brought up. As I said before in my ruling, I've heard insinuations, direct comments, and name-calling from both sides of the House. I don't see anything different about this one if those were not called a point of order at the time. Sometimes they were, and sometimes they were ruled a matter of debate. I'm simply saying that this is another one of those instances. I would encourage people to think before you speak and encourage you to – you know, we're 45 minutes away from adjourning the House at 4:30. We can get through this. We will get through this.

Thank you very much to the associate minister for withdrawing his comment. You have three minutes and 23 seconds, sir.

Debate Continued

Mr. Hunter: Sure. Mr. Speaker, what I do want to talk about is that I want to talk about how the member has continued to say how we had a terrible record, how we drove away 50,000 jobs. Here's the reality. They keep on saying: that's fact. Well, that's fact according to the NDP, which doesn't amount to much. The truth is that we inherited – we inherited – policies from this government for four years, four years that took away the ability of job creators to do exactly what they're supposed to do, create jobs. Now we are in the position where we're trying to be able to get Albertans back to work, and it takes time to be able to do that. Yes, because of the carbon tax, because of the terrible Bill 6 that they actually implemented, because of all of the things that they did, they certainly did have a residual effect into our term, and that's what you saw.

But we were well on our way – we were well on our way – to being able to bring back the Alberta advantage. The Alberta advantage is simple: having a lower marginal tax rate than other jurisdictions, having a sustainable government, and having a lower regulatory burden than other jurisdictions. That was the Alberta advantage. Now, we've heard from the members opposite many times where they say that we have done it wrong in Alberta for 44 years. They don't understand. They continue to say, as Carroll Bryant said: what just happened? They just do not understand it. In fact, they really don't like what happened in Alberta. They think we did it all wrong. I always ask the question: well, if we did it all wrong, why do you live here? In reality, Mr. Speaker, they live here because there were jobs and there were opportunities here, because this is exactly what they wanted to have, jobs and opportunities for their families, for themselves.

But, Mr. Speaker, that wasn't good enough for them. They had to drive that out. When they were given the four-year opportunity in this House to be able to prove to Albertans that they had a better way, what happened after four years? They were sent packing. The reality is that when they were for four years – and they didn't have a COVID-19 pandemic that they had to deal with. Instead, what they had to deal with is some of the best situations with the federal government, their best friend and ally Justin Trudeau being able to give them everything that they needed.

But, in reality, that wasn't good enough because they wanted to continue to destroy the fabric that made us so great, which is those three things that I just talked about, lower marginal tax rate – and that's exactly what we've done here with this bill. We've allowed us to be competitive so we can get those investments to come back into our province, and those investments then will provide job opportunities for the people of Alberta. If they think that that is so wrong, then Albertans wouldn't have gotten rid of them.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you.

I recognize the Associate Minister of Natural Gas and Electricity.

Mr. Nally: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At this point I wish to advise the Assembly that pursuant to Standing Order 3(1.2) there will be no morning sittings Tuesday, November 17; Wednesday, November 18; and Thursday, November 19, 2020.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you very much.

On RA1 I'll recognize the Member for Edmonton-Glenora.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm just going to try to focus things again on the debate at hand, and that is a referral amendment that has been brought forward. I'll just read the rationale part because I know that we're trying to limit the number of papers that each of us has and that need to be transported through the House. Just remember that the referral is that this bill

be not now read a second time because the Assembly is of the view that a reduction in the corporate income tax rate that rewards foreign shareholders is an ineffective strategy to create jobs, relative to the alternatives.

I'm going to take a minute to talk about some of the alternatives.

I just want to start my comments – there were some questions asked about why I choose to live here, and I'll say that I choose to live here. I was born here. I was born in St. Albert, and I grew up in a number of communities. I talk most about Kinuso because that's where I spent the majority of my childhood, but I also lived in Altario and in Castor. We did live in St. Albert when I was first born. I am so proud to live here, and I don't think that anyone who chooses to live here should have to ascribe to all of the policies of the government of the day.

I imagine that people who chose to move here during the time when the NDP was in government, just a few short years ago, including members of the government caucus – many members of the government caucus chose to move here when the NDP was in government. The member looks shocked by that, but let me remind him of at least two off the top of my mind. The Minister of Children's Services moved here during the time when the NDP was in government. The Member for Banff-Kananaskis moved here in the time when the NDP was in government. She specifically moved here to work in the private sector. So for the member to say that everything was doom and gloom when the NDP was in government – and I'm confident there are others, maybe the Member for Cardston-Siksika. I'm not exactly clear on the timeline when he and others chose to move back to Alberta.

