



Province of Alberta

The 28th Legislature
Third Session

Alberta Hansard

Thursday, November 20, 2014

Issue 4

The Honourable Gene Zwozdesky, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of Alberta The 28th Legislature

Third Session

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Woo-Paw, Hon. Teresa, Calgary-Northern Hills (PC)
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Young, Steve, Edmonton-Riverview (PC)

Party standings:

Progressive Conservative: 61 Wildrose: 16 Alberta Liberal: 5 New Democrat: 4 Independent: 1

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Legislative Assembly of Alberta

1:30 p.m.

Thursday, November 20, 2014

[The Speaker in the chair]

Prayers

The Speaker: Good afternoon.

Let us pray. Heavenly Father and Great Creator, as we conclude our work for this week in this Assembly, guide us that we may all return safely to our constituencies, where we will continue our work for the Albertans whom we serve. Amen.

Please be seated.

Introduction of Guests

The Speaker: Let us begin with some school groups, starting with Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville.

Ms Fenske: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As a former teacher there's always a class that holds a very special place in your heart. Today I'd like to introduce to you a class from Mundare school, who will soon be moving into their new school. These students were part of the School at the Legislature. They are accompanied here today by their teacher, Mrs. Adrienne Mills, and two parent volunteers, Mrs. Joanne McNiven and Mrs. Arlette Budinski. They are seated in the members' gallery and the public gallery as well. We are looking forward to having the Premier come out and visit when we cut the ribbon on that new school soon. Please stand.

The Speaker: Thank you.

The hon. Member for Strathcona-Sherwood Park.

Mr. Quest: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise today to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly three classes of students from the Wye school in my constituency of Strathcona-Sherwood Park. They are accompanied by teachers Amy Israelson, Tanya Jorden, Danielle Kent, and Miss Powley and a very lengthy list of parent helpers. There's a lot of parent help at the Wye school: Debbie Buxton, Leigh-Ann Ball, Karen Jones, Jackie Mill, Kirsty Woodman, Joan Kaminskas, Norm Cameron, Erin Stephen, Cathy Jones, Christine Martens, Greg Abercrombie, Marlene Crippin, and Amy Butterfield. They are seated, understandably, in both galleries, and I'd ask them all to rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of this Assembly.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms Olesen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm so pleased today to introduce to you and through you to all members of this Assembly 26 bright and enthusiastic grade 9 students from Archbishop Jordan Catholic high school from my constituency of Sherwood Park. They are accompanied today by their teacher Mr. Tim Murawsky. I'd ask that the group from Archbishop Jordan high please rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of this Assembly.

The Speaker: Are there other school groups here yet?

Let us continue then. Edmonton-Riverview, followed by the Minister of Municipal Affairs.

Mr. Young: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is indeed my pleasure to rise today and introduce to you and through you to all members of

the Assembly three notable guests from the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce, which I'll be doing a member's statement on later today. Firstly, James Cumming, the president and CEO of the chamber, is a long-time Edmontonian and businessman as well as the federal Conservative candidate for Edmonton-Centre. Max Frank is the vice-president, member experience, at the Edmonton chamber and a lifelong Edmontonian and entrepreneur. Bobbi Menard is the manager of communications for the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce. She moved to Alberta two years ago, like so many others in search of the Alberta opportunity. All three of these individuals with the Chamber of Commerce have had an integral part in stewarding the continued growth of Edmonton into the amazing city we have today. They are seated in the public gallery, and I'd ask that they rise now and receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

The Speaker: The Minister of Municipal Affairs, followed by Calgary-Buffalo.

Mrs. McQueen: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have two introductions; if I can, I'll do them both together. Today it's an honour for me to rise in the House to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly one of my four children. Melissa McQueen is joining me here today. She's taking her bachelor of arts in Red Deer. She wants to be a high school social teacher. She's very interested in politics and has been involved in all of my campaigns when I was mayor and when I was running here provincially. It's a real honour to ask Melissa to please rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of this Assembly.

Also, joining Melissa today is my outstanding staff from my office, Mr. Speaker. I have six people joining us here today, and I'd ask them to rise as they're being introduced. With us today are Laura Lupul; Duncan Webster; Matthew Grant; my press secretary, Brittney Timperley; my chief of staff, Amy Prins; and my outstanding scheduler, Kim Kennard, without whom I could not manage my job. Please rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of this Assembly.

Mr. Hehr: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to all members of this Assembly Stacey Buga, Sarah Hall, and Leah Elzinga, seated in the public gallery. Sarah Hall is the chair of the Morinville Public School Council. Stacey and Leah are members of the Morinville school parent delegation. They're here today because there is currently no public junior or senior high school in the town of Morinville, and these ambitious ladies are fighting to have one there.

My second introduction. It's a great pleasure to have Mr. Doug Dickson right up here from the constituency of Calgary-Buffalo. Doug is often in the constituency at the local coffee shops, at both grocery stores, and all over the place, and he's quick to point out the errors of my ways as he is a long-time Conservative in this province. Nevertheless, we do have a great time discussing things, and we get in our shots both ways. It's a great honour to have him here.

Would they all please rise so we can give them a warm welcome from everyone in this Assembly.

Mrs. Sarich: Mr. Speaker, it's an honour and a privilege for me to rise today to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly three very proud guests here in recognition of the 40th anniversary of Dickinsfield Amity House, a not-for-profit organization located in the wonderful community neighbourhood of Evansdale, which is in the constituency of Edmonton-Decore. My guests are seated in the members' gallery, and I would ask them to please rise and remain standing as I mention their names.

Mrs. Carrie Thuesen, chairman of the board, Dickinsfield Amity House; Ms Tracy Patience, executive director, Dickinsfield Amity House; Mr. Ian St. Dennis, avid volunteer who assists with low-income tax filings at Dickinsfield Amity House. I would now ask the Assembly to provide the traditional warm welcome to my guests this afternoon. Thank you.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Fort McMurray-Wood Buffalo.

Mr. Allen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, it's a pleasure today to rise and introduce to you and through you to all members of this Assembly a long-time friend and a constituent from Fort McMurray-Wood Buffalo, Mr. Sheldon Murphy. Mr. Murphy is the president of the Fort McMurray Fish and Game Association and a hard-working Albertan who makes his living as a heavy-equipment technician with Syncrude. I understand from Mr. Murphy's own words that it's always been a strong dream to visit what he considers the most prestigious building in Alberta. This week, while in the capital city with his daughter to go to the Mötley Crüe concert, he has a chance to make that true. Mr. Murphy is seated in the members' gallery, and I'd ask that he rise to receive the traditional warm welcome of this Assembly.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark, leader of the Liberal opposition.

Dr. Sherman: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to introduce to you and through you to all members of this Assembly a young man by the name of Andrew Tidswell. Andrew is a recent graduate from Dalhousie University, majoring in political science. Born and raised in Calgary, a good Alberta boy, Andrew is really interested in politics and is happy to be present today. Perhaps one day Andrew will be an MLA in the Legislature right here. I'd ask Andrew to rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

The Speaker: Thank you.

1:40

Members' Statements

Dickinsfield Amity House 40th Anniversary

Mrs. Sarich: Mr. Speaker, it's my honour and privilege to rise today to help commemorate the 40th anniversary of Dickinsfield Amity House. The Edmonton-Decore constituency is truly blessed to have in the heart of the Evansdale community Dickinsfield Amity House.

In 1972 Dickinsfield was a new subdivision in Edmonton, and to improve the quality of life of the residents in the area, a number of professionals established the Professionals for Progress group. In 1973 this ambitious group successfully garnered support from the Edmonton Housing Authority to open the We Care Centre, which provided co-op babysitting and after school programming. In 1974 We Care registered as a society, received funding from the city of Edmonton preventive social services, now known as Family and Community Support Services Association of Alberta, and in 1977 changed its name to Dickinsfield Amity House. The moniker "Amity," a Cree word for friendship, especially between nations, exemplifies the esprit de corps of this not-for-profit organization. Dickinsfield Amity House is a welcoming, strong, and vibrant family and community resource centre where allied professionals and volunteers build relationships and provide a wide range of support services and programs in direct response to community needs.

Mr. Speaker, special thanks to the enormous leadership of this fine organization. Also, my heartfelt gratitude to the many volunteers whose relentless commitment, dedication, energy, and efforts have transformed so many lives at Dickinsfield Amity House. Together their steadfast effort and support ensure that generations of children, youth, families, and people in the community are offered vital programs and services for all age groups. This is a living example of the Alberta spirit. Thank you for adding immeasurably to our great city and province.

Once again, congratulations and best wishes to Dickinsfield Amity House as you celebrate your 40th anniversary.

The Speaker: Thank you.

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Centre, followed by Edmonton-McClung.

LGBTQ Student Supports

Ms Blakeman: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I will move first reading of Bill 202, the Safe and Inclusive Schools Statutes Amendment Act 2014. I came into politics to change the world, and I have in some big ways. Today I'm trying to change it in small ways, but it will be a big deal to those who will now be included. I have been really struck by how, as we move forward as a province and as a nation, we open up institutions, we include. But the new Education Act didn't include sexual minority gay and lesbian students in section 33(2), the safe and caring policy to reduce bullying.

As we well know, bullying can have terrible effects, and the group with the highest suicide rate is sexual minority youth. So I go looking and find that gay-straight peer support groups have been proven to reduce suicide in our gay youth. Well, hot damn, I can support those students by adding to the Education Act policy to allow gay-straight alliances without taking away from anyone else. And no euphemisms; if students want to call them gay-straight alliances, they can.

And while I'm at it, we can include references to the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Alberta Human Rights Act in the Education Act – perfect – including our commitment to rights and freedoms and responsibilities and obligations. And, hey, I'm on a roll. Section 11.1 of the Human Rights Act should be gone. Done. In section 58 of the Education Act the parental opt-out clause can be expanded beyond religious and patriotic instruction to have sexual health education added in. So parents can in advance opt their kids out of instruction on religion, patriotic duty, and sexual health education.

It sounds like big changes, but really it's just opening up to include some kids that weren't included before. Not so hard. I hope you can support Bill 202.

Thank you.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-McClung, followed by Edmonton-Riverview.

Edmonton-McClung Constituency Priorities

Mr. Xiao: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This government is under new management, and with a new management comes updated priorities. The five priorities laid out in the throne speech are exactly what this province needs. I would like to take this opportunity to talk about the two priorities that relate most to what I have heard from my constituents in Edmonton-McClung.

Mr. Speaker, having a focused commitment to sound conservative fiscal principles is the vital priority to ensuring that Alberta

remains the economic leader of this country. Albertans elected their government to use taxpayer dollars sensibly and efficiently. I would like to thank my colleagues for their teamwork and dedication to this commitment. Together we are making these promises realities, and we are on our way to a better Alberta. Alberta is growing at a very fast pace, and we need to be prepared, and preparation is exactly what this new government offers.

The other issue I care deeply about, Mr. Speaker, which was addressed in the government's priorities, is seniors' care. This government worked very quickly to manage the needs of seniors. It gives me great pleasure to recognize the seniors in my community of Edmonton-McClung, who remind us of the important contributions that Alberta's seniors continue to make to our society and our families. About 8 per cent of my constituency of Edmonton-McClung is comprised of seniors, and they have made their priorities clear. I would like to assure my constituents and all citizens of Alberta that our government will work diligently on your behalf to preserve the priorities we were elected to uphold.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Riverview, followed by Livingstone-Macleod.

Edmonton Long-term Development

Mr. Young: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Since its inception in 1889 this organization that I rise to speak about today has consistently presented a long-term visionary strategy to create important commercially sustainable opportunities in the capital region, including my own constituency of Edmonton-Riverview. Today, over 125 years later, the Chamber of Commerce boasts nearly 3,000 corporate business members.

Within Edmonton and the capital region there is an excitement, a buzz, if you will, which is being spearheaded by a number of commercial leaders in our city, both new and long-standing members of the chamber. Our city's plan to vitalize Edmonton's downtown core has been received with optimism and enthusiasm. These are now characterized by activities of community, commerce, sport, and entertainment. Mr. Speaker, one would be hard-pressed to find a spot on the calendar without a festival or major event in this city.

This isn't just growth; it is quality of life in a dynamic city. This will without doubt create greater opportunities for business development and community development. The two initiatives that have helped propel this success are the CRL and the municipal sustainability initiative as well as partnerships in all levels of government.

I would also like to highlight the tremendous impact our postsecondary institutions have had in helping our city's cosmopolitan vision for the future through leading-edge, world-class research and the cornerstone of the knowledge-based economy.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, the feeling of excitement currently being felt in Edmonton and the capital region is one that is bursting with anticipation, and it is only the beginning. I commend the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce for being able to set a clear path for our city's long-term development. Without their forward-thinking priorities our city would definitely be at a loss and not what it is today.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Livingstone-Macleod, followed by Calgary-East.

Rural Health Services

Mr. Stier: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Every member of this House wants to see our health care system fixed. This desire crosses party lines and brings co-operation where it's not often seen. Our broken health care system affects each and every one of us, our friends, and our families. Under our former Health minister's watch the issues in rural ambulance dispatch have gone from bad to worse to a full-on crisis, with emergency wait times edging as high as an hour in some parts of the province. For our friends and families in rural and remote communities this can mean the difference between life and death.

EMS personnel, health care experts, and the opposition sounded the alarm over scarce emergency resources being flexed on nonemergency interfacility transfers on numerous occasions. Finally, last year, after immense pressure, the minister finally admitted there was a problem and launched a review, but according to southern Alberta EMS responders absolutely nothing has changed. As it stands, ambulances still flex from region to region on nonemergency calls, leaving entire corridors of the province dark.

The former minister and his associate had all year to fix this, but instead they spent time campaigning this summer with the Premier. It's time to turn the page. Today we have a different Health minister, a self-described expert. The minister said that he wants to focus on this issue, and that's great. The people he needs to talk to aren't hard to find. Some of them are sitting in this room. We in the opposition have been ready, willing, and able to work on this file for over a year. Now the question is: is the minister ready to work, too?

1:50

Oral Question Period

The Speaker: Hon. members, you're reminded that you have a 35-second limit to ask your question and a 35-second limit to answer it.

Let us begin with the first main set of questions. The Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition.

Provincial Fiscal Policies

Ms Smith: Mr. Speaker, yesterday I asked the Premier if he believed his government has a spending problem that requires more discipline or a revenue problem that requires more taxes. He avoided the question. I gave him an opportunity to commit to keeping the 10 per cent single rate of tax, that Albertans are so proud of. He didn't. Afterwards he admitted to the media that tax increases are on his agenda. Can the Premier explain to Albertans, who already pay the most per capita income tax in the entire country, why he wants to raise their taxes?

Mr. Prentice: Well, Mr. Speaker, I don't agree with the premise of the question or some of the statistics that were cited. My responsibility as Premier of this province is to operate the government of Alberta and its public finances in a manner which is prudent, which is cautious, which is balanced, and, specifically, to balance the budget in this fiscal year, which we are currently in, the 2014-2015 budget. We are into the second half of the year, dealing with circumstances beyond anyone's control relative to low energy prices. We are very focused on balancing the budget and stand by that commitment to Albertans.

