



Province of Alberta

The 30th Legislature
Second Session

Alberta Hansard

Thursday afternoon, December 3, 2020

Day 76

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

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

Amanda LeBlanc, Deputy Editor of *Alberta
Hansard*
Chris Caughell, Sergeant-at-Arms
Tom Bell, Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms
Paul Link, Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms

Executive Council

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

Parliamentary Secretaries

Laila Goodridge	Parliamentary Secretary Responsible for Alberta's Francophonie
Martin Long	Parliamentary Secretary for Small Business and Tourism
Jeremy Nixon	Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Community and Social Services
Muhammad Yaseen	Parliamentary Secretary of Immigration

STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Standing Committee on the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund

Chair: Mr. Orr
Deputy Chair: Mr. Getson

Eggen
Glasgo
Gray
Jones
Phillips
Singh
Turton

Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future

Chair: Mr. Neudorf
Deputy Chair: Ms Goehring

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

Select Special Democratic Accountability Committee

Chair: Mr. Schow
Deputy Chair: Mr. Horner

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

Standing Committee on Families and Communities

Chair: Ms Goodridge
Deputy Chair: Ms Sigurdson

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

Standing Committee on Legislative Offices

Chair: Mr. Schow
Deputy Chair: Mr. Sigurdson

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

Special Standing Committee on Members' Services

Chair: Mr. Cooper
Deputy Chair: Mr. Ellis

Dang
Deol
Goehring
Goodridge
Long
Neudorf
Sabir
Walker
Williams

Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills

Chair: Mr. Ellis
Deputy Chair: Mr. Schow

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

Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections, Standing Orders and Printing

Chair: Mr. Smith
Deputy Chair: Mr. Reid

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

Standing Committee on Public Accounts

Chair: Ms Phillips
Deputy Chair: Mr. Gotfried

Barnes
Dach
Guthrie
Reid
Renaud
Rosin
Rowswell
Schmidt
Stephan
Toor

Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship

Chair: Mr. Hanson
Deputy Chair: Member Ceci

Dach
Feehan
Fir
Ganley
Getson
Loewen
Rehn
Singh
Smith
Yaseen

Legislative Assembly of Alberta

1:30 p.m.

Thursday, December 3, 2020

[The Speaker in the chair]

The Speaker: Hon. members, please remain standing for the singing of *God Save the Queen*. We'll be led by Ms Brooklyn Elhard. Please refrain from joining her in the singing of *God Save the Queen*.

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.

Statement by the Speaker

Alberta MLA Awards

The Speaker: Hon. members, before we begin our question period today and our daily Routine, as many of you know, I put out a call last week for the second annual Alberta parliamentarian of the year awards. I am most pleased to introduce the winners today. While some may criticize such an activity, I think it's important that every once in a while we take the opportunity to remember that we have shared, common goals, a shared, common cause, and bring us together.

If you are able and you have been declared a winner, I invite you to rise when I call your name. The winners are: the most collegial MLA, the Member for Calgary-North; the best debater, the Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition; the best community outreach MLA, the MLA for Camrose; Alberta's most knowledgeable parliamentarian, the Member for Bonnyville-Cold Lake-St. Paul; Alberta's best representative of constituents, the MLA for Edmonton-South; Alberta's hardest working MLA, the MLA for Lethbridge-East; the most promising newcomer, the MLA for Edmonton-Whitemud; the MLA lifetime achievement award, the hon. Member for Calgary-Hays, the Minister of Transportation; and lastly, congratulations to Alberta's MLA of the year, the hon. Member for Calgary-Shaw, the Minister of Children's Services.

Hon. members, please join me in congratulating the 2020 parliamentarian of the year awards.

Members' Statements

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

Heritage Fund and Canada Pension Plan Investment Management

Ms Phillips: Thank you. The heritage fund is \$17 billion of Albertans' savings, and like any savings, it's invested so it'll grow and give us some income. The fund is managed by AIMCo. They get paid to give us returns that are more than just sticking it in an account and letting it grow, but over many years AIMCo has delivered less than what we pay them for. AIMCo cost us \$153 million in heritage fund investment expenses over budget last year. We paid them 150 million bucks to deliver less than if it was just

stashed in a passive investment account. The government should be focused on getting them back on track.

What is the heritage fund? It's the money we made in the '70s, when oil prices were high. It's the wealth created when my dad would get a phone call in the middle of the night when a rig had gone down. Dad would get into his electrician service truck in minus 25 and drive out into the muskeg of northwest Alberta to fix the rig. The company would get the drilling back up and running thanks to my dad. The Lougheed government would get more royalties. A lot of that went into the heritage fund. The people of Alberta worked hard for that money, so that's why it's a problem if it's not well managed.

Now it's an even bigger problem because the UCP wants to take the CPP money that comes off all our paycheques every month and move it from the big, well-managed, cross-Canada pension fund that it's in now and hand it over to AIMCo. Why? Because the Premier is more interested in political games with Ottawa than he is with our retirement security. Albertans are worried about this plan to take our CPP and hand it over to AIMCo. They don't trust it. They don't like it.

My dad didn't live long enough to collect his CPP, but if he were here, he'd be wondering why it is that if AIMCo can't be trusted with the money he pulled out of the ground in the 1970s, we then hand them all the money that's come off all our paycheques our entire working lives. That's why I'm bringing a private member's bill to give Albertans a real say over the money that belongs to them.

International Day of Persons with Disabilities

Mr. Rowswell: Mr. Speaker, December 3 is recognized around the world as International Day of Persons with Disabilities. This day is about increasing the awareness and understanding of persons with disabilities in Alberta while celebrating the contributions they make to our society as a whole. We all benefit from a diverse and inclusive society that supports the choices of Albertans with disabilities. Each and every one of us has a role to play in the success of this province. It is inspiring to see the work being done by our community partners to create a more inclusive and welcoming environment for all. Our communities are stronger when we value each other and recognize the strength that each of us has to offer.

Every year the Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities awards are presented to individuals, groups, and organizations across Alberta to recognize achievements of leaders in the disability community. Congratulations to this year's recipients for their outstanding work in building barrier-free, inclusive communities for everyone.

Our government is committed to ensuring that people with disabilities live full lives with dignity and equal opportunity and that we enhance diversity in this province. By making our workplaces more inclusive, we can all benefit by providing job opportunities to people who have a lot to contribute if we make an effort to accommodate their unique abilities. This year, more than ever, it is crucial that we make sure vulnerable Albertans have the supports they need during these challenging times.

Our government has moved quickly to adjust supports for people with disabilities at the onset of the pandemic thanks to productive relationships with stakeholders, community groups, and civil society. In fact, we were able to provide \$30 million to civil society organizations, charities, not-for-profit organizations, and food banks to support the response to COVID-19. When we help each other, we make Alberta a better place for everyone.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Fort McMurray-Lac La Biche has a statement to make.

Santas Anonymous in Fort McMurray

Ms Goodridge: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I'm going to highlight something very special to me, Father Mercredi's Santas Anonymous. Since 1984 the students and staff at Father Patrick community high school have worked collaboratively to provide Christmas hampers to families in need across the Fort McMurray area. They do so much more than provide a Christmas hamper of food and gifts, but they remind people that they are not alone and that their community is looking out for them.

For those who aren't familiar with this magical community service group, Santas is a hundred per cent volunteer based and provides students with the opportunity to be leaders. Learning about empathy and the value of hard work, students learn how to raise money, organize events, manage time and resources, fill hampers, and execute a complex plan, amongst so many other lessons. Simply put, this program changes lives for the better and not just for the recipient families.

One of my first experiences with public service was volunteering with Santas Anonymous nearly 20 years ago, which started me down a path that led me to this Chamber. I would like to thank Santas Anonymous and all of the amazing students, staff, and volunteers that make this happen year over year. You do so much to make Christmas magical in our region, and you make me a very, very proud alum. I'm especially thankful that this year they are rising to the challenge of delivering this amazing program in the middle of a global pandemic as this year's need will truly be greater than many. If you are able to make a donation, large or small, please consider making a donation to this very worthy group.

Mr. Speaker, so much of the magic of Christmas is our determination to shine brightly when everything seems darkest. This year has seemed darker than most, but I'm heartened to know that Fort McMurray's community spirit and our trapper pride is shining strong.

God bless.

1:40 Child Care and Early Childhood Education

Ms Pancholi: Mr. Speaker, last night I held an online consultation on the Official Opposition's early learning and child care proposal as part of our Alberta's future initiative, the first of many on this critical issue. It was everything a consultation should be and built on the one-on-one conversations that I've been having with stakeholders over the past 18 months. The turnout was amazing, and the conversation was engaging and thoughtful, providing valuable insight into the concerns of child care providers, educators, parents, and early learning experts.

I know the minister has been hearing the same concerns I heard last night, including the impact of this government's actions and lack of focus on quality early learning, fair compensation and support for educators, decreasing options for affordable child care in Alberta, and barriers to accessing quality child care. It was this last theme that really drove home for me the importance of government policy that is focused on ensuring equitable access for all to early learning and child care.

We heard from a rural Albertan, a father who is lamenting the lack of child care options available to him and his family. He told us that to access quality care, he and his family would have to drive more than an hour. He wanted what was best for his children, and he saw the lack of spaces in his community as a barrier to economic opportunities for his family and his neighbours. He highlighted that

lack of action in this area will only lead to reduced economic activity for Albertans.

Mr. Speaker, as you know, I've frequently stood in this House to highlight the economic value of affordable, quality child care. Increasing access leads to economic growth; decreasing leads to stagnation. The government has tools they can use to address these shortages, tools they are choosing not to use.

It isn't only rural Albertans that lack access to child care where they need it. Communities all over the province are suffering due to the cancellation of the \$25-per-day pilot program, but the minister isn't listening. I am, and I look forward to the next consultation because I will never stop listening to what Albertans have to say.

We are building our early learning and child care proposal with input from all Albertans, not just a select few. I encourage Albertans to check out albertasfuture.ca and engage with our proposal. I'm listening, and so is the Official Opposition.

Marmot Basin

Mr. Long: Mr. Speaker, spending an invigorating day or weekend at Marmot Basin is a favourite activity of many Albertans and, typically, many domestic and international travellers.

Marmot Basin's story began in the 1920s, when Swiss adventurer Joe Weiss first guided cross-country skiers into Marmot Basin via Whistlers Creek. However, it was not just the Swiss but also the Scots that had a hand in how Marmot would turn out. The first tow rope was built in 1961 out of spare parts from an old British Army truck by Toby Rayner, who was an early pioneer in Marmot's development. Rayner's tow rope would not have been possible without earlier pioneers, however, such as the British Army's Scottish Lovat Scout Regiment. The scout regiment used the old forest track for training operations during the Second World War, utilizing snowmobiles and snowcats for transportation into the basin. They were the ones who left behind the truck Rayner salvaged to build his tow rope. After that, Rayner succeeded in getting a licence from Parks Canada in 1964, which would mark the official opening of the basin.

Now Marmot Basin is a world-renowned ski resort with 91 named runs that are spread across four mountain faces with 3,000 feet of vertical drop. Marmot hosts an average of 2 million people per year. The economic impact and employment opportunities this provides to the town of Jasper, the region, and our province are vital for the continued success of our tourism sector and for the future of the region. Alberta ski hills provide a GDP contribution of \$450 million to our province, and Marmot is a significant portion of that.

Marmot Basin officially kicked off its winter 2020 launch on November 12 and has ensured that following COVID protocols is a top priority. After last year's shortened ski season they are looking forward to hosting visitors from across the province and showing them all they have to offer.

I want to encourage all Albertans to consider making Marmot Basin in Jasper your destination to unwind and make memories this year. The warm hospitality and cool mountain air will make your trip worth the while.

Thank you.

Support for Persons with Disabilities

Ms Renaud: Building Back Better: Toward a Disability-inclusive, Accessible, and Sustainable Post COVID-19 World is the week-long theme for this year's International Day of Persons with Disabilities. When we emerge from this pandemic, it's imperative that we use what we've learned to keep moving forward towards inclusion for people with disabilities.

Inclusion requires action and investment. It's not enough to say that you believe in inclusion. Failure to include disabled Albertans, their allies, and experts at the decision-making table will result in public policy that harms people. Investing in early intervention and family support for young children means children will be prepared to enter inclusive classrooms, but the UCP has cut early intervention funding and slashed funding to school boards. By removing the ban on seclusion rooms in schools, the UCP has turned their back on progress. The UCP is currently undertaking a one-month review of disability support programs without even involving disabled Albertans, their families, and allies. Investing in inclusive, affordable postsecondary education, apprenticeships, and employment support means disabled Albertans will be able to train and secure jobs that contribute to the economy. The UCP has made deep cuts to postsecondary education and can't even evaluate the minimal disability investment that is being made.

Far too many disabled Albertans live in abject poverty, substandard housing, and are forced to rely on the charity of others for survival. This Premier has added to that incredible burden of poverty by cutting benefits disabled Albertans receive, cutting housing subsidies and income support. Measurable goals focused on inclusion are missing from this government's agenda. If the UCP government truly believes in the inclusion of disabled Albertans, it's time for a hard stop on this twisted path of austerity and exclusion.

My favourite quote disability self-advocates use is Nothing about Us without Us. On behalf of myself and my colleagues to all disabled Albertans: we see you, we hear you, and we will continue to fight to ensure that no Albertan is left behind.

Individual Actions and Collective Benefits

Mr. Stephan: Mr. Speaker, Albertans want to act, not to be acted upon. As Albertans choose to do small and simple things to reduce COVID, the collective result will be great and the COVID curve bent down, without destructive lockdowns. I know Albertans can rise to the challenge.

To illustrate this principle, 10 years ago, partnering with the Red Deer Food Bank, my church started an annual food drive in Red Deer. This is how it was done. City streets were divided into routes. Families volunteered for their own route. Teenagers prepared route packages for families. Families dropped off food bags at each home on their route. A couple of days later was the big day. On Saturday families went to pick up bags of food left on the doorsteps of neighbours choosing to donate.

Mr. Speaker, it was a joy to serve with my family. My young children were excited to run to doorsteps, get heavy bags full of food, and bring them back to our minivan. Our van got full. We then drove to the church to drop off the bags. When we arrived, large rooms were overflowing with bags full of donated food from generous families of Red Deer-South, serving in love. It was inspiring how individuals choosing simply to donate a bag of food taken together collectively resulted in several tons of food for our food bank.

Mr. Speaker, the Christmas message is of good tidings of great joy, of peace and goodwill towards all. Small and simple individual acts of Albertans can bring collective great results. This is true. Better days are ahead.

Persons with Disabilities

Mr. Williams: Today is International Day of Persons with Disabilities. Albertans with disabilities live in unparalleled dignity, and I'm proud of every single one of them. When I was about six, I

was introduced to Peter, who was a few years younger, born with Down syndrome. As we played, there was a lot I envied about him. My God, Mr. Speaker, he was a happy boy, and every Oilers fan knows the sheer ear-to-ear joy that Joey Moss brought to the Oilers team because of his smile.

Life expectancy for those with Down syndrome has risen from 10 to about 50 years. Sadly, according to data, countries like Denmark are aborting 98 per cent of children with Down syndrome. In 2019 only seven Danish children with Down syndrome survived. Numbers in other progressive countries are similarly high. In Iceland they believe 100 per cent of children with Down syndrome are aborted. In Canada we don't have reliable data to know how close we are to complete elimination of our children with Down syndrome.

Others in the disabled community are systematically targeted. Take the story of Taylor Hyatt from Ottawa. Born with cerebral palsy, happily not aborted, in 2018 she went into the emergency room in her wheelchair with what turned out to be pneumonia. Upon talking to the doctor, Taylor, 27, full of life, in search of emergent care, was offered MAID, our Canadian euphemism for state-sponsored suicide.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to share the words of British disability advocate Alison Davis, who died of spina bifida in 2013, natural causes. "When my pain is bad, I do not need to be told that I am burdensome. I need to hear that my life has meaning. The feeling that I may be abandoned is worse than any pain." Instead of abandoning our disabled, today my call is for us to embrace them as a province. I think often of this final quote as I think of our disabled. "Society will be judged on the basis of how [we treat our] weakest members; and among the most vulnerable are surely the unborn and the dying."

1:50

Oral Question Period

The Speaker: The Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition has the call.

COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution

Ms. Notley: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. This Premier's news that Alberta is preparing to begin vaccine distribution early next year is very encouraging. We know that the federal government can distribute the vaccine between provinces relying on different formulas. For example, the number of seniors in Alberta would mean that Alberta would get less. Basing it on population would mean that Alberta would get the national average, and basing it on per capita case count would mean Alberta would get a lot more. Can the Premier advise if he knows which of these formulas will govern Alberta's allotment?

The Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Health.

Mr. Shandro: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm happy to answer that. A lot of this is going to be determined by the federal government. They have the purchase agreements. They purchase on behalf of the provinces and territories. Right now the information that they've been providing to us is that they would be holding back 20 per cent of the allotments and then distributing the remainder on a per capita basis. They then would be keeping the 20 per cent for surge capacity, if it was ever needed, for a province that needed it as well as for federal undertakings like the military, and if it was needed – I think our indigenous communities are going to be provided for through our provincial allotment, but if there were indigenous communities, it might be through that 20 per cent.

Ms Notley: Well, thank you very much for that information.

Now, as the Premier advised yesterday, the Pfizer vaccine must be stored at minus 80 degrees, but yesterday he also told us that only three of the 13 AHS storage facilities can accommodate those low-temperature requirements. At the same time, we are hearing reports that it could be at least six months before our orders for additional minus-80 refrigeration capacity can be filled. Can the Premier or the minister tell us if this is accurate, and if so, how the government plans to fully distribute the Pfizer vaccine in Alberta?

The Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Health.

Mr. Shandro: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Actually, we have established 20 sites for the Pfizer vaccine, another 13 for the Moderna and other vaccines. We have, actually, storage capacity for as much as 4.8 million doses at a given time for the ultra-low Pfizer vaccine, so well above what we're going to have at any given time for Pfizer. We've started by getting freezers, actually, from Agriculture and Forestry as well as the other freezers we're procuring. Remember that the first shipment of doses in January is only going to be about 38,000 per week that we're going to be receiving.

Ms Notley: Well, thank you for that information as well.

Now, while hearing concrete news about the beginning of vaccine distribution is absolutely encouraging, it does appear as though we will not see meaningful vaccination of Alberta's most vulnerable populations until the end of February at best and maybe March. Will the Premier or the Health minister acknowledge that we have between three and four months until Alberta's most vulnerable citizens are protected, and in so doing, will he finally release detailed modelling – or, if he prefers, he can call it forecasting – that will tell us how high our case levels will be between now and then?

Mr. Shandro: Mr. Speaker, the modelling that we had in the spring is still the modelling that we're using for forecasting. I think the member is talking about the early warning system, the predictive analytics, that AHS uses when they see a case count on a given day and what the acute-care capacity might be between two to 14 days after that. AHS is going to continue to use those predictive analytics, but when it comes to our case counts, we're still using the modelling that was released in the spring.

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

COVID-19 Protective Measures and Contingency Plans

Ms Notley: Well, the circumstances have changed, and three months is a long time. Now, our current rate of caseload growth suggests we can't afford to wait. Yesterday Alberta passed another unique milestone, as the first province to call on the federal government and the Red Cross to provide disaster measures in the form of field hospitals. Instead of acting, the Premier is stretching hospitals to the breaking point and beyond, and now he's looking to set up tents. Premier, is being the only province planning to treat COVID patients at the rec centre really your idea of responsible planning?

Mr. Shandro: Well, look, Mr. Speaker, I guess it's not a surprise that the NDP would on one hand falsely say that we haven't planned or that we haven't prepared for the pandemic despite a response worth almost \$2 billion and then, on the other hand, when they find a small part of the pandemic response, a contingency plan, they're fear-mongering and scaring people. This is a small part of a contingency

plan. Contingency plans, by definition, are for above and beyond what's currently forecast in our case numbers. We already have a tent that's been erected in one of our hospitals in Calgary. We're going to continue to work with AHS and with all partners.

Ms Notley: Mr. Speaker, we don't know what's currently forecast because they won't tell us. If they want to stop the fearmongering, perhaps you should share information with Albertans.

Now, Alberta is the only place that has called on the federal government and the Red Cross to run hospitals. We've also learned that on the same day health officials were touring potential field hospitals and problem solving on how to staff them, this Premier introduced half measures that didn't even include a province-wide mask mandate, let alone much else. To the Premier: how in heaven's name can you justify failing to act to stop the spread on the same day your officials were planning for disaster hospitals and . . .

The Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Health.

Mr. Shandro: Mr. Speaker, through you to the hon. member, thank you to her for admitting that she was fearmongering. I think that was a big step for the NDP in admitting that.

I suppose that they would also fearmonger when we announced that we had 200 ventilators that were donated by Exergy. I suppose that they would also fearmonger when we received a donation for a field tent that was erected outside of the Peter Lougheed hospital, and thank you to Sprung Structures for donating that. These are contingency plans but not part of what's currently planned, right now, Mr. Speaker. We have an opportunity for making sure that there are 2,250 acute-care beds to be able to respond to the pandemic at this time.

Ms Notley: Well, Mr. Speaker, these aren't my words. We've hit a crisis. Quote: it's a little bit like somebody driving towards a cliff and, instead of applying the brakes, going over and then phoning 911 as they're heading to the bottom. That's an ICU doctor, not me. Quote: the next step is calling in the refrigerator trucks. That's another ICU doctor, not me. Quote: you want to speak about who's in crisis; have you taken a look at Alberta? That's Ontario's Conservative Health minister, not me. Premier, the time for waiting is over. When will you act to stop the spread?

Mr. Shandro: Mr. Speaker, we announced new measures that were in place last week and fully implemented starting this last Monday. We're going to, as we told Albertans, revisit those measures on or before December 15. We'll continue to review our public health measures every two weeks throughout the remainder of the second wave, and going forward, we'll continue to do that review. But, look, the NDP are, again, fearmongering. We have currently, right now, surge capacity for 2,250 beds, well above what's expected to be needed throughout the second wave.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Mill Woods has the next question.

COVID-19 and Health Care Workers

Ms Gray: Mr. Speaker, health care workers in Alberta are being worked to exhaustion and beyond because this Premier didn't have the courage to hold back the spread of COVID-19 in our communities. While the Premier was at home for a week and a half, these brave Albertans were working . . .

Mr. Jason Nixon: Point of order.

Ms Gray: . . . double shifts, in danger at patients' bedsides. Almost 1,800 health workers have been infected, and now the Premier wants to set up four new field hospitals but has no plan to staff them. Premier, why didn't you do your job to slow the spread of COVID-19 in our communities?

The Speaker: A point of order is noted at 1:58.

Mr. Shandro: Mr. Speaker, quite frankly, none of that is true. We have been planning for this pandemic, starting in January. We've been making sure that we've worked with AHS so that they understood that there would be no budget when it comes to the response to the pandemic, and we've been working closely with them as well as our continuing care operators as well as the folks in public health to be able to make sure that our response to the pandemic is robust. It's a plan that's worth almost \$2 billion, including what's spent in AHS to expand workforce capacity, lab testing capacity as well as making sure that our continuing care operators have the resources they need.

Ms Gray: Health care workers are overwhelmed and exhausted already, and this Premier seems to think that the health care system is only made of beds, buildings, and machines. None of that matters without the hard-working, brave, and professional Albertans who work in our health care system. But even while the Premier is asking the federal government to lend him more beds and buildings for a field hospital, he's stripping away health benefits and presumptive coverage for the Albertans who are injured while actually doing the work. Premier, will you finally do the right thing and abandon your cruel plan to strip away benefits from injured hospital workers?

Mr. Schweitzer: Mr. Speaker, let me say, first and foremost, how much we thank our people that are working on these front lines. Everything that they're doing right now . . . [interjections] We have the NDP on the other side. They're trying to fearmonger about contingency plans. Contingency plans are the responsible things to do. That's what Albertans expect of us, to plan for contingencies, to plan to make sure that we're there for every measure.

We're bringing in reasonable changes, Mr. Speaker, to bring our labour laws in alignment with the rest of the country. We have to bring balance back to the labour laws in our province.

2:00

Ms Gray: Workers are putting their lives on the line while this government wants to debate taking their rights away from them and reducing their benefits. These same workers are who are bailing this Premier out for not doing his job, and they're the same ones he's planning to fire; 11,000 Albertans who are cleaning rooms, changing sheets, serving food in our hospitals during a deadly pandemic are the very Albertans this Premier wants to fire to pay for his \$4.7 billion handout to corporations. Premier, before you ask even more of Alberta's health care heroes to put themselves at risk, will you promise you won't fire them when the crisis has ended?

Mr. Shandro: Mr. Speaker, none of that is true. As my colleague said, we thank the health care workers. We know that they're stressed, especially those in the ICUs, especially those in our 16 largest hospitals, in those acute-care wards. We know that they're working hard, we know that they're stressed. We thank them for their hard work. Look, the NDP are now attacking, again, the implementation plan of a performance review that would be implemented many years from now from a review of AHS, which was complimented and lauded by their own Health critic back earlier this year. [interjections]

The Speaker: Order.

The hon. Member for Edmonton-City Centre is the only one with the call.

COVID-19 Protective Measures

Mr. Shepherd: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Alberta doctors know this Premier is hiding key information about the COVID-19 pandemic from Albertans, so they formed their own committee to help inform the public; chaired by Dr. Noel Gibney, professor emeritus of the U of A, and Dr. James Talbot, former chief medical officer of health in Alberta. Now, earlier this week these doctors said, "The recent public health measures implemented by the province have not significantly slowed the rate of COVID-19 . . . infections, which have progressively increased." This statement is supported by the sky-high daily case numbers. Why is the Premier not listening and taking action?

Mr. Shandro: Mr. Speaker, that's not true. We are listening. Look, there are lagging indicators, and we're going to continue to see cases increase for at least 10 days after a health measure is implemented. We're going to then, for another two weeks after that, continue to see acute-care capacity be affected after a health measure is implemented. But, as we told Albertans, we will review those health measures on or before December 15. We're going to continue to review them on a two-week basis. [interjections]

The Speaker: Order.

The hon. Member for Edmonton-City Centre.

Mr. Shepherd: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. These doctors say it is "vital that additional effective public health measures are put in place by the government immediately to decrease the rate of new COVID-19 infections to take the current unsustainable pressures off the hospitals, ICUs, and healthcare professionals." This is professional public health advice, and the Premier can't silence it in the cabinet room this time. Will the Premier listen to Dr. Talbot and Dr. Gibney and take action to protect families and businesses like introducing a provincial mask policy, a simple step that encroaches on absolutely no one's rights?

Mr. Jason Nixon: Point of order.

The Speaker: A point of order is noted at 2:03.

Mr. Shandro: Mr. Speaker, as I said, we would, after a public health measure is implemented, continue to see cases rise until we can see the effects 10 to 14 days after that health measure is implemented. So we are waiting for that data. We will see that after this week, and we're going to review the data with our public health officials, and, as we told Albertans, we will review those public health measures on or before December 15.

Ms Hoffman: Tell your caucus to wear masks.

Mr. Jason Nixon: Point of order.

The Speaker: A point of order is noted at 2:04.

The hon. the Member for Edmonton-City Centre.

Mr. Shepherd: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. These are experienced doctors, and they are noting that Alberta's hospitals are under unprecedented severe pressure, the minister's thanks or not. It's clear to all Albertans that this is because this Premier lacked the backbone to stand up to the extremist fringe in his own caucus, and that's why he hasn't taken even the easy, simple steps like a

provincial mask policy. Now, these doctors say that a surge scenario with makeshift ICUs and repurposed staff, in fact, may threaten survival rates of Albertans with severe cases of COVID. Why did the Premier refuse to slow this spread in the community and let this tsunami hit our hospitals?

Mr. Shandro: Mr. Speaker, when most of the rest of the world was actually advocating against people wearing masks because it would have people touching their faces too often, we were, quite frankly, one of the first jurisdictions to encourage the use of masks, to the extent that we actually distributed 40 million throughout the province. We encouraged the use of masks earlier than everyone else. We actually do have mandatory masks for the province, starting in continuing care. Last week we implemented further measures for masking in all indoor workplaces, and we're going to continue to review those health measures and the effects that they have on our case accounts in the days ahead. [interjections]

The Speaker: Order. Order. The Government House Leader and the Official Opposition Leader will come to order.

The hon. Member for Calgary-Currie.

Mr. Jason Nixon: There she goes. There she goes. Can't even stay for a whole question period.

COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution (continued)

Mr. Milliken: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday the Premier announced that Alberta has a team in place and a plan that's ready to distribute COVID-19 vaccines as soon as our province receives them.

Mr. Jason Nixon: Can't ask a question without notes. Can't stay for question period.

The Speaker: Order. Order.

Mr. Milliken: This is great news as widespread vaccination is one of the best ways to protect both lives and livelihoods while getting things back to normal. Can the Minister of Health tell this House when Alberta can expect our first shipment of the vaccine?

Mr. Sabir: Point of order.

The Speaker: A point of order was noted at 2:06.
The Minister of Health.

Mr. Shandro: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for the question. This is all relying on information that we get from the federal government and the indications that they give us on when the first vaccine candidates may get approval. Right now we're expecting to get those first shipments from – we think it's going to be the Pfizer candidate which is going to get approval first. That would be coming, we expect, from the information we get from the feds, on January 4. The first batches, I think, would be around, about 38,000 every week and thereafter from the Pfizer manufacturer.

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

Mr. Milliken: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that yesterday the Premier announced that our most vulnerable would be the first to receive the COVID-19 vaccine and given that protecting our most vulnerable has always been a priority of Alberta's government during this fight against COVID-19, can the Minister of Health

please tell this Chamber how many Albertans does the government expect to vaccinate in phase 1 of the vaccine rollout, and who will be the first to get it?

The Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Health.

Mr. Shandro: Thanks, Mr. Speaker. Again, this is going to depend on not just when the Pfizer candidate gets approval but when the other candidates get approved, too. Phase 1 is expected to be from January 4 to, perhaps, the end of March, March 31, so throughout that three-month period. It depends on whether it's just the Pfizer vaccine or whether there could be other approvals, but perhaps around 400,000 Albertans might get the vaccine, knowing as well that as we get the vaccines from those manufacturers, there are going to be two doses that are going to be needed for it to be effective, so we expect maybe perhaps around 400,000 Albertans.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Milliken: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the minister for that information. Given how important it will be for the vaccine to be distributed quickly and safely and the massive planning and logistical challenges in getting the vaccine to all parts of the province as it arrives from the federal government, can the Minister of Health please tell this House about who has been chosen to lead this massive effort?

Thank you.

The Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Health.

Mr. Shandro: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The answer is General Wynnyk, who is the Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs. He has been chosen, as we announced yesterday. He'll be working with AHS and the Ministry of Health to overlook and help with the distribution and the storage plan that we've started, as I mentioned to the hon. Member for Edmonton-Strathcona. We'll be working with General Wynnyk in the days ahead.

COVID-19 Statistics and Contact Tracing

Ms Hoffman: Mr. Speaker, the UCP continues to withhold valuable information about the greatest public health emergency we have faced in our lives. The R value of COVID-19 is critical to determining whether we've had any success slowing the spread or not. The government said that they would make the R value public on Monday. Today is Thursday. It has been published in the media that now the government has decided that they will keep all of this data secret. To the minister: why would you hide this information that would help people make responsible choices and could save lives? [interjection]

The Speaker: Order.

Mr. Shandro: Mr. Speaker, that's not true. The Premier took this question at his press conference yesterday, and he announced that that was going to be reviewed at the next cabinet COVID committee. Look, I think as we announce or we release our statistics on a daily basis, we continue to provide – Dr. Hinshaw, on a three-times-weekly basis. As we continue to provide, I think, one of the most transparent reporting systems on COVID statistics throughout the country, we're going to continue to make sure that Albertans have all the information they need before them so they understand the facts.

2:10

Ms Hoffman: Given that the Premier has said that the province's R value must dip below 1 for the measures he's imposed to be lifted

on December 15, and given that since we released AHS modelling data, Albertans know that the R value is constantly being updated by public health experts, to the minister: are you hiding the data from Albertans because you don't want them to see how terrible your plan is, or will you share all of that data with them today?

Mr. Shandro: Mr. Speaker, again, as I said to the Member for Edmonton-Strathcona, this is the NDP playing semantics. It's not modelling; it is the early warning system of AHS and the predictive analytics that they use when they see a case count on a given day and what the pressure would be on the acute-care system. It's fantastic work. I thank them for doing that work so that they can continue to respond in a dynamic way throughout the pandemic. The NDP continue to play games with words and play semantics because their one goal throughout this pandemic is to fearmonger.

