



Province of Alberta

The 31st Legislature  
First Session

# Alberta Hansard

Thursday afternoon, March 21, 2024

Day 29

The Honourable Nathan M. Cooper, Speaker

# Legislative Assembly of Alberta The 31st Legislature

First Session

Cooper, Hon. Nathan M., Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills (UC), Speaker  
Pitt, Angela D., Airdrie-East (UC), Deputy Speaker and Chair of Committees  
van Dijken, Glenn, Athabasca-Barrhead-Westlock (UC), Deputy Chair of Committees

Al-Guneid, Nagwan, Calgary-Glenmore (NDP)  
Amery, Hon. Mickey K., ECA, KC, Calgary-Cross (UC),  
Deputy Government House Leader  
Arcand-Paul, Brooks, Edmonton-West Henday (NDP)  
Armstrong-Homeniuk, Hon. Jackie, ECA,  
Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville (UC)  
Batten, Diana M.B., Calgary-Acadia (NDP)  
Boitchenko, Andrew, Drayton Valley-Devon (UC)  
Boparai, Parmeet Singh, Calgary-Falconridge (NDP)  
Bouchard, Eric, Calgary-Lougheed (UC)  
Brar, Gurinder, Calgary-North East (NDP)  
Calahoo Stonehouse, Jodi, Edmonton-Rutherford (NDP)  
Ceci, Hon. Joe, ECA, Calgary-Buffalo (NDP)  
Chapman, Amanda, Calgary-Beddington (NDP)  
Cyr, Scott J., Bonnyville-Cold Lake-St. Paul (UC)  
Dach, Lorne, Edmonton-McClung (NDP)  
de Jonge, Chantelle, Chestermere-Strathmore (UC)  
Deol, Jasvir, Edmonton-Meadows (NDP)  
Dreeshen, Hon. Devin, ECA, Innisfail-Sylvan Lake (UC)  
Dyck, Nolan B., Grande Prairie (UC)  
Eggen, Hon. David, ECA, Edmonton-North West (NDP),  
Official Opposition Whip  
Ellingson, Court, Calgary-Foothills (NDP)  
Ellis, Hon. Mike, ECA, Calgary-West (UC),  
Deputy Premier  
Elmeligi, Sarah, Banff-Kananaskis (NDP)  
Eremenko, Janet, Calgary-Currie (NDP)  
Fir, Hon. Tanya, ECA, Calgary-Peigan (UC)  
Ganley, Hon. Kathleen T., ECA, Calgary-Mountain View (NDP)  
Getson, Shane C., Lac Ste. Anne-Parkland (UC),  
Government Whip  
Glubish, Hon. Nate, ECA, Strathcona-Sherwood Park (UC)  
Goehring, Nicole, Edmonton-Castle Downs (NDP)  
Gray, Hon. Christina, ECA, Edmonton-Mill Woods (NDP),  
Official Opposition House Leader  
Guthrie, Hon. Peter F., ECA, Airdrie-Cochrane (UC)  
Haji, Sharif, Edmonton-Decore (NDP)  
Hayter, Julia K.U., Calgary-Edgemont (NDP)  
Hoffman, Hon. Sarah, ECA, Edmonton-Glenora (NDP)  
Horner, Hon. Nate S., ECA, Drumheller-Stettler (UC)  
Hoyle, Rhiannon, Edmonton-South (NDP)  
Hunter, Hon. Grant R., ECA, Taber-Warner (UC)  
Ip, Nathan, Edmonton-South West (NDP)  
Irwin, Janis, Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood (NDP)  
Jean, Hon. Brian Michael, ECA, KC, Fort McMurray-Lac La Biche  
(UC)  
Johnson, Jennifer, Lacombe-Ponoka (Ind)  
Jones, Hon. Matt, ECA, Calgary-South East (UC)  
Kasawski, Kyle, Sherwood Park (NDP)  
Kayande, Samir, Calgary-Elbow (NDP),  
Official Opposition Deputy Assistant Whip  
LaGrange, Hon. Adriana, ECA, Red Deer-North (UC)  
Loewen, Hon. Todd, ECA, Central Peace-Notley (UC)  
Long, Martin M., West Yellowhead (UC)  
Lovely, Jacqueline, Camrose (UC)  
Loyola, Rod, Edmonton-Ellerslie (NDP)  
Lunty, Brandon G., Leduc-Beaumont (UC)  
McDougall, Myles, Calgary-Fish Creek (UC)  
McIver, Hon. Ric, ECA, Calgary-Hays (UC)  
Metz, Luanne, Calgary-Varsity (NDP)  
Nally, Hon. Dale, ECA, Morinville-St. Albert (UC)  
Neudorf, Hon. Nathan T., ECA, Lethbridge-East (UC)  
Nicolaidis, Hon. Demetrios, ECA, Calgary-Bow (UC)  
Nixon, Hon. Jason, ECA, Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House-Sundre  
(UC)  
Notley, Hon. Rachel, ECA, Edmonton-Strathcona (NDP),  
Leader of the Official Opposition  
Pancholi, Rakhi, Edmonton-Whitemud (NDP)  
Petrovic, Chelsae, Livingstone-Macleod (UC)  
Phillips, Hon. Shannon, ECA, Lethbridge-West (NDP)  
Renaud, Marie F., St. Albert (NDP)  
Rowswell, Garth, Vermilion-Lloydminster-Wainwright (UC)  
Sabir, Hon. Irfan, ECA, Calgary-Bhullar-McCall (NDP),  
Official Opposition Deputy House Leader  
Sawhney, Hon. Rajan, ECA, Calgary-North West (UC)  
Schmidt, Hon. Marlin, ECA, Edmonton-Gold Bar (NDP)  
Schow, Hon. Joseph R., ECA, Cardston-Siksika (UC),  
Government House Leader  
Schulz, Hon. Rebecca, ECA, Calgary-Shaw (UC)  
Shepherd, David, Edmonton-City Centre (NDP)  
Sigurdson, Hon. Lori, ECA, Edmonton-Riverview (NDP)  
Sigurdson, Hon. R.J., ECA, Highwood (UC)  
Sinclair, Scott, Lesser Slave Lake (UC)  
Singh, Peter, Calgary-East (UC)  
Smith, Hon. Danielle, ECA, Brooks-Medicine Hat (UC),  
Premier  
Stephan, Jason, Red Deer-South (UC)  
Sweet, Heather, Edmonton-Manning (NDP),  
Official Opposition Assistant Whip  
Tejada, Lizette, Calgary-Klein (NDP)  
Turton, Hon. Searle, ECA, Spruce Grove-Stony Plain (UC)  
Wiebe, Ron, Grande Prairie-Wapiti (UC)  
Williams, Hon. Dan D.A., ECA, Peace River (UC),  
Deputy Government House Leader  
Wilson, Hon. Rick D., ECA, Maskwacis-Wetaskiwin (UC)  
Wright, Justin, Cypress-Medicine Hat (UC)  
Wright, Peggy K., Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview (NDP)  
Yao, Tany, Fort McMurray-Wood Buffalo (UC),  
Deputy Government Whip  
Yaseen, Hon. Muhammad, ECA, Calgary-North (UC)

## Party standings:

United Conservative: 28

New Democrat: 38

Independent: 1

## Officers and Officials of the Legislative Assembly

Shannon Dean, KC, Clerk	Nancy Robert, Clerk of <i>Journals</i> and Committees	Terry Langley, Sergeant-at-Arms
Teri Cherkewich, Law Clerk		Paul Link, Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms
Trafton Koenig, Senior Parliamentary Counsel	Janet Schwegel, Director of Parliamentary Programs	Gareth Scott, Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms
Philip Massolin, Clerk Assistant and Director of House Services	Amanda LeBlanc, Deputy Editor of <i>Alberta Hansard</i>	Lang Bawn, Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms

### **Executive Council**

Danielle Smith	Premier, President of Executive Council, Minister of Intergovernmental Relations
Mike Ellis	Deputy Premier, Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Services
Mickey Amery	Minister of Justice
Devin Dreeshen	Minister of Transportation and Economic Corridors
Tanya Fir	Minister of Arts, Culture and Status of Women
Nate Glubish	Minister of Technology and Innovation
Pete Guthrie	Minister of Infrastructure
Nate Horner	President of Treasury Board and Minister of Finance
Brian Jean	Minister of Energy and Minerals
Matt Jones	Minister of Jobs, Economy and Trade
Adriana LaGrange	Minister of Health
Todd Loewen	Minister of Forestry and Parks
Ric McIver	Minister of Municipal Affairs
Dale Nally	Minister of Service Alberta and Red Tape Reduction
Nathan Neudorf	Minister of Affordability and Utilities
Demetrios Nicolaides	Minister of Education
Jason Nixon	Minister of Seniors, Community and Social Services
Rajan Sawhney	Minister of Advanced Education
Joseph Schow	Minister of Tourism and Sport
Rebecca Schulz	Minister of Environment and Protected Areas
R.J. Sigurdson	Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation
Searle Turton	Minister of Children and Family Services
Dan Williams	Minister of Mental Health and Addiction
Rick Wilson	Minister of Indigenous Relations
Muhammad Yaseen	Minister of Immigration and Multiculturalism

### **Parliamentary Secretaries**

Jackie Armstrong-Homeniuk	Parliamentary Secretary for Settlement Services and Ukrainian Evacuees
Andrew Boitchenko	Parliamentary Secretary for Indigenous Relations
Chantelle de Jonge	Parliamentary Secretary for Affordability and Utilities
Shane Getson	Parliamentary Secretary for Economic Corridor Development
Grant Hunter	Parliamentary Secretary for Agrifood Development
Martin Long	Parliamentary Secretary for Rural Health
Chelsae Petrovic	Parliamentary Secretary for Health Workforce Engagement
Scott Sinclair	Parliamentary Secretary for Indigenous Policing
Tany Yao	Parliamentary Secretary for Small Business and Northern Development

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

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

Chair: Mr. Yao  
Deputy Chair: Mr. Rowswell

Boitchenko  
Bouchard  
Brar  
Hunter  
Kasawski  
Kayande  
Wiebe

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

Chair: Mr. Getson  
Deputy Chair: Mr. Loyola

Boparai  
Cyr  
de Jonge  
Elmeligi  
Hoyle  
Stephan  
Wright, J.  
Yao

### **Select Special Conflicts of Interest Act Review Committee**

Chair: Mr. Getson  
Deputy Chair: Mr. Long

Arcand-Paul  
Ellingson  
Hunter  
Ip  
Lovely  
Rowswell  
Sabir  
Wright, J.

### **Select Special Ethics Commissioner and Chief Electoral Officer Search Committee**

Chair: Mr. Yao  
Deputy Chair: Mr. van Dijken

Dach  
Dyck  
Irwin  
Petrovic  
Pitt  
Sabir  
Stephan  
Wright, P.

### **Standing Committee on Families and Communities**

Chair: Ms Lovely  
Deputy Chair: Ms Goehring

Batten  
Boitchenko  
Long  
Lunty  
Metz  
Petrovic  
Singh  
Tejada

### **Standing Committee on Legislative Offices**

Chair: Mr. Getson  
Deputy Chair: Mr. van Dijken

Chapman  
Dyck  
Eremenko  
Hunter  
Long  
Renaud  
Shepherd  
Sinclair

### **Special Standing Committee on Members' Services**

Chair: Mr. Cooper  
Deputy Chair: Mr. Getson

Eggen  
Gray  
Long  
Phillips  
Rowswell  
Sabir  
Singh  
Yao

### **Standing Committee on Private Bills**

Chair: Ms Pitt  
Deputy Chair: Mr. Stephan

Bouchard  
Ceci  
Deol  
Dyck  
Hayter  
Petrovic  
Sigurdson, L.  
Wright, J.

