



Province of Alberta

The 30th Legislature  
Third Session

# Alberta Hansard

Thursday afternoon, April 28, 2022

Day 26

The Honourable Nathan M. Cooper, Speaker

**Legislative Assembly of Alberta**  
**The 30th Legislature**  
Third Session

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

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

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

**Party standings:**

United Conservative: 61

New Democrat: 23

Independent: 3

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Teri Cherkewich, Law Clerk  
Trafton Koenig, Senior Parliamentary  
    Counsel  
Philip Massolin, Clerk Assistant and  
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Jason Copping	Minister of Health
Mike Ellis	Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions
Tanya Fir	Associate Minister of Red Tape Reduction
Nate Glubish	Minister of Service Alberta
Nate Horner	Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Economic Development
Whitney Issik	Associate Minister of Status of Women
Adriana LaGrange	Minister of Education
Jason Luan	Minister of Community and Social Services
Kaycee Madu	Minister of Labour and Immigration
Ric McIver	Minister of Municipal Affairs
Dale Nally	Associate Minister of Natural Gas and Electricity
Demetrios Nicolaides	Minister of Advanced Education
Jason Nixon	Minister of Environment and Parks
Ronald Orr	Minister of Culture
Prasad Panda	Minister of Infrastructure
Josephine Pon	Minister of Seniors and Housing
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Rajan Sawhney	Minister of Transportation
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Doug Schweitzer	Minister of Jobs, Economy and Innovation
Tyler Shandro	Minister of Justice and Solicitor General
Travis Toews	President of Treasury Board and Minister of Finance
Rick Wilson	Minister of Indigenous Relations
Muhammad Yaseen	Associate Minister of Immigration and Multiculturalism

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Martin Long	Parliamentary Secretary for Small Business and Tourism
Jacqueline Lovely	Parliamentary Secretary to the Associate Minister of Status of Women
Nathan Neudorf	Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Parks for Water Stewardship
Jeremy Nixon	Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Community and Social Services for Civil Society
Searle Turton	Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Energy
Dan Williams	Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Culture and for la Francophonie

**STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA**

**Standing Committee on the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund**

Chair: Mr. Rowswell  
Deputy Chair: Mr. Jones

Allard  
Eggen  
Gray  
Hunter  
Phillips  
Rehn  
Singh

**Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future**

Chair: Mr. Neudorf  
Deputy Chair: Ms Goehring

Armstrong-Homeniuk  
Barnes  
Bilous  
Frey  
Irwin  
Rosin  
Rowswell  
Sweet  
van Dijken  
Walker

**Select Special Committee to Examine Safe Supply**

Chair: Mr. Jeremy Nixon  
Deputy Chair: Mrs. Allard

Amery  
Frey  
Milliken  
Rosin  
Stephan  
Yao  
Vacant  
Vacant  
Vacant  
Vacant

**Standing Committee on Families and Communities**

Chair: Ms Lovely  
Deputy Chair: Ms Sigurdson

Amery  
Carson  
Dang  
Frey  
Gotfried  
Hunter  
Loewen  
Reid  
Sabir  
Smith

**Select Special Information and Privacy Commissioner Search Committee**

Chair: Mr. Walker  
Deputy Chair: Mr. Turton

Allard  
Carson  
Dreeshen  
Ganley  
Long  
Sabir  
Stephan

**Standing Committee on Legislative Offices**

Chair: Mr. Rutherford  
Deputy Chair: Mr. Milliken

Allard  
Ceci  
Dach  
Long  
Loyola  
Rosin  
Shepherd  
Smith  
van Dijken

**Special Standing Committee on Members' Services**

Chair: Mr. Cooper  
Deputy Chair: Mr. Schow

Allard  
Deol  
Goehring  
Gray  
Long  
Neudorf  
Sabir  
Sigurdson, R.J.  
Williams

**Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills**

Chair: Mr. Rutherford  
Deputy Chair: Mr. Jeremy Nixon

Amery  
Irwin  
Long  
Nielsen  
Rehn  
Rosin  
Sigurdson, L.  
Singh  
Sweet

**Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections, Standing Orders and Printing**

Chair: Mr. Smith  
Deputy Chair: Mr. Reid

Aheer  
Armstrong-Homeniuk  
Deol  
Ganley  
Gotfried  
Loyola  
Neudorf  
Renaud  
Stephan  
Williams

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts**

Chair: Ms Phillips  
Deputy Chair: Mr. Reid

Armstrong-Homeniuk  
Lovely  
Pancholi  
Renaud  
Rowswell  
Schmidt  
Singh  
Toor  
Turton  
Walker

**Select Special Committee on Real Property Rights**

Chair: Mr. Sigurdson  
Deputy Chair: Mr. Rutherford

Frey  
Ganley  
Hanson  
Milliken  
Nielsen  
Rowswell  
Schmidt  
Sweet  
van Dijken  
Yao

**Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship**

Chair: Mr. Hanson  
Deputy Chair: Member Ceci

Dach  
Feehan  
Ganley  
Getson  
Guthrie  
Lovely  
Rehn  
Singh  
Turton  
Yao

## Legislative Assembly of Alberta

1:30 p.m.

Thursday, April 28, 2022

[The Speaker in the chair]

**The Speaker:** Hon. members, we'll now be led in the singing of *God Save the Queen* by Ms Brooklyn Elhard. I invite you to participate in the language of your choice.

### Hon. Members:

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:** Please be seated.

### Statement by the Speaker

#### Members' 10th Anniversary of Election

**The Speaker:** Hon. members, today marks a very auspicious occasion. April 23, 2022, marked the 10th anniversary of the first election of three of our hon. colleagues in this Assembly. It may interest you to know that there have only ever been 956 members who have served this Assembly, but perhaps more interestingly only 296 of them have ever survived to serve 10 years. I would like to invite the hon. the Minister of Municipal Affairs, the hon. Member for Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview, and the hon. Member for Cypress-Medicine Hat to join me here at the dais to receive their 10-year anniversary pins. [applause]

It's my great pleasure to congratulate each and every one of you for reaching this milestone. Thank you for your dedicated service on behalf of your constituents. In particular, today we've had the pleasure to have some of your family members joining us here, who I will introduce in just a moment, but a special thank you to each and every family member, who has also made sacrifices for these individuals to serve for the time that they have.

### Introduction of Guests

**The Speaker:** Hon. members, joining us in the Speaker's gallery today are some very special guests of the hon. the Member for Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview. I'm pleased to introduce his family to you all, beginning with his partner Traci Bednard, his daughters Ella Violet Hudson and Olive Helena Ann Bilous. It's very clear she has her mother's genes.

Also joining them in the gallery today are his parents Orest and Mary Ann Bilous and his father-in-law and mother-in-law Barb and Gene Bednard. Please rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

Equally as important, in particular, for this hon. member, the Deputy Government House Leader, joining us today are his mother-in-law – I'm sure he's going to be on his best behaviour as a result – and his sister-in-law, Caroline and Lauren Malner. Please rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

Members, seated in the galleries today are several guests of the Member for Edmonton-Rutherford. I'd ask you to rise as I introduce you: Hazel Vicklund of the Peavine Métis settlement; Herb Lehr, president of the Metis Settlements General Council; Sherry Cunningham, vice-president of the Metis Settlements General

Council; and the chairs and councils of the eight Métis settlements. Please rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

Last but certainly not least, we have guests of the hon. Member for Calgary-Falconridge joining us today. Please welcome Devinder Gill and Dharminder Sanghera.

And last but certainly not least are the children of the chief of staff to the hon. Minister of Transportation and the Speaker: Henry and Sam Hastman. Please rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

### Members' Statements

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Edmonton-Mill Woods and Opposition House Leader.

### National Day of Mourning

**Ms Gray:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Each year we set aside April 28 to remember those Albertans who died from workplace-related illness or injury. On the National Day of Mourning we remember those we lost and think of those they left behind. Last year there were 178 fatalities in Alberta, according to the Workers' Compensation Board, and thousands more who suffered work-related illness or injury. These are 178 Albertans who got up every day and worked hard to support themselves, their families, and their communities, and we must remember their sacrifice. A single death touches so many lives, leaving friends and families grieving, co-workers and communities heartbroken.

We must also think of those who were injured or suffered a disability as a result of a workplace incident. These incidents alter lives, often permanently. What makes them doubly tragic is that so many injuries are preventable.

Safe workplaces are not a luxury, they are not a nice-to-have, and despite what this government says, they are not red tape. They are a fundamental right. Every worker deserves to go to work knowing they will come home safely at the end of the day. Employers, workers, unions, industry organizations, and government all have the responsibility to make sure that happens.

Mr. Speaker, we should also reflect on what we have asked of front-line workers during this pandemic and what it has cost. Last year we lost 31 Albertans due to workplace-acquired COVID-19; 10 of those were health care workers who put their lives at risk to fight this deadly virus. We know it didn't have to be this way. New figures from the Canadian Institute for Health Information shows that Alberta health care workers contracted COVID-19 and died at rates higher than the national average. The irresponsibility of this government put our hospital systems under excruciating strain and put the heroes of this pandemic directly in harm's way. They deserved better. We must do better. Thank you to all Albertans who worked through the COVID-19 pandemic.

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

### Teacher Disciplinary Process and Bill 15

**Mr. Smith:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday the Alberta Teachers' Association released polling as part of their campaign against Bill 15. This is not the first poll the ATA has released that includes self-selected participation from their membership. The poll released yesterday polled 825 ATA members, which is less than 2 per cent of Alberta teachers. This polling concluded on February 17, yet this legislation wasn't tabled until March 31. Yes, that's right. They conducted polling on a bill that was not even tabled in this Assembly yet. Much like the Member for Edmonton-Glenora, who several weeks ago criticized the

new curriculum in the media before she even read it, the ATA was polling their members and Albertans on a bill before it even existed.

**1:40**

As the Minister of Education has said many times, the majority of teachers and teacher leaders will never experience the discipline process. The same goes for the majority of Alberta families. I'm thankful for that. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, many of the individuals that have experienced the process have had negative experiences. Kelly Schneider, a former student at John Ware junior high school in Calgary, said, "The ATA's policy failed me as a student and, had it been changed, could have prevented many other victims of sexual assault." Todd Snow, a parent who experienced this process first-hand, said: "As parents we have been very disappointed in the current ATA disciplinary process. Students, parents and the public need to know we have an advocate separate from the teachers' union and that our voices will be heard."

The perceived bias of the union conducting hearings and recommending punishment in this process is not trusted by many victims, is not trusted by many parents, and has created serious problems within the disciplinary process. Mr. Speaker, Bill 15 aims to change that. Bill 15 will ensure that the entire teaching profession is protected by bringing all teachers and teacher leaders under one reformed disciplinary process no matter who they work for.

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

### National Day of Mourning

**Mr. Rehn:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've seen just about every kind of work our great province has to offer. I've worked the rigs, the sawmills, the construction sites, the farms, the ranches, even pulled 40-wheelers down our highways, and more. Through all my experience as an employee and an employer, I have learned that there's nothing more important than safety on the job site. Today is the National Day of Mourning, when we take time to recognize all those who did not make it home at the end of their workdays.

