



Legislative Assembly of Alberta

The 30th Legislature
Second Session

Standing Committee
on
Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills

Bill Pr. 2, The United Church of Canada Amendment Act, 2021
Bill 214, Eastern Slopes Protection Act

Tuesday, April 13, 2021
10 a.m.

Transcript No. 30-2-18

**Legislative Assembly of Alberta
The 30th Legislature
Second Session**

Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills

Ellis, Mike, Calgary-West (UC), Chair
Schow, Joseph R., Cardston-Siksika (UC), Deputy Chair

Amery, Mickey K., Calgary-Cross (UC)
Dang, Thomas, Edmonton-South (NDP)
Getson, Shane C., Lac Ste. Anne-Parkland (UC)
Glasgo, Michaela L., Brooks-Medicine Hat (UC)
Irwin, Janis, Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood (NDP)
Nielsen, Christian E., Edmonton-Decore (NDP)
Rosin, Miranda D., Banff-Kananaskis (UC)*
Rutherford, Brad, Leduc-Beaumont (UC)
Schmidt, Marlin, Edmonton-Gold Bar (NDP)**
Sigurdson, Lori, Edmonton-Riverview (NDP)
Sigurdson, R.J., Highwood (UC)
Williams, Dan D.A., Peace River (UC)***

* substitution for Brad Rutherford

** substitution for Lori Sigurdson

*** substitution for Shane Getson

Bill Pr. 2 Sponsor

Phillips, Shannon, Lethbridge-West (NDP)

Bill 214 Sponsor

Notley, Rachel, Edmonton-Strathcona (NDP)

Support Staff

Trafton Koenig
Michael Kulicki
Warren Huffman
Janet Schwegel
Amanda LeBlanc

Senior Parliamentary Counsel
Clerk of Committees and Research Services
Committee Clerk
Director of Parliamentary Programs
Deputy Editor of *Alberta Hansard*

10 a.m.**Tuesday, April 13, 2021**

[Mr. Ellis in the chair]

The Chair: All right. Good morning, everyone. I'd like to call this meeting of the Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills to order and welcome everyone in attendance.

My name is Mike Ellis, the MLA for Calgary-West and chair of the committee. I'd like to ask that members and those joining the committee at the table introduce themselves for the record, and then I'll call on those joining in by videoconference. We'll begin to my right. Go ahead, Mr. Schow.

Mr. Schow: Joseph Schow, MLA for Cardston-Siksika.

Mr. Schmidt: Marlin Schmidt, Edmonton-Gold Bar.

Mr. Dang: Good morning. Thomas Dang, Edmonton-South.

Mr. Nielsen: Good morning, everyone. Chris Nielsen, MLA for Edmonton-Decore.

Mr. Koenig: Good morning. Trafton Koenig with the Parliamentary Counsel office.

Mr. Kulicki: Good morning. Michael Kulicki, clerk of committees and research services.

Mr. Huffman: Good morning. Warren Huffman, committee clerk.

The Chair: Okay. Thank you.

We have folks joining us via videoconference. Maybe I'll just call on you, and then we'll get you to introduce yourselves. Member Irwin, if we could start with you, please.

Member Irwin: Good morning. Janis Irwin, Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood.

The Chair: Thank you.

Member Williams. Are you on?

Mr. Williams: Dan Williams, MLA for Peace River.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Member R.J. Sigurdson.

Mr. Sigurdson: R.J. Sigurdson, MLA for Highwood.

The Chair: Thank you.

Member Amery.

Mr. Amery: Good morning, Chair. Mickey Amery, MLA, Calgary-Cross.

The Chair: Thank you.

Member Glasgo.

Ms Glasgo: Michaela Glasgo, MLA, Brooks-Medicine Hat.

The Chair: Thank you.

Member Rosin.

Ms Rosin: Miranda Rosin, MLA for Banff-Kananaskis.

The Chair: Well, thank you very much, everybody, for introducing yourselves for the record.

We do have some official substitutions: Member Marlin Schmidt for Member Lori Sigurdson, Member Miranda Rosin for Member

Brad Rutherford, and Member Dan Williams for Member Shane Getson.

A few housekeeping rules to address before we turn to the business at hand. Pursuant to the February 22, 2021, memo from the hon. Speaker Cooper I remind everyone of the updated committee room protocols, which encourage members to wear masks in committee rooms and while seated except when speaking, at which time they may choose not to wear a face covering. Based on the recommendations from the chief medical officer of health regarding physical distancing, attendees at today's meeting are reminded to leave the appropriate distance between themselves and other meeting participants.

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 transcripts of the meeting can be accessed via the Legislative Assembly website, and those participating by videoconference are asked to please turn on your camera when speaking and mute your microphone when not speaking.

To request to be put on the speakers list, members participating virtually are asked to e-mail or send a message in the group chat to the committee clerk, and members in the room are asked to please wave or otherwise signal the chair. Please set your cellphones and other devices to silent for the duration of the meeting.

We'll next move to the approval of the agenda. Are there any changes or additions to the draft agenda?

Hearing and seeing none, would somebody like to make a motion to approve the agenda?

Mr. Nielsen: So moved, Chair.

The Chair: Mr. Nielsen. Thank you very much, sir. Mr. Nielsen moves that the agenda for the April 13, 2021, meeting of the Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills be adopted as distributed. All those in favour, say aye. On the phone? Thank you. Any opposed? Hearing and seeing none, that motion is carried.

We'll next move to the approval of the minutes. Hon. members, we have the minutes of the last few meetings to review. First, we have the draft minutes from our meeting on March 17. Are there any errors or omissions to note?

If not, can I get somebody to make a motion to approve the minutes?

Mr. Schow: So moved.

The Chair: All right. Thank you, Mr. Schow. Mr. Schow moves that the minutes of the March 17, 2021, meeting of the Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills be approved as distributed. All those in favour, say aye. On the phone and videoconference? Thank you. Any opposed? Hearing and seeing none, that motion has been carried.

Next are the draft minutes of the March 22 meeting. Do members have any errors or omissions to note?

Hearing and seeing none, could I get somebody to move a draft motion for the March 22 meeting?

Mr. Nielsen: So moved, Chair.

The Chair: Mr. Nielsen moves that the minutes of the March 22, 2021, meeting of the Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills be approved as distributed. All those in favour, say aye. On the phone and videoconference? Thank you. Any opposed? Hearing and seeing none, that motion is carried.

Finally, there are the draft minutes from the March 24 meeting. Has anyone noticed any errors or omissions?