I think that there are a lot of people who have every right to live in this province. I do. The member who just spoke certainly does, and so do all Albertans who choose to make this place home. I want to remind the member that his remarks will have weight, maybe not as much in this moment, but there are members, absolutely, of his caucus who chose to make Alberta their home during the time the NDP was in government, and I am glad they did. I think that people moving here and choosing to make this their home, contributing to our society, is a good thing. I'm confident we're going to run people against them in the next election, but I'm glad they chose to make this place their home.

I also want to say that the first two years of a term go fast; the last two years go even faster. So for those folks who are sitting there thinking that, you know, this is going to last forever, trust me; this, too, shall pass. The last two years absolutely go very quickly in a government's term if it even goes full term. That's something that we haven't spent a lot of time talking about in this place, but there definitely is a long tradition of Conservative governments in this province choosing to call elections early.

I want to talk a little bit about the \$4.7 billion thrust of this bill because that, of course, is what we're focused on in our reasoned amendment, and the reason why we are is because the government did run on doing a massive corporate reduction. They definitely had that in their platform. They had it on a different timeline than what's being proposed here, and if the government were to run on one thing and then do another thing, I would think the wise thing to do would be to look at the evidence. If you're going to pivot from what your plan was, have evidence to back up why you're pivoting, evidence to justify why it is you're not following the plan as outlined to voters, as outlined in your original throne speeches, as outlined in your original budgets. We regularly get people of the government standing in this House saying: "Four point seven? That's not true. You used to say that it was \$4.5 billion." That's what we estimated when we did the math based on the government's plan.

Then the government came out with their very first budget, and we read it. It was about six months after they were sworn in. They came out with their very first budget, and we read it in quite some detail. On page 144 of that budget they specifically said that according to the current timelines they had mapped out at that time, it would be \$4.7 billion in reduced income due to their decisions around corporate tax rates. Now they're fast-tracking that even more, so could it be more than \$4.7 billion? Absolutely, it could be. I have a feeling that the budget isn't going to have a number in it this time. I think the government has decided that. Certainly, as evidenced by subsequent budgets, they chose not to include that cumulative number that they did have in that very first budget.

3:50

So we have every reason to stand in this place and cite government documents, the government documents that were voted for by government members. I know that government members are frustrated when we do, but you voted for it. You put it in your plan. You put it in black and white. It's on page 144. We have every reason to be able to draw into question whether or not those are the right decisions.

When the \$4.7 billion was originally proposed in that first budget, the government said that it was going to create tons of net new jobs. There was a net reduction between when they brought that in, on the first Canada Day following the decision, and the beginning of COVID in our province. We think that that's one period of time that we should look at in isolation. I understand that the impacts of COVID have been deep and far-reaching in our province and globally, so we're looking at the period of time between when the government brought in the policy and when the world changed significantly through COVID. During that period of time the government's goals were definitely not achieved. It was actually the opposite. I believe the proposal said that there would be 55,000 net new jobs, and instead there were 50,000 net fewer jobs. It's pretty simple to say that the logic that was set out when the government originally proposed their plan at the rate at which they proposed it was an abject failure.

Now, some members of this House will stand and will cite test cases from the United States in the 1980s and say, "These proposals

will work because they worked in another country in another generation; therefore, we think that they'll work here, too" without acknowledging all of the other realities that were happening in that other country to another generation and without acknowledging the realities that are being inflicted on the people of Alberta today. What are some of those realities? Well, this week we saw the government bring in a bill, and the motivation for that bill, of course, is: this is about revenue, this is about income, and then there are, of course, expenditures.

We all understand, I hope, a simple balance sheet. The government is choosing, through this bill and through other subsequent actions, to drive down revenue. What they're doing on the expenditure side is that they say: "Well, we do probably need to build a bridge in La Crête. That is probably really important, but we simply can't afford to pay for it. We're not going to pay for it. We're going to download that onto the users." It's not going to be public infrastructure; it's going to be paid-for, private infrastructure. There's going to be a user fee; there's going to be a toll to drive up some revenue to offset expenditures. This is a massive revenue opportunity. All the folks who have supported the budgets in the past and who are planning on supporting Bill 35 don't seem to understand the implications. When you're working with a balance sheet and you choose to drive a massive hole through your revenue, you're therefore creating conditions to try to push other forms of revenue onto regular Albertans, one being user fees or tolls.

