

Province of Alberta

The 31st Legislature
Second Session

Alberta Hansard

Thursday morning and afternoon, November 26, 2026

Day 74

The Honourable Ric McIver, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of Alberta
The 31st Legislature
Second Session

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Arcand-Paul, Brooks, Edmonton-West Henday (NDP)
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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)
Campbell, Kyle, Calgary-Shaw (NDP)
Ceci, Hon. Joe, ECA, Calgary-Buffalo (NDP)
Chapman, Amanda, Calgary-Beddington (NDP), Official Opposition Deputy Assistant Whip
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Party standings:
United Conservative: 46 New Democrat: 39 Progressive Tory: 1 Vacant: 1

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Legislative Assembly of Alberta

10 a.m. **Thursday, November 26, 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, we will now be led in the singing of *God Save the King* by Clara Veldkamp. I would invite all to participate.

Hon. Members:

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

The Speaker: Please be seated.

Introduction of Guests

The Speaker: Hon. members, seated in the Speaker's gallery today is Clara Veldkamp, who led us in the singing of the royal anthem. Clara is a familiar face around the Legislature. She has been part of the Alberta page program for the last three years and now holds the position of head page. She has a deep love for music and plays seven instruments, the main ones being violin and piano. Apart from school and music Clara loves working outside on her family's acreage, snowboarding as much as she can in the winter months, and using her creativity in writing, drawing, and painting. Clara, please rise and accept the traditional warm welcome.

School groups today. St. Albert.

Ms Renaud: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to introduce to you and through you 59 students from Sir Alexander Mackenzie in St. Albert. They're here with their teacher Heather Friedenthal. I ask them please to all rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

The Speaker: Guests, starting with Calgary-Acadia.

Member Batten: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you I want to introduce one of the greatest gifts in life: family. Today I'm fortunate to have some of mine here in the Legislature. My in-laws, Kathy and Ed Guinn, have always welcomed me with kindness, encouragement, and a healthy sense of humour. I would love to ask them to rise and receive the traditional welcome of the House.

The Speaker: Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville.

Ms Armstrong-Homeniuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to introduce a wonderful guest in the gallery today, my good friend Tamara Dabels. Tamara is a constituent and a very good friend of mine, and I'm delighted to have her joining us here today at the Legislature. Thank you for coming so early. Tamara, could you please stand and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

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

Mr. Wright: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour to rise and introduce to you and through you a wonderful, amazing friend of mine, who's driven all the way up from Medicine Hat to be part of the FCSS event, councillor for Cypress county Robin Kurpjuweit. Robin, please rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

The Speaker: Airdrie-East.

Ms Pitt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour and a pleasure to rise and introduce to you and through you my constituent, one of my smartest ones, although they're all very brilliant. Dr. Wisdom Vizor, please receive the traditional warm welcome of this Assembly.

Members' Statements

Government Record

Mr. Gurtej Brar: Affordable life, better public health care, better public education: that's what the UCP promised in the last election. It has been 1,277 days. What did Albertans get? Two-tier, American-style private health care; no new schools; a life they can't afford. Instead of building hospitals, this government cancelled the south Edmonton hospital. Instead of funding public education, they crushed the teachers' strike. Instead of making life affordable, they turned their backs on families. Albertans are working multiple jobs just to make ends meet.

Meanwhile the Premier and her ministers take lavish trips on Albertans' dime: Saudi Arabia, Dubai, a booze cruise. When they get caught, they blame immigrants. One must look 180 degrees to find the reality. Immigrants are not responsible for corrupt care; this UCP government is. Immigrants are not responsible for wasting $200 million on a divisive referendum; this UCP government is. Immigrants did not get jobs because of DEI, but at least five of the Justice minister's family and friends got government jobs because of their connections.

This holiday season, the UCP will have 86,400 seconds every day to reflect on their actions, on their values, on their duty to Albertans. Come next election, Albertans will choose a government that works for all, not the few. By next holiday season Albertans will have a better government, and that is Alberta's New Democrats because better is possible, Mr. Speaker.

United Conservative Party Annual General Meeting

Mr. Sinclair: Mr. Speaker, this weekend more than 7,000 Conservatives will gather in Calgary for the UCP annual general meeting, the largest political gathering in Canadian history. That number is not just a record; it's a statement. More than 7,000 Albertans don't travel from every corner of this province to attend an AGM because they're looking for a headline. They do it because they believe in Alberta, in conservative principles, and in the work required to keep this province strong and prosperous.

In recent weeks we've heard plenty of naysayers and chatter about our movement, but Albertans know the difference between momentum and hot air. While the Leader of the Opposition and the Alberta NDP obsess over headlines, political stunts, and the outrage of the day, United Conservatives are focused on real results. The NDP's talking points don't cut taxes or balance five consecutive budgets. Their stunts don't make life more affordable or keep Albertans safer, and the rhetoric and insults to skilled workers don't move Alberta forward or build pipelines. United Conservatives are growing the economy, defending Alberta's

interests, and creating opportunity for the next generation, a future built on economic growth, a future built on opportunity, and a future built on a strong Alberta within a united Canada.

Mr. Speaker, Alberta's best days are still ahead. Conservatives are ready: ready to defend Alberta's interests, ready to keep our economy strong, and ready to rebuild and build on the trust Albertans have placed in us. This AGM is the beginning of the work ahead, united under the leadership of this Premier. We need you to know we'll continue moving Alberta forward. If you work on a rig, a pipeline, a mill, or a farm, our government knows that these are not jobs of the past. They are jobs of today and jobs of the future, and our UCP team and movement will stand together to protect that future and defeat the Alberta NDP in October 2027.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Homeless Supports and Affordable Housing

Member Irwin: Winter is coming as it does every year, and every year we urge the government to make a plan to support unhoused and vulnerable Albertans, and every year this government fails. The data doesn't lie. This government has had nearly eight years to act. Instead, what do we see? Sustained record numbers of unhoused Albertans; record numbers of frostbite amputations, with Edmonton holding the unspeakable title of frostbite amputation capital of the world; record numbers of deaths on our streets. These people aren't just numbers; they are people who loved and were loved, and they mattered. The data could not be more clear. It is a crisis, yet this UCP government allows the crisis to continue, and we see it in so many ways.

We see it in people from prison being released in the middle of Chinatown with no reintegration plans, no supports, no housing. We see it in encampment sweeps we were told were necessary to connect people with supports, but those supports never came. We see it when city leaders beg for more day spaces, spaces where people can just be warm and find community, but the province fails to step up. We see it in cuts to disability supports from a government that at every opportunity takes from those who have the least.

10:10

I could go on, but here's the thing. We know the solutions. Permanent supportive housing with wraparound supports, affordable rental housing and tenant protections, a continuum of care that includes recovery and harm reduction, Indigenous-led housing grounded in culture and community. We know what's needed, and arguably the UCP does, too, but they don't care. It doesn't matter to them. Solutions like supportive housing save lives and save money, too. How do you convince a government that's swayed by neither moral nor economic arguments? You can't, and we can't keep hoping that the crisis will get better when this government has proven they will not change, so let's change this government instead.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Red Deer-South.

Economy of Canada

Mr. Stephan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Because I love freedom and prosperity for Alberta families, I will speak the truth as I best understand it. Please listen. Texas is much smaller than Canada, less than one-tenth the land mass. It has a population of 10 million less than Canada, but Texas by itself has a GDP that is about half a trillion more than all of Canada. Canada could be the most free and prosperous nation on Earth, but it is not even close.

In 2014 Canada's per capita GDP was 92 per cent of the U.S. In 2025 our GDP per capita fell to 62 per cent of the U.S. That is a 30 per cent drop in just 11 years. We are getting poorer. It is happening fast. The OECD says that Canada will be the worst performing economy among its 38 member countries in terms of per capita GDP growth for the 2030 to 2060 period.

The sad truth is that Canada is in decline. Canada is broken, and those who broke it will not fix it. Spending ourselves into oblivion is no solution. Where is the accountability? This is not going to end well. Empty words and platitudes do not make it otherwise. Before uniting, first ask: to what? Will uniting to that which is bad produce that which is good?

Yet there is always hope in God, understanding truth, and uniting one's life in it. Alberta is a land of freedom and prosperity. We must be vigilant to keep it that way.

RCL Chapelhow Branch 284 Fundraising Campaign

Member Tejada: For more than three decades the Royal Canadian Legion Chapelhow branch 284 has been a place where veterans, families, and neighbours come together to remember, connect, and support one another.

Today this valued institution is facing a serious challenge. Located in Greenview, the Chapelhow Legion is not only a veterans' hub but also hosts events, meetings, and celebrations throughout the year. Revenue from hall rentals and events helps sustain operations, but ongoing roof damage now threatens that vital source of income and, ultimately, the future of the branch. The Legion requires approximately $400,000 for roof repairs, including urgent work to address leaks and prevent further damage to the building.

I want to recognize the leadership of Legion president Bill Reynolds, members Don Ross, Rick Garbutt, members of branch 284, the Greenview Industrial BIA, and Ward 4 city councillor, D.J. Kelly, who have stepped forward to help. Through fundraising events and advocacy they are working to protect a space that serves veterans and residents alike.

Mr. Speaker, this situation highlights the challenges facing many volunteer-run organizations. The Alberta community facility enhancement program can provide assistance but often requires matching funds, and navigating complex grant processes can be very difficult. In the midst of an affordability crisis, operating costs continue to rise while organizations like this one do everything they can to keep their doors open.

I encourage Calgarians and all Albertans to learn more about Chapelhow Legion's campaign, and, if they are able, to lend their support. I also hope people will join us on December 18 at the Chapelhow Legion for an evening of live music, dinner, and community spirit. The Legion stands as a reminder of those who have served our country. Let's make sure these places of remembrance continue serving future generations.

Investigation of Health Services Procurement

Ms Sigurdson: The UCP fired the CEO of AHS for looking into fraud, corruption, kickbacks, and bloated contracts. The CEO then sued them, and the government has spent nearly two years fighting her in court, wasting money on a lawsuit instead of improving health care for Albertans. They're paying $800 or more an hour for top lawyers to go after their own hand-picked CEO, all because she stood up to corruption.

Yesterday the UCP received a setback in court. The judge dismissed a request to temporarily halt a document disclosure order. The courts had ordered the documents turned over to the former CEO. What did the government's expensive lawyers do? They appealed and they lost.

From the beginning of this scandal the UCP has not fulfilled on being transparent or accountable.

It's no wonder, given how much they're trying to prevent the courts from accessing documents, that the Auditor General hasn't been able to finish his investigation, and it's no wonder the RCMP is now investigating fraud and breach of trust. Let's not forget that the Minister of Justice did not disclose his family relationship to the businessman in question, Sam Mraiche. He's never recused himself. The Premier did not disclose just how cozy her social relationships were with him either. The temptation of one too many hockey games in one too many skyboxes was too great, and the various ministers of health all dropped the ball while Albertans got stuck with wasteful Turkish Tylenol, bloated contracts for chartered surgical facilities, and ongoing corruption allegations.

The former CEO's lawyer says that they're looking forward to receiving the full disclosure from the government of Alberta. Albertans are waiting, too, because despite the UCP wanting it to, the corrupt care scandal is not going away.

The Speaker: The hon. member ought to know that the speech that was just given includes items that are before the courts, which is generally considered to be something we don't do here.

Tabling Returns and Reports

The Speaker: Are there tablings?

Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood.

Member Irwin: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to table five copies of a journal article by Alison Toews, her first ever, written with Taymy Caso and Danielle Shinbine. It's entitled Intersectional Futures: Gender Equity, Transgender Inclusion, and the Politics of Sport Governance in Alberta, and I urge all members to read it.

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

Dr. Elmeligi: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have the requisite copies of 81 different e-mails from constituents of mine sharing data and perspectives and concerns around the Silvertip gondola. All are in opposition.

The Speaker: Any other tablings? I see none.

Oral Question Period

The Speaker: Okay, hon. members. We are now in the part of the agenda where we are at Oral Question Period, and the first question belongs to the Leader of the Official Opposition.

Cabinet Travel Expenses

Mr. Nenshi: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Over the last couple of weeks we've spoken about some pretty egregious UCP cabinet travel – the 11-distillery booze cruise, the Premier's own $2,300 10-minute chauffeur – but there is so much more. For example, this January the Minister of Indigenous Relations along with, somewhat randomly, the MLA for Camrose and Shane Getson plus multiple staff, went to India for three weeks. None of these people's portfolios have anything to do with international relations, energy, or trade. What did Albertans get for that $50,000?

The Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Ms Smith: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Under the former Prime Minister the relationship with India has suffered some difficulties. Under the new Prime Minister he is reaching out and establishing relationships, and he's encouraged all of the Premiers to send delegations to do the same. We were opening an office in Mumbai, and we were looking at ways in which we'd be able to expand our Alberta-India business council. Shane Getson was my parliamentary secretary. He led the delegation, and we're looking forward to doubling our trade with India. That's one of the aspirations that we have as a government, to double our trade with all countries of the world.

10:20

Mr. Nenshi: So Shane Getson's remarkable diplomatic skills got us exactly nothing.

Now the minister of tourism has indulged in some tourism of his own, taxpayer-funded. He went to Mexico, which amounts for 0.2 per cent of our international visitors, almost no tourists, and then extended his trip for eight extra days on the beach just before the referendum. Why are taxpayers paying for this minister's all-inclusive lifestyle?

The Speaker: The Premier.

Ms Smith: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our relationship with Mexico is vitally important, and it has been since 1993. We do have the initial NAFTA agreement and the Canada-U.S.-Mexico agreement. We're looking at ways in which we can continue to partner with them. We're pretty excited about the opportunity to partner now with Mexico City. We've had a delegation sent there. We've met with Pemex, who have come here multiple times to learn a little bit about our energy sector, and there is the ability to have travel go back and forth, not only Canadians going to Mexico but Mexicans coming here as well.

Mr. Nenshi: Albertans can breathe easier knowing that the minister of tourism was negotiating CUSMA from the walk-up bar.

Finally, for today, the hapless minister for service Alberta bumbles from one junket to another, including trips to London, Kentucky, Texas, Las Vegas, Texas again, Las Vegas again, Texas again, Korea, Las Vegas again. You name it. While every single day Albertans struggle with an affordability crisis, this minister collects frequent flyer miles like they're going out of style. Who's minding the shop here, and why doesn't the Premier stop his travel?

Ms Smith: Mr. Speaker, we know that our number one and most important trade relationship is with the United States. We're very reliant on it: $188 billion worth of trade. But because of the disruption in the relationship with the United States, the Prime Minister has challenged us to go internationally to expand and double our export and trades with other jurisdictions. So yes, we're going to maintain our relationship with our closest friend and trading partner, but we are also going to be going to international jurisdictions to make sure that they know everything that Alberta has to offer.

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

Mr. Nenshi: I'm sure people in London and Korea are fascinated to know how badly this minister bungled the registries in Alberta.

Private Health Services Delivery

Mr. Nenshi: Now, when the minister announced Bill 11, the privatization of health care, she said that private surgeries would only be done on evenings, weekends, and in doctors' copious amounts of spare time and that the public system would be protected. But the government has yet to announce any of those protections even though the private system is up and running. We're still waiting for the guardrails and ratios. When will these rules be put in place to protect Albertans?

The Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Ms Smith: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. The first step was asking doctors how many of them wanted to participate in dual practice. I'm sure the minister will correct my numbers if I'm wrong, but the last time we spoke, it was about 400 doctors that want to be able to do both. And the key is this: they're going to have to have very good books so that they can show us and demonstrate to us that they're continuing to do the same amount of work for us as they have been historically and then also demonstrate how they're going to be able to meet the private demand without impacting the public demand. Those are the rules, and we'll be enforcing them.

The Speaker: The member.

Mr. Nenshi: But there are no rules. A year ago the minister swore this wouldn't happen without ratios. We have not seen the ratios. It has already happened. But this is common going back. In the 2023 election the Premier said, "Under no circumstances will any Albertan ever have to pay out-of-pocket . . . to get the medical treatment they need." But now Albertans are being asked to pay out of pocket. The private system is leaching away surgeons, anaesthetists, and OR nurses, and public operating rooms are sitting empty while far too many patients wait in pain. When will we see the guardrails they promised?

Ms Smith: Well, first of all, Mr. Speaker, no, we did not ask for ratios. We didn't promise that we were going to have ratios. All we said was that doctors who want to participate in both systems have to continue to provide the same level of service to the public system as they currently are, and then in their additional time that they are not scheduled to be in the public system: that's when they can take on private patients. No one is going to be asked to pay out of pocket. Everyone is going to be able to continue to have the same coverage that they had before. Some people may choose to remove themselves from the wait-list to allow somebody else to come up the queue, and that's what we're enabling.

Mr. Nenshi: Dual practice systems don't work without ratios. The minister said as much as recently as September. Where are they?

Mr. Speaker, four years ago, when the Premier took office, 58 per cent of cancer surgeries were done within the clinically recommended time. Now it's less than half. Four years ago about 300 patients missed their targets for surgery. Now it's more than 500. That's a 60 per cent increase on this Premier's watch. Capacity, despite the Premier's rhetoric, is simply not keeping up with demand. With all this privatization, with all these bloated contracts, why are surgery wait times getting worse?

Ms Smith: Mr. Speaker, there's another CIHI statistical analysis today that shows that we are leading the country when it comes to attaching patients to primary care practitioners. Last year it was about 83 per cent, the national average. We were at 86 per cent. We've even improved from then to 88 per cent. Being able to get access to the system begins with being able to have access to a primary care practitioner, getting diagnostic tests, which is why we've allowed for those to pay out of pocket for preventative tests so that if they do find a cancer diagnosis, we'll refund the money and get them in right away. That's what we want to do.

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

Mr. Nenshi: Under one minute ago she said that no one's being asked to pay out of pocket, and 10 seconds ago she said: we're asking people to pay out of pocket. That's the incoherence of this health care strategy.

Investigation of Health Services Procurement

Mr. Nenshi: And yes, we have another day and another legal setback in the government for the never-ending corrupt care scandal. We now know that the government tried to hide documents proving that Athana Mentzelopoulos was not fired for cause, and they've lost in court again.

The Speaker: Stop the clock, please. When things are before the courts, we try not to talk about them here because it could compromise, I'm told – I'm not a lawyer, so I think I have to say that. I've been advised that that could compromise the legal system. Please be careful not to do so. This is for all of us, okay?

Mr. Nenshi: I think it is okay to talk about judgments that have been made, but I'll go on.

Every time we learn more about this government's conduct, it looks worse and worse. The easy way out of this was a public inquiry, which the Premier has refused to do, and the Wyant report, despite what the Premier is about to say, did not clear the government. What is the government hiding here?

Ms Smith: Mr. Speaker, the Wyant report determined that no one in government, elected or an official, had any wrongdoing. What they did say is that they weren't able to interview a couple of people who had formerly worked for AHS, and I hope that that's been addressed with the Auditor General, who did have the power to be able to compel testimony, who is working on a supplementary document to give us advice on procurement. I'm really glad that Judge Wyant did his work so quickly so that we were able to hear the recommendations on procurement, and we will have all of the recommendations implemented before the end of the year.

Mr. Nenshi: The Premier hand-picked Athana Mentzelopoulos as the CEO of AHS and then fired her when she learned too much. In fact, the UCP government has hand-picked, with no search, five CEOs of AHS and fired four of them when they wouldn't do the Premier's bidding. This is one of the highest-paid roles in government, but the government has never done an open search for this role, as they haven't with so many other issues, so many other jobs. Why is the Premier so opposed to merit-based hiring?

Ms Smith: Well, Mr. Speaker, we knew that there was some restructuring that needed to be done at Alberta Health Services, and that's what we've done. We've identified that primary care needed its own pillar, continuing care needed its own pillar, mental health and addiction needed its own pillar, and we had to restore AHS to delivering services in hospital. That wouldn't have been done without the oversight of our minister of health, who has been leading the refocusing, and we're beginning to see some incredible results with patient attachment, with the reduction in opioid deaths because of the focus, and with the building of continuing care. That's why we believe that we have the right people in charge.

Mr. Nenshi: She just said "minister of health" as though there is one. In fact, we have four, none of which actually seem to have any power over the system because they're forever blaming the people that they manage for all of the problems. The Premier has also hired five relatives of Sam Mraiche, you know, relatives of the Justice minister. Purely coincidentally, two of them are top staff donors to the UCP on junior staff salaries. The Premier hands out government jobs like candy to her friends and supporters, fires people who don't

do her bidding. When will she come clean with Albertans on how much of their money she's spending to return political favours?

The Speaker: I'm not sure that was government policy, but go ahead, Premier.

10:30

Ms Smith: Well, Mr. Speaker, more money was donated by that individual to the NDP. Maybe the leader should talk to the Edmonton-North West MLA, who was processing the cards at the individual's house when he was in government.

We are focused on the things that matter to Albertans. Balancing the budget: we're going to be announcing our sixth consecutive balanced budget today with a substantial surplus. We're also going to be announcing a doubling of the heritage savings trust fund, which we're very excited about. We're going to be making sure that we take care of Alberta's interests first.

Electoral Boundaries

Ms Gray: Mr. Speaker, this government rammed through Bill 40 to gerrymander Alberta's electoral maps. They threw out an independent commission's work. They shredded public feedback from thousands of Albertans. They used their majority to shut down debate. These gerrymandered maps do not serve urban or rural Albertans. They're only designed to serve the political interests of the Premier and the UCP. It is the worst of entitlement. Why is fair, effective representation for Albertans so toxic to this UCP government?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Justice.

Mr. Amery: Well, thank you again, Mr. Speaker. To the contrary, this government adopted the recommendations of Justice Miller's report, which called for an increase to 91 seats to restore two rural seats that had been removed by the commission. The commission expressed disappointment in not being able to recommend a distribution without the 91-seat recommendations. That's what this Assembly adopted. That's what the independent panel worked with, and they provided a distribution of maps that have been adopted by this Legislature.

Ms Gray: They literally ignored Justice Miller's advice.

Voters should pick their politicians. Politicians should not be picking their voters, but that's what the UCP has forced on Albertans. Voters should be able to fire an MLA that fails them, but these gerrymandered maps will take that away, taking away fair voter representation. It is unprecedented, it is undemocratic, and it is unconstitutional. It is a naked power grab. To the Premier: will she tear up these rigged maps or admit she's simply afraid of the democratic will of Alberta's voters?