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

Chair: Mr. Yao  
Deputy Chair: Ms Armstrong-Homeniuk

Arcand-Paul  
Ceci  
Cyr  
Dach  
Gray  
Johnson  
Stephan  
Wiebe

### **Standing Committee on Public Accounts**

Chair: Mr. Sabir  
Deputy Chair: Mr. Rowswell

Armstrong-Homeniuk  
de Jonge  
Haji  
Lovely  
Lunty  
McDougall  
Renaud  
Schmidt

### **Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship**

Chair: Mr. Rowswell  
Deputy Chair: Mr. Schmidt

Al-Guneid  
Armstrong-Homeniuk  
Dyck  
Eggen  
Hunter  
McDougall  
Sinclair  
Sweet

## Legislative Assembly of Alberta

1:30 p.m.

Thursday, March 21, 2024

[The Speaker in the chair]

### Prayers

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

Hon. members, it being the last sitting day of the week, we will now be led in the singing of *God Save the King* by Nicole Williams.

### Hon. Members:

God save our gracious King,  
Long live our noble King,  
God save the King!  
Send him victorious,  
Happy and glorious,  
Long to reign over us,  
God save the King!

**The Speaker:** Please be seated.

### Introduction of Guests

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Lac Ste. Anne-Parkland has a school group to introduce.

**Mr. Getson:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you and through you the amazing kids from my constituency of Lac Ste. Anne-Parkland, better known as God's country, the Grasmere K to 7 school. Please rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly. These kids are truly strong and free.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Seniors, Community and Social Services.

**Mr. Nixon:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly a great group of grade 6ers from the Charlotte Small elementary school, one of the beautiful new elementary schools built in Clearwater county. I ask them all to rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of this Assembly.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Sherwood Park.

**Mr. Kasawski:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to all the members of the Assembly I wish to introduce the wonderful students from Woodbridge Farms elementary school in Sherwood Park. Please rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

**Ms Pitt:** Mr. Speaker, it's my honour to introduce to you and through to all the members of the Assembly some guests in the gallery: Mr. Sandeep Singh Dhelwan and Jaspreet Saggu. Sandeep runs a nonprofit in Edmonton, the Edmonton welfare association, an organization that does a number of volunteer initiatives, from cleaning parks to providing free meals. Jaspreet Saggu is an accomplished business owner in the Edmonton area. Please rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of this Assembly.

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

**Mr. Sinclair:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour to rise today and introduce to you and through you a good friend of mine, Jon Warren from Royal Camp Services. Jon's company, Royal Camp Services, has several agreements with some Indigenous communities in my region. I'm proud to have him here and very excited to introduce him to our newest parliamentary secretary from Livingstone-Macleod.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview.

**Ms Wright:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to introduce to you and through you and to the Assembly two guests who are here today from our constituency office: Karina Lo, who is a social work student with us, and Rayna Haythorne, constituency assistant extraordinaire. If they could please both stand up and rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of this House.

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

**Ms Armstrong-Homeniuk:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you and through you to all the members of the Assembly my guest, Lev Rinhel. When Lev is not working as a mechanic, he volunteers his time assisting with settlement of Ukrainian evacuees and new immigrants to Alberta communities. Please rise, Lev, and receive the warm traditional welcome of the Assembly.

**The Speaker:** Now the hon. the Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation.

**Mr. Sigurdson:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm happy to rise today and introduce to you and through you and to all members of the Assembly 20 young farmers from across the province participating in the Alberta Canola Leaders event here in Edmonton. I had the pleasure of meeting with these leadership candidates at their banquet last night. I can tell you that the future of agriculture is in great hands. I'd ask that they all please rise and receive the warm welcome of this Assembly.

**The Speaker:** Does the hon. Member for Lac Ste. Anne-Parkland have another introduction or just the school group today?

**Mr. Getson:** Not that I'm aware of, but I could try.

**The Speaker:** No; it's okay.

## Members' Statements

### Health System Reform

**Mr. Shepherd:** Mr. Speaker, last week when Blair Canniff arrived at what he expected to be a care home in Leduc, he might have had a little song running through his head.

Well, since I left the Royal Alex,  
I found a new place to dwell.  
Just a little cruise down highway 2  
at the Travelodge motel.  
Got no support there,  
can't fit my wheelchair,  
but the UCP says it's all right.

Motel medicine, Mr. Speaker. For those of us with suspicious minds there are a lot of questions to be asked. I have to say that lately it's always been on my mind. The ministers of Health and of community and social services both insist they didn't sign the

contract with this shady social service agency. Well, then, who did? We know these folks weren't fleecing for free, so how did they get on a list of providers at a hospital? How long have they been on it? How many other contracts like this exist? How many others have been housed in hotels? The ministers refused to say. They don't want to answer the question. It seems they're all shook up. And, well, they should be.

After all, it was only two years ago that the Premier was musing about housing seniors needing long-term care in hotels. It was only in November that she announced refocusing of the health care system that aims to sell off public long-term and continuing care facilities and engage in a massive expansion of new private contracts in every corner of the system. And we know how that's going to go.

Just look at this government's massive failure with privatization of lab services under DynaLife, a plan three years in the making that failed in less than one, leaving Albertans on the hook for \$96 million. Mr. Speaker, when it comes to improving health care, the UCP ain't never caught a rabbit. Any claim that they're high class: well, that is just a lie. Under the UCP it's been a race to the bottom with Albertans left waiting for care in parking lots, hallways, and motels. A whole lot of conversation, little real action to end the chaos that they've created. It's time we mark their plan and this government: return to sender.

**The Speaker:** Well, the hon. Member for Lesser Slave Lake used to reside right in that place and had the propensity to singing as well. It was out of order when he did it, just as it was today. However, I do appreciate a good member statement with some level of cleverness. It was still out of order.

The hon. Member for Fort McMurray-Wood Buffalo.

### International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

**Mr. Yao:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today marks the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, a day where Albertans and people from around the world unite against racism. Each year on March 21 we observe the anniversary of a tragic event in South Africa, the Sharpeville massacre, where police fatally shot 69 individuals during a peaceful protest against apartheid. Today is an opportunity to address the specific challenges still faced by many people in Alberta and to explore ways to promote racial equity, inclusion, and greater cultural awareness. Alberta's government categorically condemns all forms of race-based hate, discrimination, and prejudice and will recommit its pledge to continue to work on making Alberta a safer, more welcoming place for all.

Input and recommendations from the Alberta Anti-Racism Advisory Council, the Premier's Council on Multiculturalism, and the newly inaugurated Alberta Black Advisory Council have played a critical role in shaping the province's antiracism policy. Through initiatives like the antiracism grant we are supporting grassroots efforts while implementing recommendations from the Alberta antiracism action plan, where 26 actions have already been completed across 25 ministries. We created the Alberta security infrastructure program grant, which funds security assessments, training, equipment, immediate response, and security infrastructure improvements to facilities serving communities or identifiable groups at risk of hate- or bias-motivated crimes or incidents.

While we have made great strides in combatting racism, we understand there's still more to do to ensure that marginalized people feel safe. So today, on the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, let us recommit to fighting

racism, discrimination, and hatred in all of its forms and to build strong, welcoming, and inclusive communities. In Alberta we have no tolerance for racial discrimination.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

### International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

**Member Loyola:** Mr. Speaker, the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination serves as a vital reminder of the ongoing struggle against systemic racism, prejudice, and the remnants of Eurocentric colonization on Indigenous people worldwide. By dedicating a day to raise awareness and promote dialogue about racial discrimination, societies can come together to acknowledge the deep-seated inequalities that persist in our lives and in our communities and work towards meaningful change. This day provides an opportunity for individuals and communities to reflect on their own biases, challenge discriminatory attitudes, and advocate for inclusive policies that foster equality, equity, and diversity.

1:40

Historically we as Indigenous and racialized people were taught that our ways had no value, and in some cases a cultural genocide ensued. But to every Indigenous and racialized child I say: "You are priceless. You and your culture cannot be silenced. Be proud of your people and their history."

This day underscores the importance of solidarity and collective action in combatting racism and working for change. It highlights the interconnectedness of different communities and the shared responsibility to stand against discrimination in all its forms as many diverse cultures and people but as one against the historical injustices of our past. Through education, activism, and policy reform this day inspires individuals and institutions to take concrete steps towards building a more just and equitable world where every person, regardless of ethnicity or culture, can thrive and contribute to society without fear of prejudice or discrimination.

Let's all continue to do our part and strengthen our communities together.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Lac St. Anne-Parkland has a statement to make.

### Homelessness Initiatives

**Mr. Getson:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This United Conservative government is doing more than any other government before to support the homeless, improve public safety, and make sure that the most vulnerable in our society get access to the services they need to live successful, happy lives. Unfortunately, the NDP opposition has made it very clear that they don't feel the same way. Instead of getting vulnerable Albertans the help they need, the NDP opposition, or should I say the party of tents, would rather have people brutalized by dangerous gangs, made victims of the environment or lethal drugs run rampant, or, worse yet, freeze and burn to death in encampments.

Just look at their socialist comrades in British Columbia, that flooded the streets with taxpayer-funded drugs, emboldened cartels and organized crime, defunded the police, and demoralized their hard-working citizens. This is the legacy of the NDP, and if they had it their way, this would be the future for Albertans. But, Mr. Speaker, the United Conservative government is standing firm against the normalized chaos that the NDP so desperately want. Jasper Ave will not become East Hastings.

Let's be clear, Mr. Speaker. This is a direct attack on the well-being of the most vulnerable in our society. It's a sick socialist ideology that would rather see trafficking minors, exploding propane heaters, total victimization by dangerous gangs, unsanitary conditions, including over 4,000 used needles, than keeping people safe and warm in the winter. The opposition strategy to attack the incredible social service organizations that work day in and day out to support those in need is an attack to our Indigenous partners who are working tirelessly to provide shelter, cultural services as well. It's an attack on our law enforcement officers who risk their lives every day to keep Albertans safe. Most of all, it's an attack on the dignity of the Albertans who the NDP would rather have in an abandoned tent and a photo op than to really take care of.

Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House we will not be distracted by their dangerous socialist ideology that puts lives at risk. Our navigation and support centre is helping hundreds of people access life-changing service. The centre has connected hundreds of people with their ID services, financial benefits, medical help, recovery supports, shelter, and housing. It's a compassionate approach that's making amazing progress and changing the way of our communities and our lives.

We're not the party of tents. We're going to do the right thing, not just for a photo op. [interjections]

**The Speaker:** Order. Order.

### Hospital Construction

**Mr. Deol:** Mr. Speaker, the Premier announced today that she is sending more help to try to bail out the Minister of Health, but Albertans need her to do a lot more than that. Even though the minister can't seem to get a single shovel in the ground to build a hospital, she sure has dug herself quite the hole.

The south Edmonton hospital they campaigned on is just one example. They scrapped that, and now the Premier wants people to drive to Red Deer instead. The UCP highway medicine scheme is a bad idea; so is putting more pressure on the hospital in Red Deer. The UCP's P3 means that there's no guarantee the current hospital will be able to keep functioning for the people of Red Deer, never mind people from Edmonton, too.

But it doesn't matter to this government if their schemes don't make sense just as long as they can pass the buck. Look at this week's news. People are being discharged from the hospital and being shipped down the highway to motel medicine, except in this UCP world "medicine" means a bathroom you can't use and the same fast food from time to time.