Ms Smith: Mr. Speaker, our low tax rates and our simple tax structure are Alberta's single greatest competitive edge. It has led to a strong economy and plentiful, well-paying jobs. It's resulted

in Albertans paying the most income taxes on a per capita basis. I can provide the reports on Monday, when we table it. Our government doesn't work. It couldn't balance the budget at \$100 oil. We have a real spending problem there. Why is the Premier telling Albertans that the answer for his government's spending problem is to increase taxes on everyone?

Mr. Prentice: Well, Mr. Speaker, let's be clear. Albertans are already the lowest taxed people in Canada by a very, very wide margin. I look forward to the statistics that the hon. member puts forward. We have the lowest effective personal income tax rates in the country. We have the highest personal exemptions. We have the lowest combined federal-provincial income tax in the country. We have no sales tax. We have the lowest gasoline tax. This government is committed to ensuring that we maintain that competitive advantage, and I will look forward to the hon. member opposite supporting us.

Ms Smith: Mr. Speaker, we pay the lowest rates, and that's why it generates the most tax revenue.

I can see that the absence of clarity is quickly becoming this Premier's hallmark. The Premier needs to come clean with Albertans. All week I've been asking him if higher debt and higher taxes are in the future for Albertans. In this place he avoids answering. But now we know, just as the Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar blurted out this fall, that every kind of tax increase is on the table. Why won't this Premier simply tell Albertans the truth, that he plans to raise their taxes?

Mr. Prentice: Well, Mr. Speaker, as I said, the responsibility that I have as Premier is to ensure that this province is operated in the black ink, in a fiscally responsible way. We are in the second half of the current year, dealing with \$75 oil prices. We'll continue to manage our way through that. The Minister of Finance and I and our entire government are very focused on spending: on containing spending, on prudence, on discipline, on managing our way through these circumstances. That is what Albertans expect of us, and I certainly hope that the Leader of the Opposition and her party will be supportive of that fiscal responsibility.

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

Ms Smith: Well, Mr. Speaker, I can say it very clearly: Wildrose does not support new taxes.

Ethics and Privacy Issues

Ms Smith: Yesterday I asked the Premier about integrity, specifically the lack of integrity of the Education minister's decision to queue-jump a request for modulars for a school in the riding he was running in. The Premier and the minister say that they were just listening to parents when they approved modulars for William Reid ahead of six other schools with higher needs. "Just listening to parents," they said. Why did the government ignore the pleas of the parents from Cranston, Evergreen, Louis Riel, Coventry Hills, Radisson Park, and MidSun schools, which were ranked higher on the priority list?

The Speaker: Hon. member, I just need to remind you of something. I've been advised that a matter like this, I believe, may have been referred to the Ethics Commissioner by yourself. I wonder if you could please just confirm whether or not that is the case, because if it is the case, then, of course, subject to the Conflicts of Interest Act, section 24(6), we're on dangerously thin

ground. So, Opposition Leader, may I ask you to please comment on whether or not that is the case.

Ms Smith: It is the case.

The Speaker: That is the case. If you could just, going forward . . . Please have a seat, Airdrie.

Hon. Leader of the Opposition, if, going forward, you could just recraft your question to be a matter of policy or a matter of service or a matter of government program, then the question would be in order.

I'll ask the hon. Education minister if he wishes to make a comment. If not, we'll move to the first sup, recrafted.

The hon. Opposition House Leader.

Ms Smith: Well, Mr. Speaker, I will switch gears, then, and ask another question.

Sticking with the topic of integrity, this summer Albertans witnessed the spectacle of ministerial expense documents being leaked by someone in this government. The media was sent the cellphone bills of cabinet ministers. In the process an innocent person's identity was stolen, and the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act was broken. A police investigation began. Premier Hancock also ordered an internal investigation. Can the Premier update us on the status of either of those investigations?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Justice.

Mr. Denis: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To the best of my knowledge, that matter is under investigation by law enforcement, and I would decline to comment further.

Ms Smith: Mr. Speaker, we've been told that the new Premier cancelled the internal investigation. We also understand that the Calgary police have ended their investigation before even interviewing the Member for Edmonton-Castle Downs, whose information was illegally leaked. They also didn't interview any of the civil servants who were supposed to protect this information. It seems to me that the Premier might have an integrity problem in his government. Will the Premier call in the Privacy Commissioner to independently investigate this serious matter?

The Speaker: Thank you.

Hon. members, I'm going to ask the Minister of Justice to clarify whether this matter is under investigation by a source other than the Ethics Commissioner, is it sub judice, or neither of the two?

Mr. Denis: My understanding, Mr. Speaker, is that the Calgary Police Service have an active investigation in this matter. I have not checked in the last couple of weeks, but that remains my understanding.

The Speaker: So the question stands, and the clarification has been accepted.

Do you wish to comment further on the question?

If not, let us move on to the hon. Leader of the Official Opposition for your third and final main set of questions.

Misericordia Community Hospital

Ms Smith: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For the third time in just over a year the Misericordia hospital in Edmonton is flooded. This time it's really bad. The emergency room is closed, and patients are being turned away. This government has known for some time

that the Mis is in bad shape and needs immediate action, but the government's refusal to act has once again caused patients to suffer. To the Minister of Health: how can he explain his government's failure to ensure that patients at the Misericordia are safe?

Mr. Mandel: Mr. Speaker, the government of the province of Alberta has invested \$25 million in trying to ensure that the Misericordia hospital continues to deliver the services to the citizens of the west end of the city of Edmonton. This particular issue was very concerning to all of us. They're working very diligently right now to ensure that all patients are kept safe.

The Speaker: First supplemental.

Ms Smith: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The government has well over half a billion dollars in deferred maintenance in health care facilities. Today is a sobering reminder of what that means for patients. The Misericordia hospital is literally falling apart. It has flooded now three times over the last year. To the Minister of Health. He has two choices: fix the hospital or build a new one. What's it going to be?

Mr. Mandel: Mr. Speaker, we've taken a direction to invest \$25 million over a period of time to try to ensure that this hospital continues to operate in an effective way. We're also looking at: how do we build new acute-care facilities across the province? We're doing that throughout the province now, with new facilities in Grande Prairie and other places. We'll continue to do that.

The Speaker: Final supplemental.

Ms Smith: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Minister, the roof may literally cave in at this hospital.

Now, I'll cut the minister a little bit of slack because he's pretty new on this job, but I won't be forgiving of all of those who are sitting around him. This is on them. They've ignored these issues for too long. To the Premier. This has been a priority for Alberta Health Services for years. We cannot wait for more delays or more reviews. What is he going to do about it right now?

Mr. Mandel: Mr. Speaker, the government of Alberta is doing all we can at this point in time by ensuring that the current situation is taken care of. The people at the location are ensuring that all steps are being taken to make sure that patients are taken care of and that the conditions will be reinstated as soon as possible.

2:00 Education Rights in Morinville

Mr. Hehr: The Premier pontificated that the Alberta constitution may somehow tie his hands when it comes to allowing Alberta kids to establish gay-straight alliances. Now, he may be playing fast and loose with that interpretation, but one thing that is clear is that under the Alberta Act of 1905 all communities are entitled to a public school. Morinville, a community of 10,000 people, a vast majority of whom are non-Catholic, has no access to a public option past grade 7. Why isn't the Premier fulfilling this government's obligation to provide a public school for these parents and kids?

Mr. Dirks: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member opposite for the question. It's a very important one. The local MLAs in that area, working with our government, of course, recognize the growing enrolment pressures that we have on some of our schools. Recently government organized a value scoping exercise along with officials from the Sturgeon school division, the parents, and community members to explore public school options for Morinville. We're

working closely with the community to determine the best approach to providing public education in Morinville. We look forward to a proposal coming forward to us.

Mr. Hehr: Well, I'd ask the Minister of Education this. It is a constitutional obligation of your government to provide public schools for children in the Morinville community. Why is it not following through on these constitutional obligations mandated by the foundation of this province?

Mr. Dirks: Mr. Speaker, we take very seriously our responsibility to provide quality education for all students in our province. The value scoping exercise I mentioned has provided an opportunity to ensure the community has the information and transparency needed to come forward with an informed decision on the best approach. Community members participated in preparing options. Those will go to the school board, and the board will then submit its proposal to the government. We look forward to receiving that proposal.

Mr. Hehr: Well, I'd ask the minister how any of that answer provides any restitution for the people in Morinville on having their constitutional mandate fulfilled of having a public school option for their children in that community.

Mr. Dirks: Mr. Speaker, as a province we've embarked on the most expansive school infrastructure project in Canadian history to address school shortages. We're going to continue to invest in schools right across the province. Sturgeon school division's requirements, once they're confirmed by the board, will be considered seriously as we move forward investing in school infrastructure for the future.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Strathcona, leader of the ND opposition.

Misericordia Community Hospital (continued)

Ms Notley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The NDP has been demanding action to repair and replace the Misericordia hospital for several years now. The government has dismissed our concerns along with the concerns of front-line health care providers, patients, and their families. Well, today we understand that the cafeteria roof in the Misericordia, which has been leaking for years, has collapsed. To the Premier: why has his government, through their incompetence and their grossly negligent behaviour, been allowed to put the health and safety of Albertans at risk?

Mr. Mandel: Mr. Speaker, we have tried to make sure that the Misericordia hospital is operating as well as possible by supplying \$25 million to it to ensure that it will continue to operate in an effective way.

Ms Notley: I am quite concerned by the failure of either the Premier or the Health minister to take this issue seriously. Twenty-five million dollars is not relevant. What's relevant is that a roof collapsed, west Edmonton has no ER, and there are no diagnostic services right now. Meanwhile we have a minister who thinks this issue requires more study. To the Premier: do you really think your minister's judgment that this requires still more study really warrants the faith and trust of Albertans for him in his role?

Mr. Mandel: Mr. Speaker, we take very seriously the issues at Misericordia hospital as well as any hospital throughout the province of Alberta. We will make sure we do all things to ensure

these hospitals are managed properly and they're taken care of properly.

Thank you.

Ms Notley: Wow. Well, Mr. Speaker, years of Tory neglect both here in the House and generally in doing their job have come home to roost. West Edmonton has no emergency room, no diagnostics, and a collapsed roof in its cafeteria. To the Premier: what are you going to do to ensure that members of your government are held accountable for this profoundly irresponsible level of neglect?

Mr. Mandel: Mr. Speaker, as I've already said, we're doing all we can at this time. We also know there's a need for acute-care improvements across the province of Alberta. We continue to look at that, and we'll continue to do that.

Landowner Property Rights Legislation

Mr. Barnes: Yesterday, the environment minister said that property rights are, and I quote, well protected under current legislation, suggesting he doesn't understand either property rights or his government's legislation. For instance, Bill 36, the Alberta Land Stewardship Act, prevents any person with a cause of action from bringing an application before the court, when access to the judicial system is a basic hallmark of western democracy. To the Premier: your promised first bill was to re-establish property rights for Albertans, not kick the can down the road. Does your government really believe landowners shouldn't have an opportunity. . .

The Speaker: Hon. member, I'm sorry. The 35 seconds has expired.

Let's go to the minister of environment.

Mr. Fawcett: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. This government introduced a few years ago the Alberta Land Stewardship Act to bring sense and planning to a very rapidly growing province. Subsequent to that, there were a number of amendments made based on consultation with landowners that dealt with some issues within that original legislation to improve the rights of landowners in respect to that legislation.

The Speaker: First supplemental.

Mr. Barnes: No compensation, no court.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that the sweeping draconian nature of Bill 36 suppresses a landowner's right to fair compensation and access to the courts and states that the act will prevail in all matters of dispute over the landowners you're pretending to protect, does your government have plans to do the right thing by all Albertans, stop this charade, and repeal Bill 36?

Mr. Fawcett: Mr. Speaker, no, we will not repeal Bill 36. This is a piece of legislation that is very, very important to our integrated resource management system, that will allow us to develop our resources and our economy in a very responsible manner. What the Premier has introduced is a bill that addresses some of the concerns of landowners, Bill 1, as well as to ask the all-party committee to look at the recommendations brought forward by the Property Rights Advocate, and we will undertake that work.

The Speaker: Final supplemental.

Mr. Barnes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. While the government's decision to repeal Bill 19 is welcome, it's a moot point because it

doesn't change the fact that it was never enacted. And Bill 36, which is significantly more unfair in matters of compensation and appeal, trumps it anyway. Given this, do you stand by your comments that Bill 36 sufficiently protects the rights of landowners to access the courts and compensation when this bill can be used as a big stick in negotiations and binds landowners to this government's incompetency, or would you like to take this opportunity to clarify?

Mr. Fawcett: Mr. Speaker, any time under Bill 36 and any time with respect to any legislation in this province that landowners are asked to give up their property rights for the overall good of the province and the public, they will have access to appropriate mechanisms such as access to compensation and access to the courts. It's something that this government takes very seriously. We will stand behind that, and we will let the all-party committee do its work and see what we come up with.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Grande Prairie-Smoky, followed by Strathmore-Brooks.

Rural Issues

Mr. McDonald: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today at the AAMD and C fall conference we heard loud and clear from our rural counterparts on the need and the growth that we're having in rural Alberta. The question that I have here today is for the Minister of Municipal Affairs. Given that we've heard so loud and clear from our rural libraries, what is the minister going to be doing to help fund the growth that we're seeing in rural Alberta?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs.

Mrs. McQueen: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the hon. member for his question. First, I'd like to say that I've had a great three days at AAMD and C. I want to thank Bob Bars, our president of AAMD and C, for his work and congratulate the incoming president, Al, as well.

Mr. Speaker, I spent a number of years on the board of the Yellowhead regional library. I'm a very strong supporter, as is our government, with regard to our libraries. We currently are providing \$26 million this year and an additional \$4 million to support IT in advancement. We are proud of the over 300 libraries we have in our province, and this government will continue to support them.

2:10

The Speaker: Thank you.

First supplemental.

Mr. McDonald: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The second item that we heard loud and clear today was on high-speed Internet. High-speed Internet is very prevalent in the major urban areas, but rural Alberta still suffers on high-speed Internet, especially in our business communities that are out working in the oil fields. To the same minister: could you give us some clarification on when you're going to invest in rural Alberta?

Mr. Khan: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank the hon. Member for Grande Prairie-Smoky for this important question. As he identifies, not only is high-speed Internet a crucial business tool for rural development; high-speed Internet has become a crucial component just for quality of life for all Albertans, including those in rural Alberta. That's why the Premier has made access to and expanding of high-speed Internet the number one issue on my mandate letter. That's why I've been busy working with the

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, and I continue to work with our stakeholders in the corporate and municipal sectors to deliver high-speed Internet to Alberta.

The Speaker: The final supplemental.

Mr. McDonald: Yeah. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This one is for my colleague the Transportation minister. It's something that I think he heard quite clearly today, but I'd just like to reaffirm his commitment to the roads and bridges files in rural Alberta.

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Transportation.

Mr. Drysdale: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, we did hear very loud and clear this morning from our AAMD and C partners. You know, I met with several of them over the last couple of days and had the same message that roads and bridges are one of their top priorities. I agree a hundred per cent with that. This year we've invested more than \$735 million in road rehabilitation for our existing infrastructure. Much of this is going to rural Alberta. We'll continue to work with our municipalities as well as industry to find innovative partnerships that will bridge that funding gap.

