



Province of Alberta

The 31st Legislature  
First Session

# Alberta Hansard

Thursday afternoon, February 27, 2025

Day 81

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),  
Official Opposition Deputy Assistant Whip  
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)  
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),  
Official Opposition Whip  
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),  
Leader of the Official Opposition,  
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),  
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Jean, Hon. Brian Michael, ECA, KC, Fort McMurray-Lac La Biche  
(UC)  
Johnson, Jennifer, Lacombe-Ponoka (UC)  
Jones, Hon. Matt, ECA, Calgary-South East (UC)  
Kasawski, Kyle, Sherwood Park (NDP)  
Kayande, Samir, Calgary-Elbow (NDP)  
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, Rodrigo, 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)  
Miyashiro, Rob, Lethbridge-West (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)  
Pancholi, Rakhi, Edmonton-Whitemud (NDP)  
Petrovic, Chelsae, Livingstone-Macleod (UC)  
Renaud, Marie F., St. Albert (NDP)  
Rowswell, Garth, Vermilion-Lloydminster-Wainwright (UC)  
Sabir, Hon. Irfan, ECA, Calgary-Bhullar-McCall (NDP),  
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Sawhney, Hon. Rajan, ECA, Calgary-North West (UC)  
Schmidt, Hon. Marlin, ECA, Edmonton-Gold Bar (NDP)  
Schow, Hon. Joseph R., ECA, Cardston-Siksika (UC),  
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Schulz, Hon. Rebecca, ECA, Calgary-Shaw (UC)  
Shepherd, David, Edmonton-City Centre (NDP),  
Official Opposition Deputy House Leader  
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)  
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)  
Vacant, Edmonton-Strathcona

## Party standings:

United Conservative: 49

New Democrat: 37

Vacant: 1

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Trafton Koenig, Law Clerk

Philip Massolin, Clerk Assistant and  
Executive Director of Parliamentary  
Services

Nancy Robert, Clerk of *Journals* and  
Committees

Amanda LeBlanc, Managing Editor of  
*Alberta Hansard*

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Paul Link, Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms  
Gareth Scott, Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms  
Lang Bawn, Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms

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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
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
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Dan Williams	Minister of Mental Health and Addiction
Rick Wilson	Minister of Indigenous Relations
Muhammad Yaseen	Minister of Immigration and Multiculturalism

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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  
Brar  
Kasawski  
Kayande  
Stephan  
Wiebe  
Wright, J.

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

Chair: Mr. Getson  
Deputy Chair: Member Loyola

Boparai  
de Jonge  
Elmeligi  
Hoyle  
Sinclair  
Stephan  
van Dijken  
Wright, J.

**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.

**Standing Committee on Families and Communities**

Chair: Ms Lovely  
Deputy Chair: Ms Goehring

Batten  
Haji  
Long  
Lunty  
McDougall  
Petrovic  
Singh  
Tejada

**Standing Committee on Legislative Offices**

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

Chapman  
Dyck  
Eremenko  
Lovely  
Miyashiro  
Petrovic  
Shepherd  
Sinclair

**Special Standing Committee on Members' Services**

Chair: Mr. Cooper  
Deputy Chair: Mr. Getson

Eggen  
Gray  
Hunter  
Long  
Metz  
Sabir  
Singh  
Yao

**Standing Committee on Private Bills**

Chair: Ms Pitt  
Deputy Chair: Mr. Cyr

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

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

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

Arcand-Paul  
Bouchard  
Ceci  
Cyr  
Dach  
Gray  
Stephan  
Wiebe

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts**

Chair: Mr. Sabir  
Deputy Chair: Mr. Rowswell

Armstrong-Homeniuk  
de Jonge  
Ellingson  
Johnson  
Lunty  
McDougall  
Renaud  
Schmidt

**Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship**

Chair: Mr. Rowswell  
Deputy Chair: Ms Sweet

Al-Guneid  
Armstrong-Homeniuk  
Boitchenko  
Calahoo Stonehouse  
Dyck  
Eggen  
Hunter  
Yao

## Legislative Assembly of Alberta

1:30 p.m.

Thursday, February 27, 2025

[The Speaker in the chair]

### Prayers

**The Speaker:** Lord, the God of righteousness and truth, grant to our King and 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 interests and prejudices, keep in mind their responsibility to seek to improve the condition of all. Amen.

Hon. members, we will now be led in the singing of *God Save the King* by Ms 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:** Hon. members, before we start the introduction of guests, I would like to make special note for members of the Assembly that the list today is far longer than the time allotted today. As such, the list is as my office received notice from members wishing to introduce their guests.

Having said that, I do have one special introduction prior to the time commencing. It's always a pleasure to host members of the Assembly and their families here in the Speaker's suite. Today in the gallery the hon. the President of Treasury Board, the Minister of Finance: almost his whole family is here. We all know the deep debt of gratitude that we owe our family members, and on this particular day it's my pleasure to introduce them, the family members of the Minister of Finance: perhaps the best Horner, his wife, Jennifer; his daughter Avery and sons Luke and Kase; his parents, Brent and Kate Horner; and his mother-in-law, Penny Bogi. Please rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

The hon. Member for St. Albert has a school to introduce.

**Ms Renaud:** Merci, M. le Président. It's my pleasure to introduce you to a school group of grade 6 students from Ronald Harvey elementary school. There are 86 students here with chaperone Brad Shillington. I ask them all to rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

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

**Mr. Kasawski:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise and introduce you to another Harvey school, Harvey home-school of Sherwood Park. With the students and the chaperones and teachers of Harvey home-school please rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

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

**Mr. van Dijken:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my privilege to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly

my lovely wife of 41 years, Barb. Alongside her we have one of our 18 grandchildren, our grandson Lewis, here today.

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

**Mr. Sabir:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to introduce Syed Badiuddin Soharwardy, a distinguished imam and Islamic scholar. He serves as chairman of Al-Madinah Calgary Islamic Assembly, founder and president of the Islamic Supreme Council of Canada. He has authored many books and has done incredible work establishing 30-plus mosques and prayer places across Canada. I ask him to rise and receive the warm welcome of this House.

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

**Mr. Rowswell:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you and through you two very important constituents from my constituency, the mayor of Lloydminster, Gerald Aalbers, and Mike Wildeboer, the reeve and the councillor for the MD of Wainwright. Please rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

**Mr. Boitchenko:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you and through you two very good friends of mine, Mayor Nancy Dodds of Drayton Valley and Deputy Mayor Monika Sherriffs, who have contributed so much to making Drayton Valley a thriving community. I would now ask them to please stand up and receive the warm welcome of this Assembly.

**Mr. Hunter:** Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce my parents, Roy and Christina Hunter. Sometimes they may have questioned why they brought me into this world, but they couldn't put me back, so here I am. Please rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of this Assembly.

**Member Brar:** Fiaz is a dedicated faculty member at the SAIT School of Business for 18 years. A CPA, CMA, and MBA graduate who teaches courses from financial accounting to international business, he has been awarded the Edo hero award for his contribution to the community. He is joined by his lovely wife, Dilshad Virani, and I ask them to please rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Airdrie-East has an introduction.

**Ms Pitt:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour to rise and introduce to you and through you to all members of this Assembly two great conservative constituents from the fantastic riding of Airdrie-East, Tomisin and Jane. Please rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of this Assembly.

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

**Mr. Lundy:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour to rise to introduce a guest from Beaumont, Nam Kular. Nam is a strong member of the business community, and I ask him to rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

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

**Mr. Wright:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to introduce to you and through you my lovely mother, Donna Wright, who has travelled the long distance from Medicine Hat to join us here today. Please rise and receive the warm welcome of the House.

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

**Mr. Sinclair:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour to rise and introduce to you and through you very quickly, because he's been here before, my brother-in-law Shawn Gramlich. Hopefully, that's extra time for everyone else.

Thank you.

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

**Mr. Bouchard:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to introduce to you and through you my good friends, lawyer and author Eva Chipiuk and Lindsay Davis, the president of the Calgary-Acadia UCP Constituency Association. I ask that they please rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

**Mr. McIver:** Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce to you and through you my constituency president and good friend Brian van Vliet and my good friend, his son, Tyler van Vliet.

**Ms Hoffman:** I ask that Sara Tidball please rise as I introduce her. She's a very engaged mother, active leader in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, a third-year social work student, and she's doing her practicum in my office, and she's a wonderful addition. Thank you very much for being here. Colleagues, please welcome . . .

**The Speaker:** The minister of energy.

**Mr. Jean:** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce Mark Scholz, the CEO of the Canadian Association of Energy Contractors, an organization that does so much for Alberta and our economy. Please rise.

**The Speaker:** The minister of service Alberta.

**Mr. Nally:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you and through you and to all members of the Assembly two constituents of Morinville-St. Albert as well as friends of mine, Nancy Karvellas and Jacob Middelkamp. Please stand and enjoy the warm welcome of the House.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Chestermere-Strathmore.

**Ms de Jonge:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm honoured to introduce two energy entrepreneurs, very good friends, selfless volunteers, and members of my CA board, President Nick Boots and VP Ben Robinson. Please rise and receive the warm welcome of the House.

**Ms Armstrong-Homeniuk:** Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce to you and through you and to all the members of the Assembly my good friends and guests, Patty Padoborzny – Patty is the talented CAO of the county of Minburn – and my CA president, Ruven Rajoo. Thank you. Could you please stand and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

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

**Member Ceci:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Here in the gallery is Kirby Sewell, a blues musician from Calgary, a maple award winner, and a great guy. He's advocating for the blues.

**Mr. Wiebe:** Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce to you and through you the former MLA for Grande Prairie-Wapiti, Wayne Drysdale, and Sherry Drysdale and my friends from northern Alberta: Jake Froese, Abe Neufeld, and Pete Peters.

Thank you.

## Members' Statements

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

### Health Services Procurement Process

**Member Kayande:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Ethical, competent government: that's the minimum Albertans expect and deserve. But the last few weeks are a demonstration that that's exactly what we don't have here in Alberta. The UCP government has been mired in a scandal that's bigger than any before it in Alberta's history.

1:40

In a statement of claim the former CEO of AHS accuses high-ranking Alberta government officials of corruption, the abuse of power, and even retaliation towards their critics. She alleges the Minister of Health shut down an internal investigation that included a forensic audit of these bloated contracts. The CEO had started that investigation when she learned of serious accusations of conflict of interest and that Albertans may have been paying hundreds of millions more for hip and knee replacements than what was required.

But just two days before she was to meet with the Auditor General and show him the evidence of what she had found, the government fired her. She was about to brief the Auditor General, and the government fired her just one year into her job at the top of the health care system, and then the government fired the whole board of AHS, too.

But it gets worse, Mr. Speaker. The Premier's office is directly implicated. It is alleged although not yet proven in court that the Premier's chief of staff, Marshall Smith, put pressure on AHS to approve these bloated private surgical contracts. When he wasn't getting his way, he made threats to officials who resisted his orders. He also allegedly tried to silence the government critics by targeting employees who spoke out. The Premier doesn't deny that these conversations occurred.

And who is at the centre of this? The same players behind the \$70 million Turkish Tylenol scam. Albertans never even got all of the unsafe children's pain medication and still had to pay a handsome, bloated premium for it.

Mr. Speaker, in short, Alberta's most senior politicians and political staff are accused of putting private interests of their friends and insiders ahead of the public's. They're accused of kickbacks, misusing public funds, and seeking vengeance on their critics. It's not fiction. It's playing out right here, and we've had enough of it. It's time for this government to call a public . . .

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

### Firefighting Service Funding

**Mr. Yao:** Mr. Speaker, Alberta's government is strengthening local fire services with more support for training, response planning, and greater collaboration that will help keep Albertans and their communities safe. Emergency situations bring an uncertainty that can lead to effects of stress and anxiety for many Albertans and their communities. Alberta's local fire services hold a leading role in ensuring that Albertans and communities can navigate and make it through the uncertain times of an emergency through quick response and education around fire safety and prevention.