It's not just about a bridge in the lovely riding of Peace River. It's about things – the minister was asked, "Well, what about the Deerfoot?" The minister said: "Well, if the Deerfoot needs to be expanded, if it's going to be widened, if it's going to have additional opportunities for people, there's probably going to be a user fee on the expansion of the Deerfoot. If it's the current Deerfoot, the current number of lanes, we're not going to expand it." There was absolute allusion and, I would say, direction given through the media – and it was publicly reported – that the Deerfoot is at risk.

If the Deerfoot needs an expansion, which we all know it does – most of us have probably driven on the Deerfoot at a variety of times of day. I always try to time the Deerfoot so that I'm not there when it's going to be its busiest, but it seems that no matter when I'm there, it's incredibly busy. For the government to say that we're going to choose to fast-track giving away \$4.7 billion to profitable corporations – this is only, of course, revenue that they pay based on their profits so only large corporations for the \$4.7 billion, again, to be specific. I know the government tries to talk about other options, but the \$4.7 billion is about large, profitable corporations making profits in excess of over half a million dollars. So there's no money there, people of Calgary or all Albertans who need to drive the Deerfoot, for your road to be expanded unless you bring in a toll or a user fee. Well, not exactly the priorities that I would say I heard reflected to me when I've spent time in Calgary.

Also, postsecondary institutions. We've seen tremendous reductions to the amounts of supports and programs available in many parts of this province, many rural parts of this province, and also urban programming as well. That definitely wasn't something that was campaigned for. When asked why, the government stands in this place and says things like, "Well, cost-benefit analysis" and these types of things.

But what's the cost-benefit analysis of your proposal through Bill 35? I would say: an abject failure. I would say that everything that you've done to try to demonstrate that this is going to work has shown that it doesn't. That's why we thought that maybe there's been some academic research that's been done by all these highly paid people in the Premier's office. Maybe they've written reports and recommendations. Maybe they've done some analysis. Some of these people, you know, have very deep family connections.

Maybe they're writing a report saying that there are financial opportunities here. What we got back were four pages that were completely FOIPed out and no evidence to actually substantiate the claims that were alluded to by the Premier and by the Finance minister. [interjection] I'd be happy to engage in that conversation under 29(2)(a), certainly.

In terms of postsecondaries we've seen the funding go down, the tuition go up, the programs and opportunities go down, the pressures on students and on families go up. I think these priorities are absolutely backwards, and that's why I think this needs to be referred for further consideration.

I also think that the impacts on K to 12 schools – the government will very carefully stand in this place and use nuanced language to try to say that one thing happened. When you actually look at the realities, more than \$400 per student has been cut from our schools this year in the middle of a pandemic, going after ordinary families and saying that you're going to have to pay more fees, going after children and saying that there are going to have to be more of you in overcrowded classrooms, the fact that the government is choosing to make these priorities.

Another one that is absolutely heartbreaking – and I'm not surprised the government doesn't like to defend it and that they try to talk around it – is cuts to PUF, program unit funding, that has been in place in this province for a number of years, that's been focused on making sure that the students who are the most young, two years and eight months, some of them, have opportunities to close their learning gaps by the time they start grade 1. There were criticisms saying that the programs are so much more robust for three-, four-, and five-year-olds and that they should be built up for six-year-olds.

Instead, what the government has decided to do is to make them worse for five-year-olds, for sure, and in many ways for three- and four-year-olds as well. The funding that used to be tied to children – and then the parents could choose a program that best met their needs – is now tied to hours of a program. Talk about red tape: hours of a program. You need to have a certain number of hours to be able to qualify for program unit funding to support you and your child. And five-year-olds? They're on their own. They're on their own. So when we talk about funding for early years, for child care or for early years, for investing up front in students who have disabilities, these are some of the cruelest and most backwards cuts that I can imagine.

And what is the motivation? The motivation is to ram through these kinds of decisions to give away massive profits to already profitable corporations, corporations that have chosen not to create jobs in Alberta during this time – we've mapped that out – corporations that have actually in large numbers laid off people in this province or moved certain segments of their operations to other jurisdictions in other provinces.

I've mentioned education, postsecondary education. Let's talk about health care a little bit. Here we are in the midst of a global pandemic. We had a lab for Edmonton and north moving forward, and one of the first announcements the Minister of Health made was to completely shelve that lab expansion. Wouldn't it be useful to have a fantastic lab that was meeting our needs?