Mr. Speaker, Albertans deserve a government that is focused on making sure there are enough hospital beds and properly paid, rested, and respected health care workers to provide the care that these patients need and deserve. The UCP has failed these Albertans, but this side of the House will never stop standing up for them.

Thank you.

### Teachers

**Ms Wright:** Mr. Speaker, for many students today is the second-last day of school before spring break, so I thought it would be a good time as a teacher and as a member of a family with many teachers to rise and provide some clarity about what it is that teachers actually do. Teachers don't want to take over the role of parents; instead, they want to collaborate with them and help parents understand what their kids are learning and how they are doing. That might look like a classroom tour, a weekly newsletter, a school zone announcement, a daily e-mail, a parent information

night, an after-school meeting, or a quick conversation over the fence.

Teachers are professionals bound by Alberta's Education Act, a code of conduct, the teaching quality standard, the curriculum, and by division and board policies and regulations. Teachers teach curriculum; they take learning outcomes and create and plan lessons for 20, 25, 30 or more students, often without enough resources. They think about how to reach everyone in an increasingly complex classroom. They attend PD sessions and classes so they can learn new things and apply that learning in their practice. They see the affordability crisis on a daily basis and make sure there's food available for kids and to support their school's families.

They create classrooms that are safe and welcoming. They partner with colleagues. They differentiate instruction, meet kids where they are, and guide them forward. They supervise before and after school, soothe hurt feelings, bring in rocking chairs and carpets with ABCs on them, read books out loud, and share stories about what it was like when they were kids. They have an endless supply of Band-Aids and know the miracle of a Baggie filled with ice.

They assess, provide feedback, spend time after everyone has gone getting things set up for the next day, often taking a suitcase of student work home to review. They administer formal assessments that can take a half-hour or more per student, try to mitigate gaps, and then have frank talks with parents. And when it's report card time, they communicate through one mark and a few words what's challenging, what's learned, and what will be next. That is what teachers do.

### Introduction of Bills

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

#### Bill 13

#### Real Property Governance Act

**Mr. Guthrie:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm honoured to rise today to request leave to introduce Bill 13, the Real Property Governance Act.

If passed, this legislation will ensure that public buildings and lands are managed consistently and transparently across government to the benefit of all Albertans. It will also create a centralized inventory of government-owned land and buildings to help the government resource its programs more strategically.

I hereby move first reading of the Real Property Governance Act.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[Motion carried; Bill 13 read a first time]

### Tabling Returns and Reports

**The Speaker:** Are there tablings? The hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood.

**Member Irwin:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to table the requisite number of copies of another comprehensive study that's entitled *Actually, Rent Control is Great: Revisiting Ontario's Experience, the Supply of Housing, and Security of Tenure*. I would urge all members to read all the tablings that I've tabled in this House as they provide a lot of information.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Bonnyville-Cold Lake-St. Paul.

**Mr. Cyr:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm tabling this copy of a petition that has been done by one of my local constituents. He's

very passionate about Minnie Lake campground, and I look forward to seeing some movement on this.

**Mr. Haji:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to table an article from CBC which was referenced in yesterday's statement by the Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood. The title of the article is Homeless People in Edmonton Are Dying at 8 Times the Rate as Pre-pandemic.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Edmonton-McClung has a tabling.

**Mr. Dach:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to table the five requisite copies of a notice of a screening of a documentary film called *Stolen Time*. It's a riveting feature on the private care, long-term care facilities neglecting their vulnerable charges as they reap huge profits.

### Tablings to the Clerk

**The Clerk:** I wish to advise the Assembly that the following document was deposited with the office of the Clerk: on behalf of hon. Mr. Jones, Minister of Jobs, Economy and Trade, responses to questions raised during the Ministry of Jobs, Economy and Trade 2024-25 main estimates consideration on March 18, 2024.

1:50

### Oral Question Period

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Official Opposition House Leader has question 1.

### Hospital Discharge Policies

**Ms Gray:** Mr. Speaker, the UCP's latest scheme involves dependence on highway health care and motel medicine. In one case Blair Canniff had a stroke, was partially paralyzed, and discharged to a roadside motel with little to no access to care nor an accessible washroom. Then the Minister of Health accused him of lying about it. To the Premier: will she finally and unequivocally apologize to Mr. Canniff for what happened to him, including the unfounded accusations by her Health minister?

**Mr. Schow:** Point of order.

**The Speaker:** A point of order is noted at 1:51.  
The hon. the Premier has risen.

**Ms Smith:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We made an announcement last week for a reason. As we were going through looking at some of the bottlenecks that we have in our acute-care system, one of the things that we became aware of was that there are 1,500 people at any given time who need an alternative level of care. It's the reason why we have to build up more mental health beds, more addiction treatment beds. We have to build up more homeless supports for convalescence, and we also have to build up more continuing care. This is exactly the reason why we have got a crossministry working group addressing this issue, because we have to make sure that those acute-care beds are available for those with acute needs.

**Ms Gray:** Mr. Speaker, they are the government. They are the ministers and the Premier. They are responsible. Mr. Canniff was treated in a hospital. The Health minister herself said that AHS staff, quote, followed their proper procedures. End quote. Global News has confirmed that people are still getting medical care in a motel. To the Health minister. This is her file. Will she table the

discharge procedures that led to motel medicine? Will she tell us how many Albertans have been discharged this way, and where are they now?

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Premier.

**Ms Smith:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are 536 people a day discharged. Now, many of them are able to discharge back into their home under their own convalescence. There are many who are discharged in the care of families, and there are others who are discharged in the care of patients. There are a very small number of individuals with highly complex needs, with mental health, addiction, homelessness, and other issues. We have now got a crossministry working group identifying an appropriate place with an appropriate partner so that they can be treated the appropriate way.

**Ms Gray:** Mr. Speaker, Albertans want answers. They want hospitals built now, and they want the UCP to stop turning public health care into horrifying roadside drop-offs. It has now been a week. Can the Premier tell us which minister she's holding responsible? Exactly how many other victims of UCP motel medicine are there? How many similar contractors are still on the AHS discharge list? How many more motels are involved? How long has she known this has been going on, and will the Premier take responsibility for setting this in motion when she endorsed motel medicine during her leadership?

**Ms Smith:** Mr. Speaker, we knew that as we were going through looking at the bottleneck that we have in our acute-care hospitals, we had to identify some of the reasons for that bottleneck, and the reason is that we need to build more purpose-built facilities for those with complex needs. Our acute-care hospitals need to be there for acute-care needs. If somebody shows up for an emergency treatment, if somebody needs emergency surgery, if someone needs cancer treatment, if someone needs surgical treatment: those beds are highly valued. We cannot be having those kinds of care treatment put off because we don't have the right patient in the right place.

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

**Mr. Sabir:** Mr. Speaker, Albertans are concerned about the prospect of motel medicine being inflicted on their loved ones. We know of at least two motels in the Leduc area where this is happening, but neither the Minister of Health nor of seniors seems to know the full scope of motel medicine that is occurring under their watch. So for the countless time can the Premier advise this House exactly how many long-term care patients are currently getting care in motels, and if she doesn't know that, can she commit to tabling that information?

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Premier.

**Ms Smith:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What I can tell the members opposite is that we know that there were 1,547 patients who are in acute-care beds. When that happens and they should be in alternative levels of care, it means that we can't get people in from emergency rooms. It means that we cannot get people into surgical suites. It means that there are delays in surgery. This is the reason why we have a crossministry working group now to identify the appropriate facilities with the appropriate partners so that we can put people in the appropriate place. Some of them have very complex needs, need mental health, addiction, and other types of supports, and that's what we're working on.



**Mr. Sabir:** Mr. Speaker, I know that my constituents are worried about the prospect of motel medicine. They were concerned when the Premier campaigned on placing long-term care patients in motels during her leadership campaign, and they were concerned when this government removed the minimum hours of care from the regulation for continuing care. This time to the minister: what oversight is she providing to those waiting in motel rooms for care? Are they performing site visits, check-ins? Is there any kind of oversight that the minister can share with this House?

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Premier has risen.

**Ms Smith:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are talking about three different things in that one question. The first thing that we are talking about is making sure that we are using our hospital services for hospital use. The second issue that we have is a housing issue. When somebody who has been discharged has very complex needs, we need to make sure that we are supporting them with the appropriate service provider if they've got mental health, addiction, homelessness, or other issues. Then the third aspect is on the issue of continuing care and providing the appropriate level of care. We provide support for 3.62 hours of care for every patient, and the continuing care operators wanted more flexibility.

**Mr. Sabir:** Mr. Speaker, this government's endless attempts to duck responsibility are embarrassing to watch. This government owes it to Albertans to get to the bottom of this and ensure that no one is subjected to this kind of treatment in Alberta's health care. Albertans deserve to know how far this government's motel medicine model has reached. Can the minister confirm how many Calgary area motel rooms have been reserved to be used for motel medicine? Does she know, or does she care?

**Ms Smith:** I can answer that question: zero. This is not an extension of hospital care. What it is is that a patient has been discharged, and as a result they have a housing issue, a mental health issue, an addiction issue, a homelessness issue, and it requires a different type of care, which is why the Minister of Seniors, Community and Social Services will be providing an appropriate type of service provider to match the needs of that particular discharged patient. Those who need hospital care, acute care, will be getting it in hospitals. That's the reason why we need to get alternative level of care patients in the right facility.

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

**Ms Sigurdson:** No Albertan should ever be forced to face motel medicine, and those who have deserve an apology from this government, which, sadly, has not happened. Albertans deserve answers, and since this government clearly doesn't have them or is unwilling to share them, more is needed. Today we've written to the Health Quality Council of Alberta to request that they look into this disturbing situation and ensure that no one ever has to experience motel medicine. Will the Premier join our call for the Health Quality Council to look into this?

**Ms Smith:** Mr. Speaker, I mean, we're already looking into this. This is the reason why we have the crossministry task force. I would say that the members opposite had the opportunity to identify the same issues that we did, that we have 1,500 alternative level of care patients in acute-care beds, which is causing us not to be able to deliver the acute care that people need. Meanwhile we don't have enough of the facilities that are needed to provide the support for mental health, addiction, continuing care. They could have

discovered that years ago, and we would have been miles ahead. They didn't. We are beginning the process of building that out, and that is the reason we're going to continue with that. [interjections]

**The Speaker:** Order. Order.

**Ms Sigurdson:** Yesterday we saw the Minister of Health and the minister of seniors take turns denying responsibility and passing the buck for the unacceptable treatment that Albertans have received under motel medicine. The Minister of Health claimed that the individual chose where they were sent, but we know that they were not told it was a motel room. Is one of these ministers willing to take responsibility for failing this Albertan, and will they start by supporting our call for the Health Quality Council to look into this?

**Ms Smith:** Mr. Speaker, as I've mentioned, we are all taking responsibility for making sure that our acute-care beds are occupied by people who require acute care and making sure that we address appropriate care options for the 1,547 patients on any given day who need an alternative level of care. It's the reason why we are now refocusing Alberta Health Services. It's the reason why we have a crossministry working group that includes the Mental Health and Addiction minister, the Seniors, Community and Social Services minister, the Health minister. We are addressing this issue so that everybody gets the care they need.

2:00

**Ms Sigurdson:** Today the CEO of AHS and the Minister of Health couldn't answer the simple question of whether these motels where patients had been sent had been vetted. This government is trying to pass the buck and failing the Albertans who were promised long-term care but ended up in a Travelodge. The minister didn't know how many AHS patients were receiving care from the agency or sending people to the Leduc Travelodge. A real investigation is needed, not a behind-closed-doors review. Under the Health Quality Council Act the minister can request this. My question is simple: will she?