Okay. Hearing and seeing none, can I get a member to make a motion to approve the minutes of our last meeting? Mr. Nielsen again. Thank you very much, sir. Mr. Nielsen moves that the minutes of the March 24, 2021, meeting of the Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills be approved as distributed. All those in favour, say aye. On the phone and videoconference? Thank you. Any opposed? Hearing and seeing none, okay. Thank you very much. That motion is carried.

Next we're going to go to the review of Bill Pr. 2, The United Church of Canada Amendment Act, 2021, and the decision on petitioner participation via videoconference. The petitioner for Bill Pr. 2, The United Church of Canada Amendment Act, 2021, has sent a letter making a request of the committee in regard to their participation in the hearing on this bill currently scheduled for Monday, April 19, 2021. This letter was posted on the internal committee website on April 9 for members to review.

At this time I would like to invite Mr. Trafton Koenig from the office of Parliamentary Counsel to provide some context and information on the petitioner's request. Mr. Koenig, go ahead, sir.

Mr. Koenig: All right. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'll keep this brief. As the chair has said, the petitioner has asked to attend the hearing virtually. Typically, as you may recall from last year, petitioners give testimony under oath in person, and the purpose of that is to have that information provided on the public record and also to allow members to satisfy themselves on the particulars of a private bill before making a recommendation.

It's also important to keep in mind the Assembly's disciplinary powers with respect to giving false evidence under the Legislative Assembly Act. The challenge with the petitioner appearing virtually is that the jurisdiction of the Assembly doesn't extend outside of Alberta, so it wouldn't be possible to administer an oath, you know, in the normal course. On the other hand, current public health measures make it really difficult for the petitioner, who is located in Toronto, to attend the meeting in Edmonton in person.

One possible option that the committee may wish to consider to resolve this issue could be to request the petitioner to submit a sworn statement in the form of an affidavit before the hearing. The affidavit could include any information necessary for members to have under oath before deciding on a recommendation with respect to Pr. 2. The petitioner could then attend virtually but not be required to take an oath at the outset, as would normally take place.

If the committee decides to go in that direction, it may also want to consider the hearing date, which is tentatively scheduled for April 19, to allow for sufficient time for the affidavit to be submitted and also for Parliamentary Counsel's report under Standing Order 104 to take into account any of that material that is submitted.

I'm happy to answer any supplementary questions that members may have about this.

The Chair: Okay. Great. I will open up the floor to discussion. Thank you, Mr. Koenig.

Would anybody like to ask Mr. Koenig some questions? Yeah, Mr. Nielsen. Go ahead, sir.

Mr. Nielsen: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I guess that with that affidavit, I mean, there shouldn't probably be any difficulties getting that sent over here electronically, or does it need to be an original?

Mr. Koenig: I would suggest that the committee, if they do decide to make a deadline if they request that an affidavit be provided, give enough time that an original affidavit can be provided. That may

be, you know, for example, the end of next week. That would potentially be enough time for the petitioner to gather all of the required information, whatever the committee decides it wants to have, and then to have that couriered to Edmonton for us.

Mr. Nielsen: So we do need the original? I guess that maybe the committee could discuss whether an electronic version might do in the interim.

The Chair: I guess, in my experience, you know, an electronic version has been acceptable in the courts in the past. I'm dating myself here, but even a facsimile has been accepted in the past, so I don't see why that would be inappropriate.

Mr. Koenig: Yeah. If the committee wanted to expedite the process as much as possible, it could ask for an electronic copy, with the original to follow afterwards. That would work.

Mr. Nielsen: That would be my suggestion, for discussion, at least, anyway.

The Chair: Sure. Does anybody else have any questions, comments, or concerns they'd like to raise?

If not, I mean, I do have a possible draft motion.

Mr. Schow: I'd be interested in hearing it.

The Chair: You'd like to hear the draft motion? Okay. All right. It's long, so please bear with me.

Mr. Dang: Chair, perhaps before we go on?

The Chair: Sure.

10:10

Mr. Dang: Can I request unanimous consent on a different issue? I noted that due to the ongoing pandemic rules, we don't have a page in the area, so it's a little bit difficult for the Leader of the Opposition to receive notes from her staff. I'm just wondering if, through unanimous consent, perhaps her staff could sit at the table with her.

The Chair: I have no issue with it. I guess I'll ask for unanimous consent. Is there anyone who opposes a staff member sitting at the table to assist our presenter? Hearing and seeing none, that's granted. Thank you very much.

Okay. Thank you, Mr. Dang. Going back to Pr. 2, do you have a question?

Mr. Dang: No.

The Chair: Okay. All right. I'm going to read this draft motion. It's quite long, so please bear with me here, and then if somebody has a question, we can also talk about that.

Mr. Schow moved that

the Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills (a) direct Parliamentary Counsel to request that the petitioner for Bill Pr. 2, The United Church of Canada Amendment Act, 2021, provide an affidavit to the committee on or before Friday, April 23, 2021, containing the following information: (i) the actions taken by the petitioner to identify whether the interests of any third parties would be adversely impacted by the proposed amendments to The United Church of Canada Act contained in Bill Pr. 2 if enacted, including whether the petitioner is aware of any objections to the proposed amendments; (ii) whether the petitioner is aware of any impacts or potential impacts on the ownership of property by The United Church of Canada or any of its congregations in Alberta that may

result from the enactment of the proposed amendments to The United Church of Canada Act contained in Bill Pr. 2; (iii) whether the petitioner is aware of any current or potential litigation or other legal proceedings in connection with the restructuring of the United Church of Canada and its assets and liabilities in Alberta; (iv) exhibit evidencing the resolution by the United Church of Canada authorizing its restructuring such as a certified copy of the minutes of the meeting at which the resolution was passed; and (v) any additional information the petitioner has and believes is relevant to the review of Bill Pr. 2; and (b) subject to the petitioner providing an affidavit in accordance with clause (a), permit the petitioner and their legal counsel to participate by videoconference at the committee's hearing on Bill Pr. 2.

Mr. Schow, thank you very much for that motion.

Are there any questions, comments, or concerns? Okay.

Hearing and seeing none, I will put the question, then, to the committee. All those in favour of the motion as presented by Mr. Schow, say aye. On the phone and videoconference? Any opposed? Hearing and seeing none,

that motion has been carried.

Thank you.

Let's go to the hearing date, hon. members. To provide enough time before the hearing for the petitioner to provide an affidavit and for Parliamentary Counsel to provide a report on Bill Pr. 2 to the committee, the committee will need to reschedule the date of the hearing. In order to do this, we'll need a motion to rescind the following motion, agreed to at the committee's March 24, 2021, meeting.

Moved by Mr. Schow that

the Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills meet to hear from the petitioner on Bill Pr. 2 and hold deliberations on Monday, April 19, 2021, at 9 a.m.