The Speaker: Strathmore-Brooks, followed by Lesser Slave Lake.

Wheatland County Roads

Mr. Hale: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Transportation minister is going to hear it again. Residents in the Wheatland and Newell counties are driving on highways with growing potholes and shrinking embankments. It's dangerous and is sparking outrage. I know the Transportation minister recently met with these folks, but without a clear priority list for maintenance projects or a firm commitment from the government we have no timeline when these highways will get fixed. With the safety of Albertans at risk can the minister give commuters a firm timeline when these troubling highways will be fixed?

Mr. Drysdale: Well, Mr. Speaker, you know, as I said, I met with lots of municipalities, and every member in this House in their constituencies have road priorities. Every Albertan probably has road priorities. Safety is number one. When we look at all the priorities from across the province, we evaluate them, and safety is number one. We have a good technical evaluation process that measures the roughness and the condition of the road. Also, budget has a lot to do with which roads get built and the priority.

The Speaker: First supplemental.

Mr. Hale: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that it took over two years for the government to fix highway 841 after half the highway slid down the bank and given that highway 569 has still not received any care, will the minister meet the requests of Wheatland county and devolve the responsibilities to the local experts so Albertans can use these highways safely?

Mr. Drysdale: Well, Mr. Speaker, as I said, I met specifically with Wheatland county, and I know their concerns. But every municipality has concerns with roads, and we have a responsibility to balance the budget of this province with the priorities. I'd like to rebuild every road in the province of Alberta, but we know that isn't possible given the fiscal situation. I can't understand the members across. One minute they're saying that we should cut spending; the next minute they're wanting us to spend more.

Mr. Hale: Mr. Speaker, we're worried about saving the lives of our constituents that are going to fall off these beaten-up roads.

Given that highway 876 serves as a crucial access point from highway 1 to one of Alberta's most popular provincial parks, Dinosaur provincial park, and given the mix of industrial trucks and family vehicles travelling on highway 876, which is dangerous and barely passable after a rain, when will the minister ensure that this highway is fixed or cost share the project with a very willing county of Newell?

Mr. Drysdale: Well, Mr. Speaker, it's the same question. We work with all of them. There are priorities. I am working with the county there, and we're working in partnerships, but like I said, we've got to stack all the priorities of everybody in the province up. We do the most we can with the money we're given. Be assured that I take safety very seriously. Safety is number one, and we look after that.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Lesser Slave Lake, followed by Calgary-Mountain View.

Northland School Division

Ms Calahasen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. An inquiry was conducted at Northland school division, and an engagement committee report was completed in January 2011. Included in the report were five priority recommendations to improve education for over 2,700 students. To the Minister of Education: given that it is now 2014 and my peeps are getting more and more restless, when can they expect a detailed position and response from the minister on the recommendations?

Mr. Dirks: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for the question. All students in Alberta deserve a quality education, and certainly those in Northland school division are no exception. We're working with the school division and with local communities on improving student learning, ensuring effective governance of schools in the region. A number of the recommendations in the Northland inquiry team report, which I've had the opportunity to read through, have been implemented. We're starting to see some great successes; for example, we've taken steps to address teacher and principal recruitment and retention, and we're now seeing some improvements in those areas.

Ms Calahasen: Mr. Speaker, I'm so pleased to see that at least this minister is reading the report. The people have been waiting, waiting, waiting. It's a waiting game. To the same minister. My constituents have been waiting for so long. When can we see action, direction, and implementation of all the recommendations?

Mr. Dirks: Mr. Speaker, a number of the recommendations, I believe 12 of them, have been implemented already, and the others are under consideration. We have started seeing some good successes. Another example over the last few years: the number of students dropping out of high school has decreased. The number of students completing their high school program, transitioning to postsecondary, and writing provincial diploma exams has also increased. A good-news story.

Ms Calahasen: To the same minister: will there finally be an executive school board put back in place so that the people with Northland school division can also exercise the same democratic right that all other school jurisdictions in Alberta enjoy and be able to determine their own educational future?

Mr. Dirks: Mr. Speaker, a very important issue raised by the member. We're going to continue listening to the local community and work in partnership to ensure that we get the changes that need to be put in place right. In order to address some of the issues around governance, we need to amend the Northland School Division Act, and we'll be engaging in community conversations to develop principles, visions, and values for an amended piece of legislation.

The Speaker: Thank you.

The hon. Member for Calgary-Mountain View, followed by Edmonton-Calder.

Child Care Supports

Dr. Swann: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Today is Universal Children's Day, and in light of no action on child poverty by this government and in light of the Health minister's recent decision in favour of big tobacco, it's fitting that we question the PC government's commitment to putting children first. The Public Interest Alberta report released today shows more families struggling to find and pay for daycare, with the cost per child at \$900 per month, full-day kindergarten cheaper, at \$750 per month. To the Minister of Human Services: when will this government keep its promise for full-day kindergarten . . .

The Speaker: Hon. member, sorry to interrupt, but 35 seconds has gone by.

Let's go to the hon. Minister of Human Services.

Mrs. Klimchuk: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is indeed international day of the child. We know in Human Services that children are our focus. We also know that with the supports we provide, where they're for child care, parents do have the choice. We know that there are 2,300 licensed child daycare programs here in Alberta. In 2013 families received the full subsidy of \$268 per month.

Dr. Swann: Mr. Speaker, given the scarcity of safe and affordable child care in Alberta the Liberals have also been calling on the government to ensure that more of these child spaces are available and affordable, subsidized. Will the minister please help release the burden on high-cost child care by supporting the Alberta call for the creation of a universal low-cost child care program in Alberta?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mrs. Klimchuk: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last year we increased the spaces by about 4,700 child care spaces, for a total of over 100,000 spaces across Alberta. We know that many people are coming to Alberta, but we also know that we need to give parents a choice as to where they put their children, whether it's in a day home or a daycare. At the end of the day, for me, it's something that I'm looking at very carefully. Again, top of mind. Children always will come first.

2:20

Dr. Swann: Mr. Speaker, my final question is to the Education minister. Given that in the past five years the renowned early childhood mapping project has assisted government and communities in addressing thousands of children with developmental delays, learning problems, behaviour disorders, and mental health issues, why is the minister cutting this important work?

Mr. Dirks: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member opposite for the question. I'm new in the role, of course, so I'm still getting up to speed on all of the issues. My colleague might be able to respond to this issue better than I might, but I will certainly take the member's question under advisement.

The Speaker: Thank you.

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Calder, followed by Chestermere-Rocky View.

Mr. Eggen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This government was elected by promising to eliminate child poverty and to bring more low-income Albertans into the workforce. Those in the know understand that comprehensive, affordable, high-quality child care is fundamental to meeting those goals. Unfortunately, a new report proves that this government is failing Alberta families on child care. To the Premier: is your government going to be remaining lost in this *Leave It to Beaver* understanding of modern families, or will you finally commit to a meaningful child care plan that our province needs?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Human Services.

Mrs. Klimchuk: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm happy to address this question again. I think it's important to note that of over 80,000 children that are enrolled in child care programs, 25,000 children receive a full or partial care subsidy, and that's very important to this ministry. Again, helping low-income families with some of the issues that they have, whether it's through the parent link centres or providing supports like that through Human Services, is what we will be doing.

Mr. Eggen: Given that on Tuesday the Ontario Legislature endorsed a federal NDP plan for a \$15 per day child care plan and given that in this province we invest less than all but one other province, Mr. Speaker, to the Premier. We have a child care crisis here in the province of Alberta, but the issue does not even warrant a mention in your throne speech. Why?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Human Services.

Mrs. Klimchuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's really important that we focus on helping low-income families find quality child care. That's the focus we're going to take, and that's what I'll be working on, especially when we look at the early years strategy and look at the issues of child poverty as well.

Mr. Eggen: Well, given that there is a crisis-level shortage of child care spaces, especially for infants and special-needs kids, not just low income, Mr. Speaker, and that when you do find a space, the average cost is about a thousand dollars per month per child and that even the safety is not guaranteed for all people, not just low income, to the Premier again. You need to take action on this issue. When will you do so, sir?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mrs. Klimchuk: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, it's about parents having the choice where they need to put their children. We know that it's very important to support the families on lower incomes, but again, it's having families access some of the other supports that we provide through Human Services, some of the many supports through parent link centres, and some of the other aspects that we do to support families.

The Speaker: Thank you.

Calgary Area Flood Mitigation

Mr. McAllister: Mr. Speaker, a short time ago the government made an announcement on flood mitigation, and it probably wasn't coincidental that that came on the eve of a by-election. Of three potential projects they propose a giant dry reservoir in Springbank. Many of us, even the mayor of Calgary, sounded the alarm, saying that we have yet to see any proposals or engineering projects. Now, surely the government wouldn't proceed with a project of this magnitude without those, so I ask the environment minister today: have you completed these, and will you make them public?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Environment and Sustainable Resource Development.

Mr. Fawcett: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. There has been substantial work looking at a number of options when it comes to flood mitigation along the Elbow River, and what we've done is that we're taking a look at what the environmental impacts of all of them are, what the impacts to landowners are, what the financial impacts of these projects are. At this point in time, with all of the information that we've been able to gather, we've decided that the best one to move forward on right now is the room for the river concept in Springbank.

Mr. McAllister: If you're keeping track in your programs, the answer is: no, we have not.

Mr. Speaker, upstream of Springbank is the community of Bragg Creek. It suffered tremendous damage. They're still rebuilding from the last flood. The community of Redwood Meadows, through God's grace and a Herculean effort, survived. The McLean Creek project is upstream of these communities. It would make sense to build this project. Given that it is on Crown land, residents and community leaders want to know: why are you steamrolling over the rights of landowners in Springbank when this option exists and it hasn't been explored?

Mr. Fawcett: Mr. Speaker, there's so much wrong with the preamble in that question. What we are doing is working with Rocky View county there to develop a number of flood protection options that they can implement. We provided them with a grant to do the engineering on that. That community will be protected, and we're committed to that.

Mr. McAllister: The only thing wrong is that you shot before aiming.

Given that landowners understandably don't have a lot of trust in this government when it comes to property rights, understanding that community leaders and residents feel that you have completely left them out of the process, Minister, will you table the engineering reports and studies showing why you chose this project, along with the financial estimates, including the estimated cost of land acquisition, or are you clearly telling Albertans that you have not done due diligence?

Mr. Fawcett: Mr. Speaker, it's been about 17, 18 months since the floods of 2013. Our government committed shortly after that to make sure that we improve and implement a number of flood mitigation projects, and we've done substantial work on that. You know, we would be more than happy to sit down with the member and show him all of the work that we've done. We have gotten to a point where we've been able to move forward with the project, that is going to provide significant protection to the big commu-

nities of Calgary from a flood of this nature again in the future, and we must do that right now. We don't have the time to wait like the hon. member suggests.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Red Deer-South, followed by Medicine Hat.

Seniors' Housing in Red Deer

Mr. Dallas: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The government of Alberta owns two surplus long-term care sites in Red Deer that are now no longer suitable to be used for long-term care due to their age and condition. As I understand it, these buildings are due to be demolished. My first question is to the Minister of Infrastructure. What is the timeline to have these sites cleared for use by other government departments?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Infrastructure.

Mr. Bhullar: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. At present we're looking at other potential uses for these sites, and I believe we'll be able to move forward in a very swift manner.

Mr. Dallas: Mr. Speaker, my supplemental questions are to the Minister of Seniors. Once these sites are cleared, is the minister planning to utilize these sites to provide much-needed affordable housing, lodges, or assisted living for Red Deer residents and seniors?

The Speaker: The Seniors minister.

Mr. J. Johnson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That's a good question from the hon. member. I can tell you that one of my very first meetings when I became Seniors minister was set up by him, with the mayor of the city of Red Deer and the Member for Red Deer-South, to look at their housing situation. We're working with the Minister of Infrastructure. I can tell you that my staff will be on-site next week or by the end of the month, having to look at the appropriateness of these sites. These are taxpayer assets. If there is any way that we can put them to work in future plans to help seniors, we have a great appetite to do that.

Mr. Dallas: Well, that's good news, Mr. Speaker, but in the meantime – and it takes some time to develop these – what other options has the minister got for seniors in Red Deer in terms of housing options?

Mr. J. Johnson: Mr. Speaker, the government is committed to providing safe, affordable, quality housing that meets the diverse needs of all our seniors, and in Red Deer there are various options. We know that there are challenges because of tighter supplies, but one of the great mandates we have from the Premier is to develop a provincial housing strategy and look at all of our assets. We also had the recent announcements, which you know about. But most seniors in that community and others should work with their regional housing management bodies, that are supported by this province to do affordable housing. I can also give you the good news that there are about 120 supportive living projects, or units, in Red Deer under construction right now or with the sod ready to be turned.

The Speaker: Thank you.

The hon. Member for Medicine Hat, followed by Calgary-West.

Medical Laboratory Services in Medicine Hat

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. AHS has announced their plans to close a Medicine Hat diagnostics lab and centralize all of the testing at the Medicine Hat regional hospital. Not only is this bad news for patients, but it means layoffs for hard-working front-line staff. Even worse, this was done without compassion. The staff had to find out through the media. Now, I know that the minister is new on the job, but he is responsible for AHS, so can he explain this new strategy of announcing dangerous centralization plans, layoffs, and closures through the media?

2:30

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health.

Mr. Mandel: Yes, Mr. Speaker. This was a step taken in order to reduce the costs of lab work in Medicine Hat and was done to be more fiscally prudent.

Mr. Pedersen: Mr. Speaker, given that the minister said that moving testing from the diagnostic lab to the regional hospital was planned all along, he's either not telling the truth, or he's completely misinformed. It's never been in the plans. How does he intend to ensure that these services are still accessible, there are no lapses in testing, and the patients of Medicine Hat don't have to see their health put at risk?

Mr. Mandel: Mr. Speaker, there's no intent to put anybody at risk. The procedures will continue. Tests will be taken and given at a better facility.

Mr. Pedersen: Mr. Speaker, given that AHS has done a cost analysis and stated that there will be \$5 million saved over five years, can the minister please explain how many job losses and reduced services there will be to create these cost savings?

Mr. Mandel: Mr. Speaker, I've been informed that there will be no job losses and that there will be substantial savings. Thank you.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-West, followed by Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills.

Calgary Ring Road Completion

Mr. Ellis: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Last fall this government signed a historic land transfer agreement with the Tsuu T'ina First Nation that will see 421 hectares of land transferred to the government for the completion of the Stoney Trail ring road in Calgary. This agreement has now been in place for over a year. Can the Minister of Transportation please give this House an update on the construction schedule for this project?

Mr. Drysdale: Thank you to the hon. member for the question. I know he'll do a great job to advocate for the people of Calgary-West. Mr. Speaker, construction can't begin on the final leg of the Calgary ring road until the land transfer agreement with the Tsuu T'ina First Nation is complete. My department continues to work with our partners in the federal government and the Tsuu T'ina nation to complete the agreement. We expect the agreement to be completed by 2015, and in the meantime we continue to move forward with detailed engineering design and an environmental impact assessment.

The Speaker: First supplemental.