Then the government, you know, brags about how they're reducing the number of tests because they're only testing those who are most in need of tests. I find that incredibly disrespectful to all of the people who are choosing to follow medical advice that was given to them for months about being proactive, getting tests for those who had concerns, that if you were going to change your cohort, make sure you're tested, that you have a good baseline. I think that these types of decisions were absolutely being made with a focus on giving money away to profitable corporations and taking

it away from essential public services that support ordinary working families.

It's not just working families; it's also families that are getting laid off. We know that one of the first things that happened in education was a fast track to lay off more than 20,000 education workers at the beginning of the pandemic.

4:00

When Premiers in other provinces were asked if they were going to do the same thing, Doug Ford, who's not always quoted as being, you know, the most empathetic, said: absolutely not. He wasn't going to do such a thing. The job of the government is to provide stability and support families, not to attack families further, to make sure that families have the supports that they need during difficult times, including a global pandemic. This government chose to act in the exact opposite way. This government has chosen to move forward so aggressively . . .

The Acting Speaker: Under 29(2)(a). I don't know which one of you jumped up the quickest. I think I'll recognize the Member for Red Deer-South.

Mr. Stephan: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I was just sitting and listening to the Member for Edmonton-Glenora. It was a very oppressive, negative, socialist-type speech. Mr. Speaker, I want you to know that I have great optimism for our future, and that's due to the great families, individuals, and businesses in this province whom we love.

There's some optimistic news that I think it's important for the House to be aware of in respect of the job-creation tax cut. Just a couple of days ago Suncor released news that they are moving their head office to Calgary. Of course, this is one of the leading oil and gas companies in the country. Why would they do that? Well, Mr. Speaker, before having the privilege and honour to serve as an MLA in this Legislature, I practised income tax law. Ontario right now has a corporate income tax rate of 11 and a half per cent. We're reducing our corporate tax rate to 8 per cent. In terms of determining tax liability in a business, under the laws of Canada, under the Income Tax Act a corporation pays tax amongst provinces determined by where their salaries and where their revenue is earned. It's actually a 50-50 split. By moving its head office here to leverage off the income tax rates that are lower in Alberta, we will actually both increase employment in Alberta, but indirectly the happy result from that as well is that we'll increase income tax revenue from those additional jobs that will be generated by the business decision that Suncor made to move its head office to Alberta.

The job-creation tax cut not only creates jobs, but it also helps fund the services through personal income tax revenue, which is actually at a higher rate than corporate income tax rates. It gives us an increased capacity to provide the services that Albertans value and appreciate. From a historical perspective that is how Alberta has prospered and succeeded in the real world. The job-creation tax rate is really a restoration of the meritocracy that is part of the culture of Alberta. Alberta has succeeded and prospered by being a land of opportunity, by being the best. And us following through on our campaign commitment that Albertans overwhelmingly supported in the last election – it surprises me, actually, Mr. Speaker, why the opposition is so against the decision that Albertans made to support this, which was a key policy of our government.

But what it is is that Albertans as a whole reject socialism. The members opposite – when I kind of look across the aisle, I don't really feel that there's a lot of competency to speak about business competitiveness. One of the main concerns that motivated me to run for office is that during their tenure, which was really destructive to

individuals and families, there was a net loss of tens of thousands of private-sector jobs. That legacy not only has a financial cost, but there's a great human cost. Unfortunately, the members are unapologetic about their destructive policies that they had, that destroyed the livelihoods of Alberta families and individuals, and I met some of those families that suffered under their socialist ideology.

One of the problems with socialism is that it views success as a zero-sum game. When private-sector businesses succeed, they feel that there's actually a net loss for employers. They set up an adversarial relationship between businesses and its employers.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you, Member.

Are there any other members wishing to speak to RA1? I'll recognize the Member for Calgary-Buffalo.

Member Ceci: Thank you very much. With regard to RA1 I want just to focus on the last part, which is that the "reduction in the corporate income tax rate that rewards foreign shareholders is an ineffective strategy to create jobs, relative to the alternatives." There are alternatives, Mr. Speaker, and that's what I want to focus my objection on here today.

I do want to point out, in starting, just to set some context, that the CIT reduction has not had the backs of Albertans through this downturn. The reduction of the CIT has rewarded, as it says here, foreign shareholders, and they have benefited and not invested those monies back. That was one of the first things that the Premier – when he announced the CIT reduction initially, he said that he's in discussion with the six large banks, and one of them is very close. I don't want to put words in his mouth, but he intimated that a large bank would soon be moving here as a result of the CIT reductions that were put in place by his government. We know that hasn't happened. We know that the large banks are still where their head offices are. They have not moved their head offices to Alberta, either Edmonton or Calgary.