To further support municipalities and strengthen public safety during emergency situations, Alberta's government is providing \$585,000 to support municipal fire services and the Alberta Fire Chiefs Association. This funding will support better training, improve

response planning, and strengthen ties between the provincial government, local supports, and the fire services to further bolster public safety. Fire services are essential to the safety and well-being of every Albertan, and Alberta's government is committed to ensuring firefighters can do that job.

Mr. Speaker, to guarantee firefighters have access to the best training, Alberta's government is also providing a one-time increase of half a million dollars to the fire services training program, bringing total funding to \$1 million for training grants this year. This funding is available to all municipalities, Métis settlements, and First Nations. It will ensure that our firefighters will continue to have the knowledge and skills they have to navigate emergency situations.

In addition, we are providing the Alberta Fire Chiefs with \$85,000 to enhance a core competency tool that municipalities can use to assess risks and develop emergency response plans. To further support the role of municipal fire services in strengthening public safety, a provincial fire liaison committee that would be made up of municipal, First Nations, Métis, and fire service representatives is anticipated to be in place later this year.

Together, Mr. Speaker, Alberta is building a stronger and more collaborative approach to fire service delivery. These actions reflect our government's commitment to public safety but also to support the courageous men and women who protect us every day.

Thank you.

#### Health Services Procurement Process

**Ms Sweet:** Quote: something doesn't sit right with me; it doesn't pass the smell test, plain and simple. End quote. That's what the former Minister of Infrastructure said to Rick Bell when he resigned over the UCP's corrupt care scandal. He couldn't stomach what was happening in the cabinet room. Quote: "I can't sit around a table where a cabinet feels it's fine that dishonesty and conflict of interest is a normal course of business. How do I look myself in the mirror? How do I wake up in the morning and tell my kids to do the right thing? They'll determine what information gets turned over. There is a clear conflict of interest if you're investigating yourself." End quote.

Mr. Speaker, the worst part? He tried to convince his colleagues to do the right thing. They refused to listen. Quote: there is no amount I could speak in that room to change everyone's mind; that became clear to me. End quote. That means every minister still sitting at that cabinet table is either turning a blind eye or actively supporting this scandal.

Mr. Speaker, some Albertans might wonder why they should be concerned about this scandal. After all, the Premier and Health minister have promised an internal investigation. But here's the problem: they also promised to personally pick the investigator. The former minister said it best: one thing you need to know is that they have maintained an even greater stronghold than they ever had; that's significant; they have a hundred per cent say in what's going on; they're in charge of the information forthcoming to the Auditor General; they are the filter.

It's time for a public inquiry now.

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

#### Holi

**Mr. Singh:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Holi is a remarkable tradition, rich in culture and meaning, that brings people together in a joyful and vibrant celebration. Holi originated in India, deeply rooted in its cultural and religious tradition, and has since spread across the

Indian subcontinent. Over time this vibrant celebration has extended beyond the region, reaching countries like Fiji as well as various parts of the world.

Holi, known as the festival of colours, is a time for unity, joy, and renewal. The festival marks the beginning of spring and end of the winter and is celebrated through various colourful traditions, each carrying its own symbolic significance. A key element of Holi is the throwing of coloured powder, known as gulal, which signifies the celebration of diversity and triumph of good over evil. During this joyous occasion people of all ages come together in an exuberant celebration marked by vibrant traditions. The colourful exchange of powders symbolizes happiness and unity while bonfires of a ritual of renewal burn away negativity. Folk songs and dances fill the air, enriching the sense of community and cultural pride.

As we join in the spread of the wonderful celebration, we recognize the importance of Holi in fostering connections and embracing the value of love, forgiveness, and togetherness. On behalf of the government of Alberta I am delighted to extend my heartfelt greetings to everyone celebrating this colourful occasion. May this special day bring happiness, peace, and prosperity to all.

Happy Holi. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### Health Services Procurement Process

**Member Batten:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The year was 2020; Albertans bonded together against a novel threat. We banged pots and pans at 7 p.m. in celebration and support and in gratitude to the courageous front-line workers who day after day left their homes and their families to serve us, to serve Albertans.

While the world recognized the incredible value of front-line workers, the UCP government allegedly were undermining their every move by misappropriating Albertan taxpayer dollars. Over the next five years over 6,000 Albertans died from COVID-19, and thousands upon thousands of front-line workers continued to serve with stagnant wages and a rising cost of living. Now the UCP government claims that the coffers are empty and public services must be cut. Albertans are rising in loud, collective voices of cries of outrage and confusion. Where is the Alberta advantage? Who is this government serving?

Health care dollars were allegedly misused during the pandemic and beyond. Albertans in pain today waiting on wait-lists for medically necessary surgeries are learning that they'll have to wait even longer for relief. Why? Because this UCP government allegedly gifted bloated contracts to their friends, increasing the cost to Albertans while Albertans got less. Over \$600 million in government contracts were gifted to Sam Mraiche and MHCare; \$70 million wasted on the Turkish Tylenol scheme. All that money, nothing to show. We didn't even get all the Tylenol.

Albertans are tired of the UCP government working against them. They are tired of the UCP government's self-serving agenda with rumours of corruption, political interference, and kickbacks. Albertans need to have answers on corrupt care without the Premier and the Minister of Health's thumbs on the scale. We need an independent inquiry now.

#### Health Services Procurement Process

**Member Loyola:** Mr. Speaker, through you to the people of Alberta: ladies and gentlemen, gather round for a tale as old as time or at least as old as political scandals in Alberta. The United Conservative Party, our beloved stewards of the province, now find

themselves in a bit of a pickle, don't they? Allegations of corruption swirl around them like a bad case of déjà vu. Who could have guessed that health care of all things would be the stage for such drama? Surely not us, who have been telling the people of Alberta how this government has their eye on privatizing our universal health care system while this Premier panders to her base's interests.

Now, let's not jump to conclusions. Innocent until proven guilty, right? But when the whispers of backroom deals, questionable contracts, and sudden influx of cronyism start sounding like a broken record, one can't help but raise an eyebrow. Is this the efficiency we were promised or just a master class in creative accounting? And let's not forget the timing: always impeccable. While Albertans are busy worrying about hospital wait times and staffing shortages, it seems like some folks were more concerned with lining pockets than fixing problems. But, hey, at least they're consistent, consistently giving us something to talk about around the dinner table.

So here's to the UCP: masters of distraction, champions of controversy, and allegedly the architects of Alberta's latest political soap opera. Let's just hope the one thing they're prescribing is a healthy dose of transparency because Albertans deserve better than a government with the wrong priorities, that seems to have forgotten who they're supposed to be working for.

Mr. Speaker, this government can't be trusted. Albertans deserve a trusted, competent government now.

1:50

### Oral Question Period

**The Speaker:** The Leader of His Majesty's Loyal Opposition has question 1.

#### Health Services Procurement Process

**Ms Gray:** Mr. Speaker, Albertans deserve an ethical, competent government, yet so far the Premier has refused to provide clear answers to questions about the corrupt care scandal. Now it's budget day. Albertans are watching and wondering if the billions this government is about to spend might also be at risk. The Premier and her Minister of Health are facing allegations of political interference, bloated contracts for surgical centres, and hundreds of millions of dollars not providing the results it should. A simple question to the Premier: on what day was the Premier first briefed on these serious allegations?

**Ms Smith:** Mr. Speaker, I've answered the question before, and I'll answer it again. The Minister of Health let me know in the fall that they were looking into some differential prices in a number of different contracts that AHS had signed with a number of different chartered surgical facilities, and I encouraged her to let me know what was happening with that. Now we're going to see not only an Auditor General investigation into it but also an external review. We want to get to the bottom of it. We want to know why there are different prices paid to different facilities for the same service. I think all Albertans want to know that.

**Ms Gray:** The Premier is mistaken. That is not an answer to the question because the question is: on what day was she made aware of the allegations of corruption, of bloated contracts, and of political interference? On February 12 the Premier said that she had just learned of the corrupt care scandal from the media, but no one believes that this Premier was blissfully unaware while her government fired one of their highest paid, most important public officials, the AHS CEO, on January 8, followed swiftly by firing

the entire board. No one buys the claim that she doesn't know. On what day did you learn about the firing of the CEO?

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

**Ms Smith:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We need a CEO of Alberta Health Services who is going to implement government policy. We need a CEO who isn't going to create arbitrary cuts in the services to Covenant Health or chartered surgical facilities, is not going to close rural hospitals, is not going to advocate for a return of health care premiums, who is not going to say that the only way to do it is to reduce the number of surgeries. We actually need an Alberta Health Services CEO who is going to use the chartered surgical facilities to increase the amount of surgeries performed so that Albertans can get better care.

**Ms Gray:** Mr. Speaker, the Premier's former chief of staff is at the absolute heart of these allegations. Her office knew, her chief of staff knew, her deputy minister knew, the Minister of Health knew, the minister of mental health knew, and the Deputy Minister of Finance knew. Rumours of kickbacks were sliding around like a hockey puck on ice. No one in Alberta believes this Premier was in the dark during all of this. Why is it so hard for the Premier to just tell us: on what day was she briefed about this scandal?

**Ms Smith:** Mr. Speaker, the jig is up for Alberta Health Services. We are tired of the underperformance of the publicly funded health care monopoly, and as a result we are going to make sure that they return to being a service provider of hospital services. That is what this is about. If it is true, as the members opposite allege, that Alberta Health Services is able to perform a surgery for \$4,000 – we gave them 3.5 billion additional dollars – they should have been able to perform 875,000 additional surgeries for that money. Instead, they reduced the number of surgeries. That's what's at issue here. [interjections]

**The Speaker:** Order. Order.

The hon. Leader of the Official Opposition for her second set of questions.

**Ms Gray:** Mr. Speaker, the AHS CEO called up a local law firm and launched a forensic audit into these bloated contracts the minute she had any suspicion of corruption. She did the right thing. But instead of thanking her for calling an investigation, this government fired her. She had already notified the Auditor General and her Minister of Health, but the minister told her to wind it up. Why would any honest government want to wind up an expert investigation, a forensic audit into potential criminal activity? How can the Premier still have trust in the minister who wound it up?

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

**Ms Smith:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There is nothing wound up. All we have are allegations in a demand letter for \$1.7 million. We have one side of the story. We're going to get the other side of the story when the Minister of Health files a statement of defence on behalf of the government. None of these have been tested in court, but we are going to go through work with the Auditor General so he can review all of the files. He's already received the documents, and we're very close to announcing an independent investigator with outside legal expertise who will also take a look at it and get to the bottom, if there has been any wrongdoing at all.

**Ms Gray:** Mr. Speaker, they shut down the audit. If that's not true and an audit is still going on, this House would love to hear about it. But the government did more than that. They also started a witch

hunt, with the Premier's chief of staff targeting public servants for speaking up about corruption. It's alleged that they even went so far as to try and chase these public servants down by hiring private investigators. None of this is normal. None of this is good. Why would the Premier support going to such great lengths to suppress these serious allegations of kickbacks, corruption, and potential criminal activity?

**Ms Smith:** Well, Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of names that have been named in the statement of claim asking for \$1.7 million, and all of those are going to have to be reviewed and investigated, and that's what's going to happen. That's why we have already provided the Auditor General with the documents so that he can have a look at them. It's why we're going to be having an independent investigator taking a look at them as well. We want to know if there are any problems with Alberta Health Services' procurement. We are bringing the function into Alberta Health, and if there are any problems with the staff at Alberta Health Services, we need to know that. [interjections]

**The Speaker:** Order. Order.

**Ms Gray:** Mr. Speaker, here's a hot tip for the Premier: nobody calls a forensic audit without serious suspicions of corruption, so shutting it down is the wrong choice. They fired the CEO, they fired the board, and then they said nothing to Albertans about any of that. They've since fired two of the leads of the surgical program. The thing about a cover-up is that if it looks like a duck and quacks like a duck, it's probably a duck. Will the Premier stop the firing, stop sweeping things under the rug, finally call a judicial-led public inquiry into the corrupt care scandal?