Mr. Ellis: Thank you, Minister, and thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that Calgaryans are also concerned about the overall cost of

these final two sections of the ring road and that reports indicate costs in the neighbourhood of \$5 billion, can the minister please explain this unusually high price tag and detail any measures his department is taking to ensure Albertans receive the best value for their tax dollars?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Drysdale: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To be frank, it's much too early to begin serious talk about cost estimates. The ballpark estimate that's been circulating is just that, a ballpark. We have yet to determine if the project will be delivered using a P3 model or through a more traditional tendering model. This will affect the overall cost. We will make this decision based on which delivery method will provide the best overall value for Albertans. I'm confident that we can get good value for our money, and I'm committed to delivering this project in a financially responsible manner.

The Speaker: Final supplemental.

Mr. Ellis: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, Minister. My final question is to the same minister. Given that my constituents in Calgary-West have expressed concerns that noise from the road will negatively impact their quality of life, are there contingencies in place to ensure that all the communities bordering the ring road will not be affected by traffic noise?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Drysdale: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My department has strict noise guidelines that state that we must consider sound barriers for noise levels that exceed 65 decibels on average over a 24-hour period. If once construction is complete and the road is open to traffic the noise levels exceed this threshold at any location along the route, we'll take steps to address the issue.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills, followed by Whitecourt-Ste. Anne.

Rural Physician Recruitment

Mr. Rowe: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Canadian Screen Award winning film called *The Grand Seduction* described the very real problem of rural Canadian communities like mine which struggle to recruit doctors. Many towns are forced to offer massive incentives and beg on our hands and knees not only to recruit doctors but to have them stay. No matter what part of the province you live in, you should never have to drive hours to receive a checkup or treatment. It's clear that the Alberta rural physician action plan isn't working in my riding and many others. What is the Health minister going to do to fix it?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health.

Mr. Mandel: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We're very concerned about rural Alberta, ensuring that they do have adequate support from their physician community. This is a challenge, and we have developed a rural action plan. That is helping. Also, we've invested a tremendous amount more money in other programs and will continue to support rural Alberta.

The Speaker: First supplemental.

Mr. Rowe: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that it is very difficult for rural Alberta to compete with larger communities in attracting

doctors to their communities and given that rural residents who are trained in Alberta are more likely to return to rural Alberta to practise medicine, what is this Health minister going to do to ensure that we are training more doctors in our own backyards?

Mr. Mandel: Mr. Speaker, there are programs out of the University of Calgary medical school that are looking to implement places within rural Alberta to train physicians, and we're encouraging that. We think that the more that can be trained in rural Alberta, the more will stay in rural Alberta, and we think that's a very positive step.

Mr. Rowe: Given the fact that we cannot train enough doctors locally quick enough to meet the needs of today and the limited success of the rural Alberta physician action plan, what will this Health minister do to encourage the college of physicians to reduce barriers for internationally trained doctors to come to rural Alberta?

Mr. Mandel: Mr. Speaker, we hope that through a process of encouraging doctors to come to the province of Alberta from around the world and making sure that that process allows them to move through the system quickly, they will choose rural Alberta but choose in the way of choice rather than of obligation.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Whitecourt-St. Anne, followed by Lac La Biche-St. Paul-Two Hills.

Forestry Industry

Mr. VanderBurg: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The forest industry is firing on all cylinders, whether it's in Alberta or many jurisdictions across North America. I'm proud to come from a forest community, you know. The single biggest threat to our healthy forests is the pine beetle. To the Minister of ESRD: are you confirmed and committed to the pine beetle strategy in this province?

Mr. Fawcett: Mr. Speaker, obviously, having a healthy forest is a very important aspect of a healthy forestry industry and in making sure that it's economically viable. This government has committed about \$40 million this year to continue our fight against the mountain pine beetle. We have done a very good job of holding it off and making sure that it doesn't spread. We will continue to be committed to that as the forestry sector is very, very important to many of the communities in our province, as the member said.

Mr. VanderBurg: To the Treasurer. Lumber prices today are exceeding \$375 U.S. per thousand, predicted to be over \$500 per thousand. Is this going to help your shortfall in the budget?

The Speaker: The hon. President of Treasury Board.

Mr. Campbell: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. We're always happy to see the forestry industry do well although with oil at \$75 a barrel it won't help us considerably. More importantly, the forestry industry pays some of the highest wages anywhere in the province, and more than 50 communities in rural Alberta depend on forestry to be sustainable. So good forest prices and the fact that we're selling lumber across North America and the rest of the world is good for Alberta.

Mr. VanderBurg: The next question is to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. Building codes prevent the use of more Alberta wood products in our structures, especially those greater than three storeys. This is an opportunity for Alberta. Would you

support the changes in regulations to use more wood products in structures greater than three storeys?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs.

Mrs. McQueen: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. That member has had three excellent questions. Like this hon. member, I am an MLA with forestry in my constituency as well. I have had the opportunity, like this member, to go to other provinces that have built wood structures higher than three storeys. Absolutely, if a piece of legislation came through, we would support this. It's outstanding for the forest industry. Great question.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Lac La Biche-St. Paul-Two Hills.

Mr. Saskiw: I'm not sure I can follow that, Mr. Speaker.

Regional Dialysis Service

Mr. Saskiw: Lac La Biche was promised a dialysis bus; then it was delayed. We finally got a dialysis bus, but there was no staff to run it. Then the bus broke down. It might actually be funny if it wasn't a matter of life and death. Now with winter coming, the bus just sits in front of the hospital. This leaves me wondering: why aren't the dialysis units being permanently moved from the bus into the hospital?

Mr. Mandel: That's a very good question, Mr. Speaker. I've had an opportunity to meet with the community of Lac La Biche, and we're looking into that as we speak right now.

2:40

Mr. Saskiw: Given that there are other communities such as Athabasca that could use a dialysis bus, why doesn't the government simply move the dialysis units from the bus into the Lac La Biche hospital to free up the bus so that it could be used elsewhere, in places like Athabasca?

Mr. Mandel: Mr. Speaker, there are well over 2,000 people in the province of Alberta that have to go through dialysis. We need to find ways in which as many people as possible can have access to dialysis, and the hon. member has given a good suggestion. We'll see what happens.

The Speaker: Final supplemental.

Mr. Saskiw: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that northern Albertans who require dialysis must travel up to four hours each way to receive treatment, doesn't the minister care that many people are being forced to move away from their homes, communities, and their loved ones?

Mr. Mandel: Mr. Speaker, we have added dialysis machines to Westlock, Fort McMurray, and other areas around the province. We're very concerned about people and making sure they get dialysis as close as they can to their particular communities.

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. members.

The bell has rung, so that means that question period time has expired. However, you should know that as a result of fairly short answers, mostly, and some short questions we had 102 questions and answers offered today. One hundred and two. We haven't reached that mark in a long time. Those of you who were co-operating, with decorum and good order, I thank very much because it allowed a few more questions to get up today.

Statement by the Speaker

Oral Question Period Rules

The Speaker: Secondly, on the issue of preambles I did note yesterday and today that a lot of people went beyond the rule, so to speak, that preambles should not accompany or be in front of the supplementals. However, I always use the words “should not” in conjunction with some temperance, and if the preambles were of a high level, then I tended to let them go because “should not” has a lot of wiggle room, as you know. So if you’re in agreement with that, I’ll try to do the same thing come next week.

The big winner today was a whole week with no points of order. Let us hope that continues.

My final point is to mention that I just do my best to enforce the rules; I don’t set them. So to those of you who sent me notes about the Conflicts of Interest Act, it’s section 24(6), and it reads as follows: “Where a matter has been referred to the Ethics Commissioner under subsection (1), (3) or (4), neither the Legislative Assembly nor a committee of the Assembly shall inquire into the matter.” So I hope that suffices for those of you who wrote to me on that issue.

Members’ Statements

(continued)

The Speaker: Let us continue with Calgary-East.

Bullying Awareness and Prevention

Mr. Amery: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to acknowledge an important awareness campaign currently going on. November 16 to 22 marks National Bullying Awareness Week, now in its 12th year. Its goal is to increase our awareness and understanding of the horrific impacts of bullying and promote prevention of bullying behaviour.

Each year the government of Alberta is proud to take part in National Bullying Awareness Week. This week, Mr. Speaker, serves as a great opportunity to address this issue with local communities. A recent Ipsos-Reid study in 2014 revealed that 1 in 3 Albertans believe bullying is a normal part of growing up. That belief is most prevalent among 16- to 34-year-old males. Providing more cause for concern is that the number continues to rise, increasing 6 per cent since 2012. Initiatives such as National Bullying Awareness Week are important because they work to counteract upward trends like this.

Bullying is in no way, Mr. Speaker, a normal part of growing up. It takes a tremendous toll on individuals’ confidence and self-esteem, affects their school or workplace performance, and undermines the strength of our communities. We must continue to change the perception that bullying is an acceptable behaviour. One way we can change that is by participating and leading events as part of National Bullying Awareness Week.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to encourage my colleagues to take part in one of the many bullying prevention events happening this week. A list of events around the province of Alberta can be found at humanservices.alberta.ca/bullying.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Notices of Motions

The Speaker: The Minister of Justice and Solicitor General.

Mr. Denis: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise pursuant to Standing Order 34(3) to advise the House that on Monday,

November 24, 2014, written questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 14, 23, and 30 will be dealt with.

Also on Monday, November 24, 2014, motions for returns 1, 2, 4, 5, 9, 10, 11, 13, and 14 will be dealt with, sir.

Introduction of Bills

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House-Sundre.

Bill 201

Electric Utilities (Transparency in Billing) Amendment Act, 2014

Mr. Anglin: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Hopefully, there won’t be a point of order on this one.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to request leave to introduce Bill 201, the Electric Utilities (Transparency in Billing) Amendment Act, 2014.

The purpose of the bill is to increase transparency in billing, but more importantly, it proposes to standardize consumer utility bills so that retail consumers can be better informed about market options. Hopefully, the new standardized variable market rate on this utility bill should help expand competition as consumers become better informed and better equipped to compare prices and market options.

[Motion carried; Bill 201 read a first time]

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

Bill 202

Safe and Inclusive Schools Statutes Amendment Act, 2014

Ms Blakeman: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I’m very pleased to introduce Bill 202, Safe and Inclusive Schools Statutes Amendment Act, 2014.

This bill proposes three small additions to the Education Act and one deletion from the Human Rights Act. It deletes section 11.1 from the Human Rights Act but strengthens and widens section 58 of the Education Act, which is the existing parental opt-out section for religion and patriotic exercise, by adding in sexual health. Parents can still opt their kids out if they don’t want their kids in sex ed.

In the Education Act’s section 33(2) on welcoming, caring, and safe environments to reduce bullying, it adds in that the policy must accommodate students who want to lead organizations that are gay-straight alliances, and they may call them by that name.

Finally, like two previous versions of the Education Act, there will be a clause that references the Charter and the Alberta Human Rights Act as reflective of our values.

So, a parental opt-out on sexual health, accommodation of GSAs, referencing the Charter and human rights, and deleting section 11.1.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

[Motion carried; Bill 202 read a first time]

The Speaker: Just before we go on, could we have unanimous consent to briefly revert to introductions? Does anyone object? If you do, please say so now.

[Unanimous consent granted]

Introduction of Guests

(continued)

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development.

Mr. Olson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank colleagues for their indulgence. I'm pleased to make an introduction on behalf of the Member for Barrhead-Morinville-Westlock and introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly a group of grade 10 high school students from R.F. Staples secondary school in Westlock. Now, unfortunately, they've come and gone. They're otherwise busy in a neighbouring building right now, but I did want to get their presence on the record. They are accompanied by their teacher, Ms Kelly Lehman, and a parent adviser, Colleen Chapotelle. This group of students, I understand, brought treats. I haven't seen them, but I expect that they may be somewhere around, so colleagues can keep an eye open in case anything shows up in any of our respective rooms. I thank them for their presence and wish them luck and thank colleagues for their indulgence.

The Speaker: Thank you.

2:50 Tabling Returns and Reports

The Speaker: Let us continue. The hon. Associate Minister of Aboriginal Relations.

Mr. Dorward: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of Aboriginal Relations I'm pleased to rise today and table the requisite number of copies of the Northern Alberta Development Council 2013-2014 annual report and note that that's led by the MLA for Lesser Slave Lake and thank her for her service on that committee.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker

The Speaker: Thank you.

Tablings to the Clerk

The Clerk: I wish to advise the House that the following documents were deposited with the office of the Clerk. On behalf of the hon. Mr. Fawcett, Minister of Environment and Sustainable Resource Development, a response to Written Question 23, asked for by Ms Blakeman on April 14, 2014: "In relation to the June 2013 flood, how many hours' notice did the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Resource Development give to each of the affected municipalities that flooding was either possible or imminent?"

On behalf of the hon. Mr. Dirks, Minister of Education, pursuant to the Legislative Assembly Act and the Fiscal Management Act the Education annual report update 2013-14.

On behalf of the hon. Mrs. Klimchuk, Minister of Human Services, responses to written questions 4, 19, 20, 21, 22, 27, and 28, all asked for by Dr. Swann on April 14, 2014. Written Question 4: "As of January 1, 2014, how many licensed child care program spaces and approved family day home spaces are there in each of Edmonton, Calgary, and the rest of Alberta?" Written Question 19: "What criteria does the Government use to classify children as living in poverty?" Written Question 20: "What is the Government's estimate of how many Alberta children are living in poverty as of January 1, 2014?" Written Question 21: "What criteria does the Government use to determine whether a child has escaped poverty?" Written Question 22: "What is the Government's projection of how much money it will need to invest to eliminate

child poverty in five years, in connection with Together We Raise Tomorrow, Alberta's Poverty Reduction Strategy, announced in June 2013, and to which programs, services, and community resources will this funding be allocated?" Written Question 27: "What is the projected net financial result of dissolving the Child and Family Services Authorities and Persons with Developmental Disabilities Community Boards, establishing family and community engagement councils, and transferring responsibility for service delivery to the Ministry of Human Services?" Written Question 28: "How much have caseloads for Alberta Works decreased or increased from April 1, 2008, to April 1, 2013?"

The Speaker: Thank you.

Hon. members, as I've already said, we made history today. Never in my time has an entire week of business of the Assembly occurred with not one single point of order in question period, and I just want to thank and congratulate members on both sides of the House for elevating the level of decorum. I did let you burn off a little bit of steam there in the last set of questions because I could sense that things were pent up inside you for the whole week, but it didn't result in a point of order, and for that we're all grateful. There are no other points of order, so we will move on with the question of privilege.

Privilege

Obstructing a Member in Performance of Duty

The Speaker: Hon. members, I'm prepared to make this ruling on the purported question of privilege that was raised by the Member for Edmonton-Centre on Tuesday, November 18, 2014. The debate on this matter can be found at pages 23 to 28 of *Alberta Hansard* for that day.

With respect to the formalities my office received notice from the Member for Edmonton-Centre on November 12, 2014, at 2:53 p.m. regarding her intention to raise a question of privilege under Standing Order 15 when the House reconvened this session. The member has satisfied the requirement in Standing Order 15(2) for notice to be given to the Speaker at least two hours before the opening of the sitting. The notice to the Speaker also indicated that those persons whose conduct might be called into question would be copied on the notice as is also required, if practicable, under Standing Order 15(2).

