



Province of Alberta

The 31st Legislature
First Session

Alberta Hansard

Thursday afternoon, March 13, 2025

Day 85

The Honourable Nathan M. Cooper, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of Alberta The 31st Legislature

First Session

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United Conservative: 48

New Democrat: 37

Independent: 1

Vacant: 1

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Legislative Assembly of Alberta

1:30 p.m.

Thursday, March 13, 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 the Strathcona Christian Academy Elementary school choir. I invite you to participate.

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!

[Standing ovation]

The Speaker: Hon. members, please be seated.

Introduction of Guests

The Speaker: Well, hon. members, it's my pleasure to be led – I feel like they should have sung in a round. We could have had it everywhere amongst us. Our pleasure to introduce to you the royal anthem singers, the Strathcona Christian Academy Elementary school choir from Edmonton. Thank you so much to their music teacher Adrienne Roussel, teachers, parents, and those who ventured out today in the weather to sing for us. You did an absolutely wonderful job. I invite you to rise again and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

The hon. the Minister of Technology and Innovation, do you have an additional school group to introduce?

Mr. Glubish: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly over 100 kids from Davidson Creek elementary school in Sherwood Park along with their teachers Alexis Kotronis, Gerald Brouwer, and Michael Versteegt. Please rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

Mr. Singh: Mr. Speaker, I'm glad to rise today and introduce to you and through you on the occasion of Holi, the Festival of Colours, delegates from the international Swaminarayan Sanstha organization: Tarcel Patel, Dipak Patel, Kanji Aghura. I now ask our guests to rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly. Happy Holi to all.

Mr. Stephan: Mr. Speaker, my intentions are good; my pronunciation is not. On the commencement of Holi, Festival of Colours, from Shree Swaminarayan Hindu temple in Edmonton I introduce Dilip, Mayank, Kanu. Please rise and receive a super-duper warm welcome of the House.

Members' Statements

Investigation of Health Services Procurement

Mr. Ip: Mr. Speaker, Albertans know the difference between a judicial-led public inquiry and the sham investigation this UCP government is conducting. A judicial-led public inquiry could compel witnesses and demand e-mails, calendars, and internal documents. This UCP-run sham investigation cannot. A real public inquiry would allow an independent justice to follow the evidence wherever it leads, but this government's sham investigation cannot. The scope is limited, set by the Premier and Health minister, to focus only on AHS procurement practices. The investigation is restricted to, quote, relevant legislation, regulations, and policies related to procurement, specifically AHS and their application to pharmaceuticals and chartered surgical facilities.

Albertans don't want a narrowed investigation into AHS procurement. They want answers for this government's actions. They want to get to the bottom of the rumours of kickbacks and bloated contracts. They want to know why this Premier and members of her cabinet were in a luxury box at Oilers playoff games with Sam Mraiche, a man whose companies have secured over \$600 million in government contracts.

Albertans see through it. The Premier is hiding behind a rigged process with her thumb on the scale, hoping the scandal disappears. Even the former Infrastructure minister saw the same pattern in the Auditor General's report process, quote: they are in charge of the information forthcoming to the Auditor General; they determine what information gets turned over; there is a conflict of interest if you're investigating yourself. And the newly independent MLA for Lesser Slave Lake clearly stated how he feels about this government around their corruption, quote: it reeks of the same entitlement we saw at the tail end of the PC dynasty.

Mr. Speaker, the corruption and entitlement must end. Albertans deserve a real, independent public inquiry, not another cover-up.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Camrose has a statement to make.

Edmonton Health Facilities Capital Plan

Ms Lovely: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Edmonton is a remarkable, growing city with health care facilities that effectively serve many Albertans from various surrounding regions and northern rural communities. In fact, compared to other corridors in the province, the Edmonton corridor sees the highest number of out-of-corridor and out-of-province patients who access acute-care inpatient services. Edmonton is also a major specialty and trauma care hub for out-of-corridor patients. This demand will continue to steadily grow as the Edmonton corridor population is expected to reach 5.9 million by 2038, which will account for 40 per cent of Alberta's total population.

Mr. Speaker, there is a great need for capital facilities to accommodate the increased demand, and I'm so proud that our government is taking swift action to address this concern. This morning our government announced critical investment to expand, modernize, and enhance health infrastructure in the province, especially in Edmonton.

If passed, Budget 2025 would provide \$2 million to develop inpatient towers at the Grey Nuns and Misericordia hospitals, which will successfully add up to 700 new in-patient beds and improve access to care and health facilities for the region. Additionally, Mr. Speaker, if passed, Budget 2025 would include a total of \$180 million over three years for health capital projects in the Edmonton corridor, including \$11 million to advance plans for a stand-alone Stollery children's hospital. This stand-alone facility will help

increase acute-care capacity at the University of Alberta hospital and other facilities across the city.

Our government is developing shelled and vacant spaces to increase capacity within health facilities across the province, including the Mazankowski Heart Institute and Kaye Clinic. Mr. Speaker, these investments are fundamental to ensure that Edmonton remains properly supported and can continue delivering world-class health care to Albertans and out-of-province patients for many years to come.

Thank you.

Government Policies

Member Irwin: I've been thinking a lot about what this province could be and wishing things were different. I wish the Premier would spend a day, even just an hour, in the shoes of an education worker, an educational assistant who's making a tenth of that Premier's salary. I wish the Premier would sit in an overcrowded classroom and witness the care and kindness and patience that EAs exhibit each and every day for poverty wages.

I wish the Premier could experience what it's like to be on the front lines right now. I wish she'd say something, do something about the record number of calls for drug poisonings. I wish she'd acknowledge that we need to meet people where they're at and offer them a range of supports. I wish she understood that dead people can't recover. I wish the Premier could feel what it's like to live rough, just for a moment, to live how record numbers of unhoused folks live and understand that actually investing in housing and wraparound supports could be truly transformational. I wish.

I wish this Premier understood the value of a strong public health care system. I wish she'd focus more on fair contracts for our incredible health care workers and less on juicy contracts for her wealthy friends. I wish the Premier would spend more time in our province and less time in America. I wish she wouldn't spend your hard-earned dollars to go to Florida to hang out with far-right, racist climate change denialists.

Mr. Schow: Point of order.

1:40

Member Irwin: I wish this Premier would stand up for our country. I wish she would pledge her unwavering commitment to Canada. I wish that instead of pandering to other politicians who seek to weaken and divide us, she'd have a backbone and a moral compass.

I know. I know it's foolish to keep wishing for this Premier to do the right thing. But what I won't do is that I won't stop wishing for better and working for better. None of us will on this side of the House. We know that it's hard. We know that it's heavy. We know that it feels like one cut after another, blow after blow from this UCP government. But I promise you: better is possible, and it's closer than it's ever been. [interjections]

The Speaker: Order. Order. Order.

A point of order is noted by the Government House Leader at 1:40.

Federal-provincial Relations

Mr. Stephan: Mr. Speaker, our duty is to seek freedom and prosperity for Albertans and to speak the truth in love. Wouldn't it be wonderful for Albertans to stop being exploited, transferring hundreds of billions to Quebec and others who act in hypocritical ways, who attack and hold us back? Wouldn't it be wonderful to stop having to fund government jobs in Ottawa, an entrenched

swamp who glut themselves on our labours and are often jealous and hostile to Alberta's freedom and prosperity?

Mr. Speaker, Canada is suffering under economic warfare. But what about Alberta, who has suffered economic warfare under Trudeau for years? Did Team Canada have our back? No. Now, some on this team call for export taxes on Alberta oil, using us as their sacrificial lamb, costing them nothing. They are a fake team. We do not want hypocrisy.

Our loyalty must be to the truth. Canada is broken, and this has been the case for a long time. The acknowledgement of this sad truth stands independent of and does not condone destructive trade wars. These politicians broke Canada and made us more vulnerable in trade wars, and these politicians cannot be trusted to fix what they broke.

Mr. Speaker, didn't Albertans vote in a referendum to get rid of equalization? And what did the rest of Canada do? Nothing.

Educational Support Staff

Ms Hoffman: When schools were closed during the pandemic, the first students welcomed back were those with severe disabilities. It was clear that kids needed their teachers and support staff in person. They were essential. The UCP has refused to do anything to make life more affordable with things like rent or insurance caps or reregulating electricity. The cost of living in Alberta is out of control. Support staff need a meaningful raise, and the UCP is refusing.

Let me remind you of some of the things that these people do. They keep records, pay bills, connect with parents. They are the accountants, tech experts, librarians, and peacekeepers. They protect dignity, are a safe contact, and support student learning. They know how to read the signs before it's too late. They are a warm hug on a hard day. They are calm and encouraging. They are on strike in Leduc, Fort McMurray, Edmonton, High River, Spruce Grove, Morinville, and many other communities.

Schools are on life support without education support staff. Students, many of whom have already missed weeks of school, are missing their trusted adults. Schools are doing their best, but they don't have the relationships or skills they need. Teachers, overwhelmed with large class sizes, are drowning while trying to keep classrooms safe, and parents are missing shifts or even leaving their jobs altogether because they're told that their child can't be protected or supported at school.

This is wrong. It's time to fund education properly. It's time for the UCP to stop their sneaky backroom mandates and pay these essential workers a fair wage with reasonable working conditions because working conditions for these adults are kids' learning conditions. Everyone wants support staff back in classrooms: students, teachers, administrators, parents, and support staff themselves. Only the UCP government has the power to make it happen. Stop stalling, stop squeezing, and step up.

Educational Support Staff

Ms Wright: Mr. Speaker, today I rise in solidarity with educational support workers, who have been on strike for far too long. Albertans know the facts. These folks provide one-on-one and small group support, are the first line of defence in the office, organize libraries so kids can find that book, hold an endless supply of bandages, are safe spaces, wash desks, and supervise and run bus schedules, yet they are some of the lowest paid professionals in education. Too many work more than one job and cannot keep up with the cost of things. They are undervalued and disrespected by this government,

burnt out. But if you talk to them, all they want is to get back to their kids and do their job.

Years ago when I was a baby teacher, Judy took me under her wing and gave me the lay of the land and helped kids to read. Mr. Bob found the old Santa suit box so the concert could go off without a hitch and kept the school clean. Trina knew finance and made sure every single form for every single child was accurate so they got the funding they deserved. Sam moonlighted as a translator, and then he indulged me when I asked him to set up the chairs a wee bit differently. Leah taught me a tapping technique she used to help kids regulate themselves. Donna knew everything and made sure the school was a part of the community and the community was a part of the school. Laura and Sylvia tag teamed, making sure dignity was never at risk. Deanna kept the library going and reminded us all that we needed to step up. Linda, Priscilla, and Leah answered phones, e-mails, doorbells, and the same question over and over and over again.

Mr. Speaker, they all need this government to step up, and no matter what may be spun on the opposite side of the aisle, education is underfunded. These may be highly rewarding jobs and highly rewarding careers, but when a government dictates what school boards can offer in negotiations, fair bargaining does not exist. Here's some advice: remove the caps, bargain in good faith, honour the agreements, pay them what they're worth.

Tabling Returns and Reports

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

Mr. Wright: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have two tablings today. One is a cartoon from a constituent of mine who actually goes right in line with the Member for Red Deer-South's take on the truth.

The other one is detailing the rather shocking history of a fentanyl ring bust here in Canada.

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

Member Irwin: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to table a letter. I've been tabling a lot of letters from teachers and educational assistants and education support workers. This one is a very important perspective from a student named Lachlaine Gordon. They are a student at Spruce Grove composite high school and appeal to this government to pay education workers their wages.

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

Ms Hayter: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday during QP I spoke of the burden of other organizations after the one-time funding grant ended for the Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton. I have five copies of the *Red Deer Advocate* from the other day talking about the Red Deer sexual assault support centre and how they're going to anticipate more people from Edmonton using their services.

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

Ms Chapman: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to table the requisite number of copies of another letter from another Alberta mom, Gina. Gina is concerned about underfunding and low wages and how it is affecting our ability to recruit and retain educational support staff.

The Speaker: Edmonton-McClung has a tabling.

Mr. Dach: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to table the requisite five copies of yet another couple of e-mails directed to the minister of transportation, the theme of which says, "I am shocked at the way

you are wasting taxpayer money on delaying the initial green line as agreed to years ago."

Mr. Haji: Mr. Speaker, I would like to table five copies of a letter from Kelsie, a resident in Calgary-Acadia. It's a letter where she talks about the cost-of-living crisis. She specifically requested that members of the Legislature read her letter.

Tablings to the Clerk

The Clerk: I wish to advise the Assembly that the following document was deposited with the office of the Clerk: on behalf of hon. Mr. Turton, Minister of Children and Family Services, pursuant to the Protection Against Family Violence Act Family Violence Death Review Committee 2023-24 annual report.

1:50

Oral Question Period

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

Investigation of Health Services Procurement

Ms Gray: Mr. Speaker, the Premier needs to explain to Albertans why she's called a carefully constructed cover-up instead of a real public inquiry. The corrupt care scandal involves allegations of kickbacks, political interference, massive bloated contracts, shady land deals, hundreds of millions of dollars, and multiple ministries. It directly involves her office. A real public inquiry, as outlined by the Public Inquiries Act, is the only process that can clear the air and restore the public's faith. Why will the Premier not call a real public inquiry?

The Speaker: The hon. the Premier.

Ms Smith: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the member opposite knows, a public inquiry can take many forms. We have asked an independent judge who used to be the Chief Justice of Manitoba to lead this effort. We've given him a preliminary budget and let him know if he needs to have a longer time frame or more budget, we'd be happy to accommodate him, but the report will be done independently. It will be available online in June of 2025, and everybody will be able to see the results that he's able to find on his own. That's the approach we're taking.

Ms Gray: The Premier will know there is only one Public Inquiries Act, and that is what we need.

The Minister of Infrastructure resigned after a shady land deal in his ministry featuring the exact same people getting bloated contracts from AHS, but that's not in scope of the UCP 'shamvestigation.' The corrupt care scandal is about government-wide political interference, kickbacks, insiders, and more. The Premier knows the allegations go straight to her office and her former chief of staff. Albertans don't trust that the Premier is looking for the truth. Why did she limit the scope and not call a public investigation?