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Premier has the call.

**Ms Smith:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is foundationally the problem. AHS has a job to do. They run our hospitals. They are supposed to deliver acute care, and then they make a decision to discharge patients, at which point it is now our responsibility through Seniors, Community and Social Services, Mental Health and Addiction, and continuing care to find the appropriate place for that patient to go. That is what we have identified. It's the reason we put together the press conference last week where we said that we are going to be identifying the places and a process to discharge a patient to the appropriate level of care, and we're going to continue doing that.

### Funding for Homeless Supports

**Member Irwin:** Three hundred and two: that's how many unhoused people died in Edmonton in 2023. This is eight times the rate of deaths since before the pandemic, and in the first 78 days of 2024 Boyle Street Community Services received 72 death notifications for people who were experiencing homelessness. That's nearly one person a day, yet we've just learned that Boyle Street and Bissell Centre have lost the critical funding they need to keep their day services open and to keep people alive. The Premier needs to step up and take responsibility. No blame on other orders of government; no excuses. Will she save these life-saving programs?

**Mr. Nixon:** Well, the situation that's taking place on the street because of the drug epidemic is very sad, and this government sympathizes both with the individuals involved, the families that are involved, as well as the homeless providers that work with our government each and every day to help those individuals in that community. That's why we're focused on recovery. I want you to know, Mr. Speaker, that we continue to fund both of the organizations that the hon. member refers to through our community-based organizations, which are funded by the Alberta government to the tune of millions of dollars for both of those organizations put together. We will continue to work with all of our nonprofit providers to be able to provide access to services and, ultimately, help more people to get addiction supports.

**Member Irwin:** I've seen first-hand the incredible work that Bissell Centre and Boyle Street do in the communities that I represent. The day services that they provide are absolutely essential. They offer more than just coffee, meals, and laundry; they offer community, something that's needed more than ever.

Most of the 302 unhoused people who died last year died from drug poisoning. Their deaths were preventable. Front-line workers have been clear: we desperately need harm reduction, housing, and psychological supports along with addiction treatment, all of which can be offered through the programs that are at risk of closing. I'm urging the Minister of Mental Health and Addiction to fund these life-saving programs. Will he?

**Mr. Williams:** Mr. Speaker, the truth is that the tragic loss of life from overdose and the addiction crisis we have was one run rampant in part because of the homeless encampments that were existing in Edmonton. That's why our government took extraordinary steps to take down the encampments and get people into recovery supports through our recovery navigation centre. These are the first steps we need to do to get people into recovery, which is the only solution to an addiction crisis. If you facilitate more addiction, you can expect to see, tragically, more overdoses and more death, and that's something this government will not stand for. [interjections]

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Member Irwin:** I am devastated to report that it's not just in Edmonton where critical services are closing. We've learned that the Hub in Leduc will be closed. It's the only place for unhoused folks to go in that community. And we've just learned that the Red Deer street ties outreach program for youth experiencing homelessness will also be closing after losing provincial funding. This is in the Minister of Health's own backyard. She proudly wears her children-first pin. I am begging her to fund this life-saving program, the only of its kind in the entire Red Deer region. I am begging her to put children first. Minister, step up; lives depend on it.

**Mr. Nixon:** Mr. Speaker, yelling in the Legislature will not help these individuals, but I will tell you what will help these individuals. [interjections]

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

The hon. the Minister of Seniors, Community and Social Services.

**Mr. Nixon:** I will tell you that what will help these individuals is the largest investment in homeless supports in the history of the province, what this government is doing, the most shelter spaces in the history of the province, making sure we have capacity to be able

to make sure that we can connect to recovery, and, most importantly, Mr. Speaker, tearing down dangerous NDP drug-infested encampments that are costing people their lives. No matter how much the opposition yells, we are going to continue to make sure that we help everybody who's facing homelessness in our province.

### Hospital Discharge Policies

(continued)

**Mr. Ellingson:** Mr. Speaker, Albertans who are discharged from the hospital deserve proper care, not this Premier's preferred motel medicine. The Minister of Health and minister of seniors threw each other under the bus yesterday as they both claimed no one was responsible for this mess. But, finally, the minister of seniors said, "we saw the newspaper articles and have taken some action to [ensure] people are safe." So to the minister: has motel medicine been stopped once and for all? If so, how did it happen in the first place?

**Mr. Nixon:** Well, Mr. Speaker, again, to be clear, individuals are not receiving health services in these facilities. These are individuals who have been discharged medically through the Alberta Health Services process and then have re-entered the community. We have come together amongst multiple departments to be able to make sure that AHS has the best list of appropriate service providers in the community.

I want to reiterate to the House, Mr. Speaker: we do not fund the provider that is in question. That said, we have taken steps, including sending the public guardian, to be able to make sure everybody is safe and receiving all of the appropriate services that they should.

**Mr. Ellingson:** Mr. Speaker, given that the Minister of Health says that Alberta Health Services does not accredit this agency, given that the minister of seniors says that his ministry has no relationships with this agency, given that the patients are somehow handed off to this agency from a hospital run by AHS, how is it that this agency could even be recommended to a patient for discharge referral?

**Mr. Nixon:** Mr. Speaker, I think that is an important question, which is why the Premier has put together a task force made up of the department of mental health, my department of community and social services, and the Ministry of Health to be able to make sure that Alberta Health Services has access to the best list of providers that we work with each day that are in the community.

The reality is, obviously, we don't know every person and every organization that works in the nonprofit sector, Mr. Speaker, but we can provide advice to Alberta Health Services going forward on who are the best providers to work with to, again, make sure everybody is safe and receiving services in the community.

**Mr. Ellingson:** You couldn't possibly know every organization that's taking a discharged patient.

Mr. Speaker, given that this Premier said motel medicine is her preferred method of health care in this province, given that she has instructed the Minister of Health and minister of seniors to clear hospitals by any means necessary, given that there is a lack of both hospital beds and long-term care beds in our growing province, what exactly is the plan from this government to ensure discharged patients receive the right care since they failed to do anything more than introduce motel medicine to this province?

**Mr. Nixon:** Mr. Speaker, as the Premier has said today, sadly, underneath the NDP government thousands of people were left in

the wrong beds in hospital. I could think of nothing that would be more inhumane than that, to leave individuals who are done their medical processes to lie on wards in the health care system. We want to be able to make sure those individuals can return to their community, receive the supports that they may need in complex cases, and be able to go on to have productive, healthy, thriving lives in the community. That is the work that we are doing as we make sure that we develop a new continuing care organization to care for all of the vulnerable individuals that need so in that organization.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Calgary-Lougheed is next.

### Health System Reform Public Consultation

**Mr. Bouchard:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last fall our government announced the refocusing of Alberta's health care system that will prioritize comprehensive primary care and empower front-line health care workers in delivering world-class care. As our health care is undergoing the recommended changes and reshaping efforts, Albertans have been invited to participate in the process. Valuable feedback from health care workers, professionals, and the public has been documented from these sessions. Can the Minister of Health please provide an update on how refocusing engagements have been going so far?

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

**Member LaGrange:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for the question. Health care workers, patients, families, caregivers, and community leaders from right across Alberta have been helping to shape the future of health care. This is one of the largest in-person public engagements ever undertaken by Alberta's government. More than 2,500 people have participated in the in-person sessions with an additional 18,000 Albertans providing their feedback through online tools and almost 10,000 participating in virtual town halls. I'm thrilled that Albertans are actively taking part in reshaping our health care system and being part of the historic Chamber.

2:10

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Calgary-Lougheed.

**Mr. Bouchard:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker and to the minister for that answer. Given that front-line health care workers are vital to understanding the current challenges Albertans are facing in regard to wait times and access to care and given that their unique perspective and input is critical to establishing a new, well-rounded health care delivery system, can the same minister explain how the health care workforce is involved in refocusing transition, and how will you ensure that they are properly engaged?

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

**Member LaGrange:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, Alberta's government is committed to engaging with health care workers throughout the refocusing process and afterwards. Alberta Health will ensure to keep conversations going with a variety of future engagement opportunities and visitations. This has to be ongoing. We want to empower front-line workers to help shape a health care system that will continue to meet the needs of Albertans for generations to come. These conversations have brought Albertans together, and we're encouraged by the feedback and enthusiasm for an improved health care system for our province. We now have a parliamentary secretary for health workforce engagement as well. [interjections]

**The Speaker:** Order.

The hon. member.

**Mr. Bouchard:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker and through you to the minister for that answer. Given that there are still many Albertans that would like to attend an engagement session and given that there are many health care professionals who still need to share their thoughts and further given that our province is currently under way in establishing the four specialized organizations of primary care, acute care, continuing care, and mental health and addiction, can the minister provide next steps on this process?

**Member LaGrange:** I'm happy to, Mr. Speaker. Current in-person engagement sessions will wrap up in mid-April, which will conclude a total of 66 in-person engagement sessions from right across the province. As the work to refocus Alberta's health care system continues, new engagement opportunities will be developed for Albertans and front-line workers to continue providing important input and advice. We're on the right path to creating a refocused health care system that works for all Albertans, and we are prepared and delighted to listen to all essential feedback along the way. I've taken part in many of them. They're great.

### Renewable Energy Development

**Dr. Elmeligi:** One of the things I love best about Alberta is its natural beauty. The mountains and the eastern slopes are gorgeous, but there's much more. Every Albertan knows that a patch of native grassland waving in the breeze is hypnotizing, river valleys through prairie coulees stir imaginations, the Alberta badlands draw people from around the world, and the vast boreal forest is resplendent with northern charm. This question may sound fluffy, Mr. Speaker, but so is using pristine viewscapes as a regulatory mechanism. Why does the minister keep telling us that the only viewscapes worth protecting is the eastern slopes?

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Minister of Affordability and Utilities.

**Mr. Neudorf:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for the question. This topic is a topic of conversation around the world. Every jurisdiction has areas that they're proud of and want to make sure that they protect for tourism and to enjoy for generations. That's exactly what we're doing here in Alberta: protecting our majestic Rocky Mountains and those lovely foothills as well as UNESCO world heritage sites. This is what Albertans wanted; this is what we are delivering.

**Dr. Elmeligi:** Well, given that the grasslands and the badlands aren't near the eastern slopes, I guess they're not as beautiful.

Given that the minister claims that these regulations have been developed based on a vertical footprint, another UCP made-up term, given that a pumpjack is around 40 feet tall and a cell tower about 115 feet high, and given that many Albertans look out their window to see more than one pumpjack and maybe even a few industrial smokestacks and given that solar arrays have comparatively little vertical footprint, can the minister explain how pumpjacks and cell towers somehow do not impede viewscapes, or can he admit that this policy just doesn't make sense?

**Mr. Neudorf:** I'm happy to correct the record and correct the members opposite. Visual impact assessments have always been part of our development within Alberta. They will continue to do so. We just set a threshold limit on that for something as tall as the Calgary Tower impeding the view of our majestic Rocky Mountains, Banff national park, and beautiful lakes and surrounding areas. This

is completely reasonable, which is probably why rural municipalities support these kind of initiatives in over 80 per cent.

Thank you very much.

**Dr. Elmeligi:** Well, given that the minister can't really explain these things because beauty is in the eye of the beholder and a pristine viewscape is a measure of everything and nothing at the same time and given that what businesses really value most in development is clear, consistent, transparent regulations and given that the government objectives to achieve net zero are dependent on harnessing renewable, emissions-free energy, can the minister explain how we will reach emission targets without holding Alberta's energy development back and acting as if oil and gas are the only ways to produce energy?