Ms Hoffman: Given that we also published graphs this week showing more than 4,000 COVID-19 cases were not properly contact traced the week of November 8 and then another 6,000 the week of November 15 and given that the Premier failed to hire contact tracers for months as a second wave of COVID-19 crashed into Alberta and given that contact tracing has completely collapsed in this province under the minister's leadership, to the minister: did you intentionally understaff contact tracing because you didn't want the truth to come out to Albertans?

Mr. Shandro: That is completely false, Mr. Speaker. We started off before the pandemic with 50 contact tracers throughout the system, and we've built up the contact tracing workforce to over 800 now, and we're planning on getting to 1,600 very soon. That's because we have told AHS that resources are not an issue. We encouraged them to continue to hire not just in contact tracing, though, but also in our labs, the assessment centres, our workforce capacity in labs, as well through acute care and ICUs because resources are not an issue, and we'll continue to work with AHS to respond to the pandemic. [interjection]

The Speaker: Order.

The hon. Member for Calgary-McCall.

COVID-19 Protective Measure Compliance

Mr. Sabir: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I watched a disturbing video: the Calgary police, fulfilling the law, delivered fines to the organizers of an antimask protest that this Premier has refused to condemn or even criticize. The organizers berated the officers, compared them to Nazis, and informed them that the Premier has given them permission for their dangerous antimask rally. Will the Premier at long last condemn this event and the extremists who put the health of Albertans, all Albertans, at risk?

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

Mr. Madu: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can confirm that the instructions this government gave with respect to mask protests is that we expect that the public health measures that we put in place by our chief medical officer of health and this government be complied with. I know that the members opposite like to play politics with that. As the Minister of Justice I have communicated to the public and to law enforcement that it is my expectation that those public health measures would have to be complied with.

Mr. Sabir: Given that the organizers then described COVID-19, which has tragically taken the lives of over 500 Albertans, as, and I quote, this so-called pandemic and given that this pandemic is real,

will the Premier finally give a clear unequivocal condemnation of these organizers who are putting lives at risk, or does he actually support them spreading dangerous misinformation like he does with the antimaskers in his own caucus?

Mr. Shandro: Mr. Speaker, as I've said recently, when I was interviewed for Red FM, I condemned those who flagrantly disregard our public health measures. I do so again here in the House. As well, those Albertans who are misinformed and believe that COVID is not real or are denying the fact that we are in the middle of a pandemic, we are, and all Albertans have to take it seriously. They have to take the public measures seriously. They have to do it not just to protect themselves, not just to protect their families, but to protect our health care workers, to protect those who are most vulnerable. All it takes is one spin class, quite frankly, to see an outbreak in a continuing care facility.

Mr. Sabir: Given that the Minister of Transportation has said in the past that he considers the organizer of this rally a friend and, I quote, a fearless man, and given that while the Premier has found time to blame my constituents, he has refused to call out his allies for spreading misinformation like the organizers of this rally or the UCP MLA who said that masks spread COVID, when will the Premier finally do the right thing and tell his extremist friends to stop spreading misinformation and COVID-19?

Mr. Shandro: I did in the previous answer, Mr. Speaker; I'll do so again. I ask all Albertans to please take COVID seriously. Understand that we are in the middle of a pandemic. Please follow the public health measures to protect themselves, to protect their loved ones, the community, our health care workers, and those throughout the province who are most vulnerable to severe outcomes.

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

School Construction Capital Plan

Mr. Yaseen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Alberta's recovery plan is focused on building, diversifying, and creating jobs. Our government believes in supporting young Albertans in their educational endeavors to expand their skill set, which includes new schools in our growing communities. I am glad that the much-awaited north Calgary high school has been approved in the 2019-2020 budget. To the Minister of Infrastructure: when can the growing communities of north Calgary expect the construction of the high school to commence?

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

Mr. Toews: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker and to the member for the question. On behalf of the Minister of Infrastructure I'm happy to report that the bids for the contractor will close on December 4, 2020, with a contract to be awarded on December 14, 2020. Construction is expected to start shortly thereafter.

Thank you.

The Speaker: The Member for Calgary-North.

Mr. Yaseen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, Minister. Given that students are future job creators and contribute to the social and economic fabric of our province and further given that a high school serving my riding will mean that students spend less time commuting and more on educational activities, to the Minister

of Infrastructure: when can parents expect to send their children to this high school?

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

Mr. Toews: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and again to the member for the question. Once construction is completed in the summer of 2023 on the north Calgary high school, it will be up to the Calgary board of education to determine the exact opening date. There are 15 school projects completed or under way since our government took office in Calgary and Airdrie alone, at a value of \$369 million. Those projects have created over 2,000 good jobs.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Yaseen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, Minister. Given that Alberta's recovery plan is creating jobs through various infrastructure projects and further given that the creation of jobs is our top priority – the construction of the north high school will lead to further investment in the economy – to the Minister of Infrastructure: how many jobs will be created through the construction of not only this high school but similar projects across the province?

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

Mr. Toews: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker and again to the member for the questions. We estimate that over 380 jobs will be created building the north Calgary high school. Across the province there are 62 school projects valued at \$1.7 billion under way, creating thousands of good jobs. We're building new schools and updating old schools because this government knows the crucial role these institutions play in building the province that we love.

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

Support for Small Businesses Affected by COVID-19

Member Ceci: Thank you. The COVID-19 pandemic has been an extremely difficult time for small businesses across this province and in my constituency of Calgary-Buffalo. It's led to an economic crisis in our province that's seen thousands of Albertans lose their jobs as businesses have shut their doors, many, unfortunately, forever. As we face an even bigger, second wave, the UCP has been missing in action. When will this government finally step up and provide real support for small businesses to keep their doors open and protect jobs?

Mr. Schweitzer: Mr. Speaker, I don't think the NDP staffer who wrote the man's notes got an update from last week, when we encouraged them to update their notes again. We brought in a second tranche on a relaunch grant. We put \$200 million there for small businesses. We deferred things. We deferred payments. We've worked closely with the federal government on rent relief. We also need to celebrate the successes. Right across the river from that person's constituency there's Benevity, worth a billion dollars now on evaluation. Lots of encouraging things happening with our small businesses, that are now growing as well.

Member Ceci: Given that many of the support programs for small businesses have expired and that it took the UCP 11 days to offer any kind of support to businesses in this second wave and given that these supports won't actually be accessible for several more weeks even though small businesses in Calgary need that help now and

given that the support the UCP announced was a proposal our caucus put forward as part of a seven-point plan for small businesses, will the government adopt our other six recommendations to help small businesses weather the second wave of COVID that could be implemented and protect jobs today, not weeks from now?

2:20

Mr. Schweitzer: Mr. Speaker, hopefully, this person puts down their notes for the third question. Member of the NDP staff, please get him an updated note for his next round because he obviously needs to read it.

When it comes to this, we have taken action: \$200 million available for small businesses; 17,000 small businesses have participated in this program. We've done a second tranche now because of new health measures. We're going to continue to be there for small businesses in Alberta whereas the people on the other side want to shut them down. They want to put over 100,000 people out of work. Their measures are irresponsible.

The Speaker: The Member for Calgary-Buffalo.

Member Ceci: Thank you. Given that I'm hearing from small businesses in Calgary that the new measures are confusing due to the breakdown of contact tracing in this province, forcing some businesses to close their doors, and given that controlling the spread of COVID-19 is the most effective tool we have in protecting small businesses and jobs and given that the most effective way to control the spread of the virus is through testing and effective contact tracing, will the government finally fix their broken contact tracing system so we can implement more targeted and less confusing measures that will protect both Albertans' health and the economy?

Mr. Schweitzer: Mr. Speaker, to NDP staffer 5: hopefully, they can update their notes for that member so he doesn't have to keep reading them, he gets updated notes on the other side.

We're going to continue to work with small business. Let's first and foremost thank all of those small businesses that have done everything humanly possible to keep themselves open, to keep people employed, to keep providing services across this province. We don't want to shut them down. The people on the other side want to have a mass shutdown. We're following the science. We're following the data, taking reasonable steps to keep them open. Thank you so much to our small-business owners across Alberta for everything that they do.

Heritage Fund and Canada Pension Plan Investment Management

Ms Phillips: Mr. Speaker, Albertans do not trust the UCP with our retirement security. The government wants to take Albertans' CPP savings, the money that comes off our paycheques our entire working lives, and hand it over to AIMCo, some folks that haven't been able to demonstrate proper stewardship of our heritage fund. Albertans are worried about handing over our CPP savings. Will the Minister of Finance agree that Albertans deserve a say over whether it is, in fact, AIMCo, folks that lost a cool \$2 billion earlier this year through negligence, that gets to manage our retirement money?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Finance.

Mr. Toews: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Premier has been clear all along. In the event we believe there's a business case for an Alberta pension plan, we would take that to Albertans in the form

of a referendum. The answer is yes, to the Member for Lethbridge-West. In fact, I believe that there will be great potential for an Alberta pension plan. Actuaries have shown that there could be close to \$3 billion of savings both shared by Alberta employees and Alberta employers. The members opposite would have us not even look into the issue. We will look into the issue to position this province to be most competitive.

Ms Phillips: Given that AIMCo has not lived up to its own investment goals – they gave us negative value-add, but we paid them just last year \$150 million to manage the heritage fund – how can the Minister of Finance justify withholding information about AIMCo's heritage fund management, breaking the heritage trust fund act to paper over AIMCo's losses over the summer, and then ask Albertans to hand these guys our CPP retirement savings to manage?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Toews: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I categorically reject the assertions in the member's question. The reality is that AIMCo has provided great returns for Albertans over the years. They have an excellent track record. This last year was a challenging year in markets. It was a challenging year for every sovereign wealth fund in the world. AIMCo's board has conducted a review of its investment policies and strategies and is making adjustments. I'm confident that AIMCo will continue to serve Albertans well into the future.

Ms Phillips: Well, given that the minister sounds more worried about protecting the guys in suits at AIMCo rather than the folks in coveralls who built the heritage fund and given that investment management is complicated but what's not hard to understand is the 36,000 Albertans who wrote letters to the Premier asking him to keep his mitts off their retirement, will the government commit to at least conducting a referendum over whether AIMCo is handed our CPP savings to manage, or should we just trust these unaccountable suits with our money even though they've not proven they can manage a two-car parade?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Toews: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. One thing we will commit to is to take the question of whether we should proceed with an Alberta pension plan to Albertans. We made that commitment. We will follow through with that commitment, should there be a business case. Again I want to point out that the members opposite would not even have us look into this great proposition that could provide Alberta employers and Alberta employees great financial advantage. We've sent close to net \$3 billion to Ottawa for years through the Canada pension plan. This warrants a review. [interjections]

The Speaker: Order.

Health Care Services in Fairview

Mr. Loewen: Mr. Speaker, at this time of the year, with roads getting worse and winter weather, I'm reminded of one of the hidden costs of health care in this province: the cost to Albertans forced to travel for services out of town. We understand that not every service can be made available to rural and remote locations. However, right now the community of Fairview sees a need for a CT scanner to serve not only Fairview but the remote communities up to 150 kilometres away, and the community is willing to raise

money for this purchase. Will the Health minister commit to supporting this service in Fairview?

The Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Health.

Mr. Shandro: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for often meeting with me on this issue and introducing me to many of his constituents, including the municipalities in and around Fairview. I can say that the community of Fairview has never had a CT scanner, only an X-ray unit. There are two CT units that are within about 100 kilometres, in Peace River and in Grande Prairie. Both of them have the capacity and infrastructure, quite frankly, to do more scans. Fairview Health has identified other priorities for potential foundation support, including possible renovations to . . .

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Central Peace-Notley.

Mr. Loewen: Given the importance of diagnostic services and procedures and given that towns like Fairview have seen such services centralized to larger locations over the years, out of their facilities and hundreds of kilometres away, and in light of the fact that endoscopy was previously offered in Fairview and that after working with AHS, they are now positioned to offer it again, will the minister work with the local health administration to restore this service in Fairview?

The Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Health.

Mr. Shandro: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, the endoscopy program at the Fairview health complex was temporarily stopped in January 2019. The patients in Fairview requiring endoscopy procedures continue to be referred to Grande Prairie and to Peace River programs. Now, the program in Fairview is currently under review to ensure patient safety and infection control standards are met. Alberta's government is committed to improving access to care and services to all Albertans, wherever they live. This is under review and is something we hope to be able to provide an answer for soon in the future.

Mr. Loewen: Given that there is a tremendous amount of under-utilized or completely unused health infrastructure across rural Alberta, including operating rooms in Fairview, and given that Albertans are often forced to travel great distances for surgical procedures while recovering away from home, has the minister considered allowing surgeons from out of town to book surgical time and perform routine procedures out of the Fairview hospital?

The Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Health.

Mr. Shandro: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the member knows, the Fairview hospital operating room has been closed for several years now. There are significant upgrades and staff training that would be required to meet the current surgical standards. Now, remembering that we had announced in Budget 2020 significant amounts of investment in our AHS facilities, including \$35 million for the rural health facilities revitalization program to improve services and facilities so that we can address accreditation issues, this might be something that is considered in the future for Fairview at this time, and we're looking forward to getting . . .

Provincial Park Usage Data and Land Use

Mr. Schmidt: The UCP clearly revealed in writing their strategy for parks before the 2020 budget, stating that their plan to find alternative management approaches for 164 sites they claimed to be

underutilized would include sales and transfers. This morning it was reported that 11 of the sites planned to be delisted from the parks system are used just as much as other parks and, in fact, are becoming more popular each year. To the minister: rather than redirecting blame or trying to spin your way out of this mess, will you just admit that your plan to sell parks was wrong and commit to stopping it now?

Mr. Schweitzer: Mr. Speaker, we have said this many times in this Legislature, that our parks will go on. I want to make sure, to that member – I'm going to give that member on the other side an opportunity to deviate from their notes and apologize to this House for misleading Albertans when it comes to parks.

Mr. Sabir: Point of order.

Mr. Schweitzer: Time and time again the members opposite have made misleading statements when it comes to parks. Mr. Speaker, please deviate from those NDP talking notes that he has in front of him and apologize once and for all.

2:30

Mr. Schmidt: Given that the minister seems to want me to apologize for his own press releases and given that the UCP also blocked reporters and Albertans from accessing data on parks usage because the data clearly shows that the government is lying about only selling very small and underutilized provincial recreation areas and given that this data is tracked by the department officials but that the only way Albertans can currently access it is by submitting freedom of information requests, to the minister. I can see why you don't want Albertans to have this information, but they still deserve to be able to see it. Will you commit today to immediately releasing all of the usage data for the 164 parks that you plan to sell?

Mr. Schweitzer: Mr. Speaker, I think this might be the first time we've seen here today where a member opposite actually deviated slightly from their notes, so I want to say to the member opposite: job well done for that slight deviation from the notes. Hear, hear.

Mr. Speaker, again, we're tired of the misinformation. Our parks will go on. Albertans can continue to use them this winter. We're proud of the work that our minister of environment is doing to make sure we have sustainable parks going forward. We love the outdoors here. The vast majority of the MLAs representing the outdoors and our parks are on this side. We love these parks, and we're going to continue to make sure that they're there for generations to come.

Mr. Schmidt: Given that the minister just lambasted me for not deviating from my notes and then failed to deviate from his own notes and address the question that I asked about data . . .

Mr. Schweitzer: What notes? There are no notes.

The Speaker: Order.

Mr. Schmidt: . . . and given that many areas of the province are quickly becoming blanketed in a sea of green lawn signs demanding that Albertans defend their parks and given that I haven't seen anyone in support of the parks plan except those who are on the UCP payroll, to the minister: will you just stop listening to your ego, start listening to Albertans, and reverse your decision to sell and close our parks?

Mr. Schweitzer: Mr. Speaker, a quick thing here: there are no notes here.

Mr. Speaker, I'm not the minister of environment, but I'll gladly answer this question time and time again. We're not going to fall

for the clickbait of the opposition; that is what this is. It is clickbait. That is literally what they're doing, trying to get people to click on buttons and donate to build up a list for the next election. That is what this is about: clickbait, false information. Shame on the NDP. I don't know how they can stand up in this House day in and day out with this misinformation. Our parks will go on.

Child Care Funding

Ms Pancholi: Well, Mr. Speaker, for months the opposition, parents, child care operators, and stakeholders have been raising concerns that the changes that the UCP have made to child care will have negative impacts. The minister has brushed this off, calling it fearmongering and claiming that she's supposedly helping those "most in need." That's not so for a child care centre in Calgary-Cross that has been operating for over 30 years serving low-income Calgarians and will now be closing their doors due to funding cuts by this government. To the minister: how does reducing low-cost child care options in Calgary help those most in need?

