



Province of Alberta

The 29th Legislature  
Fourth Session

# Alberta Hansard

Thursday afternoon, March 15, 2018

Day 5

The Honourable Robert E. Wanner, Speaker

## Legislative Assembly of Alberta The 29th Legislature

### Fourth Session

Wanner, Hon. Robert E., Medicine Hat (NDP), Speaker  
Jabbour, Deborah C., Peace River (NDP), Deputy Speaker and Chair of Committees  
Sweet, Heather, Edmonton-Manning (NDP), Deputy Chair of Committees

Aheer, Leela Sharon, Chestermere-Rocky View (UCP),  
Deputy Leader of the Official Opposition  
Anderson, Hon. Shaye, Leduc-Beaumont (NDP)  
Anderson, Wayne, Highwood (UCP)  
Babcock, Erin D., Stony Plain (NDP)  
Barnes, Drew, Cypress-Medicine Hat (UCP)  
Bilous, Hon. Deron, Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview (NDP)  
Carlier, Hon. Oneil, Whitecourt-St. Anne (NDP)  
Carson, Jonathon, Edmonton-Meadowlark (NDP)  
Ceci, Hon. Joe, Calgary-Fort (NDP)  
Clark, Greg, Calgary-Elbow (AP),  
Alberta Party Opposition House Leader  
Connolly, Michael R.D., Calgary-Hawkwood (NDP)  
Coolahan, Craig, Calgary-Klein (NDP)  
Cooper, Nathan, Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills (UCP)  
Cortes-Vargas, Estefania, Strathcona-Sherwood Park (NDP),  
Government Whip  
Cyr, Scott J., Bonnyville-Cold Lake (UCP)  
Dach, Lorne, Edmonton-McClung (NDP)  
Dang, Thomas, Edmonton-South West (NDP)  
Drever, Deborah, Calgary-Bow (NDP)  
Drysdale, Wayne, Grande Prairie-Wapiti (UCP)  
Eggen, Hon. David, Edmonton-Calder (NDP)  
Ellis, Mike, Calgary-West (UCP)  
Feehan, Hon. Richard, Edmonton-Rutherford (NDP),  
Deputy Government House Leader  
Fildebrandt, Derek Gerhard, Strathmore-Brooks (Ind)  
Fitzpatrick, Maria M., Lethbridge-East (NDP)  
Fraser, Rick, Calgary-South East (AP)  
Ganley, Hon. Kathleen T., Calgary-Buffalo (NDP),  
Deputy Government House Leader  
Gill, Prab, Calgary-Greenway (UCP),  
Official Opposition Deputy Whip  
Goehring, Nicole, Edmonton-Castle Downs (NDP)  
Gotfried, Richard, Calgary-Fish Creek (UCP)  
Gray, Hon. Christina, Edmonton-Mill Woods (NDP)  
Hanson, David B., Lac La Biche-St. Paul-Two Hills (UCP)  
Hinkley, Bruce, Wetaskiwin-Camrose (NDP)  
Hoffman, Hon. Sarah, Edmonton-Glenora (NDP)  
Horne, Trevor A.R., Spruce Grove-St. Albert (NDP)  
Hunter, Grant R., Cardston-Taber-Warner (UCP)  
Jansen, Hon. Sandra, Calgary-North West (NDP)  
Kazim, Anam, Calgary-Glenmore (NDP)  
Kenney, Hon. Jason, PC, Calgary-Lougheed (UCP),  
Leader of the Official Opposition  
Kleinstauber, Jamie, Calgary-Northern Hills (NDP)  
Larivee, Hon. Danielle, Lesser Slave Lake (NDP),  
Deputy Government House Leader  
Littlewood, Jessica, Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville (NDP)

Loewen, Todd, Grande Prairie-Smoky (UCP)  
Loyola, Rod, Edmonton-Ellerslie (NDP)  
Luff, Robyn, Calgary-East (NDP)  
Malkinson, Brian, Calgary-Currie (NDP)  
Mason, Hon. Brian, Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood (NDP),  
Government House Leader  
McCuaig-Boyd, Hon. Margaret,  
Dunvegan-Central Peace-Notley (NDP)  
McIver, Ric, Calgary-Hays (UCP),  
Official Opposition Whip  
McKittrick, Annie, Sherwood Park (NDP)  
McLean, Hon. Stephanie V., Calgary-Varsity (NDP)  
McPherson, Karen M., Calgary-Mackay-Nose Hill (AP)  
Miller, Barb, Red Deer-South (NDP)  
Miranda, Hon. Ricardo, Calgary-Cross (NDP)  
Nielsen, Christian E., Edmonton-Decore (NDP)  
Nixon, Jason, Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House-Sundre (UCP),  
Official Opposition House Leader  
Notley, Hon. Rachel, Edmonton-Strathcona (NDP),  
Premier  
Orr, Ronald, Lacombe-Ponoka (UCP)  
Panda, Prasad, Calgary-Foothills (UCP)  
Payne, Hon. Brandy, Calgary-Acadia (NDP)  
Phillips, Hon. Shannon, Lethbridge-West (NDP)  
Piquette, Colin, Athabasca-Sturgeon-Redwater (NDP)  
Pitt, Angela D., Airdrie (UCP),  
Official Opposition Deputy House Leader  
Renaud, Marie F., St. Albert (NDP)  
Rosendahl, Eric, West Yellowhead (NDP)  
Sabir, Hon. Irfan, Calgary-McCall (NDP)  
Schmidt, Hon. Marlin, Edmonton-Gold Bar (NDP)  
Schneider, David A., Little Bow (UCP)  
Schreiner, Kim, Red Deer-North (NDP)  
Shepherd, David, Edmonton-Centre (NDP)  
Sigurdson, Hon. Lori, Edmonton-Riverview (NDP)  
Smith, Mark W., Drayton Valley-Devon (UCP)  
Starke, Dr. Richard, Vermilion-Lloydminster (PC)  
Stier, Pat, Livingstone-Macleod (UCP)  
Strankman, Rick, Drumheller-Stettler (UCP)  
Sucha, Graham, Calgary-Shaw (NDP)  
Swann, Dr. David, Calgary-Mountain View (AL)  
Taylor, Wes, Battle River-Wainwright (UCP)  
Turner, Dr. A. Robert, Edmonton-Whitemud (NDP)  
van Dijken, Glenn, Barrhead-Morinville-Westlock (UCP)  
Westhead, Cameron, Banff-Cochrane (NDP),  
Deputy Government Whip  
Woollard, Denise, Edmonton-Mill Creek (NDP)  
Yao, Tany, Fort McMurray-Wood Buffalo (UCP)  
Vacant, Fort McMurray-Conklin  
Vacant, Innisfail-Sylvan Lake