Would a member like to make a motion to rescind that motion?

Thank you, Mr. Nielsen. Mr. Nielsen will move that

the Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills rescind the following motion, agreed to at its March 24, 2021, meeting: moved by Mr. Schow that the Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills meet to hear from the petitioner on Bill Pr. 2 and hold deliberations on Monday, April 19, 2021, at 9 a.m.

All those in favour, say aye. Thank you. On phone and videoconference? Thank you. Any opposed? Hearing and seeing none,

that motion has been carried.

Okay. Thank you. We'll now need a member to move a new motion for the hearing to be held on Monday, May 3, 2021, at 9 a.m. Would a member like to move that motion? Mr. Schow, thank you.

The Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills will meet to hear from the petitioner on Bill Pr. 2 and hold deliberations on Monday, May 3, 2021, at 9 a.m.

All those in favour, say aye. On the phone and videoconference? Thank you. Any opposed? Hearing and seeing none,

that motion has been carried.

Fantastic. Now we are ready to hear the review of Bill 214, Eastern Slopes Protection Act. Member Notley, if I could just get you to introduce yourself and your guest, and then I'll have a couple more things I need to read here.

Ms Notley: Okay. I am Rachel Notley, MLA for Edmonton-Strathcona and Leader of Her Majesty's Official Opposition. I am joined by our director of policy and issues, Amy Nugent.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Member.

A presentation by Member Rachel Notley, MLA for Edmonton-Strathcona. Hon. members, Bill 214, the Eastern Slopes Protection

Act, was referred to the committee on Wednesday, April 7, 2021, in accordance with the Standing Order 74.11, and the committee's report to the Assembly is due on April 21. At this time I would like to invite Member Rachel Notley, the MLA for Edmonton-Strathcona, to provide a five-minute presentation, and then I will open up the floor to questions from committee members.

Member Notley, thank you very much for being here. The floor is yours.

Ms Notley: Well, thank you very much. It's really quite an honour for me to be here. As some people might know, I'm actually the longest serving MLA in the Legislature, going back to 2008, and this is the first time that I've ever had the opportunity to have a private member's bill at least considered in the Legislature during that time. So it's a very exciting privilege for me to be a part of this, and I also thank the Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar for his support in allowing that to happen.

You know, it's not common in Alberta or, quite frankly, anywhere that we see such a powerful consensus emerge from so many people from so many different walks of life so quickly as we did over the issue of coal. And, of course, that's what my private member's bill is talking about. But we know that when that kind of consensus emerges, it is our job as legislators to listen and to be responsive. Almost 70 per cent of Albertans who were surveyed in a ThinkHQ poll in February articulated an opposition to any decision to allow increased coal mining in our Rocky Mountains. Moreover, I think that all members of the Legislature and government alike have been, like I have, hearing directly from Albertans on this issue in e-mail, in snail mail, on social media, town halls, and forums of every type, that Albertans are very concerned about development of coal in the Rocky Mountains. They've been hearing from ranchers, from farmers, from indigenous communities, from councillors, reeves, businesses, landowners, recreationalists. Really, everyone has taken the time to say: "Stop this. Put the coal policy back in place and protect the eastern slopes and headwaters against coal mining." They are saying that their mountains and the water there need to be protected, not only today but for future generations.

Now, I have to say that in February of this year, when Minister Savage announced that the coal policy would be restored, we were originally cautiously optimistic that the public outcry had been heard and responded to. Unfortunately, we then discovered that instead of fully restoring coal protection, the UCP and the minister had left leases and exploration permits in place, only cancelling a handful of leases, with at least five exploration permits continuing and the associated work and development and risk to these protected areas also continuing unabated.

This means that hundreds of kilometres of roads are being built in extremely sensitive lands and with significant risk of contamination and disruption to headwaters. At that time, when the government failed to act and once again used language like "consult on a modern coal policy" as opposed to "heard what Albertans said and will not move forward on coal," it was very clear to me and to our NDP environment critic, Marlin Schmidt, that we needed to act. We knew that we needed to put further protections in place, and that is what would be done through this bill. That's why last week I introduced the Eastern Slopes Protection Act.

10:20

The act responds to this groundswell from Albertans of all walks of life to protect the Rocky Mountains and their sensitive headwaters for future generations. The purpose of the bill is to protect sensitive lands and watersheds, including the Oldman River basin, and to protect indigenous and aboriginal rights and

traditional activities. The lands and waters of the Rocky Mountains support communities, businesses, biodiversity, and the drinking water of so many Albertans, including in our biggest cities.

Specifically, if passed, the bill would do four things. First, it immediately cancels all exploration activities across the eastern slopes, which means a stop to the road building and the drill pits. Second, it permanently prohibits new coal mining and related activities in category 1 and category 2 lands and cancels all existing coal leases on these lands. Third, the bill prohibits coal mining and related activities in category 3 and 4 lands, pending the development of a thorough regional plan, following extensive consultation with residents of the eastern slopes, indigenous communities, elders, as well as municipalities, ranchers, farmers, agriculture, tourism, and recreational businesses, and, of course, representatives of the coal industry and other economic sectors. Lastly, the bill prohibits the AER from issuing approvals, including water permits, in categories 3 and 4 and cancels leases issued under the UCP's cancellation of the 1976 coal development policy in May 2020, pending the outcome of the regional plans I described being fully developed. Existing mines in operation or full production stage would be unaffected by this bill.

The Chair: Member, you can finish your final thoughts.

Ms Notley: Thank you. I've got just a couple more minutes.

The Chair: Yeah. No worries.

Ms Notley: Now, based on Department of Energy decision documents that became available through court documents earlier this year, it is clear that the government was advised in March 2020 that it had several different approaches it could take, including one where it actually left prohibitions in place from the coal policy while it took a regional planning approach. Unfortunately, the Minister of Energy rejected that particular strategy, notwithstanding that it was put forward as a reasonable way to move forward. Department officials also advised of the option and benefits of consulting before rescinding the coal policy in 2020, and the government rejected that. They decided to rescind it, then they reinstated the coal policy, but at the same time, unfortunately, we still have all the ongoing development that I've just described. So that was the wrong decision.

We are not now in a position where we can trust the government's coal consultation policy – and I'm happy to answer questions about that going forward – and we're not in a position to allow the ongoing exploration. This bill would stop that, and we know that tens of thousands of Albertans are looking to see exactly that outcome secured through our work here in the Legislature, and that would be done by way of passing this bill.

The Chair: Thank you, Member, and thank you for your presentation.