Ms Smith: Mr. Speaker, I understand that the Minister of Infrastructure will be issuing a statement on the particulars of the matter that the member opposite mentioned. It sounds like it was a very routine, mundane real estate deal that was done at the level of the civil service . . . [interjections]

The Speaker: Order.

The hon. Premier is the one with the call.

Ms Smith: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't know how they think things work in government. When you've got billions of dollars of procurement, a lot of it falls to the trusted independent civil service to execute on our behalf, and that's what happened in that case.

Ms Gray: Mr. Speaker, UCP friends and insiders just happen to get hundreds of thousands of dollars richer. It's normal; business as usual for this government. The government is losing cabinet and caucus members over this. A cover-up will not cut it. The retired judge she's chosen will not have the authority to issue subpoenas. That means Marshall Smith won't have to testify under oath. That means the Minister of Health, who fired the AHS board after they wanted an RCMP investigation, won't have to testify under oath. Will the Premier do the right thing and call a public inquiry with the full powers of the Public Inquiries Act?

The Speaker: The hon. the Premier.

Ms Smith: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Deputy Minister of Jobs, Economy and Trade went out and he drafted the judge from Manitoba to be able to do the investigation. It's going to be done independently. The terms of reference are there. If the judge encounters any issues along the way, we can expand the scope. We can also expand the number of dollars that he receives to do it. We can expand as well the time that he needs to be able to do the report. We have indicated that we will facilitate his access to any individual that he needs to talk to in order to get to the bottom of things, and he'll report in June of 2025.

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

Ms Gray: The government is saying: trust us; we're investigating ourselves, and it's going to be great.

Health Services Procurement Process

Ms Gray: When the AHS board learned that Jitendra Prasad was moonlighting at Sam Mraiche's company while also working in procurement for the government, they told the CEO to go to the RCMP. That didn't happen because the government fired the CEO and then the board. The Premier's chief of staff said that Mr. Prasad was his guy, and instead of alerting authorities, the worst health care minister in Alberta's history fired anybody who raised concerns. When was the Premier told about Jitendra Prasad, a government employee who was working for Sam Mraiche?

The Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Ms Smith: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As we've indicated, the Minister of Health is preparing a statement of defence on behalf of the government. I understand it's been filed, so anybody is welcome to go and see the other side of the story. We always have – especially in this context, accompanied by an ask for \$1.7 million, you can well imagine that certain facts can also be countered. I think that people would be very interested to see the statement of defence of the government. [interjections]

The Speaker: Order.

Ms Gray: The AHS chief financial officer wrote in a letter to MHCare, quote: it has come to our attention that one or more former AHS employees were or was affiliated in some fashion with MHCare in and around November 2022. This is Marshall Smith's guy, Mr. Prasad. Even the Finance deputy minister knew about these rumours, and they were being discussed. Surely, somebody briefed the Premier about this letter. What did the Premier do when

she found out that an AHS employee was alleged to be involved in kickbacks, and why was it not calling a public inquiry?

The Speaker: The hon. the Premier.

Ms Smith: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What I do know is that our government has engaged in a refocusing exercise. From the very beginning we realized that we had to separate the purchaser from the provider. This former CEO of Alberta Health Services knew that that was the direction we were moving in and, unfortunately, was not facilitating the action on that. I noticed with interest today that the National Health Service in the U.K. is also dismantling their single superboard that they have, and they're returning democratic control to the people who are accountable to the public. That's what we're doing. [interjections]

The Speaker: Order. Order. Order.

Ms Gray: Mr. Speaker, the question is about kickbacks, and in case the Premier is not aware, kickbacks are illegal. No one in the government should be getting them, offering them, or involved in them, full stop, but when this government learned that their employee Jitendra Prasad had been moonlighting for Sam Mraiche's firm while that firm was being awarded multiple bloated contracts worth hundreds of millions of dollars, they clammed up, they fired the AHS CEO, they fired the AHS board, and they did nothing about it. Why did the Premier, upon learning of these allegations, not immediately launch an inquiry?

Ms Smith: Mr. Speaker, AHS has been a black box for a long time. They receive money, and then they deliver services. They've been doing fewer services every single year even though they've been getting more money. We had no line of sight to what their contracts were, no line of sight to their negotiation, no line of sight to their procurement. Any issues that are being raised now by the former CEO are internal to AHS. What we are doing is identifying if there were problems with that procurement process, and we're going to fix it. [interjections]

The Speaker: Order.

The Leader of the Opposition.

Ms Gray: Mr. Speaker, the UCP have been in government for six years. If it was a black box, they should have turned on the light a little earlier.

Premier's Appearance with Ben Shapiro

Ms Gray: This Premier has been going back and forth to the United States of America a lot lately, despite that country's recent and repeated threats to our economy and sovereignty. Now we hear the Premier is going to share a stage with right-wing American commentator Ben Shapiro. She probably wants to be anywhere but here right now given corrupt care, so I can kind of understand, but how can she be so out of step with Albertans who are buying Canadian and changing their travel plans? Will she cancel?

Ms Smith: Well, I know the members opposite only follow social media they agree with, so they probably haven't seen that Ben Shapiro has been one of the most outspoken critics of the U.S. President's approach to tariffs against . . . [interjections]

The Speaker: Order. Order. Order.

Ms Smith: He has been one of the most outspoken critics of the U.S. President's approach to tariffs against Canada. Now, the *Wall*

Street Journal, too: I mean, they call it the dumbest trade war ever, and it really is. We've got to get back to having our advocates in the U.S. who have influence on the U.S. President so we can get back to having a tariff-free relationship.

Ms Gray: Mr. Speaker, he's against tariffs because he thinks Canada should be annexed. Quote: "I'm not saying Canadians should vote in American elections. God forbid. We can annex it and just call it an outlying territory, like Puerto Rico but for the north." End quote. This is who the Premier is sharing a stage with on top of her track record of attacking the Canada pension plan, pushing American-style health care complete with corruption, and all of the terrible decisions this government has been making. To the Premier: do you understand how offside you are with the rest of Team Canada? How many e-mails have you gotten?

2:00

The Speaker: The hon. the Premier.

Ms Smith: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think we all know what this is about. There isn't a single person their leader can call that will make one bit of difference in how the Americans approach trade negotiations, not a single one. That is why I have been in the United States. I have been meeting with members of the administration. I have been meeting with staffers at the White House. I have been meeting with secretaries. I have been meeting with everyone I possibly can to make the case . . . [interjections]

The Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Ms Smith: I have been meeting with everyone I possibly can to make the case for a strong, united approach in Canada, where we are able to put forward why it is we should maintain this tariff-free relationship across all goods and services, and, Mr. Speaker, I think it's going to be working.

Ms Gray: Mr. Speaker, Albertans are watching, and the stream of selfies hasn't made one bit of difference either. This Premier is mad that Doug Ford, David Eby, and Wab Kinew are all standing up for Team Canada. Instead, she is sharing a stage with someone who thinks that Canada should be annexed. This Premier needs to be on Team Canada. Other Premiers get it. Why won't this Premier . . . [interjections]

The Speaker: Order.

Ms Gray: This Premier needs to be on Team Canada. Other Premiers get it. Why won't this Premier get with the program, cancel the speech, stand with Albertans who are a part of Team Canada and under threat from Trump's tariffs? [interjections]

The Speaker: Order.

The hon. the Premier has the call.

Ms Smith: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Every day the members opposite demonstrate why Albertans should be very fearful if they were ever in charge. They wouldn't talk to anybody other than themselves. They wouldn't engage in diplomacy. They wouldn't get into the rooms where decisions are being made. They wouldn't talk to anybody who has any influence. Chris Wright, the Energy secretary, on Monday said that he is advocating for there to be a zero tariff across the board on energy resources. That's oil and gas. That's critical minerals. That's electricity. That is what happens when you engage in diplomacy, and now we have to make that same case for aluminum, for steel, for food, for intermediate goods.

Provincial Response to U.S. Tariffs

Ms Pancholi: Albertans are preparing themselves for the impact of tariffs on their businesses, their farms, their jobs, and their groceries. They're choosing to buy Canadian even if it costs more. They're cancelling trips to the U.S. to show their loyalty to our country in the face of a hostile and aggressive U.S. government. But not our Premier. No. While Albertans are willing to show that they'll take sacrifices for our country, she's not even willing to give up her taxpayer-paid vacation to Florida to audition for Fox News. Why does the Premier care more about her popularity with extreme Americans than standing with Canadians?

Mr. Schow: Mr. Speaker, our Premier has demonstrated true leadership by going right to the source, the United States, to make sure that Alberta's case for excellence is made. We are in a situation where there's an unstable future with potential tariffs in the United States. Our Premier has taken her time to go down there to meet with lawmakers, secretaries to make sure they know how important Alberta's trade relationship is with the U.S. and with the rest of the world.

Ms Pancholi: Well, Premier Doug Ford managed to actually get concessions from the U.S. by showing some strength toward the people who want to make Canada the 51st state. All this Premier . . . [interjections]

The Speaker: Order. Order. Order.

Ms Pancholi: Doug Ford got the U.S. to back down, but all this Premier has achieved is tariffs on our major industries and some breathless selfies. The Premier remembers being tough, right? I mean, for years all we've heard is bluster and posturing from the UCP when it comes to negotiating with fellow Canadians, but when it comes to Trump and his hostile administration, well, she's turtling faster than you can say "sovereignty act." Where's the tough talk now, Premier?

Mr. Schow: Well, Mr. Speaker, the last time I checked, there are still tariffs on steel and aluminum, so it seems that Premier Ford's tactics haven't worked one bit.

In addition to the time the Premier has spent in the United States lobbying lawmakers, lobbying secretaries to make sure they understand the importance of our relationship with the United States, the Premier has also accomplished a significant amount right back here at home. The Premier can walk and chew gum, Mr. Speaker. That includes investing record numbers and money into education, \$8.6 billion into building schools, 90 new schools, modernized and replaced 24 of them. We have a plan, and it's working.

Ms Pancholi: Well, Mr. Speaker, all this Premier has gotten is a tan.

The UCP keeps calling it diplomacy, but Canadians know the Premier is really just fangirling extremists who are hostile to our country. Speaking of fangirling, on November 24, the same day that Trump first announced his intention to go through with 25 per cent tariffs on Canada, the Government House Leader did a happy dance in this Chamber to celebrate Trump, and the minister of transportation famously campaigned for Trump, red MAGA hat and all. Meanwhile the Premier has spent more time vacationing in the U.S. than working in Alberta this year. Why don't the UCP just admit they're not on Team Canada; they're on Team Trump?

The Speaker: It may be tough to make a connection to government policy on that question, but if the hon. the Government House Leader chooses to answer it, he's welcome to do so.

Mr. Schow: Well, Mr. Speaker, I would agree with you. I didn't hear anything about government policy in that mishmash of wording across the aisle.

What I can say is that the Team Canada we're part of would never use energy or oil and gas as a negotiating tactic, Mr. Speaker. We value the relationship we have with the United States. We feel that diplomacy is the best foot forward. I can tell you that while Ottawa is in complete and utter chaos, our Premier is showing true leadership. [interjections]

The Speaker: Order. Order.

Premier's Appearance with Ben Shapiro (continued)

Mr. Dach: Mr. Speaker, let's review some quotes for the Assembly. Quote: I'm not saying Canadians should vote in American elections. God forbid. We can annex it and just call it an outlying territory like Puerto Rico, but of the north. Quote: Why the heck not? Let's expand the real estate holdings of the United States.

These quotes about Canada, Mr. Speaker, are deeply offensive to every Albertan and Canadian I know. Will the Premier agree these comments from Ben Shapiro have no place in our public discourse, and will she denounce them today?

Mr. Schow: Mr. Speaker, as already mentioned in this Chamber, Ben Shapiro agrees with us that tariffs are not the proper path forward. That is why the Premier has taken significant time to go down to the United States to meet with lawmakers, to meet with secretaries and has actually met with the President himself to make the case for Alberta, all the while making sure we're moving Alberta forward in some very uncertain times, potentially facing tariffs. The proper path forward is real leadership, which we have with this Premier, and making sure we make the case for Alberta. [interjections]

The Speaker: Order.

Mr. Dach: Given that Ben Shapiro also said, quote, "Everything we're saying about Canada is true; it's a silly country that makes maple syrup and hockey" and given that he said, quote, "I feel they will greet us as liberators" and given that no one in Alberta will accept being taken over by Donald Trump and given that, instead, Albertans are elbows up against this trade war, will the Premier denounce these horrific remarks made by Ben Shapiro, the man she's helping fund raise for an extremist group in just two weeks?

The Speaker: Before I call upon the hon. the Government House Leader, I know that there are many creative ways to make questions about government policy. I'm convinced that you didn't use any of those creative ways to make that question about government policy.

If the hon. Government House Leader would like to respond, he's welcome to do so. If not, we'll move on to the next question.

Mr. Schow: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. No. We don't agree with those comments that Ben Shapiro made there, but we do believe in engaging with people even if we don't necessarily agree with them. If there's a large following there that we have a chance to get our message out to, the Premier is going to make that case, unlike when the members opposite were in government and the federal government introduced Bill C-69 and it took Rachel Notley

nine months to get to Ottawa. She could have walked or taken the bus that fast. I tell you what. Albertans poll as some of the most patriotic. We're proud of our province, and we're proud of our Premier. [interjections]

The Speaker: Order. Order. Order.

The hon. Member for Edmonton-McClung.

Mr. Dach: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that all Albertans wonder why it's government policy that Ben Shapiro is an extreme radical who might influence the Premier but the Premier will be spending Albertan taxpayer money to fly to Florida in the middle of a trade war to help him slander Canada and given that she called President Trump's jokes about being taken over as the 51st state hilarious and given that now she's helping to support Ben Shapiro, who suggests the U.S. should annex us, and given that Canadians are elbows up and will not be annexed by anyone, will the Premier admit how wrong she is to allow government policy to be influenced by people like Ben Shapiro and cancel her trip to Florida to fund raise with Ben Shapiro today?