**Ms Smith:** Mr. Speaker, the only thing that is improving the number of surgeries in our system right now is this work that is being done at the chartered surgical facilities. We began investing in these back in 2019-20, when there were 43,650 surgeries done. We're now up to almost 62,000 by the end of this year. Meanwhile, the surgeries being done in Alberta Health Services, despite substantial billions of dollars that we give them, have yielded no increase in the number of surgeries. That is what we are going to get to the bottom of because Albertans need to get better performance for their tax dollars.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Leader of the Opposition for her third set of questions.

**Ms Gray:** It is very clear that the Premier does not want to talk about the corrupt care scandal, but she knows that her very own hand-picked chief of staff is at the heart of it. His frequent phone calls exerting political pressure on the AHS CEO were so alarming that the CEO alerted the Premier's deputy minister on October 4 about his concerning actions. On what day did the Premier get briefed by her deputy minister that her own chief of staff stood accused of an unprecedented level of political interference? This is the question that we would like to hear an answer to.

2:00

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

**Ms Smith:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would have thought the members opposite would remember how procurement works in government, but let me give them an explanation since it's been so long since they've been in government that they've forgotten political people are not involved in contracts. It happens by specialized public servants at the mid level. It can take years from the start of a procurement process until a contract is signed. Dozens

of people are involved in any one project. It involves mainly sealed bids, multiple levels of approval, and elected officials and staff only find out the winner at the end. That's how it works.

**Ms Gray:** Mr. Speaker, the Premier's own chief of staff made quite the statement. He told the former CEO he would, quote: be taken care of for the rest of his life. End quote. That's a shocking statement for the Premier's right-hand man to be saying to a senior public servant. Albertans deserve to hear from the players in this story directly. Too much money is at stake, and too much corruption has been alleged. The only thing that can clear the air is a judicial-led public inquiry. Will this Premier do the right thing, call the public inquiry, or will she release a budget under this cloud of suspicion?

**Ms Smith:** Well, Mr. Speaker, the member opposite wasn't party to the conversation. I wasn't party to the conversation, so I have no idea, and I'm not going to comment on hearsay. What I do know is that when you have an entity that appears to be dragging its feet on implementing government agenda, then you ask questions about why it is they're dragging their feet. We know that for years Alberta Health Services has been in a conflict of interest. They want to hoard all the budget, and then they are supposed to also be writing contracts for their competitors. It takes years for them to do, at unfavourable terms, and we're not putting up with it anymore.

**Ms Gray:** Mr. Speaker, when you have a cabinet that appears to be dragging its feet in looking into corruption, it just makes you more suspicious. Let's remember that this week the Premier lost her first cabinet minister to this scandal because he had the principles to refuse to stand by and watch an attempted cover-up happen. The matter is serious. If she didn't know what her chief of staff was doing, that's on her, and Albertans have been fired for a lot less than what's at stake in this scandal. What is the Premier afraid of? It's simple and straightforward. Why won't the Premier call a judicial-led public inquiry?

**Ms Smith:** Well, Mr. Speaker, as my Justice minister said a couple of days ago, just take yes for an answer. Yes, we are sharing the documents with the Auditor General. Yes, we will be having an independent third party with legal training look at the documents. They will have a budget so that they are able to investigate whatever it is they need to, talk to whoever they need to as well as get the documents that they need to give us advice on whether there was any wrongdoing, to help us if there's any repercussions that are necessary, and to help us improve the procurement process, because that's what this is all about.

**Ms Hoffman:** The current Health minister says that the worst private surgery contracts were signed before she was the minister, but she won't call an independent public inquiry. The current Premier keeps saying that she's got the back of the minister even though the Infrastructure minister said to cut her loose. But the current Health minister is loyal to the Premier and is taking the fall. The Health minister didn't get invited to the sky palace liquor party or to the Rogers Place box, so why is the government leaving her holding the bag?

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

**Member LaGrange:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That is such a ludicrous question. I can't even begin to answer it other than to say that as the Minister of Health I have been tasked to make sure that we have an excellent health care system in Alberta. We need to refocus because Albertans deserve better than what they've been

getting. We have actually started to make sure that people are able to have their surgeries within clinically approved times. We've gone from 40 per cent in clinically approved times to over 60 per cent. We have to get to 100 per cent, and we're going to get there.

**Ms Hoffman:** The Premier is pushing full speed ahead on privatization, no matter the cost to Alberta taxpayers: millions of severance for health officials, tens of millions for unsafe medical supplies, and hundreds of millions on bloated surgical contracts. MHCare alone received over \$600 million. This isn't health care. It's corrupt care. Clearly the UCP cares more about benefiting government friends and insiders than your cancer surgery or your hip replacement. It's reckless, incompetent, and corrupt, so how can the minister claim to put children first when it's clear that government priorities are actually to put rich friends first and make them richer?

**Member LaGrange:** Mr. Speaker, the member opposite is incorrect as usual. Albertans want shorter wait times and access to surgeries. We have a public health care system, and it includes hospitals, it includes urgent care centres, and it includes chartered surgical facilities that the members opposite also supported when they were in government. During their tenure there were 40,000 surgeries done at chartered surgical facilities. Now we're doing over 60,000, and we're going to keep increasing that so that every Albertan gets their surgery done within clinically approved time frames.

**Ms Hoffman:** Albertans deserve ethical leadership, but it's clear that the UCP policy is to cover up their corrupt care scandal. One of you has stated very publicly that you don't support the Health minister staying in her role, and I'm sure others don't, too. It's important for Albertans to know if the government MLA is on their side or the side of the minister. So, Mr. Speaker, through you to all members of the UCP government caucus: who actually has the confidence of the current Health minister? If you want her to stay in her job, please stand up. [some applause]

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

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Glenora will know – she's a learned member of this Assembly – that question period is a time to ask questions of the executive branch of government, and I encourage her to do so in the future.

The hon. the Government House Leader.

**Mr. Schow:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Despite that question not really necessarily being about government business, I think the member opposite got her answer. I for one and all my colleagues here stand with the Health minister and the Premier as they work diligently to refocus our health care system and make sure that Albertans are getting the care that they pay for with their taxes. That is what's forefront for us, and we will accomplish that goal.

**The Speaker:** Hon. members, the hon. Member for Edmonton-City Centre has a question to ask.

#### Edmonton Police Commission Membership

**Mr. Shepherd:** Mr. Speaker, every day we discover more UCP ministers connected to the corrupt care scandal. Yesterday we learned that after the UCP gave themselves the power to add people to local police commissions, one of the public safety minister's first appointments was a close associate to the man at the heart of the corrupt care allegations; the UCP's good friend Sam Mraiche. There are over 1 million residents of Edmonton eligible to serve on

the police commission. Can the minister explain why he felt the most qualified was the business partner of the man who treated his cabinet colleagues to luxury skybox tickets? [interjections]

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

The hon. Member for Edmonton-City Centre will know that that particular matter has been referred to the Ethics Commissioner, and as a direction was provided two days ago, that question is out of order. My sense is that the minister would prefer not to respond, but he can if he chooses to do so.

The hon. the Deputy Premier.

**Mr. Ellis:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker, and that is an absolutely disgusting question. Dr. Nagendran is a world-renowned heart surgeon who brings diverse perspective. He is originally from the South Indian community. He has extensive experience as a cardiac surgeon. He's performed over 200 surgeries on cardiac patients just in Edmonton alone. It is absolutely disgusting that the members opposite would go after one of the most upstanding members of the Edmonton community. He is an exceptional member of this community. He loves Edmonton, and he loves the people of Alberta. It is embarrassing, that question. [interjections]

**The Speaker:** Order.

The hon. Member for Edmonton-City Centre.

2:10

**Mr. Shepherd:** Now, given that the minister is currently investigating the city of Edmonton's open, public process to appoint police commissioners out of concerns about bias and given that's rather hypocritical given that all of the minister's appointments have been made with no public process at all and given that he appointed the business partner of a man who just made \$300,000 in three months selling land to the government for the Provincial Operations Centre, a facility that falls directly under his ministry, to the minister: since you support investigating bias, will you support our call for a public inquiry to get to the bottom of your and your colleagues' potential involvement in the corrupt care scandal?

**Mr. Ellis:** You know what, Mr. Speaker? I support that member saying that question outside of that door; that's what I support. Good luck with that.

**Mr. Shepherd:** Given that at last year's estimates the minister said, "No longer will police be seen as an arm of the state but, rather, an extension and reflection of the community that they serve," but given that the minister is literally using the arm of the state to force his own appointments onto police commissions, thereby imposing his will on the communities they serve, does the minister recognize this kind of arrogant political interference, giving power and profit to friends of the UCP, undermines trust in the police and lies at the heart of the corrupt care scandal in which he's now implicated? Will he do the right thing and join us in calling for a public inquiry?

**Mr. Ellis:** Mr. Speaker, Dr. Nagendran is one of the most respected physicians, not just in Edmonton, not just in Alberta but in western Canada. It is appalling that the members opposite would attack this person in his character and his career.

**Ms Hoffman:** No; it's you. It's you and your corruption.

**Mr. Ellis:** You know what? God forbid anybody in this Chamber bring any puppies or kittens in here because I'm pretty sure that will be next on the target list for the NDP.

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

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

A point of order is noted at 2:12.

### Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund

**Mr. Rowswell:** Mr. Speaker, the Heritage Fund Opportunities Corporation was created so that the government of Alberta can reinvest resource revenues that will responsibly save billions for future generations. We recently introduced a new, bold plan to grow the heritage fund to \$250 billion by 2050. This will ensure financial stability for our province inasmuch that it will reduce reliance on the volatile nonrenewable resource revenues. To the Premier: how will this new road map strengthen Alberta's financial future and secure long-term benefits for Albertans?

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

**Ms Smith:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If we had just kept the investment income in the heritage savings trust fund when it was first established by Peter Lougheed back in the 1970s and '80s, it would be worth over \$250 billion today; it would be generating \$15 billion to \$20 billion per year in investment income; it would take us off the resource roller coaster. It's unfortunate it didn't happen back then, but it's happening now. We're keeping the investment income in the fund, and that's the vision: keep those dollars being invested year after year, have the political will to keep on doing that, and by 2050 we think we can achieve that reality of \$250 billion and making sure we've got stable revenue.

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

**Mr. Rowswell:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that the Heritage Fund Opportunities Corporation is designed to maximize investment returns, ensuring the fund's growth and sustainability, and given that this corporation will use global investment partnerships and best practices from sovereign wealth funds and further given that the strong performance and independent decision-making will bring forth high returns for Albertans, can the Premier elaborate on how these measures will protect the heritage fund and maximize its long-term growth?

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

**Ms Smith:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If you look around the world, there are many sovereign wealth funds. You can look at Alaska's permanent fund, which gives a dividend to their citizens each year. You can look at Norway's fund. Norway's fund, incidentally, started in the 1990s inspired by our fund here, and it is worth \$1.6 trillion today. Qatar: they were nearly bankrupt in 1997. They started their fund in 2005, and it's worth nearly half a trillion dollars today. We have a number of different sovereign wealth funds around the world that we can use for inspiration. We know that there is a way for us to be able to invest in the critical infrastructure and other projects that will get maximum returns.

