



Legislative Assembly of Alberta

The 31st Legislature
First Session

Standing Committee
on
Private Bills

Bill Pr. 5, Community Foundation of Lethbridge and Southwestern Alberta Act
Bill Pr. 6, Burman University Amendment Act, 2025

Tuesday, March 25, 2025
6:15 p.m.

Transcript No. 31-1-5

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Standing Committee on Private Bills

Pitt, Angela D., Airdrie-East (UC), Chair
Cyr, Scott J., Bonnyville-Cold Lake-St. Paul (UC), Deputy Chair

Bouchard, Eric, Calgary-Lougheed (UC)
Ceci, Joe, Calgary-Buffalo (NDP)
Deol, Jasvir, Edmonton-Meadows (NDP)
Dyck, Nolan B., Grande Prairie (UC)
Hayter, Julia K.U., Calgary-Edgemont (NDP)
Ip, Nathan, Edmonton-South West (NDP)*
Johnson, Jennifer, Lacombe-Ponoka (UC)
Sigurdson, Lori, Edmonton-Riverview (NDP)
Wright, Justin, Cypress-Medicine Hat (UC)

* substitution for Julia Hayter

Bill Pr. 5 Sponsor

Miyashiro, Rob, Lethbridge-West (NDP)

Bill Pr. 6 Sponsor

Johnson, Jennifer, Lacombe-Ponoka (UC)

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6:15 p.m.

Tuesday, March 25, 2025

[Ms Pitt in the chair]

The Chair: Hon. members, I'd like to welcome members, staff, and guests to this meeting of the Standing Committee on Private Bills.

My name is Angela Pitt, the MLA for Airdrie-East and chair of this committee. I'd like to ask that members and those joining at this committee table introduce themselves for the record, and for the record I would like to note the following substitution: Mr. Ip for Member Hayter. I'll start with Member Bouchard, to my right.

Mr. Bouchard: Hello. Thank you, Chair. Eric Bouchard, the MLA for Calgary-Lougheed.

Mrs. Johnson: Jennifer Johnson, MLA, Lacombe-Ponoka.

Mr. Cyr: Scott Cyr, Bonnyville-Cold Lake-St. Paul.

Mr. Deol: Jasvir Deol, MLA for Edmonton-Meadows.
Thank you.

Ms Sigurdson: Good afternoon. Lori Sigurdson, Edmonton-Riverview.

Member Ceci: Good evening. Joe Ceci, Calgary-Buffalo.

Mr. Ip: Nathan Ip, Edmonton-South West.

Ms Govindarajan: Vani Govindarajan, Parliamentary Counsel.

Ms Robert: Good evening. Nancy Robert, clerk of *Journals* and committees.

Mr. Roth: Good evening. Aaron Roth, committee clerk.

The Chair: Wonderful. A few housekeeping items before we turn to the business at hand. Please note that the microphones are operated by *Hansard* staff. Committee proceedings are live streamed on the Internet and broadcast on Alberta Assembly TV. The audio- and videostream and transcript of the meeting can be assessed via the Legislative Assembly website. Please set your cellphones and other devices to silent for the duration of the meeting.

I would like to draw everyone's attention to the draft meeting agenda. Would anyone like to propose any amendments?

Would a member like to move a motion to approve the agenda? Anybody? Mr. Cyr. Mr. Cyr moves that the Standing Committee on Private Bills approve the proposed agenda as distributed for its March 25, 2025, meeting. All in favour, please say aye. Any opposed, say no. So carried.

We also have a set of minutes from the last meeting. Would anyone like to propose any amendments? No.

Would anyone like to move the motion to approve the minutes? Oh, my gosh. Mr. Ceci. MLA Ceci moves that the Standing Committee on Private Bills approve the minutes as distributed of its meeting held on May 7, 2024. All those in favour, please say aye. Any opposed, please say no. So carried.

At this point I would like to invite Ms Govindarajan to provide us with an overview of the process for reviewing the private bills.

Ms Govindarajan: Thank you, Madam Chair. This will be a brief refresher as most committee members will be familiar from last spring with the functions and process for consideration of private bills. Unlike public bills, including private members' public bills, that have general application to everyone in the province, private bills provide powers or benefits to specific individuals or

organizations to accommodate an extraordinary situation or to provide limited exemptions from the general law. Although a private bill only applies to a specific individual or group, it does become law with the same force and effect as any other law in Alberta.

Part of this committee's role involves considering the interests of a petitioner as well as potentially affected parties. What is important for committee members to keep in mind throughout this process is that a private bill should not be used to achieve a particular result if there's another legal remedy or to create an unfair advantage for a particular individual or organization.