### Party standings:

New Democratic: 54   United Conservative: 25   Alberta Party: 3   Alberta Liberal: 1   Progressive Conservative: 1   Independent: 1   Vacant: 2

### Officers and Officials of the Legislative Assembly

Robert H. Reynolds, QC, Clerk  
Shannon Dean, Law Clerk and Director of  
House Services  
Stephanie LeBlanc, Senior Parliamentary  
Counsel  
Trafton Koenig, Parliamentary Counsel

Philip Massolin, Manager of Research and  
Committee Services  
Nancy Robert, Research Officer  
Janet Schwegel, Managing Editor of  
*Alberta Hansard*

Brian G. Hodgson, Sergeant-at-Arms  
Chris Caughell, Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms  
Paul Link, Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms  
Gareth Scott, Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms

### **Executive Council**

Rachel Notley	Premier, President of Executive Council
Sarah Hoffman	Deputy Premier, Minister of Health
Shaye Anderson	Minister of Municipal Affairs
Deron Bilous	Minister of Economic Development and Trade
Oneil Carlier	Minister of Agriculture and Forestry
Joe Ceci	President of Treasury Board and Minister of Finance
David Eggen	Minister of Education
Richard Feehan	Minister of Indigenous Relations
Kathleen T. Ganley	Minister of Justice and Solicitor General
Christina Gray	Minister of Labour, Minister Responsible for Democratic Renewal
Sandra Jansen	Minister of Infrastructure
Danielle Larivee	Minister of Children's Services
Brian Mason	Minister of Transportation
Margaret McCuaig-Boyd	Minister of Energy
Stephanie V. McLean	Minister of Service Alberta, Minister of Status of Women
Ricardo Miranda	Minister of Culture and Tourism
Brandy Payne	Associate Minister of Health
Shannon Phillips	Minister of Environment and Parks, Minister Responsible for the Climate Change Office
Irfan Sabir	Minister of Community and Social Services
Marlin Schmidt	Minister of Advanced Education
Lori Sigurdson	Minister of Seniors and Housing

### **Parliamentary Secretaries**

Jessica Littlewood	Economic Development and Trade for Small Business
Annie McKittrick	Education

## STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

### **Standing Committee on the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund**

Chair: Mr. Coolahan  
Deputy Chair: Mrs. Schreiner

Clark	Horne
Cyr	McKitrick
Dang	Turner
Ellis	

### **Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future**

Chair: Mr. Sucha  
Deputy Chair: Mr. van Dijken

Carson	Littlewood
Clark	Piquette
Connolly	Schneider
Coolahan	Schreiner
Dach	Starke
Fitzpatrick	Taylor
Gotfried	

### **Standing Committee on Families and Communities**

Chair: Ms Goehring  
Deputy Chair: Mr. Smith

Drever	Miller
Ellis	Orr
Hinkley	Renaud
Horne	Shepherd
Luff	Swann
McKitrick	Yao
McPherson	

### **Standing Committee on Legislative Offices**

Chair: Mr. Shepherd  
Deputy Chair: Mr. Malkinson

Aheer	Littlewood
Drever	Pitt
Gill	van Dijken
Horne	Woollard
Kleinsteuber	

### **Special Standing Committee on Members' Services**

Chair: Mr. Wanner  
Deputy Chair: Cortes-Vargas

Cooper	Nixon
Dang	Piquette
Jabbour	Pitt
Luff	Schreiner
McIver	

### **Standing Committee on Private Bills**

Chair: Ms Kazim  
Deputy Chair: Connolly

Anderson, W.	Orr
Babcock	Rosendahl
Drever	Stier
Drysdale	Strankman
Hinkley	Sucha
Kleinsteuber	Taylor
McKitrick	

### **Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections, Standing Orders and Printing**

Chair: Ms Fitzpatrick  
Deputy Chair: Ms Babcock

Carson	Loyola
Coolahan	Miller
Cooper	Nielsen
Goehring	Nixon
Gotfried	Pitt
Hanson	van Dijken
Kazim	

### **Standing Committee on Public Accounts**

Chair: Mr. Cyr  
Deputy Chair: Mr. Dach

Barnes	Malkinson
Carson	Miller
Fildebrandt	Nielsen
Gotfried	Panda
Hunter	Renaud
Littlewood	Turner
Luff	

### **Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship**

Chair: Loyola  
Deputy Chair: Mr. Drysdale

Babcock	Malkinson
Dang	McPherson
Fraser	Nielsen
Hanson	Rosendahl
Kazim	Woollard
Kleinsteuber	Vacant
Loewen	

## Legislative Assembly of Alberta

1:30 p.m.