**The Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Affordability and Utilities.

**Mr. Neudorf:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Nothing is clearer than the map document that we released last week. A picture is worth a thousand words. It clarifies for everybody in the industry exactly where those boundaries are and to protect those lovely viewscales. We've always said that renewable energy, both wind and solar, are part of the mixture that we need to get to a carbon-neutral future. So is nuclear. So is biomass. So is geothermal. That's why we're creating regulations that the NDP failed to do under their time, when they just created a train wreck for all of these policies, costing Albertans billions and billions of dollars that we're still paying for and will be paying for for years to come. We're setting the record straight, and we're making a better plan for the future.

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

#### Government-owned Housing Maintenance

**Mr. Haji:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Edmonton-Decore has 605 out of the 10,800 community housing units regulated through the Alberta Housing Act. Almost all government-owned units were built between 1970 and '72. Due to the continued deferred maintenance these units are in extremely bad shape. In Edmonton-Decore the city- and the Civiada-owned units are maintained, but the government-owned housing units require major maintenance. Can the minister explain to Albertans why the UCP has failed to address the major maintenance needed in the government-owned housing stocks across the province?

**Mr. Nixon:** Well, Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, we've seen governments of multiple stripes not take seriously the need to maintain our own affordable housing stock, but not this government. Last year we invested \$115 million to advance capital maintenance and renewal of our own stock to be able to take more units back online and to be able to make sure that our important affordable housing stock can continue to do its job. This upcoming budget, which I hope the hon. member votes for, includes about \$125 million more to be able to go towards capital maintenance and renewal. I am happy to report that every housing authority has supported this budget exactly because of that reason.

**Mr. Haji:** Given that housing adequacy and suitability is measured by the amount of major repairs required by those units and given that residents continually reach out to my office regarding the dire conditions of the units and the maintenance that they need and given that the Alberta Social Housing Corporation owns housing units – in Balwin, 46 units; in Dickinsfield, 134 units; in Delton, 50 units – that are way behind on maintenance, can the minister tell tenants

in these government-owned housing units when the ministry will stop deferring the maintenance?

**Mr. Nixon:** Well, I can, Mr. Speaker. I think the NDP are having trouble listening or they can't pivot from their notes when they do get an answer, but I'll reiterate the answer. This government invested \$115 million in the last fiscal year. In fact, I increased it in the middle of the year as the minister to move forward with capital maintenance and renewal. We have another \$125 million taking place in this year. Unfortunately, the NDP did not do any of that work when they were in government. Again, all the housing providers, including the ones the hon. member refers to, support our budget for this reason, and I sure hope the NDP will vote for that important line item.

**Mr. Haji:** Given that we are not debating the budget and given that the government's 10-year strategic plan includes selling the Alberta Social Housing Corporation owned units and given that this government has been delaying maintenance over the years and given that those Albertans who call these units their home live in poor conditions that will impact their health and well-being, will the minister commit that his government is not planning to sell Alberta Social Housing Corporation owned units?

**Mr. Nixon:** Mr. Speaker, again, the NDP have got to try a little bit harder. I understand that they really need their notes when they're in the Legislature, but I answered the question twice. I'd like to answer it again. Yes, which is why we are investing \$125 million in this budget. I really hope the hon. member will take the time to vote for the budget because it's very important that this money goes forward to continue to fix maintenance, particularly because the NDP, when they were in power, did no maintenance at all for these important organizations that we depend on to house our seniors and other low-income individuals in the province.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Lacombe-Ponoka has a question.

2:20

#### Renewable Fuel Incentives

**Mrs. Johnson:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. World demand for renewable fuels is rising. Generally speaking, biodiesel is produced from oils such as soy, palm, and canola while ethanol is produced from cereals like corn and wheat. Given that Alberta farmers are among the world's largest producers of both canola and wheat and given that overreliance on corn for ethanol is driving up beef production costs and impacting food prices and given that biodiesel is an important additive to our economy, to the minister of agriculture: what is the government of Alberta doing to encourage the production of ethanol and biodiesel using canola and wheat grown right here in Alberta?

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation.

**Mr. Sigurdson:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for that question. It gives us a great chance to highlight how diverse our agricultural industry is. There are great opportunities in the bioindustrial processing area, and we combine that with the fact that – I don't have to tell you – we have the best farmers and ranchers in the world, who have built a strong oilseed and wheat production here in the province. Our government has also incentivized production in this area through our agriprocessing investment tax credit, 12 per cent refundable tax credit on investment over \$10 million. We are players in this space in future.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Lacombe-Ponoka.

**Mrs. Johnson:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that a minimum average of 5 per cent of gasoline must include renewable alcohol or ethanol and a minimum average of 2 per cent of diesel must include biodiesel and given that only two of the 28 approved renewable alcohol fuel and only one of the 23 approved biodiesel providers have their production at an Alberta-based facility and given that the vast majority of these providers are operating outside of Canada, to the minister of environment: how many quality private-sector jobs can be created by supporting Alberta-based renewable fuel production using Alberta-grown crops produced in Alberta's rural communities?

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Minister of Environment and Protected Areas.

**Ms Schulz:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and I do want to thank the member for that important question because this is a great example of how we can absolutely reduce emissions while creating jobs. Dozens of major new liquid biofuels projects have already been announced, creating more than 1,400 jobs and a combined value of over \$2.5 billion. Alberta is better positioned than anywhere in Canada to increase biofuel production, and it will continue to create new jobs. It's not just biodiesel; we can produce renewable natural gas, ethanol, and, hopefully in time, sustainable aviation fuels as well.

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

**Mrs. Johnson:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker and through you to the minister. Given that Alberta's taxpayers are rightfully wary of government boondoggles like the Sturgeon refinery and given that mechanisms like capital-cost tax credits offer less risk than subsidies, corporate welfare, and direct taxpayer investment, to the minister of environment: can Albertans be assured that this government will not directly risk money on renewable fuel production?

**The Speaker:** To the same minister.

**Ms Schulz:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I can assure this House that we won't make the mistakes that past governments have when it comes to picking winners and losers, but we will encourage biofuel investments through practical and effective approaches that, of course, save money and drive future investment. Our TIER system here in Alberta currently incentivizes biofuel and biogas, including landfill gas, diverted organic waste, animal manure, and waste-water projects. For example, under TIER carbon offsets can be generated by using ag waste to produce renewable natural gas. We'll continue to look for ways to support this sector and hard-working Albertans that work within it.

### **Hospital Discharge Policies** (continued)

**Member Tejada:** Another broken promise from this government and a broken health care system this government has a responsibility to fix. Mr. Speaker, as the week goes on, we're hearing that the first patient is just one of many shipped down the highway to receive substandard care outside of the health care system, and what's worse: once they're outside of that health care system, they no longer have the ability to escalate the issues that they've experienced. My constituents are wondering if they're safe

to be discharged from hospital at all. So to the minister: how many Calgarians receiving care in hospital have been discharged to motels in my city?

**Member LaGrange:** Mr. Speaker, we have been very clear that in this particular case the individual worked with the social worker within Alberta Health Services. When they had completed their course of medical treatment, they then, together with their social worker and other allied health professionals, chose the site that they wanted to go to. The provider was not – was not – transparent with the client. They should have told him where they were taking him. That is unacceptable, and we're looking to correct that.

**Member Tejada:** Making a choice requires knowing what those choices are.

Given that this government finds a way to choose private health care at every opportunity and given that this government is picking apart and dismantling public health care through private surgeries, private facilities, and cancelling the public hospitals Albertans need and given that patients are now staying at private motels when they've been led to believe that they'll be discharged to safe, supportive places to live, are the people this government is discharging to motels at least eligible for a points program in this motel scheme?

**Member LaGrange:** Mr. Speaker, it's apparent the members opposite are really good at theatre, but on this side of the House we want to solve real problems. We have identified a gap in the process, and we are going to do everything possible to . . . [interjections]

**The Speaker:** Order. Order. Order. Hon. members will come to order.

**Member LaGrange:** As I said, Mr. Speaker, they like to yell and scream, but at the end of the day, they don't actually do the work. We're doing the work to make sure that every patient that leaves hospital, even when they do not require medical care any longer, when they require housing, will actually get the supports that they need. We've got a crossministry approach, and I'm confident that we will get the job done.

**Member Tejada:** Given that all this motel medicine actually starts with the Premier, who said publicly that she wants patients discharged to motels and given that the Premier has said that she's discharged hundreds of Albertans to clear out overcapacity in hospitals struggling to find space for backlog surgeries and given that Calgarians rightly deserve to know whether this whole scheme is a plan to further private health care, can the Minister of Health assure my constituents today that no more patients will be sent to a motel? Yes or no?

**Mr. Nixon:** Mr. Speaker, again, the NDP are having trouble listening. There are zero patients being treated in – patients are treated in the hospital through the health care system. When patients have been successfully treated, they are discharged. And yes, we do have sometimes complex situations that require multiple-ministry approaches, which is what the Premier is doing. What the Premier is doing is making sure people are in appropriate levels of care, unlike what the NDP did, and that's what we're going to continue to do. While I understand the NDP want the homeless to live in tents and seniors to live in hospitals, we want to make sure everybody lives in appropriate beds for their care.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Bonnyville-Cold Lake-St. Paul.

### Electricity System Regulation

**Mr. Cyr:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Albertans across this province, including those in my constituency of Bonnyville-Cold Lake-St. Paul, are struggling to pay their utility bills right now. This is particularly bad in rural Alberta, as they have to pay significantly higher distribution and transmission fees than the larger cities of Edmonton and Calgary. This is insufferable. To the Minister of Affordability and Utilities: are there any supports being planned for my constituents and the rural Albertans to alleviate these unbearable fees? [interjections]

**The Speaker:** Order.

The hon. Minister of Affordability and Utilities.

**Mr. Neudorf:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Alberta's government is currently reviewing all aspects of our electricity system, including transmission and distribution planning. Albertans can expect to hear more on that soon. In the meantime, I strongly encourage Albertans to contact the Utilities Consumer Advocate if they are struggling to pay their bills. The UCA has resources to help Albertans better understand and lower their utility bills. Whether it's your small business, your farm, or your household, the UCA and our government are there to help.

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Member for Bonnyville-Cold Lake-St. Paul.

**Mr. Cyr:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker and through you to the same minister. Given that another issue that I'm hearing about is the high electricity prices and the practice of economic withholding, where generators offer their electricity at very high prices to gouge consumers of their hard-earned money, to the same minister: could you please elaborate on the government's recent announcement to improve rules surrounding economic withholdings?

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Minister of Affordability and Utilities.

**Mr. Neudorf:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker and to the member for the question. High and volatile electricity prices are a top concern for our government. Based on the recommendations of the MSA and the AESO we are modernizing Alberta's electricity system, something the NDP failed to do while they were in government. On top of that, the NDP continue to cost ratepayers and taxpayers billions of dollars. We've implemented temporary measures to protect Albertans from economic withholding. This will prevent spikes on Albertans' utilities bills until our balanced and responsible long-term plan can be implemented before 2027.

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

**Mr. Cyr:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker and through you to the same minister. Given that these regulatory changes as well as additional generation capacity under construction in Alberta should have a real impact to affordability for consumers, could the same minister please elaborate on further plans of the government of Alberta to improve affordability of energy generation, distribution, transmission for my constituents and those in rural Alberta?

2:30

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

**Mr. Neudorf:** Thank you again, Mr. Speaker. As part of my mandate from the Premier we are working to ensure that the electricity grid is affordable, reliable, and sustainable for generations to come. We are reviewing and modernizing all aspects of the electricity system, from

transmission and distribution costs to local access fees, as well as Alberta's generation capacity and the overall market's efficiency and optimization. Albertans can expect to see our full plans before the end of this year.