Mr. Amery: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is asking us to tear up the recommendations of the panel. We'll do no such thing. We passed a bill in the Legislature that moved to adopt those maps based on a 91-seat distribution with the paramount consideration for effective representation. That's why the majority of the Electoral Boundaries Commission initially believed that 91 seats were necessary to accomplish the goal of making sure that effective representation was achieved. That's what this Legislature adopted. That's what this Legislature did. Albertans are better served for it.

Ms Gray: The majority did not. It doesn't matter how many times the Justice minister says it, it is never true.

We are left with no other option than challenging these maps in court. The government has ignored all calls to respect democracy, too afraid to put up any of the speakers that are benefiting from their gerrymandering in the debate. Albertans deserve free and fair elections, an electoral system they can trust, and a democratic system that respects our Constitution. Will the Premier scrap these maps or force Albertans to go to court to fight for democracy?

Mr. Amery: Mr. Speaker, just because the opposition member doesn't like the outcome of those recommendations, it doesn't make it true. The act is very clear. The recommendation of the majority is the recommendation of the commission. The recommendation of the chair is the recommendation of the commission. I suggest that that member should read the act to figure out exactly what it says because it's clear that she's misinterpreting the terms of the act. The panel made a recommendation for effective representation based on 91 seats. That's exactly what happened in this Legislature because we adopted those recommendations.

UCP AGM Resolution on Labour Relations

Mr. Shepherd: Mr. Speaker, Albertans know this UCP government is no friend of working people. In fact, they are the first government in Alberta's history to use the notwithstanding clause to break a strike. Since being elected, they have repeatedly, systematically eroded the bargaining rights of Albertans in every industry, and now at their party convention this weekend they'll have a resolution that, if passed, will deliver a killing blow to Alberta's unions. If their members endorse it, will this government take yet another page from the MAGA Republicans and attack Alberta unions?

The Speaker: I will say that a question about a political party meeting that has not yet occurred is certainly not about government policy, but if the government wants to make a comment, they can.

Mr. Schow: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is that time of year when the NDP start fixating themselves on the annual general meeting of our party rather than what is important to all Albertans. What I can tell you is that on this side of the House we are focused on jobs, affordability, and a balanced budget, and today there is great news coming from the Minister of Finance about how we've been prudent with the money that Albertans pay in taxes and how we're managing that. [interjections] I'm very proud of this government's record, and I can tell you that we're going to continue to deliver for this province.

The Speaker: I'll only hear now from the Member for Edmonton-City Centre.

Mr. Shepherd: Given that what this government has been doing is attacking Alberta workers, rolling back protections on overtime, freezing the minimum wage and given that they undermine collective bargaining and the ability for unions to advocate for their members and given that this government has used every trick in the book to break up the teachers' strike, including the notwithstanding clause, and given that Canadian courts have ruled time and again against that kind of union busting, is this government in their policy so desperate to win their war on workers, or will the Premier rule out adopting an anti-union agenda that her party desperately wants?

Mr. Schow: Mr. Speaker, the only people in this Chamber who are attacking workers, particularly blue-collar workers, trades workers, is the Leader of the Opposition. He has said multiple times how he disrespects them and does not value the work that they do. On this side of the House I meet with union leaders all the time to talk about the importance of the trades in this province because jobs, affordability, and balanced budgets are important to us. That is how we're attracting billions in investment, and someone has to build it. We're working with them to get those workers on the job site. [interjections]

The Speaker: I heard quite a bit of chatter from people who weren't recognized by the chair. That's on both sides, just for the record.

Let's hear from the hon. Member for Edmonton-City Centre.

Mr. Shepherd: Given that actions speak louder than words and this government's actions and policies, hey, their whole identity, seem to come from south of the border or whatever their separatist friends dream up on their podcasts and given that this government hasn't met a Donald Trump idea they didn't like, from privatized, for-profit health care to Republican-style gerrymandering to endlessly breaking the norms of our democracy until they break, Mr. Speaker, how can anyone trust that after everything this UCP government has done in their policy to steal the rights of workers, this Premier won't cave to radical members of the UCP and move to gut Alberta unions?

Mr. Schow: There you go, Mr. Speaker. You just heard it again: more insults for the voter base of the government side of the House. But I can tell you that if you want to talk about trusting records, our record on job creation, balancing the budget, and affordability is very clear. We have multiple consecutive balanced budgets, hundreds of thousands of new jobs created right here in Alberta as a result of record investment in the . . . [interjections]

The Speaker: Order. When you're louder than the person with the microphone, that's a problem.

Go ahead.

Mr. Schow: Mr. Speaker, clearly, the Leader of the Opposition needs the microphone no matter who's around him. He doesn't let anyone else in his caucus speak. We've seen this as recently as yesterday's press conference. But on this side of the House we're focused on jobs.

The Speaker: The next question . . . [interjections] Order.

The next question belongs to the hon. Member for Camrose.

Support for Ethnocultural Communities

Ms Lovely: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Alberta is home to people from many different communities. [interjections]

The Speaker: Order. You know, what we're not going to do is make comments at times when you know it's inappropriate. We won't stand for it. Unless you want about 16 apologies all at once, that's got to stop right now.

The hon. Member for Camrose.

Ms Lovely: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Alberta is home to people from many different communities, cultures, ethnicities, and walks of life, but what we all have in common is that for one reason or another we have chosen to call Alberta home. Our province is stronger because of the contributions, experiences, and perspectives that people from different backgrounds bring to this community. To the Associate Minister of Multiculturalism: what is our government doing to recognize and highlight the contributions and impact of Alberta's ethnocultural communities in our province?

10:40

The Speaker: The hon. Associate Minister of Multiculturalism.

Mr. Yaseen: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Albertans born outside of Canada make important contributions to our communities, economy, and culture. People come to Alberta from around the world seeking opportunity and a place to build a future, and we are happy to recognize and celebrate their contributions. That's why in 2022 our government created the Alberta immigrant impact awards. These awards recognize immigrants who make a difference in their communities and professions, including those who have called Alberta home for many years. Every nominee and recipient has helped make Alberta a stronger place.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Ms Lovely: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the minister. Given that ethnocultural communities take great pride in preserving their heritage and sharing it with others and further given that cultural festivals and performances to community gatherings – these events help bring Albertans together and build a greater appreciation for one another. To the associate minister: what supports does our government have in place to help ethnocultural organizations celebrate their traditions, preserve their heritage, and share their cultures with fellow Albertans?

The Speaker: The minister.

Mr. Yaseen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our government values the many cultures that make our province. We recognize the importance of communities celebrating their traditions and sharing their heritage. That's why we support community-led projects through our ethnocultural and antiracism programs. In 2025-2026 we provided $4.5 million to 251 community-led projects to celebrate and share their culture and heritage with fellow Albertans.

Ms Lovely: Mr. Speaker, given that recognizing and celebrating our diverse communities is important but so is ensuring their voices are heard and further given that it is important that our government continues to encourage these groups, understand their perspectives, and ensure they have opportunities to contribute to decisions that affect them, to the associate minister: how is our government working directly with ethnocultural communities to understand their concerns, strengthen relationships, and ensure their perspectives are reflected in our work?

The Speaker: The hon. associate minister.

Mr. Yaseen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our government wants to make sure that ethnocultural communities are heard and have a voice in the work we do. That's why we have the Premier's Council on Multiculturalism, which provides advice to government on ways to support and promote cultural diversity across Alberta. The council members reflect Alberta's diverse communities. They engage with individuals and organizations across Alberta to better understand their needs, experiences, and concerns.

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

Private Health Services Delivery
(continued)

Mr. Haji: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In 2022 Albertans saw what happened when this government privatized lab services through DynaLife, which wasted more than $100 million while delivering far worse outcomes. Since then the government has passed four bills to increasingly privatize health care without ever seeking a mandate from Albertans. This weekend the UCP will be voting to support a fully private health care system to make you pay to see a doctor or get the care that you need. Will the Premier be introducing a fully private health care system as a government policy after her party adopts this resolution?

The Speaker: The hon. Government House Leader.

Mr. Schow: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There was nothing in that question about government policy, but I am happy to tell you what our policy is on this side of the House, and it's focusing on creating jobs, affordability for Albertans, and, of course, balancing the budget. Because of that focus, we have seen over 300,000 new jobs created in this province, jobs in things like the trades, something the members opposite continue to insult. On this side of the House we will work with the tradespeople, get more of them in the industry. A trades ticket is so important as we build this province.

Mr. Haji: Given that the focus that the minister is talking about is payments to private operators that have tripled since the UCP government came to office but outcomes haven't improved for patients, Mr. Speaker, given that hospitals are underfunded while private surgery facility investments have gone up by more than 60 per cent and given that cancer patients are suffering from dangerously long waits while the UCP welcomes privatization, will the UCP government be rolling out a fully private system, especially since they are divesting in hospital and continuing care bed investments?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister for Hospital and Surgical Health Services.

Member LaGrange: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and nothing that was just said was accurate. In fact, we are emulating European countries that, in fact, have a very strong public health system but do have a private component. They get better results than we do, but we're on track to get better results. CIHI data has shown that we are leading the country, in fact, in doing surgeries. We are up 15 per cent since when the members opposite were in power. I can say that since the NDP were in power we have increased . . .

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

Mr. Haji: Given that the American medical association doesn't develop the European health care system and given that this government has already passed four bills that expand the role of private delivery, private insurers, private operators in Alberta's health care system and given that these changes were never put before Albertans during the election campaign or during the late failed referendum, if the Premier is so confident Albertans support further health care privatization, why is she taking direction from the UCP convention floor instead of seeking that mandate directly from Albertans?

The Speaker: That was not a question of government policy, but if the Minister of Primary and Preventative Health Services wants to comment, he may.

Mr. Wright: Mr. Speaker, Bill 39 takes steps to actually close gaps that were allowed to exist under the NDP. A program that was in place since 2011 saw privately paid services being taken out of the public purse through Alberta Precision Laboratories. That side of this Chamber has voted against Bill 39 every step of the way, and Bill 39 has provisions that close that loophole. Shame on the members opposite. We're protecting public health care on this side. Full stop. [interjections]

The Speaker: Order. Good to hear people in a good mood, but we still have to have order. Edmonton . . . [interjections] Order.

Edmonton-Rutherford has the floor.

UCP AGM Resolution on Land Acknowledgements

Member Calahoo Stonehouse: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The UCP government seems to think they live in a world where Indigenous rights don't exist. They've restricted our treaty flags from being flown at Alberta schools. They gave the separatists a $200 million referendum and fought First Nations in court trying to stop it. They even removed all mention of First Nations and Métis peoples from the Premier's Alberta Day message. Now the UCP will be voting at their convention to ban land acknowledgements. Will this government follow this as their next steps to silence Indigenous voices?

The Speaker: A question about a political party meeting that has not yet occurred is not about government policy, but if the government wants to comment, they can.

Mr. Schow: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I'm excited to attend our convention this weekend, which will see over 7,000 attendees from across this province gathered together to talk about the important issues that matter to them. They will not be silenced, unlike the members opposite who require you to have an equity card before you can stand at a microphone. On this side of the House I am happy to stand by our record, one of which is about balanced budgets, protecting the birthright of this province, and making sure that we have strong fiscal books going forward.

Member Calahoo Stonehouse: Well, Mr. Speaker, given that this is the first Premier in Alberta's history to face a nonconfidence vote from treaties 6, 7, and 8 chiefs and given that this government has no respect for treaties, for inherent rights, for our land, for our water, for the eastern slopes, which they continue to sell out to foreign billionaires, and given that this government has already railroaded Indigenous rights, will this Premier for once respect the treaty relationship and rule out the ban on Indigenous land acknowledgements, even if this ridiculous resolution passes?

Mr. Schow: Mr. Speaker, if the members opposite were paying attention, they would know that the Premier does not dictate what goes onto the floor of the convention centre, but what we do in this Chamber is work on the agenda of the government, and that is jobs, affordability, and a balanced budget. Today, thanks to the tireless work of consecutive Finance ministers and the one sitting right to my left, I can tell you that we're going to have another balanced budget, Mr. Speaker, something the members opposite failed to do; rather, run consecutive deficits, driving Alberta into the ground. We're here to fix it. [interjections]

10:50

The Speaker: Order.

Member Calahoo Stonehouse: Well, Mr. Speaker, given that this UCP government is obsessed with controlling the speech of anyone who doesn't agree with them – they trampled on our treaties for their separatist friends and wealthy insiders – and given that this UCP resolution claims that acknowledging our treaty relation is somehow "unnecessarily humiliating" and given that Grand Chief Joey Pete states that this "is an act of aggression," does the Premier think that this is humiliating to acknowledge First Nations and Métis history?

Mr. Schow: Mr. Speaker, I will say that the members opposite are right. We are obsessed, absolutely obsessed with job creation. We're obsessed with balancing budgets. We're obsessed with affordability. It's why we've taken measures like cutting the gas tax, saving Albertans 13 cents per litre at the pump, giving Albertans the lowest gas prices in the country. We've also gone ahead and lowered the taxes on the first $50,000 of income, making sure Albertans know they keep more money; $3,500 more per year is kept in the pockets of Albertans than anywhere else in this country because we're focused on affordability.

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

Ponoka Hospital and Care Centre Helipad

Mrs. Johnson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Recently I attended the ribbon cutting for the new helipad at the Ponoka hospital and care centre built through community fundraising and partnership with Alberta Health Services. Since the previous helipad closed in 2019, patients needing air transport have had to go through ground ambulance to the airport, a transfer that added an average of eight minutes per transfer alone in 2026. Can the Minister of Hospital and Surgical Health Services explain how this new helipad will improve emergency care for Ponoka and for surrounding communities?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Hospital and Surgical Health Services.

Member LaGrange: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the residents of Ponoka and area for their hard work and dedication. Without their contribution none of this would have been possible. This new helipad will give an average of eight minutes back to critically injured patients. That eight minutes can make all the difference to the paramedics performing CPR, the ER doctors that are stabilizing the patients, or the family waiting outside the trauma bay for an update on their loved one. This is a great-news story for Ponoka and area, and I hope there are many more to come.

The Speaker: Hon. member, the question shouldn't be about any internal party matters. Go ahead.

Mrs. Johnson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and to the minister for that great answer. Given that in a medical emergency every minute matters and that the helipad now returns those eight minutes to patients who need urgent air transport and further given that Alberta Health Services was a partner in this project, can the same minister describe what role AHS played in supporting the helipad and in making sure it meets current Transport Canada requirements?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Hospital and Surgical Health Services.

Member LaGrange: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for the question. AHS supported the operational and facility requirements associated with the helipad replacement. However, the replacement itself was advanced by the Ponoka & District Health Foundation and the residents of the community. The necessary Transport Canada requirements were addressed through the design and construction phase. That is what happens when foundations and health care work together for the betterment of the community. It's just such a great-news story.

The Speaker: Lacombe-Ponoka.

Mrs. Johnson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and again to the minister for that great answer. Given that rural Albertans depend on timely access to emergency care and that Ponoka's helipad was built through the generosity of local donors like Eagle Builders and other businesses and service groups and further given that other communities may want to strengthen their own emergency transport options, can the same minister explain how our government is supporting rural hospitals across the province to maintain and strengthen emergency air transport?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Member LaGrange: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We're proud to say that in '25-26 Alberta's air ambulance system completed over 11,000 missions. Throughout these 11,000 missions our government worked to provide funding and resources so that our emergency medical professionals could provide the best care possible. In fact, our latest budget provides over $800 million for EMS services right across the province, including maintaining and operating helipad services. This will ensure that in our province, as large as it is, every corner has the care necessary when an emergency strikes.

Labour Protections

Ms Wright: Mr. Speaker, this weekend UCP members will debate a resolution that would import U.S.-style anti-union policies into Alberta to strip people of their union rights.

The Speaker: Hon. member, I'm going to give you a fresh 35. Several people have been reminded not to make reference to internal party matters. The *House of Commons Procedure and Practice* on page 423 makes reference to why this is a bad idea. You've got a fresh 35. Let's do better.

Ms Wright: Alberta's workers know that that means weaker unions, less bargaining power, and more erosion of their benefits like pensions. With this government's history of turning outside priorities into government policy, workers have every reason to be concerned about this government's policies. Is this government preparing to roll and import American-style union-busting policies into Alberta government policy?

Mr. Schow: Mr. Speaker, full credit to the member for adapting those notes on the fly. What I can tell you is that the only people bringing in American-style anything are the members opposite who went and hired Mamdani's campaign team to run their operation because apparently there are no socialists or lefties in the country who can run their campaign well enough. On this side of the House we are protecting the trades. We have multiple tradespeople in this caucus, including the Minister of Children and Family Services, Minister of Assisted Living and Social Services, and the Minister of Mental Health and Addiction. We understand the importance of the trades. They are building this province.

Ms Wright: Given that unions are the reason Alberta's workers have safer workplaces, better wages, and protections against unfair treatment; given that U.S. anti-union laws are designed to weaken workers' bargaining power; given that this UCP government is no stranger to revoking workers' bargaining rights altogether, as demonstrated by their use of the notwithstanding clause and given Albertans are worried about affordability and stagnant wages, will the minister rule out implementing these antiworker policies once and for all?

Mr. Schow: Mr. Speaker, the member is right. Union workers are worried about affordability, and the most effective way to manage that is to have continual work in this province for our tradespeople, which is why we continue to attract investment with major projects like the new De Havilland water bomber facility in Wheatland county. That's how we keep the trades working. I meet with them all the time. They want to keep working. That's their number one job, and that's my number one job.

Ms Wright: Given, Mr. Speaker, that last year this UCP government took away the rights of 50,000 teachers, given that Albertans want a government focused on lowering costs, strengthening public services, and raising living standards, and given that the UCP government continues to fight baseless culture wars and indulge in conversations that would serve their partisan base rather than the concerns of most

Albertans, will the UCP government rule out these anti-union policies and speak out against them?

Mr. Schow: Mr. Speaker, speaking about focus, it wasn't that long ago I stood at a podium for the CAE Alberta training for excellence in Calgary, where they're going to train thousands of aviation workers right here in this province. That's one example of what I'm focused on, attracting businesses coming from out of Alberta, calling Alberta home, and hiring thousands of people to work in industries across this incredible province. That is what we are focused on: jobs, affordability, and balancing a budget, and we are winning.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Livingston-McLeod.

Oil Sands Emissions Reduction

Mrs. Petrovic: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The NDP's emission cap was simply anti-energy ideology masquerading as environmental policy. The opposition targeted the province's most important industry and left Albertan workers with uncertainty. It threatened jobs, discouraged investment, and remained in place for years despite never being implemented or delivering any environmental benefits. To the Minister of Environment and Protected Areas: why is it so important to repeal this failed NDP policy and restore certainty to Alberta's energy sector?

11:00

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

Mr. Hunter: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for this important question. The reason we are removing the NDP's oil sands emissions cap is simple. It is redundant, outdated, and has never been used. Had it been implemented, it would have failed to deliver meaningful emissions reductions while creating significant economic harm for Alberta's energy sector, threatening investment, production, and jobs. Our government believes in cutting unnecessary red tape, not adding to it. We're removing this ineffective policy to ensure it cannot be imposed on Albertans in the future, protecting our energy sector and all the workers.

The Speaker: The member.

Mrs. Petrovic: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker and to the minister. Given that the NDP's oil sands emission cap was never implemented despite being passed into law in 2016 and given that rather than focusing on virtue signalling, Alberta's energy producers were achieving tangible results by reducing emissions and creating jobs and further given that our government is committed to clear and effective regulation, to the same minister: how are oil sands emissions currently regulated in Alberta, and how will Bill 42 simplify the province's regulatory framework?

Mr. Hunter: Mr. Speaker, Alberta's oil sands facilities and emissions are already regulated through the TIER program, and TIER is delivering real results. Rather than simply collecting industrial carbon tax revenue and putting it into general revenues, our government is reinvesting those funds into partnerships with industry and innovators to develop emissions reductions technologies that create jobs and send those jobs and that technology all throughout the world. The results speak for themselves. Since 2012 oil sands emissions intensity has declined by 28 per cent.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Livingstone-Macleod.

Mrs. Petrovic: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that Alberta oil sands producers have lowered emission intensity while growing production, accomplishing what the NDP's ideological policies failed to do, and given that the NDP spent years undermining Alberta's energy sector with job-killing policies and absurd caps that eroded investor confidence, to the same minister: why is our government choosing a practical, results-based approach to emissions reduction instead of arbitrary caps that hurt Alberta workers?

Mr. Hunter: Mr. Speaker, while we were able to decrease the emissions intensity by 28 per cent, I want to remind Albertans and the opposition that we were also able to increase, by 105 per cent, production at that same time. Through TIER and Emissions Reduction Alberta we are delivering exactly that: 62 per cent methane reduction, projected to 28 million tonnes of emissions reduction by 2030; 51,000 jobs created; $8 billion in GDP growth; and more than $100 million in exports through partners' companies. This is what the . . .

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

Government Priorities

Member Boparai: Mr. Speaker, it will be quite a showdown at the UCP convention this weekend, and we know that after it could be reflected in government policy. [interjections]

The Speaker: Hon. member, you get a fresh 35. Try again.

Member Boparai: The main event squares off the pretend federalist Premier against the separatists she spent months appeasing. Now, after wasting millions of government dollars on a separation referendum that Albertans did not want, the Premier is forcing her own separatist membership to flip-flop on the principles they all once shared. Will the Premier stop wasting money on her party's own internal separatist divisions and start focusing on making life better for Albertans?

The Speaker: That had nothing to do with government policy, but feel free to comment.

Mr. Schow: Mr. Speaker, that question had nothing to do with anything. That might be one of the silliest questions I have heard in this Chamber. I mean, we are elected in this Assembly to represent our constituents. October 19 passed with a resounding mandate to stay in Canada, which we supported and voted for. What is that member talking about? I'm just going to say, Mr. Speaker, through you to that member: do better. It's pathetic.

The Speaker: I'll remind the Government House Leader, who knows better than anybody, that you need to go through the chair. [interjection] No. No. That was pretty debatable whether that was through the chair or a direct comment.

A point of order or no?

Ms Gray: Yeah.

The Speaker: Yeah. A point of order is noted at 11:04.

Member Boparai: Given that the government needs to do better, Albertans rejected the Premier's pointless and expensive separatist referendum in record numbers. Given that Albertans never asked for and did not want it in the first place and given that this government never even ran on the idea of a separation referendum in the last election because they knew they would have lost doing so, will a single member opposite admit that this government puts staying in power ahead of the people of Alberta?