2:10

Mr. Schow: Well, Mr. Speaker, just because the member opposite says that it's government policy or thinks it's government policy doesn't actually make it government policy. What I can tell you is that our government policy is to put Albertans first. That's what the Premier has been doing since she was elected. That's what she continues to do. She continues to defend our province in the United States while we face the threat of potential tariffs. Real leadership is guiding our province through very difficult financial times and uncertainty. Our Premier has led the way. She's been to Ottawa, to the United States, and she continues to make the case that Alberta is the best place to live, to play, and to visit. [interjections]

The Speaker: Order.

Road Construction and Maintenance in Northern Alberta

Mr. Yao: Mr. Speaker, Alberta's transportation networks are critical to keeping our industries competitive and our communities connected. Roads are the number one issue that my constituents are always concerned about, mainly because they drive the roads every day. These dedicated pathways to travel have enabled our modern society around the world to progress by enabling efficient access to everything from valuable resources to agricultural lands to home. Roads are invaluable. To the Minister of Transportation and Economic Corridors: can you explain how highway 686 will improve things in the north?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Transportation and Economic Corridors.

Mr. Dreeshen: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and I'd like to thank the member for that very important question and for the work that he's done on highway 686. I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, this is a really unique project, where we worked with the three First Nation chiefs and communities and actually gave them consultation funding to go out and talk to their members in their communities about the importance of 686. That work is now completed or nearing completion, and we're actually going to have design work that's in this budget that's going to go out, if passed, to be able to build this super important highway, over 200 kilometres connecting Fort McMurray essentially all the way to Grande Prairie. It'll really unlock the true value of northern Alberta.

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

Mr. Yao: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and to the minister for his response. If passed, Budget 2025 will ensure that Alberta's government is making key investments in northern infrastructure . . .

Mr. Sabir: Preamble.

Mr. Yao: . . . including the development of highway 686 and safety improvements to highway 63 and 881, which are very important to me.

Mr. Sabir: Preamble.

Mr. Yao: These are vital roads to Fort McMurray, where industry creates billions in revenue and jobs not only for Alberta but for all of Canada. Thousands traverse these roads daily.

Mr. Sabir: Preamble.

Mr. Yao: To the Minister of Transportation and Economic Corridors: how will these upgrades improve life for families and workers in Northern Alberta?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Dreeshen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Obviously, the communities and the families in northern Alberta are important and that's why we have to do these important investments, but also it's the economics of northern Alberta, with billions of dollars of royalties coming into this province every year. That's why northern Alberta is getting \$1.25 billion over three years in road and infrastructure projects. [interjections] My estimates are on Monday. There's lots of heckling from the NDP, so hopefully they show up to that so they can hear more about this. But \$101 million going to highway 63 twinning north of Fort McMurray; \$141 million is going to highway 881. There's so much more good news for northern Alberta in this budget.

Mr. Yao: Mr. Speaker, it's given that Alberta's northern highways face extreme weather conditions that accelerate wear and tear. It is given that permafrost continually causes roads to heave and crack. It is given that the ruts that form in the road are wide and deep and all the way up and down the highway. It is given that regular maintenance is essential to keeping these vital roads safe and reliable for industries and residents. To the same minister: how is the government ensuring that northern highways, including highways 63 and 881, receive the necessary maintenance to remain safe and operational all year round?

The Speaker: Given the hon. minister of transportation.

Mr. Dreeshen: Well, Mr. Speaker, this – I can't do it. Budget 2025 has a 3.7 per cent increase, if passed, in the Transportation and Economic Corridors budget, and the highway maintenance portion of that is a 5 per cent increase from last year. But you don't even have to compare it against the UCP record. Let's actually compare it to the NDP record when they were in government. Budget '25 actually has 26 per cent more in highway maintenance going to all highways all across the province. We are investing in rural Alberta, and we're proud of it. The NDP couldn't even find rural Alberta on the map.

Investigation of Health Services Procurement

(continued)

Ms Goehring: Simply put, there are major differences between a real judicial-led public inquiry versus this government's sham

investigation. In a public inquiry a judge can compel witnesses, demand answers, and order documents, which is necessary to get the truth, but the judge in the UCP's sham investigation doesn't. The UCP ensured that by limiting the power and scope of what he can do. To the minister. This isn't complicated. Does he understand the difference between a real public inquiry and the sham his government is running? Yes or no?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Justice.

Mr. Amery: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I certainly understand the idea of transparency and accountability, and that's exactly why we have hired an independent judge from a different province to look at this and investigate with full independence and full autonomy. The former Chief Justice of the provincial court of Manitoba, Justice Wyant, is a well-respected individual with a reputation beyond reproach. We're confident that he will have access to everything he needs to conduct a thorough investigation.

Ms Goehring: Given that a public inquiry could follow the evidence wherever it leads, whether to AHS, Alberta Health, the Health minister, or even the Premier, and given that the UCP's 'shamvestigation' clearly predetermines the cause of the corrupt care scandal by limiting it to, quote, relevant legislation, regulations, and policies related to procurement, specifically AHS and their application to pharmaceuticals and chartered surgical facilities, does the minister understand that limiting the 'shamvestigation' won't address transparency or allegations of political interference and corruption? Yes or no?

Mr. Amery: Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is that this is the most comprehensive set of investigations that we can imagine. Not only do you have the Auditor General, once again, an independent office of this Legislative Assembly, investigating this matter, but you also have the RCMP and the former Chief Justice of the provincial court of Manitoba investigating it as well. The Premier has committed to providing all information and co-operating with all of these investigations. We're absolutely confident that we'll get the answers that we're all looking for.

Ms Goehring: Given that there are valid allegations of backroom deals, corruption, and kickbacks within this government due to the corrupt care scandal and given that the UCP's 'shamvestigation' will not give Albertans the answers they deserve and given that without a public inquiry Albertans won't get transparent understanding of the scandal, let me be clear. A public inquiry requires those involved to testify and would ensure this never happens again. To the minister. Albertans deserve better. Will he stop the sham investigation and launch a judicial-led public inquiry now?

Mr. Amery: Mr. Speaker, I have faith in the process, and I also have faith in the former Chief Justice that has been appointed to conduct this investigation. Members of the NDP have just heard that a statement of defence is filed, and in it the information and the facts that we are going to rely on will paint a full picture of what actually happened in this particular case. We're absolutely confident that both the investigation and the statement of defence will clarify all of the information necessary.

Education Funding

Ms Chapman: Education workers deserve respect, period. But that's not what they're getting from the UCP. The Public Sector Employers Act gives the government the authority to issue directives that set

direction in bargaining, including wage limits. It's their way of setting the frame for public-sector agreements. To the Minister of Education: under the Public Sector Employers Act what directives have been issued with respect to fiscal limits school boards must operate within while engaging and bargaining with education support workers?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Education.

Mr. Nicolaides: Well, thank you so much, Mr. Speaker. First and foremost, I do want to express my gratitude for the work that's done by our educational support workers, teachers, and other educators. Of course, they do tremendous work every single day to help ensure that our students receive a world-class education. In Budget '25 we're making significant and historic investments into our education system. We're planning to invest over \$1.1 billion over the next three years to accommodate some of the significant student enrolment that we're seeing, and there are other investments as well.

2:20

Ms Chapman: Given that the minister didn't answer the question I just asked, given that two Edmonton public school board trustees have resigned already this year, one of whom resigned in protest to stand with grossly underpaid education support workers, given that the second trustee resigned citing the erosion of school board autonomy as the reason for her departure and given that whatever the minister may say, it is the government, not school boards, who are the funder for education support workers, when will the UCP step up to properly fund our modern complex classrooms?

Mr. Nicolaides: I'm happy to do that right now, Mr. Speaker, by investing \$9.8 billion into our education system, including \$1.1 billion to fund enrolment pressures, including \$1.6 billion to fund students with special and complex learning needs, which includes a 2 per cent increase to funding for PUF, English as an additional language, the school nutrition grant, the transportation grant, the refugee grant, and others. In addition, we will be increasing our funding to the classroom complexity grant by 20 per cent to make sure that every student can receive a world-class education. [interjections]

The Speaker: Order.

Ms Chapman: Given that this minister's current funding levels see the average education assistant earning a shocking \$26,000 a year, given that it's the choices this government has made holding education funding below population growth and inflation, ignoring the rising cost of everything that is applying the pressure that keeps those wages so low, and given that this government has put school boards in an impossible position, when will the minister admit that this isn't someone else's problem but a problem of his own making?

Mr. Nicolaides: Well, Mr. Speaker, of course, the government of Alberta does not negotiate directly with the Canadian Union of Public Employees. Those negotiations happen between CUPE, between the union, and the school boards that are the employers. Of course, as a provincial government we work to establish standards for education and we work to ensure that we're providing adequate funding as we're doing, as I just mentioned a moment ago, the significant investments that we're making. In addition to that, we're also making an \$8.6 billion dollar investment to build a hundred more schools in the province.

Chartered Surgical Facility Contracts

Dr. Metz: It was already challenging for Albertans to wrap their heads around incompetence; now they need to understand

allegations of corruption. Contracts for some chartered surgical facilities pay about double the cost of procedures done within AHS. Can the minister please tell us how much of Albertans' money is being wasted on corporate profits and how much is being wasted to plan and build infrastructure that someone else will own?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health.

Member LaGrange: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can answer the question: none. In fact, we're making sure that the dollars are going to make sure that we provide the health care resources. I had a great announcement this morning. We are in fact going to build two in-patient towers, one at the Grey Nuns and one at the Misericordia, that will add 700 beds, unlike the members opposite, that didn't even have a business plan when they announced a hospital in south Edmonton that would only provide 400 beds for \$4.9 billion.

Dr. Metz: Given that patients who have surgery in chartered surgical facilities are the healthiest and least complex and given that few patients who have surgery in chartered surgical facilities need overnight admission and two nights are rare, how does this government justify contracts that pay up front for two nights for every patient who has surgery, whether they stay overnight or not?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health.

Member LaGrange: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When the members opposite were in government, they were paying for 40,000 surgeries to happen every year in chartered surgical facilities, but you know what? We've been able to increase that number to over 60,000, because you know what? Albertans deserve to have surgeries done in a timely fashion. We are now at 310,000 surgeries a year, over 60 per cent in clinically approved time frames.

Dr. Metz: Given that moving lower risk surgery out of hospitals should cost less and increase the number of surgeries and given that neither of those is happening as operating rooms sit empty and some contracts pay almost double the surgery in hospitals, will the minister acknowledge that her scheme to pay for bloated surgical contracts costs Albertans far more than the public system as well as alleged grift and kickbacks for those contracts? Will she admit that the reason she is doing it is because UCP insiders stand to profit?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health.

Member LaGrange: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll admit that when the members opposite were in government, the wait times actually went up for many surgeries. We've actually reduced the wait times for surgeries. In fact, over 60 per cent are now happening in clinically approved time frames. It was only 40 per cent just a few years ago. We're going to continue to increase surgeries to 316,500 in '25-26. We've added an additional amount to that line item to make sure that we're actually, in fact, doing surgeries for those who . . .

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

Unused Personal Protective Equipment

Member Brar: Mr. Speaker, there seems to be no end to the skyrocketing costs of this government's corrupt care scandal. Millions of dollars have been dumped into bloated contracts and Turkish Tylenol. Albertans are paying through the nose while the UCP's wealthy friends are hitting the jackpot. Just this week leaked documents and leaked videos showed us another example of this government's wasteful ways: a warehouse full of defective PPE. I ask this minister: how much more is it going to cost Albertans?

Member LaGrange: Mr. Speaker, if the members opposite are asking if AHS purchased PPE during a pandemic, when there was a shortage around the world, the answer is yes. Did they store that PPE like every other province? Yes. In fact, every other province has had the same issue in terms of having to store PPE. AHS worked with municipal governments, they worked with provincial governments, and they worked with federal governments. That's what happened.

Member Brar: Given that this government is paying more than \$110,000 a month to store mountains of expired PPE that they shouldn't have bought in the very first place and given that this expired shoddy PPE, which health care and front-line workers could not use because it gave them skin rashes, smelled horrible, and we certainly can't use now, is rotting away in a warehouse in Edmonton, will the minister finally admit to the House today that she has no plan to fix this mess?

Member LaGrange: Mr. Speaker, I'll be clear again. Alberta Health Services procured PPE during a pandemic. They also have been storing PPE, just like other provinces. There was a recent article that Saskatchewan, too, has stored PPE, as does every other province, I'm sure, in this country. AHS followed all the appropriate controls in full compliance with Health Canada protocols to acquire the PPE and to store the PPE. There was a time of crisis, and they did the prudent thing.

Member Brar: Given that this UCP government overpaid their good friend Sam Mraiche for unusable PPE that they have had to spend millions more to just store and given that there is no clarity on how much of it has already been disposed of, how much it actually costs to do so, and how many more millions it's going to cost to store and dispose of what remains of this junk PPE, will the minister kindly offer Albertans some reason as to why this incompetent and corrupt government should remain in charge of the public purse?

Member LaGrange: Mr. Speaker, once again, Alberta Health Services purchased PPE during a global pandemic. In fact, they were ahead of the other provinces in getting PPE when others couldn't get it. They purchased it. They stored it. They continue to follow all Health Canada protocols, and the members opposite would have been yelling at us if they had not purchased PPE during a global pandemic. I'm sure of it. AHS did what they were supposed to do.

The Speaker: The hon. member for Calgary – the hon. member for Medicine Hat-Cypress.

2:30 Municipal Inspection of Medicine Hat

Mr. Wright: Still wrong, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, it's been four months since I stood in this House and asked the Minister of Municipal Affairs about the municipal inspection in Medicine Hat. Clarity on this process is essential to ensure transparency and maintain public trust. It's what my community is needing as we work through this process. The residents of Medicine Hat are eager to understand the full scope of the municipal inspection and what it entails. Can the Minister of Municipal Affairs please provide this House with details about the scope of the Medicine Hat municipal inspection?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs.

