Province of Alberta

The 31st Legislature
Second Session

# Alberta Hansard

Wednesday afternoon, May 13, 2026

Day 58

The Honourable Ric McIver, Speaker

# Legislative Assembly of Alberta
## The 31st Legislature
Second Session

McIver, Hon. Ric, ECA, Calgary-Hays (UC), Speaker
Pitt, Angela D., Airdrie-East (UC), Deputy Speaker and Chair of Committees
van Dijken, Glenn, Athabasca-Barrhead-Westlock (UC), Deputy Chair of Committees

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

**Party standings:**
United Conservative: 48 New Democrat: 38 Progressive Tory: 1

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Trafton Koenig, Law Clerk
Vani Govindarajan, Parliamentary Counsel
Philip Massolin, Clerk Assistant and Executive Director of Parliamentary Services
Nancy Robert, Clerk of *Journals* and Committees
Aaron Roth, Committee Clerk
Amanda LeBlanc, Managing Editor of *Alberta Hansard*
Terry Langley, Sergeant-at-Arms
Paul Link, Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms
Gareth Scott, Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms
Lang Bawn, Managing Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms

## Executive Council

| | |
|---|---|
| Danielle Smith | Premier, President of Executive Council,<br>Minister of Intergovernmental and International Relations |
| Mike Ellis | Deputy Premier, Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Services |
| Mickey Amery | Minister of Justice |
| Andrew Boitchenko | Minister of Tourism and Sport |
| Devin Dreeshen | Minister of Transportation and Economic Corridors |
| Tanya Fir | Minister of Arts, Culture and Status of Women |
| Nate Glubish | Minister of Technology and Innovation |
| Nate Horner | President of Treasury Board and Minister of Finance |
| Grant Hunter | Minister of Environment and Protected Areas |
| Brian Jean | Minister of Energy and Minerals |
| Matt Jones | Minister of Hospital and Surgical Health Services |
| Adriana LaGrange | Minister of Primary and Preventative Health Services |
| Todd Loewen | Minister of Forestry and Parks |
| Martin Long | Minister of Infrastructure |
| Myles McDougall | Minister of Advanced Education |
| Dale Nally | Minister of Service Alberta and Red Tape Reduction |
| Nathan Neudorf | Minister of Affordability and Utilities |
| Demetrios Nicolaides | Minister of Education and Childcare |
| Jason Nixon | Minister of Assisted Living and Social Services |
| Rajan Sawhney | Minister of Indigenous Relations |
| Joseph Schow | Minister of Jobs, Economy, Trade and Immigration |
| R.J. Sigurdson | Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation |
| Searle Turton | Minister of Children and Family Services |
| Dan Williams | Minister of Municipal Affairs |
| Rick Wilson | Minister of Mental Health and Addiction |
| Muhammad Yaseen | Associate Minister of Multiculturalism |

## Parliamentary Secretaries

| | |
|---|---|
| Jackie Armstrong-Homeniuk | Parliamentary Secretary for Settlement Services and Ukrainian Evacuees |
| Chantelle de Jonge | Parliamentary Secretary for Affordability and Utilities |
| Nolan Dyck | Parliamentary Secretary for Indigenous and Rural Policing |
| Shane Getson | Parliamentary Secretary for Economic Corridor Development |
| Chelsae Petrovic | Parliamentary Secretary for Health Workforce Engagement |
| Ron Wiebe | Parliamentary Secretary for Rural Health (North) |
| Justin Wright | Parliamentary Secretary for Rural Health (South) |
| Tany Yao | Parliamentary Secretary for Small Business and Northern Development |

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

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

Chair: Mr. Yao
Deputy Chair: Mrs. Johnson

Ellingson
Kasawski
Kayande
Rowswell
Stephan
Wiebe
Wright, J.

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

Chair: Mr. Wiebe
Deputy Chair: Mr. Dach

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

**Select Special Citizen Initiative Proposal Review Committee**

Chair: Mr. Lunty
Deputy Chair: Mrs. Sawhney

Ellingson
Nixon
Pancholi
Sawyer

**Select Special Committee on Electoral Boundaries**

Chair: Mr. Lunty

de Jonge
Ganley
Gray
Sawyer
Wiebe

**Standing Committee on Families and Communities**

Chair: Ms Lovely
Deputy Chair: Ms Goehring

Batten
Getson
Haji
Johnson
Lunty
Sawyer
Singh
Tejada

**Standing Committee on Legislative Offices**

Chair: Mr. Lunty
Deputy Chair: Mr. Wright

Chapman
Cyr
Dyck
Miyashiro
Petrovic
Sawyer
Shepherd
Wright, P.

**Special Standing Committee on Members' Services**

Chair: Mr. McIver
Deputy Chair: Mr. Yao

Eggen
Getson
Gray
Metz
Petrovic
Rowswell
Sabir
Singh

**Standing Committee on Private Bills**

Chair: Mrs. Johnson
Deputy Chair: Mr. Cyr

Armstrong-Homeniuk
Bouchard
Ceci
Deol
Dyck
Hayter
Lovely
Sigurdson, L.
Vacant

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

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

Arcand-Paul
Bouchard
Brar, Gurinder
Brar, Gurtej
Getson
Gray
Sinclair
Singh
Stephan

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts**

Chair: Mr. Sabir
Deputy Chair: Mr. Lunty

Cyr
de Jonge
Eremenko
Lovely
Renaud
Sawyer
Schmidt
van Dijken

**Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship**

Chair: Mr. Dyck
Deputy Chair: Ms Sweet

Al-Guneid
Armstrong-Homeniuk
Calahoo Stonehouse
Cyr
Ip
Petrovic
Rowswell
Yao

# Legislative Assembly of Alberta

**1:30 p.m.** **Wednesday, May 13, 2026**

[The Speaker in the chair]

## Prayers

**The Speaker:** Hon. members, let us pray. Lord, the God of righteousness and truth, grant to our King and 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 ideals but, laying aside all private interests and prejudices, keep in mind their responsibility to seek to improve the condition of all. Amen.

Hon. members, please be seated.

## Introduction of Guests

**The Speaker:** Edmonton-McClung.

**Mr. Dach:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. A pleasure to rise and introduce to you and through you approximately 40 brilliant students from the wonderful elementary school of Lymburn in my riding of Edmonton-McClung, including teachers Kate Leeb and Ms Spiner* and parent chaperone Amanda. I ask them to please rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

**The Speaker:** Lesser Slave Lake.

**Mr. Sinclair:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour to introduce to you and through you some amazing grade 6 students from Saint Andrew's school in High Prairie. I've visited their school many times, and I'm honoured they're visiting all of us today. I'd ask them to please rise and receive the warm welcome of this Assembly.

Thank you.

**Ms Schulz:** Mr. Speaker, to you, through you, and to all members of this Assembly I'd like to introduce Lynette Javaheri in your gallery. She's a passionate community builder who has served as the Calgary-Shaw constituency office manager since 2019 and is a long-time constituency association board member as well. Her compassion, integrity, and dedication have served our neighbours well over the past seven years, and I certainly couldn't have done this without her. I'm so grateful for all she's done for the people of Calgary-Shaw. Lynette, please rise and receive the warm welcome of this Assembly.

**The Speaker:** Edmonton-South West.

**Mr. Ip:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to introduce to you and through you and welcome the Mah Society of Edmonton, chartered in 1917. They're hosting the national Mah convention this weekend. Please rise, Sue, Gillian, Kathy Van Nes, Jack, Elsie, May, Margaret, Doug, Don, and Cristina, and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

**The Speaker:** The Associate Minister of Multiculturalism.

**Mr. Yaseen:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's such a pleasure for me to rise today and introduce to you and through you to the entire Assembly Lydia Migus, president of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress Alberta Provincial Council, and Alyssa Stoddard, secretary of the organization. Through their dedication and leadership and advocacy they have been a voice of support for the Ukrainian community, including many newcomers. May I ask them to please rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

**The Speaker:** Calgary-Edgemont.

**Ms Hayter:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great joy to introduce you to my friend Joey. I met her during her work on a community association and working with food insecurity. She also works with poverty, inequality, and democracy. Please rise, Joey, and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly, and thank you so much for your continued friendship.

**The Speaker:** The Minister of Primary and Preventative Health Services.

**Member LaGrange:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour to rise and introduce to you and through you to the whole Assembly Theresa Tang, co-founder and CEO of Praxos Health. Praxos Health is a Calgary-based nonprofit that helps with health challenges right across Canada. Successes in Alberta include the HPV self-sampling pilot and the mobile pulmonary functioning test. She does so much more. Please rise and receive the warm welcome.

**The Speaker:** The Minister of Tourism and Sport.

**Mr. Boitchenko:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to introduce to you and through you the amazing school of St. Anthony from Drayton Valley, and I would like to ask them to please rise and receive the warm welcome of this Assembly.

**The Speaker:** The Minister of Mental Health and Addiction.

**Mr. Wilson:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I'm so happy to introduce to you and through you to all the members of the Assembly the amazing leaders of the Métis settlements of Alberta. I'm honoured to introduce Dave Lamouche, who serves as president, and Sherry Cunningham, who serves as vice-president. They're joined by all the leaders of all eight Métis settlements. Please rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

**The Speaker:** Calgary-East.

**Mr. Singh:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to introduce to you and through you the organizers of the Whistle Podu south Indian cultural event. Their efforts have brought great success celebrating culture, community spirit, and vibrant artistic expression. I ask George, Glen, Teena, Chippy, and Denika to rise and receive the warm welcome of this House.

**Mr. McDougall:** Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to introduce a constituent who is very active in the community, Erin Averbukh. She's here today to watch the exciting debate in the House. Please rise and receive the warm welcome of the House.

**The Speaker:** Lac Ste. Anne-Parkland.

**Mr. Getson:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to introduce to you and through you the folks from the Mazhathulli team. I'm going to mess that up. They're a Canadian-based platform promoting culture, creativity, community spirit, film, and television. We got a chance to talk about economic corridors. Please stand and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

**The Speaker:** Livingstone-Macleod.

**Mrs. Petrovic:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to rise and introduce to you and through you three amazing women who help

*This spelling could not be verified at the time of publication.

support our expecting moms and babies. I ask that they please rise when I say their name: Alyssa Wiens, who is a midwife; Sara Pridgen, who is a doula; and Sam Sankey, who is also a doula. Please rise and receive the warm welcome of this Assembly.

**The Speaker:** The government whip.

**Mr. Wright:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to introduce to you and through you a dear friend of mine, Kim King, up in the gallery today. Kim is a diehard advocate for those causes close to her. I please ask her to please rise and receive the warm welcome of the House.

## Statement by the Speaker

### Anniversary of Election of Speaker

**The Speaker:** Hon. members, today marks one year since you placed your confidence in me by electing me to serve as Speaker of the Legislative Assembly. Over the past year I've come to appreciate even more deeply the traditions, responsibilities, and importance of this institution and the role entrusted to me. Serving as your Speaker has profoundly been humbling and one of the greatest honours of my life. I want to sincerely thank all members of this Assembly for your support, your respect for this Chamber, and your co-operation throughout the past year. While we may from time to time disagree on matters of policy and politics and rulings of the chair, we all share a common responsibility to uphold the dignity of the Assembly and to serve the people of Alberta with integrity. I'm grateful for the trust you have placed in me, and I remain committed to carrying out my duties with fairness, impartiality, and respect for every member of the House. I promise that you will continue to receive my best effort even if that is less than perfect at times.

Thank you.

## Members' Statements

**The Speaker:** Leduc-Beaumont.

### Alberta New Democratic Party Spending

**Mr. Lunty:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Like many Albertans, I was amused when the NDP announced that they had managed to run a deficit as a party last year. Doing so in a nonelection year is a tough thing to do. Frankly, this revelation makes their performative and disingenuous calls for an early election all the more laughable. What would they fund this fictitious campaign with? Social justice points and equity tokens? It's hard to tell what's more embarrassing for the NDP right now, their bank statements or their sagging poll numbers.

For those of you wondering just how a party that collected nearly $7 million in political donations last year somehow managed to lose money, let's take a quick look at where it might have gone. We have previously highlighted in this House the absurdity of their massive investment into a U.S.-based media company to try and sell Albertans on the virtues of communism. It looks like not only was this a terrible political decision but a disastrous financial one as well. Honestly, why don't they just send their money directly to Marxist New York City Mayor Mamdani at this point? God knows he could use it.

***1:40***

We could potentially see some more obscure line items in the NDP Party budget. For instance, how about their leader's rumoured $80,000 Thai budget? Champagne socialism at its finest. Or can you even imagine the office supply costs for printing and laminating DEI cards for their national convention? That must have added up. Here's a weird one: costs to purchase wigs for the Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar for when he pretends to be the Premier online. That's not a joke, by the way, Mr. Speaker. Anyone can look that up right now. Although, honestly, the production value on those videos isn't half bad. Maybe he got his boss Avi Lewis to direct.

I will give them credit for one piece of fiscal prudence. There doesn't seem to be any line item for driving or chauffeur costs for their leader. I guess the Member for Edmonton-Whitemud provides those services pro bono.

### Emergency Medical Services

**Ms Hoffman:** I'm just going to say it. When it comes to you and your health care, the UCP just doesn't care. It's been 122 days since Mr. Sreekumar died tragically in the Grey Nuns emergency department. He wasn't even admitted. He spent his final hours scared and in pain. His family did the only thing that they felt they could. They started documenting it. They recorded his final moments, and after he died, they shared it publicly. He was only 44. His short life shouldn't have ended the way that it did. When he knew something was wrong, he did the right thing. He went to the hospital, and he asked for help. He waited patiently for more than eight hours, and at least two other patients died that same day, that same place, but we don't know their stories.

It took weeks before the health minister spoke about it. Mr. Sreekumar needed answers, and his family did, too. Then, when he finally did, he promised that he'd have emergency department triage liaison physicians in place by February. It's May. Promise broken. Acute Care Alberta's review is out, which says that the UCP should increase resources in emergency departments, but their budget was status quo, and they haven't even started the fatality review and won't until the fall.

Then 40 days ago something happened at the Royal Alex that staff warned would happen for years. One patient turned on another in a violent stabbing. At least 50 people witnessed it, and that man nearly died. I'm not confident that the UCP would have even told the public if a witness hadn't called me and asked me to do it. Why? Because just a few days ago a patient in that same waiting room died, off-loaded by EMS, waiting to be seen. Let's be honest. The UCP didn't tell anyone because they didn't want anyone to know.

When you show up in an emergency department asking for help, you should feel safe, the staff should feel supported, and you should get the help that you need. Instead, you get chaos and confusion created by the UCP because they're obsessed with pushing forward with American-style, privatized health care. They want to make us pay more when what Albertans want is great public health care and a government that actually cares. While those guys don't, I know a team that does.

**The Speaker:** Calgary-Shaw.

### Retrospective by the Member for Calgary-Shaw

**Ms Schulz:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I first ran for elected office because I wanted to serve my neighbours in south Calgary, a city with an entrepreneurial spirit that values hard work and opportunity in a province with limitless potential. I wanted to be a strong conservative voice for those who care about a strong economy, low taxes, and an understanding that people, not the government, know best because that's the approach that provides

jobs, opportunities, and a high quality of life for Albertans. This was especially important after years of the NDP and Liberal governments' devastating policies. Most importantly, I wanted to be a voice for everyday working families and represent them with integrity and common sense.

It's been the honour of a lifetime to serve the people of Calgary-Shaw and also to stand up and defend our province against federal overreach and radical activist ideology. While it's not always easy, public service is meaningful, challenging, rewarding, and consequential. It's a true privilege to be entrusted with people's frustrations, ideas, hopes, and aspirations for the future to make meaningful change and then leave this place better than we found them. I'm grateful for the trust my constituents put in me to be their voice here in this place.

I am also proud of all our Premier and our strong United Conservative team have accomplished over the past seven years. I am grateful for each and every one of these MLAs, for their hard work, their dedication, their unique perspectives and talents, and I'm fortunate to have them not just as colleagues but as friends. I ask you to continue to push for common sense, for less government spending and lower taxes, for a strong and prosperous Alberta, for the values of faith, family, and freedom, and defend against nonsensical ideological policies that put at risk our economy and our future.

I am optimistic for our future, Mr. Speaker, because I believe in Albertans, but it's also because I believe in this United Conservative team serving them here in their Legislature. Thank you.

### Government Spending

**Ms Goehring:** In the past Premiers wrapped up in scandal after scandal did the right thing. Famously, one Premier stepped down after $45,000 in flight expenses and a sky palace. But after the current Premier spent $64,000 on a trip to Saudi Arabia, she took private jets around that country. There's no benefit to Albertans, but lots of luxury for the Premier.

She did that while trampling on people's human rights and refusing to take any measures desperately needed to provide them with relief in an affordability crisis created by this Premier and her government. The entitlement to spend tens of thousands of taxpayer dollars when commercial flights are readily available between the major hubs the Premier travelled between is shameful.

Unfortunately for Albertans, this government's reckless spending doesn't end with private jets. The cost of the Premier's new office carpet: $280,000. The skybox ticket scandal: suites for Oilers games just start at over $10,000. The corrupt care scandal: $600 million in taxpayer funds for inflated private surgical contracts for political allies. The Turkish Tylenol debacle cost taxpayers $80 million for medication that went largely unused. And let's not forget the Auditor General confirmed that the UCP's failed 2022 privatization of lab services to DynaLife cost taxpayers anywhere between $109 million and $125 million in wasted funds.

Verification of the approved recall petitions will cost Albertans $6.7 million, and just yesterday another half a million was wasted on the electoral boundary redo. That's not to mention the $6,000 individual bonuses to the Premier's parliamentary secretaries, and we haven't even added the cost to Albertans for the many investigations taking place.

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

### Sessional Retrospective

**Mr. Dyck:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our government has strong values, values of freedom, of courage, of compassion, of family and for Albertans to have opportunities. These are the values that defined this legislative session. While the opposition spent much of the session obsessing with ideology, outrage, and online activism, our government focused on something far more important. We chose courage over political convenience. We chose to stand up for children and parents through changes to the Election Act. We chose to have difficult conversations around MAID legislation because vulnerable Albertans deserve safeguards, dignity, and compassion, not a system that quietly gives up on them.

As well, Mr. Speaker, Alberta was not built in a boardroom in downtown Toronto. It was built by hard-working Albertans, men and women across all sectors willing to work hard and build something bigger than themselves. We are restoring confidence in building major projects and ensuring that in Alberta projects don't just get proposed but we get shovels in the ground and they get built. There is dignity in building things, and there is dignity in hard work.

To speak locally, Mr. Speaker, right now in Grande Prairie we are pulling above our weight in local investment, and we've seen the eyes of the energy world on us as we see Shell Global look to acquire ARC Resources. Having Shell, one of the largest global energy players, invest in our backyard is a great indicator that our policies are working and that further energy investment is possible in Alberta and in the Grande Prairie area.

Aside this, my Bill 207 helps ensure students learn about Alberta's primary industries of energy, agriculture, forestry, and construction along with the careers, innovations, and opportunities these sectors provide.

Mr. Speaker, this session was about choosing what kind of province Alberta will be: weak or strong, dependent or self-reliant, ashamed of our industries or proud of them. On this side of the House we choose values of freedom, courage, compassion, and family and for Albertans to have opportunities. Our side chooses Albertans.

### Government Policies

**Member Boparai:** Mr. Speaker, I want to tell you about a family in Calgary-Falconridge. The dad is a long-haul trucker away from home for days at a time. The mom works odd jobs and awkward shifts trying to make ends meet. The grandfather works the day shift instead of enjoying retirement with his family, and the grandmother holds everything together doing whatever it takes to keep the family going. Generations working around the clock, all for one dream: a better life for their children.