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

Ms Schulz: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I do want to thank the member opposite for her interest. I understand that she held a town hall consultation last night, where she spent over half of the time sharing her opinions as opposed to listening to those Albertans. You want to talk about, you know, child care centres closing in Alberta? I do believe that last night her first answer was about an ELCC centre in Manning that was at risk because of the ELCC program ending. What she failed to mention was that eight licensed operators closed when they put their centre in that community. Stick to the facts. [interjections]

The Speaker: Order.

Ms Pancholi: Well, given, Mr. Speaker, that this is about Alberta families, not about me – but the minister can't seem to remember that – and given that the Davar child care centre in Calgary was part of the \$25-per-day pilot program and given that 98 per cent of the families they serve are fully subsidized, meaning that under the pilot program they paid zero dollars per day, and given that the families in this centre are mostly refugees and new Canadians, speaking 18 different languages, and given that with the end of the \$25-per-day program these families can't afford child care anywhere else, to the same minister: what are you doing to ensure that the families this centre serves will have access to ongoing quality child care that meets their needs and those of their children? They're listening, Minister.

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

Ms Schulz: Thank you so very much, Mr. Speaker. I think that a lot of times, when we talk about things like \$25-a-day daycare, what we fail to address is sometimes the other very important pieces, which are, in fact, quality and inclusion. I do want to speak to the fact that financially vulnerable families absolutely have access to subsidy, but these centres also had access to transitional grants for those centres that do serve a higher proportion of vulnerable families in their communities. Part of our work on inclusive child care will also provide outreach and cultural supports.

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

Ms Pancholi: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that this daycare was partnered with Hull child and family services and that the cuts and

changes by this government to family support services are the reason that Hull is no longer able to keep the building and given that even if this centre could find a new space, the families they serve cannot afford to pay the \$400-per-month difference between full subsidy and the average cost of child care in Calgary and given that these families will either stop working or return to informal, unlicensed child care, to the same minister: will you admit that your government's policies are not helping those most in need but are actually forcing these families out of child care and out of the workforce?

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

Ms Schulz: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Once again, for all of those ELCC centres who are transitioning out of those programs who do serve vulnerable populations, they did in fact receive additional funds. What's being put forward by the member opposite is somewhat concerning because they did receive additional funds to continue offering child care for those families. We will absolutely look into that, but once again we did provide that funding for those transitional supports.

Impaired Driving Penalties

Mr. van Dijken: Mr. Speaker, impaired driving is a very serious crime, and the penalties for it must reflect that fact. Beginning December 1, police are now able to hand out roadside impaired driving penalties. This includes fines of up to \$2,000 and vehicle seizure for up to 30 days. The government also introduced an administrative branch called SafeRoads Alberta to deal with impaired driving offenders. To the Minister of Justice and Solicitor General: under the new process will first-time impaired drivers be treated any differently than repeat offenders of impaired driving?

The Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Justice.

Mr. Madu: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for that important question. The SafeRoads program does indeed differentiate between first-time and repeat offenders. A first-time offender may only receive administrative penalties and not criminal charges, but repeat offenders can expect both administrative penalties and criminal charges. Let me be clear. A first-time offence is not a get-out-of-jail-free card. Anyone causing bodily harm or death will be criminally charged in addition to administrative penalties.

Mr. van Dijken: Mr. Speaker, given that many courts in our province were overbooked or backlogged even before the COVID-19 pandemic and given that prior to this recent change most impaired driving offences were brought through the court system for penalties to be handed out, to the same minister: will this new process help to alleviate pressure on the court system while still maintaining fair and just decisions on penalties for offenders?

The Speaker: The Minister of Justice.

Mr. Madu: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Moving impaired driving offences to the SafeRoads program will remove a tenth of all criminal files from our court system. In 2021 alone we are estimating that 2 million traffic tickets will be routed through this program. The new system is online, uses plain language, and does not require a lawyer to navigate. Written decisions are issued in plain language. Albertans would not need a law degree to understand these decisions. That is the first part to ensuring a fair, unbiased decision. The second is the right to a judicial review. Any

Albertan who is dissatisfied with a decision can seek a judicial review.

Mr. van Dijken: Mr. Speaker, given that prior to December 1 there were impaired driving offences being handled through the previous process and given that the new process enables stronger penalties that can be properly handled outside of the court system, to the same minister: how will impaired driving offences committed before December 1 be dealt with, and will they be subject to the stronger penalties that were recently introduced?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Madu: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and to the member for that question. Offences committed prior to December 1 will continue to route through the current traffic court system. More importantly, B.C. has experienced a significant drop in impaired driving offences, including seeing the rate of impaired driving incidents drop by 36 per cent from 2011 to 2018 and the number of impaired driving fatalities fall by 54 per cent from 2010 to 2018. Alberta's government is confident that this common-sense approach will keep Albertans safe and reduce the burden on an already-strained justice system.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Lesser Slave Lake.

First Nations' Health Care Access

Mr. Rehn: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my constituency, due to its size and geographical location, it's been difficult at times for northern First Nations to have equitable access to health care for much-needed surgeries. Communities in the north struggle to access the same level of service as individuals in Alberta's big cities. To the Minister of Health: what is being done to reduce wait times for adequate health care in communities such as Bigstone Cree Nation?

2:40

The Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Health.

Mr. Shandro: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On October 28 of this year AHS began operating the Alberta indigenous virtual care clinic. It offers patients who are First Nations, Métis, and Inuit access to same-day primary care services through a secure telephone or video system. Now, this improves access and removes barriers to primary care both in rural areas and for underserved urban indigenous populations. Its staff is about 16 indigenous physicians committed to practices of cultural safety and humility. The clinic complements the existing health care services that are provided to those . . .

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Lesser Slave Lake.

Mr. Rehn: Thank you, Minister. Given that approximately 43 charter surgical facilities exist under contract with Alberta Health Services to perform low-risk surgeries for Albertans and given that the Official Opposition loves to spread misinformation about charter surgical facilities, to the same minister: how can First Nation communities attract charter surgical facilities to their local areas?

The Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Health.

Mr. Shandro: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We're eager to work with all partners to bring down surgical wait times. With a \$50,000 grant of support, First Nations communities will be able to hire consultants to identify health needs specific to their community. Due to the pandemic right now AHS has delayed posting the RFP until 2021, and we look forward to seeing the results of First Nations needs assessments to determine which communities can

help us to reduce our wait times and improve surgical care through innovative work.

Mr. Rehn: Thank you, Minister, for that answer. Given that the minister recently awarded grants to six First Nation communities – Enoch, Maskwacis, Tsuut’ina, Bigstone, Siksika, and Blood Tribe Kainai – and given that there are more First Nation communities that experience long wait times when accessing health care, to the same minister: will there be an opportunity for other First Nation communities to get involved in a similar grant program as it relates to accessing quality health care?

The Speaker: The Minister of Health.

Mr. Shandro: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First Nations who did not receive a grant but wish to still participate in the Alberta surgical initiative may still apply to the RFP. The First Nation community must also engage a medical director, who would work at the charter surgical facility and be accountable for the facility’s quality and safety and its services. Alberta’s government and AHS are developing initiatives to improve surgical services and reduce the occurrence of short-notice schedule changes. Any First Nation that owns or operates a medical facility within the public health care system may be involved in one or many aspects of the Alberta surgical initiative.

The Speaker: Hon. members, that concludes the time allotted for Oral Question Period today, a question period in which Oscars could have been given out to either side of the House for their performances. Very, very exceptional.

Prior to heading out this afternoon – I know some of you may be needing to head down the road – as all of you know, your constituency assistants have an employer relationship with the Speaker’s office, for which I am immensely grateful, so I have left a very, very small token of my appreciation for each of your constituency assistants. They are located in the government lounge as well as the opposition lounge. If you could do me a large favour by taking them back to your constituency offices for me, that would be greatly appreciated.

An Hon. Member: Is it fudge?

The Speaker: It will be much sweeter.

For anyone that is unable to do that, it will be sent to your member office here in Edmonton for you to take next week.

Hon. members, in 30 seconds or less we will proceed to the remainder of the Routine.

Members’ Statements

(continued)

COVID-19 Protective Measures and Individual Freedom

Ms Rosin: Ronald Reagan famously said: “Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. We don’t pass it to our children in the bloodstream. It must be fought for, protected, and handed on.” Mr. Speaker, this year has brought events that no one could have fathomed. We’ve had serious conversations about legislation’s ability to force treatment and examinations. People are demanding vaccines be made mandatory, and some are even calling for a total lockdown enforced by a police state. Many of the freedoms that have made me so proud to be Canadian and Albertan are seemingly being reduced to a memory lingering in the back of my mind.

Mr. Speaker, I long for the days where we left our houses without fear, where we could share food and laughter and community with one another, where we could embrace without fear of judgment and discuss our differences over drinks rather than on social media.

At some point we must decide where we go from here. We need to return to the very ideals that built this province and our people: self-determination and the ability to think critically. They say that it takes just three weeks for a habit to be formed, and we are now nine months into COVID behaviour. To quote a constituent of mine: people have been conditioned to view freedom as selfishness.

Mr. Speaker, we need to fight for a better tomorrow. People can’t live in fear, isolation, and dependence on the government forever. They’ll become trapped alone with their own thoughts. Domestic violence rates will rise as tensions increase. Clinical depression will become widespread, and our kids will never make the memories that we did growing up.

We can’t let COVID do that to us. We can bring our old normal back, but we have to fight for it. So please follow public health guidelines, temporarily social distance, be kind to your neighbour, and pray for those in need. We can all do our part to bend this curve and head into 2021 with a renewed sense of hope for our future. Together we can ensure that our best days are yet to come.

Introduction of Bills

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

Bill 208

Alberta Investment Management Corporation Amendment Act, 2020

Ms Phillips: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to introduce Bill 208, the Alberta Investment Management Corporation Amendment Act, 2020.

The act proposes to add public-sector members to the AIMCo board, requires a referendum if Alberta sends notice to withdraw from the CPP, and requires a referendum that AIMCo be the manager. It also removes the ability of Treasury Board to give directives to AIMCo.

With that, I would like to introduce the bill.

[Motion carried; Bill 208 read a first time]

Tabling Returns and Reports

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

Mr. Sabir: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to table two sets of reports on behalf of my colleague from Edmonton-Mill Woods. I have the requisite number of copies. They both relate to PTSD at workplaces; one is a CBC article, and the other one is a university research paper.

The Speaker: Hon. members, we had a very exciting question period, where there were a number of points of order. The first point of order was called at 1:58, I believe, by the hon. the Government House Leader. I believe that the Deputy Government House Leader will be arguing on his behalf.

Point of Order

Referring to the Absence of a Member

Mr. Schweitzer: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There was a reference by a member opposite that the Premier was at home for a week and

a half. As you know, it's well established that allusions to the presence or absence of a member or minister in the Chamber are unacceptable. I think that this one is pretty cut and dried. I don't think much more has to be said than that with respect to the comment that was made. Again, it seems there's clear precedent on this one.

The Speaker: The hon. Deputy Opposition House Leader.

Mr. Sabir: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The context for that comment was that my colleague from Edmonton-Mill Woods said that health care workers in Alberta are being worked to exhaustion and beyond because this Premier didn't have the courage to hold back the spread of COVID-19 in our communities. While the Premier was at home for a week and a half, these brave Albertans were working.

I do not believe that the member intended to refer to their absence or presence from the Legislature. She was just broadly speaking about the conditions in our hospitals and how these people are working and the Premier was home, so I don't think it's a point of order.

2:50

The Speaker: I am prepared to rule on this. I've interjected on this particular situation on a couple of occasions. *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, page 619: references "to the presence or absence of a Member or Minister in the Chamber are unacceptable." I am of a mind that this isn't a point of order. It's tough to know if the House was sitting or it wasn't. Was the member at home in the evenings? The reference was not, I would suggest, clear enough to imply that the Premier was not in the Chamber although I will say that we all know what the hon. Member for Edmonton-Mill Woods was endeavouring to do. While she may not have technically broken the rules, we can't do indirectly what we can't do directly. I would encourage members of the opposition who would like to ask questions in this vein in the future to do so slightly more cleverly. I consider this not a point of order. The matter is dealt with and concluded.

Points of order 2 and 3 of the hon. Government House Leader at 2:03, 2:04 have been withdrawn. Point of order 4, I believe, by the Government House Leader, has been withdrawn.

That takes us to the hon. Member for Calgary-McCall, who at 2:05 called a point of order.

Point of Order

Referring to the Absence of a Member

Mr. Sabir: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think that was a point of order just before 2:05, when a member was asking a question, and the Leader of the Official Opposition was leaving, and the Government House Leader was clearly saying things that would create disorder, that she cannot stay for the whole QP. As the minister of jobs and employment said, it's "pretty cut and dried." We don't refer to the presence or absence of members. In this case the Government House Leader was quite loud about her absence from the House or her leaving the House. That is clearly a point of order, and that's the kind of behavior that shouldn't be allowed in this Chamber.

Mr. Schweitzer: Mr. Speaker, I mean, I don't know if there are any Blues on this. I'm down at this end here. It's hard to hear people. We have masks on, remember. With what we're trying to do here, there's lots of banter that goes back and forth on a regular basis, lots of debate that goes on in this House. I think that if there are some clear things that the member could point to that are on the record,

with any evidence other than some speculation, as to what may or may not have been said, that would be one point that it would be helpful to have some clarification on.

Down here it's hard to hear. Again, we're all wearing masks. We only take our masks off when we're making formal remarks now in this Chamber. Again, we all know that, clearly, you cannot comment on whether or not somebody is in or out of the Chamber, but witty banter goes back and forth regularly in this Chamber. Again, I don't hear any, see any record on the Blues or anything that the member is pointing to. I think this is simply just banter going back and forth in the Chamber, that we have on a daily basis.

The Speaker: Hon. members, I am prepared to rule, and I do have the benefit of the Blues. The hon. Member for Calgary-Currie was called upon. The Government House Leader, according to the Blues, said: There she goes. The hon. member for . . .

Ms Hoffman: Yup.

The Speaker: I don't need help from the Member for Edmonton-Glenora while ruling on a point of order. I appreciate your generosity, but I certainly don't need your help.

The Member for Calgary-Currie said, "Thank you, Mr. Speaker." The Government House Leader: "There she goes. [She] can't stay for [the] whole question period." There were interjections. The Speaker called the House to order. A point of order was called.

While I appreciate that the Speaker rarely makes comments on comments made off the record, I think that if *Hansard* can record comments in the Blues, it's quite likely that those comments were what were made. This is a point of order. The member can apologize and withdraw, or the Deputy Government House Leader can apologize and withdraw on his behalf.

Mr. Schweitzer: I can do that on the House leader's behalf. I apologize and withdraw the comment.

The Speaker: I consider the matter dealt with and concluded. An excellent apology.

Hon. members, at 2:29 the Deputy Opposition House Leader made another intervention. The hon. Member for Calgary-McCall.

Point of Order

Parliamentary Language

Mr. Sabir: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise under 23(j) and will actually provide another opportunity for the Deputy Government House Leader to withdraw and apologize. When my colleague from Edmonton-Gold Bar was asking a question about parks and he was referring to some previous press releases, something on government record, the member in his answer said that this member was misleading the House. I think the government has every right to disagree with what we say, but accusing members of misleading the House: that's cut and dried, and that's offside these rules, and it's clearly what we shouldn't be doing in this House. So I urge you to find this also a point of order.

Thank you.

The Speaker: I would call on the Deputy Government House Leader, but in light of the time and, quite frankly, my lack of patience for the ongoing discussion with respect to points of order, I won't be doing that.

I do have the benefit of the Blues. The hon. the Minister of Jobs, Economy and Innovation said this: "Time and time again the members opposite have made misleading statements when it comes to parks." It very clearly stated: the members opposite. What also

happened in that same set of questioning is that the hon. Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar accused the government of lying. At length yesterday and on numerous occasions in the past two weeks I have spoken about this very issue. If anyone uses the accusation that the government is lying or the opposition is lying in the dying days of this session, we will be moving to other questioners. I consider this matter dealt with and concluded.

We are at Ordres du Jour.

Orders of the Day

Government Bills and Orders

Third Reading

Bill 43

Financing Alberta's Strategic Transportation Act

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Transportation.