Mr. McIver: Thanks, Mr. Speaker. On occasion as Minister of Municipal Affairs I'm asked to look into the management of an

Alberta municipality. Typically, this happens in response to a request from the municipal council or a petition from a group of local electors worried about something going wrong. I take every such request seriously. My department undertakes due diligence to ensure all complaints and allegations are carefully considered. As with all municipal inspections we contracted an independent and credible municipal governance expert to conduct the inspection of the management administration and operations of the city of Medicine Hat and its council, and I look forward . . .

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Cypress-Medicine Hat, or something like that.

Mr. Wright: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the minister. Given that transparency is the top priority for the residents of Medicine Hat as the city moves through this municipal inspection process and given many of my constituents have continued to express a desire for a clear and timely update on where things stand and what comes next in addressing any municipal dysfunction and further given residents need to remain informed on this process, can the minister please provide an update as to what step we are at now and when we are currently going to see an inspection update from the minister?

Mr. McIver: Mr. Speaker, I know the hon. member is impatient because he cares about Medicine Hat and is probably eager for the inspection to wrap up. Once the draft report has been produced – and there are procedural fairness steps that involve engaging with the municipality to facilitate their review of the report and any actions I may consider directing them to undertake. Once this is complete, I am hopeful the inspector's report will be available to the public later this spring. We take this very seriously, and I thank the hon. member for being a champion for Medicine Hat along with our other MLA.

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

Mr. Wright: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given the significance of a municipal inspection process in both building public trust and addressing potential compliance issues and given that the point of this process is to ensure there is clear transparency and accountability with good governance for our community and further given it's important that Medicine Hat residents can trust the individual leading this inspection, can the minister please provide the House with information of the inspector's qualifications, professional background, and relevant experience?

Mr. McIver: Well, Mr. Speaker, the inspector, Mr. Ian McCormack, is an independent and credible municipal government expert. He is the president of a business consulting firm that has worked with a number of Alberta municipalities, including Fort Saskatchewan, Lacombe, Calmar, Jasper, High Level, and Whitecourt. Mr. McCormack has been an appointed inspector before, having conducted inspections at Athabasca, Fort Macleod, Rocky Mountain House, the village of Alix, and the summer village of Crystal Springs. He's highly experienced, highly respected, and I thank Mr. McCormack for his wonderful work and look forward to a report, which I'm sure we can all have confidence in when we get it.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Banff-Kananaskis.

Cougar Management

Dr. Elmeligi: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Recently someone outside of the Bow Valley killed a mother cougar and orphaned two four-

month-old kittens. Hundreds of Albertans have e-mailed me expressing concern and outrage. Last year, the Minister of Forestry and Parks increased winter hunting of female cougars dramatically, another decision benefiting his hunter outfitter friends and not wildlife. People see this killing as needless and cruel. Will the minister hold whoever illegally killed this cougar accountable, or is he too focused on killing Alberta wildlife to care?

The Speaker: I just might provide a caution. It sounds like a personal attack on the minister. Just might want to be cautious about such language.

The hon. the minister.

Mr. Loewen: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Of course, we're all concerned over the cougars in the Bow Valley. I know that there's an investigation going on, and we trust that investigation will be done shortly and the truth will come out on that. But when it comes to cougar management in Alberta, we have a cougar management plan that's focused on maintaining a healthy cougar population. Cougar quotas are regularly adjusted in line with that management plan, and so the management of cougars in Alberta will continue to be done properly and responsibly so that we have a healthy population going forward.

Dr. Elmeligi: Well, given that this is yet another decision the minister has made not based on wildlife science or data and probably based on lobbying efforts from his buddies, given these cougar kittens were too young to take care of themselves and they still have spots, by definition hunting their mother is illegal, given that fish and wildlife staff were directed to deem this hunt legal, given apparently the UCP's self-serving agenda goes beyond health care and infrastructure into wildlife, did the minister direct fish and wildlife to turn a blind eye and rule in favour of his hunting buddies?

Mr. Loewen: Mr. Speaker, that is actually atrocious that that member would accuse me of that. That's absolutely untrue. There was no direction given by me to any officers on that investigation. They did that independently through the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Services. I do want to make sure that people know that those young cougars have been taken care of. They're in the Calgary Zoo at this point, and I want to assure you that this has been taken care of properly from the start. This investigation continues, and it will continue until it's completed. I know the member opposite. I would love to debate facts with her, but she's more interested in clickbait.

Dr. Elmeligi: Well, given that direction had to come from somewhere, Mr. Speaker, given the Minister of Forestry and Parks has had previous financial interests in a hunter guide outfitting business that is now owned by his son, as I understand, given every decision this minister has made directly financially benefits hunter guide outfitting businesses, given that this government's pattern of corruption to reap personal benefits goes across ministries, how can Albertans trust the minister to make decisions that benefit Alberta wildlife when this corruption isn't an isolated instance; it's how they govern?

Mr. Williams: Point of order.

The Speaker: A point of order is noted at 2:37.
The hon. the minister.

Mr. Loewen: Mr. Speaker, that is absolutely disgusting that that member would bring that up. That member knows that we have an

Ethics Commissioner in this province. Every minister in this government has to go through that Ethics Commissioner's process to make sure that the decisions we make here are proper and can withstand the Conflicts of Interest Act. When it comes to wildlife in this province, I would rather manage wildlife with common sense than the nonsense that comes from that side. I'd rather use biology than the ideology that they use. We're doing things proper here, and that is absolutely unacceptable to have that member talk like that.

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

Health Services Procurement Process (continued)

Member Tejada: Calgary hospitals have posted up to 12-hour wait times, and one emergency room was frozen just weeks ago. While patients are waiting for the care they need, the government is mired in corruption allegations, including political pressure from the Premier's staff to write contracts for the UCP's friends, even to the point of intimidation. The same provider's name has come up many times when it comes to 'Tylenol,' faulty PPE, and now bloated private surgery contracts. Will the minister come clean about how much contracts with Mraiche and company have cost taxpayers, or do we have to wait for an RCMP and Auditor General investigation to finish?

Member LaGrange: Mr. Speaker, the statement of defence was filed today. I would ask the members opposite to go and have a read of it. I will not be commenting further on this, but just suffice to say that the statement is there for the public to have a look at. I'm happy to speak on our policies and the fact that I had a great announcement this morning and that we are, in fact, building two in-patient towers to address acute-care needs in Edmonton with 700 beds between the two of them.

Member Tejada: Given that it sounds like we're going to have to do the tally ourselves and given that we have \$49 million in credit to Mraiche for medication after the \$29 million we spent on unusable children's Tylenol on the verge of expiry – that's about \$70 million so far – and given that this week, we learned that Albertans have now paid \$5 million just to store everything from expired PPE to medication now known to be potentially harmful to newborns and given that now another half million has been wasted trying to get rid of the 'Tylenol,' – what's that now, about \$76 million? – will the minister admit that we're now just throwing good money after bad?

2:40

The Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Health.

Member LaGrange: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. AHS did indeed procure PPE in an abundance of caution during the pandemic. They procured a good amount so that we made sure that we had enough for Albertans.

Mr. Speaker, during a crisis when there was a lack of children's Tylenol, yes, AHS did procure medication for children. That is being stored and, in fact, we are looking at opportunities to get that medication that is not being used in Alberta into the hands of war-torn countries.

Member Tejada: Given that this is an increasingly tangled web and that the Minister of Infrastructure has stepped down and asked this minister to step aside until the RCMP investigation is complete and given that we have indications now that this corrupt care scandal is slowly revealing to have touched other ministries, maybe

including Infrastructure, and given that, as one of my friends has said, Albertans are tired, and I'm sure many of the members opposite must be at this point as well, will the minister admit that the only black box now is within this cabinet and agree to a fully transparent, independent, and judicial-led public inquiry today?

The Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Health. [interjections] Order. Order. Order. The Minister of Health.

Member LaGrange: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As we've said from the beginning, we are taking these allegations very seriously. In fact, there are a number of reviews and inquiries as well as investigations going on. We all have a very keen interest to make sure we get down to the bottom of what actually has occurred. As the Premier has indicated, as I've indicated, Alberta Health Services is indeed a big black box, and we're going to look into it.

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

Those of you who are travelling home this afternoon, please do so carefully.

Hon. members, that brings us to points of order. At 1:40, during Members' Statements, the Government House Leader rose on a point of order.

Point of Order Parliamentary Language

Mr. Schow: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise on Standing Order 23(h), (i), and (j). At the time you noted, the Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood was delivering a member's statement, where I called a point of order at the conclusion of that member's statement. During it that member said, and with my unofficial records, I read out: "I wish she wouldn't," when referring to the Premier, "spend our hard-earned dollars to go to Florida to hang out with far-right, racist climate change denialists." Further, she said: "I wish . . . she'd have a backbone and a moral compass."

Mr. Speaker, this language has been ruled unparliamentary on multiple occasions, including April 5, 2017, by Speaker Wanner; December 2, 2015, by Speaker Wanner; June 1, 2016, by Speaker Wanner; and April 8, 2013, by Speaker Zwozdesky. That's the climate change denier portion. Furthermore, the issue of pandering to extremists was ruled unparliamentary in March 27, 2024, by yourself.

What I also find really disturbing, Mr. Speaker, is to make a personal attack against any member in this Chamber. For me, for members of the government side, or for members of the opposition this kind of language is unacceptable. It is unbecoming of members of this Chamber, and it should not be allowed.

Though it was during a member's statement, when you're not allowed to heckle, not allowed to respond or make a sound – I respect that process – Mr. Speaker, Members' Statements is also not a time to tee off personally on another member of this Chamber and make derogatory personal attacks. That's exactly what this is. That member's remarks are repugnant. I believe this is a point of order, and I hope that you feel the same. [interjections]

The Speaker: Order. Order.

The Leader of the Official Opposition.

Ms Gray: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. We have debated a number of times in this House about when something is a personal attack or when it is talking about a member in their role, like the role of Premier, and it is a matter of government business. I would

submit to you that – I do not have the benefit of the Blues – language around spending hard-earned tax dollars to go to Florida to hang out with far-right, racist climate change denialists: that is a matter of government business. That is a matter of debate, and I do not believe that that would be a point of order.

We have debated the nuance of whether commentary about a Premier is in fact a personal attack repeatedly, on April 11, 2024; on November 5, 2024. Statements about government business even when they are directed to a Premier are not a point of order but a matter of debate. That being said, Mr. Speaker, I do not have the Blues in front of me, and while I know that the member intended to offer a commentary on government policy throughout, there may have been lines that do cross the line into personal attack. For that, I will have to rely on you and your judgment and the copy of the Blues because I do not have all of that language in front of me.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: I do have the benefit of the Blues, and I am prepared to rule. I would like to begin the ruling by saying the following. On December 1, 2010, shortly after the rules around members' statements were adjusted by agreement of the House, Speaker Kowalski said the following:

But, once again . . .

I'm sure he made the emphasis on once and again; my guess is that it wasn't his first time, as is not mine.

But, once again, I'll repeat what I've said before. Civility, decorum, respect are very important. This is not an opportunity for someone to personally attack someone else.

Now let's proceed to what the hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood said.

I wish the Premier . . .

That seems fairly direct.

. . . would spend more time in our province and less time in America. I wish she,

referring to the Premier,

wouldn't spend [our] hard-earned dollars to go to Florida to hang out with far-right, racist climate change denialists,

to which a point of order was called. She proceeded to say, she being the hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood,

I wish this Premier would stand up for our country. I wish she would pledge her unwavering commitment to Canada. I wish instead of pandering to other politicians who seek to weaken and divide us that she'd have a backbone and a moral compass.

I know . . .

I think that you get the point.

There are a number of occasions on which the hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood took the opportunity to attack the Premier personally. I think it's reasonable in light of a pretty well-known understanding of the use of member statements, what they're for and how they're to be used, to expect the member to apologize and withdraw her comments.

Member Irwin: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I apologize and withdraw.

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

I believe the only other point of order of the day was at 2:37, when the Deputy Government House Leader rose on a point of order.

Point of Order Allegations against a Member

Mr. Williams: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, unfortunately, rise on a similar point of order under 23(h), allegations made against another member, and also (j), statements likely to cause disorder in the House. At 2:37 the Member for Banff-Kananaskis was

speaking, asking a question. Where the question went – this is what I have written down – “given the Minister of Forestry and Parks,” personally named, “has had previous financial interests in a hunter guide outfitting business that is now owned by his son, as I understand, given every decision this minister has made directly financially benefits hunter guide outfitting businesses, given that this government’s pattern of corruption to [repeal] personal benefits goes across ministries,” continuing on.

2:50

The member opposite named the Minister of Forestry and Parks in particular in that question, referenced an allegation against him for making benefits that financially benefit his son and friends, and also not implied but directly cited corruption. Mr. Speaker, I remind you of multiple decisions made in the House. To name a few, on December 2, 2015, Speaker Wanner ruled it unparliamentary to use the term “corrupt politicians” and asked for a withdrawal and apology. Again Speaker Wanner, on May 30, 2016, with the term “corrupt” referring to an individual; the member withdrew. And, of course, Speaker Zwodzesky on November 19, 2013, also ruled it unparliamentary to refer to an individual member of the House as corrupt or participating in corruption.

Mr. Speaker, I’ll note that this happened directly after a warning that you issued with sincerity and weight to that member after the opening question in the series of questions. We believe on this side of the House that those warnings should have weight. We do believe that civility is the key to this debate being substantive, so we’d ask you to rule on this in favour of the government and ask for a sincere apology and withdrawal for what was a personal attack and, if it continues, will continue to cause disruption and disorder in our debates.

The Speaker: The Leader of the Official Opposition.

Ms Gray: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I disagree with the Deputy Government House Leader. This is not a point of order but a matter of debate. I believe that if the minister had access to the Blues, he would see that the question that my hon. colleague was asking did not accuse the Minister of Forestry and Parks of corruption. It did ask about the government’s pattern of corruption given all that is happening in this House right now with the corrupt care scandal and the number of accusations we’ve been talking about across weeks so far, making a reference to that. I believe that the member ended with the question, “How can Albertans trust the minister to make decisions that benefit wildlife when this corruption is not an isolated incident and clearly how the UCP governs?” always keeping it to the collective government and the concerns that we have therein.