***1:50***

Mr. Speaker, that was the promise of Alberta, of Canada. The government said that Alberta Is Calling, but when families answered that call, this is what they found. That dad is stressed about rising utility bills and higher property taxes. That mom is driving her kids across a quadrant to school because there's no space nearby while gas and insurance costs continue to climb, but this UCP government keeps raising costs. That grandfather now wonders if it's safe to bus to work because anti-immigrant hate is rising. Instead of confronting that hate, this UCP government fuels it, blaming families like this one for crowded classrooms, health care backlogs, even a global pandemic. This UCP government refuses to take responsibility.

Mr. Speaker, this hard-working family isn't asking for special treatment. They're asking for a fair shot: a fair shot at affordable living, a fair shot at health care when they need it, a fair shot at quality education for their kids. But what do they get? Distractions, division, and deflection. Costs go up, care goes down, and this

government looks the other way. It's families like this in Calgary-Falconridge and across Alberta who are paying the price.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

## Oral Question Period

**The Speaker:** The first question belongs to the Leader of the Official Opposition.

### Provincial Response to Electoral List Disclosure

**Mr. Nenshi:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This government's lack of concern for or interest in actually, you know, governing isn't just political malpractice. It's putting Albertans' lives at risk. Let's start with the Premier's friend, her chief campaign organizer, David Parker. He called Elections Alberta an evil institution, and no surprise, he's refusing to co-operate and not even giving Elections Alberta the list of people who had access to Albertans' data. Can the Premier at the very least condemn her separatist friends for putting people's lives at risk?

**Ms Smith:** Well, news flash, Mr. Speaker: I haven't spoken to Mr. Parker in over two years.

I have demonstrated through my actions that we are supporting exactly what I've said all along: a sovereign Alberta within a united Canada. In fact, I'm delighted to say that our Minister of Assisted Living and Social Services just announced an over $300 million joint funding agreement with the federal government today for affordable housing. We are doing these actions because we think it builds confidence in our relationship with Canada, and we've got a lot more to announce, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Nenshi:** Why is she so hesitant to just say that the separatists did something wrong? Because she's scared of them.

Let's be clear. Jason Kenney's electoral data, not just his address, was exposed to people on that call by David Parker. The Premier now admits that multiple of her staff, her senior staff, knew about this, and the government still did nothing. Although the Premier talks about letting the investigations run their course, her own staff thought that there should be no investigations. Is she at least happy now that somebody called the cops and started these investigations?

**The Speaker:** The Premier.

**Ms Smith:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do have to correct something I said yesterday. I'm actually quite delighted that there was a worker within Elections Alberta on April 29 who took the list of salted names, ran them by all of the different lists that had been given to all political parties, and found that 87 of them matched the Republican Party of Alberta. It looks to me from the timing that that also allowed them enough investigation power to go in and call the police. Now we see that there's a privacy investigation, an RCMP investigation, and a continued Elections Alberta investigation, with several court orders that have been issued to do cease and desist. I'm looking forward to seeing those investigations play out. The system's working as it should.

**Mr. Nenshi:** Of course, none of that would have happened if the Premier had anything to do with it. Her staff deliberately said: nothing to see here. She said: nothing out of the ordinary. The Premier has yet to even address Albertans on this data breach, but of course she hasn't, because her own story keeps changing. First, she found out about it on social media. Then one staff member knew. Then multiple staff members knew. They haven't even given Albertans tips on how to protect their own data, and the UCP members voted down our proposal to fix it. Is the Premier just hoping all of this goes away? When will she come clean?

**Ms Smith:** Well, Mr. Speaker, since the end of April I've done three media availabilities, I've done five individual interviews, I've answered 51 questions in question period, I've attended seven community events, and since the end of April our government has done nine podiums and news conferences where my ministers have all been able to answer questions.

We also noticed the website that they put up, and I hope it's not a data-mining exercise you're using to get people to go to your site. If you click on the link for Alberta identity theft, where does it go? An Alberta government website, Mr. Speaker. We're doing the work.

**The Speaker:** The second set of questions goes to the Leader of the Official Opposition.

**Mr. Nenshi:** Even her own caucus wasn't impressed with that answer. Trying to change the channel with fake news conferences is not helping Albertans.

### Emergency Medical Services Funding

**Mr. Nenshi:** Mr. Speaker, this government continues to put Albertans' lives in danger. In Alberta you used to be able to call 911 knowing an ambulance would come quickly. Now some waits for ambulances have doubled or tripled, but we don't really know because the government doesn't track the data. The creation of emergency health services has made things so much worse because people don't even know if they should drive themselves to the hospital or wait for an ambulance. What's the government doing right now to fix ambulances?

**The Speaker:** The Premier.

**Ms Smith:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, clearly, if anyone feels they are in imminent threat, they should call 911. If anyone needs emergency care, they should call 911 as well.

What we're doing, Mr. Speaker, is ensuring that our paramedics can operate to their full scope of practice so that they're able to do assessments on site and make a judgment in conjunction with a doctor on whether or not a patient does need to be transported. We have a separate division now that is overseeing emergency medical services, and we're going through the contracts to make sure that they're the right ones for each community. That's the action we're taking.

**Mr. Nenshi:** Of course, this meddling with the system is making things much worse. This hapless and weak government is not only not fixing the problem; they're actively making it worse. They've now told municipalities across Alberta that the level of ambulance service they provide is, to quote the Premier in another context, overly generous and they need to cut it back. Will the government now admit that it's actually their official policy to make public health care worse for Albertans, in this case by cutting the funding that municipalities receive for emergency medical services?

**The Speaker:** The Premier.

**Ms Smith:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. What we will do is pay for 100 per cent of the cost of ambulance services in those joint service offerings. What happens is that they have fire for some and ambulance for others. We're prepared to pay the full cost of ambulance, but they will have to pay the additional cost rather than have Alberta taxpayers subsidize fire service. That's what's going

on. We're happy to support the individual communities so that they have the ambulance service that makes the most sense to them. I can tell you, just looking at our targets that we have – I'll be happy to answer that on the next question.

**Mr. Nenshi:** So she's admitted that she's downloading more costs onto municipalities.

For decades municipalities across Alberta served the public with integrated fire and paramedic services. The system works, but now the government has given them a hard deadline to do one of two things: reduce the level of service they provide or increase property taxes to pay for services that people already have. Everything this government does in health care creates chaos, increases costs to Albertans, and cuts the services that people have. Why is this government so insistent on attacking municipalities and cutting health?

**Ms Smith:** Mr. Speaker, there will be no reduction in ambulance services in those communities. We've already seen that those who have the mixed service of fire and paramedic together, many of those communities have already made the decision to go ahead with that and also pay the additional costs.

Mr. Speaker, I can tell you that we have targets in rural and remote communities for how we should be dispatching ambulance. In remote it's 64 minutes, and we're at 52.7. In rural it's 40 minutes, and it's at 34.2. We have more resources arriving in Calgary and Edmonton.

**The Speaker:** The third set of questions belongs to the Leader of the Official Opposition.

### Electoral Boundaries Committee Review

**Mr. Nenshi:** Look, Mr. Speaker, we've clearly established that this government is putting Albertans' lives at risk, but they're also putting democracy itself at risk. They weren't happy with the results of an independent commission because they thought they had the commission in the bag, but it turned out to be independent. So now they're wasting taxpayer dollars and time by creating an illegitimate process because they don't believe in democracy, because they want pre-rigged outcomes. Will the Premier do the right thing for once? If they're so insistent on repairing their own mistake and adding two more seats, why doesn't she just rehire Justice Miller and ask him to redraw the map?

***2:00***

**The Speaker:** The Premier.

**Ms Smith:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Electoral Boundaries Commission work came to an end when they submitted their report. Justice Miller looked at the two different reports that had been put forward by the majority and the minority, and he proposed, I think, an elegant solution, which was to go to 91 seats. As a result, that has now gone over to the committee, and it's now the committee who is going broadly to ask if any justices would like to chair that advisory group. Once we get the results from that, I have every confidence the committee will choose somebody to lead that, and we'll be able to very quickly move forward with the submissions that have been made.

**Mr. Nenshi:** Mr. Speaker, this whole sham isn't just a waste of time; it's a waste of money, a huge waste of money. Yesterday the government admitted that they'll be wasting half a million bucks of taxpayer money to cook up new maps that they think will give them an electoral advantage. Half a million dollars wasted because they thought that they could control an independent commission that ended up being a little too independent for them. But this leads me to a question. How much more money has this government wasted to cover up the Premier's mistakes and this government's mistakes because they're just bad at their job?

**The Speaker:** A point of order was noted at or close to 2 o'clock.

**Ms Smith:** Well, Mr. Speaker, spending money on democracy and democratic processes is never a waste of money. [interjections] If the electoral office needs to be able to have more dollars in order to ensure that the referendums go forward or the work that needs to be done to prepare for an election next year, then the elections office is able to bring that forward to the committee. We have increased their budget by 115 per cent to acknowledge that they have additional new duties and additional responsibilities. When it comes to the Electoral Boundaries Commission, 91 seats will give better representation.

**Mr. Nenshi:** Getting beyond just how terrible this government is with money – and they are bad with money – let's get to a bigger issue. The Chief Justice told the government yesterday that they've declined to participate in this bogus process to gerrymander the electoral commission. [interjections] They're saying, in essence, that the entire process is illegitimate. When the Chief Justice doesn't support it while Albertans are stuck seeing another half a million wasted on it, it shouldn't go ahead. Does the Premier recognize how dangerous this is for our democracy, and who in the world is going to sit on her committee on this cooked-up, illegitimate scam process?

**The Speaker:** Let me just say that it was hard for me to hear the Premier's last answer, and it was hard to hear the opposition leader's last question. Let's show a little mutual respect.

Go ahead, Premier.

**Ms Smith:** I hope the member opposite isn't criticizing the court. We on this side, of course, would have liked to have seen the acting Chief Justice make sure that a broad range of judges knew about this opportunity so they could put their name forward, but we're going to make sure that we do that broad review anyway. The committee passed a motion to make sure that we have a period of time where any sitting judge or former judge would be able to put their name forward to oversee the process. I think they've got some good guidance from Justice Dallas Miller, and we look forward to seeing the results.

### Electoral List Disclosure and Provincial Referendum

**Ms Pancholi:** David Parker, the man who won the Premier the UCP leadership, is refusing to co-operate with Elections Alberta's investigation into the misuse of the voters list. He won't confirm that he'll stop illegally using the personal information of 3 million Albertans. Any signature on the separatist petition is now questionable. Any campaigning by separatists between now and October is invalid. Any vote in favour of separatism is illegitimate because one side used stolen data to do it. Will the Premier admit that her friends have so badly screwed up the separatism gift that she gave them, it's now impossible to have a legitimate referendum?

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

**Mr. Amery:** Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As we've said time and again, Elections Alberta has already commented on

this. Now, they're in charge of verification of signatures, and their job is to vet the accuracy and credibility of those signatures. What they've come out to say is that they're going to employ a more robust way of vetting those signatures, more so than before. We think that they have a system in place. We think that it is robust and appropriate, and we're going to let Elections Alberta do what they need to do on this one.

**Ms Pancholi:** It could be months or even years before the three investigations into this matter are complete, yet the Premier is willing to hold a referendum in just five months. Too many bad actors have had illegal access to too much personal information for too long. The separatism movement has shown that they do not respect the law. They are actively seeking the involvement and support of foreign governments. There are credible reports of foreign interference exploiting separatism to undermine national security. How can the Premier believe that any referendum in these circumstances would be legitimate?

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

**Mr. Ellis:** Mr. Speaker, thank you very much. This government maintains confidence in all of our law enforcement agencies, including the RCMP. We trust, should new evidence, of course, come to light regarding foreign interference, that they will investigate this thoroughly and take any necessary and appropriate action. I can tell you that any time new information comes to light, we trust that all law enforcement in this province does their job. I'd like to thank all law enforcement for dealing with a very complex situation at this time.

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

**Ms Pancholi:** It is absolute insanity that the UCP could still even consider going forward with a referendum right now. The Premier may be scared about her ability to lead the UCP if she doesn't give in to the most terrible people calling the shots in her party, but it is time for her to lead more than just the separatist UCP. It is time for her to lead this province. The Premier set this fire, and it is burning out of control. The Official Opposition is calling on the Premier today to definitively tell Albertans that there will be no referendum on separatism. It is time for the Premier to put out the fire that she started. Will she do it? [interjections]

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

The hon. Government House Leader.

**Mr. Schow:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is very rich to hear the Member for Edmonton-Whitemud talk about leadership, particularly when talking about a leadership of a party that can't seem to find their own way. On this side of the House our Premier has led this province to record job growth, record investment, record venture capital. We are breaking records in this province . . .

**Mr. Nenshi:** Yeah. Lying and misleading.

**Mr. Schow:** . . . because of the leadership of the Premier, showing that Alberta is the best place to invest . . .

**Mr. Wright:** Point of order.

**Mr. Schow:** . . . the best place to live, and the best place to raise a family, thanks to this government and the Premier. That's real leadership.

**The Speaker:** A point of order is noted at 2:07.

Let me just say for all members that outshouting the person who has the floor doesn't qualify as heckling. That's outshouting the person. They're two different things. I'm not naming anybody; I'm just telling everybody.

Okay. Now we start the part where there are no preambles on supplementaries, and the person to set the first good example is Calgary-Beddington.

## Teacher Recruitment and Retention

**Ms Chapman:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The UCP says that it wants to solve Alberta's teacher shortage by fast-tracking tradespeople into classrooms, but Alberta is facing a serious shortage of skilled trades workers. Why is the minister trying to rob Peter to pay Paul instead of addressing the real reasons teachers are leaving the profession like overcrowded classrooms, a lack of support for complex learners, and working conditions that are driving qualified educators out of Alberta schools?

**Mr. Nicolaides:** Mr. Speaker, whenever there's an opportunity to have individuals who are experts in their fields, be that tradespeople, who, of course, have a thorough understanding of their vocation, or individuals with advanced degrees or significant industry experience, it's incredibly valuable for that to be brought into the classroom to provide students with direct real-world experience and understanding of these very nuanced fields. I believe it is incredibly beneficial to have these individuals provide their expertise to the classroom to help our students receive the very best learning possible.

**Ms Chapman:** Given that one of the UCP's half-baked plans to hire more teachers is to have final-year BEd students simultaneously complete their degrees and teach full-time, given that teachers have been crystal clear that they are overwhelmed and struggling to manage complex classroom conditions and given that new teachers leave the profession at a rate of about 50 per cent in the first five years, what resources will the minister be providing to schools to assist in the support and mentorship that new, not even yet graduated teachers will need to be successful?

***2:10***

**Mr. Nicolaides:** We're providing a 7.2 per cent budgetary increase this year to help ensure that our school divisions are adequately resourced to meet the demands of a fast-growing education system. We've welcomed over 80,000 students in a few short years. Helping BEd students work in their final year of their BEd program is a win-win. It helps ensure that those BEd students gain more practical real-world experience, and it helps our school divisions bring more individuals into the classroom and provide students with the support and assistance they need.

**Ms Chapman:** Given that even the tiniest dash of critical thinking exposes the futility of the UCP's so-called plan to hire new teachers, given that the real issue is figuring out a way to keep the excellent educators we already have, given that every single action of this government shows total disrespect for teachers and the profession of teaching, isn't it right that the UCP can make as many shortcuts to teaching as they like but it won't help one bit because teachers don't want to work for them?

**Mr. Nicolaides:** As part of the complexity funding that we announced in February, we'll be hiring 476 complexity teams comprised of one teacher and two educational assistants each. In addition – actually, if the member wants to attend, she's welcome to – later this afternoon, in about an hour's time, the Premier and I

will be making an announcement that will help provide more resources to our school divisions to hire more teachers so we can help ensure that school divisions are receiving the support that they need. I hope the member attends and learns more about the amazing work that we're doing.

**The Speaker:** The next set of questions belongs to the hon. Member for Athabasca-Barrhead-Westlock.

### Affordable Housing

**Mr. van Dijken:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With more people choosing Alberta as the best place to live and raise a family, the demand for affordable housing continues to rise. Thankfully, we have a United Conservative government that understands the importance of acting to expand housing so every Albertan has a roof over their heads and a safe, stable place to call home. To the Minister of Assisted Living and Social Services: how is Alberta delivering real results and building the affordable homes Albertans need through the affordable housing partnership program?

**Mr. Nixon:** Well, Mr. Speaker, when this government came into power in 2019, we inherited a situation where the NDP had built no new continuing care homes, no new affordable homes, no new senior homes, and we committed to doing our stronger foundations plan to create 82,000 more affordable households all across this province. Underneath the leadership of this Premier we've already invested $720 million to do so, and just this morning I invested another $323 million, creating 3,600 more affordable homes in Alberta, continuing to get past the NDP's disastrous legacy when it comes to housing.

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

**Mr. van Dijken:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker and to the minister for that answer. Given that more than a decade of mismanagement by Ottawa has renters across the country feeling the pinch of increasing costs and limited supply and further given that students, seniors, young workers, and families are looking for support that will help keep renting good homes within reach as Alberta continues to grow, will the same minister speak to what the Alberta government is doing to help renters catch a break?

**Mr. Nixon:** Well, Mr. Speaker, the NDP actually called for rent control like other jurisdictions like New York had called for, which saw rent continue to go up. Places like Vancouver that experimented with that have seen disasters when it comes to rent. Not here in Alberta. Twelve per cent of the population here in Alberta; responsible for 25 per cent of all the housing starts. Rent is down four times the national average inside Alberta, down by over $400 a month, because we stuck to my philosophy: listen to what the NDP want to do, and do the opposite. We deliver for Albertans each and every time.

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

**Mr. van Dijken:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the minister. Given that young Canadians are working hard, building careers, and starting families yet are increasingly concerned that home ownership may be slipping out of their reach and given that they want confidence that Alberta will remain a place where hard work leads to opportunity, can the same minister please outline how this government is keeping the dream of home ownership alive and within reach for the next generation?

**Mr. Nixon:** Well, Mr. Speaker, we sat in this Chamber and heard from the NDP over and over where they wanted us to shut down construction, bring in more restrictions when it came to building homes, and then bring in damaging rent control and totally destroy the home market. We rejected that. Instead, we bet on Albertans. That's why we're now responsible for 80 per cent of all the housing starts in the prairies, rent going down, and people continuing to flock to this great province, because not only is it the best place to work; it's now the best place to live. It's got the lowest rents. Every time you bet on Albertans and bet against the Official Opposition, you'll win.

### Renewable Energy Development

**Ms Al-Guneid:** Mr. Speaker, the UCP government passed Bill 30 with great fanfare, promising to fast-track major projects in 120 days. Yes, of course we want to build big projects while respecting treaty rights and protecting the environment, but here's the problem. This government keeps throwing up red tape and barriers against renewable energy projects that will create thousands of great jobs. Will Bill 30 apply to renewables, or is this another UCP announcement full of sound and fury, signifying nothing?

**Mr. Jean:** Well, I thank the member for the question, Mr. Speaker. It gives me the opportunity to talk about this government and the great work we're doing with this Premier. We have come forward with an initiative for a 120-day accelerated permit process. It does apply to all projects over $250 million in investment. We'll work with the proponent to get that project done and do exactly the opposite of what the NDP has done for years, and that's drag and create uncertainty in the industry. We'll create certainty, predictability, and we'll get investment.

**Ms Al-Guneid:** Given that renewable power deals with serious investors like Amazon, Telus, Starbucks, TC Energy, RBC, Cenovus have collapsed under the UCP's antirenewables and separatist agendas and given it started with the absurd moratorium, then the pristine viewscape rule, the 35 kilometre no-go zones, the hypocritical 30 per cent security deposit, and now $15-per-panel recycling tax, no industry in Alberta has been targeted, punished, and buried in red tape like renewables. Why is the red tape reduction minister driving billions in jobs out of Alberta?

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

**Mr. Neudorf:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In fact, I'm proud that Alberta has led the country, all of Canada, over the last few years with 85 per cent of all renewables projects being invested right here in Alberta. We lead the country, and what we've done is that we've fixed all the mistakes by the NDP, which passed billions and billions of dollars of costs onto Albertans. We've put Albertans first. We are protecting them with reasonable structure, with great land use to make sure that farmers, ranchers, industry, and renewables all thrive right here in Alberta.