Mr. McIver: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for recognizing me. I rise to move third reading of Bill 43, the Financing Alberta's Strategic Transportation Act.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to begin by discussing some of the key parts of the bill and conclude with some refutation of the cavalcade of comedy coming from my friends across the aisle.

[Mr. Milliken in the chair]

The FAST Act creates a regulatory framework for user fees on new and expanded infrastructure projects in Alberta. Alberta's government currently does not have the authority to enact user fees on a project. The FAST Act is enabling legislation with a fence around it, kind of like letting cattle out of a stall but not free to run across the prairie; they're still restricted in a tightly controlled corral.

An Hon. Member: A great analogy.

Mr. McIver: Since one of my rural friends called that a good analogy, I take that as a big compliment.

Alberta's government has been clear. We face a fiscal reckoning. We campaigned on finding creative ways to build new infrastructure projects that wouldn't otherwise get built, or to get projects built faster than they otherwise would. User-financed construction strengthens economic growth and competitiveness at a time when Albertans need it the most. This means faster commutes, less congestion while unleashing economic potential through speeding up commerce in carefully selected locations. We are open to building projects that wouldn't otherwise get built or building new projects faster through user fees. As well, if other municipalities came to the province and asked for a creative way to build new infrastructure projects that wouldn't otherwise get built or built within the time frame that they would want, we at least want to be able to work with them.

However, we acknowledge that user-pay is a new concept in Alberta, and Albertans may legitimately be hesitant about user-pay projects in some cases. To provide certainty, we built a strong fence to assure Albertans that tolls will have rigorous oversight by enshrining very clear principles right within the text of the legislation. First, user fees can only finance new or expanded transportation infrastructure. The act explicitly forbids user fees on existing lanes and bridges. Second, Albertans must be engaged before a project can be built using user fees. There can be no toll surprises.

3:00

Third, those Albertans who do not wish to pay user fees must always have a nontoll alternative; in other words, if you want to live your whole life in Alberta and not pay a toll on our roads and bridges, you can do that, period. Revenue collected can only be used to cover the cost of the user-fee project. It cannot go into general revenue purposes.

Lastly, once the capital costs of the projects are paid off, the toll or the fee must stop being collected.

Additionally, the legislation also gives the Minister of Transportation the ability to create exemptions to the fee such as for snowplows, fire trucks, ambulances, and the ability to suspend the collection of a toll; for example, if people are escaping a wildfire or a flood. Each project must be enabled through a regulation passed by cabinet, including but not limited to the toll amount, different fees for different vehicle types – for example, one fee for commercial trucks and another fee for passenger cars – the manner in which to pay the fee, and so on.

The legislation balances the need for Alberta to find creative ways to finance strategic transportation infrastructure while ensuring there are rigorous checks and balances on what projects can be built using a fee. Mr. Speaker, there's a clear need for new and creative ways to finance infrastructure in Alberta. We campaigned on a promise to introduce those new and creative ways and to incentivize private-sector investment to build more and more infrastructure. The Premier said that user fees would be considered, and they are now being considered. We are keeping our promises and delivering new and accelerated infrastructure for Albertans with clear and reasonable checks and balances. The FAST Act doesn't replace government-funded infrastructure; it adds to it.

Now, I'd like to respond to some of the arguments or at least assertions from the other side. It's disappointing that the opposition tactics have mostly been to set up a straw man based on something not in the legislation and then knock it down. What that tells me is that the NDP have nothing real in the legislation to attack, so they're forced to make up issues and then attempt to argue about those. Most NDP members who spoke to the FAST Act perpetuated what is not true. I invited them to read the legislation before they decided to oppose it; clearly, they chose otherwise. Their imaginations, Mr. Speaker, are breathtaking.

Let me start with the facts. Before the last election the now Premier very clearly said that user fees were, quote, on the table. Our party platform said that we need to find new and creative ways to fund infrastructure. The now Premier said that in places where it makes sense, we would look at user fees to build major infrastructure. Yet when I introduced Bill 43 in this place, the NDP claimed that user fees were explicitly ruled out in the last election. Clearly not true. Page 29 in our campaign platform, for those who care to look it up, promised to "use alternative financing" to build new infrastructure, and the Premier clearly said so. Promise made, promise kept.

Then in subsequent debates the Member for Edmonton-City Centre said that "When the Premier mused about alternative financing . . . perhaps some industrial infrastructure" would apply. Now, wait a minute. The NDP leader said in no uncertain terms that Bill 43 is, quote, a profound breach of what the Premier promised Albertans, which isn't true. Then the Member for Edmonton-City Centre said that the government did mention it before the last election, in contravention of his own leader, but not in the way that we remember. They flip-flopped a lot. No apology for falsely calling out the Premier. Just a flip followed by a flop. Maybe there's a division in their caucus about how to properly define the truth.

Heaven knows they've argued a lot about the definitions in the FAST Act.

When I introduced the legislation at second reading, the Member for Edmonton-South spoke at length about the definition of highway. He repeated the definition of highway used in the Traffic Safety Act, which is interesting given that I said in my opening remarks that the definition of highway used in the FAST Act is the one from the Highways Development and Protection Act, which is what gives Alberta Transportation the authority to own and maintain roads in the province. The NDP claimed that the definition of highway in the FAST Act is too broad and that this would give licence to put – wait for it – tolls on ditches. You can't make this up, Mr. Speaker. The punchlines write themselves.

I'm not sure what the problem the NDP has that they're trying to solve. The definition of highway in the highways development act has been around since long before my 2012 tour in Alberta Transportation. Clearly, the definition wasn't an issue when the NDP were in power, but suddenly the walls are tumbling down now that the definition is still there. It seems disingenuous to ignore something during your tenure only to complain about it now that someone else is in charge, but that's just par for the course, another day for the NDP. It's disheartening. This is a forward-thinking piece of legislation that will enable Albertans like those in La Crête, who have suffered with the ferry for decades, a concern that the NDP ignored, to finally get a bridge, but rather than debate the merits of the bill, the NDP want to quibble over a definition of a highway.

The NDP's favourite talking point has been that the UCP government is going to start tolling ditches. Well, thanks to the safeguards in the FAST Act we can't impose a toll without doing a consultation. I can't wait, Mr. Speaker, and I'm sure you, too, look forward to when we put out a news release that we're going to do a consultation on tolling a ditch. It sounds silly to say that out loud. I don't know how the opposition keeps a straight face when they say it. It's so ridiculous that I posted their attack on my Facebook page.

Next, the Member for Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview said something funny in the Assembly the other day, that if the bill were narrowly focused on a bridge to replace the La Crête ferry, then maybe the NDP could get behind it. It's funny because when we announced that we would be engaging those in La Crête on a toll bridge to replace the ferry, after those from La Crête told us to do so, the NDP put out a press release that was the written equivalent of a head explosion. They claimed that the big, bad Premier was going to reach in and take money out of the pockets of Albertans himself, that the government would toll every road in Alberta, the same hyperbole they have used in the Assembly. So, no, despite the wild claims from the members opposite, including Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview, the NDP arguments would have been the same regardless of the legislation. Fortunately, the legislation itself says exactly the opposite. Existing roads and bridges are forbidden from a user fee.

Next, the Member for Edmonton-McClung said that we've seen "horrific examples" of toll roads gone sideways. He conveniently neglected to name even one – not one – although he said that there were "horrific examples." It defies credibility. Maybe the 407 highway, used by hundreds of thousands of people every day and often referred to as the most successful toll road in the world, or maybe perhaps the Coquihalla highway or the Deh Cho Bridge or the Confederation Bridge: all examples of infrastructure that would not exist today had they not been tolled. It's easy to assert that something is "horrific," but if you fail to provide any evidence, as the member did, then the assertion itself fails, particularly when you look at examples of actual successful toll projects in Canada and around the world.

Next, the same member said that he doesn't want tolls because "a number of times" – oh, that's ominous, "a number of times" – he received a bill in the mail and didn't even realize he used a toll road. Well, I don't know how to respond to that. There are usually signs in large letters that say "toll road" before you get on a road, giant cameras, transponders, and even a label on Google Maps. The member should put down the NDP playbook and watch the signs next time he's driving in Europe or Australia. There's no such thing as a, quote, secret toll road, particularly not in Alberta under this bill, given that, as I said, the government needs to conduct a robust public consultation before it can introduce a toll road. It can only enable additional toll roads through regulation passed by cabinet, which is publicly reported, as described in the FAST Act.

Then he claimed that tourists won't want to come to Alberta and that, quote, toll roads are an anathema – now, that's a good word – to guests in this country. This is a silly argument that he himself undermines right after. He goes on to talk about all the toll roads that exist in countries that he visited as a tourist like Australia, the United States, Europe, New Zealand, virtually every jurisdiction except Alberta. Clearly, the toll roads weren't enough to keep that member from going there and spending his tourism dollars, nor would visitors from those areas who already live with toll roads be surprised or discouraged that Alberta does the same. More importantly, tourists come to Alberta because of our Rocky Mountains, our prairie hospitality, the badlands, the cities, the Calgary Stampede, the exhibits in Edmonton and area, all the beauty and fun that our great province has to offer.

Now, Mr. Speaker, it breaks my heart to say it, but tourists don't come to Alberta for the roads. I know. It hurts me, too. But I can say for darn sure that if we don't continue building infrastructure to meet growing demand, then we won't be able to handle more tourists. The FAST Act enables government to add to the existing list of public infrastructure to build even more roads and bridges, to lessen congestion, unleash an economic potential through speeding up commerce, including tourism. Lastly, if tourists who don't pay taxes in Alberta but use our infrastructure have to contribute a bit to the construction of that new infrastructure, I'm confident most Albertans would see that as exceedingly fair. So the member's comments fall short.

How much time do I have, Mr. Speaker? Can I ask?

The Acting Speaker: Still about eight minutes.

3:10

Mr. McIver: Thank you.

The worst argument I've heard the NDP make is that the government is imposing a toll bridge on the people of La Crête. The Leader of the Opposition said so. My opposition critic said so. And most members on the opposite side that have spoken have claimed that the government is forcing a toll on the good citizens of the north. The Member for Edmonton-Manning called the toll bridge "an attack on Albertans." What a ridiculous line.

I invite any NDP to visit the people of La Crête and ask them if the government is forcing a toll on them. They should do themselves a favour: hang up the phone, say goodbye to Gil, venture out of the Edmonton bubble, and have a conversation with a rural Albertan. They failed to do it for four years in government. Maybe they'll try it in opposition. When they've had a conversation at the La Crête coffee shop about a toll bridge, then we can talk about what rural Albertans from that area think. The county, the chamber of commerce, businesses, individuals, hundreds of people have told me in no uncertain terms: build the bridge. I've shared the letters, read pieces of them out loud in the Chamber. Still the NDP

doubt they exist. Their rejection of reality boggles the mind, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, when the opposition rhetoric consists of setting up straw men arguments to claim what they know is not in the bill, it's obvious they've lost the argument. Whether it's tolling ditches and sidewalks, the definition of a highway, effects on tourism, who said what in the last campaign, or what rural Albertans actually think about this bridge, the NDP have been wrong each and every time. Rather than focus on the issue or the merits of the bill, they're stuck repeating the pointless argument about how to define a highway. Wow.

Mr. Speaker, Alberta faces a fiscal reckoning. We need to find creative ways to build new infrastructure projects that wouldn't otherwise get built and ways to build projects that we can't afford right now faster. Most other provinces, states, and countries have a record of successfully financing select construction projects using user fees. The first project proposed under the FAST Act is a new bridge on highway 697 over the Peace River to replace the aging La Crête ferry at Tompkins Landing. No government from the past – not NDP, not Conservative, none of them – identified the bridge in previous capital plans. Both Mackenzie county and the La Crête chamber of commerce advocated for a user fee to build the bridge now, and we are happy to accept, subject, of course, to this legislation passing.

The FAST Act will strengthen economic growth and competitiveness at a time when Albertans need it most. This means, in the right circumstances, faster commutes, less congestion while unleashing economic potential through speeding up commerce and maybe fewer babies between La Crête and Fort Vermilion born on the highway if the trip to the hospital is shorter.

I'm proud to support the FAST Act, I'm grateful for the debate, and I respectfully ask all members of this Assembly to support Bill 43, the FAST Act.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you, hon. members.

The minister has moved third reading.

I see the hon. Member for Edmonton-Glenora has risen to debate.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker and to the minister for his opening remarks on the third reading of his bill as we consider it here today. I want to say, first of all, that if he's using the 407 as a model of excellence, there are a lot of working people in Ontario who would disagree with him. That has driven up costs exponentially for commuting families who, particularly, live in suburban communities and have to commute into the GTA or, specifically, into the core of Toronto. That's all over the news. I don't have to do the googling for the minister. But there are many folks who have reported having to pay thousands of dollars in fines and fees, and it has been a significant hardship for many Ontario families. So if that is his model of excellence and if that is what he wants to see here in the province of Alberta, I have grave concerns.

I also want to touch on a few things. He did say that it was about new or expanded infrastructure, and when specifically asked in the media, "Would this account for things like the expansion to things like the QE II or the Deerfoot if there was an expanded lane?", he refused to rule that out and confirmed that that would be the definition of expansion, that if it was initially two lanes and it was replaced as two lanes, that wouldn't be an expansion or a new project but that if it was wider, that would be expanded and therefore, absolutely, it would be or could be on the receiving end of tolls.

I have to say that a lot of folks drive the QE II and the Deerfoot on a regular basis for work, for example, or in non-COVID times to take their children to or from activities or school. When we raised

this concern in the election period or leading up to the election period last year, there was a lot of coverage of it from January 17, 2019. I'll be happy to provide copies to *Hansard* because I'm going to quote some of this shortly. The Premier, who was the leader of the NDP and continues to be, highlighted her concerns based on things that had been floated, including things that are referenced in what now the minister is trying to say was a mandate for bringing in tolls that they so clearly ran on.

But when communications personnel from the Leader of the Official Opposition's, now Premier, office were asked to respond to the comments that were raised around concerns that our leader highlighted about this driving up costs for everyday families in the province of Alberta, Myatt told Global News, for example, on Thursday – this was January 17, 2019 – that the Member for Calgary-Lougheed

was floating an idea as an innovative way to pay for new infrastructure that Alberta desperately needs but can't afford. She said the concept hasn't been developed and wouldn't be until the UCP became government, [until] elected.

But then she goes on to say that

the user-pay idea would be for industrial infrastructure, not public projects, and that the idea that family soccer runs would have to pay a toll is "out to lunch."

Don't take my word for it, Minister; take the word of your own communications personnel, who were providing these assurances to Albertans. Was it, then, the communications personnel that were wrong? Were you always intending to tax and create tolls on these roads? Right now you're saying that that's what the platform said, but, clearly, when asked to explain that to Albertans who were concerned about those fears, the communications personnel in the pre-election period said: "Absolutely not. It wouldn't be for ordinary projects that ordinary families would use; it would just be for industrial projects."

Now, I want to unpack that just a little bit. First of all, it speaks to the government's record on this and how clearly they have broken a campaign promise and a commitment that was made in the precampaign period around affordability and to refer to the then Premier, our leader, as being out to lunch, when clearly what's out to lunch is this government's backpedal and spin in trying to justify breaking such a foundational promise that was made during the pre-election period.

I also want to say that in terms of industrial projects – and I appreciate that the minister said that there would be a different rate, that there would be a \$150 fee for large commercial traffic and somewhere between \$10 and \$20 for personal traffic. When you think about commercial traffic – and I also appreciate knowing how expensive fuel is and, particularly when you're hauling grain or other large cargo, how a heavy vehicle can impact your fuel costs exponentially, so I totally get that there would be a business case that would account for many of these businesses choosing to use the toll as opposed to driving the detour. I do appreciate that.

But they also have the opportunity, then, to deduct the cost of said tolls as a business expense. So when it comes to filing taxes and paying their fair share, already the government has made a decision to give away \$4.7 billion to large corporations through a tremendous gift, and now, obviously, if there is a payment for using a toll, that also costs towards a business expense, so it impacts the amount that corporations are asked to pay in terms of fair compensation. I just want to say that there will absolutely be some subsidy given. If that's the government's decision, so be it, but please let's own the fact that there will still be public money that goes into this, because there will be less revenue coming in to the province to help pay for these types of projects in other parts of the province. Just own it.