Last year 178 Albertans, tragically, died while at work. Right now our government is working on improving our occupational health and safety standards to reduce these tragic incidents from 178 to zero. We updated Alberta's occupational health and safety code to help workers and job creators secure the safety of their work sites and support Alberta's economic recovery, something that hadn't been done since 2009. We streamlined the occupational health and safety code following intensive engagement with businesses and health and safety professionals, and we are keeping up to date with changing trends, arranging updates to the occupational health and safety code on a three-year staggered basis to ensure that we are keeping up with the industry best practices as technology rapidly changes.

Mr. Speaker, one workplace death is too many. Alberta has realized a slow decline in workplace accidents, injuries, and deaths over the past several years, but we must remain vigilant. I can say from experience that there is nothing more satisfying than putting in a hard day's work on a safe and responsible job site. On this National Day of Mourning we pray for those who have lost their lives, their friends, their co-workers, and their families, and we vow to work towards improving safety standards for all. God bless all those we have lost. We will continue to do better for all Albertans.

Thank you.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Edmonton-Rutherford is next.

### Métis Settlements Governance

**Mr. Feehan:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm honoured to be joined here today by many members of the Métis settlements of Alberta up in the public gallery. These are dedicated community leaders focused and working hard for the people and communities that they represent. I consider myself lucky to have been able to know and work with each and every member of this council and know them as friends and, more importantly, respect them as partners, something this government has refused to do.

There is no clearer evidence of the lack of basic respect for this group of exceptional public servants than Bill 57. This government passed Bill 57 without a second being spent on consulting with those who it would most impact. The UCP took away the basic democratic rights for the Métis settlements to determine how they want to be governed and, in fact, imposed a system designed to be dysfunctional. Lo and behold, they have created a system rife with dysfunction. The UCP requires unanimous consent of all eight settlements to access funding. This is a rule that no other organization is bound by but one that the UCP decided to impose without a word of consultation.

This means that there are unacceptable delays in their ability to access funding for basic services. This government has removed income sources from them, refused to provide adequate funding for the basic needs of the Metis Settlements General Council, and more. These concerns and worries are not new to the government. I have been raising them, the MSGC has been raising them, and community members have been raising them, but this government has steadfastly refused to listen or change course.

Mr. Speaker, to those in the gallery today, I want to thank them for their hard work and patience, and I want to apologize on behalf of this government, who doesn't value them enough to consult with them or to listen to them. They deserve better. They deserve a government that respects them and will treat them as the valuable partners that they are, and I want them to know that the Alberta NDP will always be there as full partners in reconciliation.

Thank you.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville.

### Hydrogen Week

**Ms Armstrong-Homeniuk:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This week, April 25 to 29, is Hydrogen Week. Hydrogen represents the next great opportunity for Alberta's energy sector, with huge potential benefits for the economy and for the global effort to reduce emissions. Hydrogen is a low-cost carbon fuel. When it's burned for energy or used in a fuel cell, it only emits water. This means it has the potential to be a major source of clean energy to meet the world's needs. It can be used for powering vehicles, providing electricity, and generating heat.

Alberta already is the largest hydrogen producer in Canada. We have all the resources, expertise, and technology needed to quickly become a global supplier of clean hydrogen. Last fall our government released a hydrogen road map to outline a path to build on our existing strength and establish Alberta as a leader in the global hydrogen economy.

Hydrogen Week coincides with the first-ever Canadian Hydrogen Convention, which will wrap up today in Edmonton. This inaugural event has brought together some of the brightest minds and decision-makers from around the world. The convention is exploring the opportunities and challenges with hydrogen development and how we can raise awareness about this clean fuel.

It's all happening here in Alberta, just minutes away from the Legislature. Alberta is an energy powerhouse, and we have always been at the forefront of innovation. Our legacy in responsible energy development began with oil and gas, but we are leading the way in diversifying our energy mix to include solar, wind, geothermal, and, of course, hydrogen. The future of our hydrogen sector and our energy industry is bright, and our government is committed to bringing all Albertans along on this journey. I invite members of this House to join me in celebrating Hydrogen Week in Alberta.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### Eid al-Fitr

**Mr. Sabir:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the holy month of Ramadan comes to an end, Muslims in Alberta and around the world are getting ready to celebrate Eid al-Fitr. During the month of Ramadan Muslims have strengthened their bonds with the Creator and His creation through prayers, by fasting from sunrise to sundown, and exercising self-restraint and self-reflection and through acts of charity and kindness.

Eid al-Fitr marks the end of month-long fasting and is a time of celebration. During Eid al-Fitr the community will gather to participate in a special prayer and celebrate with family and friends. During these celebrations games and gifts will be given to children and young people, and special meals will be prepared and enjoyed together. In preparation for Eid al-Fitr, many will offer fitrana, a prescribed sum of money, to ensure the celebration can be enjoyed by all regardless of income or opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, as we prepare to celebrate Eid al-Fitr, I also encourage all members of this House and all Albertans to take this opportunity to connect with and get to know your Muslim neighbours. That alone can lead to a better understanding of our diversity and helps remove and eliminate the barriers that can lead to Islamophobia and hate.

It is also fitting that on Monday during Eid al-Fitr this Assembly will have the opportunity to work with Muslim communities, along with Indigenous and other racialized Albertans, and vote to have Bill 204, Anti-Racism Act, proceed for debate in this Legislature. This can help us move away from the status quo and support racialized Albertans by collecting race-based data to identify inequalities, disparities, and discrimination, including Islamophobia, which may be negatively impacting their lives. That would certainly be something for all Albertans to celebrate.

Happy Eid, and Eid Mubarak to all who celebrate it.

### Affordable Housing

**Mr. Sigurdson:** Mr. Speaker, there's no surprise that once again the NDP are blurring the lines and not painting the whole picture when it comes to affordable housing. In short, they are misleading Albertans. In the latest episode of NDP hysteria they have accused our government of leaving \$187 million of federal housing dollars on the table. Nothing could be further from the truth, and the Member for Edmonton-Riverview knows this.

Let's take a moment to paint an accurate reality that the NDP like to ignore. The agreement they're referencing is the 2019 national housing strategy. This strategy lays out how the federal and provincial governments will cost match new housing projects. It lays out the federal funding portion for the duration of those agreements. This includes the maximum every province would receive, including Alberta's portion of \$561 million. Mr. Speaker, this member knows this. If she doesn't, she's clearly not reading the

agreements before she signs them. To be clear, it was signed March 15, 2019, when she was the minister. Thankfully, a month later Albertans elected our government to ensure that every single dollar of the \$561 million would be effectively used to provide Albertans a safe, stable place to call home.

**1:50**

It is this government that consulted with the housing sector to release stronger foundations, Alberta's 10-year affordable housing strategy, that maximizes every federal dollar while ensuring flexibility for made-in-Alberta housing solutions. Stronger foundations was designed to ensure that Alberta uses every federal dollar in the most effective and efficient way to build houses for Albertans. By focusing on innovative partnerships, our government will add an additional 25,000 households, an increase of 40 per cent. Those partnerships will be community driven and focused for better community results, meaning that Albertans in need have a home and a sense of community.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

### Oral Question Period

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Member for Edmonton-Glenora has question 1.

### Health Care System

**Ms Hoffman:** Mr. Speaker, last year 178 Albertans died of workplace injuries. On the National Day of Mourning we remember them, and we pledge to do better. Thirty-one of those people died of COVID-19 contracted at their workplace, and 10 of those were health care workers. They were on the front lines of this deadly pandemic, and the government failed to keep them safe. Per capita more health care workers contracted COVID here than anywhere in Canada outside of Quebec. What does the Premier have to say to the health care workers who feel that he doesn't care about their health and safety?

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Minister of Health.

**Mr. Copping:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the hon. member for the important question. Every worker's death is one death too many, and my heart goes out to every family who had people who died in the workplace and also people who died from COVID.

In regard to the study that the hon. member is stating, I can state that no employee of AHS passed away due to COVID. In fact, AHS – and I know our health care system puts in the highest standards to protect workers. Very few actually get it at the workplace, approximately 7 per cent.

**Ms Hoffman:** Minister, there were 10 health care workers who died in Alberta.

Public health care is a point of pride for all Canadians. The Premier ran on a public health care guarantee, yet photos emerged earlier this week of 14 ambulances with patients in them waiting outside the Red Deer hospital because they couldn't access the emergency room. It looked less like an emergency room and more like a drive-through. Premier, where was the public health guarantee for those patients, those patients in Red Deer that the government failed so badly?

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Minister of Health.

**Mr. Copping:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As we indicated yesterday, it is a challenge right now in terms of provision of health care services. Our system is under strain in major hospitals in Edmonton and Calgary and in Red Deer. This is a problem that we are seeing not only here in Alberta but across the country, and this is not a new

problem. Even under the previous government we had wait times that were far too high. You know, in terms of the amount of time that people were in emergency departments, it was actually higher under the previous government. The point is that this is a problem we need to fix, and we are investing to fix it by adding capacity.

**Ms Hoffman:** Parking lot medicine is not public health care, Minister. If the minister was doing his job, ambulances wouldn't be sitting in the parking lot.

This Premier told voters that he respected public health care in the lead-up to the last provincial election, but under his watch health care workers have contracted a deadly virus. Some of them have died. Patients even now are showing up at emergency rooms to be turned back to the parking lot. Will the minister admit that Albertans can't trust the Premier or the UCP to protect public health care because they're so focused on American-style privatization while Albertans are being left untreated in the parking lot?

**Mr. Copping:** Mr. Speaker, that is simply not the case. We are supporting public health care. We are making record investments to expand capacity in our health care system. We understand that there are issues in terms of being able to get access in certain areas and at certain times. This is not a new problem. This was even a worse problem under the previous government and governments before that. We know that the solution is to invest in capacity, and we are doing that: \$600 million this year, \$600 million next year, \$600 million the year after that. We announced a record investment of \$1.8 billion in Red Deer. We are going to deliver on expanding our coverage.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Edmonton-City Centre.

#### Health Care System Capacity

**Mr. Shepherd:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In 20 towns across Alberta hospitals have closed some or all of their beds, over the last two years the number of doctors accepting patients through primary care networks has dropped in half, and earlier this week the people of Red Deer were left with parking lot medicine as 14 ambulances waited to enter the Red Deer hospital. This is health care chaos under the UCP, with Albertans uncertain if they can enter a hospital or see a doctor. This Premier promised a public health guarantee. It's clear he broke it. Does this Premier, this government really think that protecting public health care looks like closed beds, lost doctors, and parking lot medicine?

**Mr. Copping:** Mr. Speaker, as I indicated to the member previously, we are investing in public health care. We are living up to our guarantee to be able to make our health care system stronger than it was before. We are at \$1.8 billion over the next three years. That's in addition to the \$900 million we already added. Our investment in health care is the highest that it's been ever in the history of this province. I recognize that there are challenges. These challenges are not new. They're not new to the province of Alberta – we're facing this across the country – and they're not new to all governments in the past, but we are going to fix them.