As indicated, the Member for Edmonton-Centre raised her purported question of privilege on Tuesday, November 18, in the Assembly, which was the first day of ordinary business for this session. The member indicated that her purported question of privilege is based on matters contained in the Auditor General's report dated August 2014 and titled Special Duty Report on the Expenses of the Office of Premier Redford and Alberta's Air Transportation Services Program. This report was released on August 7, 2014, and was filed at that time as an intersessional deposit, known as Sessional Paper 309/2014, while the Assembly was adjourned. The Assembly did not sit from the time that the report was released until the commencement of the Third Session of the Legislature on Monday, November 17, 2014. Accordingly, I find that the application under Standing Order 15 was raised at the earliest opportunity.

I'll have more to say about a previous purported question on the same subject, decided back in March of this year, in a moment. That was during the Second Session of the Legislature.

Now, before continuing with the substance of my ruling, I would like to draw members' attention to the notice provided by the Member for Edmonton-Centre during Notices of Motions in Tuesday's daily Routine. The notice referenced four members of

this Assembly: the members for Calgary-Acadia, Grande Prairie-Wapiti, Edmonton-Rutherford, and Spruce Grove-St. Albert, but Calgary-Acadia was struck out. I have confirmed with the Member for Edmonton-Centre that she has raised this question of privilege with respect to only three of those four members and that the striking out of Calgary-Acadia in her written notice was intentional and that she herself had stricken it out.

The purported question of privilege before us today resurrected the question of privilege raised by the Member for Calgary-Shaw last session. Members can certainly read his arguments in the March 12, 2014, *Alberta Hansard* at pages 212 and 213. His purported question of privilege was similar to the one raised by the Member for Edmonton-Centre on Tuesday this week; namely, that there were statements made in this Assembly that allegedly interfered with the ability of members to perform their duties. Another way of articulating this point is to suggest that a member made a statement in this Assembly that was deliberately misleading and accordingly constituted a contempt of this Assembly.

For the benefit of the new members in particular but also for those who may not recall the proceedings on this point last March, *Erskine May's Treatise on The Law, Privileges, Proceedings and Usage of Parliament*, 24th edition, at page 254 states with respect to the United Kingdom: "The Commons may treat the making of a deliberately misleading statement as a contempt." As well, and as I pointed out in my rulings on November 29 and December 3, 2012, at pages 1190 and 1206 of *Alberta Hansard* respectively, it is understood that a form of contempt that is treated as a question of privilege is just that, as enunciated earlier.

The Member for Edmonton-Centre is raising essentially the same purported question of privilege but distinguishes her argument on the basis of the information contained in the aforementioned Auditor General's special duty report of August 2014. As everyone knows, that report dealt solely with the expenses incurred by the Premier's office. Let me be clear. We're talking about the former Premier.

To clarify the scope of the report, it states at page 2: "This was an audit of the expenses of Premier Redford and her office. It would be wrong for anyone to extrapolate our findings and conclusions to the public service of Alberta as a whole."

The Auditor General states at page 27 of the report:

We found that, on October 25, 2012, Premier Redford flew on a government aircraft to Grande Prairie to attend the Northern Alberta Leader's Dinner. We reviewed Premier Redford's schedule for that day and did not identify any government business scheduled in Grande Prairie.

Clearly, the Auditor General's reference states that there was nothing in Premier Redford's schedule to suggest that she had any government business printed in the schedule he reviewed.

The chair would also note that two days ago, on November 18, 2014, the Minister of Transportation tabled an August 13, 2014, newspaper article from the *Daily Herald-Tribune*, known as Sessional Paper 14/2014, wherein the editor of that newspaper confirms that a funding announcement that was made about the Grande Prairie regional hospital on October 25, 2012, was in fact made at the TEC Centre in Grande Prairie. In other words, some government business obviously did occur during this trip in question.*

Now, it's important to note that the test for deliberately misleading the Assembly or the House is found in *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, 2nd edition, at page 86, where the three-part test articulated by former Clerk of the New Zealand House of Assembly David McGee in the 3rd edition of his book *Parliamentary Practice in New Zealand* at pages 653 and 654 is

cited. As indicated several times in this Assembly, the three parts of the test are:

One, it must be proven that the statement was misleading; two, it must be established that the Member making the statement knew at the time that the statement was incorrect; and three, that in making the statement, the Member intended to mislead the House.

3:00

The specifics of the flights and the activities of members of the government caucus were extensively covered in March of this year, both in question period and during discussion of the Member for Calgary-Shaw's purported question of privilege at that time. Also at that time the members in question explained the circumstances surrounding their travel on the day in question, including how travel plans were affected by the tragic accident that occurred in St. Paul.

The ruling that there was no prima facie question of privilege can be found at page 215 of *Alberta Hansard* for March 12, 2014. Additional information regarding the flights, of course, was provided by the Member for Edmonton-Centre when yesterday she tabled the passenger manifest for the flights to and from Grande Prairie on October 25, 2012, as Sessional Paper 28/2014.

It is not in keeping with parliamentary tradition to raise a matter that has already been decided. If this were a court, it is my understanding that to raise the same issues that have already been adjudicated would be an abuse of process or subject to the Latin term *res judicata*, which means already subject to judicial determination; in other words, the matter has already been decided.

However, two days ago the Member for Edmonton-Centre argued that the determinations in the Auditor General's special duty report offered some proof, some new information perhaps that, in her opinion, deliberately misleading statements were made by some members in this Assembly. The three members referred to in the purported question of privilege all denied that they had any intention to mislead the Assembly, and, as already mentioned, the Minister of Transportation tabled a newspaper article substantiating his argument that, in fact, a government announcement was made in Grande Prairie during the time in question. The report by the Auditor General clearly focused on the activities of the former Premier, not on every member of the government.

With respect to the esteemed officer of the Legislature, there is nothing in his report that directly contradicts the statements made by the three members in the Assembly on Tuesday, November 18, 2014, at page 28 of *Alberta Hansard*. While the statements were short, they did not move away from their earlier statements in the Assembly which they made last March.

I indicated that I would look at other jurisdictions in formulating this ruling. A 2002 ruling by former Ontario Speaker Carr nicely summarized the issue surrounding allegations of meeting the test of deliberately misleading the Assembly and also the role of the Speaker in adjudicating such purported questions of privilege.

On June 17, 2002, at page 996 of *Ontario Hansard* for that day Speaker Carr said the following:

The threshold for finding a prima facie case of contempt against a member of the Legislature on the basis of deliberately misleading the House is therefore set quite high and is very uncommon. It must involve a proved finding of an overt attempt to intentionally mislead the Legislature. In the absence of an admission from the member accused of the conduct, or of tangible confirmation of the conduct independently proved, a Speaker must assume that no honourable member would engage in such behaviour or that, at most, inconsistent statements were the result of inadvertence or honest mistake.

*See page 98, right column, paragraph 11

In light of the comments made by the members, I would find this to be more a case of disagreement among members over facts, as stated in *Beauchesne's* paragraph 494. Speaker Scheer of the Canadian House of Commons had occasion to rule on an allegation of deliberately misleading the House on April 30 of this year, 2014. At page 4753 of *Commons Debates* for that day he quoted former House of Commons Speaker Jerome, who said on June 4, 1975, that “a dispute as to facts, a dispute as to opinions and a dispute as to conclusions to be drawn from an allegation of fact is a matter of debate and not a question of privilege.”

Accordingly, as was the case on March 12, 2014, I find that a prima facie case of privilege has not been made out. Accordingly, there will be no more proceedings on this matter because this matter is now concluded.

With that, we will move on.

Orders of the Day

Government Bills and Orders Second Reading

Bill 3

Personal Information Protection Amendment Act, 2014

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Mill Woods.

Mr. Quadri: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to move second reading of Bill 3, the Personal Information Protection Amendment Act, 2014.

This bill will authorize a trade union to collect, use, and disclose an individual's personal information in a specific circumstance if it's related to a matter under a labour relations dispute. Under the amendments the trade union can collect, use, and disclose personal information without consent “for the purpose of informing or persuading the public about a matter of significant public interest or importance” relating to the dispute; if the collection, use, and disclosure are reasonably necessary; or if it is reasonable to collect, use, and disclose the information having regard to the nature and sensitivity of the information in the circumstances.

PIPA is aimed to protect Albertans' personal information with respect to the collection, use, and disclosure by the trade union in the following manner. The legislation clarifies authorized circumstances where the collection, use, and disclosure of information in connection with the labour relations dispute is appropriate. The OIPC oversees how the personal information is collected, used, and disclosed by the private-sector organizations in the province. Additionally, the office investigates, resolves, and, where necessary, orders the remedy for those Albertans whose personal information has been compromised. If a person commits an offence under PIPA, they are potentially subject to a maximum fine of \$10,000 in the case of an individual, a maximum fine of \$100,000 in the case of a person other than an individual such as organizations, and to damages for loss or injury suffered by individuals as a result of this breach.

In the event those amendments to PIPA are not passed, the collection, use, and disclosure of personal information by private-sector organizations will be governed by the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act. Under the federal legislation the following limitations exist. The federal legislation does not include PIPA's mandatory breach reporting provision for affected individuals, thereby limiting current access and the privacy protection for Albertans, the federal legislation does not include the access to protection rights for the employees of businesses that are offered under PIPA, and there will be no

provincial oversight to assess the privacy responsibility of the private sector. The function will instead fall to the federal Privacy Commissioner.

In summary, these amendments will ensure that trade unions may collect, use, and disclose personal information of an individual in a manner relating to a labour relations dispute without compromising appropriate protection and oversight of the personal information.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Now I move to adjourn debate on Bill 3.

[Motion to adjourn debate carried]

Bill 4

Horse Racing Alberta Amendment Act, 2014

The Speaker: The hon. President of Treasury Board.

Mr. Campbell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise today to move second reading of Bill 4, the Horse Racing Alberta Amendment Act, 2014.

Under the Horse Racing Alberta Act HRA has a mandate to regulate, manage, and promote horse racing throughout Alberta, and this will still be the case even with these proposed amendments. Horse Racing Alberta currently has a 12-member board of directors, consisting of one chair, eight industry-nominated representatives, and three members of the public. All board appointments are currently determined by a board vote.

Mr. Speaker, the proposed legislative amendments to the Horse Racing Alberta Act will decrease the board members from 12 members to 11 and increase the number of public members to six, up from the three it currently has. These changes will provide more public representation on the board and will strengthen HRA's governance structure. The board will also have five industry-nominated members: a thoroughbred representative, a standardbred representative, one other breeds/quarter horse representative, an A-level race track representative, and a B-level race track representative. All public members would be selected from an open competition and screened for their relevant experience and expertise. The appointments will be made by order in council.

Mr. Speaker, with these proposed changes, more than half of the board would be public members appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, and one of those non-industry members would be designated as chair of the board.

In summary, the proposed legislative changes are part of our commitment to strong public agency board governance. I encourage all members of the Assembly to support this bill.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I move to adjourn debate on Bill 4.

[Motion to adjourn debate carried]

3:10

Bill 5

Securities Amendment Act, 2014

The Speaker: The hon. President of Treasury Board.

Mr. Campbell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise today to move second reading of Bill 5, the Securities Amendment Act, 2014.

As I mentioned at first reading, the government is proposing amendments to the Securities Act to further modernize, harmonize, and streamline Alberta's securities laws. The amendments before you today support the ongoing reform of the Canadian securities

regulatory system and assist Canada in meeting its international commitments.

The amendments relate to a variety of topics, including continued harmonization of general derivative provisions; incorporation of representatives of registered brokers and advisers; enhanced enforcement provisions; recognition and oversight of the Canadian Public Accountability Board as an auditor oversight organization; fee-setting provisions for the Alberta Securities Commission; and other housekeeping amendments to the Securities Act, with consequential amendments to related legislation.

I'd like to take a few minutes to walk you through the proposed amendments. The Securities Act was last amended during the 2014 spring session, when over-the-counter derivative amendments were enacted to help manage and mitigate risks and improve transparency. As you may recall, this type of financial instrument was cited as a contributing factor in the 2008 global financial crisis. This harmonization initiative will take several years to complete, and these amendments allow that work to continue.

Moving on to the next topic, incorporation of individual representatives, industry groups have long wanted a level playing field providing representatives of registered dealers and advisers across Canada with the option of providing securities-related services to their clients through a professional corporation. The proposed amendments will establish a statutory framework permitting representatives of registered dealers and advisers to provide services to clients through a professional corporation. This will be done under the supervision of the registered firm. The proposed incorporation model is a voluntary/optional business structure intended to provide individual representatives with additional flexibility and choice of the most effective structure for their business activities. In May 2012 Saskatchewan passed but has not yet proclaimed similar amendments. Harmonized provisions are expected to be passed across Canada shortly.

Bill 5 establishes a statutory regime to provide the Canadian Public Accountability Board, or CPAB, with the powers and protections necessary to fulfill its mandate to ensure the integrity of financial reporting by public companies in Canada. CPAB was created in 2003 to provide independent oversight of auditors of public companies in Canada following the auditing scandals involving Enron and WorldCom in the United States. The auditor oversight function is essentially a regulatory function designed to help ensure the quality and reliability of audited financial statements. It involves the information in documents that a public company has disclosed to its auditors, some of which may be subject to solicitor-client privilege.

The Alberta CPAB amendments will follow the approach taken in British Columbia, Saskatchewan, and New Brunswick of providing CPAB with access to privileged information and audit working papers only with the consent of the client. In a very practical sense this is already happening as all Canadian audit firms regardless of size now use a standard form of engagement letter. This letter provides notice of the audit firm's obligations to provide CPAB with access to the audit working file and requires the client's consent.

Mr. Speaker, effective enforcement and compliance are essential to advancing investor protection and fostering fair and efficient capital markets. The enforcement-related amendments contained in Bill 5 were designed to improve the Alberta Securities Commission's enforcement capacity as well as respond to recent court and commission decisions and to the introduction of the new *Alberta Rules of Court* in 2010. The commission is proposing to update the list of entities they share information with by adding trade repositories, clearing agencies, alternative trading systems, and credit-rating agencies.

The amended act also permits the commission to issue automatic reciprocal enforcement orders without the need to take any additional steps. Currently a hearing must be held before a reciprocal order based on enforcement proceedings or settlements in other jurisdictions can be granted and requires evidence of cross-border misconduct putting Alberta investors at risk.

Mr. Speaker, the Alberta Securities Commission and its counterparts across Canada are upgrading their IT systems and have replaced their systems operator. The new systems operator has taken over the hosting, operation, and maintenance of the three national filing systems. This requires the embedding of the requirement to pay fees for the use of these filing systems in a harmonized fee rule and has led to the need for the commission to be able to set its own fees. The amendment would permit the commission to set its own fees, including fees related to the operation of these IT systems, just as both the British Columbia and Ontario securities commissions have authority to do so. However, ASC fee changes would require the prior approval of the minister, and the commission would still have to publish fee proposals for comment under the commission's rule-making requirements.