Next we're going to go to questions from our committee members. As is convention, of course, this is an opposition member's bill, so we're going to start with the government members. First on our list we have Member R.J. Sigurdson. Before I start the clock, I just want to ask members, because the list is slowly growing, please do not monopolize the time. I just ask that you have a very quick question with a very quick supplemental. Also, with our guest, please do your best to keep your answers short. Thank you very much.

Member R.J. Sigurdson, go ahead.

Mr. Sigurdson: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you, Ms Notley, for your presentation on your Bill 214. I just want to start by, first,

saying that the future of the eastern slopes and its relationship with coal and coal development is of great concern to an overwhelming number of my constituents in Highwood and, I recognize, across the entire province as well. I know that you had stated that this bill is in response to a groundswell, as you had framed it, I guess an outcry from people in Alberta that are concerned, and that's why you're doing this. I would actually contest that our duty as legislators is not just when there's public outcry to be taking care of the environment, but we should be stewards of that at all times when we're serving.

Now, I've noticed that when you were Premier of the province, there were multiple developments that your government had approved. Even your Minister of Energy had said that there were multiple coal interests that the Alberta government would continue to develop. Under your tenure there were approvals for exploration in Tent Mountain. You approved mines. I guess, you know, this is a question that I've asked simply to many presenters with public bills. This seems to be a complete reversal of what you were doing as the Premier in your time. Why the complete change in what you had done for years as Premier? Now you're completely turning that around and heading in a totally opposite direction. Why now?

The Chair: Let's let her answer. Thank you.

Ms Notley: Well, thank you. I wouldn't frame our record on this quite the way that you have, so I take issue with it being a complete U-turn. That being said, there's no question that we were presented with a mine that had actually been approved in 2014, where there were minor additional permits that needed to be approved subsequent to that, under our tenure, but the primary decision had already been made. That was in category 3 or 4 lands. So, yes, that metallurgical mine went ahead, and the final permits were issued under our watch.

There was also, of course, the much-talked-about Ram River letter, and I would argue that the interpretation of that letter has been torqued. Quite clearly, what that letter said was that whatever decisions would be made would be made under the principles that were clearly outlined in the 1976 coal policy. So it didn't make any guarantees. It certainly did not amount to an approval. I believe there was potentially one other, again in Hinton, and it was an extension of an already operating coal mine again in category 3 or 4 lands.

Now, that being said, though, I will be perfectly honest that we, too, are responding to the tens of thousands of Albertans who have told us: "You know what? We don't even want this to be happening as a pro forma in category 3 or 4, my friends. You guys are off in la-la land, you politicians. It's time for you to listen to us. It's time for you to do a more comprehensive analysis of the whole regional plan on a cumulative basis and consider what these mines mean for our agricultural sector, our tourism sector, our recreational sector, as well as the water supply for our major cities and smaller cities that are impacted." There's been a massive upswell, as I said, at the outset, and our job is to listen. I was never presented with this kind of upswell when I was Premier, but I can tell you that if I was, I would have responded. Now as Leader of the Opposition that's exactly what I'm trying to do with this bill.

The Chair: Yeah. A quick supplemental if you could, please, Mr. Sigurdson.

Mr. Sigurdson: Well, you know, I've been responding to hundreds if not thousands of e-mails, and I'm [inaudible] to represent my constituents' concerns about this. I'm deeply passionate about protecting the eastern slopes and representing my constituents and

their concerns about this. I guess I'll just leave it simply and short to the fact that, you know, when you're looking at this, there seems to be a lot of concern. I know that you've commented on this, but you laid the groundwork and the foundation for the interest in exploration and mining in the eastern slopes, including approvals for Tent Mountain in the Crownsnest Pass. I'm just wondering [inaudible] if you can just comment on why you didn't deal with this when you were Premier. I think this is a very important topic for all Albertans.

Ms Notley: Anyway, as I've said before, I think you're overstating the degree to which there were any permits approved under our watch. Again, I described the ones that we were aware of.

Also, you actually identified an issue that would be then addressed through this bill because there's no question that the AER also was doing a lot of approving without necessarily circling back to ensure that that approval aligned with what the government position was in relation to the coal policy, which – again let me just repeat for full clarity – we kept in place and we never for a moment thought to remove. This bill would also put a bit of a collar on the activity that we saw happening through the AER without it necessarily, you know, checking back to some degree in terms of whether it was actually adhering to the policy that the government was very clearly still supporting.

10:30

At the end of the day, as I've said before, it's our job, all of us, to listen to our constituents. That's why I hope that this bill and these kinds of discussions and the minutiae can be fully canvassed in the Legislature, because it's our job to make sure that these issues, that are so important to Albertans, are fully debated in the Legislature.

Thanks.

The Chair: Thank you.

All right. Member Irwin, a question and a follow-up, please.

Member Irwin: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you for being here today. All of us MLAs, at least on our side of the House, have been absolutely inundated by correspondence on this issue, and I can't imagine that it's been any different for the UCP. Could you just share more about what you've heard? Who is concerned with coal mining on the eastern slopes? Can you just talk a little bit more about some of the groups and individuals who have spoken out?

Ms Notley: Well, generally speaking, you know, as I said, there have been tens of thousands of Albertans that have reached out. I mean, we've got specific councils. We've got ranchers up and down the Cowboy Trail. We've got conservation groups; for example, the Alberta Wilderness Association, the Alberta Backcountry Hunters & Anglers association. We, of course, have indigenous communities. You know, while members here may say that one community has offered support for one project, we actually do need to listen, and we're hearing from many other communities, Member, including the Siksika First Nation, the Kainai Blood Tribe, and the Niitsitapi Water Protectors through them. The Ermineskin First Nation in Treaty 6 and the Whitefish Lake First Nation in Treaty 8 have filed requests for judicial review. We've got municipalities, MDs, and councils. We've got the city of Lethbridge, which, of course, is in the Oldman basin, unanimously calling for a stop to all coal exploration in the eastern slopes. We've got Clearwater county, right in the heart of the minister of environment's own riding, saying that they have concerns about this. We've got Longview ranchlands, Nanton in Livingstone-Macleod, all articulating concerns about this development.

You know, just this March at their spring convention we had the Rural Municipalities association of all Alberta urging the government to protect the watershed against industrial uses that use large quantities of water, specifically in the context of coal mining, so we really do have quite a dramatic and crossprovince response to this. I mean, members opposite often like to talk about the usual suspects that work with the NDP – the environmentalists, the hikers, the scientists – but this goes beyond that group. These are regular Albertans. These are people who make their living off the land, ranchers and farmers. These are municipal leaders who are hearing from their residents. These are folks who run businesses that actually need that water supply themselves. Again, I just never – it's rare in politics to see this much consensus, so I think that's why this bill requires our attention and requires us to show the respect that all these people in the province deserve from us by way of ensuring that this issue gets a full airing in the Legislature.