**Mr. Shepherd:** Mr. Speaker, not one health care worker in this province buys what this minister is selling. Indeed, the president of the Health Sciences Association of Alberta, Mike Parker, just said that the situation in Red Deer you can find spreading across the province. We've been hearing directly from health care workers in emergency rooms who are facing a breaking point as they're once again feeling abandoned by this minister, this government. Many can't take working with this combative government anymore and

are leaving the province or leaving the profession. Does the Premier or does this minister even have a clue about the depths of the problems that are facing emergency care with the level of pressure and an exhausted, demoralized workforce his government attacked and undermined for years?

**Mr. Copping:** Mr. Speaker, we have increased capacity in our health care system. We have hired over the last two years an additional 1,800 nurses, over 230 paramedics. We have just under 100 new doctors in Q1 this year versus Q1 last year. We are investing in hiring 2,800 AHS employees to be able to expand capacity. We understand that the system is under strain right now, and this has been a challenging time over the last two years with COVID. I want to thank all of our health care workers for delivering phenomenal services. We hear them. We hear that there's a challenge, and that's why we're making the right decision and investing in capacity across our system to be able to ensure that it can respond to the needs of . . .

**The Speaker:** The hon. member.

**Mr. Shepherd:** Respectfully, Mr. Speaker, with the health care workers I'm speaking with, this minister's thanks ring hollow.

Albertans don't trust the UCP with their health care, yet still the current government is focused on privatization, forcing more private profit into our public health care, and when they fail to get a deal done with doctors and attempt to cut the wages of other health professionals, they still feel the need to direct public dollars to private profit. Front-line public health care workers don't even get an audience with this Premier. Can the Premier or the minister tell the House the last time that he spoke with a front-line health care worker, toured an emergency room, frankly, the last time he spoke to someone who could let him know about the chaos his government is causing in health care?

**Mr. Copping:** Mr. Speaker, as I've indicated before – and I want to set the record straight on a comment that I made yesterday in a response to the hon. member, but I ran out of time. I was talking about the emergency department, and I said yesterday that it was the U of A, but it was actually the Royal Alex.\*

Under the previous government the percentage of people who left the emergency department because wait times were long was 12 per cent. Now it was 10 per cent, as noted by the hon. member earlier this week. Both of those are too high, but the fact is that this problem has been around for years. It's been around under the previous government and the government before that, but, Mr. Speaker, we are going to fix it. We are going to fix it because we're investing in capacity, \$1.8 billion over three years, and we're not going to . . .

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Edmonton-Mill Woods and Opposition House Leader.

#### Cost of Living and Wage Growth

**Ms Gray:** Every day we hear from Albertans who are struggling to make ends meet during life under this government. Folks feel they're working harder and harder only to fall further behind as costs increase due to inflation and the policies of this UCP government, and new data shows that this isn't just perception; it is reality. According to Statistics Canada wages only increased by 1 per cent in February compared to last year while inflation ran at 5.5 per cent. That means Albertans fell 4.5 per cent behind. Why are Albertans seeing their quality of life eroded under this government, and when will the Premier finally do something to help workers pay their bills?

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

\*See page 917, left column, paragraph 5



**Mr. Toews:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Affordability is a big priority. Opportunity for Albertans is a huge priority for this government. That's why we are bringing in the electricity rebate program. That's why we've suspended fuel taxes in this province. But, more importantly, that's why we prioritize investment attraction, economic growth, and job creation.

Mr. Speaker, as I travel across the province visiting with employers, almost all of them are looking for staff. Wages will be going up. We're going to continue to position this province for investment growth and job creation.

2:00

**Ms Gray:** A recent report found that workers in Alberta are struggling more than those in any other province since the start of the pandemic. While prices have increased about 7 per cent, average incomes have only increased by 3 per cent. There is the lowest wage growth in the country here in Alberta. As a result, many Albertans are finding it difficult to afford the basic necessities. Another report showed that over half of Alberta households are within \$200 of not being able to pay all their bills at the end of the month, the highest level in Canada. Why is Alberta last in the country for wage growth? Why are so many working Albertans on the verge of . . .

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

**Mr. Toews:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, we recognize that we are in an inflationary period. That has also informed our fiscal policy in this province. As I observe the federal government, who's had a tax, borrow, and spend fiscal policy, it's exacerbated inflation across the country. That's the same fiscal policy the members opposite implemented year after year after year. That's why this government inherited a fiscal train wreck. We brought in responsible fiscal policy. We're working on affordability measures. We're working on opportunities for Albertans.

**Ms Gray:** Not only are Albertans taking a pay cut; this UCP government is making a bad situation worse by piling on additional costs. This government has hiked income taxes by over a billion dollars while lifting rate caps on insurance and electricity prices. Now Albertans are facing skyrocketing bills while insurance and utility companies rake in massive profits. Albertans are being forced to choose between putting food on the table or paying skyrocketing rates to keep their lights on. To the Premier: why does the government keep making choices that cost Albertans more? Why have you spent your time in power making decisions that leave families worse off?

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Minister of Finance.

**Mr. Toews:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I absolutely reject the notion of increased taxes. The members opposite raised taxes. The members opposite increased regulation. Under the members opposite's watch tens of billions of dollars of investment fled this province, tens of thousands of jobs were lost. We positioned this province for disproportionate investment attraction, economic growth, job creation. We're seeing tens of thousands of jobs created in this province, expanding fiscal capacity. This is the future for Alberta.

### Insurance Premium Costs

**Mr. Carson:** Mr. Speaker, Albertans know that this UCP government is to blame for the affordability crisis here in our province. The UCP lifted the cap on auto insurance, told Albertans

facing 30 per cent increases to shop around for better rates, and declared mission accomplished because the Premier got a \$200 rebate on the truck he doesn't drive or know how to put gas in. The Finance minister has been claiming that rates are coming down, but five of the seven filings by insurance companies this month were for rate increases. How many more rate increases will the Premier let happen before he realizes that he is failing Albertans?

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

**Mr. Toews:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. The members opposite had four years to bring in automobile insurance reform. What did they do? They simply put a rate cap on, a Band-Aid solution, which was no solution at all. It resulted in insurers pulling back products. It resulted in Alberta motorists not being able to find appropriate insurance. We're dealing with the systemic issues that are pushing up the costs, that are pushing up premiums. I'm happy to say that seven insurers have applied for rate reductions. [interjections]

**The Speaker:** Order. Order. Order.

**Mr. Carson:** Seven of over 70, Mr. Speaker.

Aviva insurance requested a basic increase of 11 per cent. Dominion of Canada insurance requested a basic increase of 7 per cent. Sonnet Insurance, Security National Insurance, Premium Insurance all requested rate increases. People will be paying more for insurance because this government values the bottom line of insurance companies more than whether or not Alberta families can afford to buy groceries. Will the Premier really stand up and claim that rates are going down when consumers are facing an 11 per cent increase in basic auto insurance?

**Mr. Toews:** Well, Mr. Speaker, that 11 per cent is simply just not true. In fact, according to recent filings, on average – on average – rates will be declining by almost 1 per cent. That's on average. I have a list of seven insurers that are all . . . [interjections]

**The Speaker:** The Minister of Finance.

**Mr. Toews:** I have a list of seven insurers that are all applying for rate decreases. The members opposite simply punted the problem down the road. This government is working to fix it.

**Mr. Carson:** Mr. Speaker, we know that the UCP lifted the cap on insurance increases likely because they owed a favour to their friend and key campaign adviser Nick Koolsbergen. The Premier has refused to release the information about who in his cabinet or staff met with the insurance lobby to take their instructions on lifting the cap. Doesn't the Premier think Albertans deserve to know who he is listening to? Because it's surely not them. Will the minister table in this House the names and dates of everyone in his staff or cabinet who met with the insurance lobby or Nick Koolsbergen? If not, what is he hiding?

**Mr. Toews:** Mr. Speaker, that is a ridiculous assertion. That is a completely ridiculous assertion. When the members opposite were in power, they brought in a rate cap. There's one outcome to a rate cap. Ultimately, insurers will pull back products, and that was beginning to happen. If left to its own, it would result in the complete collapse of the automobile insurance sector in the province, leading the government to have to nationalize it. The members opposite wanted to nationalize the automobile insurance industry. [interjections]

**The Speaker:** Order.

Fort McMurray-Wood Buffalo.

### Hydrogen Strategy

**Mr. Yao:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This week Edmonton is playing host to investors, innovators, and international delegates from around the world for the first-ever Canadian Hydrogen Convention. With a global market estimated to be worth as much as \$11 trillion, we know that hydrogen presents a massive opportunity in terms of investments, jobs, and decarbonization. What is this government's plan on how Alberta will harness this opportunity and set up our province for success in the hydrogen sector?

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

**Mr. Toews:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for the question. Alberta is already the number one hydrogen producer in the nation. With the hydrogen road map that the associate minister released last November, we have a clear plan for progress on hydrogen. We've already seen huge interest in the hydrogen industry by a number of players. There are four multibillion-dollar investment announcements that have already occurred, and there are more to come.

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

**Mr. Yao:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that on Tuesday at the hydrogen convention the Premier announced the clean hydrogen centre of excellence, an institution that is a keystone in the hydrogen road map, Albertans want to know exactly what the centre of excellence will accomplish and how it will help us excel in the clean hydrogen economy.

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

**Mr. Toews:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker and to the member. On Tuesday afternoon the Premier launched the clean hydrogen centre of excellence with a \$50 million funding commitment over the next four years. The centre of excellence will help move forward made-in-Alberta solutions through research support, network building, and everything they could need to get Alberta ingenuity highlighted on the global stage. This government is committed to grabbing onto the hydrogen opportunity with both hands.

**The Speaker:** The hon. member.

**Mr. Yao:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the Minister of Finance for those fine answers. It is given that Alberta is in a race with the rest of the world to become one of the first to excel in the growing hydrogen economy. Alberta has every benefit and attribute it needs to be a global leader in clean hydrogen. To the minister: what are the next steps in the path forward as we invest and diversify our economy?

**The Speaker:** The Minister of Finance.

**Mr. Toews:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I mentioned, our hydrogen road map has laid the path for our success in this industry. A number of steps are already under way like enabling additional opportunities for carbon capture and storage, not to mention all the early-stage technologies that will soon have the backing of the centre of excellence, Alberta Innovates, and the ongoing work of forward-looking companies like ATCO, who are pursuing their own blending project in Fort Saskatchewan. I can assure you that Alberta is moving full steam ahead on hydrogen.