### Cervical Cancer Screening

**Ms Hayter:** I'm glad the minister committed to ensuring Albertans will have self-referral for mammograms starting at age 40 because of some NDP advocacy. I look forward to hearing the formal announcement before summer.

On the topic of cancer screenings an HPV test is less invasive, more comfortable, and more effective at identifying precancerous cells than a Pap test. Pap tests are only 60 per cent accurate; HPV tests, 90 per cent accurate and can be done at home. Will the minister provide a timeline for when the pilot project will transition all Albertans who need it to finally have access to HPV tests?

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

**Member LaGrange:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We continue to improve services for women and for other Albertans in cancer screening right across this province. It's a priority. It's in my mandate letter. I'm continuing to work with organizations and with the health foundations that are actually doing some good research in this area. We are committing to continually doing improvement in these areas, and we'll always do improvements because we want to get better as we move forward. So, yes, we will continue to improve in all of these areas.

**Ms Hayter:** I'm so glad that the government agrees with the Alberta NDP.

Given that the government had a pilot program for this model back in October and given that the move for HPV tests is part of the Canada-wide goal to eliminate cervical cancer by 2040 and given that all Albertans want access to the best and most effective cancer screening practices, we're urging the UCP to immediately implement this life-saving program province-wide. Can the minister promise Albertans that HPV tests will be available for everyone who needs one by the summer?

**Member LaGrange:** Well, we have HPV testing, and there's a lot of work going on in this area. I can actually tell you that I was in the new cancer centre, the Arthur J.E. Child cancer centre, that is going to be opening this fall. It is amazing. There is going to be – it'll be the best of its kind in all of Canada. Mr. Speaker, there is so much happening in cancer screening but also in cancer innovations that we are happy to be promoting across this province. We know that in Alberta we're leaders, and we will continue to be leaders in this area.

**The Speaker:** The hon. member without the use of a preamble.

**Ms Hayter:** Given that British Columbia implemented HPV self-testing province-wide for those who request the test and countries like New Zealand have already made this change and given that 100 per cent of cervical cancer cases in Canada are attributed to the HPV virus and given that I truly believe that we are all united in the vision to build a cervical cancer free Alberta together, can the minister explain why a pilot program was implemented first, and how much longer will Albertans have to wait before they can access this life-saving test?

**Member LaGrange:** Mr. Speaker, pilot programs often happen so that we can make sure that we are actually doing what we need to

do to improve services. They are a way of ensuring that we get the information, do the research, collect the data that needs to be done so that we can scale programs across the province or whether they're worthy of scaling. We will continue to do the work that needs to be done. We are leaders in innovation in this area, so we're going to continue to do that. We're committed to making sure that there is constant improvement within our health care system, particularly in cancer screening and other screenings.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We're going to continue to improve.

### Energy Industry Property Tax Payments

**Mr. Schmidt:** Paul McLauchlin, president of the Rural Municipalities of Alberta, had some scathing words for the Alberta Energy Regulator and this government. Over six years the RMA has tallied over \$250 million in unpaid property taxes from what McLauchlin calls zombie oil and gas companies. The RMA keeps counting because the number keeps growing, with \$43 million in unpaid taxes in 2023 alone. To the minister: does the government think it's fair for hard-working Albertans to pay their property taxes while oil companies get a free ride?

**Mr. McIver:** You know, Mr. Speaker, I've answered this question before, and I'll be happy to repeat it for those that need that extra help. If anybody was at RMA on the other side, they would know that we dealt with this issue several times. The president of RMA, Paul McLauchlin, and I have worked closely on this for a number of years. As members in the House know, with their co-operation and their encouragement we passed Bill 7 . . .

**Mr. Sabir:** Apologize.

**Mr. McIver:** . . . which allowed municipalities to sue oil and gas companies, those that behaved badly. We did more. We're working with the energy minister. They added on directive 067.

**The Speaker:** If the hon. Member for Calgary-Bhullar-McCall would like to ask a question, I encourage him to rise to his feet and do so. Until it's his turn, the hon. Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar has the call.

**Mr. Schmidt:** Given that I'm grateful that the minister recounted his record of failure on this file and given that McLauchlin notes that oil companies avoiding property taxes could be a sign that they may be unwilling to meet their other regulatory obligations or an example of bad faith towards Albertans who do pay their taxes or both and given that Alberta's rural municipalities manage the majority of the roads and bridges these companies use for transport, many of which exist solely for the energy industry, to the minister. The AER itself states that holding a licence for energy development in Alberta is a privilege, not a right. Any chance this government can start proving it by making these companies pay their taxes?

**Mr. McIver:** Mr. Speaker, after we made progress with the first two things I recounted in my first answer, there are companies, mostly foreign owned, that are determined to not be good corporate citizens, to not pay their property taxes, to not pay their surface leases. I continue to work closely with the president of RMA, Paul McLauchlin, and all municipalities on this important issue. There is an issue there, and certainly the president of RMA thinks that the Alberta Energy Regulator is part of the solution. I commit to working with our energy minister to see if that is indeed the case.

**Mr. Schmidt:** Given that the minister used the word "progress" when I think he meant "failure" and given that oil is an Alberta

resource, not just an oil company resource, and therefore the profits from the resource should be given to all Albertans and given that McLauchlin notes that these zombie oil companies operate just poorly enough that the AER won't force them to pay their property taxes or account for their reclamation liabilities and that Albertans need the AER to do its job and be a regulator, not their friend, to the minister. Rural Alberta needs roads, bridges, and improved services they rely on. Why are Albertans paying more in property taxes while oil companies get . . .

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

**Mr. McIver:** Well, Mr. Speaker, it's true. This is an issue with a small number of companies. Even Paul McLauchlin and the RMA acknowledge that the vast majority of oil and gas companies are great corporate citizens, pay their taxes on time, pay their surface leases on time, but there are a small number, usually foreign owned, that don't seem to care about Alberta, don't seem to care about Canada, don't seem to care about anything. The problem with bad behaviour is that no matter how many rules you put in place, they're always looking for another way around them. We're not going to quit until we get on top of this thing. We'll work hand in hand with rural municipalities on this.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Cypress-Medicine Hat has a question to ask.

### Water Management

**Mr. Wright:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Droughts cause distress for many Albertans. Instead of summer being a time where Alberta families can relax and enjoy our waterways, they're worried about drought. These past few years have been hard on our ranchers, our farmers, and our livestock producers. Hard-working Alberta families have had to worry about dry conditions instead of growing their family farm. Can the Minister of Environment and Protected Areas share what our government is doing to conserve and collect water when we know that every drop counts?

**The Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Environment and Protected Areas.

**Ms Schulz:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and thanks to the member for the question. Of course, Alberta's winter has been warmer and drier than average, and it's not just us; over 70 per cent of Canada is experiencing drought conditions this spring. As I've shared with this House, the largest water-sharing agreement conversations are right now under way as most of our senior water licensees are working with us to voluntarily create agreements to help make sure that everybody has access to water in times of drought. We're also focusing on new and better ways to manage water, led by our new Water Advisory Committee. The member is in fact chairing this committee, and I do want to thank him for his great work.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Cypress-Medicine Hat.

2:40

**Mr. Wright:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm grateful for the initiatives and what our government is doing to develop and protect our watersheds.

Given that this winter snowpacks are below average, our rivers are at near-record lows, and multiple reservoirs are well below capacity and further given that we must allow 50 per cent of our water to flow to Saskatchewan, with some reports showing that we're actually allowing 51 to 60 per cent of our water to flow to

Saskatchewan, many in my constituency are wondering about on-stream storage. Can the minister please share what the government will do to secure water on the on-stream storage method going forward?

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Minister of Environment and Protected Areas.

**Ms Schulz:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. We absolutely know that water storage is critical to the health of our province and, of course, our economy. If the NDP had invested more into water storage, we would be cutting ribbons on new reservoirs today. We will not make that mistake. This year's budget includes \$23 million over three years for improving the province's water management system. This also includes 4 and a half million dollars to study a new Ardley water reservoir in the Red Deer basin. More work is also under way to find locations to build new reservoirs and dams that protect not only Calgary but other communities along the Bow River. Better water storage means more water for families . . .

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Cypress-Medicine Hat.

**Mr. Wright:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that the South Saskatchewan, Bow, and Oldman rivers all flow through the heart of our agrifood corridor, our government announced that we're going to be investing \$3.5 million to help make the province more naturally drought resilient, prevent floods, and improve water quality and further given that ag producers and the constituents in Cypress-Medicine Hat are looking for better on-stream storage in our region to ensure regional sustainability, can the minister please share when southeast Alberta can see on-stream storage projects to ensure the proper storage matches the needs of municipalities, industry, ag producers, and the environment?

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

**Ms Schulz:** Thank you again, Mr. Speaker. This is absolutely a priority, and we recognize the unique needs and challenges specifically faced by southeastern Alberta. That's why, as I was mentioning, as part of that \$23 million invested over three years my department will be launching a province-wide review to determine where new water storage projects are needed most and what kinds of projects would be most beneficial for our province. This will include a close look at the needs and water sources in the southeast and ways that we can help maximize our storage while still meeting our agreement with our neighbours to the east.

**The Speaker:** Hon. members, that concludes the time allotted for Oral Question Period. In 30 seconds or less we will continue to the remainder of the daily Routine.

Hon. members, the point of order from 2:01 has been withdrawn.

### Statement by the Speaker

#### Private Members' Public Bills

**The Speaker:** Hon. members, I'd like to take a moment to outline the order of precedence for private members' bills on Monday, March 25. As members will note, the long Order Paper for today, which includes private members' business, indicates that both Bill 203, Foreign Credential Advisory Committee Act, and Bill 204, Municipal Government (National Urban Parks) Amendment Act, 2023, are due on day 30 of the projected sitting day calendar. Monday, March 25, will be day 30.

The question arises: which bill will receive precedence and therefore be dealt with first on Monday afternoon? The authority

for this is Standing Order 9(1), which provides that "All items standing on the Order Paper, except Government Bills and Orders, shall be taken up [in accordance] to the precedence assigned to each on the Order Paper." Standing Order 8(7) provides that a private member's bill will be called in Committee of the Whole within eight sitting days of receiving second reading and within four sitting days after being reported by Committee of the Whole.

While rare, the situation has arisen a number of times in the past. On March 20, 2003, former Speaker Kowalski faced a similar situation in which Bill 203 was at Committee of the Whole and Bill 202 was at third reading, and both bills were due on the next private members' day. Speaker Kowalski held that in such instances "the order of precedence is determined by the date and the time that the Assembly or the Committee of the Whole has made its decisions in respect of the bills." He concluded that because Bill 203 received second reading before Bill 202 was reported out of Committee of the Whole, Bill 203 would be considered in Committee of the Whole before Bill 202 would be considered at third reading. Members, I'm sure you will be interested to find Speaker Kowalski's ruling in its entirety on pages 650 and 651 of the March 20, 2003, *Alberta Hansard*.

In our situation Bill 204 received second reading on March 11, 2024, while Bill 203 was reported out of Committee of the Whole on March 18, 2024. Therefore, the Assembly completed consideration of Bill 204 before it completed consideration of Bill 203. The Assembly shall deal with Bill 204, Municipal Government (National Urban Parks) Amendment Act, 2023, first on Monday afternoon despite both bills sharing the same due date.

Ordres du jour.