Thursday, March 15, 2018

[The Speaker in the chair]

**The Speaker:** Good afternoon. Please be seated.

### Statement by the Speaker

#### Mr. Speaker's MLA for a Day Program

**The Speaker:** Hon. members, as you know, the Legislative Assembly is hosting Mr. Speaker's MLA for a Day, which will be held May 6 to 8, 2018, at the Alberta Legislature. There is only one week left to apply to the program. This is an opportunity for all high school students from all corners of our province – for those of us who are from corners, it's really important to say that – from all of our constituencies to learn about what we do here and about the role of active citizens of our democracy. I would ask, hon. members, that you remind your high schools that this three-day program is fully supported by the Legislative Assembly Office, so there's no cost to the students whatsoever. Transportation and accommodation details will be arranged by our visitor services office.

The application form is available on the Assembly website until March 23. I urge you to support MLA for a Day by promoting student participation from your constituency and also through your personal involvement in the program.

Thank you.

### Introduction of Visitors

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

**Mr. Shepherd:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is a pleasure and an honour today to introduce to you and through you to all members of this Assembly the Hon. Naggayi Nabilah Sempala, the Member of Parliament for the Kampala woman constituency in the Republic of Uganda. Ms Sempala has served as an elected leader at both a local government and a national level for many years. She's also an active community leader and human rights activist. As the women's representative for the Kampala district she's a fierce advocate for women's and children's rights. And her family is here in Edmonton. I would ask that the Hon. Naggayi Nabilah Sempala now rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of this Assembly.

**The Speaker:** Welcome.

### Introduction of Guests

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Peace River.

**Ms Jabbour:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour today to introduce a group. They won't actually be here until 2 p.m., but I'm going to introduce them now and note that they will be arriving soon. It's the Alberta Girls' Parliament. They come every year to visit us and to learn about the legislative process. It's just wonderful to see so many young women who are keen on pursuing a career in politics and leadership. Accompanying the 36 girls are co-ordinator Mrs. Edie Jubenville, Ms Shannon Jaeger, Miss Julie Kitz, and Mrs. Gultaj Kara. I'd like to give them the warm welcome of this Assembly.

**The Speaker:** I believe, hon. member, those guests – I just received a note – are going to be here in a few minutes.

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Manning.

**Ms Sweet:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to introduce the members of the Education Advisory Committee. This provincial committee offers expertise to the visitor services office in their development of educational programming and represents different perspectives on teaching from across Alberta. With us today are Corvin Uhrbach, social studies consultant with Wolf Creek public schools and lead social studies teacher, Alberta Distance Learning; Wally Diefenthaler, who teaches secondary social studies students at the University of Alberta; Dr. Carla Peck from the University of Alberta's Faculty of Education; Justine Light, English language instructor in the English Language School at the University of Alberta and project manager of learning English with the CBC. I would ask them to rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of this Assembly.

**The Speaker:** Welcome.

We have a school group present from Fort Saskatchewan.

**Mrs. Littlewood:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my privilege to introduce to you and through you Lamont elementary school. We have students accompanied by their teachers – Tami Rickert, Tammy Marks, Cheryl Moser – and by chaperones Stak Porter, Pat Taylor, Erin Gowing, Kami Moncrief, Jodie Derksen, Kim Dickinson, and Crystal Weleschuk. They have been baking paska and also painting pysanka, so they are getting ready for the Easter season coming up. I want to ask the whole Chamber to welcome them with the warm welcome of the Assembly.

**The Speaker:** Welcome.

The hon. Member for Airdrie.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour and a pleasure to rise today to introduce to you and through you to all members of this Assembly the wonderful staff and students and chaperones of George McDougall high school in Airdrie. I am a graduate of George McDougall high school. Go Mustangs. It's great to have you guys here today accompanied by – and please rise as I say your name – teachers Ms Lesley-Anne Petcoff, Mrs. Scarlett Yakachuk and chaperones Mrs. Lianna Smith, Mrs. Franca Broughton, and Ms Dee-Anne Weisser. Students, will you rise as well and receive the traditional warm welcome of this Assembly.

**The Speaker:** Welcome.

Hon. members, are there any other school groups?

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Castle Downs.

**Ms Goehring:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm honoured today to introduce to you and through you to all members of our Assembly two distinguished guests from the Royal Canadian Navy. Visiting from Esquimalt, B.C., is Commodore Marta Mulkins. Commodore Mulkins is the commander of Canada's naval reserve, which includes 24 naval reserve divisions and approximately 3,200 officers and sailors across Canada, including HMCS *Tecumseh* in Calgary and HMCS *Nonsuch* in Edmonton. Accompanying Commodore Mulkins is Commander Frank van Staalduinen, commanding officer of HMCS *Nonsuch*, Edmonton's naval reserve division. Commander van Staalduinen serves part-time and, when not in uniform, is a perfusionist at the Mazankowski Alberta Heart Institute.

Last week we observed International Women's Day. Commodore Mulkins was the very first woman to command a Canadian warship, HMCS *Kingston*, from 2003 to 2005. Since her appointment as commander of the naval reserve in 2015 Commodore Mulkins has been serving in a full-time capacity

overseeing the transformation of the naval reserve roles and missions as part of the modernized Royal Canadian Navy.

I'm also pleased to welcome members of the Edmonton Naval Community Committee here to meet with Commodore Mulkins.

I would invite all of my guests to rise, and I request that all members join me in welcoming these distinguished guests to our Legislature.

**The Speaker:** Welcome, and thank you.

The hon. Member for Calgary-South East.

**Mr. Fraser:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour and privilege to introduce to you and through you Greta Gerstner from the Strategic Alliance for Alberta Students with Learning Challenges and Ellie Shuster, executive director of the Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta. These two outstanding Albertans have been very active in spreading a message and education on some of the seemingly impossible battles our children face when it comes to having a learning challenge in our school system. I want to thank them for their efforts, and I ask them to rise and receive the warm welcome of this Assembly.