### AgriStability Program and Avian Influenza

**Ms Sweet:** Mr. Speaker, when I've brought concerns about the uncertainty in agriculture due to the drought and the supply chain disruptions, the UCP have avoided answers. The minister is meeting with the federal and provincial counterparts next week, so I hope the UCP will finally sign on to the AgriStability deal, which producers have been united on for over a year. With the severe drought last season and the uncertainty of the avian flu now, the need for the money and stability could not be more clear. To the minister: can Albertans expect a deal to finally be done, or should we anticipate that available money from the federal government to support producers will be left on the table once again?

2:10

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Economic Development.

**Mr. Horner:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for the question. It's a good question. There has been a lot of discussion over the past six months with our provincial counterparts. There are things being offered by the feds. There's a negotiation that will have to take place, and it's always made quite clear during these conversations that the different provinces have different needs and expectations out of the BRM suite. I had a conversation with the Saskatchewan ag minister just yesterday. I think we are well aligned with Saskatchewan and look forward to the conversations...

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

**Ms Sweet:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that the drought last season was so severe that municipalities across the province were declaring states of emergency and given that farmers are still feeling the impact of last season and are facing added pressures this year with increased fees to fertilizer, feed, seeds, and a huge insurance premium tacked on by the UCP, the need for stability and financial security is paramount. Will the minister of agriculture stand up in this Chamber and apologize to producers for not signing on to the AgriStability proposal last season and leaving necessary funding untouched, and how will he fill the gaps the UCP have created in their inaction?

**Mr. Horner:** I'm not apologizing to anybody, but I will make a pledge to Alberta's ag producers that we'll continue to have those conversations on their behalf. No one needs to educate me on the severity of the drought or the prolonged impacts that many are still feeling. Those conversations are going to be had, and they've been fruitful conversations to date. Great expectations for the next week.

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

**Ms Sweet:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that the avian flu has now been detected in 18 poultry operations and that as of April 21, 340,000 birds have been infected, the most of any province – the UCP needs to address this – and given that when I asked for a plan previously, the minister deferred to the federal government, but Alberta chicken producers need answers, support, and stability now, will he meet with the agriculture ministers across the country? How will the minister of agriculture ensure that Alberta chicken producers are supported as the cases of the avian flu continue to grow?

**Mr. Horner:** Yes, Mr. Speaker, we're doing a lot to support the producers in turkey, poultry, laying hens, every aspect that's being impacted by avian influenza. It is on our agenda at the FPT meetings. Eighteen infected premises in the province: that number is probably closer to half a million birds that have been depopulated

in Alberta. It's not nearly the most of any province. But what we are seeing is that the CFIA monies are initiated quickly and that depopulation is ongoing.

#### Public Transit User Safety

**Mr. Dach:** Mr. Speaker, Albertans have been shocked at the news of violent acts occurring on Edmonton's LRT transit platforms. On Monday a 78-year-old woman was pushed onto the tracks. She's in hospital, and it's reported that she might have to have her leg amputated. Now, the city of Edmonton is worried that horrific acts like this will scare people away from transit. Albertans should be able to feel safe when travelling on public transit anywhere in this province, and this government's silence is not helping. Can the Justice minister tell this House what support he's offering the city of Edmonton to ensure that people can access public transportation safely . . .

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

**Mr. Shandro:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and, through you to the member, thank you for the question. It's a thoughtful question. First and foremost, anyone who takes public transit should feel safe. As announced on the 13th, we are committing \$79.5 million, which with federal government matching is almost \$159 million, to support 26 different Alberta municipalities. Now, the member asked about Edmonton in particular. For Edmonton, that would be almost \$67 million, and this is funding that will provide a top-up to assist municipalities that are feeling the financial pinch from low ridership over the last two years.

**Mr. Dach:** Given that the city is stepping up with more peace officers and outreach workers dedicated to transit security in February and given that the city of Edmonton's mayor has said that more needs to be done to address the root causes of crime around transit centres and given that this means investments in affordable housing, mental health, and support for people experiencing addictions, some things that the mayor says the provincial government needs to step up on, can the Minister of Seniors and Housing or the Community and Social Services minister rise and explain why they have not stepped up to support the city in tackling these very concerning issues? If the news this week isn't motivating them, what will it take?

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Minister of Justice.

**Mr. Shandro:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Maybe, first, I'll say about the funding that I was mentioning in my previous answer that municipalities can direct those funds as they see fit. That includes increased security. Now, the member opposite was also asking about the ways in which we're investing through Community and Social Services or through Seniors and Housing. The increased funding that we are providing – and maybe let me mention in particular the CSS budget, I think \$3.9 billion. That's a 7 per cent increase from last year, and we are going to continue to work in particular with the homelessness agencies to be able to help work with them and provide supports to . . .

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Edmonton-McClung.

**Mr. Dach:** Given that the mayor of Edmonton has stated that this government has not stepped up to provide this city with the necessary support to address the concerns of safety with public transit and given that the city is taking action – but with limited resources they've described the situation as, quote, Band-Aid

solutions – and given that it should not take people being injured or attacked to get this government to step up to ensure that every single Albertan can feel safe on our transit platforms, will any minister over there commit to taking real action today, or are they content wasting time talking while Edmontonians are feeling threatened?

**Mr. Shandro:** Well, we have and we will continue to be able to provide these supports to municipalities, Mr. Speaker, and to work with agencies to be able to address some of the issues that we see in particular with our urbans and our major urbans like Calgary and Edmonton. It makes sense that those who are directly responsible for the safety of users, like the transit operators and the cities that they operate in, take the needed steps for that safety. Just as the province doesn't direct the day-to-day operations of police, the province doesn't direct the daily work of municipal peace officers who work for the municipalities.

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

#### Lethbridge Northern Irrigation District Water Supply

**Mr. Schow:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last week the Lethbridge Northern irrigation district was set to begin diverting water off the Oldman River to ratepayers in preparation for this year's planting season when the irrigation board was informed by Alberta Environment and Parks that water would not be delivered down the canal. I have been speaking to many producers who want to ensure that they will have the water they need for their livestock and crops. Can the Minister of Environment and Parks please update the House on the flow of water in the LNID?

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Minister of Environment and Parks.

**Mr. Jason Nixon:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, thank you to the hon. member as well as the members for Livingstone-Macleod, Lethbridge-East, and the Member for Taber-Warner for their tireless advocacy on getting water flowing inside the irrigation district for their constituents. I'm happy to report to the House today that two days ago the Piikani First Nation community has agreed to honour all of their water commitments and allow Alberta Environment and Parks to be able to access our headworks on Piikani land. I was on-site yesterday morning with our crews as they started up the headworks. I'm happy to report to you and to the whole House that there is water inside the canals and water on its way downstream to all the user groups.

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

**Mr. Schow:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the minister for that answer. Given the importance of this government's relationship with First Nations and given that the Lethbridge Northern irrigation district's headworks are located on the Piikani reserve and given that the economic opportunity for the Piikani is important, just as it is for the producers in my area: can the minister explain to the House how the partnership with the Piikani nation is being advanced for the benefit of both the producers and the Piikani nation?

**Mr. Jason Nixon:** Mr. Speaker, the Piikani nation is proud to have Alberta Environment and Parks' headworks on the reserve and proud of their relationship with Alberta Environment and Parks to be able to provide water to the irrigation district. That said, the Piikani have been asking for multiple governments to be able to have a bilateral process to address environmental, economic, and cultural concerns when it comes to the overall operation of the Oldman dam. I'm proud to report that two days ago Chief Grier and

all of Piikani council and Alberta Environment and Parks came to an agreement on that bilateral process, that has the Piikani honouring their water commitments and making sure that we can move together in partnership to be able to provide that water.

**The Speaker:** The hon. member.

**Mr. Schow:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker and again to the minister for the answer. Given that access to water this time of year is vitally important so farmers can begin planting and given that over 750 head of cattle also depend on water from the LNID to sustain them through the summer and given that agriculture is one of Alberta's most important industries, especially in the south: can the Minister of Environment and Parks tell this House just how important a partnership in long-term prosperity with the Piikani is for producers?

**Mr. Jason Nixon:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. This partnership provides water into an irrigation district that provides water for 750,000 cows, over 200,000 irrigated acres inside that portion of the province. It is the lifeblood of agriculture in southern Alberta, and we cannot do it without our strong partnership with the Piikani. It's unfortunate that former governments have not supported that partnership or built that partnership, but this government has been dedicated to a long-term relationship with the Piikani. It's working. It's why water is flowing downstream, and we're going to continue to be committed to making sure we can share our prosperity.

## 2:20 Métis Settlements Governance and Funding

**Mr. Feehan:** In 2021 this UCP government passed the Metis Settlements Amendment Act without consultation, imposing a requirement to obtain the unanimous consent of all eight settlements to access settlement money. Alberta doesn't require this extraordinary threshold of any other democratically elected body. Members of the Metis Settlements General Council are joining us here today in the gallery, so to the minister: why has this government chosen to hamstring the Métis settlements by effectively blocking their access to essential funding?

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Minister of Indigenous Relations.

**Mr. Wilson:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. We did do changes to modernize the 30-year-old legislation to bring us to our shared goals of settlement autonomy and self-sufficiency while keeping the principles of the original act, preserving the land for the Métis people. There was a future fund set up, and it's coming to an end. There was \$140 million in there at one time. The fund has now been drained to under \$30 million. My changes remove the minister's veto power, giving more autonomy to the settlements. It also requires eight of the eight settlements to approve it, and this is going to increase the accountability and make sure that all the settlements have a say in any future expenditure. The NDP failed to make this change, and the result is a lack . . .

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Member for Edmonton-Rutherford.

**Mr. Feehan:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that we have seen the devastating impact of government neglect and lack of funding for essential services in many Indigenous communities and given that the Métis settlements require access to funding to provide basic services to families in their communities, is the minister willing to guarantee that he will ensure that the Métis settlements will be able to provide essential services such as the delivery of clean drinking water to their members?

**Mr. Wilson:** Mr. Speaker, the settlements, like, can apply for grants through the provincial government, as municipalities do, and I have a long list of grants I can go through that they have applied for for roads and water services. The intent is to leave the Métis settlements, put them in control of their own destiny. We want them to be independent, successful, and competitive. The changes will increase their council responsibilities to charge for services such as service and roads, reduce the cost and size of governments, reduce the role of the minister in the settlements, and put them in charge of their own destiny.

**Mr. Feehan:** Given that after hamstringing the Métis settlements' ability to access funds through this government's amendments to the Metis Settlements Act, the minister moved the Métis settlements land registry and the Metis Settlements Appeal Tribunal out of the MSGC's building, and given that this is depriving the MSGC of badly needed rental income, can the minister explain why he decided to strip the MSGC of these sources of rental income at a time when the MSGC is already suffering financial hardship at the hands of the UCP?

**The Speaker:** The hon. minister.

**Mr. Wilson:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. What we've done is – we've always been asked the difference between a hand up and handouts. What we are allowing is: this is that hand up. [interjections] We made sure that when we set up the AIOC, the Alberta Indigenous Opportunities Corporation, the Métis settlements were included in that, and we have several large corporations that . . . [interjections]

**The Speaker:** Order. Order.

I just want to provide caution. The standing orders and the *House of Commons Procedure and Practice* have much to say about bringing members of the gallery into the debate. I appreciate their presence here today, and I appreciate them being brought, but it's important that they're not brought into the debate.