The Chair: Thank you.

A quick follow-up, Member Irwin. Go ahead, please.

Member Irwin: Yeah. Absolutely. I mean, you and I, we're Edmonton MLAs here on Treaty 6 territory, but we're hearing from so many of our constituents because they know that our watershed here in Edmonton is impacted by decisions in the eastern slopes. What's your message to those who would, you know, dismiss this issue as minor or as just a concern, say, in southern Alberta?

Ms Notley: Well, in fact, it is interesting. I mean, we've heard from so many people, and, you know, from a political point of view, these aren't our constituents, for the most part. Even though we know that this has significant consequences for the city of Edmonton, for central Alberta – ultimately, our water supply is also impacted by development or activity on the eastern slopes – people of northern Alberta are less aware of it because, of course, historically we don't have that fight for water supply in northern Alberta quite as well developed as it is in southern Alberta. So it is, over the long term, an issue for two-thirds of the province, but no question that the people we've been hearing from are people who have to look us up online to figure out how to get in touch with us because we're not their MLAs. They've been reaching out in great numbers because they're very concerned about this change that, again, was not discussed openly with Albertans and, quite frankly, still isn't being. You know, I look forward to talking a little bit about the problems we've seen with the so-called consultation and the frustrations that Albertans have with that.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Member Rosin for a question.

Ms Rosin: Thank you, Chair. Well, as my colleague Member Sigurdson stated, this issue of coal development is very top of mind and very relevant and of great concern to many of my constituents in Banff-Kananaskis as well, so I'm happy to be here today to discuss this bill and the contents of it.

I think it's interesting, Member Notley – and you raised a very valid point – that you are the longest sitting Member of the Legislative Assembly right now, and I do agree that that is something to be proud of. But I think there's another feather you could add to your cap, and that would be being one of if not possibly the most pro coal development and exploration Premiers in Alberta's history. If we just look at your record in government, I believe there were seven exploration permits issued by the AER during your tenure as Premier. We've got Altitude Resources, Benga Mining, Teck Resources, Altitude, Prairie Mines, Elan Coal, another Teck, Montem Resources. Many – seven, I believe –

exploration permits were issued during your tenure and an eighth issued for an existing mine, so I find it very interesting that this bill has come forward now, when you had many years as Premier when this could have been dealt with. Instead, you chose to give not only eight permits out but to also write a letter to the AER requesting, essentially, that they intervene and give express approval to these permits.

I know that the member is also very aware, as are all members of this committee and, I assume, the general Legislative Assembly, that our government has recently announced that we will be undergoing extensive consultation on a new coal policy that will, hopefully, be of interest and reflect the views of all Albertans, from every corner of this province: urban, rural, north, south, and central. I am quite confident that that process will also include a town hall in my constituency of Banff-Kananaskis. I'm just curious. I suppose my first question would be on why you think that your views, which have been done without consultation, should override the views that we are expecting to hear from Albertans through a real consultation period and why you don't believe there's a need for actual public consultation, that we should just take your word for it on this bill.

Ms Notley: Well, there's a lot of stuff in there. Let me begin. I guess that one of the things I have learned from being in the House since 2008 is that it's always a really good idea to be fully briefed before one gets themselves on the record in the House. That way, you can avoid making a number of the mistakes that the member just did. For several of the projects that the member just identified, of course, if you look at the fact sheet that accompanied the government's own announcement with respect to the so-called consultations – and I'll speak to that in a moment – it nonetheless actually talks about the exploration permits having been approved since 2020. I think it's really important to just correct the record there.

As well, let me just be clear. Once this government finally removed the 1976 Loughheed coal policy, we saw over a thousand lease applications approved in the course of just a few months. Now, we don't know exactly which ones because that information has not been disclosed yet, but to suggest that that somehow is equivalent to one letter, which is subject to a certain amount of very vigorous debate with respect to its interpretation, and the continuation of previously approved proposals in category 4 lands is quite ridiculous. I would just suggest that.

With respect to the alleged fact that we don't want to engage in consultation, again I would urge the member to read the bill. What we are talking about doing in the bill is putting stuff on hold while we engage in the development of an enhanced regional plan. If the member takes the time to look through the legislation, ALSA, the land-use framework legislation that was brought in in about 2010 under the then minister, Ted Morton, you will find that the process for developing regional plans involves more consultation than practically any activity on the face of the planet. So the idea is that we would have that consultation.

10:40

To compare that to what we saw rolled out by the minister last Monday, which was a survey where people were quizzed on what regulations they knew or didn't know, without any particular outline of when there would be town halls – I mean, congratulations to the minister that she thinks there'll be a town hall in her riding. We've been begging, thousands of people have been begging for information on whether there would be town halls. We've heard nothing. We've heard nothing about what kind of information would be shared with people. We've heard nothing about who would be invited to meet in person or in this kind of setting directly

as opposed to just doing anonymous survey answers. We've got no terms of reference. We've got no timeline.

I mean, to suggest that what was announced last Monday by the Minister of Energy amounts to a consultation is really taking a bit of liberty with the English language. I would suggest, instead, that relying on the rules of consultation that are embedded legislatively into the regional planning process, that we are linking to through this bill, is in fact the most rational and reasonable way to ensure that the voices of Albertans, who up till now have only been heard through social media and media reports and through the articulate advocacy of country singers, who, by the way, are speaking on national CBC right now about this very issue – rather, Albertans would like a setting for their voices to be heard. That's what would happen through this bill. So I urge all members who believe that they are representing the concerns articulated by their constituents to allow for that to happen.

The Chair: Thanks very much, Member.

Member Rosin, just a very quick follow-up if you could, please.

Ms Rosin: Yeah. It will be quick. There is no doubt that many voices will need to be heard through this consultation process, but I do know, for one example, that the Piikani Nation are involved in the process and the approval for the Grassy Mountain coal project, and they are actively advocating to have this project approved as it lies within their traditional territory. They are quite large supporters of the project, and they've actually gone so far as to call it a quote, unquote, game changer for their nation. I'm just curious if you have consulted with people like Chief Stanley Grier of the Piikani First Nation.

Ms Notley: We have had conversations over the course of time. I haven't spoken with him directly as of yet. That is a very good point, and I look forward to having the opportunity to hear from him. We have in fact heard from other voices within that community. We've heard from the Siksika First Nation, in the riding of one of the committee members here. We've heard from the Kainai, we've heard from Ermineskin and we've heard from Whitefish. What we know is that there is not consensus. I would argue that if you were to sort of add up the numbers, you would see that those who are concerned could significantly outweigh those who are in favour.