I do not believe that this is a point of order, but I look forward to – again, I do not have the benefit of the Blues, so this is the question as written; perhaps delivered differently. I look forward to your ruling.

The Speaker: I do have the benefit of the Blues, and I am prepared to rule. Are there other submissions?

Hon. members, I will submit to the Assembly that there are times when you’re the Speaker that you wrestle with the complex nature of allowing members to ask difficult and complex and hard-hitting questions with the other rules of the Assembly around making personal accusations, personal attacks, or otherwise. I would say to the Assembly that this is one of those cases where there is a wrestling match of such, balancing between the hon. Member for Banff-Kananaskis’s strongly held views and the minister’s right to not be accused of something he did not or could not do in light of the fact that we do have protections in the province.

I think in this instance the hon. Member for Banff-Kananaskis – it is difficult to not make a correlation in this instance in the question, at least with respect to the Blues, when the member says, “Well, given that direction had to come from somewhere, Mr. Speaker, given the Minister of Forestry and Parks,” certainly implying that the direction was from the Minister of Forestry and Parks, and then went on to discuss his “previous financial interests in a hunter guide outfitting business . . . now owned by his son.” As a result, “given every decision this minister has made directly . . . benefits hunter guide outfitting businesses.” The very next sentence: “given that this government’s pattern of corruption.”

I appreciate the fact that the member made a transition to speaking about a wider group. Very difficult not to correlate the two. I do believe that this is a point of order, and I think the hon. member should apologize and withdraw.

Dr. Elmeligi: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I apologize and withdraw.

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

I appreciate the succinct apology and would just note that the Speaker does on occasion feel that push and pull between the rights of both sides of the House within a full and robust debate. The matter is dealt with and concluded.

Ordres du jour.

Orders of the Day

Government Bills and Orders Second Reading

Bill 38

Red Tape Reduction Statutes Amendment Act, 2025

The Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Service Alberta and Red Tape Reduction.

Mr. Nally: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I’m pleased to move second reading of Bill 38, the Red Tape Reduction Statutes Amendment Act, 2025.

[The Deputy Speaker in the chair]

Bill 38 is the ninth red tape reduction bill our government has introduced since 2009, and I dare say that this is one that punches above its weight class, Madam Speaker. This bill seeks to amend seven pieces of legislation that belong to five different ministries. Bill 38 makes vital changes to the Child and Youth Advocate Act that will further protect children, and those are the first changes I want to talk about today.

As you know, the Child and Youth Advocate Act establishes the Child and Youth Advocate as an independent officer to represent the rights, interests, and viewpoints of children and youth receiving services under the Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act. That’s the legislation that gives Children and Family Services the authority to provide services in support of children who are abused or neglected, typically known as child intervention services. One such service includes the transition to adulthood program, which offers financial supports to young adults up until the age of 22. The changes proposed in Bill 38 would amend the Child and Youth Advocate Act to refocus the authority of the advocate by creating both mandatory and discretionary review abilities. Mandatory review of a child’s death would be required for children who received child intervention services prior to their 18th birthday. Discretionary review would be allowed for the deaths of individuals who received intervention services after their 18th birthday up to age 20; however, this review would no longer be mandatory.

We're making these changes, Madam Speaker, to address a problem that began in 2018. At that time the government of the day made it mandatory for the advocate to review the deaths of children who were receiving child intervention services up to two years prior to their death. The advocate was also required to report the death of a young adult up to the age of 24 minus a day. That's also two years after the young adult stops being eligible for financial supports under the transition to adulthood program. Meanwhile the Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act requires Children and Family Services to publicly report the death of a child that occurs while the child was receiving intervention services up to the age of 22 in order to include those individuals falling under transition to adulthood program.

If this seems confusing, Madam Speaker, it's because it is. The inconsistency between the reporting requirements under the two acts create a potential perception that Children and Family Services may be underreporting the number of deaths each year. The changes we're introducing today would shift the advocate's emphasis for mandatory reviews to minor children by setting a clear age limit for mandatory reviews. As noted earlier, the advocate would still have a discretionary authority to review the deaths of individuals two years beyond their 18th birthday, maintaining the spirit of the existing discretionary review option. However, eliminating the mandatory requirement to review the deaths of young adults aged 20 to 24 not only ensures that the advocate can more appropriately focus on children in care, but also it creates better alignment with the review and reporting of CFS. That will ultimately improve child intervention services.

Madam Speaker, I mentioned that Bill 38 contains seven sets of amendments from five different ministries. Two sets of amendments belong to Advanced Education, and I'll focus on those next. Bill 38 proposes changes to the Post-secondary Learning Act to update Alberta's postsecondary education legislation, removing outdated sections and clarifying ambitious language to make it easier for postsecondary institutions to comply with the legislation.

3:00

We would also update the act to allow student associations to simplify their legal structure, reducing red tape and costs so that these groups can focus more time on meeting their core mandates of education, research, and student engagement. Where possible, it would facilitate consolidation of duplicate student associations into single entities to eliminate redundant operating costs and filing fees that associations pay each year for incorporating separate entities. Ultimately, these cost savings would lead to lower administrative expenses for student associations and, consequently, may reduce membership fees for students.

Madam Speaker, the other legislation from Advanced Education we'd like to amend as part of Bill 38 is the Skilled Trades and Apprenticeship Education Act, which oversees apprenticeship education and industry training programs in Alberta. If approved, the amendments would clarify the legal responsibility and duties of trade unions, employer organizations, and occupational associations to the apprentices they sponsor. These changes would benefit apprentices by ensuring that all sponsors, including unions, employer organizations, as well as occupational associations, operate under a clear and consistent framework.

Madam Speaker, this would ensure that apprentices receive the high quality on-the-job training they need for better career outcomes. Furthermore, by clarifying the existing ability of these organizations to act as eligible sponsors, these changes could also result in new sponsors participating in the program, which would increase training opportunities available to apprentices.

Madam Speaker, red tape reduction often includes removing unnecessary regulatory requirements, but it can involve removing unnecessary legislation as well. The Energy Diversification Act, which came into force in 2018, allowed the Minister of Energy to establish programs for petrochemical manufacturing and partial upgrading of Alberta oil sands bitumen to support economic growth and energy diversification in Alberta. This included the creation of the petrochemical diversification program, which provided up to \$500 million in royalty credits to encourage companies to invest in the development of new petrochemical facilities in Alberta. In 2020 the program was discontinued and subsequently replaced by a far superior program, called the Alberta petrochemical incentive program, which is enabled by the ministerial grants regulation. Two other programs enabled by the act, the partial upgrading program as well as the petrochemical feedstock infrastructure program, have also been discontinued.

In light of all this, Madam Speaker, with Bill 38 we're proposing to repeal the Energy Diversification Act altogether, as currently there are no active programs that fall underneath it. While there are no replacement programs planned at this time, future programs could be established under the Mines and Minerals Act or through the ministerial grants regulation. Furthermore, Alberta's petrochemical sector is supported by the Alberta petrochemical incentive program, a 10-year grant program designed to attract investment and drive growth in the industry. This program offers grants of up to 12 per cent of a project's eligible capital costs to companies once their projects are operational, allowing companies to factor in the full value of the incentive when calculating the project's return on investment. I'm pleased to include the repeal of the Energy Diversification Act on behalf of the Minister of Energy and Minerals.

Madam Speaker, another department also has two sets of amendments in Bill 38, and that's my own, Service Alberta and Red Tape Reduction. Albertans are kind and generous, and they support many charities in our province with their time, their effort, and, of course, their money. As such, I think it's only appropriate that Albertans who donate their money to charities are protected in the same way that consumers are. That's why we're proposing to amend the Charitable Fund-raising Act to allow for the appointment of a director of charitable fundraising. This director would be able to take the necessary action to support charitable organizations and protect consumers. This would include the authority to appoint inspectors, ensuring that front-line support exists to effectively carry out oversight as well as enforcement that ensures that fundraising activities are appropriate.

Establishing this director position, Madam Speaker, would also align the Charitable Fund-raising Act with that of the Consumer Protection Act as well as the Condominium Property Act, two legislative pieces overseen by directors delegated by my office.

The other set of amendments from my department relate to the Residential Tenancies Act, which sets the standards of conduct between landlords and tenants, including how they can serve documents to each other. Madam Speaker, right now the RTA requires that notices, orders, and documents such as notice of eviction, lease cancellation, or rent increases are served personally or by registered mail. Landlords can also post notices in a conspicuous location on the residential premises in cases where a tenant is absent or evading receipt of those documents.

Where those methods are not possible, the act does allow for a plan B that was added to its legislation in the early 2000s. Service of notice of eviction, lease cancellations, or rent increases can be provided through electronic means that results in a printed copy being received by an electronic device at the tenant's home or the landlord's office. In other words, Madam Speaker, this describes

the use of a fax machine. As you know, not very many Albertans use a fax machine anymore, so that's why we're proposing to amend the act to allow landlords and tenants to serve documents on each other using more contemporary electronic means such as e-mail. We would still require in-person communication using registered mail and posting notices in a conspicuous location. Electronic communication will still only be permitted as an alternative when these traditional methods have proven ineffective, which ensures that Albertans without reliable Internet access will still be able to communicate through other means.

Madam Speaker, the last set of amendments in Bill 38 is unique because in a way they remind us of the curveballs Mother Nature sometimes throws our way to disrupt those imaginary lines that formally separate our provinces. Under the Boundary Surveys Act Alberta's borders with Saskatchewan, the Northwest Territories, and the northern portion of British Columbia are recognized as a conventional boundary governed by markers connected by straight lines. The central and southern part of our border with British Columbia, however, is a little more complicated. It's identified as a sinuous boundary, largely defined by natural watershed lines, including the divide of the Rocky Mountains. As such, the Alberta-B.C. sinuous border boundary may change over time due to transformations in the landscape, including rock slides or a changing landscape due to factors like erosion or glacial melt. This means that sometimes small adjustments are required to correct from Mother Nature's shenanigans.

Under the boundaries act Alberta's designated boundary commissioner works with counterparts from B.C. as well as the federal government to survey and potentially convert sections of the sinuous boundary to a conventional line when necessary. Madam Speaker, currently any alteration to a provincial boundary requires an amendment to section 43 of the federal Constitution Act, and by extension our Referendum Act allows for a referendum to be held by the province relating to any question relating to a change to the Constitution of Canada. Imagine all that for a rock slide or gradual changes to the landscape due to natural events over the past 100 years.

That's why our friends at Forestry and Parks have asked us to include amendments in Bill 38 that would change the Boundary Surveys Act to remove the need for a referendum. More specifically, we would remove the requirements for a referendum when all three boundary commissions from Alberta, B.C., and Ottawa unanimously agree to alter a sinuous boundary. This way we can make necessary boundary adjustments as efficiently as possible, eliminating the cost, time, and administrative burden of a referendum for typically minor adjustments. To be clear, this is for small adjustments. We would still be able to make interprovincial boundaries more precise, but we wouldn't be able to make major changes to the boundaries. I should also mention that this brings our legislation in line with B.C. and further supports provincial jurisdiction, sovereignty, and property rights.

The benefits of this change would be far reaching. They would benefit current survey work that is ongoing along the length of the provincial boundary as other areas along the border will likely require adjustment. With a sinuous boundary the exact location of the provincial border can be ambiguous and open to interpretation. Converting the border to conventional lines will support future development projects or recreational activities in the area as it would improve clarity of which provincial operators, Alberta or B.C., are required to apply for necessary permits and approvals. It also provides clarity for landowners with property situated adjacent to a sinuous border. If that border is approved to become a conventional line, it gives them more certainty about their property lines.

There we are, Madam Speaker, seven amendments from five departments and a unique mix that, if approved, will continue to make life easier for Albertans and for businesses. In this spirit I invite the support of the House to give second reading to Bill 38.

Thank you.

3:10

The Deputy Speaker: Are there any members wishing to speak to second reading of Bill 38? The hon. Member for Calgary-North East.

Member Brar: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise today not as an MLA and not as somebody who represents my constituents, but I rise to speak as a human being and someone who believes government's first duty is to protect the most vulnerable amongst us. Today I speak against a dangerous and disgraceful provision in Bill 38, a provision that strips the Child and Youth Advocate of their duty to investigate the deaths of young people who were in government care at the ages of 18 and 19. I ask this government: when did dead children become red tape?

Madam Speaker, let's be absolutely clear about what this means. This government is removing a safeguard that allows us to learn from the deaths of young people who age out of care. These are young adults who have faced the hardest of hardships, children who grew up under government intervention, who were removed from unsafe homes, who were placed into foster care, group homes, or temporary shelters. Many of them never had the love, stability, or support that every child deserves.

Madam Speaker, this bill does not serve the needs of these young children. They have never had that family support, which we all take for granted. Now, when they die, often alone, often in the most tragic of circumstances, this government wants to turn a blind eye. This is not red tape. This is reducing accountability. This is erasing their stories from the public record.

Madam Speaker, here's why this change is not just reckless; it's dangerous, because this government wants to hide the data. In Alberta more than 70 per cent of the children and youth in care are Indigenous. These young people already face significant challenges and systemic barriers. By reducing the oversight and support for those aged 18 to 24, we are abandoning them at a critical juncture in their lives. The data is clear: in 2023 Alberta reported 88 incidents of death; 88 incidents of death in 2023 alone, Madam Speaker. In 2024 that number was 83. Of these, 47 per cent were 18 years or older. Between April '24 and January '25 alone 35 young people who had been in Children and Family Services' care died, and 40 per cent of them were 18 or 19 years old. Let me say that again. Nearly half of the young people who died after receiving intervention services were in the very age group that this government now says does not need to be investigated. How do you look at that number and conclude that oversight is no longer necessary?

These are not just statistics or numbers, Madam Speaker; these are young lives lost. Each one of these deaths represents a child that this government once promised to protect, and now their final moments, whether on the street, in a shelter, or in a hospital bed, will no longer be scrutinized, no longer be reported, and no longer be acknowledged. That is the real intent of this bill: to make death invisible.