**The Speaker:** Welcome.

The hon. Minister of Seniors and Housing.

**Ms Sigurdson:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In honour of Social Work Week in Alberta it's my privilege to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly two social workers working in the department I have the honour to represent, Seniors and Housing, Tashia Swampy and Crystal Thompson. Tashia is a single mom like me and a First Nations woman from Samson Cree Nation. She incorporates her identity and way of life with conventional education to live her childhood dream of being a social worker. Crystal is a Cree woman from Alexander First Nation. She has worked extensively with urban indigenous people and has won awards for her leadership. Both today are wearing the beautiful ribbon skirts. I just want to thank them so much for their service. Would they both please stand and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

1:40

**The Speaker:** Welcome.

The hon. Member for Calgary-West.

**Mr. Ellis:** Well, thank you very much. It is my honour to introduce to you and through you to all members of this House two very special guests who are constituents of the fine constituency of Calgary-West. First of all, Mr. Gordon Olsen is the chair of the Calgary Zoo board of trustees, and he reminds all members, including and especially you, Mr. Speaker, to come and visit the giant pandas starting in May. Mr. Olsen is also a member of the Calgary Saddledome Foundation, amongst other volunteer activities. He is accompanied today by his daughter Marie. Of course, the hon. Member for Calgary-Lougheed will recall Marie from his time in Parliament as she worked as a page in the House of Commons while she was attending the University of Ottawa. My guests are seated in the public gallery, and I ask them to please stand and receive the warm welcome of this Assembly.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Edmonton-McClung.

**Mr. Dach:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to introduce the family and friends of Sana Ayesha Ghani, who tragically passed away earlier this winter. Sana Ayesha Ghani was a dedicated teacher, devoted to her students and work at Cadotte Lake. I will speak more on Ms Ghani's impact and legacy later today. Here today, though, are Sana's father, Mr. Mohamed Ghani; Sana's brother Mustafa

Ghani; Bassam Fares, executive director of the Muslim Association of Canada Rahma mosque; Dr. Amin of the Muslim Association of Canada Rahma mosque, imam; Eldon Okanee, principal of Cadotte Lake school; and Sana's friend Summer Dominguez, teacher and assistant at Cadotte Lake school. I ask my guests to now rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

**The Speaker:** Welcome.

The hon. Minister of Health.

**Ms Hoffman:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today in recognition of acupuncturists and the service that they provide to Albertans every day. Alberta was the first province to regulate the profession, in 1988, and over the past three decades it has experienced substantial growth. Acupuncturists across our province make contributions to the health and wellness of Albertans for many conditions. Of interest, maybe, to the folks in this Assembly: it includes stress and pain management. I now ask Ling Duan, Lowell Ask, Paul Hu, and other members of the College and Association of Acupuncturists to please rise and receive the warm welcome of our Assembly.

**The Speaker:** Welcome.

The hon. Member for Calgary-Foothills.

**Mr. Panda:** Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce to you and through you to all members of this House Frank and Lynne Hickey, who are originally from Saskatchewan. They came to Calgary almost 40 years ago and raised their four children in Alberta. Frank is a mortgage broker and past president of the Alberta Mortgage Brokers Association. Frank has a 40-year history as a stellar volunteer in the federal and provincial conservative movements, including managing countless winning campaigns, some of them against me. I can't tell you how relieved I am to now have him on my side. Lynne has happily supported Frank in all of his exploits. She's a successful businesswoman in her own right, operating Lynne's Window Treatments. I would ask that they please stand and receive the traditional warm welcome of this House.

**The Speaker:** Welcome.

The hon. Member for Calgary-Hays.

**Mr. McIver:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my wonderful honour to introduce to you and through you to all members of this Assembly someone that needs no introduction. Donna Kennedy-Glans is a lawyer, businesswoman, published author, former provincial cabinet minister, and founder of Bridges Social Development. During her extremely successful tenure in the energy industry Donna worked as a lawyer and negotiator at TransCanada and later as a corporate executive at Nexen, where she was their first female vice-president. I had the great pleasure to sit with her at both the caucus and the cabinet table during her term in office. What a lot of people don't know is that while we didn't know each other, we grew up about five miles apart in southern Ontario and both spent some summers working in the tobacco fields. I would ask Donna now to stand and receive the warm welcome of this Assembly.

**The Speaker:** Welcome.

## Members' Statements

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Edmonton-McClung.

### Sana Ayesha Ghani

**Mr. Dach:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to share the story of an incredible young woman and constituent. Sana Ayesha Ghani

was a teacher of grades 6 and 7 in Cadotte Lake in northern Alberta on the Woodland Cree First Nation. With the assistance of Reconciliation in Solidarity Edmonton she helped her students publish a book of their own stories. Sana asked me if the Premier would provide a message to be printed in the book, and the Premier came through in a matter of days. A few weeks later Sana called me once more to ask if it would be possible to have the mayor of Edmonton meet with her students. We met, and Mayor Iveson spent a half-hour with us inside city hall, where two boys from Ms Ghani's class performed a traditional dance. Sana Ghani was the kind of woman who got things done.

Soon I was given a copy of *Traditional X: Stories from the Rez*, the storybook created by Ms Ghani and her students. In the preface, she wrote:

[The students] began asking me questions, sharing their insights. And one of [the] boys asked me, "Ms Ghani, you say you want us to change the world. But how do we do that if we're just sitting in the classroom, writing in our journals?" This was one of the most exciting challenges I've received . . . They needed to share their stories with people beyond their community . . . And so this project began.

This project was a great accomplishment which demonstrated to students that their lives were important and that they could tell their stories to the world.