### Orders of the Day

#### Transmittal of Estimates

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

**Mr. Horner:** Mr. Speaker, I have received a message from Her Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor, which I now transmit to you.

**The Sergeant-at-Arms:** Order! All rise, please.

**The Speaker:** The Lieutenant Governor transmits supplementary supply estimates of certain sums required for the service of the province for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2024, and recommends the same to the Legislative Assembly.

Please be seated.

**Mr. Horner:** Mr. Speaker, I now wish to table the 2023-2024 supplementary supply estimates along with an update to the 2023-2024 fiscal plan as required by the sustainable Fiscal Planning and Transparency Act. This 2023-2024 fiscal plan update contains no changes from the information provided in the 2024-2027 fiscal plan tabled for Budget 2024. The documents I'm tabling today reflect some of the realities we've faced and the needs we've addressed since Budget 2023 was tabled in February of last year. In total, the supplementary supply estimates will allow additional spending by 13 government departments. When passed, the estimates will authorize approximate increases of \$412.7 million in expense funding, \$4.5 million in capital funding for the government, and \$304.1 million in other financial transactions.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.



### Government Motions

29. Mr. Horner moved:

Be it resolved that the message from Her Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor, the 2023-24 supplementary supply estimates for the general revenue fund, and all matters connected therewith be referred to the Committee of Supply.

**The Speaker:** Hon. members, this is a debatable motion pursuant to Standing Order 18(1)(i). Are there any other members wishing to speak?

Seeing none, I am prepared to call on the hon. Minister of Finance to close debate. The hon. Minister of Finance to close debate.

**Mr. Horner:** Waive.

[Government Motion 29 carried]

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Government House Leader, I think, has risen, perhaps on a point of order or otherwise.

**Mr. Schow:** Yes, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to request unanimous consent to go to one-minute bells for the remainder of the day on all votes. Is it okay to ask that now?

**The Speaker:** Yes. You just need to include a request for the first vote after entering into committee.

**Mr. Schow:** Okay. Sure. I ask for unanimous consent for one-minute bells for all votes after the first vote in Committee of Supply.

**The Speaker:** Including.

**Mr. Schow:** Including.

2:50

**The Speaker:** I will restate the motion, perhaps, for the benefit of the Assembly.

The hon. the Government House Leader has moved a request for unanimous consent for one-minute bells for the remainder of today's sitting, including the first bell after entering into Committee of Supply.

[Unanimous consent granted]

30. Mr. Horner moved:

Be it resolved that pursuant to Standing Order 61(2) the Committee of Supply shall be called to consider the 2023-24 supplementary supply estimates for three hours on Monday, March 25, 2024.

**The Speaker:** Hon. members, pursuant to Standing Order 61(2) this is not a debatable motion.

[Government Motion 30 carried]

### Committee of Supply

[Ms Pitt in the chair]

**The Chair:** Hon members, I'd like to call the committee to order.

Prior to beginning, I will outline the process for this afternoon. The Committee of Supply will first call on the chairs of the legislative policy committees to report on their meetings with the various ministries under their mandate. No vote is required when these reports are presented. The committee will then proceed to vote on the estimates of the offices of the Legislative Assembly. The vote on the main estimates will then take place.

### Committee Reports

**The Chair:** Now I'd like to invite the chair of the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future to present the committee's report. The hon. Member for Lac Ste. Anne-Parkland.

**Mr. Getson:** Yeah. Thank you. I do have something on my desk that I can look at in reference; I appreciate the table for catching that.

As chair of the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future and pursuant to Standing Order 59.01(10) I am pleased to report that the committee has reviewed the 2024-25 proposed estimates and the business plans for the following ministries: Advanced Education; Agriculture and Irrigation; Arts, Culture and Status of Women; Executive Council; Immigration and Multiculturalism; Infrastructure; Jobs, Economy and Trade; Technology and Innovation; Tourism and Sport.

Thank you, Chair.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

I'll now call on the chair of the Standing Committee on Families and Communities to present the committee's report.

**Ms Lovely:** As chair of the Standing Committee on Families and Communities and pursuant to Standing Order 59.01(10) I'm pleased to report that the committee has reviewed the 2024-2025 proposed estimates and business plans for the following ministries: the Ministry of Children and Family Services; the Ministry of Education; the Ministry of Health; the Ministry of Justice; the Ministry of Mental Health and Addiction; the Ministry of Public Safety and Emergency Services; the Ministry of Seniors, Community and Social Services; the Ministry of Service Alberta and Red Tape Reduction.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Now the chair of the Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship.

**Mr. Rowswell:** As chair of the Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship and pursuant to Standing Order 59.01(10) I'm pleased to report that the committee has reviewed the 2024-2025 proposed estimates and business plans for the following ministries: the Ministry of Affordability and Utilities, the Ministry of Energy and Minerals, the Ministry of Environment and Protected Areas, the Ministry of Forestry and Parks, the Ministry of Indigenous Relations, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, the Ministry of Transportation and Economic Corridors, the Ministry of Treasury Board and Finance.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

We shall now proceed to the vote on the 2024-25 offices of the Legislative Assembly estimates, general revenue fund. Pursuant to Standing Order 59.03(5), which requires that these estimates be decided without debate or amendment prior to the vote on the main estimates, I must now put the following question on all matters relating to the 2024-25 offices of the Legislative Assembly estimates, general revenue fund, for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2025: \$157,918,000

Agreed to:

Offices of the Legislative Assembly

\$157,918,000

**The Chair:** Shall the vote be reported? Are you agreed?

**Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** Any opposed? Carried.

### Vote on Main Estimates 2024-25

**The Chair:** We shall now proceed to the final vote on the main estimates.

[The voice vote did not indicate agreement]

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 2:56 p.m.]

[One minute having elapsed, the committee divided]

[Ms Pitt in the chair]

For the motion:

Amery	Johnson	Schulz
Armstrong-Homeniuk	Jones	Sigurdson, R.J.
Boitchenko	LaGrange	Sinclair
Bouchard	Lovely	Singh
Cyr	Lunty	Smith
de Jonge	McDougall	Stephan
Dreeshen	McIver	Turton
Dyck	Nally	van Dijken
Ellis	Neudorf	Wiebe
Fir	Nicolaides	Williams
Getson	Nixon	Wilson
Glubish	Petrovic	Wright, J.
Guthrie	Rowswell	Yao
Horner	Sawhney	Yaseen
Hunter	Schow	

3:00

Against the motion:

Al-Guneid	Gray	Pancholi
Arcand-Paul	Haji	Schmidt
Chapman	Ip	Shepherd
Dach	Irwin	Sigurdson, L.
Eremenko	Kasawski	Tejada
Totals:	For – 44	Against – 15

[Motion carried]

**The Chair:** Shall the vote be reported? Are you agreed?

**Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** Any opposed? That is carried.

I'd now like to invite the hon. Government House Leader to move that the committee rise and report the 2024-25 offices of the Legislative Assembly estimates, general revenue fund, and the 2024-25 government estimates, general revenue fund.

**Mr. Schow:** That's exactly how I would have said it. Madam Chair, I move that the committee rise and report the 2024-2025 offices of the Legislative Assembly estimates, general revenue fund, and the 2024-2025 government estimates, general revenue fund.

[Motion carried]

[The Speaker in the chair]

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Chair of Committees.

**Ms Pitt:** Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has had under consideration certain resolutions relating to the 2024-25 offices of the Legislative Assembly estimates, general revenue fund, and the

2024-25 government estimates, general revenue fund, reports as follows, and requests leave to sit again.

The following resolutions for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2025, have been approved.

Offices of the Legislative Assembly: support to the Legislative Assembly, \$84,854,000; office of the Auditor General, \$29,620,000; office of the Ombudsman, \$4,574,000; office of the Chief Electoral Officer, \$11,150,000; office of the Ethics Commissioner, \$1,021,000; office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner, \$8,714,000; office of the Child and Youth Advocate, \$16,545,000; office of the Public Interest Commissioner, \$1,440,000.

Government main estimates.

Advanced Education: expense, \$2,749,475,000; capital investment, \$50,000; financial transactions, \$1,240,200,000.

Affordability and Utilities: expense, \$41,286,000; capital investment, \$25,000; financial transactions, \$96,970,000.

Agriculture and Irrigation: expense, \$779,230,000; capital investment, \$5,189,000.

Arts, Culture and Status of Women: expense, \$253,197,000; capital investment, \$2,331,000; financial transactions, \$2,325,000.

Children and Family Services: expense, \$1,147,670,000; capital investment, \$2,597,000.

Education: expense, \$5,757,668,000; capital investment, \$565,000; financial transactions, \$22,179,000.

Energy and Minerals: expense, \$622,438,000; capital investment, \$1,478,000.

Environment and Protected Areas: expense, \$559,211,000; capital investment, \$65,550,000; financial transactions, \$100,000.

Executive Council: expense, \$56,255,000; capital investment, \$25,000.

Forestry and Parks: expense, \$364,842,000; capital investment, \$128,145,000; financial transactions, \$21,310,000.

Health: expense, \$25,672,555,000; capital investment, \$29,815,000; financial transactions, \$159,196,000.

Immigration and Multiculturalism: expense, \$41,823,000; capital investment, \$25,000.

Indigenous Relations: expense, \$215,063,000; capital investment, \$25,000.

Infrastructure: expense, \$495,444,000; capital investment, \$1,849,050,000; financial transactions, \$19,652,000.

Jobs, Economy and Trade: expense, \$1,763,502,000; capital investment, \$14,650,000.

Justice: expense, \$674,152,000; capital investment, \$14,119,000.

Mental Health and Addiction: expense, \$1,554,712,000; capital investment, \$5,025,000.

Municipal Affairs: expense, \$1,267,242,000; capital investment, \$550,000.

Public Safety and Emergency Services: expense, \$1,179,216,000; capital investment, \$12,275,000; financial transactions, \$51,440,000.

Seniors, Community and Social Services: expense, \$5,316,342,000; capital investment, \$4,072,000; financial transactions, \$19,700,000.

Service Alberta and Red Tape Reduction: expense, \$211,573,000; capital investment, \$64,447,000; financial transactions, \$5,500,000.

Technology and Innovation: expense, \$865,916,000; capital investment, \$115,649,000.

Tourism and Sport: expense, \$135,916,000; capital investment, \$25,000.

Transportation and Economic Corridors: expense, \$1,910,459,000; capital investment, \$1,351,142,000; financial transactions, \$155,139,000.

Treasury Board and Finance: expense, \$199,594,000; capital investment, \$75,000; contingency, \$2,000,000,000.

Mr. Speaker, that concludes my report.

**The Speaker:** If politics doesn't work out for the Chair of Committees, she's going to become an auctioneer.

Perhaps she might for the interest of clarity on the record provide the office of the Public Interest Commissioner estimate amount.

**Ms Pitt:** Mr. Speaker, the office of the Public Interest Commissioner is \$1,440,000.

**The Speaker:** The Children and Family Services expense amount.

**Ms Pitt:** Mr. Speaker, the expense for Children and Family Services is \$1,147,670,000.

**The Speaker:** The capital investment for Jobs, Economy and Trade.

**Ms Pitt:** Mr. Speaker, the capital investment for Jobs, Economy and Trade is \$14,650,000.

**The Speaker:** Lastly, the capital investment for Transportation and Economic Corridors.

**Ms Pitt:** I'd like that one large in my constituency. Mr. Speaker, Transportation and Economic Corridors: capital investment, \$1,351,142,000.