There are several other housekeeping amendments of a technical or housekeeping nature. The intent of these amendments is to improve or clarify existing provisions of the Securities Act: for example, repealing a requirement to send a confirmation of trade that has been moved into the regulations, therefore making the Securities Act confirmation provision redundant; extending the requirement to file a personal information form to apply to promoters; and clarifying how to effect service of documents on the commission.

In addition, there are also some consequential amendments to other statutes, including the Cooperatives Act and the Business Corporations Act. For example, the requirements of the executive director of the commission to be notified of applications for approvals of plans of arrangement under the Cooperatives Act and the Business Corporations Act will be repealed. This is because these plans of arrangement are already subject to court and shareholder approval before they can proceed and the executive director has not taken a position when provided with notice.

The ministries responsible for the administration of the above statutes are in agreement with the proposed amendments.

To sum up, the proposed amendments will ensure that Alberta honours its commitment under the 2004 memorandum of understanding to ongoing reform. Further, these amendments support international commitments made by Canada. The net result is a better functioning regulatory system that provides additional protection to investors while ensuring the efficient operations of our capital markets.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I now move to adjourn debate on Bill 5.

[Motion to adjourn debate carried]

Bill 6 Statutes Amendment Act, 2014 (No. 2)

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development.

Mr. Olson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise and move second reading of the Statutes Amendment Act, 2014 (No.2), Bill 6.

This bill brings together a number of small amendments to a number of acts under three different ministries. The amendments

are intended to streamline and provide efficiency, clarity, and consistency between acts for those affected by these acts. These amendments have been brought as a single omnibus bill to deal with a number of small items in an encompassing amendment act for the effective use of time of members of the Assembly.

The first set of amendments are from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs. They're seeking amendments to the Safety Codes Act. Mr. Speaker, these amendments will allow qualified safety officers to approve pressure vessel designs, which will reduce delays for applicants. As well, the amendments will remove a phrase that could be seen to transfer the owners' safety responsibility to the administrator. These changes will help streamline the process by reducing delays without relaxing standards or safety. The pressure equipment industry will be most impacted as they submit designs for review and registration in order to operate and construct this equipment in their plants.

The first amendment will address a gap and allow for qualified safety codes officers employed by the Alberta Boilers Safety Association, also known as ABSA, to review and register the pressure vessel designs. As it is currently worded, the legislation reads that only the administrator can register pressure vessel designs. ABSA employs safety codes officers who review the pressure vessel designs and make recommendations to the administrator before the administrator registers them. However, this year ABSA will receive approximately 11,000 designs for boilers, pressure vessels, fittings, pressure piping systems, thermal liquid heating systems, welding procedures, complex repair procedures, and alteration procedures.

Mr. Speaker, allowing safety codes officers to review and register these designs will increase efficiency and reduce the delays to owners for the registration of their pressure vessels with ABSA. Once the amendments are made, the safety codes officers who have the appropriate technical qualifications will be designated with the authority to register designs. Currently, ABSA employs approximately 90 safety codes officers, and out of those there are 22 who have the technical qualifications to review and approve designs. There are no risks associated with this proposed change. Safety codes officers are able to effectively perform this function.

3:20

Mr. Speaker, the second proposed amendment dealing with the Safety Codes Act would delete specific wording from the act that is considered confusing. The phrase may suggest a transfer of owners' obligation of responsibility for compliance to the administrator, which is contrary to sections 5 and 6 of the act. Therefore, under section 40(1) specific wording has been removed which could place an unintended burden on the administrator to take steps for the design's safety beyond meeting requirements of the act. This proposed legislative amendment would ensure that owners' responsibilities are clear and that there is no perceived conflict with the responsibilities section of the act between the administrator and the designer.

The third proposed change would delete the word "obsolete." The term "obsolete" is unnecessary. An obsolete design may mean that it is outdated, but it could still be safe and meet the requirements of the Safety Codes Act. If the administrator, in his or her reasonable opinion, considers an obsolete design unsafe or that it does not meet the requirements of the act, the administrator has the full authority of the act to deregister the design. A design that does not meet the requirements of the act is in breach of the act. The design would be deregistered, and the owner would be required to take the unsafe equipment out of service.

It is important to note that the proposed amendments will not have any financial impact, and there is no additional training or costs as these safety codes officers exist and already have the necessary training.

Mr. Speaker, the second ministry requesting amendments is Jobs, Skills, Training and Labour. They're seeking amendments to the Workers' Compensation Act that will clarify the WCB's authority to disclose information to the Appeals Commission. The proposed amendments are intended for clarification purposes and to increase efficiency and effectiveness in the appeals process. In several recent decisions adjudicators from the office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner have interpreted the act differently than the Workers' Compensation Board and the Appeals Commissions, specifically regarding the authority of the WCB to disclose information to the Appeals Commission.

Workers and employers involved in appeals will not see any changes in the process. Staff from the WCB, the Appeals Commission, and Jobs, Skills, Training and Labour met with staff from the office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner to discuss these proposed amendments, and no further concerns were raised. Passing these amendments this fall will help ensure that the WCB, the Appeals Commission, and the office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner have a common interpretation of the act. The Workers' Compensation Board of directors, which includes representatives of the interests of employers and workers, is supportive of the proposed amendments to the WCB Act as they stand.

Mr. Speaker, the third ministry seeking amendments is my Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. We're proposing amendments to combine the Farm Implement Act and the Farm Implement Dealerships Act and repeal the Dairy Industry Omnibus Act of 2002. The Farm Implement Act provides Alberta farmers with warranty protection, legal guidelines on the length of warranty, assurance that replacement parts will be available for at least 10 years after they purchase a new implement, and minimum stated requirements for sales contracts.

The Farm Implement Dealerships Act also provides protection for consumers and dealers of farm implements. Certain requirements are placed upon distributors of farm implements such as prohibiting distributors from terminating an agreement with a dealership without cause, without an order of the court, or without complying with the court order; permitting agreements between distributors and dealers to be terminated by mutual agreement; and preventing distributors from discriminating against dealers in respect of contractual requirements or prices for farm implements of similar grade or quality or for dealing in the products of competitors.

Mr. Speaker, both acts are administered by the office of the Farmers' Advocate of Alberta. It's proposed that these acts be consolidated into a single farm implement and dealerships act to streamline the legislation and provide greater ease of reference for stakeholders to whom the acts apply.

The amendments will also align Alberta's legislation with similar legislation in Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Ontario; clarify that all implements purchased at auction are strictly buyer beware; enable the minister to publish information received through notices of failure to perform in order to better protect consumers; clarify roles and responsibilities during a repair or repurchase of a farm implement that fails to perform satisfactorily; expand buyback provisions to include required supplementary materials such as signage and computer hardware and software; repeal transitional provisions that are no longer required; and increase the penalty for any person who contravenes the Farm Implement Dealerships Act from a maximum of \$50,000 to a

maximum of \$100,000. Certainly, when you consider that farm implements can cost well over \$500,000, the fines are needed to reflect the fiscal implications of the items involved.

Mr. Speaker, we're also proposing a repeal of the Dairy Industry Omnibus Act, 2002. This act was proclaimed as part of the transfer of governance responsibility for dairy production and marketing from the provincial dairy board to Alberta Milk. Over 10 years have passed since the transition, and these provisions are no longer required for Alberta Milk. In fact, Alberta Milk supports the repeal of this act.

The amendments before you today are largely housekeeping in nature, updating details to align with similar legislation and current needs. As well, they will provide greater clarity and efficiency in providing services to Albertans. I ask all members to support this legislation.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I move to adjourn debate on Bill 6.

[Motion to adjourn debate carried]

Consideration of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor's Speech

Ms Fenske moved, seconded by Mr. Ellis, that an humble address be presented to His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor as follows:

To His Honour the Honourable Colonel (Retired) Donald S. Ethell, OC, OMM, AOE, MSC, CD, LLD, the Lieutenant Governor of the Province of Alberta:

We, Her Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly, now assembled, beg leave to thank Your Honour for the gracious speech Your Honour has been pleased to address to us at the opening of the present session.

[Adjourned debate November 19: Mr. Oberle]

The Speaker: Hon. members, I have the following list, subject to any changes: the Minister of Education, followed by Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood, followed by Innisfail-Sylvan Lake, followed by Edmonton-Centre, Edmonton-Calder, and Calgary-Shaw.

Please proceed, Mr. Minister.

Mr. Dirks: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a great honour for me to rise today in this Assembly as the newly elected Member for Calgary-Elbow and address members present in response to the Speech from the Throne. I do want, first, to congratulate the new members for Calgary-Foothills and Calgary-West and Edmonton-Whitemud in their impressive by-election victories. To be chosen by our constituents to represent and serve as their member in this Legislative Assembly and to advocate for their interests is a humbling privilege and a momentous responsibility.

Andrew Oliver, the 16th century public official, rightly said that in many respects elected public service can be a hazardous profession, but he went on to say that politics is still the noblest career any man can choose. Few people will have the opportunity to deliberate and serve the common good in this distinguished Chamber, and I'm deeply humbled by the honour bestowed upon me to represent the great constituency of Calgary-Elbow.

Since 1905 some 58 individuals have represented this geographic region, located in the heart of Calgary, and included in this number are such notable individuals as Premiers Aberhart, Manning, Lougheed, Klein, Redford, future Prime Minister R.B. Bennett, Lieutenant Governor Grant MacEwan, Sheldon Chumir, and Art Dixon, the longest-serving Speaker of this Assembly. To follow in the footsteps of such distinguished legislators who have

represented Calgary-Elbow is, needless to say, both humbling and daunting.

As I'm sure all members here will attest to, success in public life is rarely, if ever, a solo affair, so today with a deep sense of gratitude I pay special tribute to my dear wife, Evangeline Joy. Without her unwavering support and encouragement throughout my years of public service and during the strenuous by-election, I would not be standing here today. Political enterprise is, first and foremost, about people, and the effectiveness of our democratic system of governance is inextricably bound up with the lives and contributions of thousands of volunteers at the local constituency level across our great province. So today I want to recognize and to express my deep gratitude to the over 300 dedicated volunteers who linked arms with me in the recent Calgary-Elbow by-election and who worked tirelessly in support of my election campaign.

3:30

Calgary-Elbow is a vibrant and diverse constituency of over 44,000 residents, and as I talked with thousands of constituents during the by-election, I was struck, Mr. Speaker, by two key observations. First, I was deeply impressed by the decency and civility of the good voters of Calgary-Elbow. Rarely was an unkind or disrespectful word spoken to me at their doorsteps. In contrast, many are the regions of the world where elections are dangerous affairs and where the threat of intimidation, violence, and persecution are endemic to public life. So to be able to conduct our common political life with civil discourse on streets that are safe underscores the robust health of Alberta's democracy and is a blessing to be richly treasured.

Then, whether I was speaking with single professionals or younger parents with growing families or retired seniors, whether my conversations were with educators, small-business people, nurses, or oil patch executives, I was struck by the essential commonality of interests and aspirations of Calgary-Elbow residents when it comes to their government. Throughout the recent by-elections Albertans made it very clear that they want their elected officials to govern with a laser focus that is grounded in their priorities, which respects their tax dollars. During this by-election Albertans were explicit about what they expect from their government, and I share their sentiments.

In the constituency of Calgary-Elbow here's what they said. They said: protect our communities and our great city of Calgary from future devastating floods. With one voice they said: strengthen our core public services of health care and education and provide our seniors with the long-term care facilities they need in order to live with dignity in and near their communities. They issued a loud call to government to manage the public purse in a fiscally prudent way that balances the operating budget, that invests in future infrastructure, that pays down debt and saves for the future.

Albertans know that their future well-being is tied to our collective ability to market Alberta's energy, forestry, and agriculture resources to the world, so they said: put market access for Alberta's resources at the top of your agenda, and don't waver in working co-operatively with British Columbia and with Saskatchewan, our great neighbour provinces, and with the federal government and with aboriginal communities to secure our future economic well-being. But they also said: while you're maximizing the value of our resources, do so in a way that respects and protects our fundamental Alberta values of environmental conservation and the protection of property rights.

Finally, they said: we need you to help restore public trust and end the days of entitlement.

Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to say that from day one these five priorities have been and will continue to be the essential hallmark of this new government. Therefore, it's no exaggeration to say that Alberta has entered a new era, with a new government, under new management, grounded in the people's priorities. The steps our Premier and our government have taken over the past 60 days and the government's visionary agenda set forth in the Speech from the Throne have made it abundantly clear that a new day has indeed dawned in Alberta. Guided by prudence, accountability, trust, decency, and respect, our government has begun to deliver on these five fundamental priorities of Albertans.

Today, Mr. Speaker, I want to focus on just two of these priorities. It is difficult if not impossible to fully calibrate the devastation which the people of Calgary-Elbow and other residents of Calgary and High River and our aboriginal communities suffered in the flood of 2013. As I stood at the front doors and sat at the dining-room tables of many Calgary-Elbow residents, I was deeply moved to hear the gut-wrenching stories of how their lives and their families, their businesses, and their communities were turned upside down by the devastating flood.

Mr. Speaker, the first task of government is to protect its citizens. Never again should Calgarians and Albertans live in fear because of our vulnerability to future devastating floods, and that is why one of the first decisions of our Premier and our government was to green-light flood mitigation projects to protect Calgary and High River, two of the hardest hit regions in the province. We also directed a tripling of staff in order to complete disaster recovery program appeals as expeditiously as possible.

Mr. Speaker, as Minister of Education I also want to underscore our government's commitment to continue to secure the future health of our public education system across Alberta. Our province has an outstanding record of providing world-class education for children, and this government has every intention of continuing to make the provision of quality education for Alberta students a marquee priority.

One of the ways we are doing that is by aggressively moving forward, Mr. Speaker, with the largest capital investment in new and renovated school facilities in the history of Alberta and indeed of our country. Alberta is Canada's fastest growing jurisdiction by population, and we need to ensure that we are equipped to give every Alberta student the very best education facilities possible.

Our three-phase program of building and securing Alberta's school infrastructure future now includes over 240 school projects that have recently opened or are under construction or are in the permitting or planning stages. Just this past week, along with my colleague the Minister of Infrastructure, sod was turned on three new school projects in Cochrane and Airdrie, and we look forward to seeing the doors open for kids in these and many other schools in the years to come. That's what Albertans expect, and that's what good government does, Mr. Speaker.

Our government is also committed to ensuring that our K to 12 curriculum focuses on foundational skills of literacy and numeracy while incorporating 21st century skills such as communication and creativity and collaboration. We want to ensure that our grading and reporting approaches across the province are coherent and easily understood by parents.

As Minister of Education I'm committed to ensuring that we help our students become ethical citizens and engaged thinkers with an entrepreneurial mindset. We need to strengthen our focus on individualizing learning as well as placing a high priority on second-language instruction to prepare our students for the new social, cultural, and economic shifts under way in our province and in our world.

To help our students become ethical citizens and engaged thinkers with an entrepreneurial mindset, we need to ensure that we are supporting and coaching teachers and doing all we can to ensure stable, long-term, predictable funding for our school boards. And we need to make sure that every student is taught and nurtured in a safe, caring, and respectful environment because the human dignity of our students and the well-being of our public education system call for safety and security for each and every student.