**Ms Al-Guneid:** Given that thanks to Rachel Notley's climate leadership plan, renewable energy projects brought more than $6 billion in investment and created jobs for Albertans, given that the energy minister has not said a single word on whether . . . [interjections]

**The Speaker:** Order. We just need to hear the question while we're going on here.

Carry on.

**Ms Al-Guneid:** Given that the energy minister has not said a single word on whether Bill 30 will fast-track renewable projects and given that the utilities and environment ministers keep piling on red tape while the so-called red tape reduction minister sits on his hands, costing Alberta jobs and investments, why is this Premier bringing a vision from the past for Alberta and blocking Canadian energy at the very moment that we need more energy independence and investment?

**Mr. Neudorf:** Mr. Speaker, we're proud that the regulators, the Alberta Utilities Commission, and the Alberta Electric System Operator function amongst the fastest approval rates in all of Canada. That's why we keep getting investment from renewables, batteries, storage, and natural gas, because of the tremendous work by our Premier and our cabinet working to sign an MOU with Ottawa to make sure that Alberta continues to lead Canada by working in co-operation and making sure that we are the best place for business to thrive and invest. We keep setting records. We keep doing that, and we've done something that the NDP never did. We're putting Albertans first and protecting them from high costs.

*2:20* **Bills 11 and 29**

**Dr. Metz:** This UCP government has shown again and again that it cannot deliver health care when needed. Cancer rates have increased since this Premier assumed power four years ago. Instead of working with experts, front-line workers, and patients, implementing known solutions and funding front-line services, they are doubling down on their two-tier-style health care. Will the minister confirm how bills 11 and 29 are going to impact the health care workforce and how badly they will impact cancer care given that waits for MRIs and CTs, which are often critical for cancer care, are only going to . . .

**The Speaker:** The hon. minister of hospitals.

**Mr. Jones:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In fact, we've set up a dedicated entity, Cancer Care Alberta, to put more of a focus on cancer care in Alberta, and we've added $223 million of additional funding to address the problems that the member opposite has just highlighted. We want to hire more oncologists, we want to hire more staff, and we also want to equip them with modern tools, even equipped with AI, to provide faster and more accurate care. We are adding more health care professionals, we are investing record dollars into cancer care, and we will continue to.

**Dr. Metz:** Given that this government's private health care preference for dual practice, as in Bill 11, has been found by the courts to contravene the Canada Health Act and given that orthopaedic surgeons and ophthalmologists in Calgary are already blatantly performing incredibly expensive private joint replacements and cataract surgery in Calgary on Calgarians, will the minister crack down on this illegal practice that will result in dollar-for-dollar reductions of federal health transfers?

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

**Member LaGrange:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In fact, we're going to make sure that we do comply with the Canada Health Act. We have been very clear with the federal Minister of Health on that. We know that through the Canada Health Act it is enabled that you can have dual practice, and it's up to the provinces to in fact make sure that it happens appropriately. In fact, the opinion that the members opposite are talking about, the justice opinion, was showing that the province has the ability to set those rules, and we will do that.

**Dr. Metz:** Given that both bills 11 and 29 introduce practices that deplete public health care workforce and given that all over the world this model has been shown to increase public wait times, where is the minister's analysis to show how Alberta will be different, and why should Albertans believe that this government will accomplish that when they explicitly claimed that they would not open the floodgates to two-tiered, American-style, for-profit private health care when that's exactly what's happening now?

**The Speaker:** The hon. minister of health.

**Member LaGrange:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In fact, if you look around the world, 157 of 195 countries actually enable dual practice to exist, and those are some of the top jurisdictions in the world providing excellent health care. Why the members opposite do not want that for Albertans I do not understand. But you know what? We're going to make sure that Albertans have access to the best health care. It is not American health care. It is, in fact, more like European health care, and they have great health care.

**Cybercrime Prevention**

**Mr. Rowswell:** Mr. Speaker, cybercrime is evolving rapidly as artificial intelligence enables criminals to convincingly fabricate urgent scenarios and manipulate fear through tactics such as AI-generated virtual kidnapping scams. We live in a digital age where even the voice of a loved one can't be trusted because it can be easily manipulated. To the Minister of Justice: how is our government updating its approach to public safety to address digital crimes that exploit human trust and emotion, not just technology?

**The Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Justice and keeper of the Great Seal.

**Mr. Amery:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the hon. member for the question. We take the matters of extortion and intimidation extremely seriously, and that's why we're strengthening Alberta's response through a Cybercrime Task Force that we just established. We brought together experts in law, technology, consumer protection, and law enforcement who will get together and do work on this important issue. These crimes are often sophisticated. They often happen across borders, certainly across provinces, and our responses must match that complexity.

Thank you.

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

**Mr. Rowswell:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker and to the minister. Given that cybercriminals are increasingly using AI to impersonate banks, family, employers, and even government officials with alarming realism and given that these scams often cause emotional trauma and financial loss before the victims even realize a crime has occurred, to the same minister: how will this Cybercrime Task Force focus on prevention and public awareness rather than relying solely on reporting mechanisms that come after the damage is done?

**The Speaker:** The minister.

**Mr. Amery:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. One of the key priorities of the Cybercrime Task Force is ensuring that victims feel safe and supported when they come forward. That's why we are focused on making sure that we address the issues. We want people to have no fear of retaliation, and it should never prevent anyone from coming forward. The task force strengthens the investigative capacity by combining cyberexpertise with on-the-ground policing forces. We're working with policing detachments all across the

province to help shore up and improve the protection of people here in Alberta.

**The Speaker:** Vermilion-Lloydminster-Wainwright.

**Mr. Rowswell:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you again to the minister for that answer. Given that AI is enabling highly convincing scams that exploit trust and put all Albertans at risk and given that our government has a duty to protect privacy, civil liberties, and guard against unnecessary intrusion, to the same minister: how will our government build resilience against AI-driven fraud while ensuring public safety measures do not result in overreach?

**The Speaker:** The minister.

**Mr. Amery:** Thank you again, Mr. Speaker. Today's technology is making it very difficult to distinguish between what is real and what is not. It's harder to tell if an image, a video, or audio is real. This Legislature just recently passed legislation protecting from the distribution of deepfakes that are likely to mislead voters, and we know that there's more to come. The Minister of Technology and Innovation is developing further legislation that will help address these issues as well. This is to protect the integrity of people here in Alberta, and we will not stop until we do.

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

## Parliamentary Secretaries' Allowances and Expenses

**Mr. Kasawski:** Last week the Premier increased the pay for eight of her MLAs, giving them even more money during an affordability crisis. A member of this Legislative Assembly represents an average of 57,000 constituents. Federal MPs, Ontario MPPs, and Calgary city councillors all represent twice as many people as an Alberta MLA and get paid half as much as an Alberta MLA per constituent. When so many Albertans are struggling to pay the bills, fill up the gas tank, and put healthy food on the table, why has the Premier given a whopping raise of $6,000 to eight of her MLAs?

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

**Mr. Schow:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. The duties of an MLA are set out, and we understand those when we get elected. As to getting elected, there are members of the front bench, ministers, the Premier, who have a salary top-up. Then, of course, there are parliamentary secretaries, who also take on extra responsibilities. As a result, there ends up being an issue where you have increased compensation, which is not uncommon in places like Quebec, which has $28,000 for parliamentary secretaries. B.C. has $17,000 for parliamentary secretaries, and Ontario, $16,000. I think it's fair to suggest that if you're going to do more work, members of the Assembly would receive some kind of an increase. [interjections]

**The Speaker:** We don't need to like the answer. We do need to hear the answer.

**Mr. Kasawski:** You know, I'm not asking about whatever that minister is blathering on about. I'm asking why the Premier is dipping into the government treasury to pay off her backbenchers when the majority of Albertans aren't sure they can pay all their bills. Given the Premier has increased the size of the cabinet to the largest ever in Alberta and tacked on overpaid parliamentary secretaries and given Albertans are looking for their government to offer real relief from expenses instead of higher property taxes, outrageous gas prices, and nuisance fees, why did the Premier decide to give her inner circle $6,000 raises instead of bringing down the cost for regular Albertans?

**The Speaker:** I know the hon. member knows that was a preamble, and it won't happen on the third question.

The Government House Leader.

**Mr. Schow:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Blabbering on? That was hurtful. I'm offended.

Mr. Speaker, what I can tell you is that members of this Assembly who take on a parliamentary secretary role take on extra duties. That's why the increase in salary. What I can tell you is that this government has done more than the members opposite could ever dream of doing when it comes to making life more affordable. We're the ones who repealed the job-killing carbon tax with Bill 1 right in this Legislature. We're also the ones that gave Albertans a significant . . . [interjections]

**The Speaker:** Order. You know, you don't have to be silent, but we need to hear the answer.

Go ahead.

***2:30***

**Mr. Schow:** Mr. Speaker, no one needs to hear this answer more than the members opposite. We also gave Albertans the largest tax cut in a very long time, saving Alberta families $1,500 each per year.

**Mr. Kasawski:** Given that in this Legislature the UCP has voted down measures to make life more affordable for Albertans like our calls for consumer protection, our calls to eliminate predatory pricing, surprise ticket transfer fees, and the call to put limits on high ATM fees and given that the UCP refuses to raise the wages of Alberta's lowest paid workers by keeping the minimum wage frozen at the lowest in Canada, does the Premier regret running such an entitled government, where the inner circle gets $6,000 raises while everyday Albertans cannot afford life in her Alberta?

**Mr. Schow:** Mr. Speaker, life was never more unaffordable than it was under the NDP. The Fraser Institute just released a report that said that the mismanagement of immigration, the increase of supply in the job sector, plus increasing minimum wage was reducing opportunities – increased supply, reduced demand: that's a problem – creating unemployment. The members opposite want us to raise minimum wage. It's going to kill more jobs in this province. They don't understand the basic job market, and that's why they are in opposition and will remain there.

## Allergy Awareness and Supports

**Ms Armstrong-Homeniuk:** Mr. Speaker, May is recognized as Food Allergy Awareness Month, raising awareness about food allergies and the risk of anaphylaxis, particularly amongst children and youth. Across Alberta many families manage severe food allergies every day, and continued focus on awareness, prevention, and emergency preparedness remains essential to keeping children safe in schools and community settings. To the Minister of Primary and Preventative Health Services: can you update the Assembly on how our government is continuing to strengthen allergy awareness prevention and safety across Alberta?

**The Speaker:** The hon. minister of health.

**Member LaGrange:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker and to the member for the excellent question. Food allergy and anaphylaxis are serious public health concerns, particularly for children and youth. Our

government continues to support awareness campaigns and education initiatives that help families, schools, and communities recognize symptoms early and respond effectively. We're also working to improve access to life-saving epinephrine and promote its timely use in emergency. I had the opportunity to see that in action in the fall, and I know how important this is.

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

**Ms Armstrong-Homeniuk:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, Minister. Given that early recognition and timely treatment of anaphylaxis is critical to saving lives and further given that awareness initiatives like Food Allergy Awareness Month help educate families, educators, and communities, can the same minister please tell the Assembly how the government is supporting public education and partnerships with organizations such as Food Allergy Canada to ensure Albertans are well equipped to recognize and respond to severe allergic reactions?

**The Speaker:** The minister.

**Member LaGrange:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm happy to say that our government recognizes that public education and strong partnerships are essential to improving outcomes for Albertans with severe allergies. We continue to provide accessible evidence-based information through resources like myhealth.alberta.ca, which offers guidance on recognizing anaphylaxis, administering epinephrine, and knowing when to seek emergency care. We also support ongoing collaborations with organizations such as Food Allergy Canada to amplify awareness efforts. Again, we want all Albertans to be aware of these situations.

**The Speaker:** Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville.

**Ms Armstrong-Homeniuk:** Thank you again, Mr. Speaker and Minister. Given that access to life-saving epinephrine in schools is essential for protecting students with severe allergies and further given that new delivery methods, including needle-free nasal epinephrine, are emerging as essential treatment options, can the Minister of Education and Childcare please update the Assembly on how the government is ensuring school policies remain current and adaptable so that evolving epinephrine delivery options can be considered in supporting safe and effective responses to anaphylaxis in Alberta schools?

**Mr. Nicolaides:** Mr. Speaker, under the act schools must maintain emergency epinephrine, provide regular training for staff as well, and ensure that they can respond quickly if a student is experiencing an anaphylactic reaction. The legislation does allow school staff to administer not only epinephrine autoinjectors but also any other prescribed medication needed to help treat an anaphylactic reaction. My ministry is continuing to work with school boards and health partners to ensure that we're able to provide this important life-saving support to students.

## Roadside Worker Safety

**Mr. Dach:** New Democrat caucus members recently met with a delegation of Alberta fire chiefs who advocated to have the provincial government address their concerns around roadside safety. Specifically, the AFCA wants the slow to 60 public awareness campaign to be reinvigorated, including visuals and video of what to do when you come across a roadside incident where the vehicle of a first responder or roadside service vehicle is stopped with lights flashing. What has the minister to say in response to the AFCA, who seek safety improvements to their roadside workplace?

**Mr. Dreeshen:** Well, I'd like to thank that member for that very important question. I would like to tell him and that organization that we are looking at our blue light pilot project, something that the slow down, move over campaign has been successful, having the blue light pilot project to actually be full-time, Mr. Speaker, not just a temporary one, so that we can have more safety measures in place for our roadside workers. Regardless of whether they're police, whether they're roadside workers that are building the roads or towing vehicles, we want them to be safe, and that's why we want to have the best policies possible to protect them while they're doing their job.

**Mr. Dach:** Given that firefighters and emergency responders work within metres of high-speed traffic when responding to incidents on Alberta's highways and given that an alarming number of roadside workers suffer serious, life-threatening injuries each year in Alberta after being struck by passing vehicles and given that slowing traffic reduces the dangers posed by flying debris, unsafe lane changes, and secondary collisions, what new enforcement measures will the minister be introducing to protect roadside workers from injury and death? Will surveillance by unmarked and marked police vehicles be part of the enforcement strategy?

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

**Mr. Dreeshen:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The member is right. Enforcement is a very important part of what comes next. We from transportation can make the best rules possible, but we have to make sure that they're being enforced on the roadways. I'd encourage any Albertans that are listening to this to make sure that they are slowing down to 60 kilometres an hour, even though the posted speed limit may be higher, when you are passing emergency vehicles, because these are great Albertans doing their jobs every day. The enforcement of that rule is something that we're working not just with the RCMP but with our sheriff branches as well to make sure that all Albertans can go home safely.

**Mr. Dach:** Given that motorists take blue lights on emergency apparatus seriously and are more prone to slow down when approaching them on the roadside, will the minister make blue light permission permanent and allow blue flashing lights to be displayed on moving apparatus and offer grants for retrofits? Further, can the minister please clearly define the term "adjacent lane"?

**Mr. Dreeshen:** Well, Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned in my first answer, yes. We are looking at blue lights being a permanent pilot project here in this province because we know that when motorists are seeing blue lights, that is something that they're obviously paying attention to and slowing down. When it comes to fire trucks, they'd have to be rear facing because you don't want to have a fire truck being confused with a police officer as it's going up behind you.

Adjacent lanes, Mr. Speaker, just means beside.

## Citizen-initiated Referendum Proposal on Alberta Secession

**Mr. Nenshi:** Mr. Speaker, we've just received the judgment from Justice Leonard that quashes the separatist petition, and if I may read: "Alberta's application to strike evidence is partially granted. The entire affidavit is granted. The CEO decision is quashed on the following grounds." Number one is a bit technical. Number two:

"The CEO's decision not to reject the second petition in the face of Sylvestre was an error, rendering the CEO's decision unreasonable, and the Crown failed to meet its duty to consult with the applicant." What's the Premier going to do now?

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

**Ms Smith:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Whether the government likes the citizen initiative petition questions that are put forward or whether we don't like them, we believe the process should allow all voices of Albertans to be heard. The citizen initiative process is an important democratic tool. That's why it was passed even before I entered into this Chamber. We will have more to say on this later. We will be reviewing the judge's decision which just came out. I will reinforce the position of this government, that we believe in a strong and sovereign Alberta within a united Canada.

**Mr. Nenshi:** Of course, this is entirely the government's fault. In playing games, in changing the law . . .

**The Speaker:** You probably aren't accustomed to not giving preambles, but at this point no one gets to.

***2:40***

**Mr. Nenshi:** Sorry; not my habit, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that. Thank you.

Given that this is entirely the government's fault and given that their changes to the law done at the last minute after Justice Feasby showed that the original question was unconstitutional and given that the Justice minister and the Premier have swatted away that question on multiple occasions, saying, "We'll make it constitutional," now that we know that it's illegal, will the government spend taxpayer money trying to make it constitutional or appeal this ruling?

**Ms Smith:** Well, Mr. Speaker, we have nine questions that we'll be putting on the ballot in October. Those nine questions offer a way for us to enhance our autonomy within a united Canada. It offers a way to address some of the pressure points that we know that several Albertans have raised and are concerned about in their relationship with Canada. We believe our job is to give Albertans hope again. We will be reviewing the results of this judgment and then making some decisions. We obviously have a number of different processes that are ongoing right now.

**Mr. Nenshi:** Given that the judge has clearly said that this petition is invalid and given that that means that this cannot continue unless the government makes it happen through their own systems and will likely be quashed by a court and given that Mr. Sylvestre and Mr. Rath have already said that the Premier promised them a referendum regardless of what happens with the law because she's above the law, given all of those things, given the absolute unravelling of the government's plan here this afternoon, whatcha gonna do?

**The Speaker:** I'll remind the hon. member that all of your questions have to go through the chair. We don't talk directly to each other because that keeps the temperature down, when we don't do that.

The Premier.

**Ms Smith:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. When I leave here, I'm gonna go and read the judgment that just came out a few minutes ago, and then we will be looking at talking with the committee that is reviewing another question, the forever Canada petition that's going through a legislative review committee right now. There's an additional petition that we're waiting for on June 10 to see if it will get the requisite number of signatures. We will determine what the judge says about the parameters on this one, and we'll have more to say on that later.

**The Speaker:** Hon. members, in 30 seconds we will continue with the Routine.

## Introduction of Bills

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Airdrie-East.

### Bill 212
### Pharmacy Statutes (Rewards Points) Amendment Act, 2026

**Ms Pitt:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to introduce a bill being the Pharmacy Statutes (Rewards Points) Amendment Act, 2026.

Mr. Speaker, this bill aims to allow pharmacies to offer up reward points for prescriptions.

Once again I move first reading.

[Motion carried; Bill 212 read a first time]

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

### Bill 213
### Alberta Personal Income Tax (Emergency Services Volunteer Tax Credits) Amendment Act, 2026

**Mr. Lunty:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to introduce Bill 213, that being the Alberta Personal Income Tax (Emergency Services Volunteer Tax Credits) Amendment Act, 2026.

This bill would establish a nonrefundable tax credit of up to $3,000 for volunteer first responders who dedicate at least 200 hours of service each year. It's a practical way to recognize their sacrifice, support recruitment and retention, and show these brave heroes that Albertans thank them for their service.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of the Alberta Personal Income Tax (Emergency Services Volunteer Tax Credits) Amendment Act, 2026.

[Motion carried; Bill 213 read a first time]

## Tabling Returns and Reports

**The Speaker:** Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood.

**Member Irwin:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As referenced in debate yesterday, I would like to table five copies of Dave Cournoyer's article entitled Undermining Public Trust in Public Libraries Is the Real Aim of [the Minister's] Bill 28.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** Banff-Kananaskis.

**Dr. Elmeligi:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a package of 14 e-mails from Canmore constituents opposing changes to the boundaries of Bow Valley wildland provincial park to accommodate the proposed Silvertip gondola.

**The Speaker:** Edmonton-McClung.

**Mr. Dach:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to table five requisite copies of the front page of a book I referenced in debate the other day entitled *How to Lose a Country: The Seven Steps from Democracy to Dictatorship* by Ece Temelkuran. I invite Albertans to read the book.