But, in any event, I think that's why it's important to stop the development that is currently under way. That's the other thing about the so-called consultation that is in place. That exploration continues and thereby enhances and continues to jeopardize the very integrity of our Rocky Mountains, that we are endeavouring to protect. What we need to do instead is actually engage. That is actually another thing, and I thank the member for raising this and raising the matter with the Piikani. The amount of change being proposed without question triggers section 35 of the Constitution, and the current consultation laid out by the minister . . .

The Chair: I'll let you finish your thought, and then we'll move on. Thank you.

Ms Notley: . . . does not allow for that.

The Chair: Okay. Great. Well, thank you very much, Member Notley. Thank you very much, again, for presenting to the group. That was an excellent discussion by committee members and, of course, the questions from our committee members.

We'll next move on to the technical briefing by the ministries of Energy and Environment and Parks. Okay. The committee invited the ministries of Energy and Environment and Parks to provide a

technical briefing on Bill 214. However, both ministries respectfully declined to present. The Ministry of Energy provided a briefing note, which was posted to the internal committee website for the committee members, so hopefully everybody had a chance to take a look at that.

I guess that next we'll go to the decisions on the review of Bill 214. Hon. members, having heard the presentations, the committee is now ready to decide on how to conduct its review of Bill 214. In accordance with our previously approved process, the committee may choose to invite additional feedback from up to six stakeholders, three from each caucus. Alternatively, the committee may also choose to expedite this review and proceed to deliberations. Does anyone have any thoughts on this issue? I see Mr. Schow with your hand up – oh. Okay. Mr. Nielsen, go ahead.

Mr. Nielsen: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Well, it's unfortunate we didn't get the opportunity today to ask some questions of the two ministries. It would have been important to know what kind of implications this bill would have. I know that Member Notley had mentioned section 35 around consultation. I think that kind of information would have been absolutely critical for members to be able to make informed decisions, so I think based on not being able to ask questions of the ministries, it would be imperative that committee members get a chance to speak with stakeholders.

With that, I will propose a motion to invite stakeholders. I'm sure, Chair, you probably have the formal wording, as you almost always seem to be able to take those words right out of my mouth, and then we can further discuss it.

Mr. Dang: A point of order, before we continue.

The Chair: On Mr. Nielsen?

Mr. Dang: Generally, yes, I guess.

The Chair: Okay.

Mr. Dang: Sorry. I had heard you or perhaps the clerk indicate previously that a briefing note was provided by the minister and was posted on the website? I don't believe that actually to be the case. I'm reviewing the website right now, and I see the agenda, the three minutes that we approved, the petitioner letter for Pr. 2, and a memo from the Ministry of Energy, which is not a briefing note. It simply is a decline to attend.

The Chair: I will defer to the clerk since he's the one that provided me this information. Go ahead, Mr. Clerk.

Mr. Huffman: Hi. Yeah. Thank you, Mr. Chair. The briefing note that I was referring to was that memo. That was the correspondence that I received from the ministry.

Thank you.

The Chair: Okay.

Mr. Dang: So it's not a briefing note; just a memo saying they're not coming.

The Chair: Okay.

Okay. We'll go back to Mr. Nielsen. Thanks very much. Mr. Nielsen will move that

the Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills invite up to six stakeholders, three proposed by the government caucus and three proposed by the Official Opposition, to make presentations regarding Bill 214, Eastern Slopes Protection Act, on Monday, April 19, 2021, and provide

a stakeholders list to the chair by noon on Wednesday, April 14, 2021.

I will open this to a little bit of discussion if you don't mind. Thank you, Mr. Schmidt, but I'm going to go to Mr. Schow, and then I'll go to you.

Mr. Schow: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you, Mr. Nielsen, for bringing forward this motion. I think that Member Notley, or the Member for Edmonton-Strathcona, has made some good points today, though I disagree with many of them. I also do think that she has done an excellent job of researching this bill and writing this bill and presenting it today. I would commend her for that and thank her for being here this morning.

With that said, I do think that we've heard a sufficient amount of information to potentially make a decision about whether or not to move this bill to the Chamber, and I would recommend that we do not bring in stakeholders. That would be my suggestion.

The Chair: All right.

Mr. Schmidt, thank you very much. Go ahead, sir.

Mr. Schmidt: Yeah, thank you, Mr. Chair. I think, in line with the comments that my friend from Edmonton-Decore, Mr. Nielsen, made about the imperative to hear from stakeholders, now that we know that the Ministry of Energy and the Ministry of Environment and Parks have both declined to appear before the committee today, I think it's really important for us to get an understanding of what is happening in the eastern slopes right now with respect to the development of coal projects.

We've certainly heard from many people who live in the area that there is a significant amount of exploration and related development that's going on. We've heard stories of, you know, roads being built, holes being drilled and dug. Yesterday, of course, it came to my attention that temporary diversion licences for water for exploration are being granted for these programs. Part of the reason that it's extremely frustrating that Energy continues to dodge accountability by refusing to appear before committees – they refused to appear before this committee today. The government members on the Public Accounts Committee in February voted not to invite the Ministry of Energy officials to answer questions that we had about coal development. How can we as legislators and the representatives of the people of Alberta make an informed decision about coal development when we don't even have a clear picture of what's going on on the landscape right now? By at least inviting stakeholders to the committee, we can get a partial picture of what's going on on the landscape. It blows my mind that Energy refuses to provide us full information.

10:50

You know, I hear from thousands of Albertans every day how difficult it is to get information from the Ministry of Energy, not just on this file but on any energy-related files. I just cannot stress enough how important it is to hear from stakeholders so that we have at least a partial understanding of the current activity that is happening on the landscape related to coal development.

The Chair: Okay. Thank you.

I'll open up the floor to any comments. I think there are two committee members, at least, or maybe three committee members that are part of the eastern slopes. Mr. Sigurdson, certainly, if you'd like to say something, sir, go ahead.

Mr. Sigurdson: Yeah. Thank you, Chair. I think when it comes down to this, as a committee member that's been sitting on this committee for some time, there are some bills that come before us

that we haven't heard from stakeholders on, which I think is a requirement and definitely necessary for us to bring them in and to be able to hear from them. What I would say on this issue, that has been brought forward through this committee meeting, is that we have seen a mass amount of input and information come to us as MLAs, hundreds if not thousands of e-mails, hundreds of phone calls. I know I've been in constant consultation on this for months and have spoken to many, many people on this. I think we're all very aware of what's going on.