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

**Mr. Rowswell:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker and through you to the Premier. Given that the government has already committed \$2 billion from Budget 2024 to kick-start this initiative and given that the government is committed to reinvesting all earnings back into the fund and further given projections suggest the fund could exceed \$250 billion by 2050 to stabilize revenues in this province, can the Premier please outline the next steps for this plan and what

benefits can Albertans expect in the years to come from a strengthened heritage fund?

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

**Ms Smith:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, you know, when you have pension funds, they have to be invested in a far more conservative way so that you always have money available to be able to pay out the income as it comes due. With a sovereign wealth fund you have a longer term time horizon, so you're able to invest in different types of projects that yield a return over a longer period of time. There are many different organizations, many different sovereign wealth funds around the world that have tried this out. This \$2 billion investment is going to be the proof of concept. We'll be able to check back in a couple of years, and if Albertans are satisfied with the approach, we'll continue to do so.

### Health Services Procurement Process

*(continued)*

**Mr. Sabir:** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance's top official makes a serious allegation in the filed statement of claim. The Deputy Minister of Finance was worried about "kickbacks." The deputy minister raised this in December. Kickbacks would be illegal. It's a serious concern. Simple question: when did the Minister of Finance learn that his top official was concerned about kickbacks in the corrupt care scandal?

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

**Mr. Amery:** Thank you. Once again we're dealing with a statement of claim that contains unproven allegations. The fact of the matter is that this Premier and this government have taken this matter extremely seriously. To the member's point, we are working on providing everything and anything that the Auditor General's office is going to require to help facilitate answers to the questions that we all have. We're also working very closely to announce a third-party, independent investigation to provide us with all the answers that this Assembly needs and deserves.

**Mr. Sabir:** Mr. Speaker, given that the Finance minister's top official heard rumours about kickbacks and given that the AHS CEO herself was a former Deputy Minister of Finance and given that these officials are some of the top public servants in our entire government, what has the Finance minister done to ask his official for answers about these kickbacks? Please be specific.

**Mr. Amery:** Mr. Speaker, from the very beginning both the Premier and this government have taken these allegations very seriously. We are conducting a review of all of our procurement practices. We are working with the Auditor General's office to find out what documents are required, what materials, who the Auditor General needs to talk to, and we're supporting and facilitating that. In fact, the Premier even wrote to the Auditor General encouraging an expedited review so that we could get to the bottom of it. We're looking very much forward to working with the Auditor General's office to get the answers that we need.

**Mr. Sabir:** Given that the Finance minister has publicly admitted to having gone to the two hockey games on behalf of the businesses involved in the corrupt care scandal and given that he should know that these rumours of kickbacks are deeply troubling to every Albertan who believes in fiscal responsibility, will the Minister of Finance assure this House that not a dime spent on these bloated

contracts was for kickbacks, and, if not, why won't he support a public inquiry?

**Mr. Amery:** Well, Mr. Speaker, I'll say it for the third time in a row. All members on this side of the Assembly will commit to the accountability and transparency of the Auditor General's investigation and the third-party, independent investigation as well. We are in full support. We are working to do everything we can to expedite that review. This government will work diligently to make sure that all of the parties involved that are investigating this have everything they need to complete those investigations.

**Member Irwin:** The former CEO of AHS who was fired by this UCP government for trying to investigate questionable surgical contracts says she was told that, "Doug Horner was unhappy about ASG services being 'capped'." Now, ASG is the private surgery provider that is alleged to have received these bloated contracts, and former Conservative Deputy Premier Doug Horner is the Finance minister's relative, who is alleged to have lobbied for ASG to get a contract extension. So to the Premier: does the Finance minister recuse himself when his relative lobbies his ministry and remove himself from any discussions about these sketchy contracts?

**Mr. Amery:** Mr. Speaker, once again to the hon. members of the opposition, we are doing everything and we will continue to do everything that we can to make sure that the work that the Auditor General is doing to investigate the allegations that were made are fully supported in each and every way. We are committed to transparency. We are working very diligently to make sure that we get the answers that we need to address the issues with Alberta Health Services, and we'll continue to do that until the investigation is complete.

2:20

**Member Irwin:** Given that the Finance minister's own top official was worried about kickbacks built into these contracts and given that his own relative was the one lobbying for the contracts to be renewed at the same time AHS was raising serious red flags about skyrocketing costs and given that these bloated private surgical contracts are just so wildly inappropriate at any time, but especially when Albertans are struggling just to make ends meet, again, let's try the Premier: does she see just how bad the optics are?

**Mr. Amery:** Well, Mr. Speaker, the Premier has been very clear: there have been no tangible improvements in the delivery of private surgeries in this province since receiving an additional \$3.5 billion at AHS. We're working very hard to make sure that Albertans receive the health care that they need and that they can get surgeries when and where they need it. We understand that the NDP opposes any type of system that improves surgeries in this province, but on this side of the House we are absolutely committed to making sure that Albertans receive the care . . .

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood.

**Member Irwin:** Wow.

Given that those ministers and that Premier clearly don't seem to understand the seriousness of this scandal – well, one did, but he's abandoned the sinking ship – let's try the Health minister this time once more: will she support our call for a public inquiry? If she's done nothing wrong, this should be an easy yes, unless she has something to hide.

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

**Mr. Amery:** Thank you once again, Mr. Speaker. Now I'll say it for the sixth time: we are absolutely committed to supporting the Auditor General in his independent investigation of this issue. The Auditor General is completely independent and works as part of this legislative office to conduct the work that he needs to do. We are providing all of the materials, information, and people that are needed for that office to complete its review. We're also supporting an independent, third-party investigation. All of that appears to be what the hon. member is asking for, and we're happy to . . .

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Grande Prairie has a question.

### Education Funding and Curriculum

**Mr. Dyck:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Alberta is renowned for its vast oil and natural gas reserves, with the energy sector contributing roughly 25 per cent of our GDP. Our Premier's plan to double oil production and expand energy exports will drive economic growth and create more well-paying jobs across the province. Alberta's energy industry is not just our economy but our communities and our future. Could the Minister of Education outline how this revenue is being used to support education?

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

**Mr. Nicolaidis:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for the question. Of course, the vast majority of revenue that we receive within the Ministry of Education is directed primarily towards our school boards to help them support their operations, hire staff, and operate programs. In addition, we're also making a significant investment currently to build and modernize schools across the province. In September the Premier announced an \$8.6 billion investment to build 90 new schools, modernize 24 schools, and expand spaces in other settings to add 200,000 student spaces over the next seven years.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Grande Prairie.

**Mr. Dyck:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that the forestry sector in the Peace region is one of the region's significant economic drivers and given that existing forestry and wood product manufacturing exports over \$973 million annually and further given that future generations should be aware of the opportunities in forestry and gain valuable skill sets through their educations, could the Minister of Education inform this House of any plans to include the forestry sector into our current curriculum and provide opportunities for our kids to develop skills in the forestry sector?

**Mr. Nicolaidis:** Yes, of course, Mr. Speaker. The forestry sector and industry is an important part of our vibrant economy. Currently within the 7 to 9 curriculum students have the opportunity to participate in environmental, outdoor education, where they get a better understanding of forestry concepts and ideas. Furthermore, there are several career and technology studies programs and courses that are offered. There are approximately 23 of these courses that are offered in schools across the province, where students have an opportunity to gain experience directly into the forestry industry. We want to make sure that it's a priority that students learn more about career options.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Grande Prairie.

**Mr. Dyck:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that our highly environmental and responsible natural resource industry has been unfairly demonized for decades and given that this industry has helped families put food on the table, heat their homes, and earn

strong paycheques and further given that this sector exemplifies strong, can-do attitude and unwavering dedication to work ethic and hard work, could the Minister of Education please explain how we can educate our children on the importance of Alberta's oil and gas sector and instill in them an appreciation for the resources that sustain our province?

**Mr. Nicolaides:** Of course, Mr. Speaker. I completely agree. Our oil and gas sector is a critical part of our economy and our livelihoods within the province. That's one of the reasons why we've ensured that it does have a prominent place in our new curriculum. The new K to 6 science curriculum, for example, does talk about energy, does talk about our oil and gas sector, does talk about conservation, environment, waste management, and other topics that are critically important. We, of course, want to ensure that we continue to foster a strong and vibrant economy so that we can continue to invest in important programs such as in our education system and in other areas.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Edmonton-Meadows has a question.

#### Minister of Infrastructure

**Mr. Deol:** The former Infrastructure minister resigned in disgust over the corrupt care scandal, warning Albertans about shady deals and political corruption. He questioned how the UCP cabinet could look themselves in the mirror without fully investigating these allegations. Whoever replaces him will clearly inherit a mess of corrupt land deals and evidence of political interference. Will the Premier force the next Minister of Infrastructure into the same moral dilemma, or will she finally call for a full public investigation?

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

**Mr. Schow:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I want to thank that member for his question with regard to who the next Infrastructure minister will be. He will have that answer today at 4 p.m.

**Mr. Deol:** Given that the former Minister of Infrastructure ordered an internal audit into a land deal with Sam Mraiche, who flipped the property for \$300,000 profit, and given that he said he does not trust the Premier or Health minister to conduct an internal investigation because, in his words, there is a conflict of interest if you are investigating yourself, will the Premier commit right now that her next hand-picked Infrastructure minister won't try to bury another scandal and instead call for a full public investigation?

**Mr. Schow:** Well, Mr. Speaker, I can assure you and I can assure the House that whomever the Premier picks to be the next Infrastructure minister will serve the role diligently and will do a fantastic job serving this province because I can tell you that we have great needs. Albertans expect services that they pay for. They're going to get that with health care, and they're also going to get that with Alberta's next Infrastructure minister, which will be appointed today at 4 p.m.

**Mr. Deol:** Given the former Minister of Infrastructure called for a potential RCMP investigation into corrupt care and allegations of corruption and given the former AHS CEO, acting on advice of the AHS board, was prepared to hand over evidence of corruption and political interference to the RCMP and given this UCP government then fired both the AHS CEO and the entire board, will this government stop meddling in the investigation and commit to an independent, public inquiry into these corruption allegations?

**Mr. Amery:** Mr. Speaker, thank you for the question. Once again, the NDP has asked this a number of times. I'll answer with the same answer a number of times. We have committed to an independent, third-party investigation. We are working with the Auditor General's office. We certainly do not direct the police on what they do, and we will not do that. The police are entitled to do as they should and as they please. It is a fully independent body, and we'll respect whatever comes from that.

Thank you.

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

#### Midwifery Services

**Mrs. Johnson:** Mr. Speaker, Alberta's government is committed to ensuring new mothers, regardless of where they live, have access to high-quality maternal health care. As part of this commitment the Minister of Health recently announced a \$10 million investment over three years to implement a provincial midwifery strategy. This strategy aims to attract more midwives, expand services, and improve access to care, particularly in rural, remote, and Indigenous communities. Can the Minister of Health explain how this investment will strengthen midwifery services and improve critical maternal health outcomes for babies and their mothers across Alberta?

2:30

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

**Member LaGrange:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker and to the member for the question. The new Alberta midwifery strategy will provide \$10 million over three years to support improvements for maternal health services right across the province. This funding will promote engagement with Indigenous communities and birth workers, pilot innovative projects, address data gaps, attract and retain internationally educated midwives, and encourage the integration of midwifery practices into team-based primary care. Our government is committed to ensuring Albertans can access high-quality maternal health care in the province, and I'm so pleased that we are finally able to show this program.

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

**Mrs. Johnson:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker and, through you, to the minister. Given that midwives play an essential role in supporting maternal and infant health by providing care from early pregnancy through labour and up to six weeks postpartum and given that many communities, particularly in rural and remote areas, struggle to attract and retain midwives and given Alberta's recent investment includes initiatives to recruit more midwives, including internationally educated professionals, can the Minister of Health please outline the specific steps being taken to address workforce challenges and to ensure Albertans have access to midwifery services where and when they need them?