He also intimated that he was in discussion with a number of companies, and they're all very happy that the CIT has been reduced. You know, again, he was implying that they're going to come here. Well, that hasn't happened, Mr. Speaker. We heard about Suncor just a second ago, and that company is reducing over the next two years its workforce by 15 per cent. Over 2,000 people will lose their jobs at Suncor, and they have some presence here in Alberta and will be bringing some of their sales staff that are in Oakville to Alberta.

Mr. Speaker, the CIT cut, giving profitable corporations up to \$4.7 billion – it was in a budget; page 144 – has not resulted in the promises that were made by the Premier or the Minister of Finance or other members on the other side. What has happened during the time of that cut is that jobs have been lost in this province. I talked about Suncor just now. That's in addition to the 50,000 jobs that were lost pre-pandemic. We know that the economy shrank pre-pandemic. A member opposite wanted to suggest: that's because you left us a shrinking economy. I just want to remind that member and other members here that the different approach that was brought forward by the New Democrat government at the time – in two of the four years that we were government, our economy rose faster and higher than any other province in this country. That was because, I would suggest, of having Albertans' backs through some really difficult times.

4:10

We, of course, know that Premier Prentice pulled the trigger on an earlier election in late 2014, early 2015. All results from all economic modelling were suggesting and we were seeing a

significant drop to the economy in oil economies across the world. Alberta, being a very dependent economy on the world price of oil, suffered as a result of that. Premier Prentice tried to get out in front of all that, called an election in 2015, and we know the results of that with bringing forward the first New Democrat government in this province.

I'd suggest that we did a really credible job, working with David Dodge, coming up with a stimulus package to kick-start investment across this province, through the municipalities and cities in this province. It grew the economy, it moderated the job losses, and it gave Albertans the opportunity to see some incredible programs. My colleague from Edmonton-Ellerslie talked about one with regard to the pilots of the \$25-a-day daycare, which was subscribed fully in terms of the pilot programs and supported Albertans. I just want to focus on some of those things and maybe go back in time a little bit to bolster my argument about what's important that we focus on and that Bill 35, tax statutes, has not delivered. That's why this amendment is before this House today.

I just want to mention that, you know, mayors across this country – and certainly Calgary and Edmonton mayors are no different – go out there searching for opportunities to bring head offices, not only head offices but business, to this province. When I was on city council years ago, Mayor Al Duerr did that very same thing with CP Rail. I remember clearly that the thing that he talked about with regard to nailing down CP Rail as a head office in Calgary was quality of life. It wasn't the lowest tax structure in the country. Alberta at that time had a tax structure that would probably be somewhere around the lower parts of the country, but it wasn't the lowest in the country. The thing the mayor said and what people subsequently who came from CP Rail and settled here said was that the quality of life that they were moving to was important for them. The quality of life in the province was not dependent only on the fiscal quality or fiscal situation in this province. It was dependent on the environmental quality of life, the social issues that were prevalent in our city and province.

The fiscal, as I said, was one of those things as well as the cultural quality of life for families that would be moving here. When families were moving here – and I would say the same thing goes for families today if they come to this province. They're looking for a full range of experiences, not just that it's the lowest tax jurisdiction. They're looking to ensure that there is a positive physical environment for them to move into like clean water and clean air and open spaces to recreate and open spaces to go to with their families. They want high environmental standards to be upheld by government and business in the place they move to. What we've seen, unfortunately, is that this government has not paid enough attention to those things and will make it more difficult down the road to have high environmental standards in our province.

People look for social issues to be responsibly dealt with. That includes child care availability and the availability being also affordable. It includes having schools that are good for their families, that there's a range of education opportunities and that it's not costly for families to have those opportunities. It includes, you know, ensuring that our most vulnerable, those with the least, are cared for and that that's done in a good way, whether those folks have drug addictions or whether those folks are homeless or, in fact, need support because they have domestic violence situations. Social issues are just as important for people's decisions about why they move somewhere as, I would argue, fiscal ones.

Of course, it's important that taxes be reasonably levied and used by government in a responsible and accountable manner and that the cost of living is not exorbitant. I mean, there are some places in the world where, you know, inflation is just out of this world, and

the cost of living is too expensive, but families somehow have to make do. Well, people don't move to places like that because they don't have confidence that they'll be able to survive. They move to places like this because we have done so much to address the kinds of issues that I'm talking about.