The hon. member.

**Mr. Wilson:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Unlike the members opposite, we want to empower the Métis settlements being in charge of their own destiny, not what they want to see, what's best for them, and that's why we've set up the AIOC to give them that opportunity to participate in these larger adventures out there, and there are several that are going to be coming their way.

## Services for Transgender and Nonbinary Albertans Blood Donation Eligibility

**Member Irwin:** Canada has taken a step forward with how it collects census data, allowing all cisgender, transgender, and nonbinary individuals to report their gender for the first time, and last year more than 100,000 people identified as transgender or nonbinary, including more than 12,000 right here in Alberta. The collection of data is critical, but it's meaningless unless it's followed by substantial action. Can the government of Alberta provide any specific details or initiatives that it will launch as a direct result of having this census data available for the first time? We need specific actions, not empty platitudes.

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Associate Minister of Status of Women.

**Ms Issik:** Thank you very much, and thank you, through you, Mr. Speaker, for the question. It's important. We know that as public policy is designed, data is incredibly important to both understand the issues that you're looking at as you design policies but also to make sure that you can measure your policies after the fact. The data collection, we know, on many fronts is at a point where we can

do much more. We have the technology to do much more, and certainly my department is looking at data collection carefully, as are others.

**Member Irwin:** Given that I hope that this associate minister's interest in data would also apply to race-based data and given that one of the major barriers that trans folks face is access to timely health care, including long wait-lists, lack of physicians, surgeons, psychiatrists, discrimination in the health care system, and blatant transphobia, to the Health minister: at a time when this UCP government is allowing parking lot medicine with ambulances lined up and huge delays in access to health care, how can we possibly trust that your government will do anything to address the significant barriers that queer and trans Albertans face when accessing health care?

**Mr. Copping:** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for the question. We understand that there are going to be some challenges with access, and that's why we are investing in capacity in our health care system. We are putting our money where our mouths are, investing \$600 million this year, \$600 million next year, \$1.8 billion over the entire three-year period, and that's in addition to \$900 million in terms of investment. That includes surgeries for transgender individuals engaged in those surgeries. We are continuing to fund that, as the conversation that I've had with the hon. member in estimates – we are going to provide better access to our system and provide increased capacity for all Albertans.

**Member Irwin:** Given that we're happy on this side of the House to see the news that the federal government is finally lifting the discriminatory blood ban that denied men who have sex with men from donating blood and that the Alberta government has an important role in supporting Canadian Blood Services to ensure accountability, quality, and safety of the national blood system in Alberta, what specific steps will the Health minister take to ensure that all Albertans feel welcome and safe to donate blood? How does he plan to increase blood donations at a time when they're very much needed? Please be specific again, Minister.

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Minister of Health.

**Mr. Copping:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. The hon. member is quite correct. It's critically important to be able to support the work of the Canadian Blood Services so that we can actually – you know, blood: as the saying goes, "It's in You to Give," and we need to support that. I'm happy to take suggestions from the hon. member in terms of how we can improve that and work with my colleagues on this side of the House because this is an important issue. We need to increase the ability of Albertans and support them in donating blood so we can use that to be able to support the health of Albertans.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Calgary-South East has the call.

### Teacher Disciplinary Process and Bill 15

**Mr. Jones:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The vast majority of teachers in this province are upstanding professionals who put the safety and well-being of their students first, but Alberta's current disciplinary system is an outlier compared to those in other provinces. Unsurprisingly, this union-overseeing disciplinary system with clear conflicts of interest has resulted in very few teachers being reprimanded for serious misconduct. To the Minister of Education: aside from the union's clear conflicts of interest, what other factors

contributed to the decision to change the disciplinary body to an independent commissioner to handle misconduct complaints?

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Minister of Health.

**Mr. Copping:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the hon. member for the question. Alberta's government is reforming the teacher discipline process to make the education system safer for students, their families, and for teachers. This includes creating the Alberta teaching profession commission and appointing a commissioner to oversee conduct and competency complaints for all teachers and teacher leaders equally. Bill 15 will ensure that the entire teaching profession is protected by bringing all teachers and teacher leaders under one reformed disciplinary process, no matter who they work for. This will bring Alberta in line with other jurisdictions and regulated professions such as nurses.

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

**Mr. Jones:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker and to the minister for his answer. Given that there have been questions about how the new system will change the authority and powers of school districts, the union, and the ministry and given that regardless of the disciplinary body there is a need for a transparent correctional process when a teacher is found guilty of an offence, once again to the minister: how does Bill 15 change the abilities, process, and level of oversight by the ministry?

2:30

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Minister of Health.

**Mr. Copping:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thanks again to the member. The minister will retain current authorities under the Education Act, including the authority to appoint panel members, as is currently the case. The significant changes here are that rather than three different bodies overseeing discipline, the commissioner will oversee the process regardless of whether the teacher or teacher leader is an ATA member. The registrar will now be responsible for the intake of all complaints, and the commissioner will investigate them.

**The Speaker:** The hon. member.

**Mr. Jones:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker and again to the minister. Given that this change came about due to concerns and complaints from parents and students about the union's leniency with teachers accused of misconduct and given that our government is committed to supporting children and parents, could the minister point out how the old system has failed parents and students through a real-life example?

**The Speaker:** The Minister of Health.

**Mr. Copping:** Thanks again, Mr. Speaker. The most significant example would be the case of Michael Gregory. Complaints of physical and emotional abuse were filed against Gregory in 2006. The ATA investigated, and his certificate was suspended for only two years. Then in 2021 over 20 former students came forward with allegations of physical and sexual abuse and misconduct. In December 2021 senior ATA staff claimed that the ATA had done nothing wrong in 2006 and reiterated their belief that the ATA should not have reported the evidence of child abuse to police. That is one of the examples that shows that change is needed, and we are making this happen.

### Provincial Campground and Park Fees

**Mr. Schmidt:** Mr. Speaker, families across Alberta are starting to plan their summer camping trips and are looking to book one of the beautiful sites in our province. Camping has always been an accessible activity for families, but with the job losses we saw over the pandemic plus the skyrocketing cost of living, it's now more important than ever that Alberta families have access to this affordable option. However, affordability for families does not seem to be a priority for this government, who raised fees once again. To the minister: why is the UCP gouging Alberta families who are simply looking to plan an affordable vacation?

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Minister of Environment and Parks.

**Mr. Jason Nixon:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A simple answer is that we're not, and we did not raise camping fees. The hon. member is wrong.

**Mr. Schmidt:** Given that I'm sure the people of Alberta will not believe anything the minister says and given that this government's proposed fee increases could add upwards of \$150 to a family's two-week summer vacation and given that costs have shot up under this government, from taxes to school fees to insurance to utilities, and that all of these added expenses can mean the difference between a family enjoying a camping trip this summer or having to stay home, will the minister explain to the families deciding if they can afford the additional camping expenses here why the government felt it was appropriate to reach into their pockets to make up for government budgeting mistakes?

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Minister of Environment and Parks.

**Mr. Jason Nixon:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again the hon. member is incorrect, but that's never stopped him before. What I can tell you, though, is that our parks system is up and running this year. Reservation systems are up, and we're anticipating another very, very busy year, and I'm excited to see Albertans go out and enjoy their backyard all across this province, north to south, east to west, where there are a variety of experiences across the almost 500 provincial parks that we have inside this province as well as the 60 per cent of our landscape that is owned by Alberta Environment and Parks as public lands. We're here. We're ready to serve. I hope everybody has a great summer.

**Mr. Schmidt:** Given that this isn't the only attack that the UCP has made on Alberta's families looking to enjoy the great outdoors – we saw a \$90 fee applied to Kananaskis, and users of the area have reported little improvement since the fee was implemented – and given that this government has already broken promises by allowing OHV users off the hook and given that the Alberta Wilderness Association cited these sorts of irresponsible backdoor deals the government put through with their Trails Act as a first step towards privatizing public lands that all Albertans should be able to enjoy, will the minister admit that raising fees on families and giving exemptions to others is a cash grab just to make up for the government's missteps?

**Mr. Jason Nixon:** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member's conspiracy theories never cease to amaze me. Given how far off he was in his first question, saying that there's a new fee when there is not, verifiable inside the budget, I don't see the point in even engaging with him on that anymore. That said, I do want to again, through you, let Albertans know that the parks system is up and running. We're expecting Kananaskis to be busy again this year all across the eastern slopes. There's going to be activity taking place. I hope

Albertans get out and enjoy this backyard, but best of all, those from outside the province are going to be able to come and enjoy this beautiful backyard as well and be able to make our tourism industry money. I'm looking forward to all that.

### Disabled Albertans' Access to Government Services

**Ms Renaud:** When the ministry of social services has ableist practices and policies identified, it's expected that they'll fix them. I have correspondence from CSS stating that a client, not my word, has three days to reply with the document request. If the deadline is missed, the file is closed and labelled abandoned, meaning the person must reapply. People needing help from social services face enormous barriers, from even getting calls, answering e-mails, let alone responding to requests. A delay frequently means that rent can't be paid, groceries can't be purchased as benefits will be impacted. To the minister, any minister: how will you correct these ableist policies?

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

**Mr. Shandro:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and, through you to the member, thank you for the question. It's an important question. We do have a commitment to work with those who are disabled throughout the province, to be able to work with them, get their feedback so we can best make changes to our policies to, as the member said, do our best to be responsive to those who suffer from disabilities to make sure that our policies are continuing to make those – we as the government are making those changes and getting that feedback from the communities. Thank you to the member for raising this issue.

**Ms Renaud:** Given that the Minister for Community and Social Services acknowledged changes to AISH and income support appeal hearings last week, indicating that disabled Albertans would no longer be able to present new information to be considered during an appeal hearing, and given that disabled Albertans do not currently receive accommodation to navigate a very complex and ableist appeal process, to the minister, any minister: please explain how disabled Albertans are supported to receive the best hearing outcome possible when they aren't accommodated with even the basic things or allowed to give the panel new and current information.

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Minister of Justice.

**Mr. Shandro:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. We will always support the most vulnerable throughout the province. That \$1.4 billion: this is the highest AISH in the history of the province. I appreciate the member's question about appeals. I think it is a good question, and I appreciate those questions. After reviewing the AISH program appeal process, the regulation was amended to help ensure that folks with additional information to support their case can continue to work with the department before making an appeal. These amendments open the door for the department to resolve the issues before they move to the appeal stage and avoid putting people through . . .

**The Speaker:** The hon. member.

**Ms Renaud:** Let's try that again. Given that we now know that disabled and low-income Albertans appealing AISH or income supports have not been offered and given accommodations to enable them to receive the fairest hearing possible and given that the time between application and appeal can be very long, with appeals now being booked well into August, will the minister explain how preventing disabled Albertans from presenting new

information about themselves and their lives or providing accommodation for their disability during an appeal hearing makes life better for any of them?