**The Speaker:** Hon. members, does the Assembly concur in the report? If so, please say aye.

**Hon. Members:** Aye.

**The Speaker:** Any opposed, please say no. In my opinion, the ayes have it. That motion is carried and so ordered.

## Introduction of Bills

(reversion)

### Bill 14 Appropriation Act, 2024

**Mr. Horner:** Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 14, the Appropriation Act, 2024. This being a money bill, Her Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor, having been informed of the contents of this bill, recommends the same to the Assembly.

3:10

The bill requests a total of \$61.5 billion from the general revenue fund. The bill also includes \$53.8 billion for expense, \$3.7 billion for capital investments, \$1.8 billion for financial transactions, and \$2 billion for contingencies. Additionally, the bill requests a total of \$158 million for the Legislative Assembly expenses for the year, as detailed in the offices of the Legislative Assembly estimates.

Thank you.

[Motion carried; Bill 14 read a first time]

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Government House Leader.

**Mr. Schow:** Yes, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for recognizing me. It's been a wonderful week of work, and I'd like to thank all members of the Chamber for their diligent efforts on behalf of their constituents. At this time I move that the Assembly be adjourned until 1:30, Monday, March 25, 2024. [interjections]

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

Hon. members, prior to adjournment this afternoon I wonder if members might join me in providing a special thank you to the extra diligence and hours that the table and all of our LAO staff have provided with respect to supporting the committee and the Assembly during the estimates process. I'm sure members will agree that they've done a fine job. [Standing ovation]

[Motion carried; the Assembly adjourned at 3:12 p.m.]



## **Bill Status Report for the 31th Legislature - 1st Session (2023-2024)**

**Activity to Thursday, March 21, 2024**

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 — Alberta Taxpayer Protection Amendment Act, 2023 (Smith)**

First Reading — 10 (*Oct. 30, 2023 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 57-58 (*Nov. 1, 2023 aft.*), 96-97 (*Nov. 2, 2023 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 145-47 (*Nov. 7, 2023 aft., passed*)

Third Reading — 147-54 (*Nov. 7, 2023 aft., passed on division*)

Royal Assent — (*Dec. 7, 2023 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force on December 7, 2023; SA 2023 c6 ]

### **Bill 2 — Alberta Pension Protection Act (Horner)**

First Reading — 89-90 (*Nov. 2, 2023 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 154-55 (*Nov. 7, 2023 aft.*), 274-85 (*Nov. 21, 2023 aft.*), 336-43 (*Nov. 23, 2023 aft.*), 394-400 (*Nov. 28, 2023 aft.*), 424-30 (*Nov. 29, 2023 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 522-30 (*Dec. 5, 2023 aft.*), 552-59 (*Dec. 6, 2023 eve., passed*)

Third Reading — 565 (*Dec. 6, 2023 eve.*), 583-90 (*Dec. 6, 2023 eve., passed on division*)

Royal Assent — (*Dec. 7, 2023 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force on December 7, 2023; SA 2023 cA-29.5 ]

### **Bill 3 — Opioid Damages and Health Care Costs Recovery Amendment Act, 2023 (Williams)**

First Reading — 22 (*Oct. 31, 2023 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 90-93 (*Nov. 2, 2023 aft.*), 180-87 (*Nov. 8, 2023 aft.*), 272-73 (*Nov. 21, 2023 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 307-09 (*Nov. 22, 2023 aft., passed*)

Third Reading — 334-36 (*Nov. 23, 2023 aft., passed*)

Royal Assent — (*Dec. 7, 2023 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force on December 7, 2023; SA 2023 c10 ]

### **Bill 4 — Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2023 (\$) (Horner)**

First Reading — 55 (*Nov. 1, 2023 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 159-63 (*Nov. 7, 2023 aft.*), 155-56 (*Nov. 7, 2023 aft.*), 187-90 (*Nov. 8, 2023 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 309-13 (*Nov. 22, 2023 aft., passed*)

Third Reading — 336 (*Nov. 23, 2023 aft., passed*)

Royal Assent — (*Dec. 7, 2023 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force on various dates; SA 2023 c13 ]

### **Bill 5\* — Public Sector Employers Amendment Act, 2023 (Horner)**

First Reading — 55-56 (*Nov. 1, 2023 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 156-57 (*Nov. 7, 2023 aft.*), 190-97 (*Nov. 8, 2023 aft.*), 265-72 (*Nov. 21, 2023 aft.*), 403-09 (*Nov. 28, 2023 aft.*), 430-35 (*Nov. 29, 2023 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 456 (*Nov. 30, 2023 aft., passed*), 519-22 (*Dec. 5, 2023 aft., recommitted*), 559-62, 563-64 (*Dec. 6, 2023 eve., passed with amendments on division*)

Third Reading — 515 (*Dec. 5, 2023 aft., recommitted to Committee of the Whole*), 564-55 (*Dec. 6, 2023 eve.*), 575-83 (*Dec. 6, 2023 eve., passed on division*)

Royal Assent — (*Dec. 7, 2023 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force on Proclamation; SA 2023 c12 ]

**Bill 6 — Public Health Amendment Act, 2023 (Amery)**

First Reading — 90 (Nov. 2, 2023 aft., passed)

Second Reading — 157-58 (Nov. 7, 2023 aft.), 313-20 (Nov. 22, 2023 aft.), 435-38 (Nov. 29, 2023 aft., passed)

Committee of the Whole — 456-62 (Nov. 30, 2023 aft., passed)

Third Reading — 462 (Nov. 30, 2023 aft., passed)

Royal Assent — (Dec. 7, 2023 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on December 7, 2023; SA 2023 c11 ]

**Bill 7 — Engineering and Geoscience Professions Amendment Act, 2023 (Sawhney)**

First Reading — 111 (Nov. 6, 2023 aft., passed)

Second Reading — 158-59 (Nov. 7, 2023 aft.), 273-74 (Nov. 21, 2023 aft., passed)

Committee of the Whole — 400-03 (Nov. 28, 2023 aft.), 423-24 (Nov. 29, 2023 aft., passed)

Third Reading — 514-15 (Dec. 5, 2023 aft., passed)

Royal Assent — (Dec. 7, 2023 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on December 7, 2023; SA 2023 c7 ]

**Bill 8 — Justice Statutes Amendment Act, 2023 (Amery)**

First Reading — 209 (Nov. 9, 2023 aft., passed)

Second Reading — 299-307 (Nov. 22, 2023 aft.), 438-41 (Nov. 29, 2023 aft., passed)

Committee of the Whole — 515-18 (Dec. 5, 2023 aft.), 546-52 (Dec. 6, 2023 eve., passed)

Third Reading — 564 (Dec. 6, 2023 eve.), 569-75 (Dec. 6, 2023 eve., passed on division)

Royal Assent — (Dec. 7, 2023 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on various dates; SA 2023 c8 ]

**Bill 9 — Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, 2023 (Schow)**

First Reading — 478 (Dec. 4, 2023 aft., passed)

Second Reading — 513-14 (Dec. 5, 2023 aft., passed)

Committee of the Whole — 546 (Dec. 6, 2023 eve., passed)

Third Reading — 590-92 (Dec. 7, 2023 eve., passed)

Royal Assent — (Dec. 7, 2023 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on December 7, 2023; SA 2023 c9 ]

**Bill 10 — Financial Statutes Amendment Act, 2024 (\$) (Horner)**

First Reading — 673 (Mar. 12, 2024 aft., passed)

Second Reading — 705-16 (Mar. 14, 2024 aft., adjourned)

**Bill 11 — Public Safety Statutes Amendment Act, 2024 (Ellis)**

First Reading — 685 (Mar. 13, 2024 aft., passed)

**Bill 12 — Consumer Protection (Life Leases) Amendment Act, 2024 (Nally)**

First Reading — 727 (Mar. 18, 2024 aft., passed)

**Bill 13 — Real Property Governance Act (Guthrie)**

First Reading — 779 (Mar. 21, 2024 aft., passed)

**Bill 14 — Appropriation Act, 2024 (\$) (Horner)**

First Reading — 791 (Mar. 21, 2024 aft., passed)

**Bill 201 — Alberta Health Care Insurance (Access Fees) Amendment Act, 2023 (Brar)**

First Reading — 90 (Nov. 2, 2023 aft., passed)

Second Reading — 114-25 (Nov. 6, 2023 aft.), 234-37 (Nov. 20, 2023 aft., reasoned amendment agreed to on division; not proceeded with)

**Bill 202 — Education (Class Size and Composition) Amendment Act, 2023 (Chapman)**

First Reading — 209 (Nov. 9, 2023 aft., passed)

Second Reading — 237-46 (Nov. 20, 2023 aft.), 358-64 (Nov. 27, 2023 aft., defeated on division; not proceeded with)

**Bill 203 — Foreign Credential Advisory Committee Act (Dyck)**

First Reading — 111 (Nov. 6, 2023 aft., passed)

Second Reading — 364-70 (Nov. 27, 2023 aft.), 479-86 (Dec. 4, 2023 aft., passed)

Committee of the Whole — 730-43 (Mar. 18, 2024 aft., passed)

**Bill 204 — Municipal Government (National Urban Parks) Amendment Act, 2023 (Lunty)**

First Reading — 332 (*Nov. 23, 2023 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 486-92 (*Dec. 4, 2023 aft.*), 649-58 (*Mar. 11, 2024 aft., passed on division*)

**Bill 205 — Housing Statutes (Housing Security) Amendment Act, 2023 (Irwin)**

First Reading — 510 (*Dec. 5, 2023 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 658-62 (*Mar. 11, 2024 aft., adjourned*)

**Bill Pr1 — St. Joseph's College Amendment Act, 2023 (Sigurdson, L)**

First Reading — 289 (*Nov. 22, 2023 aft., passed; referred to the Standing Committee on Private Bills*), 421 (*Nov. 29, 2023 aft., reported to Assembly; proceeded with*)

Second Reading — 455 (*Nov. 30, 2023 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 515 (*Dec. 5, 2023 aft., passed*)

Third Reading — 530 (*Dec. 5, 2023 aft., passed*)

Royal Assent — (*Dec. 7, 2023 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force on December 7, 2023; SA 2023 c14 ]









**Table of Contents**

Prayers ..... 777

Introduction of Guests ..... 777

Members’ Statements

Health System Reform..... 777

International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination ..... 778

International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination ..... 778

Homelessness Initiatives..... 778

Hospital Construction..... 779

Teachers ..... 779

Introduction of Bills

Bill 13 Real Property Governance Act ..... 779

Bill 14 Appropriation Act, 2024..... 791

Tabling Returns and Reports ..... 779

Tablings to the Clerk ..... 780

Oral Question Period

Hospital Discharge Policies ..... 780, 782, 785

Funding for Homeless Supports ..... 781

Health System Reform Public Consultation ..... 783

Renewable Energy Development..... 783

Government-owned Housing Maintenance ..... 784

Renewable Fuel Incentives..... 784

Electricity System Regulation ..... 786

Cervical Cancer Screening ..... 786

Energy Industry Property Tax Payments ..... 787

Water Management ..... 787

Statement by the Speaker

Private Members’ Public Bills..... 788

Orders of the Day ..... 788

Transmittal of Estimates ..... 788

Government Motions ..... 789

Committee of Supply

Committee Reports..... 789

Vote on Main Estimates 2024-25 ..... 790

Division ..... 790

*Alberta Hansard* is available online at [www.assembly.ab.ca](http://www.assembly.ab.ca)

For inquiries contact:

Editor

*Alberta Hansard*

3rd Floor, 9820 – 107 St

EDMONTON, AB T5K 1E7

Telephone: 780.427.1875

E-mail: [AlbertaHansard@assembly.ab.ca](mailto:AlbertaHansard@assembly.ab.ca)