**Member LaGrange:** I'm happy to, Mr. Speaker. Addressing workforce challenges is a top priority for our government as we have heard from many First Nations, Métis, and Inuit families that increased access to midwifery services is critical, especially in rural and remote areas of the province. We want to grow our own. We will implement innovative initiatives to continue to attract midwives to Alberta and implement targeted programs that support retention. The Alberta midwifery strategy is our commitment to improving the health and well-being of women and children right

across the province. I am looking forward to seeing the dividends that this produces.

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

**Mrs. Johnson:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that Alberta's health care system benefits greatly from a team-based approach with health care professionals collaborating to provide the best possible care and given Alberta's midwifery strategy emphasizes integrating midwifery services into the broader health care system to strengthen maternal health care and given this includes better coordination between midwives and physicians as well as engagement with Indigenous birth workers to improve culturally appropriate care, can the Minister of Health please explain how this investment will enhance interdisciplinary collaboration and ensure that midwifery is effectively incorporated into Alberta's primary health care system?

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

**Member LaGrange:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As of January 2025 181 midwives were practising across the province, reflecting a 26 per cent increase from 2020. This is exciting news. Through the Alberta midwifery strategy \$10 million will help improve access to community-based maternity care as well as aid in reducing service gaps by focusing on expansion, integration, and standardization of midwifery services. Additionally, AHS has worked hard to integrate midwifery practices into hospitals right across the province and continues to explore opportunities to grant clinical privileges for midwives in their facilities. Great news.

#### Health Services Procurement Process

*(continued)*

**Ms Al-Guneid:** Mr. Speaker, every day we seem to discover a new development, a new angle, a new character in the UCP's corrupt care scandal. The Minister of Health should answer questions about why she tried to sweep these allegations under the rug. Why did the Minister of Health, upon learning of these bloated contracts, not immediately direct her department to call in the Auditor General?

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

**Member LaGrange:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The members opposite continue to put forward misinformation. These allegations have not been tested in court. This is about an HR issue, where there is a claim that is seeking a \$1.7 million claim on top of severance. We will be filing our statement of defence very shortly. The government will file the statement of defence in the appropriate time allotted.

**Ms Al-Guneid:** Given that the corrupt care allegations are extremely serious, given that reports allege that MHCare has been the beneficiary of more than \$600 million in contracts from Alberta Health Services, given that the minister is still overseeing the fallout from the Turkish Tylenol deal that wasted \$70 million of taxpayer money on medication that no one used, why is the Minister of Health refusing to answer any questions about this scandal that she had the responsibility to fix?

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

**Member LaGrange:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The government, as I said earlier, will be filing our statement of defence shortly, and we will also be vigorously defending against this claim. I am committed to ensuring that our health care system and the

procurement processes within it are beyond reproach. Albertans in this province deserve transparency. That is what we are going to get through the third-party independent review as well as the Auditor General, who we have been co-operating with fully.

**Ms Al-Guneid:** Given that the Minister of Health knew about these allegations for over eight months, given that she has fired her top public servant and walked the AHS board out the door, given that these allegations of political interference and bloated contracts are shocking and unacceptable and given that Albertans deserve answers and deserve better than this scandal, if the Minister of Health has nothing to hide, why doesn't she support a public inquiry?

**Member LaGrange:** Mr. Speaker, again, I am supporting full transparency through an Auditor General study, report, investigation, whatever you want to call it as well as . . . [interjections]

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

**Member LaGrange:** Mr. Speaker, the members opposite need to take yes for an answer. We are going to get down to the bottom of it because we want to know. I want to remind everyone that these were AHS processes with AHS people that are being looked at and investigated. The Auditor General and the third-party review will get down to the bottom of it.

**Member Kayande:** Mr. Speaker, the allegations made by the former AHS CEO suggest the worst government corruption in Alberta's history. The allegations are not about the AHS procurement process; they are about direct interference by the Premier's office and the Minister of Health into that process. In a shocking twist the UCP is blaming the very AHS leadership that they have fired, hired, rinse and repeat. Can the Health minister explain how one can scapegoat the people they select to do a job for the scandals arising from that job?

**Member LaGrange:** Mr. Speaker, as I've said many a time, there will be a vigorous statement of defence out within the appropriate time period. But I have to remind the members opposite that, again, these were AHS contracts. We have not signed any new AHS contracts because of the fact that, even though they were RFPed in 2021 and they were awarded in 2022, they were still under negotiation by AHS. This independent review will get down to the bottom of it. [interjections]

**The Speaker:** Order.

The hon. Member for Calgary-Elbow.

**Member Kayande:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We know those contracts were under negotiation because there were allegations of corruption.

Given that now the former Minister of Infrastructure stated, and I quote: we can't continue the cycle of dismissing person after person, and they're trying to gaslight us into thinking that somehow everybody who goes in there becomes corrupted by the system; at some point we have to take a look at those making the decisions and doing the dismissals, and given the former Minister of Infrastructure knows where we should be looking for answers, why doesn't the Health minister step down and allow a fulsome public investigation? [interjections]

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

**Mr. Schow:** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Health is not going anywhere. This minister and this Premier have undertaken a huge

task of refocusing Alberta's health care system to make sure that all Albertans have access to the quality, world-class health care that they deserve. It is not an easy task, but the flak is heaviest when you're over the target, and right now we are clearly on the right path in making sure that people get the health care that they deserve.

**Member Kayande:** Mr. Speaker, given that corrupt care goes well beyond Alberta Health Services – we have seen corrupt care seep into public safety with Sam Mraiche's police commissioner friend – and given it's made its way into Infrastructure with Mraiche's business making 300 grand in a land-flip scheme, why does this government like this guy so much to the point they're actively increasing hip replacement wait times and surgery costs for his profit? Will the Minister of Health do what is necessary and call for a public inquiry into all aspects of the corrupt care scandal?

2:40

**Member LaGrange:** Mr. Speaker, the numbers prove it for themselves. In 2018-2019 acute care facilities, which is AHS, did 257,000 surgeries. They are now doing, this year, 251,000 surgeries. CSFs, chartered surgical facilities, did 40,170. They're now doing 58,950. The Enoch chartered surgical facility, that has no connection with anything that's mentioned, has not even got a negotiated contract even though it was RFPed in 2021.

### Youth Justice Committees

**Mr. Long:** Mr. Speaker, youth justice committees in Alberta offer a community-centred alternative to court for young individuals facing minor charges. By involving volunteers, families, victims, and the legal system, youth justice committees help youth take responsibility for their actions, create healing plans, and restore community connections. This approach fosters second chances, transforms mistakes into opportunities, and encourages positive conflict resolution, benefiting both youth and their communities. Can the Minister of Justice share how this program is helping youth who have been in trouble with the law get back on track?

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

**Mr. Amery:** Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Alberta's government funds 37 youth justice committees across the province, including two in the great riding of West Yellowhead. This money is used to support volunteers involved in these programs who do an incredible job of working with young people to turn their lives around. When someone completes the program, the Crown often withdraws the charges. I'm proud of the work that these committees are doing to help give our youth a second chance in this province.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for West Yellowhead.

**Mr. Long:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to the minister. Given that this government is focused on ensuring all Albertans have timely access to a sustainable, effective, and fair justice system and given that the government is also focused on making sure our justice system continues to work efficiently and gets our most violent offenders off our streets, can the Minister of Justice tell the House about the success of these committees across Alberta and how they help our justice system focus on prosecuting our most violent offenders as quickly as possible?

**Mr. Amery:** Well, Mr. Speaker, the member is absolutely right. On this side of the House we want to prioritize getting violent offenders off our streets, and these types of programs do divert nonviolent offenders from taking part in traditional court proceedings so the justice system can focus on exactly that. But the good news is that

it's not just our youth that are benefiting from these programs. We have programs like our drug treatment courts, which are seeing a 70 per cent reduction in recidivism after graduates go through the entire program. I think those are tremendous successes.

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

**Mr. Long:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that there are many nonviolent offenders who could benefit from alternative sentencing instead of incarceration and given that awareness of these programs is paramount to the continued success of youth justice committees, can the Minister of Justice tell the House why there's been a drop in referrals to these crucial programs that are helping youth get back on track?

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

**Mr. Amery:** Well, thank you once again, Mr. Speaker. The member is right. There is a drop in referrals, and we think that awareness of these youth justice committees is important. Right now I'm looking into the matter. I'm looking to work with our Crown prosecution offices. I'm looking to work with the organizations and agencies within our justice system. We want to ensure that all youth that are eligible know about this program, and we want to make sure that everybody in the criminal justice system takes advantage of these types of diversion programs where appropriate. We also want to make sure that we do this because our top priority is a fair and accessible justice system in this province.

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

Given the fact that we will have a recess in just a couple of minutes, we will proceed immediately to the continuation of the daily Routine.

### Notices of Motions

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

**Mr. Schow:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to give oral notice of Bill 39, the Financial Statutes Amendment Act, 2025, sponsored by the President of Treasury Board and the Minister of Finance.

### Tabling Returns and Reports

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

**Mr. Wright:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to table the five requisite copies of the *Edmonton Journal* article I referenced in my Bill 37 debate yesterday. I also rise to table a RCMP news release about the superlabs on RCMP file 2024-62, a *Bureau* article about the RCMP bust on superlabs linked to Mexico and transnational exports as well as a *National Post* article, Trump's Fentanyl Ultimatum Puts Canada's 'Super Labs' Under Microscope, highlighting the Global Affairs Canada briefing on this exact topic.

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Government House Leader has a tabling.

**Mr. Schow:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Pursuant to Standing Order 59.01(3) I rise to table the appropriate number of copies of the 2025-26 main estimate schedule.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood.

**Member Irwin:** Thank you. I'd like to table three e-mails from education support workers who are on strike with CUPE, two from education assistants and one from an administrative assistant. These are three of the thousands of e-mails we've all received. The UCP needs to listen and support these workers, who are outside rallying right now, and pay them the fair wages they deserve.

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

**Ms Hoffman:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is probably my favourite tabling so far. It's all of the Christmas cards that students have created in my riding over many years. I'm excited to be able to share them with all of you. Please see them in the library.

**Mr. Haji:** Mr. Speaker, my office has been receiving a ton of e-mails around corrupt care, and this is an e-mail from Marilyn Tanguay, who's worried about the recent allegations about potential misuse of taxpayers' dollars.

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

**Ms Chapman:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to table a letter from a Leduc mom, Lisa. Her sons with ADHD aren't able to be accommodated in the classroom now. Conservatives might want to pay attention; she's not voting for you any more.

**The Speaker:** Are there others? Hon. Member for Edmonton-McClung, was that a wave or no? Do you have one? Yeah. The hon. Member for Edmonton-McClung.

**Mr. Dach:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to table the requisite five copies of a recent *Calgary Herald* op-ed about the green line, written by former long-time Calgary city councillor Shane Keating, who writes that the province has forced the city of Calgary to support a worse project that is shorter than the one that was already under way. A Partnership in Name Only is the title.

**The Speaker:** Are there others?

Seeing and hearing none, hon. members, that brings us to points of order. At approximately 2:12 the Government House Leader rose on a point of order.

#### Point of Order Parliamentary Language

**Mr. Schow:** I did, Mr. Speaker, and I will be brief. At the time noted, at 2:12 or 2:13, off the record the Member for Edmonton-Glenora, while the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Services was answering a question, clearly said: it's you; it's your corruption. I don't think that this is parliamentary language. I'm not sure if the Blues caught it – that would be left to you and your records – but I do believe this is out of order under 23(h), (i), and (j).

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Edmonton-Glenora has risen.