Tragically, earlier this winter Sana Ghani, aged 29, was killed in a motor vehicle collision while driving from Cadotte Lake to see her family in Edmonton. Her loss is still raw. Her vision, dedication, and love for her students will be sorely missed. By sharing the stories of her students, she brought together the diverse communities of the Woodland Cree First Nation, where she taught; the Rahma mosque, where she worshipped; and now the Legislative Assembly, where we honour her memory by donating a copy of *Traditional X: Stories from the Rez* to the Legislature Library.

I'm tremendously grateful for the privilege of knowing Sana Ayesha Ghani. Thank you.

### Energy Efficiency Programs in Rural Alberta

**Mr. Strankman:** Mr. Speaker, last week a constituent of mine described his frustration with the green slush fund program brought in by this government. I will highlight some of his concerns here. This family lives in Stettler and signed up for Alberta's energy efficiency residential program almost a year ago. Finally, in January a contractor came and changed out a few light bulbs for a more efficient style.

The homeowner's wife asked about the smart thermostat replacement, which was the overwhelming factor in their decision to sign up for this program. This constituent felt that this was a great idea, even noting that these thermostats were expensive, at \$100 to \$200 apiece. They were told that they would get a call in three to four weeks. Eight weeks later a call was finally received with an update on their request. The caller informed them that they would not be getting this thermostat because it wasn't worth the installer's time to come out from distant Red Deer. They didn't have enough HVAC-certified installers to warrant one coming out until more people signed up in the area, which wasn't likely in the near future. Now, Stettler and area do have some HVAC-certified companies. My constituent would love to know: why can't one of these local professionals install it and send the government the bill?

Mr. Speaker, this family has waited nine months to be told that because they are from rural Alberta, they simply aren't a priority. They believe that it appears that their rural tax dollars are being spent on people in urban areas, who largely voted NDP in the last election; they seemed to take priority. He expressed his frustration

by wondering if those of them living in small towns in the country aren't worth the time because they aren't important enough to a politically governing party. Is this another example of a primarily urban party completely alienating rural Alberta by design, or is this Alberta energy efficiency residential program another flawed piece of legislation that picks winners and losers from other hard-working Albertans?

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Calgary-South East.

### Alberta Party

**Mr. Fraser:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There's something happening in Alberta politics, something positive. The Alberta Party is growing its membership and just elected a leader in one of the most civil races in modern memory. The reason for this is simple. Albertans want to see politics done different. Too much of our political discourse has become about what people don't want. Don't like the government? Vote for this party. Don't trust the opposition? Vote for that party. It's time to offer Albertans a choice that they can vote for rather than just something against. That's what the Alberta Party is offering to Albertans, something to vote for. Our promise to Albertans is to treat our opponents with respect, argue against policies and not people, admit when we get it wrong, and base our decisions on evidence instead of partisanship.

1:50

Alberta is a dynamic, growing province, and our political leadership needs to reflect just that. We can't become trapped by the old ways of doing things just because that's the way we've always done it. Instead, we're asking Albertans to be a part of a conversation with us, and it will be a conversation because we're here to offer our ideas as well. The time has come for our province to be bold, to look at new ways of delivering services, new ways of providing for everyday Albertans. We need government to start treating Albertans as partners, not bystanders. We will ensure that Alberta has a place where you are given every chance to succeed, and we will take care of those who need it. That's our vision, and we'll keep talking about our vision because we believe in what we're offering to Albertans.

Our caucus will continue to offer constructive, measured criticism of the government that focuses on facts and policy. We'll keep working to make sure that Albertans who want a pragmatic, centrist, and inclusive option have a voice in this Legislature. There are some who want Albertans to not have a choice by limiting their options to bad or worse. From now until 2019 we're going to show Albertans that you don't have to settle. You can ask more of your elected representatives, you can choose based on your hopes, not your fears, and, most of all, you can vote for what you support and not what you oppose.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

### Oral Question Period

**The Speaker:** The Leader of Her Majesty's Official Opposition.

### Carbon Levy and Pipeline Approvals

**Mr. Kenney:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday the hon. the Premier said that she would not impose her pending 67 per cent increase of the NDP carbon tax unless construction begins on the Trans Mountain pipeline, but she just imposed a 50 per cent increase of that tax after Justin Trudeau cancelled Energy East through the National Energy Board. Why should we believe her when she says that she's not going to increase it until construction

is started, when she already did increase it without construction on Trans Mountain?

**The Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Ms Notley:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Well, again, our government has always been clear that we brought in Alberta's climate leadership plan, which had the imposition of a levy, first in January of 2016 and again in January of 2017, on the basis of the work that we did here in Alberta with Alberta industry, with Alberta communities, with Alberta environmental groups. That plan was independent. The issue subsequently around additional levies is definitely linked to the pipeline, and our government, as I've said before, will not move forward until we get the pipeline.

**Mr. Kenney:** Let me get this straight. Justin Trudeau killed Northern Gateway, that had been approved. He killed Energy East through the National Energy Board. He's doing precious nothing to get Trans Mountain built. But this Premier gave him the 50 per cent increase in the carbon tax that he wanted. Mr. Speaker, why is her close ally Justin Trudeau writing Alberta's tax policy?

**The Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Ms Notley:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's the member opposite that's not listening. What's happening is that Albertans are writing their own policy to combat climate change.

I believe, quite frankly, that it is time for the member opposite to come clear on his own position on that matter. Yesterday he said, and I quote: there's a legitimate range of perspectives about exactly to what degree anthropogenic causes are behind climate change. It sounds like bafflegab. Albertans deserve to know: does the member opposite believe that human activity is causing climate change? Yes or no? [interjections]

**The Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mr. Kenney:** Mr. Speaker, like two-thirds of Albertans, I am a carbon tax skeptic. Of course, there's climate change. I've never denied that.