The other thing I want to say is that I was in the House when questions were asked by the Member for Lethbridge-West around the Lethbridge bridge expansion in the city of Lethbridge, a project that I was really proud that we were bringing forward and that is, I believe, still moving forward for the city of Lethbridge. There was absolute refusal to say that that bridge expansion would be not subject to tolls, and there were about three different opportunities given to the government to quash any fears or concerns about that. We have the minister in media availabilities talking about that absolutely this could apply to expansions of existing roads like the Deerfoot, like the QE II, even potentially – he didn't say this one – the Yellowhead, which is a big concern for me as well and for many Albertans and people from across Canada who travel and rely on the Yellowhead to access many things to the east and the west of where we are right now. Then the opportunity three times to alleviate fears and concerns for people in Lethbridge about their bridge expansion that they have been waiting for patiently and advocating for for so many years.

3:20

Again, it is absolutely clear. It's in black and white on my computer screen, in print all over the place from January 2019 that the government refuted that this would apply to anything other than industrial projects. They said that it would only be industrial projects, that it wouldn't be broader than that.

Then we have many times in this House the minister using the example of La Crête as to why this bill needs to go through. I and many of my colleagues have asked the clear question: if this is about one specific project and one specific region, why not make the bill about that? We've done that in this House in the past, had specific bills for specific initiatives that were developed locally. I appreciate that he did consult on this. I take him at his word that the vast majority agree with the consultation and said that they support this project. I have no reason to believe otherwise, but he definitely didn't consult with all Albertans to move forward on this. In fact, when they were consulting with Albertans and conducting the last election, they were very clear to say that this wouldn't be something that would be moving in the province of Alberta on a large scale.

Definitely, this bill is enabling and creates a very large plethora of opportunities for the government to reach into the pockets of everyday families and take out another 10, 20, 150 bucks on a regular basis, if they so choose. That definitely isn't what the government ran on. They ran on reducing costs for ordinary families. They ran on making life more affordable. They ran on jobs, the economy. They have failed on all of those fronts, and I have to say that the sweeping implications of this legislation, I think, are negative. I think they are opposed to what the government said that they would do. I think to attest to anything else is disingenuous and defies the facts that have clearly been reported to the people of Alberta over the last two years.

With that being said, I continue to be very frustrated by the government's failure to own the fact that they have made an intentional decision to break their campaign promise and to try to pretend and play word salad to try to justify their complete backtracking on what was very clearly laid out by the communications department serving the now Premier, that this was absolutely not the direction that the government would be moving in, that this wouldn't have implications on ordinary soccer families travelling throughout the province when clearly this bill will and can moving forward, Mr. Speaker.

That being said, I will continue to voice my frustration and concern when the government breaks their commitments to the people of Alberta. I think that's one of the things that is the job of the opposition to do, and the government shouldn't be surprised that

if they continue to break their word and continue to erode the trust of the public, we will call them out on that.

Thank you very much.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

I see the hon. Member for Calgary-West has risen.

Mr. Ellis: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would like to request that we move to one-minute bells for the remainder of the afternoon.

[Unanimous consent granted]

The Acting Speaker: Are there any hon. members looking to join debate? I see the hon. Member for Lethbridge-East has risen.

Mr. Neudorf: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the opportunity to rise and talk about Bill 43, that the hon. Minister of Transportation has brought forward. I feel it is a very well-balanced approach to adding horizontal infrastructure to the province. I would like to correct some of the arguments brought forward by the Member for Lethbridge-West last night, particularly about our government's character and commitments and about the \$100 million promised for the highway 3 bridge. I would like to go back and just set the record straight on a few things in terms of the dates and the commitments, particularly because it involves Lethbridge, and it is a critical piece of infrastructure.

I have done extensive research into the last budget tabled by the former government, the NDP government, in 2018-2019, and there is indeed the Oldman River bridge on highway 3 in Lethbridge on there for \$3.4 million for some upgrades that did happen, and we're appreciative of that. It is a bridge in need of some repairs, and those repairs were done.

Unfortunately for the NDP, there was never another budget tabled in 2019-2020 until much later in the year, and it did not include any further funding for the bridge in Lethbridge. What did happen on March 15, 2019, was that the NDP made a promise for \$100 million for the highway 3 bridge, but if I remember correctly – maybe the Minister of Transportation can help me out there – something else went on in March and April of 2019. Oh, that's right. There was an election called, and what date was that writ dropped, I wonder? Oh, March 19, 2019, just four days after that promise. Unfortunately for the NDP, there was, I think, something like \$9 billion of additional promises made within that time frame.

Mr. McIver: Twelve.

Mr. Neudorf: Even more. Thank you, Minister.

These are promises that were made by the NDP, the former government. It didn't help them win that election. It was their promises that went unfulfilled. What the Premier, the then Leader of the Official Opposition, did say at the time was that any projects committed to in the capital infrastructure plan would be followed through on. Unfortunately, that one wasn't. I do appreciate their efforts to rewrite history, but unfortunately the facts are very, very clear. There were a lot of promises made during that time frame, but we have been in office since April 16 and followed through on many of those promises.

Like I said at the beginning, I do support this legislation and the consideration of moving projects forward where communities agree and support a toll. That is not necessarily the case for everywhere, but it is for the bridge in La Crête. I'm very thankful that it has not been the case for the highway 3 twinning expansion of \$150 million from Taber to Burdett, which will have massive economic impacts to Lethbridge and area, an incredible increase in safety, and another

project put forward by this minister. I appreciate and thank him for that as well. I do think that the constituents of La Crête and that area would thank the minister for saving them the cost of an additional hour-and-a-half drive each way or of paying for a ferry ride. Again, I fully support this legislation as well thought through, good options with the agreement to consult in future areas.

If Lethbridge is fortunate enough to have a third bridge in a timely manner to support our growing population, that would be something. I'd look forward to that conversation in the future.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

Are there any members wishing to join debate on this bill?

Seeing none, I am prepared to ask the question. However, I will offer the opportunity to the Minister of Transportation to close, should he so choose, and he has risen. The Minister of Transportation has the call.

Mr. McIver: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will be brief, but I'll make a few brief closing remarks. A few things need to be clarified and corrected here that come from the other side. As the hon. Member for Lethbridge-East, from our side of the aisle, said, yes, in Lethbridge that bridge – there were just several million dollars spent on it very few years ago, so I'm a little surprised by the member opposite wanting to have that torn out and waste that very new investment right now to replace that bridge. Yes, it's clear that there's a desire. The mayor from Lethbridge has expressed to me that he'd like to see that bridge replaced one day, but the mayor also understands that we just finished spending several million dollars on that bridge.

To be clear, it's a great game that the NDP can play as they say for every project: are you going to charge a toll on it? I guess, well, the answer today is no, but the fact is that there will never be a surprise. The legislation requires us to do a public consultation. A public consultation. Right now there is only one project that we are contemplating doing a toll on, and never will there be a surprise. There will always be a consultation. Right in the legislation it's project-by-project consultation. In the future we may never propose another toll project, and we may. We've never shied away from that fact. We can't do it until after we do a public consultation. There you go, Mr. Speaker. It's right in the legislation that project-by-project consultation has to happen. Right in the legislation. [interjections] I'm quoting from the legislation, and the folks on the other side can't stand themselves because the truth is so painful to them. It's so painful to hear over there when somebody is telling the facts. The consultation in the legislation is project by project.

The Lethbridge bridge was just repaired, and at the appropriate time we'll continue to talk with the people of Lethbridge. Our great member of our caucus down there is a terrific voice for the city of Lethbridge, who never lets me or other ministers forget about what's important to the people in Lethbridge.

3:30

Mr. Speaker, again I'll repeat it because the member across who spoke either ignored or didn't hear or didn't recognize what I said in my remarks. In our platform, for those who care to look it up, on page 29 we talk about that we intend to use alternative financing to help build more infrastructure, to build it forward. It was a campaign promise. Today, if this bill passes, it is a promise made and a promise kept. That's the way we intend to do business here in the UCP.

With that, I will sit and I will respectfully ask members of this Assembly to support this bill.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

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

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 3:31 p.m.]

[One minute having elapsed, the Assembly divided]

[Mr. Milliken in the chair]

For the motion:

Amery	Lovely	Schweitzer
Armstrong-Homeniuk	McIver	Smith
Ellis	Neudorf	Turton
Getson	Rosin	Walker
Loewen	Rowswell	Yaseen

Against the motion:

Eggen	Pancholi	Schmidt
Feehan	Sabir	Shepherd
Hoffman		

Totals:	For – 15	Against – 7
---------	----------	-------------

[Motion carried; Bill 43 read a third time]

Government Bills and Orders Second Reading

Bill 46

Health Statutes Amendment Act, 2020 (No. 2)

Ms Ganley moved that the motion for second reading of Bill 46, Health Statutes Amendment Act, 2020 (No. 2), be amended by deleting all of the words after “that” and substituting the following:

Bill 46, Health Statutes Amendment Act, 2020 (No. 2), be not now read a second time because the Assembly is of the view that it jeopardizes the confidential health information of Albertans by failing to put adequate safeguards in place for the use of that information.

[Debate adjourned on the amendment December 1: Mr. Shepherd speaking]

The Acting Speaker: Are there any hon. members wishing to join debate? I see the hon. Member for Edmonton-Whitemud has risen.

Ms Pancholi: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise again to speak in second reading on Bill 46, the Health Statutes Amendment Act, 2020 (No. 2) and on the amendment that's before the Chamber today. Although we've had repeated, I guess, examples in this Legislature of bills being brought forward by the government that have not been the result of proper consultation, have not been actually even timely, considering the unique and unprecedented circumstances we are currently in in Alberta, I have to say that it has been quite shocking to a number of Albertans and my constituents to know that during the time of this pandemic, we are in this House. Not only are we debating significant pieces of legislation that are completely unrelated to the direct reality that most Albertans are experiencing right now – certainly, I don't know that this is the time that many Albertans are thinking they'd like a toll road put in place – but also at the same time that we are in this incredibly challenging public health emergency, we're also seeing pieces of legislation being brought forward by this government that undermine our very health care system.

We are currently debating before this Legislature Bill 47, which actually actively seeks to make workplaces more unsafe by reducing supports for workers who are in unsafe conditions, actually taking away rights and benefits and privileges that they have as workers at a time when not only our health care system and

our health care workers, who are tirelessly working in very, very risky situations every day – also, we know that front-line workers across the board, whether it's in health care or not, are also in incredibly challenging health circumstances right now, yet this is the time that the government is choosing to limit their rights and protections with respect to safety.

That's mind-boggling, Mr. Speaker, but here we are again with another bill before this House, Bill 46, that actually seeks – again, at a time when Albertans are most concerned about their health, perhaps more than at any other time in recent history, now this government has brought forward a bill that would actually share and disclose their health information to entities outside of Alberta, and in doing so, they failed to even consult with the most knowledgeable and expert individual with respect to information and privacy protection, who is the Information and Privacy Commissioner. To proceed with that at this time – first of all, on that basis alone we should be focused, and I'd like to see our government focus as much as possible on, actually, the health care challenge that's before them.

We've seen the members opposite stand up over and over during this time, seemingly obsessed with the members of the opposition, seemingly obsessed with our debate and our comments in this Legislature. I don't know who they're speaking to, Mr. Speaker. I don't know who their audience is right now because who they should be speaking to, who really needs to hear from this government and hear from this Premier and see some leadership, are Albertans. I know they think that this is some kind of game that goes on in here, but what they're doing right now is deeply affecting Albertans in every single way. On those issues that most matter to them, they're silent, but they've got a lot to say about a lot of things that are not only irrelevant right now to many Albertans' lives but are actually going to make their lives worse.

And here we have the same thing happening again, Mr. Speaker. With Bill 46, we have a bill that's meant to put health information at risk. That's the goal of these amendments that we're seeing put forward by this government right now. We are seeing them bring forward a piece of legislation that the Information and Privacy Commissioner, frankly, has taken the unusual step of actually standing up and speaking out against because she was not consulted, and she has very significant concerns about a number of the measures within this bill.

3:40

For example, Mr. Speaker, you know, having worked a little bit myself within the information and privacy world, we know that that is all about a balance. It's all about a balance between being able to collect, to use, to disclose health information, but also, equally as important, is to protect the privacy of those individuals about that information.

That balance seems to be completely irrelevant to this government right now. They're trying to tip the balance in the other direction, which is that they're not concerned about the privacy of health information of Albertans. In fact, I want to read a quote, Mr. Speaker, from the Information and Privacy Commissioner in a news release issued on November 13, 2020. This is a quote from Jill Clayton, the Information and Privacy Commissioner. She states:

While many jurisdictions around the world are introducing new or enhanced privacy laws to build public trust and ensure accountability mechanisms are in place to protect personal or health information, many of the proposed amendments to HIA [the Health Information Act] are heading in the other direction.

I don't know why this government would choose this point in time to actually actively make privacy protections weaker for Albertans.

Let's talk about what health information is. I mean, in the Health Information Act we know that health information means "diagnostic, treatment and care information" or "registration information." This is so fundamentally, deeply personal. We know that with health information – and currently the Health Information Act recognizes this – there are significant circumstances, due to the unique context of health information, where consent isn't actually sought. In many other respects with personal information we have information and privacy schemes in place that do seek as their first step to get consent before you can disclose or use personal information.

But there is a recognition that health information is a unique quality. We know that in order to provide appropriate treatment for individuals, in order to get the right health individuals involved, to be able to provide care – we also know that for many other purposes we have an interest in health information. I don't think that could be more evident than right now, Mr. Speaker, where we know that there is significant information about Albertans' health that is not being used, that is not being shared, that is not forming the basis of decision-making by this government.

Health information is critical, and it's unique. There isn't a consent scheme in place the same way there is with other personal information, but because of that, because of the unique quality of health information, we have a legislative scheme that seeks to make sure that there are as many protection measures taken as possible because we're not always seeking the consent of that individual before we disclose or share health information.

It's even more important that those prescribed limits around privacy protections that are in the Health Information Act are absolutely bolstered and protected because they aren't as great as they are in other schemes around information and privacy protection.

We need to make sure that what's there is protected. Yet what we see in Bill 46 is actually a significant effort to undermine that. The Privacy Commissioner stated that she's absolutely shocked. I'll perhaps, actually, Mr. Speaker, read her quote. Yes. It is "shocked." She said:

Frankly, it is shocking and disappointing to see an amendment that proposes to remove this [privacy impact assessment] requirement that supports and documents the assessment of privacy risk and ensures that reasonable controls are in place.

This is also from her letter dated November 13, 2020.

Bill 46 actually says that Alberta Health, Alberta Health Services, and the Health Quality Council of Alberta are not required to do a privacy impact assessment, and that is shocking our Information and Privacy Commissioner, and we have yet to hear a clear explanation from this government as to why.

There's absolutely no way that this bill should be going forward considering the significant impact it has on the privacy of Albertans around the protection of their deeply personal health information without absolute consultation with the Information and Privacy Commissioner but also consulting with Albertans.

I don't think that right now Albertans have a lot of trust in this government for many, many reasons, which I could go on at length about, which I won't do right now. Certainly, trust is the key part, especially when we're talking about personal information, and they're breaking trust by saying that they don't even have to do a privacy impact assessment, which says: what are the measures in place to protect the privacy of Albertans' personal health information? They don't even want to do that anymore.

Given the example that we have had with this government already with – for example, the Babylon app. We also know, Mr. Speaker, that that app was introduced as the pandemic was beginning. It was launched with great fanfare by this government, and then it became clear in that situation that there was no privacy

impact assessment done on that. Again, the Information and Privacy Commissioner is currently investigating that, Mr. Speaker, because there are significant concerns about the sharing of personal health information. But this bill allows organizations and entities and individuals outside of the jurisdiction of Alberta to be able to use health information with no requirement, with no recourse by Albertans to follow the Health Information Act. That's what this government has done.

Given the example that we have with the Babylon app, which, by the way, was also, as we will all recall, brought in by the government – and the providers of health advice under that app actually got paid more than our doctors here in Alberta. The doctors who were providing care during a pandemic were getting paid less than those providing services through this app. I mean, that's clearly what this government's agenda is about, taking away the ability of doctors in this province to do their job. We know that. They've been on the attack of doctors from the beginning, since they were elected, and they carried through with that ridiculous agenda even through the greatest public health crisis that this province has faced in generations. They chose to pursue that.

We know now that this is clearly – they don't believe in privacy impact assessments. If you take the Babylon example – and now that they're trying to exempt themselves, the ministry, Alberta Health Services, the Health Quality Council of Alberta from requiring privacy impact assessments, where is the balance from this government in protecting personal information of Albertans? They clearly are not committed to that, Mr. Speaker, and for that reason alone – for that reason alone – that they can't justify why they're doing this and they have not consulted with the Information and Privacy Commissioner, I believe strongly that this bill should not go forward at this time.