With that, I think there's enough information for us to be able to make a decision on whether this goes directly to the floor or not. As a committee it's for us to look at the technical aspects of the bill. I don't see any technical problems with the bill, so I think an informed decision on whether this proceeds can be made at this time. And I would say that with the number of people that are approaching me, I don't think we can delay on this decision and push this back any longer. I think we should make the decision as soon as possible on whether this proceeds.

Thank you, Chair.

The Chair: Okay.

Yeah, Mr. Schmidt, go ahead.

Mr. Schmidt: Thank you, Mr. Chair. In response to some of the comments that Member Sigurdson made, certainly I believe him when he says that he is receiving a lot of correspondence from people who are concerned about the issue. What I've also heard from people who have contacted my office and my fellow colleagues here in the Official Opposition is that they are not hearing anything back from government members in particular. So I think not only would it be important for the committee to hear from stakeholders but also to show the stakeholders that their elected representatives are actually listening to the feedback and can respond to them. I think that by inviting these stakeholders to the committee, we can at least demonstrate to the people who are very concerned about this issue that we are listening. Right now there's a serious problem with people believing that their elected representatives are hearing them on this issue.

The Chair: Okay.

Are there any government members that want to make a comment?

If not, I'll go to Mr. Dang. Go ahead.

Mr. Dang: Thank you, Mr. Chair. At this time I'd like to make an amendment to this motion. I'd like to amend that pursuant to Standing Order 69(1) this committee also compel the Minister of Energy and the Minister of Environment and Parks to present to this as well. I believe this is important due to the lack of technical briefing prepared today. As you know, it is well established in *House of Commons Procedure and Practice* as well as in our standing orders that this committee has the authority under the Constitution Act to compel witnesses to this committee, to be summoned to this committee.

This committee does have the authority to demand a technical briefing. I believe that my colleague the Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar has outlined that this committee has not received thorough presentations from stakeholders. We have not received the proper technical briefs. We have not received the information that would be required at this time. That government members are trying to push forward without the full transparency and without the full proper process, the due process, that this bill deserves I think is offensive, and we should indeed compel the ministers themselves to come and explain why they refuse to send their staff to provide technical information regarding this bill.

The Chair: Okay.

Shall I defer to Parliamentary Counsel on this? Thank you.

Mr. Koenig: Sure. I'm happy to provide some comments. Obviously, this is a decision of the chair. Two brief comments. In terms of making an amendment to this motion, typically motions don't ask compound questions, so this may be a question that's better moved as a separate motion. On that specific point, very briefly, I can't comment very much about compelling witnesses to committee meetings because it has never happened while I have been here. I think it's pretty extraordinary, but as I understand it, it certainly is available under the Legislative Assembly Act, that witnesses can be compelled to attend committee meetings.

The Chair: Yeah. I mean, I certainly haven't been here as long as Member Notley, but I've been here a long time myself. I've never heard of anybody being compelled. It kind of reminds me of the American Senate, to be honest with you, but that being said – I'm sorry. Mr. Dang, you were referring to which standing order?

Mr. Dang: Standing Order 69(1) which states, essentially, that "no witness shall be summoned to attend before any committee of the Assembly except by order of the committee or the Assembly." As we are, of course, a standing committee, we have the authority therefore to summon a witness.

The Chair: Okay. You're making this as an amendment, right?

So we need to vote on the amendment? Is that correct?

Mr. Dang: We would compel these ministers in addition to the six stakeholders.

The Chair: I appreciate what you're trying to do, but I'm just thinking of process.

The process is that he's put this amendment here, and then the committee would vote on whether to accept or not accept the amendment. Is that correct?

Mr. Koenig: Yeah. Mr. Chair, of course, lawyers always love talking about process, so this is right up my alley. What I might suggest to the committee, just going back to that idea about asking a compound question, is that once you sort of fuse the question about compelling the witness with this amendment inviting stakeholders, committee members have to answer yes or no to both together. What may be another option, if the committee so desires, is to decide upon the issue of stakeholders first, and then if a subsequent motion is brought forward to compel the attendance of another witness, then the committee can make that decision as a separate item.

The Chair: Sure.

Yeah. I understand. I'm also thinking of not making this complex. I think it's quite clear as to how the government members and the opposition members feel, so I'm going to recommend, or I believe, that we should vote on the existing motion that's on the floor, and certainly if a member wants to provide another motion, they certainly can. Okay?

At this time in regard to the existing motion that is on the floor as presented by Mr. Nielsen, are there any other questions – well, any additional information? Mr. Schmidt. Okay.

Mr. Schmidt: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would just like to specifically address the issue of Piikani First Nation, that was raised by Member Rosin. Certainly, she referenced the chief, who has expressed support for the Grassy Mountain project. I will tell you that we've heard from a number of individuals of the Piikani First

Nation who feel that the chief doesn't represent them and that they need to have their voices heard in another forum, and I think that this is the appropriate forum for them to have their voices heard. In terms of respecting First Nations and making sure that they have their voices heard on this incredibly important matter, I would urge all members of this committee to vote in favour of this motion so that we can hear from representative members of First Nations, not just chief and council, on this very important issue.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Member Schmidt.

Okay. All right. I'll put the question to the committee. All those in favour of the motion as submitted by Member Nielsen, say aye. All those opposed, say no. On videoconference?

An Hon. Member: A recorded vote, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: That motion has been defeated, but we've asked for a recorded vote.

11:00

Mr. Schow: Mr. Chair, just a point here. It is my understanding that Member Rosin is having difficulties with her Internet connection. So as we vote in the recorded vote, I would ask that if she's not able to connect to the Internet, somehow we are able to record her vote, whichever way she votes. It's just my understanding of that. I don't want her to be not counted because of technical difficulties.

The Chair: Okay. That's a fair point.

Mr. Nielsen: If it's possible, she can get in either through the chat or e-mail.

The Chair: I was thinking the same thing.

Mr. Nielsen: I think that would be acceptable as well to record her vote.

The Chair: Yeah. Essentially, what we're going to do about the process here is that I'm going to go around the room for the yeses and the noes, and then what I will do is that I will open up the videoconference and call lines for the yeses or noes, at which point – sorry. Members who are on the video chat: you're just going to have to do your best to chime in there when it comes to yeses and noes or however you are going to vote on this.

Again, for the recorded vote, we'll say: all those in favour, if you can just raise your hands within the room. All right. I have Member Nielsen, Member Dang, and Member Schmidt. Now, all those in favour on the videoconference, if you can just make yourself known. We have Member Irwin. Anyone else? Okay.