Lastly, I want to just mention that culture is something that needs to be focused on as well. People want, you know, the opportunity for their kids to get a cultural education as well, to have great opportunities like sports teams and theatre and music and the opportunity to be a part of those things but also take part in those things.

Mr. Speaker, the quality of life in this province is the responsibility of all governments, whether you're the UCP, sitting on that side, or whether it was the NDP, who were sitting on that side before. We focused on all of those things, and I believe you're trying to focus on all of those things, but you're putting too much emphasis on one part of that four-legged stool and leaving it as the most important part when it's not the most important part. It forms a part of the whole that we were trying to redress when we were government because we didn't feel like the parts that I was speaking to around social issues, around environmental issues, and around cultural issues had been focused on enough by previous governments.

Mr. Speaker, the work that we believe needs to go on won't go on if we pass this bill. That's why we're standing up and saying that it needs to get a second look. We need to take more time. We need to address it with the needs of Albertans in mind.

You know, I was listening to the RMA convention online on Zoom or YouTube earlier this week, and I heard the Premier speak to some of the challenges the GDP and the economy are having right now in this province. Mr. Speaker, when the UCP took over, the GDP was at \$360 billion. This NDP government when we were government left the economy at \$360 billion. He's saying now that – this is with the policies that are currently in place by the UCP government. The economy will shrink, he said, possibly up to 20 per cent. That puts it down around \$300 billion.

That's not a very good track record that the UCP has right now. They haven't grown the economy. In fact, they're overseeing a shrinking in the economy, and I can tell you that to turn that around, you can't just look at one part of the whole. You have to look at all aspects that bring people to this province, that bring investment to this province, and it's not just the lowest CIT, one of the lowest in North America.

When we were government, Mr. Speaker, we had a CIT that was in the middle of the pack. It wasn't the lowest. It wasn't the highest of the provinces and territories in this country. It was in the middle of the pack even with the work we did to bring in a responsible, reasonable CIT at 12 per cent. We left the small business tax – no. We lowered the small business tax from 3 per cent to 2 per cent. We did that with the full knowledge that we were supporting small-business job creators, that that would be beneficial to them.

4:20

We know that, you know, to attract business here is a long-term play – I would agree that it's not something that happens at the turn of a dime – but that's what our minister of economic development was doing when he went down to Silicon Valley with the mayor of Calgary to say: look, Calgary, Alberta, and Edmonton and elsewhere in this province are great places for you to bring your business. That has generated the opportunity to have a really unique starter business place called the Edison in downtown Calgary. I think it's using the old EnCana building.

The Acting Speaker: Under 29(2)(a) I will recognize the hon. Associate Minister of Red Tape Reduction.

Mr. Hunter: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The hon. Member for Calgary-*Buffalo* doesn't motivate me as much as the hon. Member for *Edmonton-South*, but I will say that I do like listening to his voice as it reminds me of Mister Rogers. He was also a smiler, and I appreciated Mister Rogers.

Mr. Speaker, though, I want to talk a little bit about the problem I see with the NDP understanding what Alberta is about. It really can be described in their own constitution. I've brought this up before, but I want to bring this up again to help Albertans, the hundreds of thousands that are watching today, understand really what the NDP are about. They talk about the failed approach, that we were back in the 1980s and that we were trying to be able bring back a 1980s style of economics. The truth is that the socialist economics went back to the 1890s. I think that we've actually got a fairly good record in terms of being able to bring about economic growth in this province. Socialism, as described in their own constitution, says: "Socialism is essentially the application of democracy to the economy. Economic democracy, i.e. democratic socialism..." This is the interesting thing. Mr. Speaker, they really don't like hearing this, but it's in their own document.

Mr. Sabir: Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: We were so close. A point of order has been called at 4:22.

Go ahead, Member for *Calgary-McCall*.

Point of Order Relevance

Mr. Sabir: Thank you. Mr. Speaker, 29(2)(a). I will read that subject to clause (b), following each speech on the items in debate referred to in suborder (1), a period not exceeding 5 minutes shall be made available, if required, to allow Members to ask questions and comment briefly on matters relevant to the speech and to allow responses to each Member's questions and comments.

Whatever the minister of red tape is saying has no relevance whatsoever. What is happening here: we are talking about Bill 35, which expedites, which puts on steroids their failed \$4.7 billion corporate handout policy. What he is reading has no relevance to the debate at hand. It is not what's covered by 29(2)(a).