They need to do their work, and they need to prove to Albertans that they can be trusted with the decisions they're making about their health information because right now they have not proven that. They've broken trust with Albertans over and over again. By ramming through this bill or trying to without proper consultation, without talking to Albertans about the implications, without justifying the decisions that they've made, this bill should not move forward. Therefore, I believe, Mr. Speaker, that all members of this Assembly, including government members, should take a pause and say: "You know what? Until we can provide confidence to Albertans that we are looking out for their best interests, not the best interests of companies and organizations outside of this province, not the best interests of Telus but actually looking after the best interests of Albertans," which is their job, until they can do that, this bill should not proceed.

I hope that the government members will take that to heart and take a pause and actually focus a little bit more on governing and on what's really facing Albertans right now, which is a severe economic and health crisis. They've been completely distracted by their own agenda and by whoever it is that's pulling the strings behind the decisions they're making and the bills they're bringing forward, which are not consistent with what Albertans are asking for.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you.

Standing Order 29(2)(a) is available for brief questions or comments.

Seeing none, are there any members wishing to join debate? I see the hon. Member for Edmonton-Rutherford.

Mr. Feehan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I welcome the opportunity to address the House on this very, very problematic bill, Bill 46,

and the changes that are being made to the health circumstances in this province. Having just listened to the Member for Edmonton-Whitemud, I know that the points about privacy have been extremely well articulated and laid out, but I just want to, you know, synthesize quickly for the people in the province of Alberta what's happening with regard to privacy and then move on to another concern that I have.

With regard to the issue of privacy, the number of people that can access your file, the reasons they can access your file, and where they can take the information from your file, including outside of the jurisdiction of Alberta, have all been expanded by this government. That's it, plain and simple. Your personal health information is now going to be made available to foreign-funded corporations for their own purpose, where we have no controls to control their use of that information. That's it. That's the central point.

Now, clearly, the government officer, Jill Clayton, who is responsible for privacy in this province has said: this is problematic. The very person who has been set up to protect your privacy has said that this is a problem and has asked that this bill be withdrawn until it can be corrected. This government has failed to do so. It's not fearmongering on the part of the opposition in the House; it is a fact stated by the most knowledgeable privacy person in the province of Alberta. It's quite simply being done to allow foreign-funded corporations to make a profit on your health information. That's it. That's what's happening.

3:50

Since that has already been, I think, well articulated by the Member for Edmonton-Whitemud, I'd like to move on to another part of the bill which I think is problematic, which isn't spoken of very often, and that is the decision by this government to force professional colleges to separate themselves into two separate units; that is, the separation of the professional colleges and the professional associations in this bill. Now, a number of the associations actually have both functions – that is, the governance of practice of their practitioners and the advocacy of the concerns of the members – under the same roof. The government has decided that you shouldn't have both the same organization governing people with regard to their practice and also advocating for the nature of their practice, which is really reflective of a very old mindset of separating out these kinds of activities.

Because this government simply does not understand the implications of structural problems in the world today, they only believe that there are individual choices, and they do not believe that the nature of the way society is constructed sometimes is itself the problem. They've been opposed to any kind of examination of structural issues, and this is another step toward separating those two out. But I want to say that there are many organizations that don't have that failure that this government has of separating those two out, that understand that good practice is also often about advocacy.

I'd just like to use the Alberta College of Social Workers as an example because of my previous experience of having been a member of this organization. They have, of course, with their professional college put together a quite comprehensive guideline for competent practice, and they have a number of practices internally for assessing and regulating competent practice. One of those things, of course, is a code of ethics, and that code of ethics describes in it some six different sets of values, which overall archingly guide the practice of social work. The six values are not hierarchically ordered. All of them are considered equally important, and the one that happens to be labelled as value 2 is the pursuit of social justice.

Now, the point of reading this out here is the fact that to adhere to the code of ethics, social workers should be practising in their practice a pursuit of social justice; that is, competent social work practice actually involves the pursuit of justice not just on the individual practice level but the larger social justice. Of course, they describe that as: "Social workers believe in the obligation of people, individually and collectively, to provide resources, services and opportunities for the overall benefit of humanity and to afford them protection from harm." So you're looking not just at the practices of an individual, but social workers in their practice must look at the collective responses; that is, the structural ways in which services are provided.

They go on to say in their principles which underlie the value of the pursuit of social justice:

- Social workers uphold the right of people to have access to resources to meet basic human needs.
- Social workers advocate for fair and equitable access to public services and benefits.
- Social workers advocate for equal treatment and protection under the law and challenge injustices, especially injustices that affect the vulnerable and disadvantaged.
- Social workers promote social development and environmental management in the interests of all people.

It is very clear in this statement from the social work code of ethics, which all social workers must adhere to in order to demonstrate competent practice, that they need to be looking at the issue of equitable access to public services. They need to be looking at the promotion of social development and environmental management in the interests of all people. They need to be looking at equal treatment and protection under the law and challenge injustices, especially injustices that affect the vulnerable and disadvantaged; that is, the pieces of work that must be done by the college – that is, to assess whether or not you have done good practice – are also the same pieces that this government is trying to push out of the colleges and separate into colleges and associations.

The intention here for the government is that they're trying to find a way to push any criticism of this government out of the professional associations by setting it up so that any time someone wants to criticize public policy, the government can say: "That is not the work of your college. That is the work of an association. If you want to join the association, go out and join that." The hope is, of course, that they will then set up the situation where people are required to join their college but not required to join their association, and as such any advocacy for change on a structural, societal level will be eliminated from these professional colleges by pushing them off into the association.

The point is really clear that many people understand the nature of structural problems that cause issues for people in society, particularly those who are most vulnerable or disadvantaged, and this government does not want to hear it. The intention of this part of the act is simply to silence opposition or appropriate examination by appropriately trained professionals into the nature of the structures of society, particularly the structures established by government. This is a silencing of the people who have the very job to understand how these structures will influence your life and to advocate on your behalf to ensure that the structures of society and particularly the structures of the ministries within the government are doing things that are making your life more difficult and problematic.

This government does not want to hear it. It's simply a way of making sure that they can do whatever they want, and then when someone wishes to challenge them, they can tell them that they don't have a right to do that. Yet here it is. We're going to put social workers into a position where in order to adhere to their code of

ethics, they are going to be put in a problematic situation. When they look at a situation for a client and say, "This isn't just about the individual circumstance of this client, but it's how the whole system is organized that's caused the problem here," and they wish to advocate for policies that change the overall system, they will be seen to be in contempt of the separation of colleges and associations in order to remove the ability for these professionals to advocate on behalf of their citizens.

As such, I think this is really an underhanded, sneaky way of the government of silencing people who will be looking at what they're doing, who will be advocating for their clients, who will be advocating for the citizens of the province of Alberta and making sure that when they do horrendous things, as they have continuously done throughout this session, that affect the citizens of the province of Alberta negatively, the professionals who would be aware of that and who would have the skills and training to be able to respond to that will be silenced. This is completely unacceptable.

As such, I would ask that all members of this House reject this bill and accept the amendments presented by the opposition to refer this bill for further consultation before implementation along with the recommendations of the Privacy Commissioner. Thank you.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

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

Mr. Shepherd: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the opportunity to respond with a few comments to the thoughts put forward by my colleague from Edmonton-Rutherford. I certainly do hear the concerns he brings forward. Certainly, we have seen that this is a government that has been incredibly oppositional towards any groups of professional organizations of health professionals in the province of Alberta: their ongoing feud with the Alberta Medical Association, their war on doctors, the responses we have seen from the Minister of Health towards the College of Physicians & Surgeons of Alberta, attempting to use them as a proxy to cover for the damage he was doing in driving doctors out of the province of Alberta.

4:00

One other issue I have heard raised around this particular bill and this change to divide the regulatory colleges from advocacy organizations or organizations that are outside of that is with the separation of CARNA. Now, CARNA is the representative for registered nurses of Alberta, and then, of course, you have UNA, which is the United Nurses of Alberta. Now, I have heard that in some cases for nurses that have discipline charges brought against them by AHS for particular reasons and then have the support of UNA as their union to help them fight that complaint, in some cases where they are indeed successful in fighting the complaint and they are absolved under AHS, then there will also be a complaint filed with CARNA. CARNA then, despite the fact that through the employment process that nurse has been acquitted, will still proceed to file a complaint and to allow that to go through.

Now, the concern that I've had raised is that under this bill folks that work in management at AHS will still have the ability to sit on the board of CARNA after this separation is mandated and after this has gone through, but the way this legislation is worded, it states that nobody who is a member of a union or advocacy organization for these employees may sit on the board of a regulatory college. So we have an advantage here, where management from AHS, who can be involved in the discipline process of a member of that college under AHS, can also sit on the board of CARNA. A nurse who is working under AHS and who may have a complaint filed by

managers within AHS and who is indeed absolved of that complaint under AHS may still face a complaint under CARNA and have members of management from AHS on the board of CARNA, who could then be involved in a process of adjudication on a similar complaint filed against that member, but no member of that nurse's union, who may be on their side of things, is allowed to be a member of CARNA.

Now, one hopes that all members of the board, of course, would set aside any of their previous affiliations or thoughts, but we know, Mr. Speaker, that we are all human. This is, I think, something of some concern, whatever other reasons there might be. I do recognize that CARNA itself has come out in favour of this particular piece and indeed was part of the government's press release, but I think it is worth considering some of the imbalance that is being brought in here, particularly as we have had this government bring in Bill 47, which has also been under debate in this Assembly, where they are again also very heavily tilting the balance against employees while handing much more power to employers, where we already have an existing imbalance and knowing that this is something we have seen this government do time and again, indeed bringing in legislation which has been extremely antagonistic towards the labour movement in this province.

I do have some concern that this particular provision that's included here in Bill 46 in this particular situation is indeed carrying on that antagonism by the government, that tilting of the scale, and, again, putting workers at a disadvantage when they are dealing with situations when they are in conflict with the employer.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

We are on amendment RA1. Are there any hon. members looking to join debate?

[Motion on amendment RA1 lost]

The Acting Speaker: Moving back to the bill, Bill 46, are there any hon. members looking to join debate? I see the hon. Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar.

Mr. Schmidt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise and offer my thoughts on Bill 46, the Health Statutes Amendment Act, 2020 (No. 2). I want to, first of all, thank my friends from Edmonton-Whitemud, Edmonton-Rutherford, and Edmonton-City Centre for their thoughtful interventions in this debate. Certainly, my friend from Edmonton-City Centre has done an excellent job as Health critic in his time in that role. Of course, we've seen that again in his brief comments in response to my friend from Edmonton-Rutherford regarding this bill.

My friend from Edmonton-Whitemud, in her comments on this bill, raised some information around the context within which we are debating these changes to health statutes. Of course, it's very concerning to me to see the latest COVID numbers. We exceeded 1,800 new cases yesterday, a new case record, and this is following days and days of setting new daily COVID case records here in the province of Alberta. I just want to say that my heart goes out to all of the families who have lost loved ones to this disease, especially the 14 people who died yesterday as a result of this disease. My thoughts and prayers are with the dozens of people who are currently fighting for their lives in ICUs, struggling with this disease. I sincerely hope that all of them make it through okay.

It is concerning to me, Mr. Speaker, that these kinds of comments, expressing empathy with the victims of COVID-19, are hard to come by. I've certainly heard from my constituents when they're expressing their many concerns about how this government

is managing the COVID pandemic. Wrapped up in all of their comments is their shock and dismay at the lack of empathy that has been displayed by the Premier and members of Executive Council with respect to the victims of COVID. So I just want those people to know that we here in the Official Opposition do care. We don't think that any of these people had this coming to them regardless of what their age is or what their other underlying health conditions are. All of these deaths are preventable. If only we had a government that was actually interested in doing the work of preventing the spread of COVID-19.

I think this Health Statutes Amendment Act, 2020 (No. 2) – with the fact that we are debating rather minor changes, I would argue, to things like the ABC Benefits Corporation Act at a time when 1,800 people were just notified today that they had a COVID diagnosis and 2 per cent of those can expect to die, what's the government's priority? Making sure that the Alberta Blue Cross act changes to represent the name of that organization. I'm not saying that that shouldn't have been done, but it's incredibly troubling to me and to all of my constituents in Edmonton-Gold Bar that that's what this government is focusing on instead of actually dealing with the pandemic at hand. It's incredibly troubling, Mr. Speaker.

I can promise members opposite that even though the vaccine seems to be on the horizon and, hopefully, we will be out of this pandemic in the coming months, potentially a year, the people of Alberta will not forget how this government turned their backs on them during this significant health crisis, and not only that, but they couldn't even be bothered to offer some kind words to the families who've lost loved ones. It's awful. The people of Alberta will not forget and I'm certain they will not forgive the members opposite for the callous attitude that they've taken to the victims of COVID-19.

4:10

My friend from Edmonton-Whitemud raised some concerns with respect to health privacy and the way that health records will be dealt with, and there are a couple of thoughts that I have on that matter, Mr. Speaker. It's interesting to me, the contrast that the government has shown today with respect to how they want to manage information in the province of Alberta. Earlier today in question period I asked the minister whether or not he would just freely, voluntarily release data related to the use of parks in our province. This is something that exists. The legislation says that the people of Alberta have the right to know and see, and the minister refused to release that information to the people of Alberta. Even though we have a legal right to it, he stood up and said no, that he will not comply with the multiple requests that have been made by members of the public to see that information. But when it comes to health information, well, it's their view that anybody should have the right to see that.

That's a curious contrast to me, that with something that is seemingly uncontroversial and should be a matter of routine, like parks usage data, the government goes to extreme lengths to keep that from public view, but Albertans' health care records, incredibly private, incredibly personal information, this legislation will make freely available to anybody, regardless of where they live in the world, to see. It boggles my mind, Mr. Speaker, that we have such divergent approaches to managing information in this province, and that's why I will not be supporting this bill. I don't think that it's right that this private and personal health care information be released into the wild the way that it is, in direct violation of the recommendations made by the Privacy Commissioner.

Now, I've heard from many of my constituents, wondering why it is they think that Albertans' health care information needs to be released so freely to people outside of their jurisdictions, and I think

the answer is pretty plain to see. There are certainly many patients, many constituents in Edmonton-Gold Bar whose doctors have picked up stakes and have left the province, Mr. Speaker, because of this government's war on physicians. Now my constituents, if they want to continue getting care from that doctor, will probably have to call them up on the phone or make a Zoom appointment or some other kind of telecare appointment because those people have picked up and left the province.

Maybe that's why the minister and members of Executive Council have decided to release these health care records into the wild like this, because they know full well that doctors are leaving the province in droves and that many of these constituents who have been left to find health care will have no option but to follow their doctors virtually to whatever jurisdiction it is that they're going to. I can tell you that that has not gone over well with my constituents, and they are certainly not buying the stories that the government is spinning in relation to the management of the health care system.

It's interesting, of course, the hubris that the government has displayed in taking on the war on doctors and actually having the temerity to dispute what the doctors are saying with regard to what's going on with health care in the province of Alberta. I mean, Mr. Speaker, as you know, not very many people hold politicians in very high regard. The things that we say, just because of the positions that we hold, are automatically viewed with a great deal of skepticism, and that's not true of doctors. People trust doctors more than they trust any other profession in the entire province, yet the Minister of Health seems to think that just by standing up and claiming that he's telling the truth every day, he's going to actually be more trustworthy on the issue of health care and health care management than doctors.

Ms Hoffman: They trust nurses, too.

Mr. Schmidt: They trust nurses as well, and I thank my friend from Edmonton-Glenora for expanding the definition of "health care worker." She's absolutely right. Albertans will trust any health care worker before they trust this minister or any members of Executive Council. I think the minister would be wise to remember who has more trust on the issue of health care management and perhaps conduct himself accordingly.

It's on that issue of trust, Mr. Speaker, that I want to offer some final comments. When this piece of legislation was introduced, he was questioned on whether or not he had conducted consultations with the Privacy Commissioner about the changes that he's making to the legislation governing health care records, and he actually said in public that he had conducted such consultations and that the Privacy Commissioner had actually approved the changes. It turns out that that wasn't true. The Privacy Commissioner had to take the extraordinary step of publicly putting out a statement saying that what the Minister of Health had said about the changes that are being proposed in this piece of legislation were not true. That's extraordinary.