**The Speaker:** No. You don't get to give advice; you just get to table it here.

Lac Ste. Anne-Parkland.

**Mr. Getson:** Yeah. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have the Complete List of NDP MLAs That Returned Accommodation Allowance and Wage Increase, listing who's entitled to them, who's received what, and who hasn't given anything back. It's blank.

**The Speaker:** Nobody gets to give advice.

Go ahead, Calgary-Varsity.

**Dr. Metz:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have an article from the *Journal of the American Medical Association* published May 6, 2026, titled Elective MRI Screening of the General Public – Buyer Beware.

**The Speaker:** Calgary-Beddington.

**Ms Chapman:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to table the requisite number of copies, CBC article from April 21 detailing UCP cuts to early intervention supports.

**The Speaker:** Okay. That takes us to points of order. The first one I think was called at 2 o'clock, thereabouts, and I think it was called by the government side.

**Mr. Schow:** Yeah, Mr. Speaker, I did call that. But I'm going to withdraw that because I believe there's one at 2:07 that I do want to argue. Am I correct in that? I want to make sure our times are correct. I don't want to miss the one I do want to argue.

**The Speaker:** There's another one at 2:07.

**Mr. Schow:** Yeah. Withdraw the first one, then.

**The Speaker:** Okay. That concludes that matter.

The next point of order is at 2:07, also from the government side.

### Point of Order
### Parliamentary Language

**Mr. Schow:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise on this point of order that was called by the hon. whip. Grateful for him having my back, literally, as he sits behind me. At the time noted, I was speaking, answering a question. From a sedentary position the Leader of the Opposition yelled very loudly, "Lying and misleading." The Leader of the Opposition must be taking cues now from the Member for Edmonton-Glenora trying to finish sentences, which seems to be commonplace from members on the front bench, and presuppose the thoughts of members answering questions on the government side. Now, I can assure all members of this Assembly that the only person besides me who knows what I'm thinking and can finish my sentences is my dear wife, Nicole Schow. If she's watching, I love you, babe.

What I can tell you is that I do not believe that it is fair, parliamentary, or proper etiquette of this Chamber to yell. Even the volume of the yell was unparliamentary. But to say that I am lying or misleading: that is clearly a point of order under 23(h), (i), and (j).

**The Speaker:** Opposition House Leader.

**Ms Gray:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Just to rebut the Government House Leader, heckling is part of parliamentary tradition. It's talked about in several of our many tomes that talk about it.

That being said, the use of the term "lying" is absolutely unparliamentary. On behalf of the member I apologize and withdraw.

**The Speaker:** That was the right decision for the Opposition House Leader, and I thank you very much for that, and the way you did that right away: I thank you for that, too.

This settles that matter.

*2:50*

## Orders of the Day

## Government Motions

### Adjournment of Spring Sitting

43. Mr. Schow moved:
Be it resolved that pursuant to Standing Order 3(9) the 2026 spring sitting of the Assembly shall stand adjourned upon the Government House Leader advising the Assembly that the business for the sitting is concluded.

[Government Motion 43 carried]

## Government Bills and Orders
### Third Reading

### Bill 25
### An Act to Remove Politics and Ideology from Classrooms and Amend the Education Act, 2026

[Adjourned debate May 12: Mr. Williams]

**The Speaker:** Okay. Before we continue debate on Bill 25, An Act to Remove Politics and Ideology from Classrooms and Amend the Education Act, 2026, I will remind hon. members that pursuant to standing order . . . [interjection] Order. Pursuant to Standing Order 21 and Government Motion 42, agreed to on May 7, 2026, Bill 25 is now subject to a further 11 minutes of consideration at third reading, following which all questions must be decided in order to conclude debate on Bill 25 at third reading. Furthermore, pursuant to Standing Order 32(3.1) "the interval between division bells on all divisions required to dispose of [the bill at third reading] shall be 3 minutes."

Now I'd like to recognize the hon. Member for Calgary-Beddington.

**Ms Chapman:** Mr. Speaker, how much time do I have?

**The Speaker:** Eleven minutes.

**Ms Chapman:** Thank you.

I'm pleased to rise and give some final comments on Bill 25. I'd like to start us off by reminding us of how the minister first introduced this bill. The claim was that this bill was necessary because

> for years we have seen a gradual but persistent shift in the mission of our schools. What was once a system dedicated almost exclusively to literacy, numeracy, citizenship, and preparing young people for workforce has become increasingly cluttered. Today many of our school boards are becoming increasingly distracted with other priorities such as developing DEI action plans and reacting to the latest progressive trends. Many of our school boards . . . fund diversity and inclusion departments.

[Mr. van Dijken in the chair]

Now, the suggestion that the minister is making here, of course, is that a teacher or school or school board who are expending some unquantified but likely relatively small amount of resources to address inclusion or antiracism is a problem. The argument that the

minister is attempting is that kids who need learning supports aren't getting them because of all the "DEI action plans." What the minister fails to do is present any kind of evidence to support this position.

On the other hand, after years of asking and being denied, the minister finally coughed up information and numbers on funding for the critical early intervention program called PUF. If anyone is curious about the details, I just tabled the article that includes that. What is in there is evidence of not just the short-sightedness of this government but a key piece in the puzzle that is current-day classroom complexity. Let's be clear. The UCP was absolutely ruthless in their cuts, slashing funding for this program by more than half.

I do know that the minister loves to give himself a little pat on the back for increasing funding during his tenure, but the fact remains that PUF funding is still tens of millions of dollars less than it was seven years ago even though today there are thousands more children who require the exact kind of support a program like PUF provides. To suggest that a school board having a .5 FTE to do a little bit of work on antiracism would have the same impact on available resources for learning supports as removing hundreds of millions of dollars for early intervention classroom supports or holding funding below growth rates for years is laughable at best.

I need to circle back on that baseline assumption that I heard from the minister that our school system is no longer "dedicated almost exclusively to literacy, numeracy, citizenship, and preparing young people for workforce." This cannot possibly be a serious criticism offered up by any parent who has made a real effort to engage with their child's teacher, school, learning journey.

I'm going to use a sample. It's a small sample – okay? – two of my kids, one elementary and junior high. I know the proximity bias is a risk here, but fortunately I do have the pleasure of knowing quite a few teachers now, so I was able to do some cross-referencing to determine that these class schedules absolutely reflect the priorities and general structure that is seen in all public school classrooms in Alberta.

My grade 6 gets to start the day with gym. He loves that, actually. I thought that would maybe be awful, but he says no; it wakes him up, gets him going. After that two days a week he gets music. Shout-out to music teachers and all the work that they do to support learning and memory pattern recognition, collaboration, reasoning, creative thinking, attention skills. The other three days of the week they spend that hour in reading groups, and those groups are designed and targeted to the reading levels of each child so that they're grouped with kids who are working at the same level that they're at.

After that it's time for writing. Right now they're doing PAT writing exam prep. Then it's recess because they are children after all. After recess it's time for what he calls, quote, hardcore math. That makes sense, right? The kids have just had a break, they're refreshed, so they're in a good headspace to learn some new content. It's very smart, the way teachers organize their day to ensure that children are doing the most challenging work at a time when their minds will be the freshest. Hardcore math runs all the way to lunchtime.

Now, after lunch break, it's another hour of math. Early grade elementary teachers tell me that sometimes they have to get sneaky with extra math. It's delivered in the form of games with cards or dice or manipulatives. Teachers are always thinking about how to get kids engaged with the subject material, and when it comes to math, I would suggest that's no easy feat, so I truly appreciate the creativity, dedication, and persistence that teachers bring in teaching subject matter, core subject matter, to their students. After math and more math the day is rounded out with a social studies or science lesson.

My junior high kid is an even easier schedule to tell you about because the day is four periods. One period for humanities. That's language arts, all sorts of literacy, and social studies. One period for 'smath.' That's the portmanteau they use for science and math. One period that's an option. Great news on options for parents is that you can make choices that encourage learning a second language, band. Trades options are available. Tons of choices there. And then one period for PE and leadership. All of this is government curriculum all day every day.

When you listen to those schedules, to suggest that our schools are not focused on literacy and numeracy is an obvious and complete mischaracterization of what is actually happening day to day in the classroom. After all, it is this minister who takes every opportunity to crow about Alberta's performance on PISA where Alberta students are top performers, particularly in reading. So which is it? Are Alberta students excelling in literacy, or are our schools derelict in their duty to focus on literacy? The minister cannot have it both ways.

In the minister's concluding remarks on this bill he made comment around a section that many of my colleagues and I had raised questions about, which was the change to language around violence in schools. The criticism, of course, that we offered was that this was not something that was going to be sufficient to address a real crisis that is happening in our schools. The minister suggested that the change to language around violence in schools is "not a minor housekeeping amendment" and once again completely misses the point. Minor or major, the point is that this amendment to the Education Act will do nothing to address violence in the classroom. Words on a piece of paper, an addition to a student code of conduct that no students read: if these are the best ideas to address classroom conditions, it is no wonder that so many teachers and school boards have voiced opposition to this bill.

***3:00***

What was most telling to me about the minister's comments on Bill 25 yesterday was the idea that there is a "long-running contest [on] who controls" the values in Alberta's classrooms. That was what, in the end, provided a lot of clarity for me on why this government has been so misguided in their approach to managing Alberta schools. Picking fights is the hallmark of this government. To be sure, it provides wonderful cover for bad decision-making, but this is an imaginary battle that the UCP has entered into, and it is distracting them from what is actually happening in our classrooms and what actually needs to be addressed in our classrooms.

Funding for early intervention was cut, and classroom complexity skyrocketed. A slapdash math curriculum was pushed into K to 6 schools against the best advice of the experts who teach that subject matter, and lo and behold, math PAT scores plummeted. Funding for education was kept below population growth and inflation for years. School construction didn't keep pace with student enrolment. Classrooms filled and overflowed, and teachers were asked to do more and more and more with fewer and fewer resources. If students are lacking supports to excel in literacy and numeracy, it is nothing but the consequences of the choices that the UCP has made.

Bill 25 is an obvious attempt to distract from the embarrassing legacy of the UCP when it comes to education. I want to thank all my colleagues for the excellent comments that they provided on this bill, and I encourage everyone in this Chamber to vote against.

**The Acting Speaker:** Hon. members, pursuant to Government Motion 42, agreed to on May 7, 2026, which states that after one

hour of debate all questions must be decided to conclude debate on Bill 25 at third reading, I must now put the following question to conclude debate.

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

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 3:03 p.m.]

[Three minutes having elapsed, the Assembly divided]

[The Speaker in the chair]

**The Speaker:** Ever so briefly, I will point out that there was a standing order infraction earlier today made by the Speaker. I offer you my sincere apologies, and I will endeavour not to let that happen again.

For the motion:

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

***3:10***

Against the motion:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Al-Guneid | Elmeligi | Kayande |
| Arcand-Paul | Eremenko | Metz |
| Batten | Ganley | Miyashiro |
| Boparai | Goehring | Nenshi |
| Brar, Gurinder | Gray | Pancholi |
| Brar, Gurtej | Haji | Renaud |
| Calahoo Stonehouse | Hayter | Schmidt |
| Ceci | Hoffman | Shepherd |
| Chapman | Hoyle | Sigurdson, L. |
| Dach | Ip | Sweet |
| Deol | Irwin | Tejada |
| Eggen | Kasawski | Wright, P. |
| Ellingson | | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Totals: | For – 46 | Against – 37 |

[Motion carried; Bill 25 read a third time]

## Bill 32
## Electoral Boundaries Commission Amendment Act, 2026

[Adjourned debate May 12: Mr. Williams]

**The Speaker:** Hon. members, before the Assembly continues debate on Bill 32, Electoral Boundaries Commission Amendment Act, 2026, I will remind hon. members that pursuant to Standing Order 21 and Government Motion 42, agreed to on May 7, 2026, Bill 32 is now subject to a further 16 minutes of consideration at third reading, following which all questions must be decided in order to conclude debate on Bill 32 at third reading. Furthermore, pursuant to Standing Order 32(3.1) the interval between division bells on all divisions required to dispose of the bill at third reading shall be three minutes.

Now I'd like to recognize the hon. Member for Calgary-Elbow.

**Member Kayande:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let's be clear. Bill 32 is an illegitimate response to the Electoral Boundaries Commission's majority report. If the government had truly wished for four seats to be added instead of two, they would have made that change prior to constituting the commission – this would have been valid and legitimate – but they did not. That's because population growth in Alberta occurred mostly in Edmonton and Calgary. The government knew that if they increased the number of representatives prior to the commission being constituted, those seats would have had a high chance of going to the cities that voted against them.

[Mr. van Dijken in the chair]

There's an intersection here of big data, analytics, and now artificial intelligence, which can slice and dice voters with extremely high levels of accuracy. It's a challenge for our democracy that our institutions may not be set up for what looks like an asymmetric redistricting war where American-style disrespect for democratic institutions is moving north to Canada. Our courts here in Canada are clear. Effective representation is a shield. It enhances the principle of one person, one vote and cannot be used as a sword to disenfranchise voters. Edmonton and Calgary voters are entitled to a voice as well, and adding two seats outside of the electoral boundaries process deprives them of that voice.

These questions cannot be adequately addressed in debate today, unfortunately, because our debate right now is time allocated. We are left with insufficient time to adequately consider all of the implications of the government's attempts to subvert our democratic institutions.

The Quebec Court of Appeal recently threw out the Quebec National Assembly's throwing out of their boundary commission's map in a unanimous vote of the Assembly of every member in every party. Let me repeat that. The Quebec National Assembly voted unanimously to throw out their electoral boundary commission's map. That is not what's happening here. But even that effort by the Quebec National Assembly was found to be unconstitutional.

Today with Bill 32 under time allocation and more than a few members opposing this bill and with the government motion creating the sham, illegitimate redistricting committee, also time allocated, this poses severe challenges of procedural unfairness. This government is using an illegitimate process in this House to ram through an illegitimate process in committee to ram through an illegitimate outcome of suppressing Albertans' voices and potentially rigging the next election. This isn't right. A government that suppressed Albertans' constitutional rights four times, under time allocation each time, at one point passed in the dead of night and at all times in partisan votes, must face a fair electoral test in the next election. That's how the notwithstanding clause was designed.

Bill 32 is directly opposed to the concept that governments who strip us of our constitutional rights must face a fair electoral test afterwards. This concept is violated by a government that aims to choose its voters rather than a voter choosing its government. I call on all members to oppose this legislation. It is illegitimate, it is undemocratic, and it's wrong.

Now, here's the other issue with Bill 32 and with the entire concept of how the government is approaching redistricting. Here's the problem. See, the government fully formed an Electoral Boundaries Commission by passing a law that stripped out many of

the previous requirements that the Electoral Boundaries Commission would be required to pay attention to, specifically in regard to respecting municipal boundaries and respecting other communities of interest. This alone creates a lot of challenges with the process. However, the process went ahead. The government thought – they fully thought – that by changing the law so that municipal boundaries didn't have to be respected anymore, it would grant more degrees of freedom in how boundaries were drawn, and those degrees of freedom could be used to tilt the playing field to cement their power.

I only wish that this government had applied similar cleverness and similar thought to actually governing for the people of Alberta so that they didn't have to tilt the playing field. They could have chosen to do that. Let's remember that this is a government that presided over the lowest real wage growth in Canada since 2019. That's right. Albertans are behind after inflation. We're the only province in Canada where real wages haven't grown after inflation since 2019, and no matter who this government blames for that problem, the government owns it. They know, therefore, that governments that fail to increase incomes and increase disposable incomes and lower costs on people are governments that don't get elected.

They needed a different approach, so they constituted an Electoral Boundaries Commission with additional degrees of freedom in order to tilt the map so that it would make it more likely that they would win an election with less work, and the boundaries commission didn't go along with it. The boundaries commission had more than a thousand submissions, both in person, both remotely. I believe that it is the provincial commission that has had the second-highest level of participation of any commission in Alberta's history. This is an Electoral Boundaries Commission that had an extremely high level of validity, and in the interim report there was unanimity amongst all members of that commission – those appointed by the government, those appointed by the opposition, and the chair, who was appointed by the Premier – unanimity on how the interim map should look.

Then, as happens, there was a second round of consultation, and in that second round of consultation a few tweaks were made. Those extremely minor tweaks: for some reason the two UCP-appointed members decided that they wouldn't go along with the other members of the commission, so we ended up with a majority and a minority report. In the past when this has happened, the majority report has governed, just as the majority report governs in court decisions. So the only ethical, moral, legitimate choice that the government should have made was to accept the ruling of the majority of the Electoral Boundaries Commission. That was the only legitimate choice.

***3:20***

They didn't do that. They tried to fix the whole process from the beginning. They tried to rig the electoral boundaries process right from the beginning, and the chair didn't go along with it. That meant that there was actually a fair map, and there is nothing that this government dislikes more than fairness. As a result, the government, faced with a series of narrowing options, chose to kick the can down the road.

Now, we've heard flowery words from the Premier about: oh, no, no, no; the majority map is going to be the baseline of how the new map is generated. To that I say balderdash. That is nonsense. That is poppycock. The government is using every tool at its disposal to delay the process and put in place maps of its own choosing and maps of its own drawing, and they're kicking the can down the road. They've created the sham committee that has zero legitimacy in order for the temperature to go down a little bit, people to forget over summer, and then they'll do the result that they want. The chair was asked in committee, "Will the majority map be the baseline?" and refused to answer.

What we're left with, then, is a key cornerstone of our democracy left to the vagaries of a government that has, at every single opportunity to test their fidelity to democracy, chosen to not embrace the principles of fairness, not embrace the principles of democracy, not to embrace the idea that we have unalienable rights, of which one of them is the right to choose our own voters. I do not believe that there has ever been a government in Canada that has cared so little about the voices of the people. It makes me really sad.

I guess what I'll do is that I'll finish up by talking directly to the people of Alberta. I want you to know that you have a caucus on this side of the House that is fighting for you, that wants every single vote to matter, no matter who you vote for. It's a joke I tell when I'm out knocking doors, when I'm meeting people in my community, and they say, "Hey, I live in Calgary-Elbow," and I'm like: "That's fantastic. I love that you live in Calgary-Elbow. You know, you either voted for me or against me." [interjections] Both those who voted for me and against me have a voice. Both those who voted for me and against me are constituents that I am required to represent in this House by the oath that I took, and both those who voted for me and against me have a place, a deserving place, and have legitimacy. The fundamental issue, as we're hearing some of the heckles on the other side right now, is that we have a government that does not believe in the legitimacy of the opposition. They do not believe that I serve a purpose representing my constituents.

They have four times now stripped fundamental constitutional rights from all of the people of Alberta, all done under time allocation, mostly done under the dead of night. Now under time allocation, thank goodness not under the dead of night, they are stripping away the most fundamental constitutional right that we have in a democracy, that of being able to choose our government. This is a government that wants to choose its voters; they're not comfortable with voters that choose their government. Mr. Speaker, I find it very sad. I did not think when I chose this route that I would have to be standing here defending the most basic democratic principles.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker:** Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood, there is approximately one minute left.

**Member Irwin:** Oh, wow. One minute. Okay.

What an honour to rise and speak here to Bill 32. It is very unfortunate, as the Member for Calgary-Elbow just mentioned, that our time is once again limited by this UCP government, a UCP government that has used time allocation more than any other government in history combined in the last few years, which is incredibly shocking because every single one of us represents a constituency, and every single one of us is impacted by Bill 32 deeply.

The fact that this UCP government is unwilling to listen to the opposition, unwilling to listen to Albertans, as we see in Bill 32, a process that all of us in this Chamber participated in, a process that so many of our constituents, even those who didn't support us, participated in, hundreds of thousands of dollars wasted by this UCP government, and for what? All due to an unwillingness to work with the opposition and to follow fair electoral processes.