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: Any rebuttal? I will recognize the Member for *Cardston-Siksika*.

Mr. Schow: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. While I can appreciate the comments from the member opposite, I do recognize and all members should recognize that a great amount of latitude is given to members to respond within 29(2)(a). That is procedure. That is convention within this Chamber. While the hon. Associate Minister of Red Tape Reduction was making points that the member may not think had been relevant, I suspect the member was obviously getting towards a greater point in response to the comments made by the Member for *Calgary-*Buffalo**. I don't think this is a point of order. It's clearly a matter of debate, and as I said at the beginning of this response, chairs in the past, including yourself, have granted a significant amount of latitude. I ask that you continue to grant that latitude.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you. Any other comments?

I'm prepared to rule on this. I've listened to about roughly 50 minutes of debate on RA1. I've heard comments drifting as far away as education, so I will not call this a point of order.

You can continue, sir, with 3:26.

Debate Continued

Mr. Hunter: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's interesting. A very interesting strategy of the left is that when they don't like what you're saying, they shout you down, and they don't want you to be able to speak. But I will continue, Mr. Speaker.

I was just about to say the definition in their own constitution of democratic socialism "assures production to supply the needs of all people." That hasn't changed much since the 1890s.

The reality is that the hon. members are still upset with the private sector being able to determine what supply and demand is. They are still upset with the idea that the economy is a free market, that they don't know better than the economy. The economy moves too quickly, so when the government gets in the way, that is the reason why socialist governments fail their people to be able to create jobs. This is the reason why throughout the world, for over a hundred years now, we have seen socialist government after socialist government fail.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the reason why the NDP continue to work at a strategy of being able to tell Albertans what's best for them and that they're going to reinvent things, that it's going to be better this time – "Yes, we didn't do so well the last time; yes, you did kick us out after four years," the only government, I might add. But this is a strategy. "No; it's going to be better this time." The truth is that that socialist strategy, as can be described in their own document, is the same since the 1890s, and the reality is that it hasn't changed.

Mr. Speaker, when the hon. member was speaking about this and saying that we need to actually take this and send this to committee and actually not go forward with this anymore, with that amendment, the reality is that they're still trying to block progress for Albertans and trying to be able to get Albertans back to work.

On this side of the House we are a hundred per cent committed to getting Albertans back to work. We know that the way to be able to do that is to make sure that the investors will come back to our province, the investors that the NDP drove away, the tens of billions of dollars that was driven away by the NDP. We need that to come back. This is why our Premier will go down to Texas, go right back down into the investors' homeland and say: "Come on back here. We're doing something different now. It's not the same NDP that you've seen in the last four years. We are actually open for business." What that means is that we have to make sure that we are competitive on a global scale for that investment for it to come back. That is the reason why we have decreased the corporate tax rate.

Mr. Speaker, we're not finished with that. We are getting aggressive with red tape reduction, which I'll be tabling the report on in the coming weeks, to be able to show how much we've done in comparison to other jurisdictions at getting out of the way of our job creators. We have to do better for Albertans. We are working hard to be able to make sure that they get back to work because that is what we were elected to do. Jobs, the economy, pipelines: we are going to be one hundred per cent hyperfocused on that no matter what the NDP say and no matter how much they scream about this.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you, Member.

And 29(2)(a) is finished.

Are there any other members wishing to speak to RA1? We have a couple of minutes left. I'll recognize the Member for *Edmonton-Whitemud*.

Ms Pancholi: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I only have a moment. Luckily, I'm a fast speaker.

I've enjoyed hearing the smugness and the arrogance from the government members today about their, quite frankly, failed economic approach thus far. For a government that likes to pride itself on their remarkable economic acumen, we've created no jobs. They've created none. They've lost jobs, and they also handed out \$4.7 billion.

More interestingly, just this afternoon, Mr. Speaker, the Auditor General's report was issued. Guess what? It says that this government had \$1.7 billion in accounting errors. From a government that has remarkable economic acumen – my goodness – \$1.7 billion in accounting errors, from numerous sources. As well, might I add, there were criticisms, of course, about the freely awarded sole-source contracts without documentations. Spent money without board approval on paid contractors as a result of their war room.

So as entertaining as it is to hear this government continue to pat themselves on the back for so far a complete failed economic

record, the truth is that Albertans can see this government's record for what it is. They talk a big talk, but they have not produced anything but economic failure for this province to date. Their record speaks for itself. Frankly, we don't even need to get up and say it. It's clear on the record itself.