Let me also talk about what happens to these youth when they turn 18 and age out of care. Let's talk about what happens to their lives after they are out. For many of them turning 18 is not a milestone of independence; for them it is a death sentence. What happens when a child in care turns 18? They lose access to child intervention supports. They often have no stable housing. They lack

family support; no parents to help them with rent; no relatives to guide them through the difficulties of their lives. Many struggle with mental health issues: PTSD from abuse, anxiety, depression, or untreated trauma. Many are at risk of exploitation, whether that be human trafficking, predatory landlords, abusive relationships. And many, Madam Speaker, do not make it to their 20th birthday.

Since 2020 the Child and Youth Advocate's office has investigated over 120 deaths of young adults aged 18 and 19. These reports exposed systemic failures: failures in housing, failures in mental health care, failures in addiction treatment and transition planning. Now, with Bill 38, this government wants to stop those investigations. Madam Speaker, if we stop investigations, we stop learning from these tragedies; if we stop learning, we stop fixing the system; and if we stop fixing the system, we condemn more young people to the same fate. This is not red tape. This is negligence. This is a cover-up.

Madam Speaker, let's not take my word for it. Let's hear from the Child and Youth Advocate herself, Terri Pelton. Let me share what she has said, and I will quote: if we do not know about them passing away, we can't look at what happened, and if we can't look at what happened, we can't improve the services for other young people.

This government is not just ignoring the young people who have died; this government is ignoring those young people who will need the support and whose lives can be saved in the future. We are talking about the young Albertans. We are talking about the next generation of this province. We are talking about those amazing minds that will be lost just because of the negligence and the cover-up from this government. If those youth can be cared for properly and if we can give them the proper supports that they need, we can have amazing engineers from this province; we can have amazing teachers; we can have amazing entrepreneurs. We can have amazing, next-level leaders that will lead this province.

But the unfortunate part is that this government is not doing its part. They are busy in corrupt care scandals. They are busy giving tons, loads of money to their wealthy insiders, but they cannot spare some time, they cannot think about the youth that are most vulnerable. This is not the government that Albertans deserve.

3:20

Madam Speaker, Terri Pelton has also not been consulted on this issue. The very office responsible for protecting children and youth was not asked whether this was a good idea or not. There is a specific reason that office was not consulted. The reason is that they would have said no to this bill. That is why this government rushed this provision into an omnibus bill, buried among unrelated amendments, hoping no one would notice. But that's not the case. Albertans have noticed it, and Albertans will not remain silent.

Let me also uncover the true intentions of this government, and let's call it what it really is. This is not about reducing red tape. This is not about improving efficiency. This is about hiding the numbers. Instead of reducing youth homelessness, they'll just stop reporting when a young adult dies on the streets. Instead of improving mental health services, they'll just stop tracking the suicides of youth who left care. Instead of fixing the transition system, they will just make sure nobody ever sees the data. This is the most cynical, dishonest, and dangerous way to govern, Madam Speaker, and every single member of the House, including the members on the other side of the House, knows about this.

Madam Speaker, let me also share the shameful history of child welfare failures in Alberta. Time and again we have seen governments neglect the children and youth in their care. We have seen reports pile up, investigations ignored, and crises getting worse only for action to come too late.

Let's not forget that in 2014 the government tried to suppress reports on the deaths of children in care. After a public outcry journalists revealed that the government had underreported child deaths for years. More than 740 children have died while in care between 1999 and 2013, but the government had only disclosed 56 to the public.

In 2022 the Child and Youth Advocate reported a surge in opioid-related deaths among former youth in care. The numbers were rising, and her office called for urgent action. But instead of acting, this government now wants to make sure that these deaths are not reported. That's shameful.

These are not abstract cases. These are our children who were taken into government care with a promise that they would feel safe, they would feel healthy, and they would have a better future. Madam Speaker, if history has taught us anything, it is that ignoring child deaths does not prevent them; it enables them. By stripping the advocate's duty to investigate, we repeat the mistakes of the past, mistakes that have already cost hundreds of lives of young Albertans.

Madam Speaker, let's look at what happens when government decides not to investigate the deaths of vulnerable youth. In British Columbia between 2010 and 2015 child deaths involving youth who have aged out of care were not properly tracked. In 2015 the report from B.C.'s representative of children and youth found that a lack of oversight allowed preventable deaths to happen that might have been avoided if the system had been monitoring outcomes properly. This shows that those deaths were caused because of systemic failures.

In Manitoba an investigation into the child welfare system found that Indigenous youth were dying in record numbers after leaving care, but the government had no proper review process in place to analyze why these deaths were happening. It took public outcry before the government admitted that it had no reliable way to track outcomes for former youth in care.

In Ontario the government ignored warnings from transition support for the young aging out of care. Between 2015 and 2019 the number of youth in care who died of opioid overdoses skyrocketed. Experts said that more oversight was needed, but instead of acting, the government cut funding to transition services. The result, Madam Speaker: more deaths, more preventable tragedies.

This is what happens when you stop counting, when you stop looking, and Alberta should be learning from these failures. Alberta should not be joining these failures. Alberta should not be repeating these failures.

Many members in this House have children. I want members to think about your children. Imagine your son, your daughter, your niece, your nephew turning 18. Imagine they have no family to support them. Imagine them couch surfing, struggling with mental health, turning to dangerous survival work just to make it through the night. If something happens to them and no one asks why, imagine how you'd feel after that. Can the members of this Chamber look into the eyes of that mother and tell her that the death of her son, her daughter, her kid does not matter?

Is this the government that we elected? This is not what Albertans deserve. At least, this is not what Albertans expect from any elected government. There can be so many things that this government can do to protect those youth. Let me share, just in case this government doesn't know what they can do. How about we give more resources to the advocate's office to investigate cases instead of cutting their mandate? How about expanding the transition supports, investing in housing programs, investing in mental health services so fewer of these young people die in the first place? Why not mandate a review system where all deaths are tracked with full investigations

focused on the highest risk cases? Madam Speaker, the answer is not to stop looking. The answer is to do better.

Madam Speaker, before every member of this House votes on this bill, I want all members to ask themselves: can you with a good conscience support this bill? Can you go back to your constituencies and talk to parents about this bill? Can you have a meeting with the Child and Youth Advocate to see what their opinions are? Can we do the basic, basic things of our job, consult with our constituents, listen to the stories, learn from the past mistakes of the other provinces, learn what other jurisdictions have done to improve the processes, and also start caring about the young people around us? How can we even think for a second that the child who has died, that child's story, does not matter? How can we think that child's life cannot be saved? It can be saved, Madam Speaker. If we invest properly in the resources in the first place, that child's life could be saved.

3:30

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

Ms Armstrong-Homeniuk: Thank you, Madam Speaker. It's an honour to join in on today's discussion of Bill 38, the Red Tape Reduction Statutes Amendment Act, 2025. I'd like to take a moment to thank the minister for his constant work on this file because I believe it's something we should all appreciate. Cutting red tape isn't just arbitrary work we are doing to impress others; it has a real and tangible benefit to the lives of our constituents. We should be proud to have eliminated 209,000 regulatory requirements, but what makes me most excited to share this news with constituents is what that reduction translates into dollars saved, investment attracted, and jobs created. So far this ministry's work on the file has amounted to \$2.9 billion in savings for Albertans. This is not a number to scoff at. The minister has my thanks for his diligent work in saving taxpayers' dollars. This bill would be another entry in our already impressive record, making government more efficient.

The changes I'm most excited to see in the proposed legislation relate to the Skilled Trades and Apprenticeship Education Act. This act governs Alberta's designated trades, apprenticeships, and industry programs. It is an important piece of legislation, especially for those of us who represent fast-growing or industry-dependent constituencies. By the end of this decade about 700,000 of the 4 million Canadians working in the trades are set to retire. If that number doesn't already alarm you, a report by the Canadian Federation of Independent Business found that small and medium-sized firms lost out on a total of \$38 billion in business opportunities because of labour shortages. These aren't opportunities we can afford to miss, Madam Speaker. Demand for skilled trades in my own constituency is immense. For example, at its peak Dow Chemical's \$9 billion net-zero petrochemical project will probably see around 600,000 workers on-site.

Apprentices already play a vital role in Alberta's workforce, and as more people retire from the industry, they will only become more important. Beyond that, apprenticeships offer good-paying, stable work and the prospect of becoming a journeyman. It is for those reasons we want Alberta's apprenticeship, education, and industry training programs to be accessible to as many students and sponsors as possible.

The proposed changes to the Skilled Trades and Apprenticeship Education Act would make the legal responsibility and duties of trade unions, employers' organizations, and occupational associations to the apprentices they sponsor much clearer. The result would be easier access to the program for both the apprentices

and sponsors so all apprentices in Alberta continue to receive quality on-the-job training. In light of the current shortage this is a critical change in a critical time. However, this is only one of the changes that Bill 38 would make if passed.

Bill 38 also proposes amendments to the Post-secondary Learning Act, which would allow student associations to simplify their legal organization, reducing unnecessary red tape and costs. These changes will make applying and understanding the PSLA easier, ensuring our postsecondary institutions can operate with greater efficiency and avoid confusion in matters of interpretation and compliance. Being a student is hard enough without the government stepping in to complicate things.

If passed in this Chamber, key improvements would also be made to the Charitable Fund-raising Act. We want to ensure legislation covering charitable fundraising protects donors in the same way our legislation protects consumers. This is exactly what Bill 28 proposes, as it would create consistency between the Charitable Fund-raising Act and other consumer protection legislation. These changes would allow the minister to establish a director of charitable fundraising with delegated administration and decision-making authority. Such a role would allow for reduction in internal red tape and simple delegation, administration, and enforcement of the act.

Bill 38 also clearly aligns itself with the minister's mandate to eliminate legislation or regulation that is no longer relevant or in use. One piece of legislation, the Energy Diversification Act, does not currently support any programs or new initiatives. If this bill is approved, the act would be repealed to avoid confusion with industry about government programs available.

The final changes, which I believe I have time to discuss, relate to the Residential Tenancies Act. One of the keys to a healthy and stable landlord-tenant relationship is clear and effective communication. The proposed changes would allow landlords and tenants to use electronic communication such as e-mail for serving documents but only in cases where traditional methods like registered mail or public posting have been unsuccessful. This common-sense change will modernize our approach while maintaining safeguards for both parties.

If you're still listening at this point, it should be clear that Bill 38 proposes some broad changes, but they are changes I am proud to support. We are the best in the country at cutting red tape to promote economic growth, and with these proposed changes, it is clear we will stay that way.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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

Ms Sweet: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I'm not sure how we got here with Bill 38 and the changes that this government has decided to make around Children and Family Services. I find it really disappointing, to be honest, that the government would take a move to limit accountability and transparency around such an important issue that we repeatedly talk about in this House.

I think we should go back into a little bit of a history lesson about how things work or have been in the history of since I've been around and a little bit before my time, about why and how we got to the place that we ended up, why it was that children over the age of 18: their deaths were being investigated so that we could learn and understand how to do preventative work.

I was a social worker, as many know in this Chamber. I worked in children's services for 12 years before I was elected. I worked first with Métis Child and Family Services, with Indigenous communities. Then I moved to children with disabilities, and then eventually I ended up working in the inner city. I worked with high-

risk youth, and I also worked primarily with First Nations communities and had designated First Nations communities that I worked with.

While I was working with some of the youth that I was working with, I had a death on my caseload. I had a young child who was actually the child of a youth that I was working with, and unfortunately he passed away at six months from SIDS. There was nothing that the mom on my caseload could have done to have prevented that death. We know that SIDS, unfortunately, happens, and children pass away. However, the impact to the youth that I was working with at the time when that happened was significant.

She was in a place and on a path in her life at that time that she was running for success. She had changed her life around. She had become pregnant quite young but had been able to stabilize herself, was living in an apartment, was doing really great things, and then her son died and we went right back to zero again. She started using, and she started getting involved in things again. She was connected to gangs, and we had to, like, reset and rebuild and redo all of those things. I will say that today she's amazing and she's doing amazing things and she has kids now. Like, she's a child and youth worker and went to university, and she made it happen. I am super proud of her and her success in her life.

3:40

But that was part of why I decided to run, to put my name forward and become an MLA. I recognized there were failures and there were faults within children's services that needed to be fixed. I would say that there are members opposite in this Chamber who would agree with me that in 2014, when the government realized that – and that was the government opposite at the time, to be clear, the Progressive Conservatives. They recognized that there needed to be some accountability, that we needed to do better, and we needed to start doing statutory reviews on death of children in care.

The PCs at that time decided we needed to start doing statutory reviews. They passed legislation, 2014 happened, the election then happened, and in 2015 we became government. What we found out is that after those pieces of legislation were passed, the statutory review never happened, not under these guys, not under the government at the time, under the PCs, and many of the members opposite were part of that government.

But then what happened – and this is what blows my mind – is the members opposite, when in opposition, specifically the minister of emergency and safety, decided to turn a death of a child into a political stunt and try to start talking about the fact that we needed to have more accountability.

Because of that, there was a review that was done, which members of the current government sat on and helped create recommendations about accountability in children's services and how we could do better and how we should be more transparent and how we need to make sure we do these death reviews so that we know how to make sure we prevent these deaths from happening again. It was a big deal, lots of things, and I have lots of opinions and emotions, clearly, about how that interaction happened and how we could have had conversations way differently about that than how it happened when I was in government. But we took accountability, and we created change, and we implemented the recommendations that came out of a multidisciplinary panel which had members of the opposition and government, which includes current ministers that sit on the government side.

One of those recommendations was specifically about the death reviews and including people over the age of 18 and including youth that had died that were receiving services. And now those very same members, that sit in cabinet, are coming with a red tape reduction bill and saying we shouldn't do that anymore. Like, what

is happening? We're 10 years later, and we're going backwards. Not only that, but the current government is also cutting the budget to the Child and Youth Advocate on those very accountability measures and not giving the power and the ability to be able to do the work.

We also have a private member's bill currently sitting in this House that wants to start moving parental rights into the Child and Youth Advocate, which I'm extremely concerned about because it contradicts the whole intent of the Child and Youth Advocate's office. It does not protect kids when you start bringing in parental rights. If the government wants to have that conversation and start to have someone who can be an advocate for parents, it does not sit in the Child and Youth Advocate's office. Their job is to keep kids safe, to give them an advocate, and to make sure that their rights are protected and that we can learn from mistakes as adults to make sure that deaths don't happen again. But not according to this government.