**The Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Justice.

**Mr. Shandro:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker and to the member for the question. The two most important things are for us to make sure that there's a fair, transparent, and consistent process but, second, as well making it easier for AISH recipients. People who are eligible for benefits shouldn't have to use the appeal process to be able to get there. Under the NDP the appeals process was chaotic, and policy was rarely followed. We now have established clear roles, and every Albertan will get a fair appeal. We'll continue to be the social safety net for the vulnerable and support them in their lives.

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Member for Vermilion-Lloydminster-Wainwright.

### Postsecondary Tuition Fees and Student Financial Aid

**Mr. Rowswell:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Alberta 2030: building skills for jobs strategy is a 10-year plan for the postsecondary sector and the first in over 15 years. The strategy aims to lead Canada in providing world-class postsecondary experiences and credentials. Our students have expressed concerns about the rising cost of tuition, especially throughout the pandemic, where jobs were less accessible than before. To the Minister of Advanced Education: what student aid supports exist, and how are students' debts being managed, considering students in Alberta are living on tight budgets?

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Minister of Advanced Education.

**Mr. Nicolaides:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. A good opportunity to inform the House, of course, of the variety of supports that exist and that are available for postsecondary students. In fact, in this budget alone there's \$167 million allocated specifically for student aid. More specifically, it's about \$108 million that's available in scholarships and awards and approximately \$59 million that's available in nonrepayable grants and bursaries. I think Alberta's government firmly believes that all students should have access to the financial support that they need in order to access postsecondary education.

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Member for Vermilion-Lloydminster-Wainwright.

**Mr. Rowswell:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that tuition and affordability affect accessibility to postsecondary education and given that the UCP government is keen on expanding access and strengthening student experience on campus, to the same minister: what do you say to students and parents who feel that budget cuts to the postsecondary institutions will engender tuition hikes, which only limit accessibility to postsecondary education, and what limitations have been put on raising tuition costs?

**The Speaker:** The hon. minister.

2:40

**Mr. Nicolaides:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, one of the pieces that's available as it relates to tuition policy, of course, is a cap on tuition. A cap exists to ensure that tuition increases remain within a consistent level. That policy has ensured that tuition in Alberta remains incredibly competitive. Tuition in Alberta today remains below the national average. Any Albertan can look up that

information on Stats Canada. As well, in other areas, as I mentioned a moment ago, we provide additional support in student financial assistance.

**The Speaker:** The hon. member.

**Mr. Rowswell:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that one of the key goals of the Alberta 2030 strategy is to encourage postsecondary institutions to be financially self-sufficient and self-sustainable and given that students contribute to institutions' sustainability through their tuition and fees, to the same minister: what do you say to students and parents who are skeptical about investing additional funds to maintain sustainability of their institutions to help ensure the quality of their education and diversification of the Alberta economy?

**Mr. Nicolaides:** Well, Mr. Speaker, we're providing \$171 million in funding to postsecondary institutions over the next three years. That's going under the banner of a targeted enrolment initiative. Those funds will go to expand spaces in very particular high-demand programs. We, in fact, have just received submissions back from our postsecondary institutions about how many spaces they can create and in what programs. We'll be scoring and evaluating those proposals over the coming weeks and be in a position to more publicly communicate which institutions will be the beneficiaries of the targeted enrolment funds in the coming months.

**The Speaker:** Hon. members, that concludes the time allotted for Oral Question Period.

In 30 seconds or less we will return to the remainder of Members' Statements.

### Members' Statements

(continued)

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Calgary-South East has a statement to make.

### Government Policies and Economic Recovery

**Mr. Jones:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With a balanced budget, the lowest taxes, and the fastest growing economy in the country, it is safe to say that Alberta is back. Everywhere you look, optimism is abounding about Alberta's economic future, and United Conservatives have launched their new website, [albertaisback.ca](http://albertaisback.ca), to help share the good news with Albertans. Investors are choosing Alberta again, with companies like Amazon, Dow, Northern Petrochemical, Walmart, HBO, and more investing billions of dollars in landmark projects across our province. You can learn more about these exciting investments at [albertaisback.ca](http://albertaisback.ca).

We are keeping our promises: cutting taxes for job creators from 12 per cent to 8 per cent, scrapping the job-killing NDP carbon tax, and investing more than \$20 billion in infrastructure to build roads, bridges, schools, and hospitals for Albertans. In fact, we made 374 promises to Albertans in the last election, and so far we have delivered on 88 per cent of them, with more exciting news to come. You can track our campaign promises at [albertaisback.ca](http://albertaisback.ca).

We are fighting for a fair deal for Albertans by holding a successful equalization referendum, creating an Alberta Parole Board, and establishing a provincial Chief Firearms Officer. You can learn more about what we are doing to stand up for Alberta's autonomy at [albertaisback.ca](http://albertaisback.ca).

We are protecting education choice, getting woke politics out of classrooms, creating a curriculum that will set our kids up for success, and ending the egregious conflict of interest that allows the

ATA to investigate misconduct against its own members. You can find more about our education work at [albertaisback.ca](http://albertaisback.ca).

Here are some more highlights: 80,000 new businesses started in the last year, 145,000 jobs created since 2021, the highest farm cash receipts ever, the most oil and gas drilling ever, \$1 billion in new film and television productions, and record venture capital investment. Mr. Speaker, Alberta is back, and Alberta's future is bright. Alberta is moving forward. We will not stop or go back to failed NDP policies that kill jobs and investment. Visit [albertaisback.ca](http://albertaisback.ca) to find out more.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Edmonton-South.

### Government Record

**Mr. Dang:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Under the UCP government the future of families living in Alberta is in jeopardy. Young families are thinking of leaving this province due to the horrible and racist curriculum. Others are tired of waiting for affordable and quality child care while their cost of living continues to soar. It's clear that this UCP government is more in touch with those who frequent sky palaces than families and young people who worry about what their next month's insurance bill will be. Families see clearly that this government has the wrong vision for Alberta.

Instead of promoting a province that is diverse and welcoming to all, we see the government attack LGBTQ2S-plus youth. Instead of promoting a province that would excel at innovation and research, the government attacks and defunds our advanced education. These attacks on health care workers, teachers, postsecondary students and staff, not to mention the public service more broadly, during a global pandemic nonetheless have made Albertans feel that they cannot trust and cannot support this UCP government.

This government isn't focused on jobs. They aren't focused on the soaring cost of living or real impacts to Alberta families. Instead, they're focused on their wealthy friends and donors. We need a government that will step up and stand up for those we serve. We need to create a province that has a diverse and green economy. We need to create a province with communities and supports that work for everybody. We need to create a province that attracts young people. We need a government focused on the priorities that matter to Albertans, not to wealthy friends and donors. It's time for the UCP to get out of the way so we can start building an Alberta that works for everybody, an Alberta that works for families, and an Alberta that works for the people that actually live in this province.

Thank you.

### Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Leduc-Beaumont.

**Mr. Rutherford:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The current Ombudsman and Public Interest Commissioner, Marianne Ryan, who has served in these roles for almost five years, will be retiring in June. It is not anticipated that a successor will be in place by this time, and the Standing Committee on Legislative Offices has recommended to the Lieutenant Governor in Council that Peter Sherstan be appointed Acting Ombudsman and Acting Public Interest Commissioner until such time as a replacement is appointed. This recommendation is reflected in the committee's report that I am tabling today.

### Introduction of Bills

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Athabasca-Barrhead-Westlock.

### Bill 206 Prohibiting Ownership of Agricultural Lands (Pension Plans and Trust Corporations) Act

**Mr. van Dijken:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to introduce a bill, Bill 206, Prohibiting Ownership of Agricultural Lands (Pension Plans and Trust Corporations) Act.

The availability and ownership of agricultural land for use by individual farmers and ranchers is important and is the foundation of our sustainable food production industry. As well, ownership of agricultural land by individuals is paramount in keeping our rural Alberta communities strong. Bill 206 aims to enable the long-term success and sustainability of our agriculture industry, preserve our food security, and, above all, protect the culture and well-being of our rural Alberta communities.

Mr. Speaker, with that, I move first reading of Bill 206.

[Motion carried; Bill 206 read a first time]

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Leduc-Beaumont.

### Bill 207 Traffic Safety (Tow Truck Warning Lamps) Amendment Act, 2022

**Mr. Rutherford:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to introduce Bill 207, the Traffic Safety (Tow Truck Warning Lamps) Amendment Act, 2022.

The purpose of this bill is to increase the visibility of tow trucks and to make it safer for those operating their tow trucks. They're often in dangerous weather conditions and road conditions, and this is simply, Mr. Speaker, to increase the level of safety and ensure that they can get home to their families at the end of the day.

With that, I move first reading of Bill 207.

[Motion carried; Bill 207 read a first time]

**The Speaker:** We are at points – correction; there were no points of order today, so you all get a gold star.

Ordres du jour.

2:50

### Orders of the Day Government Bills and Orders Third Reading

#### Bill 12 Trustee Act

[Debate adjourned April 27: Ms Ganley speaking]

**The Speaker:** Hon. members, are there others? The hon. the Minister of Justice and Solicitor General.

**Mr. Shandro:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to be here today to speak to third reading of Bill 12, the Trustee Act, which will make it . . .

**The Speaker:** I'm sorry. The hon. the Minister of Justice and Solicitor General is the sponsor of the bill and it was moved on his behalf, which equates to the hon. minister providing a second reading speech. I'm sure he'll have much more opportunity to provide his remarks at Committee of the Whole or if the opposition . . .

**Some Hon. Members:** This is third.

**The Speaker:** Yeah. Correction: Mr. Rutherford, the hon. Member for Leduc-Beaumont, moved . . .



**Mr. McIver:** Point of order.

**The Speaker:** I apologize and withdraw for the use of a name.

The hon. member moved it on behalf of the minister, and as such the conclusion is that your speech has been given at third on behalf. You are able to close debate, as you have identified, or – you never know – perhaps the opposition will move an amendment on which you could speak to then.

The hon. Member for Calgary-Bhullar-McCall.

**Mr. Sabir:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise to speak to the third reading of Bill 12. I do not have any amendment to move, just to clarify.

[The Deputy Speaker in the chair]

I'm pleased to see that the government is bringing forward this important piece of legislation. This piece of legislation is largely based on the work of the Uniform Law Conference of Canada, their Uniform Trustee Act, and based on that, the Alberta Law Reform Institute initiated consultation, worked on that, proposed some variation. My understanding is, after reading the bill, attending the tech briefing, that this bill closely follows the recommendations made by the Alberta Law Reform Institute in their report of 2017. I think it's important that we have a trust legislation that is up to date. Although there were minor changes that have been made to trust legislation at different times, our legislation is still based largely on the 1893 English statutes. This one is the first comprehensive review of that act.