What the Premier said yesterday is that she, quote, doesn't really want to relitigate the carbon tax. Well, unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, Albertans are going to relitigate that at the next election. Today I'll be tabling – oh, anticipation. Would the government agree that Albertans should not suffer a further increase in this punitive carbon tax without being able to have their say in a referendum?

**The Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Ms Notley:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What I've already said very clearly is that moving forward with additional hikes to the carbon levy will depend on the Trans Mountain pipeline, as I've said many times over the last year and a half.

But, Mr. Speaker, the member opposite did not answer the question. People are concerned about this issue. His Finance critic funded a climate-denying film and attended an event called Climate Dogma Exposed, and he's still on the front bench. The fact of the matter is that Albertans need to know: does the member opposite believe that human activity is the primary cause of climate change? Yes or no?

**The Speaker:** Thank you, hon. Premier.  
The hon. member.

## Federal Energy Policies

**Mr. Kenney:** Mr. Speaker, Environment Canada says that it's going to cost at least \$300 per metric tonne in order for a carbon tax to achieve the federal government's greenhouse gas emissions. Her own adviser Professor Leach says: at least \$200 a tonne. My question for the Premier is: does she agree with these estimates that to meet global greenhouse gas emission targets would require a price of between \$200 and \$300 a tonne? Does she agree?

**The Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Ms Notley:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. What I agree is that we need to take action to stop human-caused climate change. You know, I just cannot engage in a conversation about the best strategies to do that with someone who will not answer the question, yes or no, "Does he believe that human activity is the primary cause of climate change?"

**Mr. Kenney:** I see the hon. the Premier, Mr. Speaker, is once again auditioning to be opposition leader. We'd invite her to try to answer the question.

Here's another one since she won't answer that. Does she agree that the regulation of the production of oil and gas is an exclusive provincial jurisdiction under section 92A(2) of the Constitution?

**Ms Notley:** Mr. Speaker, we've already had this conversation, and indeed this is a matter that we'll have an opportunity to discuss much further when we bring in our legislation to move forward on the control of supply, the strategic control of supply of oil and gas, further to the conversation that we had in our throne speech. The fact of the matter is that the issue of controlling emissions is something that matters to all Canadians. Putting a cap on emissions matters to all Canadians, and it should even matter to those people who have yet to determine or to advise whether they believe that climate change is significantly or primarily caused by human activity.

**Mr. Kenney:** Well, Mr. Speaker, that wasn't exactly a skill-testing question, so I'll answer it for the Premier. Yes, section 92A of the Constitution says that the regulation of the production of oil and gas is a provincial jurisdiction. The follow-up, then, is: why did this government do nothing to object to the federal government intruding into that hard-won provincial jurisdiction, won by Peter Lougheed in 1982, when the National Energy Board killed Energy East by getting into the regulation of upstream emissions? Why did they surrender this hard-fought provincial jurisdiction?

**Ms Notley:** Well, Mr. Speaker, I completely reject the underlying presumptions that began that question. Nonetheless, what I will say is that the federal government does actually have an obligation to act in the environmental sphere to some degree. That's why they have a climate change plan, something that the member opposite pretty much ignored when they were in government. I'm wondering why that was because the fact of the matter is that, still, the member opposite has failed to address the fact that his front-bench Finance critic has funded conspiracy theory films combatting the notion of climate change, and he's failed to answer the question.

**The Speaker:** The hon. leader.

**Mr. Kenney:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Actually, I think I take from decoding that very opaque answer that the Premier doesn't think it's exclusive provincial jurisdiction, and that's why she surrendered this area to the federal government. She's the first Premier, this is the first government in our history to do so.



### Rural Crime Prevention

**Mr. Kenney:** To change subjects, Mr. Speaker, yesterday the government could not answer the question about when additional RCMP positions will actually be staffed, when those RCMP officers will arrive in Alberta, so I'd like to give the government another opportunity to tell us: when will those positions be filled? When will those officers and those boots be on the ground here in Alberta?

**The Speaker:** The Justice minister.

**Ms Ganley:** Thank you very, Mr. Speaker and to the member for the question. We know that all Albertans are very concerned about this issue and about ensuring that our plan to combat rural crime is put in place as quickly as possible. The RCMP has already begun recruitment to those positions. The RCMP has already begun moving officers into those strategic crime-fighting units. So some of that work has already begun. As with any large organization, there's a certain amount of turnover that will be ongoing for a certain period of time. But that work is already under way because we know, unlike the opposition would say, Albertans can't wait to address this issue.

**The Speaker:** Thank you.

**Mr. Kenney:** Well, Mr. Speaker, Albertans are waiting. Some municipalities have been waiting for upwards of two years for funded positions to be filled by the RCMP. This government has done nothing to raise that, nor have they raised any objections to the federal Liberals, their close allies, repealing tough-on-crime laws. Now, we have the situation once again of a revolving door, Mr. Speaker, of serious repeat offenders getting back on the streets to reoffend, to create new victims in Alberta. Will the NDP government join us in calling on the federal government to restore those tough-on-crime laws to stop the revolving door?

2:00

**The Speaker:** The hon. Premier.

**Ms Notley:** Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I honest to goodness think that the member opposite thinks he's running to be Prime Minister, not Premier, and – who knows? – maybe ultimately that's his plan. What I will say is that we are focused on doing the job here in Alberta. It's not easy when the members opposite actually vote down supplementary estimates for Justice, which were geared towards paying the salaries of more RCMP officers, a mere hour and a half ago. I don't know if you guys talk to each other between these acts. Nonetheless, our Justice minister is working very hard to make sure that we have more resources in rural communities and everywhere else to combat crime, and she will continue that good work.