We have seen more kids die under the UCP over the last few years that are over the age of 18 than we have historically in the history of all of the things. A lot of that is drug use, and we know that. We know that there is a problem and that we have really dangerous drugs on the street, but what I also know as someone that worked in children's services is that when you start cutting services to families, when you start making housing not the number one priority, and when people don't have somewhere to live, when low-income families can't access supports and services to manage the needs of their children, when we don't have enough educational staff in schools to identify when kids are potentially at risk and be able to call children's services and say we're worried about this child, more kids die. I've seen it, and I know it.

So this has to go. Like, I fundamentally will not vote for this bill with this in it. I can't. You cannot ignore kids that have grown up in care, who have been traumatized, who don't have the ability to have access to supports. When you see a government who is trying to cut more and more supports to youth, who wants to decrease services from 24-year-olds down – already has, actually. When you see that we have young people living on the streets – we've also heard this government talk about human trafficking over and over again in this House and how it's really important that we address that. These are these kids.

Mr. Shepherd: May I intervene?

Ms Sweet: Yeah. Sure.

Mr. Shepherd: Thank you, Madam Speaker. If I may intervene just for a moment. My colleague was speaking of human trafficking. You know, this morning in the estimates for Public Safety and Emergency Services I was speaking with the minister about the border interdiction patrols, \$30 million being spent. I asked him what metrics he would be using to measure the value of that spend, and he said to me – you know, they had stopped one woman that was being trafficked across the border – that spending that \$30 million is worth it to save one life. If that is true, and I am not contesting that, it is certainly worth this small piece of doing these reviews to ensure another child's life is not lost and supporting these children.

I wonder if my colleague agrees.

Ms Sweet: Thank you, Member. Of course, I absolutely agree.

I also know that when you look at children's services and you look at caseloads that children's services workers have and the fact that their funding continues to be adjusted and manipulated and moved around within ministries, their ability to do their job is impacted. At one point when I was with children's services, I had

25 youths between the ages of 12 and 16 on my caseload, and that was small. Many of my colleagues that were working with families that had children that were not considered high risk had 40 families. We're supposed to see those kids every month and have interactions with those kids every month.

The 25 that I had, the youngest was 12 when I started working with her. She was part of a family that was gang affiliated, and she was totally being groomed. To her that was normal, that men in her life, that the adults in her life – that this is what happens. Being given gifts and having drugs around her and all of those things: that was what her life looked like. And I had 25 of her.

So when you cut programs and when you cut staffing and when you say to children's services workers, "Do more with less," kids are put at risk. When you cut supports and programs to adults, their kids end up having to be involved with children's services because they're not able to provide the supports that they need or they're exposed to more stress in their lives. The fact that we're seeing victims' services being cut in this very budget and the fact that women who are survivors are not going to be able to access the same supports because of this budget puts kids at risk.

We know women have to leave abusive relationships at least 10 times. They do go back, and they go back because they don't have the financial assistance to be able to do it by themselves. They don't have anywhere to go. They don't have access to housing, big problem here, and then their kids end up being at risk. So everything that this government is doing currently in the budget is putting kids at risk. They can deny that all they want, but in fact that's exactly what they're doing. Don't have access to health care, don't have access to housing, don't have access to financial assistance. None of those things. Those are the social determinants of health, those are what keep communities safe, and those are what keep kids safe.

Our schools are a fundamental foundation in that conversation. The number of teachers that I worked with to try to support kids, to make sure that kids were safe, that were able to tell me what was going on in those families' homes before I even went out to meet them. Teachers are fundamental. Educational assistants are fundamental. Yet this government wants to cut that very accountability out of this bill and then out of the budget when you cut the Child and Youth Advocate.

3:50

How can the government spend millions of dollars on storing health care PPEs and doing contracts with their buddies and then say, "But kids don't matter"? Do not wear that pin that says "children matter" in this House if you're going to cut the budget and you're also going to make it so that you don't have to be accountable to the public about what happens to kids when they die in care. You can't wear that pin. The government needs to take it off if this is what they're going to do. I cannot believe – I can't wrap my head around this. There cannot be a single member on that side of the House that gets to stand up and fight for kids if this is done. This isn't fighting for kids. Every single one of these kids that dies, these young adults that we are now saying or the government is now saying, "We don't need to have to review," is someone's life, someone's story, and a story that we should be learning from so that we can do better. I don't get it.

So let's just go facts and figures for now because I could go on for this forever. In 2023 Alberta reported 88 notifications of death. In 2024 Alberta reported 83 notifications of death where 47 per cent, almost 50 per cent, were over 18 years. As of January 2025, six weeks ago, there are approximately 8,800 children receiving intervention services with 7,500 of them currently in care of the minister. So we only have . . .

The Deputy Speaker: Are there any other members wishing to join this debate? Seeing the hon. Member for Edmonton-North West.

Mr. Eggen: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I appreciate the opportunity to speak to Bill 38, just recently introduced as part of the red tape reduction initiative that this government has moved on for quite a long time, actually. You know, once again, Bill 38 is problematic in that it has so many different sections to it that are completely disparate from each other. While you might be interested in one element, like the boundary changes using the continental divide between British Columbia and Alberta – I mean, sounds interesting, and I will talk about that a little bit – then you have changes to investigations of deaths of children in care with the Child and Youth Advocate all in the same bill. I mean, these two things don't belong in the same universe much less the same collection of papers. And a third twist to that is changes to postsecondary education. Again, just a real grab bag of things inside of the section on postsecondary, too.

I mean, I know that the UCP likes to pretend that they invented this word "red tape reduction" – right? – which is not true, and likes to think that they are revolutionizing government by cleaning it up, but that's not true either. What you are doing is taking disparate little bits and pieces of legislation from all over the law statutes book and plunking them into individual pieces of a bill. Now, you can do that in the Westminster parliamentary system if you have a miscellaneous statutes sort of bill and you agree with other members of the other parties in the Legislature to, you know, pass that expeditiously, but none of those things are happening here either. So you have this kind of mutant version of a miscellaneous statutes act, but inside there are all kinds of problematic pieces of legislation that, quite frankly, as my colleague from Edmonton-Manning pointed out, are quite objectionable and, I would venture to say, deeply hypocritical and certainly not rational.

So that's the first part, that my colleague from Edmonton-Manning was talking about, in regard to the Child and Youth Advocate. You know, I thought, "Well, I'll look at the Child and Youth Advocate budget," since that's what we're in the season of here. I have the Leg. Offices' estimates, which will be debated as part of the budget, and lo and behold, the Child and Youth Advocate office is receiving a cut to their budget. Well, goodness gracious, right? It's quite a significant one because, of course, you have to factor in record inflation and record population growth in any budget that we debate as part of budget estimates. There is at least a 5 and a half per cent cut to the office of the Child and Youth Advocate in this budget right now under this same government, who also brought forward Bill 38, which is suggesting that the Child and Youth Advocate stop investigating certain categories of death of children and young people in custody.

I mean, again, you know, that doesn't smell very good, Madam Speaker, right? It suggests that they have a predetermined agenda to just simply have a lot of these deaths of youths go dark somehow. We just don't get to categorize that, and that's irresponsible. It's irresponsible, it's a shame, and it goes against all the principles of how we have even built the office of the Child and Youth Advocate and the department of social services, which is meant to save and to improve young people's lives that are in difficult situations and not simply sweep that information under the rug.

The best way you can make improvements is to have the data that tells you where you need to make the improvements, and, Madam Speaker, there's a glaring place, which is young people, children in care passing and turning 18 years old and older and dying in record numbers here in the province of Alberta. It's an absolute shame. As my colleague pointed out, it's some of the very most vulnerable people that we have in this province, period, not just people in care

but a population of people that are most susceptible to early deaths, between 18 and 24 years old, people graduating out of the children in care program.

To study those numbers and to see what we can do to improve that, to turn around the most vulnerable population and the mortality in that vulnerable population, this government is choosing to cut that office generally. And as I see on page 31 of the budget, line 5, investigations in the Child and Youth Advocate's budget, specifically that line item is being cut, too. [interjection] Oh, I'm sorry. Yes.

Mr. Kasawski: Yeah. Member, I really appreciate what you're saying, especially when we're talking about funding being flat, and flat is as good as a cut. What I'm seeing when you're talking about this is that we're talking about youth that are transitioning from adolescence to adulthood. Some are very vulnerable, and there's a lack of investment in prevention in this province. And the old saying goes, Madam Speaker, that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

Mr. Eggen: What's that in metric?

Mr. Kasawski: Yeah. It's metric. I don't know the conversion.

I just think you're on to something with that, and I wonder if you want to elaborate.

Mr. Eggen: Oh, yeah. Absolutely. Thank you for that. I mean, I was just listening to a radio program on this very issue around cuts to the Child and Youth Advocate's programming here in the province of Alberta, and they had a number of young people who are actually directly affected. It was quite poignant because these were articulate young people who had passed through the child and youth system and had been, you know, aging out past the age of 18 and then not receiving the extended care, which was usually afforded to young people like this. They said: well, you know, from the day that we were born or moved into the Child and Youth Advocate, we've always been at a distinct disadvantage. We're less likely to complete school. We are more likely to be victims of violence. We are more likely to be living in poverty, which includes, of course, accommodation – right? – always looking for safe and stable accommodation.

And all of those things don't suddenly change when you turn 18. In fact, all of those disadvantages, which exacerbated these different elements of poverty and danger to these young people living under the age of 18, only compounded themselves from the age of 18 to 24.

4:00

One person particularly – I was quite struck listening to this on the radio – said: I never had the training and the experience of a stable family situation that I could apply to myself and to any new family that I might be able to try to put together later on. They just didn't have that experience, that way of being able to perhaps save, the way to look ahead towards getting some postsecondary education or completing high school, the ability to stay away from criminal activity: all of those things.

At a distinct disadvantage and suddenly the government thinks at their 18th birthday: bang, bang; thanks very much; off you go into the world. And here we are with a death rate at the ages of 18 to 24 of this vulnerable population that exceeds any other category in Alberta, and it's only getting worse. As my colleague pointed out, these are historic rates of death in this age category for vulnerable young people.

Obviously, this part of this bill is seriously flawed. Even if you had attached it to a universal pharmacare program or whatever and

snuck onto the same bill under red tape reduction, this element of the bill drags down all of those other ideas and makes them something you simply can't vote for. You know, again, categorically, from the top of my commentary, it was: make sure that you are honing your legislation properly and, number two, don't try to slip in these changes to red tape reduction when you're in fact attacking vulnerable children.

Yes, I'll take the intervention.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you very much, Colleague. I think you're right to talk about the fact that this bill is about so much more than what the title says. I think that the title is a disservice to the people of the province, and I was wondering, Minister – former minister. Hopefully, future minister. You've titled bills before. What would a more appropriate title be for a bill that obviously does this direct attack on young people, discrediting the type of accountability that they deserve?

Mr. Eggen: I don't know. I mean, this is the heart of this bill, really. You know, it is the Reduction of the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate Act, something like that, reducing the scope and the ability of this office of the Legislature to do their job.

You know, there's another level of problem around this, which is that whenever the government of the day chooses to reduce the budget of any office of the Legislative Assembly, they are also treading on very, very thin ice – right? – in regard to why these offices were set up in the first place. Why did they have to set up an office for the Child and Youth Advocate? Because quite often the ministry has problems built within it and they're not doing their job. This is like a watchdog to make sure that we are doing the job of what the ministry of social services is meant to do. I know that it's a very difficult ministry and I know that it's not easy to accomplish, but to have an advocate in the best of circumstances would actually help that job to be executed by the government.

But if you choose to cut that office or any of these other offices, like the Chief Electoral Officer or the Ethics Commissioner, if you start wading into those things, you're not just cutting another few dollars off the budget. I think the cut that we could save from the Child and Youth Advocate's budget is in the hundreds of thousands of dollars. As the Member for Edmonton-City Centre pointed out, very adroitly, you know, a \$30 million increase to looking for cross-border human trafficking, one person being caught at \$30 million: I mean, that's all well and good. I don't disagree with that either. But here we are with literally dozens or even hundreds of children and young adults that are living in extremely precarious circumstances. A cut to several hundred thousand dollars of that budget compromises their safety and security as well.

Yeah. I mean, there's a whole other level to it, then, right? The government of the day takes its – this is free advice for them, you know. Hands off the offices of the Legislature. They're there to help, to advocate, but they're also an arm of democracy to make sure that the government is doing their job. If they reach in and say, "Hey, well, you know, we're going to cut you," then it sends two messages. One, you're not caring about our most vulnerable youth, and, number two, maybe you just are not a big fan of democracy and transparency.

Lord knows we've seen a lot of that with this government in the last few weeks, with the corrupt care scandal, right? They're not being willing to investigate something that's obviously offside and needs to be cleared up and, instead, are going for the very opposite of transparency, which is to obfuscate and to try to pass blame off to something else.

It's not the way to govern. It certainly goes against not just that one issue on corrupt care, but it undermines the integrity of the

government in general so that anything a government does, once they say, "Oh, we're not investigating. Sorry. You know, nothing to see here; look the other way. Everybody, back to sleep," people are not going to do that. They'll do the opposite, and they'll start to investigate other choices that the government is trying to pull off, like underfunding the Child and Youth Advocate and not reporting or investigating deaths of young people in care, right? Suddenly, that takes on a whole new level of people wondering what this government is up to, the very integrity of the government.

They're also over here not investigating a corrupt care scandal that is muddying the waters of everything, quite frankly, right? Again, once a government stops acting with integrity and responsibility, then all of their decisions come into question in regard to integrity and responsibility, of which this is one, too.

I'll just in the last few minutes look at some of the other pieces of the grab bag which is this Bill 38. Again, maybe people wouldn't be so concerned about changes to the Post-secondary Learning Act, you know, some administrative changes and so forth. But, by golly, this government has been up to no good already, so I think we need to have some explanations around why they are choosing to allow student associations to register themselves and register into a single entity.