The Assembly's rules that govern the private bills process are found in part 8 of the standing orders, and they provide for two main functions of this committee. First is to review the petitions received this calendar year and consider whether they've complied with the standing order requirements, which is why this committee has convened this evening. If the committee is satisfied that they have met those requirements, the chair will report back to the Assembly, and the bill relating to that petition would then be introduced.

The bill would then stand referred back to this committee for its second task, which is to make a recommendation that the bill proceed, not proceed, or proceed with amendment. That consideration involves a hearing with the petitioner, and depending on the subject matter of the bill the committee may seek comments from government departments.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

The Chair: Perfect. Does anyone have any questions?

Perfect. Two petitions have been received for our committee's consideration this spring. I would like to invite Parliamentary Counsel to provide a brief overview of the petitions and the requirements under standing orders 90 through 94.

Ms Govindarajan: Thank you again, Madam Chair. This year the Assembly received two petitions. As noted in my memo to members in advance of this meeting, any member of the committee can review the petition documents at any time in our office, and I also have them with me this evening should any members wish to see them.

The first petition received is for the passage of a bill to repeal and replace the Community Foundation of Lethbridge and Southwestern Alberta Act. The petitioner submitted letters of petition to the Legislative Assembly and Lieutenant Governor, a cheque for the required sum, a draft bill, and is advised that Member Miyashiro has agreed to be the sponsor of the bill. They provided a statutory declaration confirming that they advertised once a week for two consecutive weeks in six newspapers of general circulation in southwestern Alberta.

The second petition received is for the passage of a bill to amend the Burman University Act. The petitioner submitted two required letters of petition, a check for the required sum, a draft bill, and proof of publication of advertisements in the *Lacombe Express* once a week for two consecutive weeks. A statutory declaration confirming publication was provided by the March 12 deadline, but it was without original signature. I can advise committee members that an original statutory declaration was received today. Finally, Mrs. Johnson has agreed to be the sponsor of the bill.

In my view both petitioners have complied with the standing order requirements.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms Govindarajan. My apologies for missing your first name.

Do any members have any questions for this part of the process?

These petitions seem to be in compliance with the standing orders 90 to 94. With that settled, in accordance with Standing Order 99(1) I will provide an oral report to the Assembly tomorrow regarding a review of the petitions, following which the bills may be introduced.

The final matter for the committee to deal with tonight is the scheduling of a hearing with the petitioners and the committee's deliberations on each of the proposed bills. The best practice of the committee has generally been to schedule hearings several weeks after reviewing a petition for a bill. This timeline provides the petitioners with ample notice of their presentation date. It gives the relevant ministries time to respond to the proposed legislation and allows Parliamentary Counsel to report any observations or recommendations on the bill to the committee.

Based on the work of previous committees and for efficiency, as this is the committee of efficiency, we should hear from both petitioners at the same meeting and set aside an hour for each bill. One potential hearing date that has been raised is April 15, 2025, probably in the evening.

Do any members have any concerns with this date? Or morning? I mean, not everybody is a morning person. Morning, I suppose, is the potential. Sounds good?

Okay; 10:15 on April 15.

Mr. Deol: We have a meeting.

The Chair: In the morning?

Ms Sigurdson: The chamber of commerce has a presentation on tariffs.

The Chair: In the morning?

Ms Sigurdson: They do. It's at 9. It's okay.

The Chair: You could do both. We'll start at 10. You'll get an hour. Or do you want to do the evening?

Member Ceci: No.

Ms Sigurdson: No.

The Chair: No. Okay. I mean, the chair prefers the evening, but it seems like you guys all are in the morning.

We'll do 10:15 on April 15 unless it's just not possible.

Mr. Dyck, can you just introduce yourself for the record?

Mr. Dyck: Absolutely. Nolan Dyck, MLA for Grande Prairie.

The Chair: Perfect. Okay. Can I have someone move that we meet on April 15 at 10:15 a.m.? Mr. Ceci moves that

the Standing Committee on Private Bills meet to hear from the petitioners for Bill Pr. 5 and Bill Pr. 6 and hold deliberations on April 15, 2025, at 10:15 a.m.

All those in favour, please say aye. Any opposed, please say no.

Okay. Any other business for discussion in this committee?

Ms Robert: Did you call the vote?

The Chair: Yeah. I called the vote.

Ms Robert: Did you announce . . .

The Chair: Yeah.

It was carried.

Ms Robert: Okay.

The Chair: At least now it is.

Okay. Any other items?

I'm seeing none. Perfect. The next meeting date is April 15, 2025.

Would a member like to move to adjourn? Mrs. Johnson moves that the March 25, 2025, meeting of the Standing Committee on Private Bills be adjourned. All those in favour, please say aye. Any opposed, please say no. So carried. The meeting is adjourned.

[The committee adjourned at 6:24 p.m.]

