



Legislative Assembly of Alberta

The 31st Legislature
Second Session

Standing Committee
on
Private Bills

Bill Pr. 1, The Ranchmen's Club Ordinance Amendment Act, 2026
Bill Pr. 2, Prairie Bible Institute Amendment Act, 2026

Tuesday, March 24, 2026
11:04 a.m.

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Standing Committee on Private Bills

Johnson, Jennifer, Lacombe-Ponoka (UC), Chair
Cyr, Scott J., Bonnyville-Cold Lake-St. Paul (UC), Deputy Chair
Armstrong-Homeniuk, Jackie, Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville (UC)
Bouchard, Eric, Calgary-Lougheed (UC)
Ceci, Joe, Calgary-Buffalo (NDP)
Deol, Jasvir, Edmonton-Meadows (NDP)
Dyck, Nolan B., Grande Prairie (UC)
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Lovely, Jacqueline, Camrose (UC)
Sigurdson, Lori, Edmonton-Riverview (NDP)
Vacant

Bill Pr. 1 Sponsor

Ceci, Joe, Calgary-Buffalo (NDP)

Bill Pr. 2 Sponsor

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11:04 a.m.

Tuesday, March 24, 2026

[Mrs. Johnson in the chair]

The Chair: Good morning, members. I would like to welcome members, staff, and guests to this meeting of the Standing Committee on Private Bills.

My name is Jennifer Johnson, MLA for Lacombe-Ponoka and chair of this committee. I will ask that members and those joining the committee at the table introduce themselves for the record, starting on my right.

Ms Lovely: Hello, everyone. MLA Jackie Lovely from the Camrose constituency.

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

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

Mr. Bouchard: Eric Bouchard, Calgary-Lougheed.

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

Mr. Deol: Good morning. Jasvir Deol for Edmonton-Meadows.

Ms Hayter: Julia Hayter, MLA for Calgary-Edgemont.

Member Ceci: Hello. Joe Ceci, Calgary-Buffalo.

Ms Govindarajan: Good morning. Vani Govindarajan, Parliamentary Counsel.

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

Ms Rempel: Good morning. Jody Rempel, committee clerk.

The Chair: Thank you.

For the record, I will let you know there are no substitutions this morning.

A few housekeeping items before we turn to the business at hand. Please note the microphones . . .

Ms Armstrong-Homeniuk: Excuse me, Chair. Do you want me to introduce myself, too?

The Chair: Oh. I apologize, Member. Please go ahead.

Ms Armstrong-Homeniuk: Hi. Jackie Armstrong-Homeniuk, MLA, Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville.

The Chair: Thank you so much, and I apologize for that.

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I'll draw everyone's attention to the draft meeting agenda. Would anyone like to propose any amendments? Seeing none, would a member move a motion to approve the agenda? I see Mr.

Bouchard has moved the agenda. All in favour? Opposed? Online? Carried.

We also have a set of minutes from the last meeting last year. Would anyone like to propose any amendments to the minutes? Seeing none, would a member move a motion to approve the minutes? Ms Lovely. All in favour? Any opposed? Carried.

At this point I would like to invite Parliamentary Counsel to provide us with an overview of the process for reviewing private bills. Please go ahead.

Ms Govindarajan: Thank you, Madam Chair. Most committee members will be familiar from last spring with the functions and process for consideration of private bills, so I will try to be brief, subject to any questions.

Unlike public bills that have general application to everyone in the province, including private members' public bills, private bills provide powers or benefits to specific individuals or organizations to accommodate an extraordinary situation or to provide a limited exception to the general law. Some things that committee members will want to keep in mind throughout this process, particularly during deliberations, are that 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 the petitioner as well as potentially affected parties. 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.

There are certain procedural rules that are specific to the private bills process, and those are found in Part 8 of the Standing Orders. Those rules provide for the two main duties of this committee. The first is to review the petitions received this calendar year and consider whether they've complied with the standing order requirements for the application.

This is the purpose of this morning's meeting. If the committee is satisfied that they've met the requirements, the chair will report back to the Assembly and the bills relating to the petitions can be introduced for first reading. Those bills would then stand referred back to this committee, who would then hold a hearing with the petitioner, may seek comments from government departments or others, and then make a recommendation that the bill proceed, not proceed, or proceed with amendment.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

The Chair: Thank you.