I know as my job is the shadow minister for postsecondary education that each of our 28 colleges, polytechnics, and universities have some version of a students' union or students' council, but each of them just has one. They don't have multiple ones inside each of those institutions; they just have one. This idea of consolidating something when there is only one in the first place makes you kind of wonder. We do need an explanation, perhaps from the Minister of Advanced Education, as to what exactly this means.

The minister of red tape reduction said that the students at NAIT had asked for this legislation. I'll have to call in to the students at NAIT to see if that's actually true. Again, the NAIT Students' Association: there is only one of them, so there's no more consolidating you need to do. They're already consolidated.

Another element to the postsecondary part of this red tape reduction act talks about, in section 5(6), any material produced by an officer of a public postsecondary institution or employee of the board of the public institution that results from the duties must be made available to the public. Now, again, I think this requires some explanation, Madam Speaker. We need to know what exactly information, material is. Is that research material? Is that, you know, unique research that people are producing, let's say, at the university, or is this more sort of an administrative thing?

The language needs to be clarified and needs to be explained, quite frankly, because that is potentially encroaching on intellectual property, right? If someone is doing research at a university and is building it as part of their contract to the researcher or perhaps a saleable entity that they're producing as a result of their research in nanotechnology or in AI or in oil sands technology or whatever, if they have a proprietary part of their contract, then they don't necessarily have to make publicly available any of the things that they're producing. Again, we just need to make sure that that's clarified in that section.

4:10

Then the third one, which I did hear about on the radio as well. You're getting little hints of where I get most of my media information, listening to the radio. That's the Boundary Surveys Act. This is talking about making it easier to make changes to Alberta's provincial boundary, right? Hopefully, not Alberta's provincial boundary with the United States of America. Lord knows...

The Deputy Speaker: You are done.

The hon. Member for Sherwood Park.

Mr. Kasawski: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Happy to rise this afternoon on Leg. Friday to talk about another red tape reduction statute amendment act. Looking for some themes that have been brought up in debate: when I read through the bill, I find it interesting that there are actually some themes. I wish we could have a new name. I think this would be the 20-something Act. I think it would be a great focus. I ask all members in the House to think back to their time of transitioning into adulthood, turning 18, which legally is the moment where you are an adult, and that period of time in your 20s.

Last night someone who is in their 20s came up to me and said: what's your advice to someone that's in their 20s? I thought it was a really interesting question. You know, transitioning to adulthood is a important period, and the government does tend to take their hands off and allow people at that period of time to go through their own formative period for learning and self-discovery in that transition from adolescence to adulthood, Madam Speaker.

The 20-something individuals: we explore different paths. Often we try a job, find out what we like and do not like in our work. We make choices that shape our future. You know, often there are people in a situation where their choices are very limited. Maybe it's from their circumstances. Maybe it's from their own abilities. For those people the government is available to provide support, help them find mentorship, help them make connections. Those things, making an investment in connection, making investments in preventative measures, are very helpful when we're in our 20s.

What we're seeing often with this government is – I think in budget estimates it was called a new strategic direction, which I understood meant a deficit budget. In a deficit budget perhaps there's looking at where cuts can be made, but cuts that are made in prevention we will pay for down the road. When we were talking, the member earlier, we talked about an investment. You know, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. That is true. It's a truism that stands the test of time.

When I look in this, I see there's going to be some changes coming for those key areas, in skills development and in postsecondary, which are important. But we're seeing these cuts and reductions in key areas, like for municipalities to invest in prevention with FCSS. When we have people with disabilities that are going through their transition to their 20s – in my own constituency people have come to me and expressed their concern with the direction the government is making with those people, those citizens in Alberta that are going from youth into adulthood.

If you're an older or an aging parent of a young disabled child or a young disabled adult, you have stress and worry in your life. Some of it is just some burdens that the government puts on in terms of regularly checking in annually to see if someone with a permanent disability is disabled year after year. They have to go through almost 60 hours of tests and resourced examinations to make sure that they're eligible for funding, which are areas which would probably be worth looking at reviewing if we're looking for savings in the budget.

The advocate for youth has previously called on the UCP to provide better and increased support for youth transitioning to adulthood, and we're seeing a bill brought forward that is doing the opposite, doing less for prevention and doing less for people that are going to be in need.

I often think back to earlier in this government's mandate when it was a different Premier, and one of the things that was so cruelly done by them, that youth in care – where the age was changed. They were covered previously up to the age of 24, and then it was

dropped down to 21. Perhaps it was looked at as a way to push people out of the nest, out of care, but it was also probably being done from cruelty, ideology, and cheapness.

Some of the members have brought up some great examples and great stories from the 20s, and we can look at our own stories from the 20s to find out what we were going through at that period of time. I see that there are going to be changes to the postsecondary act and, Madam Speaker, to clubs in the postsecondary act. I was surprised, talking to the minister about this, that legislation is required. I can imagine, from my own time in university, that clubs are so important. Making those connections in that period of time in our 20s is important, so an investment is important for people when they're in university and in postsecondary.

Finding a way to alleviate the costs and burdens on clubs: this sounds like a reasonable thing that is being brought forward in this red tape reduction bill. Student associations that may become redundant, or maybe they're smaller groups and they want to join and form larger groups – it seems like a reasonable idea, so I'm glad the minister has found a way to listen to the students at the technical institutes and other postsecondary institutions and say, "There's a way we can make life easier for you; we can make your clubs more functional," and they can have that legal entity that they need so that they can have those connections that they will make in that youth period.

Students' unions on campus are an extremely important part of campus life, and they provide advocacy for the students. They also provide connections with them to industry, and we want to make sure that we are giving them those supports that will enable student life in our postsecondary institutions to thrive and be a great place for that period of time in our young people's lives.

Again, we're talking about people in their 20s. When you're in your 20s, that period of time, the more connections you can make while you're making those choices in life are going to be a powerful benefit, and if the government can find a way that makes it easier, then I'm feeling like that's going to be a positive thing that comes out of this red tape reduction.

Not sure why we always go back to calling it red tape reduction, Madam Speaker. It feels like sometimes we're just jamming too many things into some sort of omnibus bill, but if postsecondary institutions and the students are saying that they want and need an ability and the tools so that we can make this change, great.

I am a little worried, when sometimes we don't see it clearly listed out, what the intention could be from this government, because we've lost trust, because we have a lot of chaos coming from this government. I wonder if there's something in here that is trying to go after students and student groups in their advocacy role. I'm a little concerned about that, Madam Speaker. I want to make sure that student clubs, student groups, when people are at that formative time and have a lot of strong opinions do not lose the opportunity for advocacy. There seems like there could be, by a ministerial order – we could have student clubs merged or eliminated in this legislation if it comes forward the way it is. We would like some more clarity on that from the minister, expecting to see some of that when he gets up to speak at closing debate or during an intervention.

The Skilled Trades and Apprenticeship Education Act: there are going to be some changes made here. These organizations that provide that opportunity for apprenticeship are so important. Apprenticeship is really mentorship for young people in this province. Improvements that will be made to apprenticeship I think are going to be a very powerful and very helpful thing, so a good thing that's going to be coming from this act.

4:20

I know I've worked with a lot of electricians, Madam Speaker. You know, from first-year journeyman to fourth-year journeyman that movement in that life of a person is so important. The life skills they're gaining aren't just the tools of the trade and the skills of the trade, but they're learning through mentorship with older, more experienced members that are of the trade, that are able to guide them along, teach them how to put on their boots, be safe at work, and then also make those good decisions that are important for their trade and to be able to apply their trade.

I did note in here – and it's worth taking a swing at the minister of affordability – that there's an opportunity now to have a bill where we can get rid of the Energy Diversification Act. Why would you want to have energy diversification in this province? I feel like this was brought in not because it was helpful to take this bill out but because it was just a clear statement that the minister convinced the minister of red tape reduction to eliminate anything that said "energy diversification" in this province. The minister is welcome to stand up and answer that question. Are we taking energy diversification out of this province, Minister? It seems like that's what the legislation is bringing forward. Everything can be moved into minerals and mining. Does all energy come from minerals and mining? I know the minister had a chance to speak in Strathcona county last week about nuclear, so there are other forms of energy that are being looked at. It's not all going to be coming from minerals and mining, right?

Madam Speaker, overall, I think there are some good things brought in here that are going to be helping our youth. I have questions about the Charitable Fund-raising Act. The changes that we've brought forward here could be very substantial in creating a slush fund for the government. I'm worried about energy diversification in this province not being a priority. I am happy to see that for youth in their 20s we're looking at things in the university clubs and in apprenticeship. But I am very troubled by the lack of investment in prevention in this province, and we're seeing that in this bill. We will not be taking care of our youth as they transition from adolescence to adulthood.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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

Ms Hoffman: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I rise to speak to Bill 38, which is titled the Red Tape Reduction Statutes Amendment Act, 2025. This is one of the probably, this session anyway, cruelest pieces of legislation I've seen introduced. The fact that the minister responsible for children and youth isn't even bringing forward a bill, that clearly undermines the province's responsibility in caring for vulnerable children, that requires – currently in the existing legislation we have section 9, under the Child and Youth Advocate Act, requirements around investigating the deaths of young people, and for a good reason.

I know we don't have a lot of time here this afternoon, but I will use what we have to talk about one of the fatality inquiries that happened back in – it was February of 2025, so very recently. It was about 20-year-old Tory, an investigation and review. I hope that all hon. members take the opportunity to reflect on what we learned through this investigation and review and why it is that the government feels it's not important to even account for, let alone tell the story of what happens to these young people when they are failed. The opening part reads:

About Tory and her family.

Tory was 20 years old when she was found unresponsive in the community . . . (EMS) responded, and she was transported to the hospital where she later passed away. The Office of the Chief

Medical Examiner concluded that she died from fentanyl and methamphetamine toxicity. Tory had received Child Intervention through the Transition to Adulthood Program (TAP) within two years of her passing.

Tory was a loyal and kind . . . Métis woman. She was a talented makeup artist. Tory loved her siblings and enjoyed spending time with them.

Tory was the oldest of Elisa and Bill's three children. They separated early in Tory's childhood but frequently got back together. Elisa used substances, and Bill was often away for work. Tory and her siblings moved between . . . parents' homes and had minimal contact with their relatives. Elisa had two other children with whom Tory had sporadic contact.

This report, Madam Speaker, tells the story of a young woman who suffered hardship after hardship. They have a timeline of significant events. Honestly, these reports are very sweeping and tell about government intervention at various points and where it was successful and where it certainly wasn't successful. I think for the government to acknowledge that when a young person dies, who's had interactions with the government in a significant way – for example, the first time was when Tory was only two years old, a child intervention custody enhancement agreement.

Then between four and six years old: child intervention involved four times, including a psychoeducational assessment and individual program plan, diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, and the father obtained permanent custody.

Then when she was seven to nine years old, child investigation was involved five additional times.

At 10 years old child intervention was involved, and the mother obtained permanent custody.

At 11: child intervention involved three additional times because Tory was already self-harming, Madam Speaker.

Then at 12 she was apprehended, put into foster care. There was a custody order. Her father obtained primary custody. Child intervention was involved yet again, and there was a specified class IPP educational assistant and, finally, some literacy support at age 12, after she's already been self-harming.

At 13 she was apprehended, separated from her siblings, and put into yet another foster home and then received a permanent guardianship order, therapy, and psychosupports. Again another IPP. Started using substances. Only 13 years old, Madam Speaker.

At 14: group care, kinship care, confined in a secure services facility, campus-based group care, hospitalized under the Mental Health Act, also had another school IPP.

At 15 years old: group care, psychoeducational assessment, delayed intellectual abilities and moderate impairment. Therapy and psychiatric supports ended at 15 years old, after she'd already been self-harming for two years. Oh, and she decreased in school attendance. I wonder why.

At 16 years old: independent living placement – great idea – told to live independently. Re-established her relationship with her mother. There was a youth worker involved, then she was evicted. Well, imagine living on your own at 16 years old with all of this trauma and all of this educational need that had been identified.

At 17 she was living on the streets, then ended up in a youth shelter and an independent living placement and was identified as needing supports through PDD because there were developmental disabilities. She later applied for AISH, assured income for the severely handicapped. The application was started, but it wasn't completed. Again, I wonder why. She was deemed independent at 16, living on the streets, told to fill out this paperwork. Her substance use escalated. She was confined in a secured service facility. She was evicted again. Then she was confined under a protection, PCHAD, order.

Then at 18: support of financial assistance agreement, two independent living placements, third and fourth eviction notices. Already, at 18 years old.

Then at 19: called into a detox program but wasn't admitted. Again, not a shocker. The current government doesn't have enough space available for folks who are seeking voluntary detox and voluntary treatment. Then she was in a transition to adulthood program agreement, lived in a remote community with her boyfriend. They had a son together, who was apprehended. Then there was a work service order ended because she turned 20 years old. She transitioned to accessing the opioid dependency program and was prescribed Suboxone and then within that same year died and was found on the streets alone.

These are the kinds of reports and documenting of where the government had failed, specifically this young Métis woman. I'm sure the government, the first time they engaged with her file, had far greater hopes for her than watching and reading about her dying on the streets alone. This legislation does a disservice to children, does a disservice to reconciliation, and I don't think it's becoming of this place. To hide it in red tape reduction . . .

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. member, I hesitate to interrupt, but the clock strikes 4:30.

The House stands adjourned until Monday at 1:30.

[The Assembly adjourned at 4:30 p.m.]

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

Activity to Thursday, March 13, 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 (Nicolaidis)

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)

Second Reading — 2534-44 (Mar. 13, 2025 aft., adjourned)

Bill 39 — Financial Statutes Amendment Act, 2025 (\$) (Horner)

First Reading — 2478 (*Mar. 10, 2025 aft., passed*)

Bill 40 — Professional Governance Act (Sawhney)

First Reading — 2499 (*Mar. 11, 2025 aft., passed*)

Bill 41 — Wildlife Amendment Act, 2025 (Loewen)

First Reading — 2511 (*Mar. 12, 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*)

Committee of the Whole — 2491-92 (*Mar. 10, 2025 aft., adjourned*)

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 (Miyashiro)

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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