**Ms Hoffman:** I'm happy to apologize and withdraw.

**The Speaker:** I consider this matter dealt with and concluded.

#### Statement by the Speaker

##### Decorum

**The Speaker:** Hon. members, that makes it Orders of the Day,

Ordres du jour, but before the Assembly briefly recesses – and it will not be quite as brief as it once would have been because of the expediency of the House; thank you very much for that – we will allow adequate time to prepare for the Budget Address by the hon. the President of Treasury Board and Minister of Finance.

I want to reiterate what I said in the procedural memo that I sent to members last Friday, that I am sure every member took the opportunity to peruse. Regarding the Budget Address, the Budget Address is a ceremonial event, and as such electronic devices are not to be used, members are not to consume food or drink with the exception of water that has been provided at their desks, and it is expected of members that they will maintain order and decorum befitting such a ceremonial session.

[The Assembly adjourned from 2:49 p.m. to 3:15 p.m.]

**The Sergeant-at-Arms:** Order!

**The Speaker:** Please be seated.

#### Orders of the Day

##### Transmittal of Estimates

**Mr. Horner:** Mr. Speaker, I have received certain messages 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 estimates of certain sums required by the offices of the Legislative Assembly for the service of the province for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2026, and recommends the same to the Legislative Assembly.

The Lieutenant Governor transmits estimates of certain sums required by the government of Alberta for service of the province for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2026, and recommends the same to the Legislative Assembly.

Please be seated.

**Mr. Horner:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the 2025-2026 offices of the Legislative Assembly estimates and the 2025-2026 government estimates. In addition, I also wish to table the 2025-2028 government of Alberta strategic plan and the Budget 2025 ministry business plans.

#### Government Motions

##### Budget Address

57. Mr. Horner moved:

Be it resolved that the Assembly approve in general the business plans and fiscal policies of the government as presented in the Assembly on February 27, 2025.

**The Speaker:** The hon. the President of Treasury Board, the Minister of Finance. [some applause]

**Mr. Horner:** Just wait. You might not like it.

Mr. Speaker, I now wish to table the government's 2025-2028 fiscal plan and move Government Motion 57. Buckle up.

It is truly an honour to rise in the Assembly today and present Budget 2025. As I do, I am keenly aware that we are in a particularly interesting time in our history. By that, I mean we are also in a time of change here in Alberta, in Canada, certainly south

of the border, and, indeed, around the world. But, Mr. Speaker, you'll notice that I did not say that these times are unprecedented.

Unprecedented, by definition, is something that has never been known or experienced before, and any Albertan who has a few years under their belt knows that our province is no stranger to change or challenge, be it the adversity of Mother Nature from the dust bowl drought of the '30s to the Jasper wildfire of last year; the whimsy of economic forces from the market crashes in 1929 and 2008; booms and busts of the oil cycle that can sometimes happen over a period of mere weeks or last for years; damaging federal policies from Trudeau the elder's national energy program in the 1970s to Trudeau Jr.'s production cap, Impact Assessment Act, and tanker bans today; or the potential tariffs from the U.S. administration, a phenomenon that is both new and old.

Alberta has never hesitated to rise to any challenge, to fight for what's fair or fight for whatever might threaten our quality of life, and, Mr. Speaker, we will never hesitate. So as we once again see change and challenges, know that experience has prepared us for whatever may come our way.

In April 1973, during question period, the then minister of mines and minerals responded to questions about potential tariffs on our products by President Richard Nixon. Later that day Premier Peter Lougheed responded to concerns over tariffs by saying that Canada should develop our own domestic oil supply to meet the needs of Canadians. He asked in this very Chamber whether the utilization of crude oil sources from Venezuela, Iran, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia by parts of Canada was security of supply. How very familiar.

3:20

Mr. Speaker, I don't use the word "unprecedented" because that is not the situation we're in now. Fifty-two years ago Peter Lougheed was addressing many of the issues we face now with many of the same questions we find ourselves asking as Albertans and Canadians today. These are not new problems, but we're in times that will require us to strive to new levels of courage and tenacity.

That brings us to the theme of Budget 2025: meeting the challenge. Meeting the challenge means being clear eyed about what's right in front of us and being ready to address it. It means doing the right things to ensure we remain steadfast in the face of headwinds. It means keeping the ground we've worked so hard to gain while also doing what we can to maintain our advantages so we can continue building on them for future generations.

Mr. Speaker, Budget 2025 is meeting the challenges facing Alberta with responsible decisions to fund the priorities of today. It's meeting the challenge of the cost of living. Population growth and geopolitical uncertainty are not the only challenges we face. The cost of living is an ever-present burden that individuals and families across Alberta and Canada are struggling to bear.

One year ago I stood in this Chamber and said that we would bring in the tax cut we promised in the 2023 election in two phases, beginning in 2026 with a 9 per cent tax bracket on the first \$60,000 of income and then fully implementing the 8 per cent bracket in 2027. As the Premier stated on the day she announced the tax cut: it's your money; you earned it, not the government.

Fifty years ago in Budget 1975 the government of the time lowered personal income taxes on Albertans due to, and I quote, "a time of substantial increases in the cost of living." The average savings for each Alberta taxpayer at the time was approximately \$140, and for an average family the savings was approximately \$98.

Mr. Speaker, this is a government that is proud of being there for our fellow Albertans when they need it. Our balance sheet is stronger than that of many Alberta families. I'm very proud to announce that Budget 2025 will fully implement the tax cut this

year, two years ahead of schedule, and I can assure Albertans that the savings will far exceed those realized in 1975, saving individuals up to \$750 a year and families up to \$1,500 a year. Budget 2025 is meeting the challenge of the cost of living by helping families move towards a brighter future and adding more to each and every one of their paycheques.

We have allocated a significant amount in contingency for natural disasters and unanticipated cost pressures that may arise throughout the year. This year we have significantly increased that amount to potentially address the uncertainty around tariffs and the uncertainty around public bargaining settlements.

We hope that our American friends and neighbours will understand the value of our trading relationship. They enjoy tremendous benefits from our energy exports, paying a lower price than from other markets and allowing them to fuel their vehicles and heat their homes. But we cannot depend on it. That is why we've allocated additional contingency dollars to the contingency this year to address any potential impacts of tariffs from the United States if they are applied, whether that happens next week, next month, or a year from now.

Budget 2025 is meeting the challenge of uncertainties in trade and security by focusing on diplomacy and supporting the economy. Budget 2025 is meeting the challenge of a rapidly growing population with continued investments in education and health care.

Before I speak in more detail about this year's budget, I'm proud to share how our government's continued hard work has created a solid foundation, ensuring we are well positioned to maintain the Alberta advantage come what may. Now and throughout our history resiliency and optimism have been in our DNA and are two reasons why we always overcome our challenges. Through the government's efforts we've created one of the most business-friendly environments in North America. We have lowered corporate taxes to be competitive while bringing in more revenue than under the previous rate; attracted international investment from around the world; supported small businesses, start-ups, scale-ups; and attracted continually high levels of venture capital while improving and maintaining the highest level of productivity in Canada.

But we're not done. We're continuing to cut red tape, working to save Alberta businesses even more than the \$2.75 billion they've saved since 2019. We are maintaining Canada's most competitive tax regime for residents and businesses alike. As the province with the fewest exemptions under the Canadian free trade agreement, we are the national leader in ending barriers to interprovincial trade.

We're also supporting and growing our energy industry because we know the world will look to us for their energy needs for decades to come. As the rest of Canada now realizes that the most powerful asset we have as a nation is the world's most innovative energy sector, it is perhaps a moment in history where we can grow our economy as a province, a nation, and a continent to new heights. The key to that audacious goal will be growing our skilled workforce to ensure we have the labour force industry needs for the future, building our trades workforce, training more nurses and other health care workers, empowering thinkers to harness the power of artificial intelligence and quantum computing, and so many more.

We are seeing growth in every corner of our province, particularly as we work to diversify our economy. There are major investments outside of traditional oil and gas happening in this province. In fact, investment by industries outside of oil and gas extraction is forecast to reach \$54 billion by 2027. That includes Dow Chemical and Linde's investment of \$13.6 billion just outside Edmonton and companies like De Havilland, which plans to construct a new aircraft manufacturing facility near Calgary. Dairy

Innovation West has broken ground on a new \$70 million milk concentration plant near Blackfalds, and Mondi Group has acquired the Hinton pulp mill with the intention of constructing a more than \$500 million expansion.

We often talk about the Alberta advantage. It was first coined in August 1993 in this very Chamber. The throne speech from that year stated that the

government will not try to buy prosperity through higher taxes. Instead, it will build on Alberta's existing advantage of low taxes and its free enterprise spirit to develop the most competitive economy in North America. The government will strengthen the Alberta Advantage and sell it aggressively around the globe.

Again we look to the example of those who came before us, strengthening us as we stand in the face of adversity. All this is to say that the Alberta advantage is alive and well and recognized not only by the many businesses and investors who choose us but also by the many individuals and families from across the country and globe who are choosing to relocate to our province.

We're expecting that the Alberta economy will continue to grow this year even in the face of a volatile landscape of Canada-U.S. trade relations and lower global demand. We welcome newcomers with open arms, but we are also seeing the pressures such growth can bring. After our population accelerated to one of the fastest rates on the planet in 2023 and 2024, Alberta's public services are feeling a strain.

Our housing market, facing record levels of demand, rose to the challenge with almost 48,000 units in 2024, exceeding all other provinces on a per capita basis. We expect that our home builders will continue to build throughout this year, but there will still be growth that we must meet. Many who come to this province take time to join the workforce and enter the tax rolls, all while utilizing our world-class schools and health care system.

In this budget process we were faced with difficult choices. We are being buffeted by forces that exceed our ability to influence or predict. We rely on our fiscal framework to guide budget decisions and closely evaluate our revenue throughout the year. Once a deficit is reported in the year-end financial statements, the government has three years to return to a balanced budget. As affordability, economic trade, and growth pressures affect our province and our government, we find ourselves in a situation that requires us to address those pressures.

Budget 2025, if passed, will have a deficit of \$5.2 billion. It contains the largest ever expenditure levels in our health care system, meeting the challenge of population growth and ensuring Albertans have access to health care when and where they need it.

3:30

Our education system, facing record enrolment growth, has an increase of funding that will bring total funding above \$10 billion. By '27-28 education funding is expected to increase to over \$11 billion. These increases mean that our schools will be able to hire more than 4,000 educational staff, including teachers, educational assistants, bus drivers, and other support staff.

Our capital investment in new school infrastructure totals \$2.6 billion over three years and will create the classrooms and facilities for 90,000 students over the next four years and 200,000 students in total over the next seven. Our total capital budget is \$26.1 billion over the next three years, an increase of \$1.1 billion from Budget 2024, supporting more than 26,000 direct jobs through 2027-2028.

Budget 2025 also allocated more than \$3.6 billion over three years to expand our health care facilities. This includes funding for continuing care under the new agency assisted living Alberta and \$207 million for funding in compassionate care facilities that will provide care for adults and youth suffering from mental health or

addiction issues who are a danger to themselves or others. Budget 2025 also includes funding for expansions to the Misericordia and Grey Nuns hospitals in Edmonton.

Budget 2025 is meeting the challenges facing Alberta with responsible decisions to fund the priorities of today. In a time of tremendous uncertainty and geopolitical challenges from around the world, whether they be directly across our border or in other hemispheres, immense population growth, and continued dereliction of leadership from Ottawa, Alberta will meet the challenge. For decades the United States has been our largest trading partner. Uncountable billions of dollars have crossed our shared border. Last year we exported well over \$100 billion to the United States; the vast majority of those exports were products from our energy sector.