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

Ms Govindarajan: Thank you, Madam Chair. The documents that are required for a petition for a private bill are set out in Standing Order 94, and they include two letters of petition, one addressed to the Legislative Assembly and one to the Lieutenant Governor; a statutory declaration confirming that they provided public notice in the areas of Alberta to which the application relates and includes information about the nature and the object of the bill and the location of any proposed work or affected property; the required fee; two copies of a draft bill; and the name of the member who's agreed to be the sponsor.

This year the Assembly has received two petitions. The first petition that was received is for the passage of a bill to amend the Ranchmen's Club ordinance. The petitioner has submitted letters of petition, a cheque for the required fee, a draft bill, and advised that

Mr. Wright agreed to be the sponsor of the bill. I can also advise the committee that I've since received correspondence from the petitioner, Mr. Shandro, relating to changing the sponsor to be Member Ceci, who is the MLA representing the constituency in which the organization is located. I understand that Member Ceci and the petitioner are agreeable and that Mr. Wright is aware. The bill sponsor will be updated accordingly before introduction of the bill.

11:10

Finally, in respect of that application a statutory declaration was provided confirming a published notice once a week for two consecutive weeks in the *Calgary Herald*.

The second petition received is for the passage of a bill to amend an act to incorporate the Prairie Bible Institute. The petitioner also submitted two required petition letters, a cheque for the required fee, a draft bill, and proof of publication of notice in the *Edmonton Journal*, *Red Deer Advocate*, *Three Hills Capital*, *Calgary Herald*, and *Lethbridge Herald*, and Mrs. Sawyer has agreed to be the sponsor.

All the petition materials, including the notice and the draft bill, were provided to members on the committee's internal website. In my view, the petitioners have complied with the standing order requirements. I have the petition materials here which members can review at any time, including this morning.

That's everything from me, Madam Chair, unless there are any questions.

The Chair: All right. Thank you so much.

These petitions seem to be in compliance with standing orders 90 to 94. Do members have any questions they wish to raise at this time? Mr. Ceci.

Member Ceci: Just an addendum to what Vani has just said. In addition to Mr. Shandro asking that the name be changed, I have talked to MLA Wright and he is agreeable to the transfer as well.

The Chair: Thank you for that.

In accordance with Standing Order 99(1), I will provide an oral report to the Assembly this afternoon regarding a review of the petitions following which the bills may be introduced in the Assembly by their respective sponsors.

The final matter for the committee to deal with today is the scheduling of a hearing with the petitioners and the committee's

deliberations on each of the proposed bills. The past practice of the committee has generally been to schedule hearings several weeks after reviewing a petition for a bill. This timeline provides petitioners with ample notice of their presentation date. It gives the relevant ministries time to respond to the proposed legislation, and it 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, we should hear from both petitioners at the same meeting and should set aside an hour for each bill.

One potential hearing date has been April 13 from 8:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. Do members have any thoughts about this date?

Member Ceci: That's a Monday morning. It's also Vaisakhi. It's just difficult for me to get here for Monday mornings from Calgary, so I hope we could find an alternate date that works for all of us.

Ms Robert: Madam Chair, I wonder if you might want to call a recess so we can talk this out while not online.

The Chair: Yes. I will call a recess at this time and we can have a further discussion.

[The committee adjourned from 11:13 a.m. to 11:22 a.m.]

The Chair: We are looking at a date to meet with our petitioners, and I'm suggesting April 14, Tuesday morning, from 8 till 10. Is this agreeable with everyone? Would anybody like to make that motion?

It's made by Ms Hayter. Moved by Ms Hayter that the Standing Committee on Private Bills will meet to hear from the petitioners for Bill Pr. 1 and Bill Pr. 2 and hold deliberations on April 14, 2026, from 8 to 10 a.m.

Is there discussion? All in favour? Any opposed? Online? Carried.

Are there any other items for discussion under other business? Seeing none, our next meeting will be April 14, 2026.

Member Ceci: Move to adjourn.

The Chair: Member Ceci has moved to adjourn our meeting. All in favour? Any opposed? Carried.

Thank you, all.

[The committee adjourned at 11:23 a.m.]