**Mr. Kenney:** Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm running partly so that we have a provincial government that actually stands up and defends this province from bad policies coming from Ottawa, including the repeal of tough-on-crime laws by their friends the Trudeau Liberals and every one of those repeals supported by their federal wing, the federal NDP. So will the Premier take the opportunity to ask her federal friends in the NDP and Liberal Party to restore tough-on-crime laws and mandatory minimum prison sentences for serious, repeat violent offenders to keep Albertans safe and to stop the revolving door of the justice system?

**Mr. Nixon:** Point of order.

**The Speaker:** Point of order noted.

The hon. Premier.

**Ms Notley:** Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Well, you know, those decisions are made in the federal sphere. In the provincial sphere we fund policing, and we work with the RCMP to ensure that there is the best allocation of those policing resources. Let me say that it is not helpful when the budget is pressed because of additional funding required for the RCMP as a result of decisions that are made with respect to their salaries when the members opposite don't stand up to support that. We are focused on ensuring that there are resources, and you will see there are additional resources coming in the budget to keep Albertans safe.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Calgary-South East.

### Education Concerns

**Mr. Fraser:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Education is an issue that affects all Albertans, and we're all responsible for ensuring that our next generation has access to quality education that respects the diversity and the unique needs of its students. As legislators we must be sure we're respecting the role and decision-making of parents and local school authorities. For example, the Calgary board of education recently released its list of capital and infrastructure priorities, and that list is informed by real-time, on-the-ground expertise at our local school authorities. To the Minister of Education: will you commit to following the most current capital plan as requested and laid out by the Calgary board of education?

**The Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Education.

**Mr. Eggen:** Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for that question. Yes, it's very important to respect the local decision-making powers and the authority and the intelligence on the ground that school boards allow us. Certainly, I work closely with them. Today I was meeting with Lakeland school division here, just this morning, and they gave me lots of very good information that I will directly use in decision-making in the future. The same goes with the Calgary board of education and all the other 61 school boards around the province.

**Mr. Fraser:** I recently had the pleasure of speaking with an organization who was pushing to do more to address and identify potential early childhood learning challenges. What they were addressing is an increasingly important issue. The issue has grown to an extent that at the Calgary board of education the cost of providing appropriate programming for special needs, indigenous, and ESL students exceeds the funding provided by the province by \$80 million. To the same minister: will the minister commit to fully funding these programs or at the very least commit to pushing for more early childhood screening?

**The Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Education.

**Mr. Eggen:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Certainly, developing literacy skills at an early age is absolutely essential, and we're certainly seeing more expertise with teachers, that we encourage to use screening tools at an early age so that we can get the extra help that those students need. You know, certainly, the advocacy of such individuals as Greta Gerstner, whom we have here this afternoon, I appreciate very much. This sort of work directly with parents and with advocacy groups, with postsecondary institutions helps us to strengthen our education system.

**Mr. Fraser:** Well, we need to be responsive to experts, from teachers to counsellors and administrators. The most important voice we need to listen to for most children is their parents. The safety of a child is paramount, but as much as possible we need to keep parents informed and involved in what's happening to their children at school. The concerns of parents should be included at every level of our education system. To the same minister: how is Education working to ensure that conversations are happening between parents, educators, advocacy groups, school boards, and your department?

**The Speaker:** The hon. minister

**Mr. Eggen:** Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Certainly, we've been working very hard to work with parent councils and school councils across the province. We've never seen such strong representation in the history of these organizations as we do right now in Alberta. We get a lot of good information that way. I encourage individual schools and boards and my department to work with these parent councils every step of the way. It's very important to have that conversation, to have that interaction so that not only are we giving the information on where a student is at any given point in time, but we're actually building and strengthening community and a sense of ownership of education for all Albertans.

**The Speaker:** Thank you, hon. minister.

The hon. Member for Calgary-Bow.

#### Sexual Assault and Harassment Services

**Drever:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Women all over the world have been galvanized by the #metoo and #timesup movements to address sexual assault and harassment. In Canada sexual violence is the only crime that has not declined. Reporting to police has also increased in both Edmonton and Calgary by 13 per cent and 25 per cent respectively. To the Status of Women minister: what is being done to support survivors of sexual assault and harassment?

**The Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Status of Women and Service Alberta.

**Ms McLean:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for the question. Every Albertan deserves to live free from sexual harassment and assault. In recent months we have seen more and more courageous survivors, most of whom are women who stepped forward to share their accounts of sexual harassment and assault. To those survivors I want to say: we have heard you; we believe you; we stand with you. That's why we are taking action to support all survivors with a historic \$8.1 million investment to the Association of Alberta Sexual Assault Services. These significant new dollars will go directly to more counselling, more crisis support, and more help navigating the police and court systems so that survivors who bravely step forward have the vital help they need close to home.

We know there's so much more to do but I'm proud to say . . .

**The Speaker:** Thank you, hon. minister.

First supplemental.

**Drever:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. According to AASAS, Alberta sexual assault centres have experienced a 53 per cent increase in counselling clients since 2016. How will the funding address this?

**Ms McLean:** Thank you, Member, for the question. Every survivor deserves to be supported. With this increased funding sexual assault centres will have enhanced counselling services, with a goal to cut

the wait times for counselling. This funding will expand immediate crisis services so that more survivors have immediate access. There will also be increased front-line supports in seven underserved communities in rural Alberta. All of this will help address the increased demand in sexual assault services across the province.

**The Speaker:** Second supplemental.

**Drever:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I understand that the funding will increase supports for survivors of sexual violence. To the Minister of Status of Women: how else is the government tackling gender-based violence?

**The Speaker:** The hon. minister.

**Ms McLean:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker and to the member. Although sexual violence can happen to anyone, the vast majority of survivors are women. It is a crime of power and control rooted in gender inequality. Supporting survivors is one way to make life safer for women and girls in Alberta. That's why I was so disappointed to hear that none of the members opposite voted in support of the additional funding this morning for sexual assault survivors. In fact, one such member, the Member for Calgary-Hays, voiced his opposition to that funding.