Mr. Schow: Mr. Speaker, when I was in university, I took a job as a lifeguard, and they taught us how to recognize signs of actual drowning. I'm seeing it on the opposition side. Right now we are focused on the things that matter most to Albertans. That is jobs, that is affordability, and that is a balanced budget. That dog's breakfast of a question made absolutely no sense and was borderline unnecessary and, frankly, out of order in this Chamber. Through you, Mr. Speaker, to the member: do better.

Member Boparai: Given that this government is drowning and has tabled new legislation that makes it nearly impossible for Conservative voters unwilling to pledge allegiance to the Premier from forming an alternative party, given that this Premier is forcing her own membership to sign loyalty pledges or risk being kicked out of the party, given that at least 15 riding presidents have refused, calling it a restriction on free speech, is this grassroots democracy in action, and is this government rewriting the law to stop its own party from breaking apart? [interjections]

The Speaker: I love the joy in here, but let's hear from the Government House Leader, please.

Mr. Schow: Mr. Speaker, I'm glad to see the members opposite waving the Order Paper, embracing the traditions of the Mother Parliament. Sadly, that question did nothing of the sort. On this side of the House we will continue to be focused on things like jobs and affordability and a balanced budget while the members opposite will continue to answer to their boss, Avi Lewis, who wants to shut down the oil sands in our province, destroy one of our most important sectors hiring thousands of – what? – tradespeople, that they insult on a regular basis, paying the bills of the rest of this country. [interjections]

The Speaker: I hardly need a fan today.

Vaccination Policies

Member Batten: This flu season started unusually early, and it's placing heavy pressure on our already strained emergency rooms and hospitals. We've already recorded about 3,700 cases of influenza and over 800 hospitalizations. The best preventative tool that we have is vaccination, that helps prevent serious illness for Albertans. But the UCP collective wants to debate limiting vaccines again. Will the government be adopting an even more antivaccine policy, aligning themselves with their, well, collective?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Primary and Preventative Health . . .

Mr. Sabir: Private.

The Speaker: Order. I didn't even get the introduction done.

The Minister of Primary and Preventative Health Services.

An Hon. Member: Private health care.

The Speaker: Order. One more time.

The hon. minister of private . . . [interjections] Primary. Joke's on me. Fair enough. You had that coming. But we're still going to do a proper introduction for the Minister of Primary and Preventative Health Services.

Mr. Wright: Mr. Speaker, we are putting Albertans in the driver's seat of their own health care. Vaccinations are available across the province, and we encourage every Albertan to make the decision that's best for their vaccination and health needs. We have 1,800 community pharmacies that are administering vaccinations, and we encourage all Albertans to get the vaccination that is right for them.

The Speaker: My apologies for botching your title, Minister.

Member Batten: Given that our hospitals became overcrowded with patients suffering with influenza and respiratory illnesses and given that most Albertans and all health experts, well, outside of the UCP's failed candidates, know that vaccination is one of the safest ways that Albertans can stay healthy and reduce pressure on our public health care system and given that this government has failed to achieve higher vaccination rates despite years of warning, will the minister commit today to a province-wide vaccination campaign led by public health?

11:10

The Speaker: The minister.

Mr. Wright: Mr. Speaker, thank you so much for the opportunity to address that question. Again, we are putting Albertans at the heart of health care, making sure that they have the ability to go and get a vaccination at any of the public health clinics as well as local community pharmacies. It is ensuring that we have the right response. In fact, we pivoted ahead from the October 19 start of the influenza season to ensure that Albertans could get the respiratory vaccination earlier. We pivoted much faster than any other province in the country.

Member Batten: Given that public health experts have warned this government for years that lower vaccination rates lead to preventative illnesses, fewer hospitalizations, and reduced pressure on our strained public health care system but given that as of about mid-November only 1 in 8 Albertans have received the flu shot and given that antivaccine rhetoric from the UCP community risks further vaccine hesitancy and the questioning of the science of safe, effective vaccines, will the minister reject this policy, condemn it, and speak in favour of getting vaccinated today?

Mr. Wright: Mr. Speaker, on this side of the aisle we believe Albertans should be in the driver's seat of their health care. If they feel they should go and get a vaccine that's right for them, they should do so, unlike the members opposite, who have been on record before that they would take an authoritarian approach and go door to door for immunization. On this side of the aisle we don't believe that. We put Albertans first, and that's what we will continue to do.

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

We are now at points of order. The one from 11:04 was withdrawn, so there are none today. Thank you, members from both sides.

Orders of the Day

Government Motions

The Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Justice.

Good-Faith Religious Opinion Defence Repeal

49. Mr. Amery moved:
Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly approve pursuant to section 3 of the Alberta Sovereignty Within a United Canada Act the following motion:
1. The Legislative Assembly is of the view that
(a) the Alberta Bill of Rights guarantees the right of every Albertan to freedom of speech and expression and freedom of religion, reflecting that Alberta's free and

democratic society is founded on principles fostered by tradition that honour and respect fundamental freedoms,

(b) the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (Charter) guarantees the fundamental freedoms of conscience and religion and of thought, belief, opinion, and expression,

(c) freedom of speech and expression are indispensable to a free and democratic society and ensure that individuals are free to express opinions, including those relating to educational, religious, or political topics,

(d) freedom of religion ensures that individuals are free from unjustifiable interference with beliefs, expression, and practices fundamental to human dignity,

(e) in R. versus Keegstra, Justice McLachlin, as she then was, issued a dissenting opinion holding that section 319(2) of the Criminal Code, which creates the offence of wilful promotion of hatred, limits the right to freedom of expression protected by section 2(b) of the Charter in a manner that is not demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society,

(f) in her dissenting opinion in R. versus Keegstra, Justice McLachlin observed that section 319(2) of the Criminal Code had "provoked many questionable actions on the part of the authorities" and noted that the provision "may have a chilling effect on legitimate activities important to our society by subjecting innocent persons to constraints born out of a fear of the criminal process,"

(g) the government of Canada has, through An Act to Amend the Criminal Code (Hate Propaganda, Hate Crime and Access to Religious or Cultural Places), SC 2026, c. 15 (Combatting Hate Act), amended the Criminal Code to, among other things, create new criminal offences for hate-motivated conduct and define "hatred" for the purposes of Criminal Code offences,

(h) the Combatting Hate Act repeals sections 319(3)(b) and 319(3.1)(b) of the Criminal Code, which provided a defence to offences under sections 319(2) and 319(2.1) and applied when the accused, in good faith, expressed or attempted to establish by an argument an opinion on a religious subject or an opinion based on a belief in a religious text, commonly referred to as the "good faith religious opinion" defence (the good-faith religious opinion defence),

(i) the repeal of the good-faith religious opinion defence is anticipated to cause harm to Albertans by unjustifiably restricting freedom of religion and freedom of speech and expression and by exposing expressive activity and religious beliefs and activity to potential criminal sanction,

(j) every Albertan must always be free to read and quote from sacred religious texts such as the Bible, Torah, and Quran without fear of state persecution,

(k) on August 10, 2026, the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Services issued guidance to Alberta law enforcement agencies indicating that Alberta's government does not condone hate speech or violence, but the government's priority continues to be stopping violent crime, not criminalizing lawful opinions or expression that merely offends,

(l) on September 1, 2026, the Attorney General issued a directive to the Alberta Crown prosecution service on hate crimes, stating that

(i) the values associated with freedom of expression should be given significant weight in assessing the public interest associated with a prosecution;

(ii) individuals must be free to express opinions on topics that are, by their very nature, fundamental to our democracy such as opinions related to religious beliefs and political convictions;

(iii) prosecutions should not be pursued simply for expressing controversial, provocative, or unpopular political or religious beliefs; and

(iv) prosecutors must seek the personal consent of the Attorney General in order to proceed with charges under the following provisions of the Criminal Code, in recognition of the significant public interest considerations raised by criminal offences relating to expressive activity: section 318 (advocating genocide), section 319(2) (wilful promotion of hatred), section 319(2.1) (wilful promotion of antisemitism) and section 319(2.2) (wilful promotion of hatred – terrorism and hate symbols),

(m) inaccurate public communications by provincial entities or the federal government can misinform Albertans about their rights to freedom of expression and freedom of religion, leading to a chilling effect on speech, and

(n) the government is committed to ensuring that the freedom of speech and expression of Albertans is not unreasonably or unjustifiably restricted.

2. The Legislative Assembly is of the opinion that the repeal of the good-faith religious opinion defence will cause or is anticipated to cause harm to Albertans by

(a) unjustifiably interfering with the right to freedom of speech and expression of Albertans,

(b) unjustifiably interfering with the right to freedom of religion of Albertans, and

(c) unjustifiably criminalizing expressive activity and religious beliefs and activity.

And be it further resolved that the Legislative Assembly urge the Lieutenant Governor in Council to consider the following responses to the repeal of the good-faith religious opinion defence:

(a) direct any member of Executive Council to take any necessary measures consistent with the law to oppose the repeal of the good-faith religious opinion defence,

(b) direct any member of Executive Council to take any necessary measures consistent with the law to ensure that the Combatting Hate Act does not violate Albertans' rights to freedom of speech, freedom of expression, or freedom of

religion or create a chilling effect on political or religious communications,
(c) direct any member of Executive Council to take any necessary measures consistent with the law to ensure that every Albertan is free to read and quote from sacred religious texts,
(d) direct the President of Executive Council to require communications and public engagement to undertake a public education campaign for Albertans on their rights to freedom of speech, freedom of expression, and freedom of religion in order to counter the chilling effect on expression that may be created by inaccurate statements about the scope of criminal offences, and
(e) take all reasonable steps consistent with the law to meaningfully address crime through measures that protect public safety without interfering with the rights and freedoms of Albertans.

Mr. Amery: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise today to introduce and move Government Motion 49.

Now, Mr. Speaker, you'll see that the motion is quite lengthy. It appears on our Order Paper, and I'd like to refer to it from time to time. With your approval, I will not read it into the record. Is that okay?

The Speaker: Does anybody object to the minister not reading the full motion? I hear no objections.

Then go ahead, Minister.

Mr. Amery: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to members of the Assembly. We're introducing this motion under the Alberta Sovereignty Within a United Canada Act because no Albertan should have to choose between openly practising their faith and fearing the power and prosecution of the state. Freedom of religion and freedom of expression are two of the most fundamental rights that Canadians enjoy and that Albertans hold close, guaranteed in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. They are fundamental rights, and they are incredibly important to all of us. They allow us to speak openly. They allow us to debate difficult issues, to practise our faith, and to express beliefs that sometimes might be controversial, unpopular, or disputed. That is the wonderful thing that we have here, the ability to debate and to disagree with one another without fearing arrest or prosecution. Mr. Speaker, those freedoms matter most when we have disagreement. That's why Alberta is taking a stand against the federal government's decision to remove the good-faith religious opinion defence from the Criminal Code in Bill C-9.

[The Deputy Speaker in the chair]

Now, let me be absolutely clear, Madam Speaker. The long-standing protection that has been in the Criminal Code has existed for many years for a reason. Canadians should not have a long-standing safeguard for lawful religious expression stripped away by the federal government, and Alberta will stand up to defend it.

Now, let's talk for a moment about what's at stake. A pastor delivering a sermon should not have to look over his shoulder. An imam should never have to second-guess a passage from the Quran. A rabbi should never be afraid to quote the Torah, and no religious leader should ever fear that quoting scripture risks arrest.

Now, I think above all, Madam Speaker, that Albertans should not have to wonder whether explaining a sincerely held religious belief could get them in criminal trouble. When people begin to fear that openly talking about their faith could expose them to criminal prosecution, some may decide that it's not safe to speak at all. That's the chilling effect that we are concerned about in this Assembly, and that's why Alberta has a responsibility to act.

I want to address something very important that I think all members of the Assembly need to know. Introducing this motion does not weaken our commitment to protecting Albertans from hate. As a matter of fact, Madam Speaker, the opinion exemption for good-faith religious expression has existed for a very long time. This motion seeks to protect and preserve it, but this motion will never weaken our commitment to protecting Albertans from hate. That is not true.

Freedom of religion and expression is not a licence for violence. It's not a licence for threats. It will never be a licence for intimidation nor criminal hatred. There is no place in this province for organized intimidation, attacks, violence, or any type of illegal act or behaviour at a faith community or at any other community. Those crimes will continue to be investigated, and those crimes will continue to be prosecuted, and everyone in this province is expected to comply with the Criminal Code.

But there's an important distinction, Madam Speaker, between complying with the Criminal Code and a belief that someone finds controversial, provocative, or even sometimes offensive. Our justice system must be capable of recognizing the difference between those two, and Alberta has taken steps to reinforce it. In August the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Services told law enforcement that our priorities here in this province continue to be stopping crime and not policing opinions. In September I issued guidance to the Alberta Crown prosecution service to give significant weight to freedom of expression and not pursue charges simply because someone expresses a controversial opinion or an unpopular political belief.

Madam Speaker, I've said it before; I'll say it again. The simplest way of expressing our desire to support this motion is that we will not prosecute nor police opinions in this province. The motion itself asks government to consider lawful measures in response to the federal government's repeal of the good-faith religious opinion defence. It seeks to ensure that Albertans can read and quote sacred texts without fearing prosecution, and it asks government to take reasonable steps to address crime and public safety while respecting the rights and freedoms of Albertans.

Those objectives are not in conflict. Those objectives are not in disagreement. Protecting communities from criminal conduct and protecting lawful expression, in fact, go hand in hand. You do not have to share someone's religious faith to defend their freedom to practise it. You do not have to agree with a religious teaching to defend somebody's right to peacefully discuss it, and you certainly, Madam Speaker, do not have to agree with everything somebody says, whether it's religious or political, to recognize that controversial or unpopular opinions can still be lawful expression. That's the principle at the heart of this motion. Alberta will protect people, always, from hate and violence. Alberta will protect freedom of religion and expression. Alberta will stand up for the fundamental freedoms that Canadians are entitled to and enjoy, and we will stand up whenever they are threatened.

That's what this motion represents. That's why I'm proud to bring it forward. I urge every member in this House to support it. Madam Speaker, again, I rise to move Government Motion 49.

Thank you.

11:20

The Deputy Speaker: Are there others who wish to participate in the debate on Government Motion 49? Seeing the hon. Member for Bonnyville-Cold Lake-St. Paul.

Mr. Cyr: Well, thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise today to speak in strong support of the motion introduced under the Alberta Sovereignty Within a United Canada Act to protect freedom of speech and religion.

Madam Speaker, there are some principles that sit at the foundation of a free society: that right to free speech, the right to vote, the right to live out your faith without fear. These are not privileges handed down by governments. They are foundational freedoms, and Alberta's government will always stand with them and fight for them when necessary. That is why we have introduced this motion in response to the federal government's Combatting Hate Act, and our message to Ottawa is clear. Alberta will always defend the foundational freedoms of Albertans. Stop. I will say that again. Alberta will always defend the foundational freedoms of Albertans.

Albertans should not have to fear criminal prosecutions for simply expressing sincerely held religious beliefs in good faith. Think of the people in our province who are religious and hold their beliefs near and dear to their hearts. This can look like a pastor preparing a sermon or a parent teaching their child the faith that they were raised in. These are ordinary Albertans doing what free and just people do. They're not committing crimes, yet removing the defence that protects this kind of good-faith expression creates unnecessary uncertainty, and there are underlying consequences to this.

When the line between lawful religious expression and criminal conduct becomes unclear, people naturally become cautious. They hesitate. They stay silent. A pastor may soften a sermon. A parent may avoid a conversation. A person of faith may decide that it is safer not to speak at all. That is what we mean by the chilling effect, Madam Speaker. It does not require anyone to be charged; it only requires people to wonder whether they might be.

A society where people must weigh the risk of prosecution before they express their sincerely held beliefs is a society that has lost something very important. Our government will not accept that. Removing this defence has chilling religious expression consequences, and we are not prepared to stand by while that happens.

As that freedom is lived out, we need to consider that this is not just a long-standing tradition for Alberta but Canada as a whole. In Alberta faith communities run schools, hospitals, shelters, and charities. They feed the hungry, care for the sick, and educate our children. Catholic schools serve families across this province. Faith-based organizations serve Albertans of every background, often quietly, often without recognition. Those works are an expression of a belief, and they depend on the conviction of those who carry them out.

Now, it's important to be clear about what this motion is not. It is not a green light for hate speech or violent acts. Hate propaganda, violence, and other criminal acts will continue to be investigated and prosecuted as appropriate. Nothing in our position is changing that. Albertans expect their police and prosecutors to act when genuine crimes are committed, and they will, Madam Speaker. This distinction is an important one. There is a difference between a crime and an opinion. There is a difference between violence and a belief, and our justice system should be focused on the former, and it should be leaving room for the latter.

Madam Speaker, this motion is not the first step the government has taken on this issue. It builds on work already under way. In August the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Services told Alberta law enforcement that the priority continues to be stopping crime, not policing opinions. That is the right priority. Law enforcement should not be asked to step in over disagreements over belief.

In September the Attorney General provided guidance to the Alberta Crown prosecution service. That guidance asked prosecutors to give significant weight to freedom of expression. It asks them not to pursue charges simply because someone expresses a controversial, provocative, or unpopular political or religious belief or opinion. Taken together, these steps send a consistent message. Our priority is stopping crime. We will not police opinions, and we will protect the rights of Albertans to speak and believe freely.

Madam Speaker, Albertans deserve to know where every party stands on this issue. For us, it's disappointing to see that the opposition has decided not to stand and give their opinion on this matter. When the NDP last formed government, they made it clear that faith-based schools risked losing funding if left-wing ideology was not adopted in these schools. During that 2015 to 2019 period I literally was sitting with Christian independent schools while they were going through the memory verses from our Bible that they were crossing out because they found it offensive. That's absurd that they are going through our most holy text in that way. Communities of faith voiced their concerns loudly, and today we saw them, and every day since, rejected for their ideology that they continue to put forward, that they just have no acceptance of those that have differing opinions.

Today the NDP leader has called this motion culture war garbage, literally called it garbage and dismissed it as a political theatre. This is a clear sign that the NDP stands in stark contrast to this government on this issue, and those who hold deep religious beliefs need to know what side they are on. Madam Speaker, Albertans of faith should not have to wait until the harm happens. Prevention is the point of protection. A party that dismisses this motion as culture war garbage and that has a record I just described has not earned the trust of people of faith. Albertans are entitled to ask whether that party would defend religious freedom if it formed government again. This government will. We have already acted, and we are acting today.

Madam Speaker, Alberta's government will always stand up for Albertans' rights and freedoms. That is what Albertans expect of us. When the federal government raises real concerns about the ability of Albertans to express sincerely held religious beliefs in good faith, it is our responsibility – it is our responsibility – to speak up. We do not do this lightly. We do not do it because freedom of speech and religion is something that is a concept up in the ether. It is important to each and every Canadian and Albertan, and I will say that for my constituency it is one of the most important foundational policies that I would hope a government would want to stand for.

This motion before the House is a clear and direct response. It tells Ottawa where Alberta stands, and it tells Albertans of every faith: no matter where you are, we have your back. Their government will stand up for them even when the NDP opposition walks away from them. It's just sad, Madam Speaker. A free country is not one where we all have to agree; it is one where people can disagree openly and respectfully without fear of the state. It is one where a person of faith can live according to their beliefs and where a person who disagrees can do so openly. This motion protects that kind of discussion in Alberta. It defends the right to speak, the right to believe, and the right of expression for something that we all hold near and dear to our hearts because religion is the foundation of what Canada was built on. At the same time, it makes it clear that hate and propaganda that are clearly directed towards violence and other criminal acts will continue to be investigated and prosecuted.

Madam Speaker, I can't believe that I'm in the House today.

11:30

An Hon. Member: Me either.

Mr. Cyr: They're laughing at me. I can't even believe it. This is so sad, Madam Speaker, that we have an opposition right now that is making jokes about something that is so important to all of us. Canada was built – was built – on faith, and it continues to be a foundational part of our entire country and Alberta.

Thank you. I would hope the opposition votes along with us on this motion.

The Deputy Speaker: Are there others? The hon. Member for Edmonton-City Centre.

Mr. Shepherd: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I appreciate the opportunity to speak to Government Motion 49. Let me be very clear. All of us in the Official Opposition understand and deeply respect religious faiths of all kinds and all Albertans – our friends, our family, our neighbours – for whom it is essential, for many the defining part of their life. Indeed, there are many in our caucus who are people of faith, many different faiths. And while I personally no longer profess a faith, my own values and principles, my reasons for standing here, are deeply informed by the faith that I was raised in.

We should also be very clear today that Albertans already have and enjoy both freedom of religion and freedom of expression, and neither are under threat. The motion that this government has put in front of us today is not grounded in evidence. It is simply the kind of political theatre we have come to expect from the UCP. It's not surprising.

This is a government that insists we must take them in the best of faith, not in the sense of spiritual belief but in the sense of maintaining belief without evidence on the purity of their intent, on many, many things. That their decision to spend more than $90 million in taxpayer money on a referendum campaign that targeted newcomers and immigrants, claimed they were the sole source of issues that we face in our economy, health care, and education, was in no way opportunistic or intended to capitalize on the growing levels of hateful rhetoric we see rising against Albertans, Albertans and Canadians who are or look like or are related to many of the same people they claim they're standing here to defend today. That despite the growing and established web of connections between their government and individuals at the heart of what appears to be the most significant government scandal in the history of Alberta, perhaps Canada, there's nothing to see here. That despite the fact that they've repeatedly demonstrated that their decisions about whose rights, freedoms, or voices they will defend and when they will do so are far more often rooted in political opportunity than any sense of consistent principle. That their government will, as the Member for Bonnyville-Cold Lake-St. Paul just said, quote, defend the foundational rights of Albertans, period, when we have seen them not once, not twice but four times use the notwithstanding clause to override the foundational rights of Albertans. They expect us to take it in good faith that they actually mean what they're saying today. At the same time, they're insisting we must take the provisions in the legislation of the federal government in the worst of faith.

You know, when we as opposition point out the many things that this government is doing that bend and break our laws and our democratic norms and principles, that they are undermining and abusing our democratic institutions, that their actions outstrip those of any previous government in their level of interference and overreach, including overriding the foundational rights of Albertans, well, then they rise and they accuse us of fearmongering, exaggerating, lying to the public for political gain. But no, Madam Speaker; that's what this government is doing on this issue today. There is no police force being assembled to descend on churches, mosques, gurdwaras, or any other place of faith.