The Acting Speaker: I'm sorry to interrupt, Member.

Well, it's been a rather robust Thursday afternoon. Just before we adjourn, I would just like to encourage all members to attend the Remembrance Day ceremony of their choice in their home constituency. And please recognize – it was discussed earlier today – that there is a poppy etiquette. It is to be worn on your left-hand side and above any other insignia, like I'm wearing it right now. So please recognize that and enjoy a safe trip home.

Pursuant to standing orders 3(6) and 4(2) the Assembly stands adjourned until Monday, November 16, 2020, at 1:30 p.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 4:30 p.m. to Monday, November 16, at 1:30 p.m.]

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

Activity to Thursday, November 5, 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 (S) (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.*), 2940-43 (*Nov. 2, 2020 eve.*), 2986-94 (*Nov. 3, 2020 eve., adjourned*), 3072-83 (*Nov. 5, 2020 aft.*)

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.), 2925-29 (Nov. 2, 2020 eve.), 2974-78 (Nov. 3, 2020 aft., 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)

Committee of the Whole — 3024-29 (Nov. 4, 2020 aft.), 3031-48 (Nov. 4, 2020 eve., adjourned; amendments agreed to)

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.), 2960-65 (Nov. 3, 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.), 2929-40 (Nov. 2, 2020 eve.), 2979-86 (Nov. 3, 2020 eve., 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.), 2965-74 (Nov. 3, 2020 aft., adjourned)

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

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

Second Reading — 2915-24 (Nov. 2, 2020 eve.), 3011-23 (Nov. 4, 2020 aft.), 3051-58 (Nov. 4, 2020 eve., adjourned)

Bill 42 — North Saskatchewan River Basin Water Authorization Act (Nixon, JJ)

First Reading — 2907 (Nov. 2, 2020 aft., passed)

Second Reading — 3009-11 (Nov. 4, 2020 aft., passed)

Committee of the Whole — 3048-51 (Nov. 4, 2020 eve., passed)

Third Reading — 3072 (Nov. 5, 2020 aft., passed)

Bill 43 — Financing Alberta's Strategic Transportation Act (McIver)

First Reading — 2956 (Nov. 3, 2020 aft., passed)

Bill 44 — Financial Statutes Amendment Act, 2020 (Toews)

First Reading — 2956 (Nov. 3, 2020 aft., passed)

Bill 45 — Local Authorities Election Amendment Act, 2020 (No. 2) (Allard)

First Reading — 3006 (Nov. 4, 2020 aft., passed)

Bill 46 — Health Statutes Amendment Act, 2020 (No. 2) (Shandro)

First Reading — 3071 (Nov. 5, 2020 aft., passed)

Bill 47 — Ensuring Safety and Cutting Red Tape Act, 2020 (\$) (Copping)

First Reading — 3070-71 (Nov. 5, 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.*), 2908-09 (*Nov. 2, 2020 aft., passed*)

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.....	3059
Introduction of Guests	3059
Members' Statements	
Remembrance Day	3059, 3060
Petrochemicals Diversification	3060
Royal Canadian Legion Poppy Campaign	3060
Festival of Lights.....	3061
Provincial Parks.....	3061
Live Events.....	3061
Socialism.....	3070
Oral Question Period	
Automobile Insurance Premiums	3062
Toll Roads and Bill 43.....	3062
COVID-19 Testing.....	3062, 3069
Agent General to Houston	3063
Construction Industry Prompt-payment Legislation.....	3064
Rural Municipalities' Property Taxes.....	3064
Health Care Contracted Services.....	3065
COVID-19 Protective Measures.....	3065
Student Mental Health Supports.....	3066
Provincial Diploma Examination Exemptions.....	3067
Public Health Act Emergency Powers.....	3067
Calgary Storm Damage Recovery Funding	3068
Programs for Persons with Developmental Disabilities.....	3068
Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees	3070
Introduction of Bills	
Bill 47 Ensuring Safety and Cutting Red Tape Act, 2020.....	3070
Bill 46 Health Statutes Amendment Act, 2020 (No. 2).....	3071
Tabling Returns and Reports	3071
Tablings to the Clerk	3071
Orders of the Day	3071
Government Bills and Orders	
Third Reading	
Bill 42 North Saskatchewan River Basin Water Authorization Act.....	3071
Second Reading	
Bill 35 Tax Statutes (Creating Jobs and Driving Innovation) Amendment Act, 2020.....	3072

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