I mentioned that we are the province with the fewest barriers to interprovincial trade. Those impediments to the free flow of goods are at the forefront of the national conversation at this moment in time. Budget 2025 is an investment in economic supports but also an investment that builds on our past strengths. We stand on the shoulders of giants. Hopefully, we can finally rectify the mistakes of the past and meet the challenge of the moment and other provinces can permit the free flow of goods from coast to coast to coast.

Alberta's government is continuing to build the workforce we need today and for the future to grow and diversify our economy. Included in this budget are investments in NorQuest College to expand their skills training capabilities, the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology for a new advanced skills centre, redevelopment of the campus centre at the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology, a major investment in the biological sciences centre at the University of Alberta, and a multidisciplinary hub at the University of Calgary.

Rural communities are vital to Alberta's success. Targeted investments in Budget 2025 will support their growth and prosperity. The University of Lethbridge is continuing to receive funding to expand their rural medical teaching school, and Budget 2025 contains funding to attract and retain health care providers in rural Alberta. The budget is also providing additional funding for health care facilities from Beaverlodge to Cardston.

Mr. Speaker, you may have noticed that for Budget 2025 we were looking for inspiration from the past. That does not mean we are not looking forward, but as we plan for a prosperous future, we cannot ignore our history. I return to a speech made in this Chamber in 1976, when in the introduction of the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund Act Premier Lougheed stated that the reliance for services by the provincial government and, hence, the citizens upon revenues from nonrenewable resources is a factor that needs to be frequently underlined. Nearly five decades later that reliance is more evident than ever.

Resource revenue is the Achilles heel of the province. We will not be able to rely on that revenue indefinitely. That is why our government has taken the audacious and bold step of releasing a plan to grow the heritage savings trust fund to \$250 billion by 2050. At that time we will be able to replace at least \$10 billion of resource revenue with investment income from the fund while continuing to grow the fund, ensuring that future generations will be able to continue to provide the services and infrastructure needed to ensure the highest standard of living. We are meeting the challenge of securing Alberta's long-term prosperity.

Mr. Speaker, opportunity can arise from challenges. Tough choices we're making today will lead to new opportunities tomorrow. Like our predecessors have shown us, the work we do now will ensure future generations of Albertans continue to enjoy the Alberta advantage. We are in a difficult time. We are facing challenges that have tested the

mettle of some of our greatest leaders. But the choices we make today can create a future that is prosperous and maintains the benefits and values we enjoy today, so we are meeting the challenge.

After 120 years as a province this budget maintains the promise of Alberta, that of a province that is strong and free. Thank you.

**Ms Gray:** Mr. Speaker, I move that we adjourn debate.

[Motion to adjourn debate carried]

**The Speaker:** Prior to calling the hon. the Government House Leader to adjourn the Assembly, I hope that the members will provide a small piece of Speaker latitude and join me in thanking

the hundreds of Albertans who have joined with us today: community leaders; Indigenous leaders; municipal leaders; leaders in postsecondary, labour; business leaders who've taken time out of their day to join us here, including former Premier Mr. Ed Stelmach. Please join me in welcoming these guests.

The hon. the Government House Leader.

**Mr. Schow:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that the Assembly be adjourned until 1:30 on Monday, March 10, 2025.

[Motion carried; the Assembly adjourned at 3:37 p.m. to Monday, March 10, at 1:30 p.m.]



## **Bill Status Report for the 31th Legislature - 1st Session (2023-2025)**

**Activity to Thursday, February 27, 2025**

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.), 868-73 (Mar. 26, 2024 aft.), 904-05 (Mar. 27, 2024 aft.), 899-901 (Mar. 27, 2024 aft.), 970-75 (Apr. 9, 2024 aft.), 1003-05 (Apr. 10, 2024 aft., passed)

Committee of the Whole — 1005-09 (Apr. 10, 2024 aft., passed)

Third Reading — 1040-43 (Apr. 11, 2024 aft., passed)

Royal Assent — (May 16, 2024 aft.) [Comes into force on various dates; SA 2024 c4 ]

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

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

Second Reading — 976-90 (Apr. 9, 2024 aft.), 1009-15 (Apr. 10, 2024 aft.), 1091-96 (Apr. 16, 2024 aft., passed)

Committee of the Whole — 1217-20 (Apr. 23, 2024 aft.), 1334-1341 (May 7, 2024 aft., passed)

Third Reading — 1448-55 (May 14, 2024 aft., passed on division)

Royal Assent — (May 16, 2024 aft.) [Comes into force May 16, 2024, except section 1, which comes into force on proclamation; SA 2024 c6 ]

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

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

Second Reading — 1015-22 (Apr. 10, 2024 aft.), 1043-46 (Apr. 11, 2024 aft.), 1096-102 (Apr. 16, 2024 aft.), 1135-40 (Apr. 17, 2024 aft., passed on division)

Committee of the Whole — 1220 (Apr. 23, 2024 aft.), 1239-48 (Apr. 24, 2024 aft., passed with amendments)

Third Reading — 1367-74 (May 8, 2024 aft., passed)

Royal Assent — (May 16, 2024 aft.) [Comes into force May 16, 2024; SA 2024 c3 ]

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

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

Second Reading — 1102-09 (Apr. 16, 2024 aft.), 1132-35 (Apr. 17, 2024 aft.), 1161-63 (Apr. 18, 2024 aft., passed)

Committee of the Whole — 1220-28 (Apr. 23, 2024 aft.), 1341-43 (May 7, 2024 aft., passed)

Third Reading — 1395-1400 (May 9, 2024 aft., passed on division)

Royal Assent — (May 16, 2024 aft.) [Comes into force May 16, 2024, with some sections deemed to have come into force on March 21, 2024; SA 2024 cR-5.3 ]

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

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

Second Reading — 855-63 (*Mar. 26, 2024 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 887-93 (*Mar. 27, 2024 aft., adjourned*), 903 (*Mar. 27, 2024 aft., passed*)

Third Reading — 920-24 (*Mar. 28, 2024 aft., passed*)

Royal Assent — (*Mar. 28, 2024 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force on March 28, 2024; SA 2024 c1 ]

**Bill 15 — Appropriation (Supplementary Supply) Act, 2024 (\$) (Horner)**

First Reading — 841 (*Mar. 25, 2024 eve., passed*)

Second Reading — 863-68 (*Mar. 26, 2024 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 893-99 (*Mar. 27, 2024 aft., adjourned*), 901-04 (*Mar. 27, 2024 aft., passed*)

Third Reading — 924 (*Mar. 28, 2024 aft., passed*), 920 (*Mar. 28, 2024 aft.*)

Royal Assent — (*Mar. 28, 2024 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force on March 28, 2024; SA 2024 c2 ]

**Bill 16 — Red Tape Reduction Statutes Amendment Act, 2024 (Nally)**

First Reading — 935-36 (*Apr. 8, 2024 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1127-32 (*Apr. 17, 2024 aft.*), 1248-53 (*Apr. 24, 2024 aft.*), 1279-82 (*Apr. 25, 2024 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 1456-60 (*May 14, 2024 aft., passed*)

Third Reading — 1490-92 (*May 15, 2024 aft., passed*)

Royal Assent — (*May 16, 2024 aft.*) [Comes into force on various dates; SA 2024 c7 ]

**Bill 17 — Canadian Centre of Recovery Excellence Act (Williams)**

First Reading — 959 (*Apr. 9, 2024 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1156-61 (*Apr. 18, 2024 aft.*), 1272-79 (*Apr. 25, 2024 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 1361-67 (*May 8, 2024 aft., passed*)

Third Reading — 1464-66 (*May 14, 2024 aft., passed*)

Royal Assent — (*May 16, 2024 aft.*) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2024 cC-1.5 ]

**Bill 18\* — Provincial Priorities Act (Smith)**

First Reading — 993 (*Apr. 10, 2024 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1122-27 (*Apr. 17, 2024 aft.*), 1209-17 (*Apr. 23, 2024 aft.*), 1253-60 (*Apr. 24, 2024 aft.*), 1329-34 (*May 7, 2024 aft.*), 1533-40 (*May 21, 2024 aft., passed on division*)

Committee of the Whole — 1540-42 (*May 21, 2024 aft.*), 1569-77 (*May 22, 2024 aft., passed with amendments*)

Third Reading — 1664-68 (*May 28, 2024 aft.*), 1692-99 (*May 28, 2024 eve., passed on division*)

Royal Assent — (*May 30, 2024 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2024 cP-35.5 ]

**Bill 19 — Utilities Affordability Statutes Amendment Act, 2024 (Neudorf)**

First Reading — 1177 (*Apr. 22, 2024 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1344-48 (*May 7, 2024 aft.*), 1400-03 (*May 9, 2024 aft.*), 1455-56 (*May 14, 2024 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 1460-64 (*May 14, 2024 aft., passed*)

Third Reading — 1492-96 (*May 15, 2024 aft., passed*)

Royal Assent — (*May 16, 2024 aft.*) [Comes into force on various dates; SA 2024 c8 ]

**Bill 20\* — Municipal Affairs Statutes Amendment Act, 2024 (McIver)**

First Reading — 1271 (*Apr. 25, 2024 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1374-82 (*May 8, 2024 aft.*), 1562-69 (*May 22, 2024 aft., passed on division*)

Committee of the Whole — 1591-94 (*May 23, 2024 aft.*), 1669-75 (*May 28, 2024 aft., passed with amendments*)

Third Reading — 1699-1700 (*May 28, 2024 eve.*), 1712-13 (*May 28, 2024 eve.*), 1729-35 (*May 29, 2024 aft., passed on division*)

Royal Assent — (*May 30, 2024 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force on proclamation, except ss 2(24) and (25), which come into force on January 1, 2025; SA 2024 c11 ]

**Bill 21 — Emergency Statutes Amendment Act, 2024 (Ellis)**

First Reading — 1394 (*May 9, 2024 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1508-19 (*May 16, 2024 aft.*), 1542-48 (*May 21, 2024 aft.*), 1634-41 (*May 27, 2024 eve., passed on division*)

Committee of the Whole — 1649-50 (*May 27, 2024 eve.*), 1675-81 (*May 28, 2024 aft.*), 1683-84 (*May 28, 2024 eve., passed*)

Third Reading — 1700-01 (*May 28, 2024 eve.*), 1704--11 (*May 28, 2024 eve., passed on division*)

Royal Assent — (*May 30, 2024 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force May 30, 2024; SA 2024 c9 ]

**Bill 22 — Health Statutes Amendment Act, 2024 (LaGrange)**

First Reading — 1447 (*May 14, 2024 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1594-1600 (*May 23, 2024 aft.*), 1641-48 (*May 27, 2024 eve., passed on division*)

Committee of the Whole — 1650 (*May 27, 2024 eve.*), 1684-90 (*May 28, 2024 eve., passed*)

Third Reading — 1700-01 (*May 28, 2024 eve.*), 1713-15 (*May 28, 2024 eve.*), 1735-41 (*May 29, 2024 aft., passed on division*)

Royal Assent — (*May 30, 2024 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2024 c10 ]

**Bill 24\* — Alberta Bill of Rights Amendment Act, 2024 (Amery)**

First Reading — 1754-55 (*Oct. 28, 2024 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1788-1805 (*Oct. 29, 2024 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 1819-36 (*Oct. 30, 2024 aft.*), 2051-58 (*Nov. 20, 2024 aft.*), 2082 (*Nov. 21, 2024 aft.*), 2144-45 (*Nov. 26, 2024 aft., passed with amendments*)

Third Reading — 2171-72 (*Nov. 27, 2024 aft., passed on division*)

Royal Assent — (*Dec. 5, 2024 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force December 5, 2024; SA 2024 c12 ]

**Bill 25 — Early Learning and Child Care Amendment Act, 2024 (Jones)**

First Reading — 1818 (*Oct. 30, 2024 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1855-56 (*Oct. 31, 2024 aft.*), 1907-12 (*Nov. 5, 2024 aft.*), 2027-29 (*Nov. 19, 2024 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 2189 (*Nov. 27, 2024 aft.*), 1717-20 (*Nov. 27, 2024 eve., passed*)