Madam Speaker, this is certainly not a government that has any standing to be lecturing any other government about overreach. When we look at what they have done, it is not a government to be lecturing any other about introducing legislation that has vague parameters that cause fear, uncertainty, and unintended consequences. The Premier admitted as much on her radio program last week when she said that, yeah, that's what they do; they rush through legislation written on the back of a napkin with no consultation, no thought or care for who it costs or who it hurts, and it's up to everyday Albertans to have to organize and lobby to get their attention before they'll wake up and do something about it. Half the time it feels like if they have the political capital, well, they'll just let the harm stand anyway.

Again, as we are speaking about authoritarian overreach, Madam Speaker, and this motion in front of us today, let us remember that this is the government that invented the occupation of library inspector, that is placing teachers, health care workers, university instructors, and more in a position where they have to look over their shoulders to see if this government is listening, if their advocacy for students, patients, and others might invite their retaliation. This is a government that is looking over the shoulders of every public body as they work to hire employees. Let me be very clear. That creates a chilling effect for all of those public servants.

The fact is that we are not debating this motion today because this government has any genuine concern about democratic overreach, because they engage in it every day. We're here because this government is once again trying to distract from their own record, from their own failures, their own decisions to pursue policies and actions that targeted and harmed some of the same communities they claim they're standing to defend today. They're doing so by amplifying claims that have no merit, claims that spread fear and misinformation. Albertans of all faiths, Albertans who profess no faith, Albertans of all perspectives and opinions deserve better.

Once again, for all who are watching this debate who may indeed fear due to these claims that have been put forward by others, this misinformation, this fearmongering that has been put out for political gain, let me be very clear to all Albertans of faith. You are not under threat. There is no threat today or tomorrow to freedom of religion and your freedom of expression here in Alberta. We all in this House support Albertans of faith. There are many on both sides of this House who are people of faith, and we stand with Albertans who hold faith, who profess no faith in supporting their freedom of expression and the right to enjoy all of their foundational rights here in this province, and we recognize that so many Albertans are ably and capably doing so with love for their neighbour, as pretty much all faiths profess, with consideration of what actions we take and how they may harm others.

We stand with Albertans of faith, Madam Speaker. I rest my case.

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

Mr. Dyck: Well, thank you, Madam Speaker. I really appreciate the opportunity to rise and speak on this in support of Motion 49, brought forward under the Alberta Sovereignty Within a United Canada Act in response to the federal bill Combatting Hate Act.

Now, Alberta has a rich history of people of faith and those with strong conviction, and many of those people helped build this province into what it is today. The federal government made a distinct change in the law that I think concerns many of us and that should be concerning. They removed the good-faith clause through the federal Combatting Hate Act. This removes a Criminal Code defence for people who express religious beliefs or opinions in good faith. Let's be completely clear. The vast majority of people of faith are people who want to practise their faith peacefully. They're Albertans who work hard to strengthen their communities and our communities across our province. This is something that touches many Albertans' deepest convictions, including mine: our faith, our conscience, our understanding of right and wrong, and our place within our communities.

11:40

No person of faith or someone who holds a strong belief should have to fear a criminal prosecution because they speak about their beliefs and

are expressing these in good faith. Madam Speaker, freedom matters when we have agreed upon these convictions and also protecting views when they are unpopular. It is easy to defend words that we agree with. The harder test is whether we have the ability for peaceful disagreement when someone expresses a conviction that challenges our own ideas. This motion does not require us to agree or disagree with every belief. It requires us to recognize that disagreement alone should not determine whether someone faces criminal prosecution.

Albertans strongly value freedom, and we will continue to make sure that there is ability for people to question, to be able to debate, persuade, and disagree without automatically treating those differences as threats. We do not have to choose between protecting people from hatred and protecting freedom of religion and freedom of expression. We do not have to choose between public safety and freedom of expression. Our responsibility is to defend those objectives together.

The concern before us is whether people can continue these activities in good faith without unnecessary uncertainty about their faith. My friends who are pastors, who are imams, who are rabbis, whether they're teaching from the Bible or teaching from the Torah, or a parent explaining a family tradition: these are very real Albertans in very real situations and real people that hold strong beliefs about their family and about their world. Albertans should not be left guessing whether expressing their beliefs could expose them to criminal prosecution. We are talking about the possibility that someone remains silent out of fear even when their expression is lawful. That is the outcome we should work to prevent.

Madam Speaker, defending this does not mean suggesting that faith and belief places anyone above the law. It does not. Hate, propaganda, violence, and other criminal acts will continue to be investigated and prosecuted as appropriate. That commitment is explicit in the government's position. There is a difference between expressing sincerely held beliefs in good faith and engaging in criminal activity – and this distinction is key – without making sweeping claims that every controversial statement is harmless or every objectionable opinion belongs before a court. We should seek to protect people against criminal wrongdoing and respect lawful expression, recognizing that unpopular beliefs are not, simply because they are unpopular, a reason to pursue criminal charges. These principles should guide our approach regardless of the faith or political perspective involved.

Our government's position has been reflected in guidance to those responsible for public safety and prosecution. In August the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Services told Alberta law enforcement that the priority continues to be stopping crime, not policing opinions. In September the Attorney General provided guidance to the Alberta Crown prosecution service to give significant weight to freedom of expression and not pursue charges simply because someone expresses controversial, provocative, or unpopular political or religious beliefs.

Supporting that purpose does not require us to diminish anyone else's dignity. We should reject the suggestion that respect for religious freedom and respect for our neighbours must somehow compete against each other. It means remembering that a person does not lose their dignity because we disagree with them. It also means recognizing that the protection of freedom carries a responsibility.

As a person of faith I do strongly support this motion. Albertans should not fear criminal prosecution simply for expressing their faith and by doing so in good faith. We will continue to defend this principle while remaining clear about our commitment to investigate and prosecute criminal wrongdoing. This speaks to the focus Albertans should expect. We want enforcement directed at criminal conduct. Our government will always stand up for the fundamental freedoms of Albertans, and this motion reflects that commitment. I urge all members to support this motion.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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

Mrs. Johnson: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Today I rise to speak also in support of protecting one of the most fundamental freedoms we enjoy as Albertans, Canadians, and human beings, and that's the freedom to believe, the freedom to worship, and the freedom to express sincerely held religious convictions without fear. These freedoms are not abstract ideas and at times, thanks to the sacrifices made many years ago, can be taken for granted. These freedoms shape the daily lives of ordinary Albertans. They're freedoms that allow a family to gather at church on Sunday morning. They're also freedoms that allow a mosque to open its doors for prayer. They're freedoms that allow members of a synagogue to pass down traditions that have endured for generations. Regardless of background the freedoms protect everyone, and they give us the ability to feel safe within our distinct houses of worship. That is why Alberta's government has introduced this motion under the Alberta Sovereignty Within a United Canada Act in response to changes made by the federal government's Combatting Hate Act.

Might I add, the name of the federal act is one that will naturally stand out if it receives criticism. Nobody here endorses hate speech or believes in undermining hate crimes, but a long-standing Criminal Code defence was removed. That defence protected individuals who in good faith expressed opinions on religious subjects or beliefs grounded in religious texts. By us standing up against this act, it has nothing to do with disagreeing with the overall concept of combatting hate. The concern raised by this motion is straightforward, and we believe removing that safeguard risks creating uncertainty and could discourage lawful religious expression. This motion isn't about giving anyone permission to threaten, intimidate, or harm others. Hateful propaganda, violence, and criminal acts shall continue to be investigated and prosecuted.

Madam Speaker, the other day the Premier along with the Justice minister spoke with Albertans as to why this motion matters. They stated that the motion is intended to protect lawful political and religious expression and ensure Albertans remain free to read and quote sacred religious texts without fear of prosecution. It was emphasized that people of faith, whether pastors, rabbis, imams, or others, should not fear being monitored, arrested, or prosecuted simply for sharing religious teachings in good faith. That is such a perfect point as to the explanation of why we put this motion forward.

The Premier also made another important point. She said that while we might not always agree with one another's beliefs, it's a responsibility of government to preserve a society where people with different convictions can live together with dignity, security, and mutual respect. I couldn't agree more with that statement because freedom of religion is not only about protecting the beliefs we personally hold. It's about protecting the rights of others to hold beliefs that might be different from our own, and that is a true test of freedom.

Madam Speaker, when we discuss freedom of religion, it's easy to become focused on legislation or court decisions or constitutional language, but behind every discussion about rights and freedoms are real people. I want to share a story about a family in my riding. Several years ago they immigrated to Alberta after fleeing persecution overseas. Like many families who flee persecution, when they arrived here, they had very few possessions. They spoke very little English and were unfamiliar with this new place that they wanted to call home. Before they fled, they had spent their whole lives living in a place where openly practising their faith could put them in danger, but when they arrived in

Alberta, one of the first places they visited was a local place of worship. The people there welcomed them with open arms. They helped them find housing. They connected them with employment supports and helped the kids integrate into the school system.

Most importantly, they gave that family something they had never experienced before. They gave them the confidence to openly practise their faith without fear. The parents could attend religious services. The children could learn about their family's traditions. They could celebrate important holidays openly and proudly. Nobody threatened them, no one persecuted them, and no one told them that they had to hide who they were. Years later those children graduated from Alberta schools. They started businesses, volunteered in their communities, and they're giving back to a new generation of immigrants. That story is repeated countless times across this province. It's the story of many who have come to Alberta seeking opportunity and freedom. What makes Alberta special is not that everyone thinks the same but that people who think differently can still live together, work together, and build a shared future.

History teaches that rights are rarely lost all at once. More often uncertainty creeps in a little bit at a time, over time, and that uncertainty creates a rather chilling effect. As rights erode, public discussion becomes discouraged, participation in faith-based activities weaken, and, ultimately, society becomes less free. That is why Alberta's government has taken steps to ensure freedom of expression remains an important consideration.

Earlier this year Alberta law enforcement was reminded that their priority should be stopping crime, not policing opinions. As well, guidance was provided to the Alberta Crown prosecution service directing prosecutors to give significant weight to freedom of expression and to not pursue charges simply because someone expresses unpopular political or religious beliefs.

We've seen what's going on in the U.K. when a government starts to police the freedom of expression. In a free society people will disagree, sometimes strongly and sometimes even passionately. We see it here in the Chamber, sometimes uncomfortably, but disagreement is not a crime and debate is not a crime and, Madam Speaker, faith is not a crime.

11:50

The answer to disagreement is dialogue. The answer to differing beliefs is discussion, and the answer to controversial ideas is not less freedom but more freedom. Madam Speaker, Alberta has long been a province shaped by people of extraordinary faith. A lot of communities were built around a church, and those pillars of community run food banks, shelters, youth programs, and events because their faith inspires them to serve others. These contributions make Alberta stronger, and they deserve both our appreciation and our protection.

At its heart, this motion is about preserving a province where people remain free to speak openly, worship peacefully, and live according to their conscience. It's about ensuring that lawful religious expression remains protected. It's about defending the principle that fundamental freedoms matter, and it's about sending a clear message that Alberta will continue standing up for the rights of its citizens. Madam Speaker, the strength of Alberta has never come from forcing people to think alike. It comes from our ability to respect one another's differences while remaining united by a shared commitment to freedom and religion.

For these reasons, I'm so very proud to support this motion, and I encourage all members of this Assembly to do the same. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: Are there others that wish to participate in the debate? The hon. Member for Calgary-East.

Mr. Singh: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise today to speak in support of Government Motion 49 under the Alberta Sovereignty Within a United Canada Act to protect freedom of speech and religion. For most Albertans these freedoms are not ideas; they are part of everyday life. In Calgary-East constituents attend a place of worship, discuss religious teachings with their families, disagree with a political idea, or express a belief that another person strongly rejects. In a free society disagreement is not a crime. Criminal law should only come into play when conduct crosses a much more serious line, including threats, violence, or the wilful promotion of hatred.

That distinction matters because the federal government changed the Criminal Code through the Combatting Hate Act. Among other measures, it removed the specific protections that applied when a person in good faith expresses or attempts to establish through argument an opinion on a religious subject or an opinion based on belief in a religious text. The amended law continues to provide protections for lawful expression. It states that religious, political, educational, and scientific statements on matters of public interest are not prohibited when they do not deliberately promote hatred. It also makes clear that a statement does not become unlawful "solely because it discredits, humiliates, hurts or offends." When Parliament removes such a protection, Albertans have a reasonable question. Has the line between law, belief, and criminal hatred become less clear?

Think about someone preparing remarks for a religious service. They may be discussing a teaching that has existed for generations but touches on a subject that is politically or socially controversial today. That person should be able to understand the difference between sincerely discussing a religious belief and deliberately promoting hatred against another group. Those are not the same thing. The former protection gave people a direct way of seeing that distinction in the law. Removing it means more uncertainty. It means greater reliance on the remaining wording of the offence, and where necessary on the courts to decide where the line is, and that is the concern this motion is responding to.

Madam Speaker, this issue matters. Alberta is home to people from many faiths, cultures, and backgrounds. A person may attend a church on Sunday, a mosque on Friday, a gurdwara, a temple, a mandir, or another place of worship. Another Albertan may choose not to practise any religion at all. It requires enough room for people to hold different beliefs while respecting the legal rights and personal safety of those around them. Sometimes those differences will be uncomfortable. A sermon may contain a teaching that someone considers outdated, a political speaker may express an opinion that others find offensive, and a public debate may become heated. In a democracy the normal response should be discussion. People can challenge an argument, explain why they reject it, and make a stronger case for their own. Criminal law should remain focused on conduct that meets the serious legal threshold Parliament has established. Criminal law should remain focused on conduct, not policing opinions. That is why Alberta has taken action within its own areas of responsibility.

In August the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Services told Alberta law enforcement agencies that their priority remains stopping crime, not policing opinions. Then in September Alberta's Attorney General provided guidance to the Alberta Crown prosecution service. Prosecutors were directed to give significant weight to freedom of expression and not to pursue charges simply because a political or religious belief is controversial or unpopular. That does not mean prosecutors should ignore criminal conduct. It reminds them that the freedom of expression remains part of the legal framework they must consider when deciding whether prosecution is appropriate. There are also existing safeguards in the federal Criminal Code. Proceedings of certain hate propaganda

offences cannot begin without the consent of the Attorney General. That requirement reflects the seriousness of bringing criminal proceedings into an area where unlawful hatred and constitutionally protected expressions may sometimes be argued closely together.

Madam Speaker, the motion before us uses the Alberta Sovereignty Within a United Canada Act. It is important to be precise about what that means. The act does not allow Alberta to erase a federal law or ignore the Constitution. It does not give the province authority to direct private citizens or businesses to break federal law. What it provides is a process for this Assembly to identify a federal measure that Alberta believes harms provincial interests, interferes with provincial jurisdiction, or affects the constitutional rights of Albertans. Members can then debate and vote on the resolution while any proposed provincial actions remain subject to legal review to ensure they are lawful and constitutional. That is the framework being used here.

The concern raised by this motion also extends to the good-faith discussion, interpretation, and quotation of a sacred religious text. Religious communities regularly study text written long before the political debates of today. The fact that a religious teaching is controversial cannot by itself determine whether discussing it's criminal. The legal question remains whether the conduct crosses the threshold established by the Criminal Code.

12:00

Madam Speaker, there is another side to the discussion that should not be ignored. The federal Combatting Hate Act also strengthened protections around places of worship and certain community spaces. It created offences involving intimidation intended to prevent someone from assessing a protected location as well as the obstruction of lawful access to those places. No one should be threatened because of their faith, and religious communities should be able to gather safely. At the same time, protecting people from intimidation does not require us to become careless about the legal space for held beliefs to be expressed. One responsibility protects people from criminal conduct directed at them. The other preserves the space people need to discuss ideas and beliefs that may not be universally accepted, and those responsibilities can exist together.

Madam Speaker, Alberta's concern is not simply about whether someone would ultimately be convicted. It is also about how that may happen before a case ever reaches that point. If people become uncertain about whether a lawful religious discussion would bring them into a criminal investigation, some may decide that the safest option is to say less. A person does not need to be convicted for uncertainty in the law to affect their behaviour. That is the chilling effect Alberta has warned about, and it is why clarity matters when law touches expression. People should be able to understand that lawful religious discussion, political disagreement, and controversial opinions are different from the deliberate promotion of hatred. Police can have clear boundaries when deciding what conduct requires investigation while prosecutors must weigh both the evidence before them and the constitutional freedom involved. Any Legislatures also have a responsibility to debate these boundaries openly when changes to the law create real questions.

Madam Speaker, a free society is not one in which every person believes the same thing. It is the one in which people can live beside neighbours whose religious or political views may be very different from their own while knowing that the law protects both their safety and their lawful expression. Protecting people from criminal hatred and preserving space for lawful religious and political expression do not have to be competing goals, and that is why I support this motion. It affirms that Alberta will defend lawful expression without weakening the investigation or prosecution of threats, violence, intimidation, or the deliberate promotion of hatred. Albertans should not have to fear criminal prosecution simply for expressing sincerely held religious beliefs in good faith. At the same time, one shouldn't be permitted to use religion as a shield for genuine criminal conduct, and that is the balance this motion seeks to protect.

For those reasons, I encourage all members of this Assembly to support this motion. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: Are there others who wish to participate in this debate?

Seeing none, I will call the question.

[The voice vote indicated that Government Motion 49 carried]

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 12:05 p.m.]

[Ten minutes having elapsed, the Assembly divided]

[The Speaker in the chair]

For the motion:

Amery	Jones	Sawhney
Armstrong-Homeniuk	LaGrange	Sawyer
Boitchenko	Loewen	Schow
Bouchard	Long	Sinclair
Cyr	Lovely	Singh
de Jonge	Lunty	Stephan
Dreeshen	McDougall	Turton
Dyck	Nally	van Dijken
Ellis	Neudorf	Wiebe
Fir	Nicolaides	Williams
Glubish	Nixon	Wilson
Horner	Petrovic	Wright, J.
Hunter	Pitt	Yao
Jean	Rowswell	Yaseen
Johnson		
Totals:	For – 43	Against – 0

[Government Motion 49 carried]

Government Bills and Orders
Second Reading

Bill 39
Health Statutes Amendment Act, 2026 (No. 2)

[Adjourned debate November 23: Dr. Elmeligi]

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

Mr. Sabir: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to speak to Bill 39 and must mention that it's under time allocation.

[The Deputy Speaker in the chair]

Public health care is important. It's important to all Albertans, and it's an essential part of our Canadian identity. It's a fundamental Canadian value that is rooted in our shared belief in humanity and in human dignity. The way it works is that when one of us gets sick, we as a society come together to look after that neighbour, that person. On this side of the House we believe in public health care, and on the other side they don't. That's the fundamental disagreement between us and the UCP.

Like many other bills in this House, this bill is also paving the way for the creation of a two-tier physician system. Prior to this bill the UCP introduced a number of bills that will weaken our public health care system and its delivery. Bill 55 that was passed in 2025, among many other things, also allowed private entities to operate

over public hospitals and make profit from those funds that should go to front-line care and that should go to looking after those who need medical care. In 2025 as well they introduced Bill 11, which authorized physicians to work in both public and private systems at the same time.

12:20

Earlier In 2026 they introduced Bill 29 that permitted self-referrals and private pay for diagnostic services. With this bill now they're giving the minister authority to expand the private health care market alongside Alberta's existing publicly funded health care delivery system by ministerial order, without any oversight from this Legislature or any other body. In short, this bill just continues with the UCP agenda of further privatization and dismantling of our health care system.

When the Premier got elected, she said that she will fix the health care system in 90 days. That's been over 1,000 days, almost four years, and what we have seen from this government is just further erosion of public health care, dismantling of public health care. The fact remains that people are struggling to find primary health care, they are waiting longer in emergency rooms, they are waiting longer for their needed surgeries. And when I engage with my constituents, like, I do hear heartbreaking stories.

A month ago a member of our community had some heart complications, and he needed a surgery right away. He had to be parked in Peter Loughheed hospital almost for 10 days before he could be taken in for the surgery in Foothills hospital. And they were not sending that person home either because he was at risk of further complications. That's the experience of people in our health care system.

A family member, just last weekend, had some pain for which he had received a date for surgery in February. He experienced some pain. He went to emergency, and he had to be there for 17 hours. Family had to be there for 17 hours. After 17 hours he was told that he can still wait for his scheduled surgery date. So they assessed him after 17 hours and didn't do the procedure because they didn't have the capacity to do that procedure. That's the experience of everyday Albertans in our health system.

It's not that we got here overnight. It's the UCP's policies, their deliberate action or lack thereof. In their bills – like, 55, the other bills I mentioned, and this bill – they're not focused on ensuring access to health care for Albertans; rather they're focused on creating opportunities for their friends and donors, like Sam Mraiche, to see how they can benefit from this health delivery system. That's behind their surgical initiative.

Last time at Public Accounts one of the health ministries was before the Public Accounts, and my colleague the Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar and my other colleagues at the committee questioned ministry officials about surgical initiatives. What we were told at the committee was that only the less complicated, minor surgeries are the ones that are directed towards surgical facilities, these private surgical facilities, while the public health system still has all the major surgeries, all the complicated surgeries, and there were no satisfactory answers that if some complications arise in these surgical facilities, private facilities, where those Albertans, where those patients, will end up. Clearly, they end up in the public system.

Instead of strengthening the public system, instead of creating more capacity in the public system, they're more focused on opportunities for their friends and donors to make profit. That's what this government has been focused on while Albertans continue to struggle to get basic health care. The government brags about direct democracy and all kinds of things. They went for a referendum, and one of the questions was around health care, whether they'll be able to kind of break away from Canada's universal health care and constraints of the Canada Health Act, and Albertans across this province resoundingly said no. Almost 6 out of 10 Albertans told them that they do not want this government to break their public health care; they do not want this government to move away from the constraints of the Canada Health Act. But they do not care what Albertans have to say about their health care.

Many public surveys, which government also references in debate in question period: Albertans continue to rank health care as their number one priority, but still this government continues to have wrong priorities, continues to strengthen their control, cabinet control, over health care decisions which should be better left for health care professionals. This bill is just a continuation of the government policy of having more control on decisions which they do not have expertise, which they often do not know about. They're taking it away from health professionals, health bodies, and continue down the path of breaking Alberta's public health system.