Then we will go to the noes. All those against the motion by Mr. Nielsen, just raise your hand within the room. All right. I have Mr. Schow. And then if you can identify yourself, please, on the videoconference. Go ahead, please. I think you might have to be vocal there. I saw R.J. Sigurdson raise his hand, but you might have to say something. Sorry.

Mr. Sigurdson: Yeah. Sorry. That's a no, Chair.

The Chair: Anybody else?

Ms Glasgo: Michaela Glasgo, voting no.

The Chair: Okay. Member Rosin, you've raised your hand?

Ms Rosin: Correct. Miranda Rosin, voting no.

The Chair: Okay. Thank you.

Mr. Williams: Dan Williams, opposed, voting no.

The Chair: Okay. Mickey Amery. Sorry; I thought I saw you raise your hand, but I didn't hear from you.

Mr. Amery: MLA Amery, opposed.

The Chair: Okay. I think we've got everybody.
Clerk, can you read the final result there, please?

Mr. Huffman: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Total for the motion, four; total against, six.

The Chair: Okay. Thank you.
That motion has been defeated.
I have Mr. Schow on my list.

Mr. Schow: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I appreciate that, and I appreciate the conversation we just had. I would like to, then, go back to something that the presenter said today, that there is no consensus on this issue. I think that member is correct.

Ms Notley: I didn't say that. I said that there's been no other example of this much consensus on the issue.

Mr. Schow: No. That was not what I heard. I guess we'll have to check out the benefit of the Blues.

The Chair: We'll just call it a matter of debate.

Mr. Schow: Sure.

The Chair: Just proceed, please.

Mr. Schow: But that is what I'm getting in my constituency. I've had lots of people speak to me about this, many of which work in Sparwood in a coal mine and others who are very concerned about the future of coal mining in this province and the concerns about the beauty and majestic nature of the eastern slopes.

With that said, I think we should look at moving this bill to the Chamber. Mr. Chair, I'd like to move a motion that this bill shall proceed.

The Chair: Okay. Do you have a motion, then?

Mr. Schow: I suspect you might have a draft motion, Mr. Chair, but that would be my – you usually tend to have the words better than me.

The Chair: All right. I do have a possible draft motion here.

Mr. Schow would be moving that the Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills recommend that Bill 214, Eastern Slopes Protection Act, proceed. Is that correct, sir?

Mr. Schow: That's correct, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Okay. Any further discussion on this?

Hearing and seeing none, I will put the question. Mr. Schow moves that

the Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills recommend that Bill 214, Eastern Slopes Protection Act, proceed.

All those in favour, say aye. On the phone and videoconference? Any opposed? Hearing and seeing none,
that motion is carried.

Mr. Sigurdson: Sorry, Chair, to interrupt. Could I request a recorded vote on that, please?

The Chair: You can. Yeah, we can do a recorded vote on that, for sure.

All right. Same thing. All those in favour within the room, if you could raise your hand, and then I will count you. I have Member Nielsen, Member Dang, Member Schmidt, and Member Schow. On the videoconference call and the phone: you're just going to have to be vocal and just work your way in and say yes or no. Go ahead.

Mr. Sigurdson: Chair, I vote yes.

The Chair: Thank you.

I appreciate that people are putting their hands up, but you're going to have to be vocal if you don't mind.

Ms Glasgo: Okay. Michaela Glasgo, voting yes.

Ms Rosin: Miranda Rosin, voting yes.

Member Irwin: Janis Irwin, voting yes.

Mr. Amery: Mickey Amery, voting yes.

Mr. Williams: Dan Williams, voting yes.

The Chair: Okay. Thank you.

Any opposed?

Hearing and seeing none, go ahead, Mr. Clerk.

Mr. Huffman: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For the motion, 10; against, zero.

The Chair: All right. Thank you very much. Again, that motion has been recorded and carried.

Hon. members, the committee has concluded its deliberations on Bill 214 and now should consider directing research services to prepare a draft report, including the committee's recommendations. Would a member move a motion to direct research services to prepare the committee's draft report?

Mr. Dang: Mr. Chair, I believe I still have an outstanding motion.

The Chair: Okay. Sure.

Mr. Dang: I believe we had agreed that I had an outstanding motion to compel the Minister of Energy as well as the Minister of Environment and Parks to attend this committee. As we have already seen this motion that the bill should proceed, it does not preclude this committee from doing additional inquiries and summoning additional witnesses as we proceed with deliberations.

The Chair: I will defer again to Parliamentary Counsel as to process now since we have asked this committee to have this proceed. Go ahead, sir.

Mr. Koenig: It would be up to the committee to decide if they wish to invite additional people to speak to the bill.

The Chair: Okay. What you're saying is that the motion is on the floor and that the committee would say yes or no.

Mr. Koenig: Well, of course, the question of whether it's in order is always up to the chair, but if the member does wish to move an additional motion . . .

The Chair: Sure.

Go ahead, Mr. Schow.

Mr. Schow: Thank you, Mr. Chair. While I appreciate the motion from Member Dang regarding compelling witnesses to appear before this committee, I do believe we have already voted once now on stakeholders, not to bring them in, and we have now voted to move the bill to proceed. With that said, I actually don't believe that this motion would be in order given that we have now gone past the presentation section and we are now moving the bill to the Chamber. I would suggest that this motion is actually out of order.

The Chair: Yeah. I'll ask for any further comments, but I believe that I have an idea of a decision. I see Member Glasgo wants to make a comment.

Ms Glasgo: Mr. Chair, if you're ready to make a decision, then I resign my time.

The Chair: Yeah. Look, the purpose of this committee is to determine whether a bill is to proceed or not proceed within the Chamber. It's not to, you know, have in-depth, we'll call it, discussions on – we have the discussions which provide us the recommendations from the stakeholders to proceed or not proceed, but I would argue that this motion at this time would be out of order.

With that, I think we'll go back to research services. I need a member to move to direct research services to prepare the committee's draft report.

Mr. Schow: So moved.

The Chair: Mr. Schow. Mr. Schow would move that the Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills (a) direct research services to prepare a draft report on the committee's review of Bill 214, the Eastern Slopes Protection Act, which includes the committee's recommendations, and (b) authorize the chair to approve the committee's final report to the Assembly on or before noon on Thursday, April 15, 2021.

All those in favour, say aye. On the phone or videoconference? Any opposed? Hearing and seeing none, that motion has been carried.

11:10

Are there any other issues for discussion at today's meeting?

Hearing and seeing none, the date of the next meeting will be at the call of the chair.

I need a member to adjourn.

Mr. Schow: So moved.

The Chair: Mr. Schow moved that the meeting be adjourned. All those in favour, say aye. Any opposed? Hearing and seeing none, the motion has been carried. The meeting is adjourned. Have a great day.

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