Third Reading — 2222-27 (*Nov. 28, 2024 aft., passed*)

Royal Assent — (*Dec. 5, 2024 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2024 c13 ]

**Bill 26 — Health Statutes Amendment Act, 2024 (No. 2) (LaGrange)**

First Reading — 1848 (*Oct. 31, 2024 aft., passed on division*)

Second Reading — 1900-07 (*Nov. 5, 2024 aft.*), 1969-77 (*Nov. 7, 2024 aft.*), 2137-40 (*Nov. 26, 2024 aft., passed on division*)

Committee of the Whole — 2145-50 (*Nov. 26, 2024 aft.*), 2172-77 (*Nov. 27, 2024 eve., passed*)

Third Reading — 2299-305 (*Dec. 3, 2024 aft., passed on division*)

Royal Assent — (*Dec. 5, 2024 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force on proclamation with exceptions; SA 2024 c16 ]

**Bill 27\* — Education Amendment Act, 2024 (Nicolaides)**

First Reading — 1848 (*Oct. 31, 2024 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1912-20 (*Nov. 5, 2024 aft.*), 2020-27 (*Nov. 19, 2024 aft., passed on division*)

Committee of the Whole — 2177-89 (*Nov. 27, 2024 eve., passed with amendments*)

Third Reading — 2305-11 (*Dec. 3, 2024 aft., passed on division*)

Royal Assent — (*Dec. 5, 2024 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2024 c14 ]

**Bill 28 — Meat Inspection Amendment Act, 2024 (Sigurdson, RJ)**

First Reading — 1818 (*Oct. 30, 2024 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1854-55 (*Oct. 31, 2024 aft.*), 1966-69 (*Nov. 7, 2024 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 2058-60 (*Nov. 20, 2024 aft., passed*)

Third Reading — 2066-68 (*Nov. 20, 2024 aft., passed*)

Royal Assent — (*Dec. 5, 2024 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force December 5, 2024; SA 2024 c18 ]

**Bill 29 — Fairness and Safety in Sport Act (Schow)**

First Reading — 1848-49 (*Oct. 31, 2024 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1934-40 (*Nov. 6, 2024 aft.*), 2088-92 (*Nov. 21, 2024 aft.*), 2140-44 (*Nov. 26, 2024 aft., passed on division*)

Committee of the Whole — 2150-52 (*Nov. 26, 2024 aft., passed*)

Third Reading — 2311-14 (*Dec. 3, 2024 aft., passed on division*)

Royal Assent — (*Dec. 5, 2024 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2024 cF-2.5 ]

**Bill 30\* — Service Alberta Statutes Amendment Act, 2024 (Nally)**

First Reading — 1868 (*Nov. 4, 2024 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1946-53 (*Nov. 6, 2024 aft.*), 2068-70 (*Nov. 20, 2024 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 2082-88 (*Nov. 21, 2024 aft.*), 1720-24 (*Nov. 27, 2024 eve., passed with amendments*)

Third Reading — 2227-31 (*Nov. 28, 2024 aft., passed*)

Royal Assent — (*Dec. 5, 2024 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2024 c20 ]

**Bill 31 — Justice Statutes Amendment Act, 2024 (Amery)**

First Reading — 1898 (Nov. 5, 2024 aft., passed)

Second Reading — 2029-35 (Nov. 19, 2024 aft.), 2270-78 (Dec. 2, 2024 eve., passed on division)

Committee of the Whole — 2319-23 (Dec. 3, 2024 eve., passed)

Third Reading — 2376-79 (Dec. 4, 2024 eve., passed on division)

Royal Assent — (Dec. 5, 2024 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force December 5, 2024, except s. 1(4), which comes into force on proclamation, SA 2024 c17 ]

**Bill 32 — Financial Statutes Amendment Act, 2024 (No. 2) (S) (Horner)**

First Reading — 1868 (Nov. 4, 2024 aft., passed)

Second Reading — 1940-46 (Nov. 6, 2024 aft.), 1724-27 (Nov. 27, 2024 eve., passed on division)

Committee of the Whole — 2314-17 (Dec. 3, 2024 aft., passed)

Third Reading — 2336-37 (Dec. 3, 2024 eve.), 2366-69 (Dec. 4, 2024 aft.), 2379-89 (Dec. 4, 2024 eve., passed on division)

Royal Assent — (Dec. 5, 2024 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on various dates; SA 2024 c15 ]

**Bill 33\* — Protection of Privacy Act (Glubish)**

First Reading — 1931 (Nov. 6, 2024 aft., passed)

Second Reading — 2060-66 (Nov. 20, 2024 aft.), 1727-31 (Nov. 27, 2024 eve.), 2231-33 (Nov. 28, 2024 aft.), 2278-80 (Dec. 2, 2024 eve., passed on division)

Committee of the Whole — 2351-57 (Dec. 4, 2024 aft., passed with amendments)

Third Reading — 2360-63 (Dec. 4, 2024 aft., passed on division)

Royal Assent — (Dec. 5, 2024 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on the proclamation of SA 2024, cA-1.4; SA 2024 cP-28.5 ]

**Bill 34\* — Access to Information Act (Nally)**

First Reading — 1931 (Nov. 6, 2024 aft., passed)

Second Reading — 2035-38 (Nov. 19, 2024 aft.), 2153-57 (Nov. 26, 2024 aft.), 2259-66 (Dec. 2, 2024 aft., passed)

Committee of the Whole — 2281-84 (Dec. 2, 2024 eve.), 2323-32 (Dec. 3, 2024 eve., passed with amendments)

Third Reading — 2363-66 (Dec. 4, 2024 aft., passed on division)

Royal Assent — (Dec. 5, 2024 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2024 cA-1.4 ]

**Bill 35 — All-season Resorts Act (Schow)**

First Reading — 1965-66 (Nov. 7, 2024 aft., passed)

Second Reading — 1731-36 (Nov. 27, 2024 eve.), 2266 (Dec. 2, 2024 aft.), 2267-70 (Dec. 2, 2024 eve., passed)

Committee of the Whole — 2332-35 (Dec. 3, 2024 eve.), 2357-59 (Dec. 4, 2024 aft., passed)

Third Reading — 2371-76 (Dec. 4, 2024 eve., passed)

Royal Assent — (Dec. 5, 2024 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2024 cA-38.5 ]

**Bill 36 — Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, 2024 (Schow)**

First Reading — (Nov. 20, 2024 aft., passed)

Second Reading — 2280-81 (Dec. 2, 2024 eve., passed)

Committee of the Whole — 2335-36 (Dec. 3, 2024 eve., passed)

Third Reading — 2389-90 (Dec. 4, 2024 eve., passed)

Royal Assent — (Dec. 5, 2024 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on various dates; SA 2024 c19 ]

**Bill 37 — Mental Health Services Protection Amendment Act, 2025 (Williams)**

First Reading — 2402 (Feb. 25, 2025 aft., passed)

Second Reading — 2441-50 (Feb. 26, 2025 aft., adjourned)

**Bill 38 — Red Tape Reduction Statutes Amendment Act, 2025 (Nally)**

First Reading — 2437 (Feb. 26, 2025 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)

Third Reading — 805-12 (Mar. 25, 2024 aft., passed on division)

Royal Assent — (Mar. 28, 2024 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on June 28, 2024; SA 2024 cF-16.5 ]

**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)

Committee of the Whole — 812-17 (Mar. 25, 2024 aft.), 938-48 (Apr. 8, 2024 aft., passed on division)

Third Reading — 1059-66 (Apr. 15, 2024 aft., passed on division)

Royal Assent — (May 16, 2024 aft.) [Comes into force May 16, 2024; SA 2024 c5 ]

**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.), 948-50 (Apr. 8, 2024 aft.), 1066-71 (Apr. 15, 2024 aft.), 1178-81 (Apr. 22, 2024 aft., defeated on division; not proceeded with)

**Bill 206 — Child and Youth Advocate (Parent and Guardian Advisor) Amendment Act, 2024 (Cyr)**

First Reading — 917-18 (Mar. 28, 2024 aft., passed)

Second Reading — 1181-90 (Apr. 22, 2024 aft.), 1294-1300 (May 6, 2024 aft., passed)

**Bill 207 — Skilled Trades and Apprenticeship Education (Valuing Skilled Workers) Amendment Act, 2024 (Hoyle)**

First Reading — 1152-53 (Apr. 18, 2024 aft., passed)

Second Reading — 1300-09 (May 6, 2024 aft.), 1417-20 (May 13, 2024 aft., defeated on division; not proceeded with)

**Bill 208 — Psycho-Educational Assessment Access Act (Hayter)**

First Reading — 1359 (May 8, 2024 aft., passed)

Second Reading — 1420-29 (May 13, 2024 aft., adjourned)

**Bill 209 — Reconciliation Implementation Act (Arcand-Paul)**

First Reading — 1868-69 (Nov. 4, 2024 aft., passed)

**Bill 210 — Employment Standards (Protecting Workers' Tips) Amendment Act, 2024 (Gray)**

First Reading — 2350 (Dec. 4, 2024 aft., passed)

**Bill 211 — Arts and Creative Economy Advisory Council Act (Ceci)**

First Reading — 1590 (May 23, 2024 aft., passed)

**Bill 212 — Organ and Tissue Donor Information Agreement Act (Metz)**

First Reading — 1663 (May 28, 2024 aft., passed)

**Bill 213 — Cancer Care Delivery Standards Act (Goehring)**

First Reading — 2298 (Dec. 3, 2024 aft., passed)

**Bill 214 — Eastern Slopes Protection Act (Notley)**

First Reading — 1729 (May 29, 2024 aft., passed)

**Bill 215 — Prohibiting Ownership of Agricultural Lands (Pension Plans and Trust Corporations) Act (van Dijken)**

First Reading — 2221 *(Nov. 28, 2024 aft., passed)*

**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 ]

**Bill Pr2\* — Community Foundation of Medicine Hat and Southeastern Alberta Amendment Act, 2024 (Justin Wright)**

First Reading — 918 *(Mar. 28, 2024 aft., passed; referred to the Standing Committee on Private Bills)*

Second Reading — 1633 *(May 27, 2024 eve., passed)*

Committee of the Whole — 1691 *(May 28, 2024 eve., passed with amendments)*

Third Reading — 1711 *(May 28, 2024 eve., passed)*

Royal Assent — *(May 30, 2024 outside of House sitting)* [Comes into force on May 30, 2024; SA 2024 c21 ]

**Bill Pr3 — Providence Renewal Centre Amendment Act, 2024 (Calahoo Stonehouse)**

First Reading — 918 *(Mar. 28, 2024 aft., passed; referred to the Standing Committee on Private Bills)*

Second Reading — 1633 *(May 27, 2024 eve., passed)*

Committee of the Whole — 1691 *(May 28, 2024 eve., passed)*

Third Reading — 1711 *(May 28, 2024 eve., passed)*

Royal Assent — *(May 30, 2024 outside of House sitting)* [Comes into force on May 30, 2024; SA 2024 c22 ]

**Bill Pr4 — Rosebud School of the Arts Amendment Act, 2024 (Petrovic)**

First Reading — 918 *(Mar. 28, 2024 aft., passed; referred to the Standing Committee on Private Bills)*

Second Reading — 1633-34 *(May 27, 2024 eve., passed)*

Committee of the Whole — 1691 *(May 28, 2024 eve., passed)*

Third Reading — 1711-12 *(May 28, 2024 eve., passed)*

Royal Assent — *(May 30, 2024 outside of House sitting)* [Comes into force on May 30, 2024; SA 2024 c23 ]







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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)