They have hired and fired almost half a dozen CEOs for health care. They have hired and fired Alberta Health Services boards without any accountability. They are embroiled in one of the largest scandals in the history of this province when it comes to health care procurement. A few weeks ago there was news that the RCMP is investigating for fraud, for breach of trust, for money laundering and all kinds of criminal activities. Again, when asked at Public Accounts, the department wasn't forthcoming about that investigation.

[Mr. van Dijken in the chair]

Just that news alone, that one of the departments that Albertans care the most about is under investigation by the RCMP for fraud, breach of trust, and money laundering, should be able to shake this government, but they think this is business as usual. There's nothing to see there. No one is willing to take responsibility despite having four or five health ministers. They will just find ways to duck accountability. They will refuse to take any responsibility and will continue with their agenda of breaking our public health system.

12:30

Albertans deserve far better than this. They deserve far better than their empty promises like the public health guarantee, like the 90-day fixing of the health system. These decisions are life-and-death decisions for many Albertans. Timely care can make a huge difference in the life of Albertans and their health outcomes, but the government thinks that it's okay for people to wait 17 hours in waiting rooms. It's okay for them to go to emergency rooms and find them closed. Many of those facilities are closed in rural Alberta.

I think come next election, Albertans will have that opportunity to elect a better government that believes in public health care, that is focused on public health care. Vote against this bill.

The Acting Speaker: The Member for Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview.

Ms Wright: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm happy to stand in opposition along with my colleagues to this bill, Bill 39, for a number of reasons. I thought I would start my remarks today with a quote that comes from a 1983 address from Tommy Douglas, the greatest Canadian, if I may say so, but certainly also well recognized as the founder of Canada's medical and medicare system, who had some strong words to say at the time. One of the things that he said in that address over 40 years ago was that our job is "to save Medicare from subtle strangulation."

Now, what we're working with right now over the course of this last number of bills – bills 55, 11, and 29, to say nothing of this current Bill 39 – perhaps is not subtle. We absolutely know what's happening in terms of the creeping privatization that's being inflicted upon our public health care system. Nonetheless, it is subtle in a number of ways. Many of the amendments that we see in omnibus bill after

omnibus bill after omnibus bill appear to be, really, nothing of consequence, nothing that one really needs to worry about until, Mr. Speaker, folks dig a wee bit deeper. So I'm hoping to dig a wee bit deeper today.

Certainly, Tommy knew what he was talking about all those years ago. He was prophetic, if I may say. I really do wish that the politicians of that time, the folks who came before Premier Klein perhaps and his government, all those Conservative governments after Conservative governments that told us again and again and again that health care was important and that nothing would happen to health care and that public health care could absolutely – it will be there forever, and you can trust us, and we'll make it better. We'll make sure it works. In fact, we'll even sign a health care guarantee. We had two Premiers, one of which is the sitting Premier, Mr. Speaker, that promised that. In fact, we were promised a 90-day fix. It's now been about 1,490 days, and nothing has been fixed. In fact, I would say that it's been the opposite of fixed.

Bill 39 does not stop that strangulation of health care that Tommy Douglas talked about all those years ago, 40 years ago, and it certainly doesn't stop this government's slow, though sometimes quick, march to a two-tier, American-style health care system.

Quite frankly, what also really does rankle at the moment, Mr. Speaker, is the fact that we're under time allocation and this – as I noted, although it may seem at its face to not contain consequential amendments, they're actually quite consequential. We should be having more time to discuss this. We should be able to add many more Albertans' voices to the discussions which we are having. Albertans deserve more time because, as my colleagues have noted in the past talking about this particular bill, public health care is indeed a fundamental Canadian and Albertan value.

We know that something like over 80 per cent of Albertans actually like the idea of public health care. I can't imagine my life without it. I was lucky enough to be born in a time when public health care was there. My children have known nothing else, nor have my grandchildren, and I hope that that will continue, but I fear with this bill and the bills which preceded it that they will not, that they will be looking, quite frankly, at a health care system that demands they pay first.

We heard it this morning in one of the questions to the Premier, Mr. Speaker, where the answer had something to do with MRIs, and if the MRI shows something, well, then we'll refund you. Well, a refundable option does not mean that Albertans are protected from having to pay. It means that, in fact, Albertans do have to pay.

Who is the person who's going to be deciding whether or not, in fact, that's a refundable option? We talked about this in the debate on Bill 41 as well, that so much of the power and the decision-making lands at the feet of individual ministers in their offices, Mr. Speaker. So much of what we know in terms of what the insurance companies have been doing of late – not just having to do with auto insurance, but also we know in terms of our currently public health insurance program that those conversations have been had. We know that they have.

One does wonder, and I think it's an appropriate thing to wonder and be extraordinarily concerned about, who this government and, whether it's these ministers or ministers that come after them, who exactly it will be that they will be listening to. Will they be listening to the insurers, the insurance companies that possibly have roots in the United States, where they're quite happy with the exorbitant profits that they're making and the bankruptcies that befall, I think, far too many Americans? Who exactly will they be listening to?

Okay. I have completely gotten off my script, so I'll attempt to get back on to what I was going to say. As I said, it doesn't stop the strangulation of our health care system, and no matter how many times the folks opposite will say, "It's not American style; it's European style," it is not. We do not have the same number of beds. We do not have the same number of doctors. We do not have the same number of nurses. It is an apples-to-oranges comparison, and we cannot be compared. It's different. Regardless of all of the reassuring statements, the collective experience of Albertans that they are experiencing right now, Mr. Speaker, tells an entirely different story.

As I said, health care has not been fixed, and I do not believe that under this government it will be fixed. I do believe that under this government the idea, in fact, is simply to privatize because that is an ideological stance that this government has taken. I believe that the endgame was pretty simple, simply to break apart AHS into so many parts as to make it unrecognizable. That has meant that not only are patients confused, Mr. Speaker, but so, too, are workers: health care aides, nurses, doctors with all of these different pillars without even knowing which of the different pillars they might be working under or might be reporting to. There is much confusion that is out there at the moment.

Certainly, the omnibus nature of all of these bills that we've had before us of late hasn't helped. We know that there absolutely will be some, you know, I suppose, to offer a little bit of grace, unintended consequences because this UCP government, Mr. Speaker, lives in a world of failing to plan, and we see this every single week, sometimes daily. We've got the example of drivers' licences with the multiple points of failure. I can't think of one of my colleagues that didn't receive a number of e-mails, particularly from women who might have been seniors who had the temerity to get married even just in another province. This government caused these folks real difficulty, and it's one thing to kind of roll back a policy, but – I don't know – perhaps it would have been better to talk about it first and to figure it out first, perhaps listen to whoever it was you needed to listen to.

This week we've had a rollback on the flagpole issue. We have teachers on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker. We could have told you how many flagpoles the last schools that we taught in contained. We've heard a number of times that, you know, we didn't learn about complexity until just recently. I indeed could have had a long conversation with folks about complexity in classrooms over the last three or four years. People have been shouting, but the UCP government has chosen not to listen to them.

12:40

Even just yesterday we had a number of members from AUPE here who – and these are folks, Mr. Speaker, who take care of some of our most vulnerable. They're folks who took care of people like my dad after hip surgery. They are amazing. They are also amazing in terms of the amount of work and the type of work that we expect them to do in what have become some really untenable – untenable – workplaces and unfair situations. Their work conditions are our loved ones' care conditions. Yet we also know that the minister concerned was too busy to meet with them, again, a missed opportunity to talk with people who are working presently and, in particular, to talk with the people who are probably not earning as much as they should, not only because of the type of work that we expect them to do but also because of the quality of work that they give every single day and the dedication they show our loved ones in those situations every single day. These are dedicated Albertans. They are dedicated to their patients. They're dedicated to the service that they provide. They are dedicated to their jobs, and we are asking them to do far too much for far too little.

We are also very much concerned because Bill 39, as well, does indeed have some potential implications for labour because of the restructuring, because of all the different pillars, because of the fact that there really is so much unknown at this point because of that fragmentation. I know that folks who are part of unions are worried about things like common wage settlements and benefits and staffing

provisions. They're worried, for instance, and, speaking of some of those health care workers we had yesterday, those folks perhaps working with a private operator rather than a public or nonprofit operator, they might see, despite the fact that they're working in the same sector, Mr. Speaker, quite a difference in terms of whatever their wage settlement might be or whatever the hours of care might be.

And if I may as well, we all know, certainly in that continuing care sector, Mr. Speaker, this is a bill – Bill 39 could have had something about this in here. We know that there are zero mandated hours of care for folks who are in continuing care, and we have certainly heard that the folks across the aisle trust that the operators of some of those companies are going to make sure that people receive the hours of care that they need. But we also know that that is not true. I knew that it wasn't true two years ago because even though, as I said, when my father was able to get the care that he needed, there weren't enough people available to offer that care to him. Every single time I walked on that floor, I heard that nurse in charge trying to get extra folks from agencies because there weren't enough. That short staffing continues today. And it is impossible to guarantee a particular number of hours per patient if you don't have the number of people working on that floor at that time. It's a simple impossibility.

It should be better. When I was dealing with my dad in care, Mr. Speaker, that was already two years ago, but it isn't better. It's not better. And certainly, where allied health workers are concerned, folks like lab technologists, counsellors, paramedics, and others, in many respects much like Alberta's continuing care workers, very much form the foundation of that important daily care. And, you know, if we go for a test that might be a little bit scary, they're the ones that help us through that. They, too, are dealing with the vagaries of different pillars and organizations. We spoke with some just a couple of weeks ago. They, too, are still wondering: "Will I have a job in the future? And if I have a job, who exactly will that job be with?" They're worried about things like certifications being watered down to the extent that it doesn't serve patients and, again, will have a detrimental effect on working conditions. A year ago, Mr. Speaker, a report was released entitled Undervalued and Overstretched, which was all about inequity, discrimination, and the crisis facing Alberta's allied health care workforce. There is much important information in that report that this government might in fact have taken, and then perhaps we could have seen the results of looking at that report and its recommendations in this bill, Bill 39, but of course we did not.

One of the things that the report found, Mr. Speaker, was that something like pay inequity exists, and I spoke of it very briefly in terms of folks who work in a private health care setting versus a public health care setting. We know certainly that pay inequity exists there, but we also know that pay inequity exists in terms of gender disability status and visible minority status. The report makes it clear that in 2026 women continue to make less than men. People with disabilities make less than those without disabilities. And visible minorities make less than nonvisible minorities. The workers who contributed to this report talk very often about everyday discrimination, and it's one of those things that can of course be a very small microaggression, or it can be something sustained over a period of time. That would no doubt add to the stress that people are feeling when they go to work every day.

It talks about employment discrimination, experiences of being unfairly not hired, not promoted being reported by over 40 per cent of respondents, Mr. Speaker. It talks about the resulting stress, high levels of job-related stress. Seventy-five per cent of the people who responded stated that their job is emotionally draining, and almost half stated that they were overwhelmed by the demands of their job, and I have no doubt that it's primarily in cases where there simply aren't enough people working. There simply aren't enough colleagues to support everyone on shift and therefore to support the patients in the way in which they should be supported.

Now, one of the things that Tommy Douglas said in that 1983 address – and I'll quote him directly, and then I'll paraphrase as well. He says:

> I want to warn you as one who started out even before I was in politics, dedicated to the idea of comprehensive health insurance. Fought for it . . .
>
> I want to say to you that Medicare and hospital insurance are already marked for destruction.

He pledged 50 years ago that we should do better, and I would say that voting for this bill, we can't do it. That's not doing better, Mr. Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: The Member for Edmonton-West Henday.

Member Arcand-Paul: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I stand in opposition to Bill 39, the Health Statutes Amendment Act, 2026 (No. 2), again, for the same reasons for what all these other bills that this UCP government have put forward to privatize health care in this province. We heard loud and clear from Albertans in this referendum that the UCP put forward to try and affect what they wanted to do, which is separatism. They also asked Albertans a bunch of other questions, basically purity testing where they stand on issues such as privatized health care. And the referendum results showed that 6 out of 10 Albertans want to stay with Canada's universal health care system and keep our public health care system, keep it strong.

If we look at the numbers and we look at the surveys that have been done of Albertans, about 86 per cent of Albertans want to keep health care public, and it should be based on need rather than the ability to pay. Mr. Speaker, I'm reminded every day by the strong and resilient folks that have disabilities in this province that we are all one life-circumstance change away from having a disability and relying on the public health care system. Instead of trying to change and introduce a two-tier system like the Americans have, we should improve the system, not make it easier to jump the queue if you have greater wealth.

What this bill is doing and the suite of legislation to make privatized health care a reality in Alberta is doing indirectly what you can't do directly via ministerial order or regulations and particularly in Bill 39, where they are ushering in private health care and making the minister more opportunities to put forward ministerial orders or regulations, further eroding health care in this province. I think of self-referrals and what we debated in the spring of this year where we talked about self-referrals for medical imaging.

12:50

Most recently I just had my own health issue where I had to go and attend from a medical requisition that I had from a doctor to go and do an X-ray of my lungs, and I was interested to find that of the institution that I went to, the facility had a really important clarification on their website, and they put it on their phone when you would call in to make the appointment. They would not be accepting self-referrals, and they will be monitoring the regulatory system as it comes down, so this self-referral opportunity that the province is trying to put forward, that the UCP is trying to – that they put forward in legislation is something that facilities and institutions are not prepared and do not want because, again, this government has missed the mark.

I think of what the minister of – I don't know what their title is. They've changed so often, but the minister of hospitals and surgical health facilities quite often recommends and refers to Quebec as an example for a system that has hybrid health care. In that jurisdiction

they had something very similar at the time that we're having here in Alberta, and that is unreasonable wait times in their public health facilities. That is the only similarity that that province has with Alberta. We are seeing that these long wait times – I'm thinking of the Supreme Court of Canada decision of Chaoulli and Quebec where section 7 of the Charter was invoked to allow for a private medical practitioner to deliver health care to avoid these lengthy wait times that the province was undergoing at that time.

When we think about Charter rights and the access to health care, we have to expand and look at the current wait times. I'm so thankful to a constituent for reaching out and providing these numbers to me, but you can look at the emergency wait time estimators on the Alberta Health Services website every so often to get a good glimpse of where the wait times are. We look in November and the wait time shared with me but also that I saw when I was going through my own health difficulties a few weeks ago.

From this government website on wait times in the first 10 days of November we saw facilities like the Foothills medical centre have a 10-hour and two-minute wait. The Peter Lougheed Centre: 10 hours and 28 minutes. Rockyview general hospital: 10 hours, 53 minutes. Strathcona community hospital: eight hours, 57 minutes, then nine hours and 49 minutes. Westview health centre: nine hours, 13 minutes. Misericordia community hospital, a hospital that my communities rely on: eight hours and one minute and eight hours and 31 minutes. The Leduc community hospital, which is oftentimes one of the lower ones in the region, had a high number of nine hours and 48 minutes. The Fort Saskatchewan community hospital: eight hours, 48 minutes. Northeast community health centre: eight hours and 31 minutes and nine hours and six minutes. And the Grey Nuns community hospital, which a lot of the constituents of the members on this side of the aisle also rely on in southern Edmonton because we still don't have that south Edmonton hospital: seven hours and 26 minutes.

If we want a good glimpse, too, of just one day here in Alberta, on November 9 in Calgary the Alberta Children's hospital had an eight-hour and 23-minute wait. Foothills medical centre: eight hours and 16 minutes. Peter Lougheed Centre: 11 hours and 47 minutes. Rockyview general hospital: a whopping 12 hours and three minutes. And the South Health Campus: 13 hours and three minutes.

Mr. Speaker, I bring these numbers up because this is an alarming rate that this government is not focusing on. Instead of ushering in private health care, we should be making record investments into health care to provide the support that all Albertans rely on instead of creating a two-tier, American-style health care system.

When we talk about the work that the province is required to do and we want to talk about this jurisdiction and exercising our jurisdiction and protecting our jurisdiction, it is by also doing the investments in the areas that we have real bona fide, de facto jurisdiction, and that is health care. Mr. Speaker, I can tell you that this bill does nothing of the sort to address these long wait times. It is creating a system that should cause concern to all Albertans. In fact, I hear it every single day, and I'm sure members opposite get those e-mails, because I see they're CCed on them, on making sure that our health care systems remain public.

I know we heard perhaps a Freudian slip in this Chamber earlier today about the intents of this government. I rest quite assured that that is not just a Freudian slip. I think that is what this government is intending to do. You read the legislation. You heard the Premier during election time commit to ensuring that all Albertans would not need a credit card to go to their doctors. We see these changes in Bill 39 and the subsequent suite of legislation that is quite concerning that more Albertans will be relying on that. We see health administrators, insurance administrators from the United States come to Alberta to provide their services here.

From my friends that live in the United States I can tell you that they are not happy with their health care system. I don't want to see this being brought into Alberta because I also realize that the ones that are going to be hurt by this are low-income Albertans and certainly folks that this government continues to undercut, particularly disabled Albertans. They are going to continue suffering under this privatized system.

But, Mr. Speaker, this bill also makes amendments to the Compassionate Intervention Act. I remember having this debate when we first brought it into this Legislature about compassionate intervention. There was an inclusion of a lawyer member because it's very obvious that the compassionate intervention intakes and the apprehension orders that go along with it are quasi-judicial. They are a sentencing without any procedural fairness attached to it, and there's still no procedural fairness despite this clarification that the lawyer member be of good standing with the Law Society.

An apprehension that does not provide defence opportunities for an accused runs afoul of procedural fairness. You can see that this is a concerning part of this legislation that these amendments do not capture despite the gymnastics of the minister putting these changes into this piece of legislation. I worry about the folks that are being apprehended under the Compassionate Intervention Act that will not be given the opportunity to have their lawyer present until after they've been reassessed. It is after that point, it is beyond the actual sentencing of the individual, of an accused, if you will. That really does not provide that procedural fairness.

Mr. Speaker, I think that we need to be really serious when it comes to ensuring that the rights of all Albertans are included in this, even folks that are facing the lowest part of their life when addictions have overtaken them. I look at section 2(58) of this omnibus bill, where a client – they call it a client in this bill – does not have the right to refuse schedule 1 drugs under the Pharmacy and Drug Act. Mr. Speaker, this causes me some concern, too. I hear from the other side often that – I don't know this terminology. I hate this terminology, but they're creating these, in effect, UCP drug sites even though we know that they're detox centres. We know that they're harm reduction facilities.

1:00

For those that aren't aware at home, schedule 1 drugs include things like heroin, fentanyl, and other opioids, where a patient can't refuse getting prescribed these schedule 1 drugs.

I bring this up not only because of the ministerial powers under being able to classify what drugs can be administered in these compassionate intervention facilities or UCP drug sites; I think of this work that I've done on fatality inquiries in the province when I was practising. I think of this really poignant investigation that I had to undertake where I looked at the history of someone who had died in the care of police. I know this government is also musing with not having any fatality inquiries into deaths of such nature, and I can tell you that the people that are most affected by this are Indigenous people. This Compassionate Intervention Act and these changes will also disproportionately affect Indigenous people.

I don't bring this up lightly. I remember watching the video of a young woman dying in the jail cell, and I watched her not have access to what she needed at that time. She ended up asphyxiating in that cell. I looked at the history, the medical history of that individual, and it included things like these drugs on schedule 1 that the government is putting in place.

I just can't support this bill. I want procedural fairness in this legislation, and we need to be working for Albertans.

The Acting Speaker: The Member for St. Albert.

Ms Renaud: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure , as always, to rise and speak to this legislation. However, today feels a bit like Groundhog Day because we just keep getting these time allocations. This is a government that's really uninterested in hearing what Albertans have to say. Not too surprising.

Anyway, what this bill is, Mr. Speaker, as I'm sure you know and my colleagues have outlined, is this omnibus-looking bill that actually creates a legal framework to continue privatizing the health care system. As my colleague sort of touched on, it's people that are already vulnerable that will be hurt by this. That's not a question or an assessment. It will happen. We know this will happen.

Let me give you some examples. I spent a lot of time when I was younger working in the disability sector, more front line than anything. I was a director of an organization, actually, just after the legislation came in for protection for persons in care. That Protection for Persons in Care Act, which is also one of the pieces of legislation that's being amended by this bill, is actually – at first, when I saw it, I didn't think we needed it, but then I saw how it worked, and it actually worked. Far be it from me to praise the government for a system, but you know what? It worked, and it brought attention to an area that was really needing the attention.

What it was: protection for persons in care has been in place, I guess, since 2000, and what it does is it's meant to prevent abuse, obviously. That includes training for all the staff, and that training needs to be updated on a regular basis. What it does is require employers to also ensure that you're compliant with the need for training. That also matters in accreditation. Protection for persons in care was really important for us because we had people living in sort of congregate situations. We refer to them as group homes. This is a situation where maybe two or three people live together in a condo. The maximum is about four people in a house. This legislation covers that group.

PDD, which is an over-a-billion-dollar program, an important program in this province, is covered by protection for persons in care to an extent. It is only covered if you are required to do the supportive living licensing inspection, so that means if you have four people living together. But, you know, there were restrictions because not all people with developmental disabilities are funded through a service provider. That means that the government directly pays a service provider.

The other piece is called family managed support. More and more we see this government encouraging families with disabled – actually, they're adults. Take this up because it's cheaper for government. Family managed supports don't get the big administration dollars that the service providers do. For example, I asked, you know, during budget estimates: what is the highest percentage of administration dollars on the direct service dollars? For some big organizations that's, like, $20 million, $30 million. Some private companies that have been hired by this government to provide services actually get upwards of 25 per cent on their funding for administration. That's a bit shocking. It's actually very shocking. Protections for persons in care doesn't cover that group of people. So if people have been – they just can't find a service provider or they've been unable to secure the provider they want, they're told that they have to use family managed care. They get no extra money to actually run a business, which is managing an organization like that, and they're told that they're not covered under protection for persons in care.

Let's say that I have a person with Down syndrome that I'm caring for, and we go to the swimming pool. I'm staff, and I choose to berate him in the change room because he's going too slow. There's a witness there that sees it. Well, if I used an agency or a service provider, that witness could call protections for persons in care and say: "You know what? I saw this abuse. I want to remain anonymous. I got their name and information." Then it goes to the director, who makes a decision about an investigation. But they never get there because they're not covered.