I'm telling you that Albertans deserve so much better than that. When that next election comes along, you better believe that Albertans are going to choose better and elect an NDP government.

**The Acting Speaker:** Hon. members, pursuant to Government Motion 42, agreed to on May 7, 2026, which states that after one hour of debate all questions must be decided to conclude debate on Bill 32 at third reading, I must now put the following question to conclude debate.

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

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 3:28 p.m.]

[Three minutes having elapsed, the Assembly divided]

[The Speaker in the chair]

For the motion

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

Against the motion:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Al-Guneid | Elmeligi | Kayande |
| Arcand-Paul | Eremenko | Metz |
| Batten | Ganley | Miyashiro |
| Boparai | Goehring | Nenshi |
| Brar, Gurinder | Gray | Pancholi |
| Brar, Gurtej | Haji | Renaud |
| Calahoo Stonehouse | Hayter | Schmidt |
| Ceci | Hoffman | Shepherd |
| Dach | Hoyle | Sigurdson, L. |
| Deol | Ip | Sweet |
| Eggen | Irwin | Tejada |
| Ellingson | Kasawski | Wright, P. |

Totals: For – 46 Against – 36

[Motion carried; Bill 32 read a third time]

## Bill 28
## Municipal Affairs and Housing Statutes Amendment Act, 2026

**The Speaker:** Hon. members, before the Assembly begins debate on Bill 28, Municipal Affairs and Housing Statutes Amendment Act, 2026, I will remind hon. members that pursuant to Standing Order 21 and Government Motion 42, agreed to on May 7, 2026, Bill 28 is now subject to one hour of consideration at third reading, following which all questions must be decided in order to conclude debate on Bill 28 at third reading. Furthermore, pursuant to Standing Order 32(3.1) the interval between division bells on all divisions required to dispose of the bill at third reading shall be three minutes.

Now I would like to recognize the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs.

**Mr. Williams:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do rise to move third reading of Bill 28, which is the Municipal Affairs and Housing Statutes Amendment Act, 2026.

This is an important piece of legislation, and it does a number of different things, Mr. Speaker. We've had much substantive debate on the legislation through second reading, committee, and now in third. As we all know as parliamentarians, third reading is no longer a debate on whether they're going to make amendments – that was the committee period – and not on the legislation in principle, but we now have our i's dotted and t's crossed, and the final detailed legislation in front of this House is what we'll be deciding on. I couldn't be more proud of the work done by my department, my team, bringing this legislation forward because it has a number of really important categories that we need to be addressing when it comes to advancing, modernizing, and working with municipalities in a number of key pieces of legislation.

Particularly, I'm going to start with the work that's being done on the MGA. A number of the different policies that we're advancing focus on the question of transparency and accountability. Now, I was very happy to have partnered with AB Munis on an announcement that we made together with a number of these policies coming out, and the idea here was partnership for a councillor accountability framework. In the past we've seen legislation – Alberta was actually the first of every Canadian province to introduce the legislation that was in the end the code of conduct for councillors. It was introduced by a previous government, under the NDP, in 2017. And I'll pay credit. It was an important piece of legislation, something that every other government, to my knowledge, across the country now has followed suit on, and if they haven't, you know they will have to soon.

Some of the tragic reality of why that introduction was needed and continues to be needed is because as much as we hope good manners and a simple apology, like we see in our Chamber even when tempers run hot, should be able to regulate the back and forth of intense and controversial, polemical political discussions, sometimes more is needed. And when those situations arise, we need to have a mechanism that meets a couple of different ends. Number one, it should be administered locally, and I think that that is one of the things that we've struck an important balance with here. We renewed the same structure that we saw in the legislation introduced in 2017.

It also needs to be something that is accessible to those councillors so that they have a real chance of being able to move through it. One of the challenges that we saw in a number of different iterations of the use of the code of conduct previously was its use could be really delayed because the review mechanism was an appeal to the courts. Now, obviously, courts have an important role to play as an appeal body throughout a number of different statutes that refer to them; however, a timely, quick, and inexpensive solution was important. Some municipalities have a broad depth and sophistication to them, and some councils represent more ratepayers and residents than we do as MLAs and more than some Members of Parliament do. But others in very small villages definitely don't have that kind of sophistication in their administration, and as individuals it's not a full-time job for them either. So having the appeal mechanism now through a series of different abilities to appeal with a referral board that has a roster where individuals be appointed by the ministry so that they can always be looking at this on a case-by-case basis when an appeal comes, not needing to use the courts, is something that will expedite the process, something, as we engaged with municipalities, that was absolutely key for them to have.

*3:40*

We also know in the past, though the legislation, the code of conduct was important in its initial phase, it was also – and I don't blame anyone, legislator or government, for this – able to be abused. In this House we have the privilege of being parliamentarians, and I mean that in the very important sense that we have parliamentary privilege. We are protected in the free speech that we can have here, and we allow, under your guidance, Mr. Speaker, a broad, broad width of what's appropriate for substantive debates. Of course, when it becomes personal, inevitably that's out of bounds. We wanted to make sure that the mechanism in place as well for councillors was one that would not, with the councillor accountability framework, be abused so that political speech ended up being silenced or censored. This was something that we saw happen indirectly a number of times with the code of conduct. The councillor accountability framework that we're bringing in really does permit a bit more latitude here for political speech.

[Mr. van Dijken in the chair]

Now, what exactly counts as going to be out of bounds in the regulations is something we'll engage in very directly with both the two large associations of RMA and AB Munis but also individual councils, individual mayors, unique circumstances. I know there are a number of councils across the province that are dealing with live issues right now around "where does the rubber meet the road?" and "how do we sort the wheat from the chaff?" in terms of these definitions. Of course, there are other bodies as well, particularly and importantly the mid-sized cities caucus, who my colleague from Leduc-Beaumont recently gave a wonderful tribute to, the work that they do. There are mid-sized towns as well.

There are a number of different bodies and institutions we want to work with to make sure as we draft these regulations that they get addressed in concrete detail and that we try and get this right, understanding as well that we're putting the details in regulation for a reason, Mr. Speaker. The original 2017 legislation in the MGA had it all in legislation, which is a very important – it gives solidity to it and predictability but it also doesn't allow that nuancing and that calibration needed as you go through these sorts of difficult circumstances. This really does put it in the hands of working directly with our partners and stakeholders to make sure we get it right.

Of course, in that category of transparency as well, there is also the ability for us to have a sunshine list for municipal administration all the way down, from the CAO right down to anyone else that works. If they meet the same threshold that we have provincially for the sunshine lists, they would also meet that. Municipally it will be standardized as well. This is about open government. This is about transparency. To be fair as well, Mr. Speaker, and credit to the municipalities that do this, many municipalities already do have a variation of this. This is saying that what's good for the goose is good for the gander. What's good for one municipality is good for all. What's good for the provincial government is also good for municipal governments across the province. So, of course, we have that as well in the transparency piece.

We also have a lot when it comes around growth and housing. Importantly, we're trying to reduce red tape. The red tape that we're trying to reduce is things like allowing AI into the MGA, which was permitted in a sense already, but this clarity allows municipalities to really lean into that potential advantage that they can have when it comes to the massive amount of applications, sorting all the different data that they have. When we talk about relationships between the provincial and municipal government, AI will be able to help municipalities just as it does the provincial government when it comes to being able to calibrate and calculate very large amounts of data that can sometimes exist as we're doing reports, studies, and over time looking at trends as they emerge and, of course, for applications as well, which leads to the automatic yes framework for low-risk, fully compliant applications that can happen in many municipalities, already happening to a degree in Edmonton and Calgary. This is going to create a legislative framework for how the automatic yes can work.

We need to make sure that when there is meaningful risk, we're weighing that in the zoning and the application process, at whatever part of the process it's in, but also knowing that every single risk that we push onto the developer, that we push onto the builder, that we push onto the realtor, that we push onto industry that are our partners in development, well, that ends up getting pushed down to Albertans, and the cost of housing goes up because of it. These are real questions that can have meaningful changes.

Of course, there are off-site levies with clarity in terms of what counts as applicable to an off-site levy. These are meant to be paid by the homeowners in that immediate vicinity, so things like ambulances, et cetera, of course, need to be paid for by the municipal taxpayer as they're municipally operated, owned, and run. To try and burden all that just with the local taxpayer that the offset levy applies to for a new development could be unfair, because the nature of things like ambulances, for example: they're on wheels. They end up all over the place, and sometimes moving that firehouse to that response, so we're really clarifying that if we're going to be making the end user, the new home buyer, pay more, it has to be for a legitimate reason connected to that space. That clarity is good, and this is exactly the role that the provincial government has in trying to create predictability and clarity.

I'm going to transition now a bit to tax assessment and fairness. There was a lot of work done with the assessment model review, and some of that is coming into play here with this legislation. The provincial government is the provincial assessor for designated industrial property tax; residential, commercial, et cetera, is assessed by local government, each in their local municipalities.

That being said, the provincial government since, I believe, 2018 has effectively become the provincial assessor on all of these industrial questions. That is a challenging piece, of course, because it's one of those zero-sum games, Mr. Speaker. We have municipalities that rightfully have a need to make sure that they're getting the revenues they need so that they can continue providing services to the ratepayers, to the industry, to the oil and gas, the forestry, to the agriculture or commercial, and those residents who live there, so that we continue to be the best place in the country, with that Alberta advantage, to live, to raise a family, to work, to play. That means a balance.

Also, Mr. Speaker, there is an importance here about updating. It's been two decades since we've seen an update to the assessment model. Technologies have changed in industry. Whether you're talking about telecommunications or horizontal drilling well sites, catalyzation of deep natural gas wells, there are a number of different things that need to be updated. I'm committed to working on those regulations in the future drafting of how all this rolls out with both municipalities and particularly RMA, as I know they have real challenges around revenue and especially some of these communities with mature assets. I'm committing to them. I'll work with them, and I also think industry will benefit from predictability.

Right now we have a huge question mark when it comes to assessment in terms of what those rules look like. It's 20-years-old, the technology is outdated, and we have a new set of challenges coming up. When it comes to industrial assessment, we want predictability. Predictability is a virtue when it comes to the rule of law, and this is no different when it comes to assessment and the

role that we play as the provincial assessor. This is meant to take one cost out of the system, that even though it's a zero-sum game, you can see all boats rise with this tide of having predictability and clarity in exactly how the assessment rules work.

There are no shortcuts on this one, and I think that members from both sides of the House will remember that previous ministers on both sides have had a hard time trying to find the right approach, so what we've done is we've broken it into two stages. We're starting with this piece, the assessment model review, and we look at all the models going forward after this.

Of course, we have the cost-reported projects, which are always going to be a challenge. So much of northern Alberta in particular, but almost every big industrial project, requires real predictability and fairness in how we look at those very large projects. A number of municipalities, especially in my communities in the north and across the province, really rely on that predictability of understanding: how do we look at this? Importantly, Mr. Speaker, all costs reported, for example, and everything with the assessment model review will be grandfathered in going forward, so any changes we see are balanced, they're fair, they're working with industry, working with RMA and affected municipalities, and we're saying it's a go-forward basis. So happy to work with municipalities going forward on the fairness and tax assessment piece surrounding modernizing the regulated property assessment for designated industrial.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to address a few comments made previously. In particular, the Member for Banff-Kananaskis made a passionate speech yesterday at the close of the time that we had for Committee of the Whole on Bill 28, and I thought that those comments, many of them, were very fair and reasonable. I want to assure that member and the residents in Canmore that I want to work with that town council, their elected representatives, to find solutions because there is no doubt in my mind that a nonmarket housing solution is needed in Canmore. That is the reality. They have a very local supply hemmed in by the beautiful Canadian Rockies in the Bow Valley with a global demand, and this will inevitably create a torque when it comes to local housing markets. We still need to have a community in Canmore that will continue to offer many of those services. Many of those residents who have been there for decades will continue to be there for decades more. There is a real sense of community in Canmore. In spite of the sense of it being global in terms of its demand, there is a sense of belonging in place, and that is a good thing to foster. I appreciate that challenge.

***3:50***

My understanding of communications with the mayor is that the expected revenue of the accommodation that we found between the provincial government and the town has dropped to about half, somewhere about $10 million to $4.5 million, so there's still revenue coming in from this. What the legislation will do, Mr. Speaker, is allow the town to continue with its policy, but it applies to non-Alberta resident property owners.

There are a lot of I's to dot and T's to cross in terms of the details of how to make this happen. The town has solicited information to try and get from every single homeowner whether or not they're an Alberta resident somewhere else and this is a secondary home for an Alberta resident or a secondary home for someone who lives outside. I do appreciate that these challenges are real. I will happily tell the member opposite that we do support the town of Canmore.

I understand the frustrations. The demands on the infrastructure are large, but it's about two and a half million, $2.4 million of LGFF that are going toward Canmore this year. That rises and lowers with consolidated provincial revenues for LGFF. I hope and I think it's going to rise again next year because of the nature of international commodity prices that have been affected. We'll see where that lands, of course, at the end of the fiscal year, but I do commit to working with Canmore and with residents, including the member opposite, on thoughtful, creative solutions to try and find revenue for what is very challenging policy. It's unique. There aren't other communities in the province that have that challenge. There truly aren't. So to some degree we'll have to create tailored solutions, but they need to be fair and equitable as well. I'm very open to working with the town on exactly that.

I also want to talk a little bit more about – let's see if I can find this. Pardon me, Mr. Speaker. I want to talk a little bit about libraries as well. I know this will be in all likelihood, unfortunately – there are about a dozen other issues. This is a very, very important piece of legislation with lots of amendments going into it. I'm very happy that we've worked very thoughtfully with municipalities, with stakeholders, to try and get this right. Much of the legislation is enabling, which means to say the regulations are where the rubber meets the road, and that engagement will be the most important. That's no different on libraries.

I'll say a few things about libraries, Mr. Speaker. The first thing I'll say about libraries is that I have a very warm heart for libraries. I grew up in a library in so many ways. It's where I found so much of my personal formation, as I was bookish, along with members opposite who have made similar comments. There is a love of libraries. This is true in remote communities like La Crête, the town that I live in. It's true in our large centres like Edmonton and Calgary, and I'll say that those libraries are different. They're different demographics, they're different population, and we have to understand that there are local interests in libraries. Of course there are.

Inevitably, Mr. Speaker, libraries are established by provincial law, the Libraries Act under the authority of the Minister of Municipal Affairs, and that's why I'm bringing forward these amendments. We have a challenge. We do. For all of us who love libraries, we need to make sure that they remain a place where families, especially families with young children, feel comfortable to continue to go to solicit, whether it is community activity there, where you can bond together. Often it's one of the only places, members opposite often point out, where you can gather in public in so many of our smaller communities, especially in the cold northern weather. We need to make sure that it remains open to people for them to continue to feel comfortable.

Now, this is a point of contentious debate between members opposite and myself. Members opposite say that for it to be an inclusive space, we cannot bring forward this legislation because it allows us to say that books that are pornographic and visually graphic pornographic material would have to be put behind the counter.

The arguments against are varied. Some of them are centred around freedom of expression, sometimes invoking section 2 of the Charter, sometimes not. Sometimes it's bordering on the Charter rights, though it's different. It would be a slippery slope argument, Mr. Speaker. Sometimes they say that if this is allowed – they don't speak to the substance of pornography for children, but they say, "What about *The Handmaid's Tale*?" or, you know, James Joyce's *Ulysses,* or you name these sorts of books that were shocking to the time of Victorian England, perhaps. They say that we're returning to some sensorial culture. That's a slippery slope argument on the other side.

Other points of the argument members opposite make is that they say: well, kids are getting porn; they're not getting it in our libraries. I mean, my goodness, Minister, have you not walked outside? Children have these things, their cell phones, and they can get them

wherever they want. They say that because of that this is a bit morally disingenuous, I think was the line quoted from the Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood from a blogger online.

There might be a handful of other arguments, but I'll at least try and address these as substantively as I can right now, and I'll start with the one on censorship. It is not a Charter right to have access to pornography for children. I'm only talking about pornographic materials. The enabling legislation will allow the regulation to be created. I will work with libraries to make sure that is the case. I'm happy to say that if they're willing partners, they can work with me on this. But access to pornography is not a Charter right for children, full stop, period, new paragraph, page break, new book. That's the end of it.

Mr. Speaker, for that to be the case, they should really be concerned about obscenity laws that have been on the books ever since Canada was created and well before in every single Westminster democracy across the world, and the Criminal Code right now that prohibits distributing pornography to children would have to also fall into this in a principle category. Invoking the Charter for this – I'm not even talking about 18 years old. I'm talking about 16 years old. It doesn't connect. It doesn't connect intellectually, and the public understands that.

There are substantive questions you can ask, Mr. Speaker, and I'm happy to address more of these as the time goes. I hope members opposite . . .

**The Acting Speaker:** Thank you.

The Member for Lethbridge-West.

**Member Miyashiro:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To begin I'd like to address something from the Committee of the Whole debate yesterday that I think needs to be stated. The minister said that the library section of Bill 28 is about – well, he just said it again – protecting kids. He seemed to infer from our debate that the opposition doesn't understand about protecting children. How interesting.

I worked for 13 years in the child and family services system doing front-line work services development and senior management. A number of my colleagues worked for collective decades as child protection social workers, but the minister gets it better than us. Seriously? This is a really instructive illustration of how Bill 28 was developed. The UCP think they know a lot more about something than they actually do and they lack the knowledge to realize that shortcoming, you know, like a paraphrased Dunning-Kruger effect.

I've also spoken at length about the apparent lack of stakeholder engagement by this government in writing this legislation, and this becomes more apparent every time the minister attempts to gaslight this Assembly and the public by stating Bill 28 is all about collaboration with municipalities, assisting with governance, et cetera, et cetera. No one buys this, especially not municipal leaders.

[The Deputy Speaker in the chair]

Perhaps the minister and this government are experiencing some form of collective cognitive dissonance, you know, when they intellectually understand that this bill doesn't actually help everyday Albertans, but ideologically they're driven to justify it. I only wish this were true because this government and this minister actually believe they're helping Albertans and municipalities with Bill 28.

Yesterday I spoke mostly about the library section of this bill. Today I'm going to share with you how municipal leaders feel about Bill 28. A mayor describes reducing property tax revenue and off-site levies as a raw deal. This person also feels that the province's meddling in municipal roads will make things more unsafe for children.

A mayor stated to me that the overreach is disturbing: we know our communities best; we should be allowed to do what's best for our communities. Bill 28 is continuing the chaos that piles on everything else this government has done to diminish municipalities.

A reeve has concerns about almost all of Bill 28 and doesn't know why the government is doing this. However, this reeve has some thoughts on the possible why: the province thinks municipalities are a problem that needs fixing. That's why the overreach; the government just knows better than municipal councils. Now that the minister has authority over dissolution, is forced amalgamation next? The section on utilities concerns this reeve as they wonder if the province will weaponize utilities to serve their own agenda. Further, why was the old code of conduct pulled and not just amended? Why make municipalities endure without a code for all these long months?

***4:00***

Madam Speaker, several villages and towns sent letters to the government asking for clarity on how the municipalities were supposed to handle additional costs from Bill 28 as the government has made it clear that local taxpayers will bear the costs, not the province. A mayor from a mid-sized city raised concerns about added costs for municipalities, and they said that it seems to be the same thing that the province complains about about the federal government. This mayor wonders if libraries will just stop taking provincial money and cut services so they don't have to follow the government's rules. Is this what the province really wanted in the first place? To stop funding public libraries?

They're concerned about the province downloading more responsibilities on municipalities and ask if this is intentional or incompetence. They also expressed grave concern about the possible takeover of municipal utilities and wondered if maybe it's a bit socialist. This mayor also said that if the province wants municipalities to be a department of the government, then just do it. If the UCP government wants total control over municipalities, then just do it. The mayor finishes by asking: what problems are you trying to solve?

A rural municipality suggests that the bill opens the door for gravel pits to be improved regardless of local conditions. You mean like environmental and development concerns? Hmm, imagine that.