It makes some important changes. For instance, it clarifies the powers of trustee. It clarifies rules around investment of trust property. It also proposes a new standard of care for professional and institutional trustees, which is a really good thing because those corporations, those banks ought to be held to a higher standard because of their professional expertise. It also clarifies certain powers for the court to intervene where trust instrument is not clear and provides directions so that the trust instrument and the intention of the trust can be carried out as smoothly as possible. Then it contains rules around communication and reporting to the trustee also, very clear rules that will help trustees know what their responsibilities are, what their obligations are, and, again, help us with the smooth administration of the trust.

While this legislation closely follows the Alberta Law Reform Institute, there are certain exceptions, a certain few recommendations that were not included. I hope that when the minister gets up to close debate, he can share some rationale why those recommendations were not accepted.

Other than that, when we talk about giving courts more roles and power and authority to help with the administration of trusts, I think we also need to make sure that courts have all the resources they need for these additional roles and this additional authority. In the last three budgets the UCP government has made almost \$200 million worth of cuts to the Justice department alone. We've been hearing that they will hire 50 prosecutors; still there are not enough prosecutors because of the pressure put on by COVID-19 and Jordan delays. We are seeing many cases at risk of being tossed out because of those statutory requirements that offences be prosecuted within a certain time. Those are, I guess, concerns that if we are asking courts to do more work, we should also be making sure that courts have all the resources that they need to carry out their functions so Albertans will be able to get justice and have access to the courts in a timely fashion.

In short, we are in support of this piece of legislation, and I thank the government and the minister for bringing forward this thoughtful piece of legislation. With that, I will cede my time.

Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Are there others to join the debate on Bill 12 in third reading?

Seeing none, I will ask the hon. Minister of Justice to close debate.

**Mr. Shandro:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I'm pleased to close debate on Bill 12, the Trustee Act, which will make it more efficient to manage trusts and lessen the need for Albertans to be able to or to have to go to court.

Now, as we've said before, it's the government's responsibility to continually revise and reform legislation to meet the needs of the modern world and the needs of Albertans. Let's remember that this is a process which started, as the hon. member had mentioned, beginning with the Uniform Law Conference of Canada almost a decade ago and then the work that the Alberta Law Reform Institute had done for years after that to be able to get their report to government, back in 2017, to provide their advice on how the uniform act that was provided by the Uniform Law Conference of Canada – to be able to make those suggestions into an Alberta-specific suggestion to the Legislature and to government at the time, because this was back in 2017, considering some of the very specific practices that professionals use in Alberta and what's in the current Trustee Act and how we can continue with some of those practices. They did provide that report in 2017, which leads us to the 87 of the 90 recommendations which have been accepted in this draft.

Now, before I continue, I'd like to just summarize what was presented at yesterday's third reading. If passed, the new Trustee Act would then replace the existing legislation, which is significantly outdated. We're talking about mid-Victorian legislation that is out of date and focused mostly on trusts in wills. The new Trustee Act, as proposed here in Bill 12, would clarify the roles of trustees and their administrative powers; outline specific processes so that in many instances trustees and beneficiaries don't have to go to court all the time; set out clear provisions as well to support and improve the day-to-day functioning of trusts; and, last, provide a basis for trusts that don't have extensive terms or that don't cover off all of the situations the provisions apply to while making sure that people can still set their own terms.

3:00

Madam Speaker, as was mentioned yesterday by colleagues, Bill 12 has nothing to do with a Henson trust. That was one of the questions that we had from members opposite. Bill 12 also does not affect a person's eligibility for government benefits such as the AISH program. As a reminder from yesterday, I would also like to make it clear that Bill 12 adopts, as I said, 87 of the 90 recommendations that we received from the Alberta Law Reform Institute. The three remaining, that weren't accepted, were not adopted because they were minor housekeeping provisions.

For example, one of the recommendations from ALRI, the Alberta Law Reform Institute – I'm talking about recommendation 11, in particular – was about the definition for "represented adult." The recommendation was not adopted as the term that's used here in Bill 12 because that term that's used in Bill 12 is "incapacitated person." Now, using the term "represented adult" would have been inconsistent with definitions that we already have in the Adult Guardianship and Trusteeship Act and the Public Trustee Act.

Another question was about exceptions with this legislation. Madam Speaker, it's important to understand the purpose of this legislation and how it operates. Bill 12 provides that the trust itself prevails over any contrary provision of the act except to the extent that the act provides otherwise. Now, the purpose of the legislation is to provide rules for

when a trust instrument doesn't contain an applicable provision. Accordingly, with the exception of a limited number of specific provisions in the act, a trust instrument prevails over the act. When the act does prevail over a trust, it is because the mandatory provisions in the act embody a rule of such importance that it shouldn't be able to be displaced by the person setting up the trust, that there isn't an opportunity for that in particular very important rule to be – well, not contracted out, because it's a trust, but contracted out in the legislation. The mandatory provisions relate to such matters as the power of the court to appoint, to remove, or to reinstate a trustee.

Madam Speaker, Bill 12 replaces the existing Trustee Act and improves trust management as a whole, and it does this by setting clear provisions to support and improve day-to-day functioning of all trusts. All of the provisions apply to all forms of a trust. There are no specific provisions that apply to only certain types of trusts. Therefore, real estate investment trusts are generally a type of trust to which the act applies.

There was also a question about the public trustee and the impact on AISH. First, let's be clear: Bill 12 applies to trusts only. Second, Bill 12 does not apply to fees or to AISH. Third, the public trustee is governed by the Public Trustee Act. To that end, any question about the possible implementation of technology that might facilitate any changes as a result of Bill 12 is not relevant. Madam Speaker, that reference is about the public guardian and trustee office and has nothing to do with the Trustee Act.

Similarly, any questions about outstanding recommendations from the office of the Auditor General are also not relevant. The OAG's recommendations relate to the office of the public guardian and trustee and, again, don't have anything to do with Bill 12.

Also, during debate there was also a question regarding how much court time the government is estimating this act will either save or add. The Alberta Court of Queen's Bench hears matters that are related to trusts either as a civil court matter or as a Surrogate Court matter; that is to say, those related to estates of those who are deceased. While there are no specific stats that we have on trust matters alone, over the last six years there were, on average, 46,000 matters that started in civil court each year. Almost 46,500 matters

started in the Surrogate Court each year. The Court of Queen's Bench supports initiatives that would divert matters from the court when other, more appropriate avenues are available. But make no mistake; Bill 12 will divert many trust matters out of the court system.

Madam Speaker, another question that was raised was about additional government consultation. There was widespread support for the report from interest groups, including the Society of Trust and Estate Planners, charities, the legal profession, and other professionals that are involved in or experts in trusts, and our proposed changes are consistent with what stakeholders like those have supported in the institute's report.

Madam Speaker, ultimately, Bill 12 would let trustees better serve beneficiaries and better manage trusts. We also believe that the experience of dealing with trusts, whether as a trustee, whether as a member of the legal community, a trusts and estates organization, the courts, an Albertan who's trying to set up a trust or as a beneficiary, should be as efficient as possible, should save money and reduce the need to have to go to court all the time.

This is exactly what these changes to the Trustee Act accomplish. They will improve all aspects of managing trusts and trust laws in our province. They also reflect our government's commitment to modernizing trust laws in our province, and I hope members on both sides of the House will support this legislation.

I ask that we move third reading of Bill 12. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

[Motion carried; Bill 12 read a third time]

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. Associate Minister of Status of Women.

**Ms Issik:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. We've gotten a lot of great work done this week in the Chamber, and I move to adjourn the Assembly until 1:30 p.m. on Monday, May 2.

[Motion carried; the Assembly adjourned at 3:08 p.m.]

## **Bill Status Report for the 30th Legislature - 3rd Session (2022)**

**Activity to Thursday, April 28, 2022**

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

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

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

### **Bill 1 — Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Recognition Act (\$) (Kenney)**

First Reading — 4 (*Feb. 22, 2022 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 94-97 (*Mar. 7, 2022 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 140-44 (*Mar. 10, 2022 aft., passed*)

Third Reading — 230-34 (*Mar. 17, 2022 aft., passed*)

Royal Assent — (*Mar. 24, 2022 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2022 cQ-0.7 ]

### **Bill 2 — Financial Statutes Amendment Act, 2022 (\$) (Toews)**

First Reading — 110 (*Mar. 8, 2022 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 312-19 (*Mar. 22, 2022 aft.*), 391-95 (*Mar. 23, 2022 eve.*), 484-90 (*Mar. 29, 2022 aft.*), 565-71 (*Mar. 30, 2022 eve.*), 599-604 (*Apr. 19, 2022 morn.*), 661 (*Apr. 19, 2022 eve., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 699-707 (*Apr. 20, 2022 aft., passed*)

Third Reading — 715-24 (*Apr. 20, 2022 eve., passed*)

Royal Assent — 767 (*Apr. 21, 2022 aft.*) [Comes into force on various dates; SA 2022 c4 ]

### **Bill 3 — Special Days Act (Orr)**

First Reading — 124 (*Mar. 9, 2022 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 327 (*Mar. 22, 2022 eve., adjourned*), 343-45 (*Mar. 22, 2022 eve., adjourned*), 346 (*Mar. 22, 2022 eve., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 375-78 (*Mar. 23, 2022 aft.*), 379 (*Mar. 23, 2022 eve., passed*)

Third Reading — 389-91 (*Mar. 23, 2022 eve., passed*)

Royal Assent — (*Mar. 24, 2022 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force March 24, 2022; SA 2022 cS-16.3 ]

### **Bill 4 — Municipal Government (Face Mask and Proof of COVID-19 Vaccination Bylaws) Amendment Act, 2022 (McIver)**

First Reading — 110 (*Mar. 8, 2022 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 163-77 (*Mar. 14, 2022 aft.*), 360-66 (*Mar. 23, 2022 aft.*), 396 (*Mar. 23, 2022 eve., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 519-23 (*Mar. 29, 2022 eve., passed*)

Third Reading — 571-79 (*Mar. 30, 2022 eve., passed on division*)

Royal Assent — 767 (*Apr. 21, 2022 aft.*) [Comes into force April 21, 2022; SA 2022 c5 ]

### **Bill 5 — Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2022 (Sawhney)**

First Reading — 202 (*Mar. 16, 2022 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 319-26 (*Mar. 22, 2022 aft.*), 469-71 (*Mar. 28, 2022 eve., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 523-24 (*Mar. 29, 2022 eve., passed*)

Third Reading — 537-43 (*Mar. 30, 2022 aft., passed*)

Royal Assent — 767 (*Apr. 21, 2022 aft.*) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2022 c6 ]

**Bill 6 — Emblems of Alberta Amendment Act, 2022 (Orr)**

First Reading — 228 (*Mar. 17, 2022 aft., passed*)  
Second Reading — 502-505 (*Mar. 29, 2022 aft.*), 513-14 (*Mar. 29, 2022 eve., passed*)  
Committee of the Whole — 562-65 (*Mar. 30, 2022 eve., passed*)  
Third Reading — 594-98 (*Mar. 31, 2022 aft., passed*)  
Royal Assent — 767 (*Apr. 21, 2022 aft.*) [Comes into force April 21, 2022; SA 2022 c3 ]