Not just that, Mr. Speaker. It wasn't until – I think it was before the last election that we started asking: "Where's the report for protection for persons in care? We haven't seen it in years." That report tells us which programs had how many allegations of abuse, how many were researched or investigated, and then how many were given recommendations, which is the last, most intrusive step before sending it to the police or anything like that. There's a whole group of people in this over-a-billion-dollar program that have no oversight in terms of protecting people from abuse who are in care. For this government to pass a piece of legislation saying that they're amending all of these things to make life better for Albertans – "Look at us" – they missed the boat. They missed it. I mean, sure, these little changes are terrific. But what's really problematic is the lack of public reporting, the lack of transparency. And the scope of the program is messed up. It's just messed up.

If anyone is interested, the information used to be available online. You could see the allegation, the process of the investigation, and the results. We don't get that kind of clear information anymore, Mr. Speaker. Not at all. I've been through a few investigations myself, not that I was abusive to people but supervised staff that had been accused of abusing a client. There are a number of areas of abuse. Medication administration is certainly one. Financial management is certainly one. It was a really, actually, good process. We heard the allegation, and then we talked to everybody. The investigator talked to everybody, as did I. Then we came up with some ways to ensure that that – we'd do our best to ensure that that wouldn't happen again.

This was a really, really important piece of legislation. I was really stoked when I saw that it was included in this. But quite disappointing, as usual. This is a UCP government that likes to scratch the surface of stuff and say: you know, yeah, that's enough. It's not.

The other thing that I wanted to mention before my time runs out, Mr. Speaker, is that the people who will suffer from a private health care system or a hybrid are people with disabilities who don't have a lot of resources, who are already marginalized in every which way you can think of. These are folks that don't get the same medical treatment – I'm going to say that because I've seen it – as others.

1:10

I've had a person who was in her 50s. She has Down syndrome, and she started to – like, the dementia advances quite quickly with people with Down syndrome, and the onset is early. We found some doctors, did some research, and there was a medication that she could start that would slow down the effects of the dementia. So we went to that doctor, got an appointment, and the doctor literally said: "Doesn't she have enough problems? You want to put her on this medication?" That's just the way it is, Mr. Speaker, whether it's, you know, wanting to get a procedure done, but you're not the front of the line and you certainly can't afford to get anything done privately. Let's say that you have someone who suspects they have cancer, and they can't get an MRI for a year or eight months. What are they forced to do? Naturally, to pay for it privately so that they can then get a surgery or treatment or whatever.

The fact that this government doesn't see all of the problems that this creates and the long-term costs to Alberta is a little bit shocking. You know, it truly is shocking, but it also underlines the fact that they've demonstrated over and over again, Mr. Speaker, that they are not listening. They're not listening to us, of course, but they're not listening to Albertans either. If they were, they would know that the vast majority of Albertans think this is a no go. They appreciate the public health care. They love their public health care, actually. It's part of our identity, it keeps people safe, and it evens the playing field. And this government

is uninterested in that. They're interested in building – I don't know what they're interested in building – their empire for their friends. I don't know. I don't know what the plan is.

But when you fail to consult – like, I'm quite sure they didn't consult the disability community when they brought up changes to protection for persons in care. They don't do that. They don't consult Indigenous communities. They don't consult the disabled community. It just goes on and on. And what you get, the result, Mr. Speaker, is really bad legislation that just scratches the surface of need and really doesn't meet the requests or the recommendations from actual Albertans.

Can I get a time check, Mr. Speaker?

The Acting Speaker: Four minutes left.

Ms Renaud: Five minutes left. Okay.

You know, one of the other things I wanted to mention for protections for persons in care: it enables a few things like compliance officers to enter a service provider premises and assess whether the PPCA order is being followed, keeping existing protection, et cetera, et cetera. I remember this incident. I think it was a couple of years ago. I don't remember how long ago, but the then minister of social services actually, I think, got busted – oh, no, it wasn't social services; it was health – for discharging people who were disabled, in a wheelchair to a motel because they needed to clear up space in a hospital. That was a service provider putting them in a hotel, and this government paid for them. Of course, it's hard to track that down because they use numbered companies, but, Mr. Speaker, that's the kind of dangerous health care – with no oversight, by the way.

We brought it up. We didn't get any kind of follow-up with that, but that's what protection for persons in care does. It gives Albertans who see abuse right in front of them or witness it or have good reason to believe there's abuse – there's a direct line that they can call. There's a form they fill out online with the intake person, and then it goes for a decision about whether to go forward. Unfortunately, as I said earlier, the scope is far too narrow, actually, to address the many, many problems that have been identified over the many years, the decades, actually, that protection for persons in care has been around.

Now, I wanted to tell you about another person, again, that underlines, really, the importance of public health care. We supported a person. His name is Steven Arshid.* He's gone now. I first met him when he was 17. He had pretty severe autism, among other things, but he was actually kind of violent, too, so, you know, it makes it difficult to find doctors – it just does – or doctors willing to take on complex people. Certainly, I'm guessing private clinics: he's not going to be the first one that they would have picked, so it makes it difficult. Mr. Speaker, because there wasn't regular access to the regular health care that all of us deserve, he died of testicular cancer because it escalated undiagnosed like that. He wasn't getting regular health care, and the really sad part: I think he was, like, 26 years old.

I'm not saying that it's the health care system's fault. I'm just saying that there are systemic problems with our health care system that this government is creating or emphasizing. We already know that there are problems accessing what you need, where you need. We already know that, and they're making it tougher. You know, we can't clone doctors and nurses and anaesthetists. I can never say that word. We can't clone them. Some of them are going to go to private, so we are once again going to create a real problem in our public system.

Again, this is a government that doesn't seem to look beyond the next election, so we continue to get really bad legislation. Really bad legislation. These guys are so proud of it, waving their papers, and it's just, like: do you not see what you're doing? Do you really not see what you're doing? I guess they don't, Mr. Speaker. It's unfortunate.

Let me tell you about another person, Frank. We met Frank when he was discharged from Michener Centre, which is an institution where people with disabilities were shoved for many years. Frank, as a result of his disability – I think it's, like, pica – would eat anything, chicken bones, socks. Anything. Because it's an institutional behaviour, he couldn't get the care he needed for his esophagus.

That's it.

The Acting Speaker: Pursuant to Government Motion 48, agreed to on November 24, 2026, which states that after one hour of debate all questions must be decided to conclude debate on Bill 39, Health Statutes Amendment Act, 2026 (No. 2), I must now put the following question to conclude debate.

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

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 1:17 p.m.]

[Three minutes having elapsed, the Assembly divided]

[The Speaker in the chair]

For the motion:

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

Against the motion:

Arcand-Paul	Elmeligi	Sabir
Batten	Goehring	Schmidt
Brar, Gurtej	Gray	Sigurdson, L.
Deol	Metz	Wright, P.
Eggen	Renaud	

Totals:	For – 43	Against – 14

[Motion carried; Bill 39 read a second time]

Bill 43
Transportation (Safe and Sensible Roads) Statutes Amendment Act, 2026

[Adjourned debate November 24: Mr. Williams]

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

Dr. Elmeligi: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise today to speak to Bill 43, the Transportation (Safe and Sensible Roads) Statutes Amendment Act, 2026. I'm opposed to the bill, but I'm happy to talk about it because I love bikes, and I love my bike, especially.

This bill kind of cracks me up, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to be honest with you. Again we see a UCP bill that is not really focused on the

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

priorities of Albertans. There's nothing in this bill that is going to make life more affordable or create jobs or make our health care system or education system better, but, hey, let's have the UCP take a stab at bike lanes because that's what's so important that we have to talk about.

[The Deputy Speaker in the chair]

If the government wants to talk about bike lanes, let me tell you about my bike. Her name is the Silver Bullet. She's very fast, and she's a road bike. She's amazing. I love my bike so much. My bike is the best, and when I'm riding my bike, I go very, very fast, which makes me very, very happy. The reason why I'm telling you about my bike is because that feels just about as important as the provincial government interfering in the existence of bike lanes. But my bike is important to me.

I want to tell you a story, Madam Speaker. I used to participate in triathlons, and the road biking part of triathlons was one of my favourite parts because I can ride my bike so fast and I love the wind in my hair. When I first started training on my road bike, I would ride on the Trans-Canada highway from Canmore to Banff. I'd ride on the shoulder. It was scary. Yeah, super scary. Being passed by a semi-truck on the Trans-Canada highway when you're on a road bike is very adrenaline inducing, shall we say.

During this time in my life when I was competing in triathlons, Parks Canada built the Legacy Trail, which is a mixed-use trail that connects Canmore to Banff, and suddenly us road cyclists didn't have to ride on the shoulder of the Trans-Canada highway anymore for training. We could ride on the Legacy Trail, and it was a game changer. I suddenly felt so much safer. My bike rides were more pleasurable. I was even faster, if you can believe it. Like, now I'm just insanely fast on my road bike. All of that changed because we had a designated pathway to ride bikes on.

Over the 20 years that I have been living in Canmore, there has been an incredible growth of bike lanes in town. Sometimes it's a mixed-use pathway. Sometimes it's a widening of a road or a widening of a sidewalk. All of this has been really important for us as a community because the whole purpose of this is to decrease traffic congestion. It's around getting people out of their cars and onto their bikes. We live in a small town. Canmore, I've said this so many times: we have more Olympians per capita than any other town in Canada. We're a very active community, so it's nice to have designated spaces for bikes. It's also so much safer for anybody riding a bike. Anybody in this room who's ridden a bike through traffic knows the difference that a bike lane or a designated bike pathway can make.

Ultimately, the town of Canmore: we're encouraging people to get out of their cars and walk or bike. We are a small town. We have traffic congestion issues because we host the world for tourism. We can't afford to build more roads because, you know, municipal cost downloading and tourism is expensive and also we don't want to because we want people to get out of their cars and walk and bike places to enjoy our beautiful town.

This is all about an active lifestyle. This government, ironically, talks about an active lifestyle because it wants to have phys ed to grade 12 in high school, which I fully support, by the way. I took phys ed all the way up to grade 12. I also took all of the sciences and maths, and that's also why I'm just so smart. Ironically, the government wants you to take phys ed to grade 12 so that you can embrace an active lifestyle but only until you're old enough to afford a car, and then you definitely need to ditch your active lifestyle and start driving everywhere because you don't want to have bike lanes. Heaven forbid people should not be using a fossil fuel to get around and should actually just use their own two feet and a heartbeat, as I used to tell my kids all the time. It's just kind of funny to me.

Canmore has over 80 kilometres of trails, shared streets, pathways, with a 2030 mode share target of 40 per cent active and transit trips. That means that the town of Canmore is aiming to have 40 per cent of all trips in town being with two feet and a heartbeat, whether that's on your bike or walking. This has definitely changed what our town looks like and feels like. It's part of an integrated transportation plan that the town of Canmore opened up for public consultation, and it includes a variety of things like reducing speed limits, traffic-calming measures, free public transit, and separated bike pathways, but sometimes on residential streets you're just riding on the street. All of this has led to a reduction in summer vehicle traffic from 81 per cent in 2022 to 75 per cent in 2025.

1:30

Madam Speaker, I want to emphasize that people ride bikes year-round. This is not just a summer activity. There have been technological changes in bikes and bike tires that make it safer to ride bikes in the winter. I myself used to ride a bike in the wintertime. I worked in Calgary one or two days a week. I would park on the edge of the city, and I would ride a bike into downtown because it was faster than driving oftentimes. I love riding my bike. I love riding it all seasons throughout the year.

On the east side of my riding, biking takes a slightly different form. There's a lot less mountain biking, but there's a lot more road biking, Madam Speaker. A lot of road bikes from Calgary and surrounding region come out to the MD of Foothills and the MD of Rocky View for recreational purposes on their road bike. These road bikes are on highway 8, highway 22, highway 66, highway 762, and a lot of other secondary highways in between. When I talk to people in the eastern end of my riding, they have significant safety concerns about the volume of road bikes, particularly during the summer, on narrow secondary highways with little to no shoulder.

I share those concerns. I drive on those secondary highways to communities all the time. I see these road bikes everywhere. It isn't safe. The problem is that when I have tried to talk to any of the ministers on the other side of the aisle about widening shoulders or creating bike pathways like the Legacy Trail, I'm basically shot down without a minister even giving it a second thought. It's such a shame, Madam Speaker, because those bike pathways not only keep people safe, but they are a huge attraction for tourism. Huge. A very significant attraction.

The Bow Valley Parkway connecting Banff and Lake Louise: half of it is now closed to vehicle traffic for two months a year during the shoulder season, and it is instantly packed with cyclists. Instantly. We're so busy focused on building massive infrastructure in parks, like a gondola up Mount Lady Mac, that we forget that what people actually want to do is get on their bike. They just want to ride a bike. We don't need to build a gondola to attract people to the mountains, Madam Speaker. We just need to have more and safe bike paths and ways for people to get around on a bike.

Bikes are super fun; 49 per cent of Albertans bike. That's half of the population. We need to be able to provide infrastructure for people to engage in this form of recreational activity and also to commute. There's nothing wrong with bikes. Bikes are awesome. They drive tourism, they create an active lifestyle, and they're just plain fun. I literally giggle out loud when I'm riding my road bike down a hill because I'm having such a good time. This government is almost like the fun police here, just waging this war on bikes.

[The Speaker in the chair]

I know, Mr. Speaker. It's ridiculous. Oh, sorry. I'm not bringing you into debate. My apologies. Just saying that it is ridiculous to wage a war on bikes because bikes are a good time.

I just want to emphasize that all of these amazing changes around bike lanes and bike-related infrastructure in Camore: all of that happened without the province interfering in those municipal decisions. Isn't that also a wonderful and beautiful thing? When municipal governments that are elected by the people get to make decisions for the people based on the people that voted for them and what they want.

Member Arcand-Paul: Imagine that.

Dr. Elmeligi: It's crazy. I know.

One of the things that I think about this bill, when I read it, is something that my daughter used to say to me all the time, Mr. Speaker, and that is nunya. Nunya business. The provincial government does not need to interfere in bike lanes. They need to mind their own business and govern the province, not municipalities. The province doesn't need to be in this bike lane. It needs to be in its own lane, which apparently is just filled with trucks and maybe Hummers. The minister of transportation, who clearly for some unknown reason hates bikes – maybe he also hates fun; I don't know – doesn't need to approve bike lanes. I don't know why the minister wants to create all this extra work for himself or herself or whoever is minister in the future.

The reality is that provincial ministers are not voted in to manage bike lanes in municipalities. They are voted in to manage provincial roadways – right? – like the secondary roads that are in desperate need of shoulder widening for safety for road bikes. That's something the provincial government could do. The provincial government could increase safety for road cycling, which is a rapidly growing form of recreation, on secondary highways in Alberta. The minister of transportation could do that, but, instead, the minister of transportation is choosing to interfere in municipal bike lanes, which is clearly not at all provincial responsibility.

This adds to a long list and a pattern of various bills we've debated in this House. It is all about the province taking away decision-making power from municipal governments. Bill 20 in the spring of 2024, Bill 50 in the spring of 2025, Bill 28 last spring, 2026: we strongly opposed every single one of them because every single one of them is about a province overreaching into municipal decision-making for unknown reasons, to no effect, to just really create more work for themselves and to basically disrespect municipal councillors.

I want it to be clear, Mr. Speaker. I represent 11 different communities and two First Nations in my riding. I respect every single municipal councillor that was elected by the people of that municipality to represent municipal needs and perspectives.

The government did a consultation this summer about bike lanes, but as usual their consultation was a complete farce. It didn't really leave space for people to say anything positive about bike lanes or bike-related infrastructure even though many people still used it as an opportunity to tell this government to leave bike lane decision-making up to municipalities.

Is the government listening to Albertans when it brings forward this bill? No. The government continues to disrespect and discount municipal councillors and decision-makers, and a lot of this is creating more cost to municipalities, downloading additional costs on to municipalities that are already strapped for funding to begin with. The ban of electronic vote tabulators made the provincial referendum more expensive for municipalities, repealing codes of conduct, then reintroducing codes of conduct sort of, hiking property taxes through the education tax.

Now, I know that this government recently introduced a framework to reduce the education tax, but that doesn't work for my community, Mr. Speaker. It doesn't work for the town of Canmore. The recent changes to the education tax still increase property taxes for Canmore. The new rates increase the community's annual contribution to provincial education funding from $41.1 million to $42.3 million. A single detached home with a median assessed value of $1.718 million – that's the median assessed value of a stand-alone home in Canmore, $1.7 million – will now get taxed another $109 per year, bringing the total to $4,552 in property tax per year.

The government has limited the ability of municipalities to charge specialized taxes, and all of these things together basically make the most expensive community in Alberta to live in more expensive to live in. That's not helping anybody. It's not helping Canmore and Banff generate over a billion dollars in tourism revenue for the province every year. It's not helping the residents who live in these towns to stay living in these towns, plant roots, plant families, all that stuff. It's just making life more expensive.

This government has failed to address the over $250 million in unpaid oil and gas taxes owed to municipalities.

1:40

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Ellerslie.

Mr. Gurtej Brar: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to speak against Bill 43. This summer, just like my colleagues on this side of the House, I knocked on doors across my riding. People in Edmonton-Ellerslie told me countless stories about their real worries. It is waiting in the emergency room with a sick kid. It's a classroom with too many students and not enough help. It is the grocery bill, the rent, the insurance renewal that came higher again this year. I have knocked on thousands of doors this summer. I have yet to meet anyone who wants the minister in charge of their city's bike lanes or its train line. Still I'm waiting for a phone call or anyone to tell me that this is what their priority is.

Mr. Speaker, I hold weekly session updates in my constituency office. Every time people ask me: which bill is this UCP government bringing to the Legislature to ease our real worries? I always hate having to tell them that more private health care is on the way, that their health card will do less than it did last year, and that they will need their credit card to access more health services. And tomorrow I have to tell them again about this Bill 43.

A government that failed Albertans on health care, failed to build new schools, and failed to bring down grocery prices has written a bill to run things that are somebody else's job. I wish this government showed the same determination to deliver what it actually promised to Albertans about 1,277 days ago. It was an affordable life, better public health care, better public education. Instead, Mr. Speaker, what they got: two-tier, American-style private health care; no new school; and life they can't afford. At a time when a mom has to think twice before buying good-quality food for their kids, this government is ready to download even more costs on her. Bill 43 shows once again how out of touch this government is.

Edmonton's mayor says that removing the bike lanes built over the last decade could cost $150 million. Think about that, Mr. Speaker. Concrete that is already in the ground, paid for by Edmontonians, ripped out on the minister's order, and then the bill for ripping it out goes right back to those same Edmontonians on their property taxes. People in my constituency don't want their tax dollars spent undoing work that is already done.

Albertans are wondering: who is even writing these bills? The government tabled Bill 43 last Thursday. By Friday Calgary's mayor was telling reporters that the Premier's office had called the cost of the section a mistake, a premature draft. By Saturday the

Premier was on the radio promising an amendment. Two days, Mr. Speaker. If this government can't keep its own bills straight for two days, why should municipalities trust it with a veto over their roads?

This is part of the pattern, Mr. Speaker. In 2024 the government gave cabinet the power to force a veto to remove a councillor and to order a council to change or repeal its bylaws. Last month it ordered Edmonton to roll back its infill zoning, and now it's bike lanes and the LRT. Every time the message to local voters is the same: your vote counts until this government disagrees with it.

In October of last year people in Edmonton, Calgary, and all over Alberta went to the polls. They elected a mayor, a council in each city. Those councils were elected to make those choices: where a road goes, how a street is laid out, how a train line gets built. They answer to their voters. Now this government wants to stand over their shoulders and grab the pen.

Meanwhile, what's happening with the things that really are the government's job? The south Edmonton hospital is listed on the province's own major project site as cancelled in 2024. And people are paying the price for this government's neglect. We all know what happened to Prashant Sreekumar. He was just 44 years old, Mr. Speaker, a father of three. He went to hospital with chest pain last December, waited eight hours to see a doctor, and he died. His whole life he paid his taxes, trusting that if he needed help, he would be taken care of. And he died waiting. What a shame. His family called for answers and accountability. I speak about him with respect of the people who loved him. They have already suffered a loss that no speech in this Chamber can put right. But we have a responsibility to remember what families need from their government when someone becomes seriously ill. They need care that they can reach and trust.

It's the same in our schools, Mr. Speaker. Last March I spoke in this House about the child living steps away from his school yet facing an hour ride because of a lottery in my constituency. Think about explaining that to a six-year-old. There is a school right there. There is a playground, but getting a spot depends on whether their name gets drawn in the lottery or not. As a father I think about what that means for a family. An ordinary school morning becomes harder. A parent has to figure out about the transportation. A child has to adjust to school far from their own neighbourhood. This is what should demand the full attention of this government. It should make every minister think carefully about where they put their time, their money, and their efforts.

1:50

Instead, where is Albertans' hard-earned money actually going? The Premier and her ministers take lavish trips on Albertans' dime: Saudi Arabia, Dubai, the infamous booze cruise, and over $2,000 for just a 10-minute ride for the Premier in London, Mr. Speaker. This government can't do its own job, can't justify its lavish trips to Albertans, and now it's trying to do someone else's job. What's going on here?

Bill 43 asks us to put even more power over municipal decisions into the minister's hands. We see this pattern in every session. Bill after bill, the minister will decide. Government members often tell Ottawa to respect provincial decisions. Why can't they understand why people in our cities are asking for the same respect, Mr. Speaker?

At a press conference last week Edmonton's mayor said that he was surprised to see his name still listed as the mayor of Edmonton. He said to put the Premier, the minister of transportation, the Minister of Municipal Affairs instead. You can hear the frustration of a mayor when this government keeps interfering in his job, and I agree. The residents won't always be happy with every council decision, and they have every right to disagree. They can call their council, attend a meeting, and press for change. Again, if this government can't do its own job, why is it sticking its nose into someone else's job?

Countless times we have asked how Sam Mraiche got over $600 million in government contracts, why many ministers accepted his expensive hockey tickets, how five relatives connected to the Justice minister got public jobs, and what criteria was used to hire them. No answer, Mr. Speaker.

This government should listen to what families have actually been asking for, which is schools their child can attend nearby, medical care when someone they love is fighting in pain, a monthly budget that leaves them room to breathe, Mr. Speaker. Those are the responsibilities I take seriously every time I rise in this House. The parent waiting on a school lottery result deserves that seriousness from this government. So does the family waiting beside someone in the emergency room. Give our communities serious services they need, respect the representatives they elected, because that's what Edmontonians, my Edmonton-Ellerslie people, want, and that's what Albertans want from this government. They don't want this government to do someone else's job. They want this government to do their own job properly.