I couldn't even speak to the mayor of Lethbridge and my former council colleague about this bill because he and council have been preoccupied with dealing with the funding quagmire caused by this government's desire to download costs for our integrated fire and EMS service and by a water treatment waste-water issue caused by this government's failure to support municipal infrastructure.

Initial reaction from the Rural Municipalities of Alberta, or RMA, begins by stating that

> collaborative partnerships between municipalities and the Government of Alberta are more effective than unilateral legislative changes.

Hmm. Working together: what a concept. They also state that

> Bill 28 [appears] to reflect industry-driven priorities for standardization in municipal operations and decision-making, [which equates to] reductions in municipal planning and development authority. These changes [might] not fully reflect the realities or needs of rural communities, where local conditions vary significantly.
>
> The Bill . . . [also standardizes] municipal processes or allow for shifting [the] decision-making to the provincial level in areas such as land use planning, utility management, and administrative processes. These structural changes may have unintended consequences for local governance and community-

> specific needs . . . Bill 28 [implementation details] will be established through regulation, making it difficult to fully understand how these [things] will affect municipalities. [But] as regulations are developed, it will be important to ensure that the intent behind the changes is clearly defined, that municipalities have the tools needed to implement them effectively, and that local autonomy remains respected,

so keep us informed, let us help to develop the regulations, and support us to let us do what we need to do and what we do best. Good luck with that.

Alberta Municipalities, or AB Munis, wrote a preliminary analysis of Bill 28, which can be summarized as:

> the . . . legislation introduces several provisions that risk eroding the independence and self-governance of local councils, including items related to:
>
> - . . . standard meeting procedures
> - Results from viability [reviews]
> - Implementation of community design codes
> - Limitations on vacancy property tax
> - Public utility governance
> - Approval of aggregate pits
>
> In addition, ABmunis identifies that several . . . provisions may lead to significant and potentially unsustainable cost pressures for municipalities across [the province].

The analysis document provides the organization's analysis of each section of the bill and rates them. Some sections are just given a "Further Details Required." All of the sections which negatively affect municipal revenue streams are rated as "Oppose," as are the sections on utilities, aggregate pits, and, unsurprisingly, libraries.

From the Environmental Law Centre:

> Bill 28 proposes several amendments to the MGA which will enable the provincial government to direct municipal planning and development decisions. This may curtail or have a chilling effect on opportunities for green planning and development decisions. This includes amendments imposing provincial community design codes which may override municipal planning and development decisions.

From CUPE:

> For a provincial government whose favourite gripe with the federal government is about "overreach," they sure do love taking control away from municipalities . . . Bill 28 allows the UCP government to compel "a municipality to transfer ownership or control of a municipal public utility to a public utility entity."
>
> [And] we know that privatization always comes hand in hand with higher costs, less oversight, and with outsourcing concerns for workers . . .
>
> In an environment where we're seeing a troubling trend of privatization of utilities, the government paving the way to taking control and oversight away from democratically elected municipal officials raises a major concern for all municipal workers, elected officials, and residents.
>
> Maybe [the Premier] should take her own advice and "stay in her lane."

Madam Speaker, it's painfully obvious to us that this minister and this government have no desire to work collaboratively with Alberta's municipalities, nor do they want to support municipalities to better serve their residents. Bill 28 is a naked power grab by this government that only serves to reduce the authority and responsibilities of elected municipal councils while concentrating power within the UCP government.

Thank you.

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

**Dr. Elmeligi:** Well, thank you, Madam Speaker. It's my pleasure to finish my debate from yesterday since the buzzer went out. You'll remember that I was quite passionate about my community. I'm going to channel some of that passion again because I wasn't quite done.

I appreciate the minister's comments about working with the town council of Canmore and searching for solutions to our housing crisis. I just want to point out that I have shared some potential solutions with the minister and with this House on multiple occasions, and all of those have been ignored. Meanwhile what this bill does is further attack the community of Canmore and our housing crisis, so I'm sorry, Madam Speaker, if I find the minister's words ringing a little bit hollow.

Actually, what's happening is that the changes that this bill proposes to this differential tax rate cost Canmore $5.9 million. I will be honest with you, Madam Speaker. I don't care where the money comes from to address our housing crisis. If it's not coming from the livability tax, fine. Let the minister find some other solutions. To date he has not. All the minister is doing is costing our town more money all the time and downloading more costs onto a rural municipal budget. It's egregious, and it's offensive, and it irritates the crap out of me – sorry – that the minister can stand up there and talk about working collaboratively with the community. For the record the minister is not working collaboratively with the community of Canmore. If he was, we would be having a different conversation in here today.

Because of this $5.9 million shortfall the town council has had to make some hard decisions. The consequences of this bill are already being felt in the municipal budget by delaying affordable housing projects by another two years. So instead of groundbreaking and having more affordable housing in the next couple of years, people of Canmore will have to wait four years. A pedestrian overpass over the Trans-Canada highway that will keep people safe is delayed by four years. Other capital projects have been delayed. Is this government funding those projects? No.

Just to be clear, we need about 2,000 affordable nonmarket housing units in Canmore in the next five years if we are going to have any kind of community sustainability, and right now we'll get about 350. So to the Minister of Municipal Affairs through you, Madam Speaker: 2,000 and 350 are not quite the same number. Show me the money. Show me the money. How are we going to create a sustainable community if people don't have somewhere to live? How can tourism businesses continue to grow if they can't find staff because staff can't find housing? It's very clear what the issues are. This bill doesn't make it better. It makes it worse.

Meanwhile – this is, clearly, infuriating – the government sees Canmore as a cash cow. I see people. I see a community of people struggling to stay in town and build a life. I see a town council democratically elected by the people of Canmore struggling to address a housing crisis and keeping people in town to build our community. The overreach of this government to pick on one community in the province and target it in provincial legislation for doing what their people democratically elected their town council to do is appalling.

***4:10***

This bill also speaks to the minister having control over design codes. Oh, my goodness. The overreach is astounding. The next time the members opposite stand up and talk about federal overreach, I think we should remind them about how they treat municipalities and municipal councils like children. They're not children; they're partners. The province overriding municipal planning documents introduces uncertainty regarding local land-use planning authority, municipal development plans, area structure plans, conceptual schemes. They provide clear guidance to developers to ensure design standards meet municipal needs. Municipalities thoroughly consult their populations on these standards. It all goes through consultation.

To create provincially prescribed standards that might not reflect the local context, that might not reflect the servicing realities or community priorities: this creates uncertainty for businesses and for communities.

I'm also wondering how this applies to the All-season Resorts Act that the Government House Leader brought up yesterday. We've got this Silvertip gondola being proposed. It's currently out for consultation. I'm getting hundreds of e-mails in opposition to this thing. Will the minister just decide that we should do it anyway and never mind what the people of Canmore have to say about it?

What about speed bumps? I got an e-mail the other day from a woman who's very concerned about the traffic calming devices in her neighbourhood. Should I just forward that e-mail directly to the Minister of Municipal Affairs, or should I send it to his staff? I'm not quite sure what to do about that.

The bill also talks about aggregate pit approvals. This is a big deal for a lot of communities. Municipalities have worked hard to consult their communities to create standards and guidelines. The MD of Rocky View has worked for years to adopt an aggregate development performance standard and aggregate site monitoring bylaw. That's after years of public consultation. That bylaw balances economic development with effective oversight, and the needs of citizens and environmental provincial regulations are complemented. Bill 28 risks negating these efforts, is creating concerns among residents who donated their time and expertise to participate in this process.

I will remind the minister through the chair that even if he does live in rural Alberta, he's not living in these communities that are impacted by these decisions. You know who is, though? The elected municipal councils. They're living there, they're talking to these people every single day, and it is their job to represent them. It is the minister's job to support them to do their jobs, not to make their jobs harder.

Bill 28 is egregious overreach into municipal governance. It is disgusting. It is the next round of this province reaching into municipal budgets and responsibilities. There's just no way that I could ever support this.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar.

**Mr. Schmidt:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I'm pleased to offer a few thoughts on Bill 28. The things that I want to touch on today are the changes that the minister is bringing forward with respect to governance of our libraries. I want to raise a concern that I don't think any of my colleagues have yet raised, and that's the impact that this may have on the development of science in our province. I want to touch on the measures around pit developments, the sunshine list, and, if I get time, the code of ethics.

First of all, I want to read into the record comments that were sent to me and posted on social media by my former CA. Her name is Emily. She is a librarian, and she has some thoughts about Bill 28 that are worth sharing. She calls this

> a 1984-style battle complete with thought police. The UCP's proposed bill is scary. It's disheartening to see this bill before the legislature.
>
> Bill 28 is a municipal affairs omnibus Bill. Just a few of its pages are on public libraries, but they have the potential to fundamentally change how Alberta libraries operate and how folks use libraries. If passed, it will limit people's freedom to read and also allows a Minister or their designated "library inspectors" to demand things like library users' reading history. The bill states that if libraries don't comply they can be fined and staff can be "charged with an offence." If you care about public libraries and think it's important that a free, open, "third space" full of different ideas exist, then this bill should concern you.
>
> This is being done under the guise of keeping porn away from kids which is a completely fabricated issue. The UCP [government] is using fear of "pornography" to remove the freedom to read. In [her] long library career in [Alberta, she's] worked at 5 public libraries [including] rural [libraries]. Even the tiniest libraries have distinct sections for kids, teens, and adults. Any library [that she's] worked in also has policy in place about not allowing unattended children in the library. Are there books in the teen/adult sections that you wouldn't want kids to read? Yes, as there should be! Whose responsibility is it to supervise children in a library and decide what kids can read, see, and borrow? Parents, as it should be!
>
> [She] cannot over-emphasize how much of a false flag the "save kids from pornography" thing is. In [Canada] there are legal definitions/thresholds regarding obscenity. The books in question do have mature content, but they are not "obscene" and pornography is not running rampant on library shelves like some kind of Larry Flynt fever dream.

The people who laughed, who know who Larry Flynt is: shame on you. I will have a discussion with your mothers. Sorry. I should direct my comments to the chair. Through the chair, Madam Speaker, I will be contacting their mothers to let them know what they've been reading.

> These books are award-winning graphic novels that are also all LGBTQ memoirs and stories. I'm sure that's just a coincidence and there's no other agenda here.
>
> The hard truth is that a library will have something in it that offends everyone! This is because libraries house a plurality of ideas, thoughts, and human experience within their walls. The Minister of the hour should never be the person deciding which books are OK for you to read and which aren't. You should be the only person who gets to decide that.
>
> I worry this will not end with the current Minister's list of "bad books" and is actually just starting. The way the bill is written means many books could be on the chopping block. Due to the language of the bill, the door is open to restrict anything a future Minister deems "age inappropriate" and also allows for the privacy of all library users of any age to be under threat.

And then she links to the letter from the Coalition of Alberta Public Libraries and encourages people to learn more information about that there.

Madam Speaker, those are worthwhile thoughts from my former CA that I wanted to share. You know, I wanted to expand a little bit, and I'm looking for a time signal here.

**Member Irwin:** You're still good.

**Mr. Schmidt:** Okay. Good. I wanted to expand a little bit on her point that she raised at the end of her comments, saying that this is not the end, that this is just the beginning.

I have concerns about what this might do to this government's control of the publishing and dissemination of information related to science. You know, it's well known that authoritarian governments have in the past cracked down on science in the name of party or political ideology. Two widespread, well-known historical examples are the promotion of the ideas of Lysenkoism in the old Soviet Union. This is the idea that genes are inherited by adopted traits rather than passed on through genetics. That mandatory belief in Lysenkoism set back Soviet science, particularly with respect to crop production, for decades and, in fact, was linked to massive starvation events because they didn't believe in using genetics and breeding to improve crop production in the Soviet Union. That was because the government of the day promoted this idea that Lysenkoism was the way that traits were inherited in all organisms, and that caused massive suffering.

Likewise, during the Cultural Revolution in China the Communist Party there restricted the practice of science to only those things that were deemed in line with political ideology, that aligned with the party and the party chairman. It's notable that a number of physicists and astronomers were executed if not fired from their positions or exiled from the country. I can't help but wonder, Madam Speaker, if those scientists hadn't been persecuted during the Cultural Revolution in the late '60s and early '70s whether or not China would already have landed and perhaps established moon bases. Had they not lost that decade of scientific advances in astronomy and physics, I am certain that the Chinese would have beaten everybody else in the space race.

***4:20***

I'm not basing my fears on science just on hypotheticals. We've seen members of this government attack scientific truth all the time. You know, I think about my friend from Vermilion-Lloydminster-Wainwright, who recently got up and made a statement in favour of selenium, Madam Speaker, not knowing that selenium above a certain dose is actually toxic to people. He's repeatedly talked about the benefits of climate change, denied that climate change is even real. We've heard members in the past talk about how forest fires aren't accelerating due to climate change. There are all these things. The Premier has even inserted her government into reviewing funding applications at universities for research in this province. So I'm very concerned that this bill will open the door to limiting the dissemination of scientific information.

Unfortunately, I'm out of time. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. Member for St. Albert.

**Ms Renaud:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise and speak to Bill 28, Municipal Affairs and Housing Statutes Amendment Act, 2026. Like my colleagues, I certainly don't have enough time to touch on all of the concerns that I have with this piece of legislation because this government chooses to shut down debate just like they choose to attack every piece of democracy.

I'm going to focus my quick time on, of course, the library because the St. Albert public library has reached out to me and asked me to share this. This letter was actually sent to the Premier and the Minister of Municipal Affairs. I'm going to read a few sections because I think they're really important to this debate.

I would like to address one thing before I begin, Madam Speaker. I heard the minister stand here and say: this is just enabling legislation; it'll all come out in regulations, and we'll consult then. Well, that is not the tradition of this government. We see it over and over and over again that that's not what they do. That's what they say they do; that is not what they do.

A really good example just today: last night we saw AISH and ADAP regulations drop, and guess what? It's just a few weeks before it changes. Now, they announced these changes over a year ago, but we didn't see the regs till yesterday, and you know what? That happened with zero consultation with this community. That's the pattern, and that's what we're used to. That's what Albertans are used to. So when this minister stands up and says, "Don't worry; you'll have a chance to weigh in," that's horse hockey. I don't know if that's an actual word. I don't know why I said it. It just came to my head.

Anyway, this letter is actually from the board chairs of the St. Albert public library, Meagan Dechaine and Jennifer Freitas. It's a fairly long letter, but I'm not going to read all of it. I just picked a few sections that I thought were really important. Now, they go on to say:

> The St. Albert Public Library is already undersized for the community we serve.

I would expect the MLA for Morinville-St. Albert would be well aware of that and would be very concerned about these proposed changes in this legislation, but I've heard nothing from him, so I guess not. He's going along with what he's been told. The community that we serve: the library service in St. Albert is not big enough.

They have a satellite and a main facility.

> We [don't] have the capacity to create separate, restricted areas for our collections without significant redesign and costs. Implementing access controls would also require new systems and increase staff involvement in mediating access to materials. [Now,] without dedicated provincial funding, these requirements would place additional pressure on municipalities and local taxpayers while diverting staff time away from direct service to the public.

Isn't that what this government does all the time? They just pass on expenses and costs to municipalities. All of that stuff trickles down, and then they say: well, that's not our fault; that's the municipality. It has happened throughout this government's tenure of 10 years, and now it's going to happen again with libraries because this minister seems to have a problem with pornography and wants library inspectors.

> At the St. Albert Public Library, materials are thoughtfully organized by age, format, and reading level to support appropriate access and discovery. Our trained staff work directly with families to help them find materials that align with their values and needs. Our collection development practices follow established professional standards, and our policies ensure that children are supervised and appropriately supported while in the library.
>
> Because of these existing systems, we are seeking clarity on what specific problem this legislation is intended to address.

What problem does this legislation address when it relates to libraries? Absolutely nothing. Whether this is a distraction or a weird pet project for this minister, who knows? But we know that Alberta libraries are trusted sources of information. The librarians are trusted resources within those libraries, and pornography is not being distributed in public libraries, contrary to what this minister thinks.

The letter goes on to say:

> [Now,] introducing identity verification and mediated access risks creating barriers for many users, including those who may not have identification or who rely on the discretion and openness that libraries provide.

Again, that is what this government does. They're not interested in removing barriers. Oh, no, no. They are interested in creating red tape and adding barriers. That's what this does. It adds more barriers, it adds more red tape, and it wastes more money, but that's what they do.

Now, this letter goes on to say that the St. Albert library and the library board

> respectfully echo the Coalition of Alberta Public . . . Libraries in asking the government to [do the following:]
>
> - Engage directly with library leaders before moving forward on any legislative changes . . .

And the minister says: "Oh, no. Trust us. We've consulted." Clearly not. It's in black and white.

> - Ensure any response is clearly tied to evidence-based problems . . .

That's not how this government functions. They like to make stuff up and listen to podcasters.

> - Build on existing systems that already support families, including collection policies and staff expertise
> - Avoid approaches that require libraries to act as gatekeepers or that introduce barriers to lawful access [and, finally]

- Ensure any changes are supported by appropriate privacy review, implementation, planning, and funding.

Now, I know we're going to run out of time and my colleague has some thoughts that he would like to add, so I'm going to stop with this letter from the St. Albert public library. I will table this tomorrow, Madam Speaker. I urge all members to read this.

You know, public libraries are not the sort of organization that stick their necks out and take risks. They're actually too busy looking at collections or creating programming or doing outreach or working with the kids and families that are there or offering all of the extras that they do. They aren't interested in promoting pornography like this minister seems to believe. They're interested in doing all of the things that they've always done.

It's unfortunate that this government feels the need, that they are governing in such a poor fashion and they are so deeply unpopular, the stuff they're doing is so deeply unpopular that they have to continue to throw this garbage out. It's unfortunate.

The other piece that I'm a little bit concerned about is the community design codes. I appreciate the comments from my colleagues. Once again the government will say: "Oh, no. We'll consult. I promise. It'll be in the regs." We know that they don't do that. We've seen seven years of evidence. They can say all they want. We no longer just listen to what they say, Madam Speaker. We watch what they do because we know they don't do what they say they're going to do. Now, they said that they're going to transfer accessibility to the Municipal Affairs minister, and that didn't happen. Instead, we have a half-baked attempt to address community standards that does nothing. It does really nothing except overreach.

With that, I will take my seat and allow my colleague to add his comments.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. Member for Calgary-Foothills.

**Member Ellingson:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. As I begin, can I just confirm how much time I have?

**The Deputy Speaker:** Seven minutes.

**Member Ellingson:** About seven minutes. Thank you.

Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise today and speak to Bill 28. I've got a couple of alternative names that maybe the government could consider. We could call it the hypocrisy act. We could call it the provincial overreach act, part 5. You know, this act makes it clear that this government is hypocritical. This government cares only about their power and their control, and this government didn't campaign on the consolidation of power like they have been implementing in their legislation over the last two years.

The bills being debated today give this government the power to gerrymander the next election. They give the minister of education authority over school boards and how teachers must teach your children. And now Bill 28 extends their power over municipalities, including control over community planning and design, control over municipally owned utilities, control over councillor conduct, control over development approvals for mining activities, control over housing for seniors, control over taxation, control over libraries. Madam Speaker, when, where will this stop?

***4:30***

Albertans didn't vote for this in 2023, but – you know what, Madam Speaker? – they did vote for their members of council. But this government doesn't care about that. This government thinks that they know better. They know better than the Albertans and the members of council that they voted for. Every day in this House this UCP government decries federal overreach. This government consistently passes legislation to limit federal powers in Alberta, and then they put their hands all over the authority of municipalities: the very definition of hypocrisy.

Bill 28 is a continuation of a long list of bills that they have passed giving themselves control over municipalities. Bill 18 in 2024, limiting agreements with federal governments, creating red tape, and preventing municipalities from accessing federal funding. Heaven forbid we would want to get federal funding to meet our objectives here in Alberta.