Mr. Speaker, Albertans spoke decisively during the recent by-elections. They want and Albertans deserve a government that first listens and then acts decisively on the people's priorities. Alberta's new government is doing just that. Each and every day the people's priorities are resonating with this government as we move into a new era in the history of Alberta's public life.

Mr. Speaker, I am sincerely humbled to serve the people of Calgary-Elbow as their member in this Legislative Assembly. With deep sincerity I pledge to work vigorously to represent the interests of the residents of Calgary-Elbow in this Legislature and to ensure that the people's priorities as articulated in this Speech from the Throne remain the enduring focus of my work as MLA and as Minister of Education in the months and years to come.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

3:40

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

Standing Order 29(2)(a) is now available. Does anyone wish to rise under 29(2)(a)?

If not, let us move on to Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood. But just before we do, I should let you know that there was some time remaining at the top of this particular section for the hon. Deputy Government House Leader to take up six more minutes of the speaking time that he had or something along that line. Maybe he had more time left. However, he waived that, and that's why we went straight to the Minister of Education. For those of you who were asking me that question, that's the answer.

Secondly, the Member for Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview, in fact, will be in the fifth spot today unless otherwise noted, not Edmonton-Calder.

Let's go on to Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood, please.

Mr. Mason: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour to speak to His Honour the Lieutenant Governor's Speech from the Throne and his relaying of the government's intentions for this session. I found his speech very interesting although in many respects hard to agree with. I'd like to outline some of the concerns I have.

First, I wanted to say a few things about my constituency of Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood. I'm very proud to represent that area. I have represented it now for 14 years – it was previously Edmonton-Highlands, then was amalgamated with the Edmonton-Norwood constituency when that was eliminated due to a redistribution – and have represented that area both on city council and here for 25 years now. [some applause] Thank you very much. I know the people and the area very well.

It is primarily a low-income area. It has some of the lowest incomes in the province of Alberta. It has tremendous people, a tremendous sense of community, and a great variety of types of communities, a very interesting area. It includes not only some of the very poorest parts of the city – in the Boyle Street area, the downtown area – but it includes Chinatown, it includes Little Italy, and it includes Alberta Avenue, with a very vibrant arts scene that has been developing there, and I would like to express some appreciation to the Minister of Health in his former position as mayor for the contribution that he made sure took place on the

part of the city of Edmonton to develop that area. I always try to say something nice about them when they come, Mr. Speaker, and something nice about them when they leave. In between it's not quite the same.

But it has made a difference, Mr. Speaker, and it's an exciting area that's really beginning to take off and attract people from not only the rest of the city but from other parts of the province as well with some of the wonderful festivals, the arts festivals and so on, that are taking place there as well as the communities of Highlands, which is a long-established neighbourhood, as well as Newton and Montrose. It is something I'm very proud of, to have represented that area for so long.

It has some issues, and it has some needs, Mr. Speaker. Community revitalization is very important to it, and one aspect that I'd like to touch on with respect to that is the importance of schools and retaining schools in some of the older neighbourhoods. It is an issue that I've worked on in conjunction with other MLAs, with school trustees, and with city councillors in order to do that. We recognize very much the need and the pressure on the government to provide new schools in growing areas, but we also need policies that encourage people to remain in older communities near the core of the city so that the existing schools as well as parks as well as libraries and other important facilities get the full use that they need.

I want to talk a little bit now about some of the aspects of the speech and the five main principles that have been established by the government under the new Premier.

A focused commitment to sound, conservative fiscal principles; ending entitlements and restoring public trust; maximizing the value of our natural resources and respecting property rights; establishing our province as an environmental leader; and increasing Albertans' quality of life by being a leader in the areas of health, education, seniors' care, and skills training.

I'd like to take some of those things in turn.

I notice in the Speech from the Throne that the government says that it "will be cautious in budgeting, prudent in spending, and diligent in saving." Mr. Speaker, it may come as a surprise to some members of this House that I find no basis for disagreement with those principles. It makes sense entirely to me that you should be cautious in budgeting and not spend more money than you have and that you should be saving for the future. That's not something with which I disagree. The question is how it's done and what the intention is in doing so, and this is where I do disagree with the government.

In another statement on the same page of the speech it says, "the rate of increase on spending for government operations will be kept below the rate of population growth and inflation." Even the Wildrose says that spending should keep pace with the rate of population growth and inflation. Now, if you don't do that, Mr. Speaker, what happens, of course, is that you have cuts. You have reductions in spending. You have, really, programs that are eliminated or reduced. You can't meet the needs of the public.

Mr. Speaker, it's always the lower income people and the programs they depend on that get cut first. They don't cut, you know, programs that benefit corporations or oil companies; they get drilling incentives. Other people get aboriginal education programs cut or low-income housing cut. Those are the kinds of things that the government comes for when it tries to reduce spending below the rate of population growth and inflation. That, I think, is really where we're going to have a major difference. It's important that we improve our spending and our programs for low-income people in this province and for average Alberta families.

In fact, many of these things can be seen as investments that will save money in the longer term. If you do targeted social investments in programs to combat poverty, to combat homelessness, to combat hunger, you actually will save money in terms of courts, police, and so on. In many cases these kinds of investments are actually the fiscally responsible course of action to take.

Now, the government is also talking about ending entitlements and restoring public trust, and some of these things, I think, are not bad things. The question is whether they will go far enough, and I believe that they will probably not. The question that I think is most important in this is about the cozy relationship that has developed over the years between the PC Party, the PC government, and the oil industry. It's very, very close. It's very, very cozy. The lack of regulation in terms of environmental protection with respect to new programs, I think, is the consequence of that.

In terms of maximizing the value of our natural resources, that is something we've been talking about for a long time. Peter Lougheed established a number of principles for the development of the oil and gas industry in this province, that I think were seminal. In fact, they'd been adopted by Norway in the development of policy with respect to their industry and put to very good use. Unfortunately, here in Alberta the government has walked away from Peter Lougheed's principles. It no longer thinks like an owner. It thinks more like a doormat, Mr. Speaker, and lets the oil and gas industry basically write its own ticket.

3:50

Peter Lougheed talked about adding value. He talked about getting fair value on the resources that we own. He set a target, Mr. Speaker, that the province would collect 30 per cent of the total value of the natural resources of this province, that belong to every citizen. He achieved that, and in some years he actually exceeded it, but now, far from being 30 per cent, the province of Alberta is collecting just 9 per cent of the value of those natural resources, which is less than was achieved by the Social Credit government in the 1950s and the 1960s. It is unacceptable.

While Norway has a \$600 billion fund from their oil and gas revenue and has raised the level of standard of living of their people, raised the level of services that the people of Norway receive, here in Alberta we're still involved in boom-and-bust cycles, and we've managed to scrape together not much more than Peter Lougheed put together during his term. The rest of it is gone. It's been spent. It's slipped through our fingers. It's gone to Houston. It's gone to Chicago. It's just gone, Mr. Speaker. I think that we really will have a lot of explaining to do to our grandchildren when they ask what happened to the wealth of this province, that was squandered and wasted and not saved for future generations.

I remember when former Premier Ed Stelmach put together a blue-chip economic panel to talk about the major challenges facing the province. I attended the release of their report. That was in 2007. One of their primary recommendations was that Alberta should reduce its dependence on very volatile royalty revenue as a source of income for program expenditures. They identified that 30 per cent of Alberta's program expenditures are paid for by nonrenewable and highly volatile royalty revenues. That hasn't changed, Mr. Speaker, seven years later. The government still talks about it in throne speeches and does nothing.

It's important, in our view, that the royalty revenue be retained for future generations. It doesn't just belong to us, Mr. Speaker. The oil and gas in the ground is the heritage of all Albertans, not just Albertans of this generation. If we spend it on our current

needs, to fund our health care system, our education system, our roads, whatever, then we are really stealing from future generations of this province, and that money should be saved and retained, but it means that there has to be some revenue reform, because under former Premier Klein Alberta's income tax system was gutted.

I was there. I watched Steve West, when he was the Provincial Treasurer, talk about reducing corporate income tax from 15 and a half per cent down to 8 per cent. They have systematically reduced corporate income tax – and this is paid just on profits. They're not taxing companies that are struggling. They're just taxing their profits. It's gone now from 15 to 10 per cent, and billions of dollars of revenue is no longer available to us. We've become more dependent on royalty revenue.

Just before that, when Stockwell Day was the Provincial Treasurer, he brought in the flat tax. The flat tax gave a massive tax holiday to the very wealthiest in our province, and at the same time it raised taxes on middle-income people. Do you know that someone earning \$70,000 a year will pay more in income tax in Alberta than they will in B.C. or Ontario? It's been an increase on the middle class and a windfall for millionaires and billionaires in our province. It also costs us billions of dollars a year, so we're even more dependent on oil prices.

Oil prices. Guess what, Mr. Speaker? Who could have predicted that they go up and down? I don't understand, you know. This is a big surprise to the government every time. I don't know. Once again, we're in a period of low oil prices, and it's going to last, apparently, a couple of years according to the business press.

There was an interesting article in the *Globe and Mail Report on Business* a few weeks ago indicating that because of successes internationally in reducing dependence on fossil fuels, the lower prices may in fact be permanent. I don't know if that's true or not, Mr. Speaker, but the fact is that this government has had plenty of warning about the imperative necessity of eliminating its dependence on royalty revenue for program spending, and it has done precisely nothing. Now they're talking about it in the throne speech again. Well, I like to learn from history, and I've learned that oil prices go up and down. I've also learned that the government talks about changing things and never does. So I'm just going to have to hold my breath.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

Standing Order 29(2)(a) is available for anybody who wishes. Let's go with Innisfail-Sylvan Lake, and then we'll go from there to Strathcona-Sherwood Park.

Mrs. Towle: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We heard a lot of talk about all of the things this government was going to do in the throne speech but very little on the 10-year plan to end homelessness. As you were discussing, your riding is probably directly affected as many of our ridings are. I'm just wondering if you can walk me through some of the challenges facing your riding and many of the urban ridings in the 10-year plan to end homelessness given that we're five years in and we don't seem to be actually anywhere near a plan.

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

Mr. Mason: Yes. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Well, I think that when the government initiated this, they actually were sincere about trying to do something about it, but they took money from affordable housing programs and put it into programs to end

homelessness, so they just really moved the problem. There wasn't new money that was made available for this. There was some initial progress, but now homeless numbers are rising again, and you can see it. It's not just individuals who are homeless now but entire families that are homeless. I don't think that the province has been nearly as effective or proactive or serious about this as some of our municipalities that have taken action. We could do a lot more if the province would actually get onboard with the municipalities and work with them to do this.

I want to make one more point, and that is that shelters are not homes. Mr. Speaker, they get people out of the cold, they get them out of potentially dangerous situations, but they're not giving them a home. It's a fundamental thing. If you want to tackle the other problems, you know, other difficulties you may have, with child poverty or addictions or things like that, the first place to start is to make sure that every Albertan has a home.

I'll just segue from that a little bit to talk about the absence of any talk in this throne speech about ending child poverty. As people will remember, that was a major promise of Alison Redford in the election that elected all of the government members that are sitting here today except for the last four. Everybody else was elected on a promise, among many other promises, most of which have not been kept, to end child poverty. Yet I can't recall a single mention of child poverty as a priority for this government in any throne speech since, including this one, and I think that that is something that is very much a shame.

I know that schools struggle to raise money from private sources to put on hot lunch programs because there's no systematic approach to deal with that and no assistance from this government. The government doesn't do anything to assist and make sure every child is learning on a full stomach. It's left to people to go begging to private sources and for funds that are available for that purpose. It's not something that the government sees as a priority. I think that's very, very unfortunate.

4:00

I will make one last point, Mr. Speaker, before my time is up. It seems that fundamental things that the government needs to do, such as health care and education, are almost add-ons in this speech. They're a subpart of the fifth point, or the fifth priority, of the government. In our view, they should be front and centre as the major priorities of this government. That is one of the fundamental things that a provincial government in the Canadian system is responsible for, the provision of public health care and public education. To have them almost as appendices, add-ons at the end of the speech, really indicates where they sit in terms of the priorities of this government. It's not good enough.

We've seen today the result of the mismanagement and the neglect of our health care system with this disaster at the Misericordia hospital, something that we've been asking about and demanding answers on for several years now. I think that it's an indication of the very low priority with which this government treats important social services, primarily health care and education. I think we can do better, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you very much.

The Speaker: Thank you.

I will do my best to intersperse speakers from all four parties based on the requests I receive. At the moment I have Innisfail-Sylvan Lake, followed by Edmonton-Centre.

Mrs. Towle: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour and a privilege to rise and speak to the throne speech that was delivered on Monday by our new Premier.

You know, it's interesting. In the two and a half years that I've been elected as a brand new MLA, coming into this wonderful organization and this Legislature on April 23, 2012 – I'd like to walk you through some of the things that I've heard so far.

One of the things is that in two and a half years we've heard three throne speeches. We've heard from three different Premiers. We've had three different visions of government and three different versions of what Albertans want at the door. This is what's important to understand. In all of that, each throne speech throws out a lot of promises, and each throne speech throws out a lot of where we'll focus on and the direction of government. So far we've seen promises made to teachers, \$107 million. We saw family care clinics being the priority of this government in the previous throne speech. We saw the previous throne speech address multiple different avenues about debt, about borrowing, about infrastructure, about not borrowing, about not taking on debt, and they all kind of mismatch together.

We also heard last year from the previous Premier about the bitumen bubble. Funny; that's missing in this one. It's worded slightly differently, but the bitumen bubble is in this new throne speech. It's just kind of worded a little bit more polished. The reason this is important, as my friendly colleague from Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood said, is that these promises matter because each and every member in this House, other than the four that were just newly elected, was elected on those very promises. So this new throne speech throws all of that out, just like the baby with the bathwater, and starts fresh and basically says that they have a new mandate from Albertans based on four by-elections.

That's an interesting way to go about it, but, you know, each to their own. We saw the previous Premier go about it, and we saw that she hit a high when she was first elected, and everybody praised her throne speech. We heard all of the members of the party of the day stand up and praise that previous Premier about family care clinics. They all went to the wall. Edmonton-Gold Bar was very vocal in his support of the previous Premier and constantly heckled and chatted all the time about how important the previous Premier's vision for Alberta was. Now we're hearing that the previous Premier's vision for Alberta isn't actually quite what they meant, and we're kind of glad she's gone because that was a bit of a disaster for them. So now they're trying to come all under the nice little tent that the new Premier has created.

Let's talk about the new Premier's five priorities. He talks about "a focused commitment to sound, conservative fiscal principles." I agree with that, as does the hon. member who was just speaking. I think this is fantastic. Unfortunately, the previous Premier also said that. As we know, it's a little bit difficult for these Premiers and this party to kind of keep their word. As we're seeing already, we're getting a little nuanced in our language. They talk about: oh, we're going to have a balanced budget, but it's not a balanced consolidated budget; it's going to be a consolidated operational only, and we'll sort of fudge the numbers on the debt side. They don't tell people that when we take on \$20 billion in debt, they're going to be paying almost \$800 million in interest payments. I think we can all guess what \$800 million could get us in this wonderful province for all of those needy programs that so many Albertans really require.