**Bill 7 — Appropriation Act, 2022 (\$) (Toews)**

First Reading — 272-73 (*Mar. 21, 2022 eve., passed*)  
Second Reading — 310-11 (*Mar. 22, 2022 aft., adjourned*), 327-36 (*Mar. 22, 2022 eve., adjourned*), 345 (*Mar. 22, 2022 eve., passed on division*)  
Committee of the Whole — 366-75 (*Mar. 23, 2022 aft.*), (*Mar. 23, 2022 eve.*), 395 (*Mar. 23, 2022 eve., passed on division*)  
Third Reading — 411-14 (*Mar. 24, 2022 aft.*), 419 (*Mar. 24, 2022 aft., passed on division*)  
Royal Assent — (*Mar. 24, 2022 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force March 24, 2022; c1 ]

**Bill 8 — Appropriation (Supplementary Supply) Act, 2022 (\$) (Toews)**

First Reading — 297 (*Mar. 21, 2022 eve., passed*)  
Second Reading — 311-12 (*Mar. 22, 2022 aft., adjourned*), 336-43 (*Mar. 22, 2022 eve., adjourned*), 345-46 (*Mar. 22, 2022 eve., passed on division*)  
Committee of the Whole — 379-89 (*Mar. 23, 2022 eve.*), 395 (*Mar. 23, 2022 eve., passed on division*)  
Third Reading — 414-19 (*Mar. 24, 2022 aft.*), 419 (*Mar. 24, 2022 aft., passed on division*)  
Royal Assent — (*Mar. 24, 2022 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force March 24, 2022; c2 ]

**Bill 9 — Public's Right to Know Act (Shandro)**

First Reading — 309 (*Mar. 22, 2022 aft., passed*)  
Second Reading — 447-54 (*Mar. 28, 2022 aft.*), 455-63 (*Mar. 28, 2022 eve.*), 643-51 (*Apr. 19, 2022 eve., passed*)  
Committee of the Whole — 707-13 (*Apr. 20, 2022 aft., passed*)  
Third Reading — 745-49 (*Apr. 21, 2022 morn., passed*)  
Royal Assent — 767 (*Apr. 21, 2022 aft.*) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2022 cP-47 ]

**Bill 10 — Health Professions (Protecting Women and Girls) Amendment Act, 2022 (Aheer)**

First Reading — 408 (*Mar. 24, 2022 aft., passed*)  
Second Reading — 463-69 (*Mar. 28, 2022 eve.*), 543-50 (*Mar. 30, 2022 aft.*), 604-10 (*Apr. 19, 2022 morn.*), 661 (*Apr. 19, 2022 eve., passed*)

**Bill 11 — Continuing Care Act (Copping)**

First Reading — 432 (*Mar. 28, 2022 aft., passed*)  
Second Reading — 550-56 (*Mar. 30, 2022 aft.*), 634-42 (*Apr. 19, 2022 aft.*), 663-72 (*Apr. 20, 2022 morn.*), 865-71 (*Apr. 26, 2022 aft.*), 873-79 (*Apr. 26, 2022 eve.*), 891-97 (*Apr. 27, 2022 morn.*), 936-42 (*Apr. 27, 2022 aft., adjourned on amendment*)

**Bill 12 — Trustee Act (Shandro)**

First Reading — 483 (*Mar. 29, 2022 aft., passed*)  
Second Reading — 651-61 (*Apr. 19, 2022 eve.*), 749-54 (*Apr. 21, 2022 morn., passed*)  
Committee of the Whole — 858-65 (*Apr. 26, 2022 aft., passed*)  
Third Reading — 903-09 (*Apr. 27, 2022 morn.*), 988-90 (*Apr. 28, 2022 aft., passed*)

**Bill 13 — Financial Innovation Act (Toews)**

First Reading — 535 (*Mar. 30, 2022 aft., passed*)  
Second Reading — 624-33 (*Apr. 19, 2022 aft.*), 724-27 (*Apr. 20, 2022 eve.*), 807 (*Apr. 25, 2022 eve.*), 850-58 (*Apr. 26, 2022 aft., passed*)  
Committee of the Whole — 925-36 (*Apr. 27, 2022 aft., passed*)  
Third Reading — 943-48 (*Apr. 27, 2022 eve., passed*)

**Bill 14 — Provincial Court (Sexual Awareness Training) Amendment Act, 2022 (Issik)**

First Reading — 535-36 (*Mar. 30, 2022 aft., passed*)  
Second Reading — 672-81 (*Apr. 20, 2022 morn.*), 727-33 (*Apr. 20, 2022 eve., passed*)

**Bill 15 — Education (Reforming Teacher Profession Discipline) Amendment Act, 2022 (LaGrange)**

First Reading — 592 (*Mar. 31, 2022 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 767-76 (*Apr. 21, 2022 aft.*), 825-32 (*Apr. 26, 2022 morn.*), 884-89 (*Apr. 26, 2022 eve.*), 923-25 (*Apr. 27, 2022 aft., passed*)

**Bill 16 — Insurance Amendment Act, 2022 (Toews)**

First Reading — 622 (*Apr. 19, 2022 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 807-808 (*Apr. 25, 2022 eve.*), 832-37 (*Apr. 26, 2022 morn.*), 879-84 (*Apr. 26, 2022 eve.*), 897-903 (*Apr. 27, 2022 morn., adjourned*)

**Bill 17 — Labour Statutes Amendment Act, 2022 (Madu)**

First Reading — 766 (*Apr. 21, 2022 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 968-75 (*Apr. 28, 2022 morn., adjourned*)

**Bill 18 — Utility Commodity Rebate Act (Nally)**

First Reading — 693-94 (*Apr. 20, 2022 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 735-45 (*Apr. 21, 2022 morn.*), 807 (*Apr. 25, 2022 eve., passed on division*)

Committee of the Whole — 808-22 (*Apr. 25, 2022 eve., passed*)

Third Reading — 822-23 (*Apr. 25, 2022 eve., passed*)

**Bill 19 — Condominium Property Amendment Act, 2022 (Glubish)**

First Reading — 766 (*Apr. 21, 2022 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 948-58 (*Apr. 27, 2022 eve.*), 959-68 (*Apr. 28, 2022 morn., adjourned*)

**Bill 20 — Justice Statutes Amendment Act, 2022 (Shandro)**

First Reading — 766 (*Apr. 21, 2022 aft., passed*)

**Bill 21 — Red Tape Reduction Statutes Amendment Act, 2022 (Fir)**

First Reading — 788 (*Apr. 25, 2022 aft., passed*)

**Bill 22 — Electricity Statutes (Modernizing Alberta's Electricity Grid) Amendment Act, 2022 (Nally)**

First Reading — 922 (*Apr. 27, 2022 aft., passed*)

**Bill 201 — Eastern Slopes Protection Act (Notley)**

First Reading — 156 (*Mar. 14, 2022 aft., passed; referred to the Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills*), 432 (*Mar. 28, 2022 aft., committee recommendation that Bill not proceed reported to Assembly*), 789-95 (*Apr. 25, 2022 aft., debate on concurrence motion; not proceeded with*)

**Bill 202 — Public Health (Transparency and Accountability) Amendment Act, 2022 (Loewen)**

First Reading — 110 (*Mar. 8, 2022 aft., passed; referred to the Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills*), 309 (*Mar. 22, 2022 aft., committee recommendation that Bill proceed reported to Assembly*), 433-40 (*Mar. 28, 2022 aft., debate on concurrence motion; proceeded with*)

**Bill 203 — Technology Innovation and Alberta Venture Fund Act (Bilous)**

First Reading — 228 (*Mar. 17, 2022 aft., passed; referred to the Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills*), 693 (*Apr. 20, 2022 aft., committee recommendation that Bill not proceed reported to Assembly*), 796-801 (*Apr. 25, 2022 aft., debate on concurrence motion; not proceeded with*)

**Bill 204 — Anti-Racism Act (Shepherd)**

First Reading — 408 (*Mar. 24, 2022 aft., passed*), 788 (*Apr. 25, 2022 aft., committee recommendation that Bill not proceed reported to Assembly; debate on motion on concurrence to take place Monday, May 2, 2022*)

**Bill 205 — Human Tissue and Organ Donation (Mandatory Referral) Amendment Act, 2022 (Sigurdson, RJ)**

First Reading — 592 (*Mar. 31, 2022 aft., passed; referred to the Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills*), 922 (*Apr. 27, 2022 aft., committee recommendation that Bill proceed reported to Assembly; debate on motion on concurrence to take place on Monday, May 2, 2022*)

**Bill 206 — Prohibiting Ownership of Agricultural Lands (Pension Plans and Trust Corporations) Act (van Dijken)**

First Reading — 988 (*Apr. 28, 2022 aft., passed; referred to the Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills*)

**Bill 207 — Traffic Safety (Tow Truck Warning Lamps) Amendment Act, 2022 (Rutherford)**

First Reading — 988 (*Apr. 28, 2022 aft., passed; referred to the Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills*)

**Bill Pr1 — Calgary Young Men's Christian Association Amendment Act, 2022 (Jones)**

First Reading — 309 (*Mar. 22, 2022 aft., passed; referred to the Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills*)

**Bill Pr2 — Calgary Heritage Authority Amendment Act, 2022 (Nixon, JP)**

First Reading — 309 (*Mar. 22, 2022 aft., passed; referred to the Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills*)

## Table of Contents

Statement by the Speaker	
Members' 10th Anniversary of Election.....	977
Introduction of Guests .....	977
Members' Statements	
National Day of Mourning .....	977, 978
Teacher Disciplinary Process and Bill 15.....	977
Métis Settlements Governance .....	978
Hydrogen Week.....	978
Eid al-Fitr .....	979
Affordable Housing.....	979
Government Policies and Economic Recovery.....	987
Government Record.....	988
Oral Question Period	
Health Care System .....	979
Health Care System Capacity .....	980
Cost of Living and Wage Growth.....	980
Insurance Premium Costs .....	981
Hydrogen Strategy.....	982
AgriStability Program and Avian Influenza .....	982
Public Transit User Safety.....	983
Lethbridge Northern Irrigation District Water Supply.....	983
Métis Settlements Governance and Funding .....	984
Services for Transgender and Nonbinary Albertans Blood Donation Eligibility.....	984
Teacher Disciplinary Process and Bill 15.....	985
Provincial Campground and Park Fees.....	986
Disabled Albertans' Access to Government Services.....	986
Postsecondary Tuition Fees and Student Financial Aid.....	987
Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees .....	988
Introduction of Bills	
Bill 206 Prohibiting Ownership of Agricultural Lands (Pension Plans and Trust Corporations) Act .....	988
Bill 207 Traffic Safety (Tow Truck Warning Lamps) Amendment Act, 2022.....	988
Orders of the Day .....	988
Government Bills and Orders	
Third Reading	
Bill 12 Trustee Act.....	988

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