How about Bill 20 from 2024, that increased the control over bylaws, allowing them to strike down any bylaw that they saw fit? We wouldn't want to, you know, consider that members of council and city administration had spent hours and days and weeks consulting with people about bylaws. No.

How about Bill 21, also in 2024, expanding their reach and control over emergency powers for municipalities, whether or not municipalities asked for that or not?

How about Bill 50 that gave them further governance and oversight changes around code of conduct, including municipalities that already had a code of conduct in place? We might as well wipe that out because, clearly, this provincial government knows more about code of conduct given that their Premier was the only Premier to ever be found in conflict of the Conflicts of Interest Act, an act that they have changed now multiple times. Every single time one of their members steps out of line, they've got to change that act to make those activities okay.

And now we have Bill 28, seizing more power over municipalities, including control over planning and design, control over housing, control over utilities. It allows the province to step in and make sure that, as an example, gravel pits will be allowed. This is interesting for the constituents of Calgary-Foothills, Madam Speaker. It just so happens that there is a gravel pit in my constituency about 200 metres away from where I live. I'm pretty sure that my neighbours would want to be engaged in a conversation about whether or not those activities were expanded.

Just a few kilometres outside of the city, Big Hill Springs provincial park, where I've actually had a number of those constituents e-mail me about their concerns about gravel pit mining around that park. But I guess this minister feels like: if that needs to go ahead, that's just going to go ahead. The residents there be damned.

This is done through an omnibus bill that amends the Alberta Housing Act, the Libraries Act, the municipal affairs statutes amendment act, the Municipal Government Act. Beyond the hypocrisy and lust for power, Madam Speaker, this UCP government is turning Alberta into a nanny state.

If their control over municipalities and schools wasn't enough, now they need to seize control of libraries. Let's talk a moment about the amendments to the Libraries Act. The changes to the Libraries Act go far beyond meddling in the affairs of municipalities. These changes meddle in the affairs of parents and families. Libraries are guided by the principles of intellectual freedom. I know for the government that this is a totally woke idea, that people have the right to seek access to information, access to express ideas, information without censorship, restriction, or interference.

Madam Speaker, libraries group materials according to age. Libraries have designated areas for activities for children and for families. But you heard right here in this House that because libraries are created through provincial legislation, the minister therefore must step in and exercise their right to control. We have heard the minister say that apparently the opposition knows nothing about children or protecting children. What he's really saying is that he believes that parents know nothing about protecting their own children and raising their own children. Parents don't have the ability to go into libraries with their children and govern those

activities. Will the minister be personally reviewing the entire catalogue of every library in the province to decide what books are okay to have in that library?

**The Deputy Speaker:** Hon. member, I hesitate to interrupt, but one hour of debate has now been concluded. According to Government Motion 42 I must now put the question.

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

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 4:36 p.m.]

[Three minutes having elapsed, the Assembly divided]

[The Speaker in the chair]

For the motion:

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

Against the motion:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Al-Guneid | Elmeligi | Kayande |
| Arcand-Paul | Eremenko | Metz |
| Batten | Ganley | Miyashiro |
| Boparai | Goehring | Nenshi |
| Brar, Gurinder | Gray | Pancholi |
| Brar, Gurtej | Guthrie | Renaud |
| Calahoo Stonehouse | Haji | Schmidt |
| Ceci | Hayter | Shepherd |
| Chapman | Hoffman | Sigurdson, L. |
| Dach | Hoyle | Sweet |
| Deol | Ip | Tejada |
| Eggen | Irwin | Wright, P. |
| Ellingson | Kasawski | |

Totals: For – 46 Against – 38

[Motion carried; Bill 28 read a third time]

## Bill 29
## Health Statutes Amendment Act, 2026

**The Speaker:** Hon. members, before the Assembly begins debate on Bill 29, the Health Statutes Amendment Act, 2026, I will remind hon. members that pursuant to Standing Order 21 and Government Motion 42, agreed to on May 7, 2026, Bill 29 is now subject to one hour of consideration at third reading, following which all questions must be decided in order to conclude debate on Bill 29 at third reading. Furthermore, pursuant to Standing Order 32(3.1) the interval between division bells on all divisions required to dispose of the bill at third reading shall be three minutes.

The hon. Minister of Primary and Preventative Health Services.

**Member LaGrange:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise today and move third reading on Bill 29, the Health Statutes Amendment Act, 2026.

This legislation reflects a clear and practical approach to strengthening Alberta's health care system, one that improves access, supports patients, and ensures our system continues to evolve alongside our province's growing demand. Bill 29 is a measured step forward in helping provide timely care, better access, and ensures the system is responding to patient needs.

Mr. Speaker, this bill advances the work in three key areas. First, it expands access to preventative health testing. We know that early detection leads to better health outcomes. It improves quality of life for patients, and it reduces long-term pressure on hospitals and acute-care services. Bill 29 creates a framework to allow Albertans to access certain preventative tests without requiring a referral through accredited facilities. Medically necessary tests will continue to be fully covered and prioritized. Bill 29 provides an additional option, one that reduces barriers and gives patients more choice. It also recognizes that many Albertans want to take more proactive control and a more proactive role in managing their health care, particularly those who may not have consistent access to primary care providers.

Second, the bill improves timely access to essential medications, particularly for those living with addiction. Timing is critical in these situations. When someone is ready to begin treatment, delays can have serious consequences. Additionally, Bill 29 allows authorized prescribers to obtain a limited supply of certain medications directly from pharmacies, enabling treatment to begin immediately within a clinical setting. This is especially important in rural and remote communities where access to pharmacies can be limited and people will have to drive long distances. It is a practical, patient-focused change that reduces barriers, supports recovery, and, of course, improves outcomes and one that practitioners have been asking for. As with all elements of this bill, appropriate safeguards will remain in place to ensure medications are stored, prescribed, and monitored according to strict standards.

Thirdly, Bill 29 completes the legislative alignment required to support Alberta's refocused health care system. Over the past several years our government has taken significant steps to modernize how care is delivered, and this bill ensures that our legislation reflects those changes. Mr. Speaker, it updates and aligns statutes, it clarifies roles and responsibilities, and it supports a system that is more co-ordinated, accountable, and sustainable.

While I heard a lot of fearmongering and speculation and debate by the opposition, I want to be very clear, Mr. Speaker, what this bill does not do. It does not reduce access to publicly funded care or compromise patient safety, and it does not replace the role of health care professionals. What it does is introduce practical improvements that expand access, reduce pressure, and support a health system built for the future. It also emulates high-performing jurisdictions from around the world. Bill 29 reflects a health care system that is adapting, one that values prevention, timely care, and responsible innovation. This legislation is about ensuring Albertans can access the care they need when and where they need it.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I encourage all members of the Assembly to support Bill 29.

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

**Mr. Haji:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Bill 29 will make Alberta's health care system more expensive. I disagree with the minister that it will be patient focused. No, it will not be patient focused because it bypasses physicians who triage the clinical requirement of tests that currently exist, removes that guardrail, opens the door. It

increases the number of people who will be lining up for the existing diagnostic capacities that exist in the province.

The minister just said that it supports the system, that it is co-ordinated. It actually fragments the system and creates a fragmented system that is not co-ordinated and risks the continuity of care for patients. The minister just mentioned that it emulates high-performing jurisdictions with health care systems. It actually doesn't. That's why the government has to use the examples of countries that are outside North American jurisdictions for this particular bill. The government has to go outside of European jurisdictions because they couldn't find any jurisdictions within the G-7 countries that have similar kinds of health care systems, Mr. Speaker.

***4:50***

Instead of strengthening public health care access, the legislation expands a piece of privatization that shifts costs on Albertans without the clinical oversight of the doctors that currently have that role to ensure that access to diagnoses are provided with proper clinical oversight and proper clinical triage. Bill 29 undermines the principle that health care should be based on medical needs but not on a personal financial capacity, which Bill 29 introduces.

Mr. Speaker, the minister just mentioned that this completes the refocus, but in my perspective, yes, this completes the privatization two-tier system which has been introduced through Bill 11 and now completed through Bill 29. That is a transformation system that will take the province's health care system into a two-tier American style.

The government is moving Alberta away from a universal, publicly delivered system towards a two-tier, market-based model, and this has consequences. Access to timely diagnosis could increasingly depend on private insurance coverage or personal wealth because the bill makes the government the last payer. Further to that, the minister mentioned that a lot will be done through regulations, which grants a sweeping power, that Albertans have not weighed in on, to the minister's office. This includes which diagnostic services qualify for self-referral, what patients will pay, who may qualify in reimbursement, what portions of the system remain publicly insured, and what is the reimbursement framework that exists within those who are Albertans who are moving in and out of the province. These decisions will fundamentally shape the accessibility and fairness of the health care system in our province, Mr. Speaker.

Another worry that I will express in the House is that the Canadian Life and Health Insurance lobby explicitly identified Alberta's reform as an opportunity for an expanded private insurance market. That should worry every one of us. Insurance lobby organizations participated in the advisory groups informing Bill 11 and Bill 29. They have a stake in the game, and they have had an influence, in my perspective, in the framing of those two bills. Industry publications openly – and this is insurance companies – acknowledged that these reforms could increase demand for supplemental health benefits, and that is where the insurance companies will come in.

This raises serious critical questions. How deeply was the insurance industry involved in shaping this legislation? Were U.S.-based insurers consulted on this? Is Alberta's health care system being restructured to create profit opportunities for private corporations? I ask these questions, Mr. Speaker, because in the video that was released in October last year, both the minister and the Premier alluded that there will be private investments coming into our province, and I have the right to ask why. We all know that Alberta's public health care budget exceeds $34 billion annually, and private insurers clearly view this as a market opportunity, but we, the government, on behalf of Albertans are the ones who are supposed to protect that.

Expanding private insurance infrastructure risks embedding corporation interests into a core health care delivery system. One foot in the door will create an expansion and will risk privatization of the system. Once large-scale private insurance structures become entrenched, traversing them may be extraordinarily difficult due to the trade agreements and market obligations that the province has.

Another problem with the bill, Mr. Speaker, is that Albertans are already facing significant affordability pressures. The bill is encouraging to be able to self-refer and pay out of pocket. This means higher private insurance premiums, this means deductibles, this means copayment, this means out-of-pocket expenses, and this means greater household financial strain. Instead of reducing cost-of-living pressures, the government is shifting health care costs onto the families through Bill 11 and Bill 29. Health care should never depend on the size of someone's wallet.

Bill 29 does not solve health care access. It creates new barriers, it creates new costs that Albertans don't have to worry now, and it will actually create inequities. It prioritizes private market expansion of public system sustainability, which is already scrambling, Mr. Speaker. It risks burdening taxpayers while empowering insurers. They have already expressed how it opens the door. It weakens continuity of care. It does not increase co-ordinated care. It actually decreases it, creates fragmentation, weakens continuity of care, and leads to poor health outcomes.

Mr. Speaker, Albertans deserve a health care system that is publicly accountable, that is universally accessible, that is clinically driven, that has an oversight of clinical responsibilities, that is focused on the patient's needs and the patient's outcomes. When I read Bill 29, it fails that test. For these reasons, I cannot support this legislation, and I ask every single person in this Chamber to vote against Bill 29.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Dr. Metz:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Bill 29 is going to do a lot of damage to Alberta's health care system. We've yet to hear any good reasons for Bill 29, any evidence that there's been any analysis that evaluates the costs of this implementation of self-ordered tests, any analysis of the impact on the health care workforce, and any real analysis of the benefits and harms to Albertans.

We have heard or we've been told that other countries allow the self-ordering, but that statement comes without really critical information around that. Where self-ordering is available, it comes with all kinds of surrounding regulations. It's very limited. It's typically for conditions that are already known, and people are just keeping an eye on themselves.

That is, except for the United States, a country that spends 18 per cent of their GDP on health care versus a little over 11 per cent in Canada. This is not a place that we want to emulate. We do not want the U.S. health care system. This is a country where the major reason for personal bankruptcy is health care debt. We don't want that in Alberta. Albertans don't want that. We expect to have a government to give us good, affordable health care, not to tear it apart and bring in the carpetbaggers – I know you like that word – and make health care unaffordable and even unattainable to Albertans.

***5:00***

We've heard that we should not presume which diagnostics are going to be in this because it will all come in the regulations, but this bill gives them power to write whatever they want into those

regulations. Based on past decisions of this government, they really cannot be trusted to wisely provide health care and wisely spend Albertans' money. I don't want to hear the excuse that they're spending record amounts on health care. Yes, it's true. They are. It all matches their $9.4 billion deficit, but that's because the money is being spent very foolishly. Bill 29 will do this. Bill 29 means that self-referral for diagnostic tests is going to add enormous cost to the system for really no value.

We must not move ahead with self-ordering of diagnostics in Alberta. Aside from the cost that will be added to the public system for medical follow-up of tests, it's simply bad medicine. Just let's look at screening. As we've heard here, a good part of the purpose of this is so people can order their own screening tests. Yes, there are maybe a million Albertans that don't have a family doctor, and probably there are many that are missing out on the screening that they need. Instead of opening up screening, let's get them a family doctor instead of Google care. Google care and then ordering your own test is not good medicine.

I'm very certain that the varying ministers of health have received briefings about screening from the staff in their varying health ministries. Given that it's unlikely that others have been aware of how screening functions, I want to talk a little bit about that. Let's start with the question: wouldn't you want to know if something bad was lurking in your body? The quick, short answer is yes, but let's dig into what answering yes really means. If that test to detect a condition has no risk, it's probably relatively easy to stick with a decision that, yes, you'd like to know, you'd like to have the screening test. But the risk of the test itself goes up in most cases, so the potential benefit better be very real if you're going to have that screening test.

Let's look at colonoscopy, where the main reason is to look for colon cancer. There is a very real risk of perforating the colon during a colonoscopy. It's about 1 in 1,000. Now, that's not very high if you're at significant risk of colon cancer, but it's a very real reason that we're not doing this on 20-year-olds to screen for colon cancer unless they very uniquely have a very high risk. This highlights that screening tests have to be balanced against the potential benefit. We should not just do tests because there's a risk that somebody might have a condition if that risk is the baseline low population risk. We shouldn't be doing tests because: "Gee, what if I have that? I've never heard of that before, but maybe I'd better have a test to be sure I don't have that." We have to balance the risks with the benefits.

Another thing to consider is whether the test that people are having for screening is actually reliable to detect the condition that they think they're having the test for. There are many tests that you can have to screen that are exceedingly low in terms of their yield of a diagnosis when a person is either in the very early stage of the disease or at a stage where there's no benefit to them to find it. But these tests also have an increasing risk of finding something that we call a false positive. So you might have the false security that you don't have this condition, when, really, the test was just crap, or you end up having a test and something is found there that now needs follow-up. You create uncertainty. You don't know what that report means, and it leads you to more meetings with doctors, all in our public health care system, more tests.

Often the tests you're going to have do carry actual risk with them. You could end up having to have a biopsy to find out if something that you don't actually have – most of these incidentalomas in a low-risk population do not turn out to be anything. Think of this as looking at your skin. You likely have minor spots, bumps, colour changes on your skin, and it's pretty easy for you to know that you've had that spot forever. It's not anything. But when you do a test that looks inside your body, you have no way of knowing if that's just the way you are and that's always been there or if this is something that might be risking your life. So you sit in anxiety that this is something bad going on. Your inside is no different than your skin. It has all these little spots. The more tests you do, the more oversensitive or supersensitive they are, the more likely you're going to find something that doesn't mean anything, but you didn't know about it before.

We have to be very, very careful about screening. It causes anxiety. It causes more tests. It causes more risk to the person. A biopsy is really different than an MRI scan. The screening tests really need to be decided based on the evidence that supports their value, and they have to be individualized to a person, not Dr. Google or your neighbours who tell you, "Gee, you should have this to see if you maybe have a brain tumour" just because you have headaches that you've had forever. Sometimes only very high-risk people should have certain types of screening tests because of the high risk of finding incidental things.

There's also the consideration that there's no real value in early detection. Who would have thought that? Wouldn't you want to know if you had a thyroid cancer, let's say? Well, that's what they thought in South Korea when they started doing ultrasounds of the thyroid on 10 per cent of the adult population. There was a fifteenfold increase in newly diagnosed thyroid cancers. Hundreds of thousands of people had surgery. Tens of thousands developed significant, life-altering complications, forever needing hormone therapy or forever impacting a nerve that was critical for speaking so that they had a chronic cough or other problems due to this. Not a single life was saved. These were very low-risk cancers that further study has shown would never have caused harm and would not have otherwise ever come to detection. Buyer regret for sure because people were harmed. Nobody was helped. People who chose screening were more likely to be harmed than those who were not.

Screening typically in many situations detects slow-growing tumours when they're done for the general population without a target, without the people that are at higher risk, whereas the tumours that we wish we could have caught early typically grow very quickly and are detected by getting into a doctor early and seeing people without all the wait times that we're building up in our system. Those are the people that need the health care, not the healthy population having screening tests that are not medically necessary. Now, we've heard that this is for people to have things that are not medically necessary because medically necessary tests are being covered by the health system. So we're going to just be doing a whole lot of unnecessary screening that's not recommended.

***5:10***

Screening is really complex. There are many factors that go into it. Mammography is important in the right population, but for a low-risk woman we don't do this at age 25. Colonoscopy is really important in the right population and with the specific conditions. As we've learned, there are even better ways for most people to be screened for colon cancer, with a FIT test rather than necessarily needing a colonoscopy. But if people are tied to the fact that they want that test, that will present a burden on our health care system. Screening requires very careful analysis. It requires ongoing updating as new evidence arises. It requires medical oversight. Put these resources into primary care. Reduce wait-lists by investing in the needed workforce and infrastructure that we need. Don't try to put a patch on things by leaving Albertans to make their own decisions because there's nobody available to guide them.

Another example I would give you from my own experience is the people that experience headaches. This is a very, very common

condition. It's, in fact, hard to find people that have never had a headache. A person with a typical migraine, that has all the features of a migraine, does not need brain imaging. They don't need an MRI. They don't need a CT scan. But they will often hear that you should have one once just to be sure. Well, once for what? What are you looking for? If you have had headaches for the last 10, 20, 40 years, what are you looking for? A brain tumour? I think not. But people will hear that from their neighbours. They'll hear that from Google, so they'll go have a brain MRI. They're often having them ordered by their doctors because often we can't get access to the specialists we need to confirm the diagnosis. Let's get the right treatment for the people at the right time rather than going down this wrong path.

Then what often happens is that we find these little spots. How many people have I seen in my career that had a little white spot, where the interpretation says: cannot rule out multiple sclerosis. They never had symptoms. The spots: one, two millimeters. Boy, are they ever anxious. They bump other people that have significant concerns because this could be serious. There's something on the MRI. They live in this anxiety. Then what goes on is that they maybe have another MRI in another year to monitor, to look at what's happening.

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

**Member Gurinder Brar:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We all know the story of the *Titanic*. Did you know that the *Titanic* continued at the speed of 22 knots despite warnings about icy waters? Did you know that it kept moving forward, confident that nothing could stop it? Did you know that when it struck the iceberg, there were three ships nearby: *Carpathia*, *Californian*, and *Samson*? When it hit the iceberg, even the strongest steel, those heavy metal plates held together by nuts and bolts, tore open like a zipper. Water rushed into the ship, safety sirens blared, distress signals were sent out in the night.

*Samson* was just seven miles from *Titanic*, but it was involved in illegal seal hunting and thought someone was coming after them. As soon as they heard the sirens, they rushed in the opposite direction. *Californian* was 14 miles from *Titanic* and heard the sirens, too, but they ignored them. They were too lazy to help. *Carpathia* was 58 miles from *Titanic* and surrounded by ice, but as soon as Captain Arthur Rostron received the distress call, he ordered his crew to prepare medical aid, blankets, and hot drinks. Despite being farther away than the other *Carpathia*, it sailed through dangerous icy waters and rescued more than 700 passengers, bringing them safely to the safe shores of New York. Captain Rostron showed us that in moments of crisis a true leader doesn't turn a blind eye. The leader steps up with courage, with compassion, and with commitment.