Or it would be extraordinary if we hadn't seen this Health minister in action for the last 18 months, right? We ask him if he's driving doctors out of the province; he says no. We ask him if he's firing 11,000 front-line health care workers; he says that that's not true. We asked the government in February, March: should we be worried about this COVID thing? "No, don't be concerned about it," and then on March 17 the province is shut down. All along we said: "Oh, does the government have enough contact tracers to manage COVID?" "Yes, absolutely." It turns out that that wasn't true. Do we have enough ICU beds? Do we have enough staff to

manage this pandemic? "Yes, absolutely. Nothing to worry about. Nothing to see here." Well, we've got the worst case count of any province in the country, and people are dying in greater numbers per capita than in any other province in the country.

The problem is that – there are two problems, Mr. Speaker. It's this repeated behaviour by the Minister of Health of telling us things that are quite separate from the actual facts and his refusal to even try to rehabilitate his reputation. We were here on Monday, asking him to release government documents related to discussions that his department had with the college of dentists about the changes to the fee guide. The minister stood up, swore up and down that he tried to discourage the dentists, but he couldn't possibly do anything to dissuade them from hiking dental fees by 5 per cent. But when I told the Health minister that the people of Alberta are having a problem trusting him on this issue in addition to every other issue that he has to deal with as Health minister and that perhaps releasing the documents, if they could prove what he said was true, would go a little bit towards rehabilitating his reputation, he failed to take advantage of that opportunity that we put before him.

Now again here we have an opportunity during debate on this bill . . .

The Acting Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.
Standing Order 29(2)(a) is available.

4:20

Seeing none, are there any hon. members looking to join debate on Bill 46, Health Statutes Amendment Act, 2020 (No. 2)?

Seeing none, I am prepared to ask the question.

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

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 4:20 p.m.]

[One minute having elapsed, the Assembly divided]

[Mr. Milliken in the chair]

For the motion:

Amery	Jones	Schweitzer
Armstrong-Homeniuk	Loewen	Smith
Ellis	Lovely	Turton
Fir	Neudorf	Walker
Getson	Rosin	Yaseen
Goodridge	Rowswell	

Against the motion:

Eggen	Pancholi	Schmidt
Feehan	Sabir	Shepherd
Hoffman		

Totals:	For – 17	Against – 7
---------	----------	-------------

[Motion carried; Bill 46 read a second time]

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

Mr. Schweitzer: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We made some excellent progress this week. I move that we adjourn until 1:30 p.m. on December 7, 2020.

[Motion carried; the Assembly adjourned at 4:25 p.m.]

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

Activity to Thursday, December 3, 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 Sitzings.

Bill 1 — Critical Infrastructure Defence Act (Kenney)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Bill 14 — Utility Payment Deferral Program Act (Nally)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Bill 21* — Provincial Administrative Penalties Act (Schweitzer)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Bill 23* — Commercial Tenancies Protection Act (Fir)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

First Reading — 1619-20 (*Jun. 24, 2020 aft., passed*)
Second Reading — 1784-97 (*Jul. 7, 2020 eve.*), 1962-63 (*Jul. 13, 2020 eve., passed*)
Committee of the Whole — 2163-81 (*Jul. 20, 2020 eve., passed*)
Third Reading — 2239-64 (*Jul. 21, 2020 eve., passed on division*)
Royal Assent — (*Jul. 23, 2020 aft.*) [Comes into force September 1, 2020; SA 2020 c22]

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

First Reading — 1695 (*Jul. 6, 2020 aft., passed*)
Second Reading — 1783-84 (*Jul. 7, 2020 eve.*), 2032-37 (*Jul. 14, 2020 eve.*), 2086-2103 (*Jul. 15, 2020 eve.*), 2189-97 (*Jul. 20, 2020 eve.*), 2210-27 (*Jul. 21, 2020 aft.*), 2289-96 (*Jul. 22, 2020 aft.*), 2313-28 (*Jul. 22, 2020 eve.*), 2360-61 (*Jul. 23, 2020 aft., passed on division*)
Committee of the Whole — 2432-475 (*Jul. 27, 2020 eve.*), 2512-20 (*Jul. 28, 2020 aft.*), 2523-31 (*Jul. 28, 2020 eve., passed with amendments*)
Third Reading — 2539-61 (*Jul. 28, 2020 eve.*), 2562-69 (*Jul. 28, 2020 eve., passed on division*)
Royal Assent — (*Jul. 29, 2020 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force July 29, 2020, with exceptions; SA 2020 c27]

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

First Reading — 1760 (*Jul. 7, 2020 aft., passed*)
Second Reading — 1878 (*Jul. 8, 2020 eve.*), 2023-31 (*Jul. 14, 2020 eve., passed*)
Committee of the Whole — 2233-39 (*Jul. 21, 2020 eve., passed*)
Third Reading — 2309-12 (*Jul. 22, 2020 eve., passed*)
Royal Assent — (*Jul. 23, 2020 aft.*) [Comes into force July 23, 2020; SA 2020 c21]

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

First Reading — 1760 (*Jul. 7, 2020 aft., passed*)
Second Reading — 1861-63 (*Jul. 8, 2020 eve.*), 2003-23 (*Jul. 14, 2020 eve.*), 2051-53 (*Jul. 15, 2020 aft.*), 2059-69 (*Jul. 15, 2020 aft.*), 2147-62 (*Jul. 20, 2020 aft.*), 2268-73 (*Jul. 21, 2020 eve.*), 2296-307 (*Jul. 22, 2020 aft.*), 2328-40 (*Jul. 22, 2020 eve.*), 2361-63 (*Jul. 23, 2020 aft., passed on division*)
Committee of the Whole — 2404-32 (*Jul. 27, 2020 eve.*), 2475-85 (*Jul. 27, 2020 eve.*), 2502-12 (*Jul. 28, 2020 aft.*), 2531-39 (*Jul. 28, 2020 eve., passed*)
Third Reading — 2569-78 (*Jul. 28, 2020 eve.*), 2579-86 (*Jul. 28, 2020 eve., passed on division*)
Royal Assent — (*Jul. 29, 2020 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force on various dates; SA 2020 c28]

Bill 33* — Alberta Investment Attraction Act (Fir)

First Reading — 1760-61 (*Jul. 7, 2020 aft., passed*)
Second Reading — 1807-19 (*Jul. 8, 2020 morn.*), 1927-37 (*Jul. 13, 2020 aft.*), 2117-27 (*Jul. 16, 2020 aft., passed*)
Committee of the Whole — 2227-31 (*Jul. 21, 2020 aft.*), 2233 (*Jul. 21, 2020 eve.*), 2340-44 (*Jul. 22, 2020 eve.*), 2312-13 (*Jul. 22, 2020 eve.*), 2363-65 (*Jul. 23, 2020 aft., passed with amendments*)
Third Reading — 2401-04 (*Jul. 27, 2020 eve.*), 2485-88 (*Jul. 27, 2020 eve., passed on division*)
Royal Assent — (*Jul. 29, 2020 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2020 cA-26.4]

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

First Reading — 1839 (*Jul. 8, 2020 aft., passed*)
Second Reading — 1966-69 (*Jul. 13, 2020 eve.*), 2116-17 (*Jul. 16, 2020 aft., passed*)
Committee of the Whole — 2117 (*Jul. 16, 2020 aft., passed*)
Third Reading — 2312 (*Jul. 22, 2020 eve., passed*)
Royal Assent — (*Jul. 23, 2020 aft.*) [Comes into force on various dates; SA 2020 c23]

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

First Reading — 2616 (*Oct. 20, 2020 aft., passed*)
Second Reading — 2666-81 (*Oct. 21, 2020 aft.*), 2741-55 (*Oct. 26, 2020 eve.*), 2803-15 (*Oct. 27, 2020 eve.*), 2841-47 (*Oct. 28, 2020 aft.*), 2860-69 (*Oct. 28, 2020 eve.*), 2940-43 (*Nov. 2, 2020 eve.*), 2986-94 (*Nov. 3, 2020 eve.*), 3072-83 (*Nov. 5, 2020 aft.*), 3126-36 (*Nov. 16, 2020 eve.*), 3208-12 (*Nov. 17, 2020 eve.*), 3265-72 (*Nov. 18, 2020 eve.*), 3361-65 (*Nov. 23, 2020 eve., passed*)

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.*), 3121-24 (*Nov. 16, 2020 eve., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 3224-32 (*Nov. 18, 2020 aft.*), 3292-94 (*Nov. 19, 2020 aft., passed*)

Third Reading — 3336-42 (*Nov. 23, 2020 eve., passed*)

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.*), (*Nov. 24, 2020*), 3398-3401 (*Nov. 24, 2020 aft., passed with amendments*)

Third Reading — 3529-30 (*Nov. 25, 2020 eve.*), 3544-45 (*Nov. 26, 2020 aft., passed*)

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

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

Second Reading — 2795-2800 (*Oct. 27, 2020 eve.*), 2838-41 (*Oct. 28, 2020 aft.*), 2884-93 (*Oct. 29, 2020 aft.*), 2960-65 (*Nov. 3, 2020 aft.*), 3124-26 (*Nov. 16, 2020 eve., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 3232-36 (*Nov. 18, 2020 aft.*), 3419-24 (*Nov. 24, 2020 eve.*), 3503-13 (*Nov. 25, 2020 eve., passed*)

Third Reading — 3611-14 (*Nov. 30, 2020 eve., passed on division*)

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.*), 3206-08 (*Nov. 17, 2020 eve.*), 3272-76 (*Nov. 18, 2020 eve., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 3357-61 (*Nov. 23, 2020 eve.*), 3401-09 (*Nov. 24, 2020 aft.*), 3411-19 (*Nov. 24, 2020 eve.*), 3513-25 (*Nov. 25, 2020 eve., passed with amendments*)

Third Reading — 3685 (*Dec. 1, 2020 eve., passed*)

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.*), 3136-38 (*Nov. 16, 2020 eve., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 3424-27 (*Nov. 24, 2020 eve., passed*)

Third Reading — 3606-11 (*Nov. 30, 2020 eve., passed*)

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.*), 3164-73 (*Nov. 17, 2020 aft.*), 3255-65 (*Nov. 18, 2020 eve.*), 3276 (*Nov. 18, 2020 eve., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 3679-85 (*Dec. 1, 2020 eve., passed*)

Third Reading — 3700-07 (*Dec. 2, 2020 morn.*), 3753-58 (*Dec. 2, 2020 eve., passed*)

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*)

Second Reading — 3150-64 (*Nov. 17, 2020 aft.*), 3276-80 (*Nov. 18, 2020 eve., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 3594-3605 (*Nov. 30, 2020 eve.*), 3687-3700 (*Dec. 2, 2020 morn.*), 3721-33 (*Dec. 2, 2020 aft.*), 3751-53 (*Dec. 2, 2020 eve., passed*)

Third Reading — 3784-88 (*Dec. 3, 2020 aft., passed on division*)

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

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

Second Reading — 3115-21 (Nov. 16, 2020 eve.), 3354-57 (Nov. 23, 2020 eve., passed)

Committee of the Whole — 3591-93 (Nov. 30, 2020 eve., passed)

Third Reading — 3685 (Dec. 1, 2020 eve., passed)

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

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

Second Reading — 3175-79 (Nov. 17, 2020 eve., passed)

Committee of the Whole — 3525-29 (Nov. 25, 2020 eve.), 3654-65 (Dec. 1, 2020 aft., passed)

Third Reading — 3685 (Dec. 1, 2020 eve., passed)

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

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

Second Reading — 3176-92 (Nov. 17, 2020 eve.), 3342-54 (Nov. 23, 2020 eve.), 3459-65 (Nov. 25, 2020 morn.), 3614-22 (Nov. 30, 2020 eve.), 3675-76 (Dec. 1, 2020 aft.), 3788-93 (Dec. 3, 2020 aft., passed on division)

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

First Reading — 3070-71 (Nov. 5, 2020 aft., passed)

Second Reading — 3192-206 (Nov. 17, 2020 eve.), 3236-45 (Nov. 18, 2020 aft.), 3367-73 (Nov. 24, 2020 morn.), 3427-41 (Nov. 24, 2020 eve.), 3445-59 (Nov. 25, 2020 morn.), 3622-28 (Nov. 30, 2020 eve.), 3630-42 (Dec. 1, 2020 morn.), 3743-51 (Dec. 2, 2020 eve., passed on division)

Committee of the Whole — (Dec. 3, 2020 aft., adjourned; amendments introduced)

Bill 48* — Red Tape Reduction Implementation Act, 2020 (No. 2) (Hunter)

First Reading — 3096 (Nov. 16, 2020 aft., passed)

Second Reading — 3247-55 (Nov. 18, 2020 eve.), 3387-98 (Nov. 24, 2020 aft.), 3441-43 (Nov. 24, 2020 eve., passed)

Committee of the Whole — 3665-75 (Dec. 1, 2020 aft.), 3733-40 (Dec. 2, 2020 aft.), 3759-62 (Dec. 2, 2020 eve., adjourned)

Bill 50 — Appropriation (Supplementary Supply) Act, 2020 (\$) (Toews)

First Reading — 3502 (Nov. 25, 2020 aft., passed)

Second Reading — 3545-52 (Nov. 26, 2020 aft., passed)

Committee of the Whole — 3587-91 (Nov. 30, 2020 eve., passed), (Nov. 30, 2020 eve.)

Third Reading — 3677-79 (Dec. 1, 2020 eve.), 3685 (Dec. 1, 2020 eve., passed)

Bill 201 — Strategic Aviation Advisory Council Act (Gottfried)

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*)

Third Reading — 3096-3103 (*Nov. 16, 2020 aft., passed on division*)

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*), 3070 (*Nov. 5, 2020 aft., reported to Assembly*)

Second Reading — 3103-08 (*Nov. 16, 2020 aft.*), 3307-14 (*Nov. 23, 2020 aft., passed*)

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

First Reading — 2827 (*Oct. 28, 2020 aft., passed; referred to the Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills*), 3223-24 (*Nov. 18, 2020 aft., reported to Assembly*)

Second Reading — 3314-21 (*Nov. 23, 2020 aft., adjourned*)

Bill 207 — Reservists' Recognition Day Act (Rutherford)

First Reading — 3224 (*Nov. 18, 2020 aft., passed; referred to the Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills*), 3719 (*Dec. 2, 2020 aft., reported to Assembly*)

Bill 208 — Alberta Investment Management Corporation Amendment Act, 2020 (Phillips)

First Reading — 3782 (*Dec. 3, 2020 aft., passed; referred to the Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills*)

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

First Reading — 1125 (*Jun. 4, 2020 aft., passed; referred to the Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills*), 3292 (*Nov. 19, 2020 aft., reported to Assembly*)

Second Reading — 3629-30 (*Dec. 1, 2020 morn., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 3740 (*Dec. 2, 2020 aft., passed*)

Third Reading — 3740-41 (*Dec. 2, 2020 aft., passed*)

Table of Contents

Statement by the Speaker	
Alberta MLA Awards.....	3771
Members' Statements	
Heritage Fund and Canada Pension Plan Investment Management.....	3771
International Day of Persons with Disabilities	3771
Santas Anonymous in Fort McMurray	3772
Child Care and Early Childhood Education.....	3772
Marmot Basin	3772
Support for Persons with Disabilities	3772
Individual Actions and Collective Benefits	3773
Persons with Disabilities	3773
COVID-19 Protective Measures and Individual Freedom.....	3782
Oral Question Period	
COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution.....	3773, 3776
COVID-19 Protective Measures and Contingency Plans	3774
COVID-19 and Health Care Workers.....	3774
COVID-19 Protective Measures.....	3775
COVID-19 Statistics and Contact Tracing	3776
COVID-19 Protective Measure Compliance	3777
School Construction Capital Plan.....	3777
Support for Small Businesses Affected by COVID-19.....	3778
Heritage Fund and Canada Pension Plan Investment Management.....	3778
Health Care Services in Fairview	3779
Provincial Park Usage Data and Land Use.....	3779
Child Care Funding	3780
Impaired Driving Penalties.....	3781
First Nations' Health Care Access.....	3781
Introduction of Bills	
Bill 208 Alberta Investment Management Corporation Amendment Act, 2020	3782
Tabling Returns and Reports	3782
Orders of the Day	3784
Government Bills and Orders	
Third Reading	
Bill 43 Financing Alberta's Strategic Transportation Act	3784
Division	3788
Second Reading	
Bill 46 Health Statutes Amendment Act, 2020 (No. 2)	3788
Division	3793

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