Build more schools, Mr. Speaker. Build more hospitals. The south Edmonton hospital was supposed to open its doors this year but has been cancelled. That's the wrong priorities this government has. People should not be dying in emergency rooms waiting just to see the doctor. There are thousands of people waiting for a family doctor, and the kids are shipped to faraway schools because this government . . . [Mr. Brar's speaking time expired]

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Meadows.

Mr. Deol: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity to speak to Bill 43 – let me see what this bill is – Transportation (Safe and Sensible Roads) Statutes Amendment Act, 2026. Let me tell you in advance: like, you know, it's not really my pleasure. In those seven years that I have been witness to, I don't know how this UCP government couldn't figure out how to learn from their experience and keep wasting the precious time of the Legislature every other session.

This is another bill that shows an example of the UCP's hypocrisy and is a demonstration of its authoritarian characteristics. They say one thing, but they believe in doing another one. And this bill keeps showing the same pattern we saw coming in 2019. Mr. Speaker, we always, you know – this is not something that we have to work hard on, but we often and most of the time daily see here and there this UCP government and the party lecturing to Ottawa on how to respect the local decision-making, the provincial autonomy. But when it comes to them, it's not for them. They cannot stay in their own lanes. And it's not about them only. Albertans are paying the heavy price of their constant behaviour of ignoring their responsibility on their commitment to the public.

Bill 43 has nothing to do with serving Albertans. When I look back, I don't know how many times we have to repeat in this House to remind the folks on the other side of the 90-day drill. The UCP is going to come in and fix health care in 90 days. What they have done in almost four years of governing is made it the worst in the history of this province. You know, nothing is perfect. Nothing is foolproof. We always have issues. It's a continuing process to keep things in line. But nobody – nobody – ever probably thought we would see in Alberta people dying in ER rooms, and that happened under the watch of this government. Did it make any difference to them? No.

So, unfortunately, my constituent – you know, he was relatively healthy, 44 years old, a healthy man, never got sick – suddenly felt some chest pain and walked to hospital with confidence that we have a system; we have people that are going to take care of him. He was not even that critically ill, but it took eight hours – eight hours – for him to keep waiting, to get even, like, you know, primary care. And before he got it, it was too late for him. That didn't only happen to one person; that happened to another person, another person, another person. We have six deaths in this province in emergency rooms or under a doctor's care. Not only that, a doctor's own spouse lost her life waiting for an ambulance for over an hour. Never happened in the history of this province before.

2:00

When this government actually brought this bill, there's no doubt to me that this government did not have anything in their mind that they're going to address any issue that the constituents in the ridings are asking for or the issues we're hearing from people in the communities. They didn't act to address issues in our education system at all. Instead, what did they do? They used the notwithstanding clause to send the teachers, students back to the classes without addressing their issues. Same situation.

Let me tell you that principally this government does not have sympathy for constituents in cities, in urban municipalities, and it does not have any sympathy or anything to do to help constituents in the rural municipalities as well. Their seven years of record clearly shows that. Not only this. The rural municipal leaders, where the majority of the UCP caucus come from, not only once but every step of the way in seven years have been calling on their actions that are hurting municipalities, rural municipalities. They think they can use a trick during the election to say one thing and do another, but the people are fed up. The past president from 2019 to the president all the way to 2026 and all elected rural municipal leaders have been condemning their attempt to suffocate, create chaos in the municipalities, and cuts to the funding. They have changed – it started under the Jason Kenney government right away. Seven years after that I see the second Premier, but there's no change in the pattern.

They made a change to MSI under Bill 20 in 2019. Then they brought forward Bill 20 again in 2024. Bill 56; I can just go on and on. They cut MSI funding. That impacted rural municipalities getting a transfer of $1.2 billion reduced to $480 million. They promised rural policing to help control rural crime. What did they do? They actually passed a bill that the provincial government could recover a cost from rural municipalities for policing instead of providing them help. They passed a bill where rural municipal constituents would pay more for telephone user fees for using emergency services. They downloaded the cost every step of the way on rural municipalities, and the rural municipal leaders did not only condemn what this UCP government is doing, but they ended up studying and conducting a report that they published in 2024. The rural municipalities are chronically facing a $17 billion infrastructure deficit under this UCP government, so they are not able to manage their services. They either have to cut their services or they have to increase the property tax. That's the only meaningful way they have to generate the revenue.

They also changed the local government fiscal framework that almost cut 30 per cent funding to rural municipalities. The rural municipalities also said that if this issue is not addressed on the priority basis, the infrastructure deficit will rise to $25 billion by the end of this year. We're already facing the end of this year. So $17 billion to $25 billion. If this government was, you know, really worried about the smooth move of transportation or the mobility of the constituents, of Albertans, from one place to another, they need to remember what happened under their watch.

I remember it was Jason Kenney's UCP government when the Greyhound bus disappeared, stopped their services, shut their services, and this government has yet to come up with a plan to help support rural municipalities to build sustainable bus service in the province. So many different players came on board. They were looking for support from this government, but I remember that, you know, only one stakeholder got one meeting with the then transportation minister. They could not even, you know, dare to meet with those people.

I'm surprised to see the friends on the other side – they do not really understand what they're doing. We have democracy, and they always call for, you know, respect for provincial decision-making, their jurisdiction. The people in cities and municipalities elect their own leaders on their own merits, on their own promises, and they can hold them accountable locally, but you're confusing everything right here in the rush to power grab.

When we go out door-knocking, any time the constituents come up with issues related to police, related to snow moving, or anything that has to be done with the city's jurisdiction, we have answers for them. We direct them where to go to talk to your councillor. Talk to your city government, if you have issues related to the city. What you're doing here is you're telling Albertans that those councillors, aldermen, are not actually responsible for those jobs because the province can come in a way and they can take control of those services and decision-making the way that you have done to the cities under the bike lanes you're changing; a lot of other stuff you shouldn't have touched. You have touched the complete local decision-making process the cities use to build their proposal.

2:10

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

Member Ellingson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise to debate Bill 43, Transportation (Safe and Secure Roads) Statutes Amendment Act, 2026. As I went through the bill, the legislation, I was asking myself one question. I ask this question a lot when I'm reading government legislation. What is the problem that the government is actually trying to solve?

There could be some good elements here. If the purpose of the bill was improving transportation safety, there are some pieces of the legislation that maybe make sense. If the purpose is improving commercial carrier compliance, then there are some measures in the bill that are worth discussing. If the purpose is establishing rules around emerging transportation technologies, that's also a conversation that all of us in the House can have.

But when I look through the whole bill, it seems to be less about those things and more about control. You see, just like other bills that this government has brought forward, the bill gives more authority to ministers, more authority to cabinet, more authority to the provincial government, in this case at the expense of municipalities that are already responsible for planning, building, operating, maintaining infrastructure and transportation infrastructure.

Mr. Speaker, I also hold the role in this caucus as the shadow minister for finance. I have observed from this government that the centralization of decision-making brings some costs. Sometimes those costs are clear. Sometimes we see those costs later. Sometimes they may be related to additional administrative expenses. Sometimes they may appear as project delays. Sometimes it appears as uncertainty, driving up costs for taxpayers. But there is almost always a cost. That is something that really worries me about Bill 43.

If we talk about the provisions here for municipal transportation infrastructure and planning, municipalities, like Calgary and Edmonton and all of the municipalities around the province, employ

professional engineers, transportation planners, economists, financial analysts, community engagement specialists, operations experts. They have all of these people already putting their time and effort into transportation planning.

Municipalities, cities spend years on major transportation projects. They consult residents. They look at traffic impacts. They evaluate safety considerations. They balance competing priorities within their city, and ultimately the decisions are made by elected municipal councillors who are directly accountable to their local residents.

Yet for some reason, despite all of that, this government wants to put all of that decision-making into the minister's office, in the hands of the minister. I guess if the minister wants to do the same assessment that the city has already gone through, they can spend the millions of dollars and time wasted in doing that, but for me it doesn't make much sense.

If the government wants to overrule a municipality, they should at least be able to demonstrate benefits in doing so, maybe reducing costs. Can they show us any evidence on how this will reduce costs? Can they show us a business case for any of the transportation planning, cost-benefit assessment for any of the transportation plans that are in front of us to consider why we might want to pass this bill? Unfortunately, Bill 43 provides very few answers to those questions. Instead, municipalities are told that they may require provincial approval for transportation decisions, and then they ultimately may be required to alter the existing infrastructure or those decisions at their own cost, the cost of the people living in that municipality. And you know what that means, for the Albertans that are listening? Property taxes.

An Hon. Member: Yay.

Member Ellingson: Yay. Everybody loves property taxes, right? At least this provincial government does. They increased them by – what? – 25, 30 per cent over the last couple of years in Calgary?

I live in Calgary. Calgary is growing quickly. We do need transportation infrastructure in Calgary. We need roads. We need transit. We need mobility improvements that will help people get to work, access services, participate in our economy. What we don't need is uncertainty around those transportation projects. And that's what this bill does. When municipalities don't know whether or not long-term transportation plans can be overridden, Mr. Speaker, that makes it pretty difficult to budget. It becomes harder to attract the investment for those projects. It becomes harder to deliver those projects on time, on budget. And when those costs rise, taxpayers pay.

Mr. Speaker, this is not speculation. Successive provincial interventions – and now we'll hear from what comes from the other side – on the green line, beginning with the Kenney government and continuing to this government, forced redesigns, created uncertainty, delayed delivery. Those delays from this provincial government during a time of construction inflation contributed significantly to higher costs for taxpayers.

And it's not just here in Alberta. In Ontario the provincially managed Metrolinx transit program became a cautionary tale when large transportation projects subject to centralized political oversight and intervention – the Eglinton Crosstown LRT was supposed to open back in 2020. It was supposed to cost $9.1 billion. Those costs escalated to more than $13 billion, and the project was delayed by years. In those ensuing years taxpayers aren't just paying more; communities, businesses endured years of construction disruption in those corridors.

Every additional approval requirement creates risk. Every additional point of political intervention creates risk. Every delay creates risk. And what we have seen in the past is that intervention from this provincial government creates delays, increased costs, and embeds risks into those projects. Yet rather than giving municipalities greater certainty, this legislation is just giving the minister even broader authority to intervene. When this government encounters institutions that it does not fully control, their solution is to centralize authority. We've seen this again and again and with municipalities. We've heard from my colleagues already today. Bill 20 took away the ability for municipalities to use vote tabulators. Millions of dollars to taxpayers.

Bill 50 took away existing codes of conduct in municipalities that were already there. Not sure exactly why.

Bill 18 put the provincial government in between money that would come from the federal government to municipalities. That one was particularly interesting to me. Daily this government rails about how we don't get money from the feds, and when the municipalities are getting money from the feds, their response was to put themselves in between and say: "No. No thanks. Actually, we don't need it."

Bill 28 appointed library inspectors and allowed cabinet to transfer the ownership of a municipal public utility.

2:20

Now we have 43 giving the government authority over transit projects, directing whether cities can or cannot have bike lanes. Apparently, now that's the number one issue for the minister of transportation, bike lanes. The minister, I guess, just woke up one morning somehow with this nuisance for bike lanes. On this I would say to the minister and to the UCP government the advice that they freely give the federal government on a daily basis. Stay in your own lane.

I will just throw in here a bit of personal experience. It just so happens that there was a time in my life when I relied on my bicycle to be my primary mode of transportation. I rode it everywhere in the city of Calgary. I did live in a part of the city where bicycles are pretty common. You see them on a daily basis. It also happens that I was on the committee that consulted the community on the use of bicycles on Stephen Avenue in the downtown core.

In case the government isn't aware, consultation is when you meet with and listen to stakeholders. Consultation is that you listen to people who have divergent opinions. That consultation helps you make better decisions.

Not everybody agreed on bicycles on Stephen Avenue, but we did come to an agreement, an arrangement where rules were set in place as to when bicycles could be used on Stephen Avenue, some design changes to Stephen Avenue that allowed for both bicycles and pedestrians while preserving the historic nature of the avenue. You can come to these solutions when you sit around the same table and you talk to stakeholders that all have different opinions and different needs.

Mr. Speaker, Albertans deserve legislation and policy that is grounded in evidence, accountability, value for money. They deserve governments that trust local expertise. They deserve legislation that solves problems rather than simply concentrating power in the minister's office. They're going to get that when they have a government that is an Alberta NDP government.

I have significant concerns with this bill, Mr. Speaker. On that, I will say thank you.

The Speaker: Seeing no more speakers.

[Motion carried; Bill 43 read a second time]

Mr. Williams: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that the Assembly now be adjourned until Monday, November 30, at 1:30 p.m.

[Motion carried; the Assembly adjourned at 2:24 p.m.]

Bill Status Report for the 31st Legislature - 2nd Session (2025-2026)

Activity to Thursday, November 26, 2026

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

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

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

Bill 1 — International Agreements Act (Smith)
First Reading — 6 *(Oct. 23, 2025 aft., passed)*
Second Reading — 77-85 *(Oct. 28, 2025 aft., adjourned)*, 109-18 *(Oct. 29, 2025 aft., adjourned)*, 133-35 *(Oct. 30, 2025 aft., passed)*
Committee of the Whole — 184-87 *(Nov. 4, 2025 aft., passed)*
Third Reading — 250-52 *(Nov. 6, 2025 aft., passed)*
Royal Assent — *(Nov. 26, 2025 outside of House sitting)* [Comes into force November 26, 2025; SA 2025, cI-3.8]

Bill 2 — Back to School Act (Horner)
First Reading — 26 *(Oct. 27, 2025 aft., passed on division)*
Second Reading — 27-28 *(Oct. 27, 2025 eve.)*, 29-35 *(Oct. 27, 2025 eve., passed on division)*
Committee of the Whole — 35-36 *(Oct. 27, 2025 eve.)*, 37-45 *(Oct. 27, 2025 eve., passed on division)*
Third Reading — 45-46 *(Oct. 27, 2025 eve.)*, 47-54 *(Oct. 27, 2025 eve., passed on division)*
Royal Assent — *(Oct. 28, 2025 outside of House sitting)* [Comes into force on October 28, 2025; SA 2025 cB-0.5]

Bill 3 — Private Vocational Training Amendment Act, 2025 (McDougall)
First Reading — 65 *(Oct. 28, 2025 aft., passed)*
Second Reading — 135-37 *(Oct. 30, 2025 aft., adjourned)*, 187-93 *(Nov. 4, 2025 aft., adjourned)*, 215-16 *(Nov. 5, 2025 aft., passed)*
Committee of the Whole — 334-37 *(Nov. 18, 2025 aft., passed)*
Third Reading — 371-73 *(Nov. 19, 2025 aft., passed)*
Royal Assent — *(Nov. 26, 2025 outside of House sitting)* [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2025 c17]

Bill 4 — Public Safety and Emergency Services Statutes Amendment Act, 2025 (No. 2) (Ellis)
First Reading — 121 *(Oct. 30, 2025 , passed)*
Second Reading — 193-201 *(Nov. 4, 2025 aft., adjourned)*, 216-24 *(Nov. 5, 2025 aft., adjourned)*, 289 *(Nov. 17, 2025 eve., adjourned)*, 323-34 *(Nov. 18, 2025 aft., passed on division)*
Committee of the Whole — 408-13 *(Nov. 20, 2025 aft., passed)*
Third Reading — 447-55 *(Nov. 24, 2025 eve., passed on division)*
Royal Assent — *(Nov. 26, 2025 outside of House sitting)* [Comes into force November 26, 2025, with exceptions; SA 2025 c18]

Bill 5 — Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, 2025 (Schow)
First Reading — 271 *(Nov. 17, 2025 aft., passed)*
Second Reading — 322-23 *(Nov. 18, 2025 aft., passed)*
Committee of the Whole — 407-08 *(Nov. 20, 2025 aft., passed)*
Third Reading — 589-90 *(Nov. 27, 2025 aft., passed)*
Royal Assent — *(Dec. 11, 2025 outside of House sitting)* [Comes into force December 11, 2025; SA 2025 c23]

Bill 6 — Education (Prioritizing Literacy and Numeracy) Amendment Act, 2025 (No. 2) (Nicolaides)

First Reading — 150 *(Nov. 3, 2025 aft., passed)*
Second Reading — 252-60 *(Nov. 6, 2025 aft., adjourned)*, 289-98 *(Nov. 17, 2025 eve., adjourned)*, 337-39 *(Nov. 18, 2025 aft., adjourned)*, 341-51 *(Nov. 18, 2025 eve., adjourned; amendments introduced)*, 455-65 *(Nov. 24, 2025 eve., adjourned; amendments introduced)*, 504-14 *(Nov. 25, 2025 eve., passed on division)*
Committee of the Whole — 681-86 *(Dec. 2, 2025 eve., passed)*
Third Reading — 713-21 *(Dec. 3, 2025 aft., passed)*
Royal Assent — *(Dec. 11, 2025 outside of House sitting)* [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2025 c19]

Bill 7 — Water Amendment Act, 2025 (Schulz)

First Reading — 121 *(Oct. 30, 2025 aft., passed)*
Second Reading — 224-35 *(Nov. 5, 2025 aft., adjourned)*, 298-307 *(Nov. 17, 2025 eve., adjourned)*, 351-55 *(Nov. 18, 2025 eve., passed)*
Committee of the Whole — 480-93 *(Nov. 25, 2025 aft., passed)*
Third Reading — 536-43 *(Nov. 26, 2025 aft., adjourned)*, 661-63 *(Dec. 2, 2025 aft., passed)*
Royal Assent — *(Dec. 11, 2025 outside of House sitting)* [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2025 c27]

Bill 8 — Utilities Statutes Amendment Act, 2025 (Neudorf)

First Reading — 478 *(Nov. 25, 2025 aft., passed)*
Second Reading — 663-70 *(Dec. 2, 2025 aft., passed)*
Committee of the Whole — 737-44 *(Dec. 3, 2025 eve., passed with amendments)*
Third Reading — 766-71 *(Dec. 4, 2025 aft., passed)*
Royal Assent — *(Dec. 11, 2025 outside of House sitting)* [Comes into force December 11, 2025, with exceptions; SA 2025 c26]

Bill 9 — Protecting Alberta's Children Statutes Amendment Act, 2025 (Amery)

First Reading — 319-20 *(Nov. 18, 2025 aft., passed on division)*
Second Reading — 378-91 *(Nov. 19, 2025 aft., adjourned)*, 493-501 *(Nov. 25, 2025 aft., adjourned)*, 549-54 *(Nov. 26, 2025 aft., adjourned)*, 676-79 *(Dec. 2, 2025 aft., adjourned)*, 815-22 *(Dec. 8, 2025 eve., passed on division)*
Committee of the Whole — 855 *(Dec. 9, 2025 aft., adjourned)*, 873-80 *(Dec. 9, 2025 eve., passed on division)*
Third Reading — 891 *(Dec. 9, 2025 eve., adjourned on division)*, 892-900 *(Dec. 9, 2025 eve., passed on division)*
Royal Assent — *(Dec. 11, 2025 outside of House sitting)* [Comes into force December 11, 2025; SA 2025 c24]

Bill 10 — Red Tape Reduction Statutes Amendment Act, 2025 (No. 2) (Nally)

First Reading — 271 *(Nov. 17, 2025 aft., passed)*
Second Reading — 374-78 *(Nov. 19, 2025 aft., adjourned)*, 514-21 *(Nov. 25, 2025 eve., adjourned)*, 543-49 *(Nov. 26, 2025 aft., adjourned)*, 670-76 *(Dec. 2, 2025 aft., passed)*
Committee of the Whole — 728-29 *(Dec. 3, 2025 aft., adjourned)*, 744-45 *(Dec. 3, 2025 eve., passed)*
Third Reading — 789-94 *(Dec. 8, 2025 eve., passed)*
Royal Assent — *(Dec. 11, 2025 outside of House sitting)* [Comes into force on various dates; SA 2025 c25]

Bill 11 — Health Statutes Amendment Act, 2025 (No. 2) (LaGrange)

First Reading — 426 *(Nov. 24, 2025 , passed)*
Second Reading — 555-64 *(Nov. 26, 2025 eve., adjourned)*, 590-96 *(Nov. 27, 2025 aft., adjourned)*, 637-46 *(Dec. 1, 2025 eve., adjourned)*, 808-15 *(Dec. 8, 2025 eve., passed on division)*
Committee of the Whole — 856 *(Dec. 9, 2025 aft., adjourned)*, 867-73 *(Dec. 9, 2025 eve., passed on division with amendments)*
Third Reading — 913-14 *(Dec. 10, 2025 aft., adjourned on division)*, 916-22 *(Dec. 10, 2025 aft., passed on division)*
Royal Assent — *(Dec. 11, 2025 outside of House sitting)* [Comes into force on various dates; SA 2025 c21]

Bill 12 — Financial Statutes Amendment Act, 2025 (No. 2) ($) (Horner)

First Reading — 478 *(Nov. 25, 2025 aft., passed)*
Second Reading — 693-98 *(Dec. 2, 2025 eve., adjourned)*, 731-37 *(Dec. 3, 2025 eve., passed)*
Committee of the Whole — 745-50 *(Dec. 3, 2025 eve., adjourned)*, 850-55 *(Dec. 9, 2025 aft., passed with amendments)*
Third Reading — 860-67 *(Dec. 9, 2025 eve., passed on division)*
Royal Assent — *(Dec. 11, 2025)* [Comes into force on various dates; SA 2025 c20]

Bill 13 — Regulated Professions Neutrality Act (Amery)
First Reading — 404 *(Nov. 20, 2025 aft., passed)*
Second Reading — 564-73 *(Nov. 26, 2025 eve., adjourned)*, 629-37 *(Dec. 1, 2025 eve., passed)*
Committee of the Whole — 686-92 *(Dec. 2, 2025 eve., adjourned)*, 801-08 *(Dec. 8, 2025 eve., passed)*
Third Reading — 887-91 *(Dec. 9, 2025 eve., passed on division)*
Royal Assent — *(Dec. 11, 2025)* [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2025 cR-13.3]