Now, this next one. I'm going to take a few minutes because it says, "Ending entitlements and restoring public trust." Well, let's start there. Let's talk about ending entitlements and restoring public trust. They talked about strengthened conflict-of-interest guidelines for political staff. Oh, well, that's interesting. Only political staff? I'm pretty sure this government and Alberta Health Services just paid out or is about to pay out \$900,000 to Mr.

Merali in a severance package, that the previous Health minister assured us could never happen. He actually fired the board over it. He said that it could not possibly happen that these severance packages could be paid out, that these contracts are in the best interests of Albertans.

This new Premier is once again going to ignore the problem of severance packages, bonuses, and special perks for everybody except for political staff. While political staff are certainly a problem, he's certainly overlooking the vast majority of the problem in the additional staff outside of that. One of the biggest ministries, the Ministry of Health, has probably one of the biggest areas where these bonuses and perks have really caused this government a great amount of black eyes.

One of the things that we don't see is any mention of an Alberta Health Services sunshine list yet, another promise of the previous Premier that was mentioned in her throne speech, yet it applies to everybody except for Alberta Health Services. One has to wonder what the government is worried about there. Why not disclose salaries of Alberta Health Services employees and of your boards and commissions? But, you know, they don't want Albertans to really have transparency and to really have a way to actually force them to end the entitlements. So there's that one.

Restoring public trust. Well, this sort of hits right at home because restoring public trust means that you don't queue-jump awarding of schools in ridings that are under a by-election. Restoring public trust says that you will treat every riding the exact same regardless of who is representing that riding and regardless of whether or not a cabinet minister is running there in a by-election. There were six other schools that were prioritized higher than Calgary-Elbow modulars, yet conveniently they decided to restore public trust on the day of the election by awarding the modulars in the very riding that had a failed Premier and that needed a solid win. That's not very trustful.

The third one on restoring public trust – and the Premier probably did the right thing as soon as he could. He kind of had to. He sort of had to get rid of those planes. They were really dogging you guys. In restoring the public trust, that was a good one. He had to get rid of the planes because, as the Auditor General has identified, they were being used and abused for partisan purposes. Regardless of how members in this House feel, the Auditor General is an independent, third-party officer of the Legislature, who was very clear that government planes shouldn't be used for partisan business, and they were in the case of Grande Prairie and in others. Many of the members that currently sit today that are part of this government took full advantage of that opportunity, and the Auditor General identified that.

Mr. Mason: They should have a frequent flyer program.

Mrs. Towle: They should. They absolutely should have frequent flyer miles on that.

That creates a real problem for restoring public trust. That's a low-hanging fruit. We get rid of that, but that doesn't necessarily restore anything because you kind of offset it by then turning around and making by-election promises that totally go against everything about integrity and restoring public trust and ending entitlements. I'm happy to award schools. There are multiple schools in this province that are needed. I'm happy to have that infrastructure. I think lots of communities would be happy to have that infrastructure. Lots of communities are waiting. Fifty schools have been announced and lots of sod-turnings have happened, but none have been built. Conveniently, Calgary-Elbow is on the winners list. Good for them.

4:10

“Maximizing the value of our natural resources and respecting property rights.” Well, the reality of this one is huge for us in the Wildrose. We certainly campaigned loud and proud on that issue in 2012, as did Albertans. Albertans were very clear that they want restoration of property rights when bills 19, 36, 50, and Bill 2, which came in after you were elected, came in and removed the public interest and did not restore property rights. This Premier talks a lot in the throne speech about how he has, you know, spent 20 years dedicated to property rights and how he’s going to hear the voices of Albertans and how he is going to restore property rights. Unfortunately, we saw Bill 1. It contained about seven words, and it didn’t do anything except retreat on Bill 19, which was never proclaimed.

Now, we also heard the environment minister stand up and tout the efforts and say that everything is fine but also mention that they will not be repealing Bill 36, which overrides all of the acts that the Premier said protect property rights. It does not bring in fair and timely compensation when your land is taken away from you. That should be a fundamental right for all Albertans, not being able to take your land and not pay you for it and give you fair and timely compensation.

Now we’re going to go into the last one and probably one of the most important ones, “increasing Albertans’ quality of life by being a leader in the areas of health, education, seniors’ care, and skills training.” This is fundamental to this province, and it’s desperately needed. There is no question that our health care system and our seniors’ care system are in a crisis. We have heard from doctors, front-line workers, health care professionals, everyday Albertans, members in this House – opposition has certainly pounded the desk loudly on this issue – about the continuing crisis of emergency rooms and acute-care beds that are being used inappropriately by people who are not able to get care outside of an acute-care setting.

We have also heard story after story of seniors suffering in substandard conditions in government care. We know that the recent CIHI, the Canadian Institute for Health Information, report came out and showed that this government spends 19 per cent less than the national average on long-term care. That means that all of the other provinces in Canada are spending more than us on long-term care. We are the richest province in this country, and we as the richest province should be leaders in long-term care. Some people wonder: well, what does that mean if we spend 19 per cent less on long-term care? It means a lot of things. The first one is that it means that our front-line health care professionals are overworked and unable to provide the quality of care required by some of our most vulnerable citizens.

Many of you know my story. I won’t go into it fully, but I can tell you that as a caregiver for a 32-year-old young man who goes into a long-term care centre and can’t get the care he needs when he’s given two years to live and dies two years and four months later and on average could not get a bath a week could not get home-cooked food – if it hadn’t been for my mother and volunteers and other paid staff that we brought in, he probably would have died much earlier.

An Hon. Member: We’ve heard that speech.

Mrs. Towle: Yeah, you have heard that speech, and it’s a good speech for you to hear every single day because those are everyday Albertans. I’m sorry if it’s offensive to you on the other side to have it reiterated to you that everyday Albertans go into long-term care facilities and don’t get the care they need. I’m sorry if it’s offensive to you to hear another long, drawn-out story

about a 32-year-old young man who has Huntington’s. I’m sorry if it’s offensive to you that people get involved in politics because it’s important to them to push these issues so that you will make changes. I hope you do, and if you do, I’m happy to applaud you. The last thing that I would ever want, whether I’m in opposition or not in opposition, is to take the position that we would want to keep people in substandard care in the richest province in this country just because you had to hear one more story about somebody who’s dying in care.

I get that it’s uncomfortable for you because you own it. I don’t own that. I did my part. My family did our part. We had to do our part because the long-term care Alberta Health Services facility that he was in, like for many seniors and many other people in this province, wasn’t doing its part, and the government wasn’t funding them appropriately to make sure that our front-line health care professionals could do the hard work that they do every day.

I would remind this government that while you’re sitting over there so proudly and heckling that you’ve heard these stories before and don’t really care, the government actually spent \$10 million less on continuing care last year than it did in the previous year. That is not something to be proud of. Spending \$10 million less on continuing care last year than you did in the previous year is not a proud moment for you, not when you stand up every day and talk about how this province is growing. Reducing the cost and the resources going into continuing care and long-term care is not a proud moment as our province is growing.

I would also remind you that 77 of the beds that were closed last year at Rouleau house in Calgary were long-term care beds. At the time the government said that they had to be closed due to the flood and they couldn’t be reopened because of safety issues. That wasn’t true. They had a permit from the city. They had been given the good to go. The city had deemed it safe and ready to reopen. We asked the government about this. This was 77 long-term care nursing beds that were desperately needed while people were sitting in acute-care beds at a cost of \$1,500 a day. They could have very easily been moved over to Rouleau house at a cost of \$200 a day.

Thank you.

The Speaker: Thank you.

Hon. members, 29(2)(a) is available. Calgary-Shaw, you were on your feet quickly, so let’s go to you.

Mr. Wilson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes. Thanks to the hon. Member for Innisfail-Sylvan Lake for her comments. There’s been a lot of discussion about the difference between long-term care and continuing care. I note that in the throne speech the words “long-term care” don’t appear, but continuing care does. I’m wondering, considering that the Minister of Health is in the room today, if you’d be so kind as to explain the difference.

Mrs. Towle: I’d be happy to. There’s a vast difference between long-term care nursing beds and continuing care beds, and fundamentally it is this. For everyday Albertans, this is what it means. Long-term care nursing beds are the responsibility traditionally of the government. A person who goes into a long-term care nursing bed gets 24-hour nursing care. They are funded differently, and when they go in there, their medications and their 24-hour nursing care are covered. You cannot extra-bill or should not extra-bill for that.

Continuing care beds are nowhere near that. Continuing care beds are for people who require a slightly higher level of care but don’t necessarily need 24-hour care. They fall under the accommodation act. Luckily enough, by falling under the

accommodation act, what are they allowed to do? They're allowed to extra-bill like crazy. [interjection] That's right. I think it's built into their business plan. Their business plan allows them to charge for medication assistance. It allows them to charge for feeding assistance. It allows them to charge for bathing assistance. It allows them to pretty much charge for everything.

What is happening with this government and what we saw was this government last year trying to close almost 1,379 long-term care beds. What they were doing was forcing people needing a higher level of care into the lower level of care, into continuing care beds. What that meant to the government is that they saved a whack-load of money. They didn't have to cover all those things anymore. What it meant to everyday Albertans is that they got lower levels of care. They didn't get the 24-hour nursing care that they required. They didn't get bathing. They didn't get feeding assistance, they didn't get medication assistance, and their medications were now being charged back to them.

This can make a dramatic impact on the person being cared for but also on the costs that that person sees. More importantly, what ends up happening when they go into continuing care beds and they actually have long-term care needs – guess where they go when that facility can't take care of them? They call the ambulance, and that facility promptly sends them off to the emergency room. The emergency room can't manage them because they don't have the resources, so they take up space in an acute-care bed, and then the acute-care bed has to house them because every single continuing care facility won't take them back because they're too high a level of care.

This, Mr. Speaker, is our fundamental problem in Alberta today. We have 758 people sitting in acute-care beds awaiting mostly long-term care nursing beds, not continuing care. The throne speech identifies that they're going to build 464 continuing care spaces. That's great, except that these are not new beds. These are simply the spaces that will reopen, all the ones you closed hastily last year. You're not getting into new beds. You closed those beds, and now you have to reopen them. They're not new. Let's just walk that theory through a little bit more: 464 beds, but you have 758 people waiting, so it doesn't really matter because you're not going to be able to solve that problem, and it doesn't address the problem that you have today, that more people are coming into care every single day.

4:20

More importantly, though, is the continual closure of long-term care beds. As they close long-term care beds – you can build a thousand or 2,000 continuing care beds, but you are not going to

be able to give the clients what they need because they're not the right level of care.

Again, I would go back to the previous Premier's throne speech, under which you were all elected except for the four, and the promise of 1,000 long-term care nursing beds – her policy platform actually said 1,000 long-term care beds, not continuing care – every year for five years. That is an absolute failure. You haven't built any more beds. You've actually closed more beds. You are nowhere near, and even with 464, even if we're generous – let's just say that you're actually going to get to the whole 1,400 continuing care spaces by 2018. Let's just say that you can do that. You weren't able to do it last year, you weren't able to do it the year before, and I don't think your four new folks are miracle workers. The four new folks aren't going to be able to do it in the years coming up either, and you're going to have a crisis because, as you admit yourself, this government says everyday about how many people are coming here.

Thank you.

The Speaker: Thank you.

The hon. Government House Leader.

Mr. Denis: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I may not be a miracle worker, but I would like to move that the House stand adjourned until 1:30 p.m. on Monday.

The Speaker: We'd have to adjourn debate first.

Mr. Denis: Sorry. I would move to adjourn debate.

[Motion to adjourn debate carried]

The Speaker: I will adjourn the House in just a moment.

I would like to make one point of clarification. During my ruling on privilege today I indicated that some government business obviously did occur during the trip in question, and I neglected to add the words "by one or more members of cabinet," which is the subject of some notes that have been coming back and forth. So that matter now stands corrected.*

We will move on and adjourn the House until 1:30 p.m. on Monday.

Mr. Denis: If it pleases you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: It does please me a lot. Thank you.

The House does stand adjourned until Monday at 1:30 p.m.

[Motion carried; the Assembly adjourned at 4:22 p.m. to Monday at 1:30 p.m.]

*See page 88, left column, paragraph 7

Bill Status Report for the 28th Legislature - 3rd Session (2014)

Activity to November 20, 2014

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 199 are Government Bills. Bills numbered 200 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 numbers until the conclusion of the Fall Sitings.

- 1 Respecting Property Rights Act (Prentice)**
First Reading -- 6 (Nov. 17, 2014 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 30-31 (Nov. 18, 2014 aft., adjourned)

- 3 Personal Information Protection Amendment Act, 2014 (Quadri)**
First Reading -- 22 (Nov. 18, 2014 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 89 (Nov. 20, 2014 aft., adjourned)

- 4 Horse Racing Alberta Amendment Act, 2014 (Campbell)**
First Reading -- 22 (Nov. 18, 2014 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 89 (Nov. 20, 2014 aft., adjourned)

- 5 Securities Amendment Act, 2014 (Campbell)**
First Reading -- 22 (Nov. 18, 2014 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 89-90 (Nov. 20, 2014 aft., adjourned)

- 6 Statutes Amendment Act, 2014 (No. 2) (Olson)**
First Reading -- 22-23 (Nov. 18, 2014 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 90-92 (Nov. 20, 2014 aft., adjourned)

- 201 Electric Utilities (Transparency in Billing) Amendment Act, 2014 (Anglin)**
First Reading -- 86 (Nov. 20, 2014 aft., passed)

- 202 Safe and Inclusive Schools Statutes Amendment Act, 2014 (Blakeman)**
First Reading -- 86 (Nov. 20, 2014 aft., passed)

Table of Contents

Prayers	75
Introduction of Guests	75, 87
Members' Statements	
Dickinsfield Amity House 40th Anniversary	76
LGBTQ Student Supports	76
Edmonton-McClung Constituency Priorities	76
Edmonton Long-term Development	77
Rural Health Services	77
Bullying Awareness and Prevention	86
Oral Question Period	
Provincial Fiscal Policies	77
Ethics and Privacy Issues	78
Misericordia Community Hospital	78, 79
Education Rights in Morinville	79
Landowner Property Rights Legislation	80
Rural Issues	80
Wheatland County Roads	81
Northland School Division	81
Child Care Supports	82
Calgary Area Flood Mitigation	83
Seniors' Housing in Red Deer	83
Medical Laboratory Services in Medicine Hat	84
Calgary Ring Road Completion	84
Rural Physician Recruitment	84
Forestry Industry	85
Regional Dialysis Service	85
Statement by the Speaker	
Oral Question Period Rules	86
Notices of Motions	86
Introduction of Bills	
Bill 201 Electric Utilities (Transparency in Billing) Amendment Act, 2014	86
Bill 202 Safe and Inclusive Schools Statutes Amendment Act, 2014	86
Tabling Returns and Reports	87
Tablings to the Clerk	87
Orders of the Day	89
Government Bills and Orders	
Second Reading	
Bill 3 Personal Information Protection Amendment Act, 2014	89
Bill 4 Horse Racing Alberta Amendment Act, 2014	89
Bill 5 Securities Amendment Act, 2014	89
Bill 6 Statutes Amendment Act, 2014 (No. 2)	90
Consideration of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor's Speech	92

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