Today in 2026 the massive ship of our health care system has hit the iceberg of this government's corruption, and health care workers, doctors, and nurses have been sounding the alarm. Our health care system has hit the iceberg of this government's mismanagement, and families across the province are ringing the alarm bells. The massive ship of our health care system has hit the iceberg of this government's entitlement, and health care professionals have sent clear signals against this bill.

At a time when Alberta's health care ship is already taking on water, the UCP has arrived not as a rescue vessel but as a destroyer launching the torpedo of Bill 29 into the heart of this ship. Bill 29 will open the hole for a for-profit, American-style, two-tiered health care system that will be by the rich, of the rich, and for the rich. Instead of repairing the damage, it will widen the cracks. When that torpedo hits, it will not be the wealthy who will sink first. It will be seniors. It will be working families. It will be people waiting in pain, hoping their government still believes their lives are worth saving. Albertans will suffer, will be pushed out of the ship of the public health care system, and will be left with no help. This is what the UCP is trying to do with this bill and our public health care system.

When a ship is taking on water, you do not save it by opening more holes. You do not protect passengers by selling the lifeboats to the highest bidder. You do not strengthen public health care by inviting private profit to steer the wheels of that ship. Bill 29 takes a crisis created by UCP mismanagement and uses it as an excuse to privatize more of our health care system. Albertans do not need a first-class ticket to get care. They need a government that believes that every life on the ship is worth saving. With Bill 29 the UCP will sink the ship of public health care.

For generations the ship of Canadian health care has sailed on one sacred principle, care based on medical need, not the ability to pay. That is the promise of universal health care. That is the promise protected through the Canada Health Act. The UCP says that privately paid self-referred diagnostic and lab services will shorten wait-lists. They say it will increase capacity. They say it will give choice to parents who can afford to pay, but what kind of choice is it when only the wealthy get a lifeboat, Mr. Speaker? Bill 29 creates the legal framework for for-profit medical imaging providers to offer faster diagnostic testing to privately paying clients. Not patients; clients. That means that those with money can get results sooner while ordinary Albertans continue to wait longer.

The UCP says that private access may help with easier screening and detection. That is not true. They say it could provide health outcomes and reduce costs later. That has been proven wrong. They say reimbursements for serious conditions will preserve universality. That has been proven false. Mr. Speaker, you cannot preserve universality by building a first-class deck for the wealthy and leaving everyone else below. Bill 11 in fall 2025 and now Bill 29 push Alberta toward a system where the public insurance plan becomes the payer of last resort. Private insurers are billed first.

What happens to those Albertans who do not have coverage? What happens to a senior on a fixed income? What happens to a family already choosing between groceries, rent, utilities, and medication? The UCP is not rescuing the ship of public health care. They are opening the lower decks to the water, giving private companies the lifeboats, and telling Albertans to pay if they want a place on board.

***5:20***

But, Mr. Speaker, luckily, we have a leader in Alberta, the Member for Edmonton-Strathcona, who, like Captain Arthur Rostron, will lead with courage, compassion, and commitment. Despite a cold and challenging political climate he has begun steering the ship of the Alberta NDP to help Albertans. He doesn't just have the compassion to rescue; he has the capability to guide this province away from the dark waters of Conservative cronyism towards a new horizon, a horizon where we can already see a ray of hope, hope that providing the best care to every sick person in society will be the responsibility of everyone, hope that you will not have to look into your wallet when you feel sick because there will be a publicly funded, publicly delivered health care system for every single Albertan, hope that the sick person will not be a money-making opportunity for UCP insiders but a fellow citizen who needs care.

I can already see that horizon, Mr. Speaker, a horizon of better days, days when Alberta will have the best public health care system in the country, days when government will not tear the contracts of doctors but respect the work they do, days when

government will listen to health care professionals, nurses, and experts, not silence their voices.

The Member for Edmonton-Strathcona will lead this province to the land of a new promise, a promise that, no matter your background, your skin colour, your financial situation, everyone will have access to the health care whenever they need and wherever they need without having to pay a single penny out of pocket. In the air, Mr. Speaker, you can almost feel it. You can almost smell the optimism, the belief that better is possible.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I request all members of this Assembly to vote against this bill.

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

**Member Irwin:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I didn't get any applause. That's just very disheartening. I'm just teasing. [interjection] That's right. Yeah. That is a sign, when you're asking for applause.

You know what? It is truly an honour, though, to rise and to speak to Bill 29. You know, once again, I have to reflect on the fact that it's very troubling that so few of us on this side of the House will get to speak to Bill 29, a health care bill that impacts all of our constituents. I know I can speak for at least the members on this side of the House when I say that health care continues to be one of the top issues that we hear about every single day, whether we're out door-knocking in our communities or whether we are monitoring our inbox or social media. It is a huge, huge issue for Albertans, and it's an awful shame that this UCP government doesn't want to debate it.

I'm just so honoured to have so many incredible folks on this side of the House who are speaking out and fighting back. I just have to give a shout-out, of course, to the wonderful MLA for Calgary-Varsity. [interjections] Yeah. I mean, this is someone who built an esteemed career in health care. You know, if I'm going to trust any MLA in this House on health care, it's going to be that member. I do hope the minister was listening intently to her words.

You know, I want to use the few minutes I have in this Chamber to just actually talk about an experience I had with health care recently. I didn't share this with many people. I might get a little emotional here. My neighbour here, the wonderful nurse from Calgary-Acadia, knows. In March I actually discovered a lump in my breast. I'm only 41. I'd never had a mammogram before, never had a history of breast cancer in my family, anything like that. I got to experience the health care system first-hand. I'm someone who, admittedly, rarely goes to a doctor and doesn't even really have a family doctor.

Like so many women, you know, I took it seriously, and I had my first ever mammogram at 41. I got in really quickly, and I got an ultrasound really, really quickly as well. I actually got to see a radiologist fairly quickly as well, and he said: I think it's going to be okay, but I would say to go get a biopsy done. So in April, again, I got, actually, into the biopsy fairly quickly. In April I had that, and, gosh, what a not-fun experience a biopsy is for anyone who's had one. It ended up being benign, and I'm obviously really grateful for that.

I share that story, you know, obviously, not for pity. There are a lot of people experiencing far worse than I did, and I was incredibly lucky. I share that story because the experience I had was really good. I know that I'm privileged, and I know that I was able to book and to rearrange my work schedule and all the things that I needed to do to get the appropriate medical care. But I think about the path that this UCP government is going down of privatization, and I don't want any woman or any Albertan to have to experience worse and to have to think about potentially paying out of pocket for these diagnostic tests. That's my worry.

I know the minister right now is shaking her head, but Bill 29 paves the path for further privatization. It does. It's in your bill. It does make it more likely that folks will have greater access to health care if they have a bigger wallet, and I think that that's fundamentally wrong. It's been a pattern. Multiple pieces of legislation under this UCP government have made it clear that privatization is their goal, and I wanted to share my story, to get on the record, to say that we may not be successful in stopping this bill, Bill 29, but you've got our commitment – you've got my commitment; you've got our entire Alberta NDP team's commitment – that we will forever fight for universal health care, and you've got our promise. You've got a promise from all of us that we will continue to invest in and to strengthen public health care so that nobody – nobody – gets denied access to the health care that they deserve.

Yeah. I just really wanted to use the opportunity as well to thank the health care workers. You know, again, as I said – and it is National Nursing Week, by the way – I think about the incredible health care workers across our province who do so much and who haven't always had the best experience with this government. Again, my one experience is one that just reminds me of how grateful I am for all the folks in our health care system who make it run each and every day. They've got our commitment as well that an Alberta NDP government will always stand up for public health care and will always respect health care workers, and we'll fight bills like 29 every step we get. When we form government in 2027, you know that you've got a government that will support you.

Thank you.

**Mr. Nally:** Those are socialist fantasies. Never going to happen. [interjections]

**The Speaker:** Persons that have the floor are probably who we should hear from. Right now that's Edmonton-Glenora.

**Ms Hoffman:** Thanks, Mr. Speaker. The disrespect from the MLA for Morinville-St. Albert continues to astound.

I've never been the headliner for the last bill of the last hour of session before, so this is an exciting opportunity for me. I wish it was a bill that was going to do something to make health care better. Instead, we have a bill that is focused on furthering the current Premier's goal of privatizing, Americanizing health care in the province of Alberta. This isn't a new goal. It's been one that she was more open about before. Definitely, campaigned very hard on wanting to bring in the market when she was the leader of the Wildrose Party. Then she crossed the floor to become a member of the PCs, and then she didn't win her nomination and had a different side career for a while, and now she's back.

Clearly, the goals are still the same, but the tactics are very different this time, Mr. Speaker, the tactics of being covert about the intentions of the legislation, particularly when you look at what she campaigned on when she ran to be the Premier in the last provincial election. She said: "Don't worry; nobody's going to have to pay to see a doctor. Don't worry; it's all fear and smear." Then session after session after session there've been further erosions of our public health care.

***5:30***

She even signed a public health guarantee in the last election, saying that she could be trusted this time. When she comes into this place and says, "You can trust me with the regulations, even though I'm creating vast opportunities for people to have to pay out of pocket for everything related to diagnostics, and even though in the press conference I had on an unrelated topic, where I talked about reducing the age restrictions for self-referral for mammograms" –

now it's down to 40, and thank goodness. There are many, many people who will benefit from being able to access a mammogram between 40 and 45.

Now, that is good news, but the Premier went one step further and said: I hope that those women take me up on it and that they pay to get it done. Then she said: oh, I misspoke; I didn't mean pay. But in this bill it creates the opportunity for that to be exactly the outcome through regulations. So no, we don't trust this Premier with our public health care. Nobody in Alberta should given what she's campaigned on in the past and what she's done to date as Premier.

I will also say that the chaos that has ensued in the last four-ish years in terms of the demolition of the structures that we had in place – earlier today there was a question about EMS and the Premier's response was, "Don't worry; we've got a separate division, a new CEO that's just going to be focused on EMS," when she used to campaign on getting rid of management and having more focus on the front line and the workers that are providing the care.

I want to take some time to talk about the workers that are providing the care because in this case it is primarily doctors. One of the health ministers, the one who's sponsoring this bill, said that part of her intention in this bill – there are nearly a million Albertans without access to a family doctor, including some within this very Chamber – is that she wants to empower them to take more control of their own health care because they can't get a family doctor to order them the exams that they need or the tests that they need. What an inappropriate use of one's responsibility.

They definitely didn't campaign in the last election on: you're in charge of your own health care. They said that they were going to help us get family doctors. They said that they were going to open more hospitals. They said that they were going to be trusted with our public health care, and they've done everything they can to the contrary, Mr. Speaker.

When I look at what the elected representatives of doctors say, specifically the Alberta Medical Association, elected to represent doctors, the AMA couldn't be more opposed to this bill if they tried. They were proactive about it because the minister and Premier did some foreshadowing prior to session, saying that they were going to be bringing in pay-out-of-pocket, self-referral exams. They were very clear in the lead-up. They actually invited all of us to attend their spring representatives' forum here in Edmonton to be able to learn from members and hear their analysis on what the negative implications of that would be, having looked at this around the world. The ministers: none of them attended. There were three NDP MLAs who did attend, and I'm grateful to my colleagues for taking the time to be there and for the members for sharing their analysis.

Whole-body MRIs, which are one of the things that the Premier and minister have talked about: about 30 per cent produce positives that are false on somebody who has no symptoms or no reason for a doctor to have referred them for that MRI. About 1.1 to 1.57 per cent of those actually produce something that is of serious concern. But for that 30 per cent it isn't just the test that happens. Thirty per cent get their positive. Let's say – I'll round up – a hundred of us in this Chamber, which might actually be right if you look at the number of people in the gallery and some of the other folks, decide we're going to pony up. We're going to pay for an out-of-pocket full-body MRI. It comes back, and 30 of us got a positive. We don't know that it's false. One of the things they highlight is the mental anguish that people experience in the time between when they find out that something is of concern and when they find out that it's benign or that it's not of concern. That's a lot of mental anguish on the 30 of us in this Chamber, for example.

The other piece that it talks about is that those test results need to be read by a public health professional, unless they're planning on further privatizing things, which certainly I wouldn't rule out. That means that doctors who would otherwise be reading results that were deemed medically necessary are now reading the results of people who didn't need them, not just that 30 per cent with the false positives but all of us. Then that 30 per cent with the false positives: we don't know that they're false positives yet, so we need to send them to go and get additional tests and have more follow-up.

My colleague from Calgary-Varsity has talked about the old lady who swallowed a fly, right? So you find something out. You do more mental stress, more exams, pulling more of those resources out of the public system that should be triaged to make sure that we all get the right care in the right place at the right time. It is a horrible use of public resources and a horrible use of what is limited.

Let's be honest here. What is happening is that some are being moved out of the public system into the private so that the people who can afford to have a shorter line. Everyone else who is medically necessary in that public system, who either can't afford to pay or choose not to pay because they do believe in a single-payer public health care system, which the Premier said she could be trusted to be a steward of in the last election and has now shown otherwise, have to wait longer for their results.

It definitely is an attempt to shift capacity away from all to just those who can, which is absolutely American-style. No matter what the minister might say, it is clear that this has been the playbook all along. Allowing consumers to shift those resources away from the sickest patients, the AMA says, is not a responsible use of the health care resources. We certainly can't trust them with the regulations, as I've said. There was Bill 11 in the previous session, and now Bill 29 is a further erosion of this.

Some analysis came out very recently from the Canadian Health Coalition, a legal opinion analyzing the impacts of Bill 11 and whether or not it is indeed in line with the Canada Health Act. These are experts in this field. The opinion is very clear that Alberta is putting $7 billion a year at risk should Alberta choose to further implement these pieces of legislation. We haven't seen the regulations yet for Bill 11, but if they continue to move forward on the same path they've already set, that $7 billion per year, which is what we get for Canada health services, could be absolutely put at risk. I don't think that any Albertan wants to leave $7 billion a year in Ottawa instead of having it focused here on the health care system.

In fact, I was proud that when I was the health minister, I was able to work with other provincial and territorial health ministers to make an argument for our transfers to go up. We got a billion dollars more because we made an argument, in collaboration with other provinces and territories, that it should be based on population, not based on age and other comorbidities. There are lots of ways that we can work proactively with our partners to make sure that we're getting more to invest in health care for us all. Instead, this Premier and all of her health ministers seem focused on bringing in American-style care.

I also want to remind you of one thing that the Premier said when she was campaigning to be leader of the UCP. She talked about how cancer before stage 4, quote, is completely within your control. One of the things, she clarified, is talking about, well, if people could have access to more tests earlier on, they could have more say and agency in whether or not they got earlier treatment and earlier improved outcomes. Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm sorry; for most Albertans access to a private, for-profit full-body scan to see if you do have something when it hasn't been identified is not within your control.

There have already been many clinics popping up selling these things. They're so excited that the government is creating these

great opportunities for them to create more profit on the backs of concerned citizens. One of the things that these clinics are offering with, you know, an initial membership of somewhere between $7,000 and $11,000 is that you get a full CT, you get a full MRI, you get full blood work, you get to meet with mental health professionals, and you get put on the panel for a primary care provider, for a doctor.

Now, what people think is going to happen is that they can take that information with them and transfer back to their former health provider, go back to their family doctor, but once you have transferred from one panel to another doctor's panel, there is no guarantee you will be able to go back. So that upfront sunk cost that you put in, thinking you could get all these things done and then you could take them back with you – almost certainly these doctors will have a full roster. Once they've lost that patient, they will pick up another patient.

***5:40***

This is an undermining of their expertise and their professionalism. We've seen it with other bills in this House, this session, this afternoon. We saw it with a bill disrespecting teachers and the expertise and the training that they've had. We saw it with a bill around municipal affairs, disrespecting librarians and municipal councillors and the training that they've had, the democratic process of being elected. And we see it now here with this legislation, undermining the role of a doctor.

You know what, Mr. Speaker? Public health care is one of our biggest responsibilities. It's one of the reasons why I'm excited to be a provincial MLA. I care deeply about health care, and we have a lot within our actual mandate that we could be doing to make it better for everybody. This government could stay away from health care for a little while. They could say: "You know what? We did a lot in those first three years. We could back off for a little bit, see how it goes." But, no, they continue to move full speed ahead when what's happening is that there is chaos in our hospitals.

The first day of session, you might recall, Mr. Speaker, we came to this place, and I asked for an emergency debate on the state of emergency room care because on December 22 – we were back a couple of months later; it was the first opportunity – a man had just died in the emergency room at the Grey Nuns hospital who was 45, who came there asking for help, experiencing chest pain. We saw that video and we knew how horrific it was and what was happening. It required support from the government, and the government said: "No, no, no. Don't worry. Everything's fine. Things are already getting better." That's what the government said just a few months ago on the first day of this session.

Then 40 days ago we saw what happened in the Royal Alex emergency department when one patient was stabbed violently by another patient. Over 50 people waiting in that emergency department for emergency care didn't even get admitted. Those were patients waiting for emergency care. A violent episode happened, and the government said: "No, no. Don't worry. Everything's fine." Oh, PS: they didn't tell anybody about it until after the NDP Official Opposition went public and said that this had happened. Then they confirmed that it happened.

Now they're saying that they're going to do some things to make it better. I certainly hope they follow through on that, Mr. Speaker, but I'm not going to hold my breath. It has been years of them documenting that their safety, health, and wellness groups have been asking for these types of interventions to happen, but maybe they'll do it this time.

Oh, and then we found out that just a few days ago in that same emergency department a patient who was brought in by ambulance – brought in by ambulance – off-loaded because the Premier has brought in a new policy that ambulances have to get back on the road. So that patient who had been off-loaded in the emergency department and left to sit in the waiting room with all these other patients: hours later found dead. The government didn't say boo about that. Again it took somebody who was a witness reaching out and saying that it's clear that the government is not going to do anything about this. We don't even know if there's going to be a fatality inquiry. Who knows?

Any time somebody dies in an emergency department waiting for care, the government should be outraged. They should be doing their jobs. They should be making sure that they get to the bottom of it and make sure it never happens again. But they said nothing. They failed to report it. They failed to go public.

Mr. Speaker, this is why this bill is part of the system and part of the problem, because the government wants to pretend that everything is fine while they further privatize health care, while they erode confidence in the public system. It is absolutely unacceptable. They cannot continue down this path. Their days will be numbered – trust me – because Albertans deserve the very best care by people they can trust to protect them and the systems that they need.

I want to, lastly, say thank you to my colleagues for their amazing sharing. I wish I could have heard from all of my NDP colleagues on this bill. Instead, the government has time limited, so we only got to hear from five of us. That is a disappointment, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** Hon. members, pursuant to Government Motion 42, agreed to on May 7, 2026, which states that after one hour of debate all questions must be decided to conclude debate on Bill 29 at third reading, I must now put the following questions to conclude debate.

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

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 5:44 p.m.]

[Three minutes having elapsed, the Assembly divided]

[The Speaker in the chair]

For the motion:

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

***5:50***

Against the motion:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Al-Guneid | Ellingson | Kasawski |
| Arcand-Paul | Elmeligi | Kayande |
| Batten | Eremenko | Metz |
| Boparai | Ganley | Miyashiro |
| Brar, Gurinder | Goehring | Pancholi |
| Brar, Gurtej | Gray | Renaud |
| Calahoo Stonehouse | Haji | Schmidt |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Ceci | Hayter | Shepherd |
| Chapman | Hoffman | Sigurdson, L. |
| Dach | Hoyle | Sweet |
| Deol | Ip | Tejada |
| Eggen | Irwin | Wright, P. |
| Totals: | For – 46 | Against – 36 |

[Motion carried; Bill 29 read a third time]

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

**Mr. Schow:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to inform the Assembly that there will be no evening sitting. [interjections] I thought you'd be happy about that.

I also wish to move that the Assembly be adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m.

[Motion carried; the Assembly adjourned at 5:52 p.m.]

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