Bill 14 — Justice Statutes Amendment Act, 2025 (Amery)
First Reading — 763 *(Dec. 4, 2025 aft., passed)*
Second Reading — 794-801 *(Dec. 8, 2025 eve., adjourned)*, 844-50 *(Dec. 9, 2025 aft., passed on division)*
Committee of the Whole — 856 *(Dec. 9, 2025 aft., adjourned)*, 880-87 *(Dec. 9, 2025 eve., passed on division with amendments)*
Third Reading — 922-23 *(Dec. 10, 2025 aft., adjourned on division)*, 924-31 *(Dec. 10, 2025 aft., passed on division)*
Royal Assent — *(Dec. 11, 2025 outside of House sitting)* [Comes into force December 11, 2025, with exceptions; SA 2025 c22]

Bill 15 — Public Safety and Emergency Services Statutes Amendment Act, 2026 (Ellis)
First Reading — 943 *(Feb. 24, 2026 aft., passed)*
Second Reading — 972-83 *(Feb. 25, 2026 aft., passed)*
Committee of the Whole — 1141-48 *(Mar. 19, 2026 morn., passed)*
Third Reading — 1337-44 *(Mar. 31, 2026 aft., passed)*
Royal Assent — *(Apr. 16, 2026 outside of House sitting)* [Comes into force April 16, 2026; SA 2026, c5]

Bill 16 — Traveller Protection and Destination Development Act (Boitchenko)
First Reading — 963 *(Feb. 25, 2026 aft., passed)*
Second Reading — 1065-68 *(Mar. 12, 2026 aft., passed)*
Committee of the Whole — 1148-52 *(Mar. 19, 2026 morn., passed)*
Third Reading — 1216-19 *(Mar. 24, 2026 aft., passed)*
Royal Assent — *(Mar. 26, 2026 outside of House sitting)* [Comes into force on Proclamation; SA 2026, cT-6.7]

Bill 17 — Fiscal Measures Statutes Amendment Act, 2026 (Horner)
First Reading — 1039 *(Mar. 10, 2026 aft., passed)*
Second Reading — 1210-16 *(Mar. 24, 2026 aft.)*, 1241-44 *(Mar. 25, 2026 aft., passed)*
Committee of the Whole — 1270-73 *(Mar. 26, 2026 morn., passed)*
Third Reading — 1273-76 *(Mar. 26, 2026 morn., passed)*
Royal Assent — *(Mar. 26, 2026 outside of House sitting)* [Comes into force on various dates; SA 2026 c3]

Bill 18 — Safeguards for Last Resort Termination of Life Act (Amery)
First Reading — 1124 *(Mar. 18, 2026 aft., passed)*
Second Reading — 1332-37 *(Mar. 31, 2026 aft., passed)*
Committee of the Whole — 1462-65 *(Apr. 14, 2026 aft., adjourned)*, 1524-28 *(Apr. 16, 2026 morn., passed)*
Third Reading — 1607-12 *(Apr. 22, 2026 aft., passed on division)*
Royal Assent — *(May 14, 2026 morn.)* [Comes into force on Proclamation; SA 2026 cS-0.3]

Bill 19 — Appropriation Act, 2026 ($) (Horner)
First Reading — 1140 *(Mar. 19, 2026 morn., passed)*
Second Reading — 1222-27 *(Mar. 24, 2026 aft., passed on division)*
Committee of the Whole — 1248-58 *(Mar. 25, 2026 aft., passed on division)*
Third Reading — 1278-88 *(Mar. 26, 2026 morn., passed on division)*
Royal Assent — *(Mar. 26, 2026 outside of House sitting)* [Comes into force March 26, 2026; SA 2026, c1]

Bill 20 — Appropriation (Supplementary Supply) Act, 2026 ($) (Horner)
First Reading — 1197 *(Mar. 23, 2026 eve., passed)*
Second Reading — 1219-21 *(Mar. 24, 2026 aft., passed)*
Committee of the Whole — 1244-48 *(Mar. 25, 2026 aft., passed)*
Third Reading — 1276-78 *(Mar. 26, 2026 morn., passed on division)*
Royal Assent — *(Mar. 26, 2026)* [Comes into force March 26, 2026; SA 2026, c2]

Bill 21 — Interprovincial Trade Mutual Recognition Act (Schow)
First Reading — 1261 *(Mar. 26, 2026 morn., passed)*
Second Reading — 1344-49 *(Mar. 31, 2026 aft., passed)*
Committee of the Whole — 1404-08 *(Apr. 2, 2026 aft., passed)*
Third Reading — 1453-55 *(Apr. 14, 2026 aft., passed)*
Royal Assent — *(Apr. 16, 2026 outside of House sitting)* [Comes into force on Proclamation; SA 2026, cI-9.5]

Bill 22 — Animal Protection Amendment Act, 2026 (Sigurdson, RJ)
First Reading — 1299 *(Mar. 30, 2026 aft., passed)*
Second Reading — 1399-1404 *(Apr. 2, 2026 aft., passed)*
Committee of the Whole — 1618-20 *(Apr. 22, 2026 aft., passed with amendments)*
Third Reading — 1643-47 *(Apr. 23, 2026 aft., passed)*
Royal Assent — *(May 14, 2026 morn.)* [Comes into force on Proclamation; SA 2026 c6]

Bill 23 — Justice Statutes Amendment Act, 2026 (Amery)
First Reading — 1299 *(Mar. 30, 2026 aft., passed)*
Second Reading — 1455-62 *(Apr. 14, 2026 aft., passed)*
Committee of the Whole — 1492-98 *(Apr. 15, 2026 aft., passed)*
Third Reading — 1520-24 *(Apr. 16, 2026 morn., passed on division)*
Royal Assent — *(Apr. 16, 2026 outside of House sitting)* [Comes into force April 16, 2026, with exceptions; SA 2026, c4]

Bill 24 — Alberta Whisky Act (Nally)
First Reading — 1329 *(Mar. 31, 2026 aft., passed)*
Second Reading — 1393-99 *(Apr. 2, 2026 aft., passed)*
Committee of the Whole — 1498-99 *(Apr. 15, 2026 aft., passed)*
Third Reading — 1532-36 *(Apr. 16, 2026 morn., adjourned)*, 1607 *(Apr. 22, 2026 aft., passed)*
Royal Assent — *(May 14, 2026 morn.)* [Comes into force on Proclamation; SA 2026 cA-37.7]

Bill 25 — An Act to Remove Politics and Ideology from Classrooms and Amend the Education Act, 2026 (Nicolaides)
First Reading — 1329 *(Mar. 31, 2026 aft., passed)*
Second Reading — 1465-71 *(Apr. 14, 2026 aft., adjourned)*, 1499-1504 *(Apr. 15, 2026 aft., adjourned)*, 1647-51 *(Apr. 23, 2026 morn., adjourned)*, 1833-39 *(May 11, 2026 eve., passed on division)*
Committee of the Whole — 1874-80 *(May 12, 2026 eve., passed on division)*
Third Reading — 1901-07 *(May 12, 2026 eve., adjourned)*, 1925-26 *(May 13, 2026 aft., passed on division)*
Royal Assent — *(May 14, 2026 morn.)* [Comes into force on Proclamation, with exceptions; SA 2026 c13]

Bill 26 — Immigration Oversight Act (Schow)
First Reading — 1353 *(Apr. 1, 2026 aft., passed)*
Second Reading — 1528-32 *(Apr. 16, 2026 morn., passed)*
Committee of the Whole — 1620-24 *(Apr. 22, 2026 aft., passed)*
Third Reading — 1739-42 *(May 6, 2026 aft., passed)*
Royal Assent — *(May 14, 2026 morn.)* [Comes into force on Proclamation; SA 2026 cI-0.3]

Bill 27 — Financial Statutes Amendment Act, 2026 (Horner)
First Reading — 1353 *(Apr. 1, 2026 aft., passed)*
Second Reading — 1487-92 *(Apr. 15, 2026 aft., adjourned)*, 1612-18 *(Apr. 22, 2026 aft., passed)*
Committee of the Whole — 1746-49 *(May 6, 2026 aft., passed)*
Third Reading — 1769 *(May 6, 2026 eve., adjourned)*, 1769-71 *(May 6, 2026 eve., passed on division)*
Royal Assent — *(May 14, 2026 morn.)* [Comes into force on various dates; SA 2026 c8]

Bill 28 — Municipal Affairs and Housing Statutes Amendment Act, 2026 (Williams)
First Reading — 1385 *(Apr. 2, 2026 morn., passed)*
Second Reading — 1636-43 *(Apr. 23, 2026 morn., adjourned)*, 1752-56 *(May 6, 2026 aft., adjourned)*, 1757-59 *(May 6, 2026 eve., adjourned)*, 1839-46 *(May 11, 2026 eve., passed on division)*
Committee of the Whole — 1880-86 *(May 12, 2026 aft., adjourned)*, 1893-95 *(May 12, 2026 eve., passed on division)*, 1887 *(May 12, 2026 eve., adjourned)*
Third Reading — 1928-36 *(May 13, 2026 aft., passed on division)*
Royal Assent — *(May 14, 2026 morn.)* [Comes into force on various dates; SA 2026 c10]

Bill 29 — Health Statutes Amendment Act, 2026 (LaGrange)
First Reading — 1420 *(Apr. 13, 2026 aft., passed)*
Second Reading — 1651-57 *(Apr. 23, 2026 aft., adjourned)*, 1716-23 *(May 5, 2026 aft., adjourned)*, 1867-74 *(May 12, 2026 aft., passed on division)*
Committee of the Whole — 1887-93 *(May 12, 2026 eve., passed)*
Third Reading — 1936-43 *(May 13, 2026 aft., passed on division)*
Royal Assent — *(May 14, 2026 morn.)* [Comes into force May 14, 2026, with exceptions; SA 2026 c9]

Bill 30 — Expedited 120-Day Approvals Act (Jean)
First Reading — 1450 *(Apr. 14, 2026 aft., passed)*
Second Reading — 1706-11 *(May 5, 2026 aft., passed)*
Committee of the Whole — 1771-76 *(May 6, 2026 eve., passed)*
Third Reading — 1776-77 *(May 6, 2026 eve., passed)*
Royal Assent — *(May 14, 2026 morn.)* [Comes into force on Proclamation; SA 2026 cE-12.8]

Bill 31 — Red Tape Reduction Statutes Amendment Act, 2026 (Nally)
First Reading — 1627 *(Apr. 23, 2026 morn., passed)*
Second Reading — 1711-16 *(May 5, 2026 aft., passed)*
Committee of the Whole — 1749-52 *(May 6, 2026 aft., passed)*
Third Reading — 1800-1806 *(May 7, 2026 morn., passed on division)*
Royal Assent — *(May 14, 2026 morn.)* [Comes into force May 14, 2026, with exceptions; SA 2026 c12]

Bill 32 — Electoral Boundaries Commission Amendment Act, 2026 (Amery)
First Reading — 1635 *(Apr. 23, 2026 morn., passed)*
Second Reading — 1743-46 *(May 6, 2026 aft., adjourned)*, 1759-69 *(May 6, 2026 eve., adjourned)*, 1846-53 *(May 11, 2026 eve., passed on division)*
Committee of the Whole — 1895-1901 *(May 12, 2026 eve., passed on division)*
Third Reading — 1907-12 *(May 12, 2026 eve., adjourned)*, 1926-28 *(May 13, 2026 aft., passed on division)*
Royal Assent — *(May 14, 2026 morn.)* [Comes into force on May 14, 2026; SA 2026 c7]

Bill 33 — Justice Statutes Amendment Act, 2026 (No. 2) (Amery)
First Reading — 1973 *(Oct. 27, 2026 aft., passed)*
Second Reading — 1990-97 *(Oct. 28, 2026 aft., passed)*
Committee of the Whole — 2018-23 *(Oct. 29, 2026 morn., adjourned)*, 2076-81 *(Nov. 3, 2026 aft., passed)*
Third Reading — 2128-30 *(Nov. 5, 2026 morn., passed)*

Bill 34 — Service Alberta and Red Tape Reduction Statutes Amendment Act, 2026 (Nally)
First Reading — 1990 *(Oct. 28, 2026 aft., passed)*
Second Reading — 2010-18 *(Oct. 29, 2026 morn., adjourned)*, 2081-86 *(Nov. 3, 2026 aft., passed)*
Committee of the Whole — 2195-98 *(Nov. 17, 2026 aft., passed)*
Third Reading — 2223-28 *(Nov. 18, 2026 aft., passed)*

Bill 35 — Education and Childcare (Securing Parental Involvement) Statutes Amendment Act, 2026 (Nicolaides)
First Reading — 2009 *(Oct. 29, 2026 morn., passed)*
Second Reading — 2068-76 *(Nov. 3, 2026 aft., adjourned)*, 2203-09 *(Nov. 17, 2026 aft., passed)*
Committee of the Whole — 2359-64 *(Nov. 24, 2026 eve., passed with amendments)*
Third Reading — 2376-81 *(Nov. 24, 2026 eve., passed)*

Bill 36 — Children and Family Services (Supporting Alberta Families) Statutes Amendment Act, 2026 (Turton)
First Reading — 2009 *(Oct. 29, 2026 morn., passed)*
Second Reading — 2130-36 *(Nov. 5, 2026 morn., passed)*
Committee of the Whole — 2198-2203 *(Nov. 17, 2026 aft., passed)*
Third Reading — 2268-71 *(Nov. 19, 2026 aft., passed)*

Bill 37 — Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, 2026 (Schow)
First Reading — 2009 *(Oct. 29, 2026 morn., passed)*
Second Reading — 2233 *(Nov. 18, 2026 aft., passed)*
Committee of the Whole — 2324-25 *(Nov. 23, 2026 eve., passed)*
Third Reading — 2325 *(Nov. 23, 2026 eve., passed)*

Bill 38 — Advanced Education Statutes Amendment Act, 2026 (McDougall)
First Reading — 2067 *(Nov. 3, 2026 aft., passed)*
Second Reading — 2136-46 *(Nov. 5, 2026 aft., adjourned)*, 2189-95 *(Nov. 17, 2026 aft., passed)*
Committee of the Whole — 2228-33 *(Nov. 18, 2026 aft., passed with amendments)*
Third Reading — 2265-68 *(Nov. 19, 2026 aft., passed on division)*

Bill 39 — Health Statutes Amendment Act, 2026 (No. 2) (Justin Wright)
First Reading — 2097 *(Nov. 4, 2026 aft., passed)*
Second Reading — 2233-40 *(Nov. 18, 2026 aft., adjourned)*, 2258-64 *(Nov. 19, 2026 aft., adjourned)*, 2322-24 *(Nov. 23, 2026 eve., adjourned)*, 2431-37 *(Nov. 26, 2026 morn., passed on division)*

Bill 40 — Electoral Divisions Act (Amery)
First Reading — 2158 *(Nov. 16, 2026 aft., passed)*
Second Reading — 2254-58 *(Nov. 19, 2026 morn., adjourned)*, 2313-22 *(Nov. 23, 2026 eve., adjourned)*, 2346-53 *(Nov. 24, 2026 aft., passed on division)*
Committee of the Whole — 2353-58 *(Nov. 24, 2026 aft.)*, 2359 *(Nov. 24, 2026 eve., adjourned)*, 2364-67 *(Nov. 24, 2026 eve., passed on division)*
Third Reading — 2393-2400 *(Nov. 25, 2026 aft., passed on division)*

Bill 41 — Financial Statutes Amendment Act, 2026 (No. 2) ($) (Nixon, JJ)
First Reading — 2189 *(Nov. 17, 2026 aft., passed)*
Second Reading — 2307-13 *(Nov. 23, 2026 eve., passed)*
Committee of the Whole — 2367-73 *(Nov. 24, 2026 eve., passed)*
Third Reading — 2410-13 *(Nov. 25, 2026 aft., passed)*

Bill 42 — Energy, Environment and Utilities Statutes Amendment Act, 2026 (Glubish)
First Reading — 2222 *(Nov. 18, 2026 aft., passed)*
Second Reading — 2400-10 *(Nov. 25, 2026 aft., passed)*

Bill 43 — Transportation (Safe and Sensible Roads) Statutes Amendment Act, 2026 (Dreeshen)
First Reading — 2251 *(Nov. 19, 2026 morn., passed)*
Second Reading — 2373-75 *(Nov. 24, 2026 eve., adjourned)*, 2437-42 *(Nov. 26, 2026 morn., passed)*

Bill 44 — Justice, Public Safety and Information Statutes Amendment Act, 2026 (Amery)
First Reading — 2283-84 *(Nov. 23, 2026 aft., passed)*

Bill 45 — Natural Gas Infrastructure Act (Jean)
First Reading — 2284 *(Nov. 23, 2026 aft., passed)*

Bill 201 — Employment Standards (Protecting Workers' Pay) Amendment Act, 2025 (Ganley)
First Reading — 121 *(Oct. 30, 2025 aft., passed)*
Second Reading — 154-65 *(Nov. 3, 2025 aft., adjourned)*, 274-76 *(Nov. 17, 2025 aft., defeated on division)*

Bill 202 — Conflicts of Interest (Ethical Governance) Amendment Act, 2025 (Kasawski)
First Reading — 248 *(Nov. 6, 2025 aft., passed)*
Second Reading — 276-84 *(Nov. 17, 2025 aft., adjourned)*, 427-31 *(Nov. 24, 2025 aft., defeated on division)*

Bill 203 — Energy Storage Planning for Investment Act (Al-Guneid)
First Reading — 319 *(Nov. 18, 2025 aft., passed)*
Second Reading — 431-39 *(Nov. 24, 2025 aft., adjourned)*, 608-13 *(Dec. 1, 2025 aft., defeated on division)*

Bill 204 — Public Interest Disclosure (Publicly Funded Health Entity Whistleblower Protection) Act (Sweet)
First Reading — 534 *(Nov. 26, 2025 aft., passed)*
Second Reading — 613-20 *(Dec. 1, 2025 aft., adjourned)*, 1014-20 *(Mar. 9, 2026 aft., defeated on division)*

Bill 205 — Non-Disclosure Agreements Act (Johnson)
First Reading — 1129 *(Mar. 19, 2026 morn., passed)*
Second Reading — 1169 *(Mar. 23, 2026 aft., referred to Standing Committee on Families and Communities)*

Bill 206 — Accessible Alberta Act (Renaud)
First Reading — 1063 *(Mar. 12, 2026 aft., passed)*
Second Reading — 1081-94 *(Mar. 16, 2026 aft., adjourned)*, 1166-69 *(Mar. 23, 2026 aft., defeated on division)*

Bill 207 — Primary Provincial Industries Recognition Statutes Amendment Act, 2026 (Dyck)
First Reading — 1269 *(Mar. 26, 2026 morn., passed)*
Second Reading — 1300-1311 *(Mar. 30, 2026 aft., passed)*
Committee of the Whole — 1424-32 *(Apr. 13, 2026 aft., passed)*
Third Reading — 1549-51 *(Apr. 20, 2026 aft., passed)*
Royal Assent — *(May 14, 2026 morn.)* [Comes into force on January 1, 2027; SA 2026 c11]

Bill 208 — Tobacco, Smoking and Vaping Reduction Amendment Act, 2026 (Petrovic)
First Reading — 1507 *(Apr. 16, 2026 morn., passed)*
Second Reading — 1551 *(Apr. 20, 2026 aft., referred to Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future)*

Bill 209 — Consumer Protection (Affordability Measures) Amendment Act, 2026 (Eremenko)
First Reading — 1635 *(Apr. 23, 2026 morn., passed)*
Second Reading — 1672-84 *(May 4, 2026 aft., adjourned)*, 1820-22 *(May 11, 2026 aft., defeated on division)*

Bill 210 — Consumer Protection (Fraud Prevention Measures) Amendment Act, 2026 (Deol)
First Reading — 1781 *(May 7, 2026 aft., passed)*
Second Reading — 1822-28 *(May 11, 2026 aft., defeated on division)*

Bill 211 — Patient Outcomes Reporting Act (Batten)
First Reading — 2009 *(Oct. 29, 2026 morn., passed)*
Second Reading — 2036-50 *(Nov. 2, 2026 aft., defeated on division)*

Bill 212 — Pharmacy Statutes (Rewards Points) Amendment Act, 2026 (Pitt)
First Reading — 1923 *(May 13, 2026 aft., passed)*
Second Reading — 2159 *(Nov. 16, 2026 aft., withdrawn)*

Bill 213 — Alberta Personal Income Tax (Emergency Services Volunteer Tax Credits) Amendment Act, 2026 (Lunty)
First Reading — 1923 *(May 13, 2026 aft., passed)*
Second Reading — 2159-69 *(Nov. 16, 2026 aft., passed)*
Committee of the Whole — 2285-92 *(Nov. 23, 2026 aft., passed with amendments)*

Bill 214 — Alberta Health Care Insurance (Protecting Public Health Care) Amendment Act, 2026 (Hoffman)
First Reading — 2127 *(Nov. 5, 2026 morn., passed)*
Second Reading — 2169-72 *(Nov. 16, 2026 aft., adjourned)*, 2292-98 *(Nov. 23, 2026 aft., adjourned)*

Bill 215 — Municipal Government (Reserve Land Use) Amendment Act, 2026 (Yao)
First Reading — 2222 *(Nov. 18, 2026 aft., passed)*

Bill 216 — Property Statutes (Grocery Store Property Controls) Amendment Act, 2026 (Chapman)

First Reading — 2284 *(Nov. 23, 2026 aft., passed)*

Bill Pr1 — The Ranchmen's Club Ordinance Amendment Act, 2026 (Ceci)

First Reading — 1269 *(Mar. 26, 2026 morn., passed; referred to the Standing Committee on Private Bills)*, 1450 *(Apr. 14, 2026 aft., reported to Assembly; proceeded with)*

Second Reading — 1972 *(May 7, 2026 morn., passed)*

Committee of the Whole — 1792 *(May 7, 2026 morn., passed)*

Third Reading — 1867 *(May 12, 2026 aft., passed)*

Royal Assent — *(May 14, 2026 morn.)* [Comes into force May 14, 2026]

Bill Pr2 — Prairie Bible Institute Amendment Act, 2026 (Sawyer)

First Reading — 1269 *(Mar. 26, 2026 morn., passed; referred to the Standing Committee on Private Bills)*, 1450 *(Apr. 14, 2026 aft., reported to Assembly; proceeded with)*

Second Reading — 1792 *(May 7, 2026 morn., passed)*

Committee of the Whole — 1792-93 *(May 7, 2026 morn., passed)*

Third Reading — 1867 *(May 12, 2026 aft., passed)*

Royal Assent — *(May 14, 2026 morn.)* [Comes into force May 14, 2026]

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