Our government is taking concrete steps not only to make life safer for women and girls in Alberta but to make it better and fairer, too.

**The Speaker:** Thank you, hon. minister.

#### Abortion Rights and Freedom of Speech and Assembly

**Mr. Fildebrandt:** Mr. Speaker, when faced with the painful decision of whether or not to have an abortion, some women have been confronted by protestors when entering clinics. I agree with the Premier that the behaviour by these protestors is most inappropriate, not compassionate, and probably hurting their own cause. They are nonetheless exercising their fundamental rights to freedom of speech and assembly. Can the Premier assure this House that any legislation brought forward will not impede the Charter rights of Albertans?

**The Speaker:** The hon. Deputy Premier.

**Ms Hoffman:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker and to the member for the important question. We are working to ensure that we fund health care services for Albertans where and when they need them, and of course that includes women who choose to access abortion services being able to access those important health care services. We know that members of the Official Opposition have previously advocated to defund health services for women. We feel that this is the wrong move, and that's one of the reasons why we're standing up to make sure that they have their rights protected, their access protected, and their choice protected.

2:10

**Mr. Fildebrandt:** I agree that these women should be protected, but I'm concerned about Charter rights here. Under existing law it is illegal for all kinds of protestors except for striking workers to impede the lawful entrance of people to a property. We have laws that make intimidation, harassment, and stalking illegal. Does the government not agree that the deficiencies in this area should be addressed through the Criminal Code more broadly and not a law limiting the civil liberties of a small, targeted group of people?

**The Speaker:** The hon. Deputy Premier.

**Ms Hoffman:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker and again to the member for the important question. It is a fact that there have been times when women have had their access impeded because of people exercising their rights. It's important that we ensure that the women who are accessing their options are able to do so in a safe way without threats or intimidation. Of course, other jurisdictions have seen extreme measures and have had to respond with increasing legislation. This is one of the options that we are considering, and we look forward to ensuring that all women can access their health care without fear of intimidation or inability to access such.

**Mr. Fildebrandt:** I largely agree with the minister, but I want us to strike an appropriate balance here. The law that the government is considering ostensibly targets only a small group of protestors, but it will curtail the liberty of every man and woman if they agree with them or not. As the saying goes: I might disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it. The Charter does not defend free speech and assembly that we agree with; it defends free speech and assembly that we do not agree with. Does the government not agree that we either all have free speech or we have none at all?

**Ms Hoffman:** We absolutely believe that it's important for people to be able to access the public health care services when they need them. We also understand that it's important for people to have abilities to make their opinions heard and the right to be able to say those. I am deeply concerned that there are members of this House, including those in the Conservative party, who have been taken over by antichoice organizations, whose goal is to legislate women's rights back, not forward. That's not okay.

**An Hon. Member:** Shame

**Ms Hoffman:** That is shameful.

It's 2018. Alberta women don't want the UCP leader to take their rights back to the 1950s. They deserve respect, and they will get that from this government.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Chestermere-Rocky View.

### Carbon Levy

**Mrs. Aheer:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier this week the Minister of Education responded to my question about the impact of the carbon tax and what is happening in my riding with rhetoric about what this government is doing to teach kids in Alberta about climate change. A well-rounded education is critical for students, so I would hope that the curriculum would also highlight the real and devastating impacts of poor initiatives like the carbon tax and what that can do to our economy. Can the minister assure me that our kids are getting a full picture and not just the portion that fits this government's ideology?

**The Speaker:** The hon. Education minister.

**Mr. Eggen:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Certainly, we are engaged in a very important process, which is to develop new curriculum, some of which subject areas are more than 30 years old. We are engaging literally tens of thousands of Albertans in this process. You know, one concern I have is that members opposite are trying to politicize this important curricular process, and by doing so, they diminish not only the integrity of the process, the people who are actually writing these things, but the information that gets to kids as well. So, you know, asking things and talking

about things like that is actually what we're striving not to do. It is to make sure that we have an evidence-based, scientific . . .

**The Speaker:** Thank you, hon. minister.

**Mrs. Aheer:** Well, Mr. Speaker, the government asserts tremendous influence over our children's education, and given that our children are the future of this province and given that the information that they learn in the schools shapes their perceptions, can the government please tell me if the curriculum being taught to our children in the schools reflects a balanced perspective, one that weighs environmental stewardship with the economy, the devastation of poorly thought out ideas like the carbon tax, and also the concern over the carbon tax? Or is the concern over the carbon tax, like the Premier said, quote, creating concerns that really don't exist?

**The Speaker:** Thank you, hon. member.

The hon. Minister of Education.

**Mr. Eggen:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Certainly, once again, it's very important to have an evidence-based, scientific approach to curriculum to defend against the very sort of accusations that are coming across from the member opposite here right now, which is to take an issue, politicize it, and then somehow twist it around from here out into the public. I mean, I find that shameful, I find that regressive, and that's not the way we run our education system.

**The Speaker:** Second supplemental.

**Mrs. Aheer:** Thank you. Well, speaking of politicization, this government should think about what they've done with that with respect to pipelines.

Mr. Speaker, amazing volunteers for the food bank who drive to collect donations and support those in need use fuel and are being punished by this carbon tax. Given that this has been devastating for our not-for-profit sector and given that the need for these charitable organizations is growing, again, I ask the government: do they understand the effect their carbon tax has had on the ability for regular, everyday Albertans to give back to the communities that they live in, or are they satisfied to promote ideology that penalizes wonderful Albertans who are helping their neighbours?

**The Speaker:** The Minister of Energy.

**Ms McCuaig-Boyd:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, we have started from day one to create an Alberta-made carbon plan, a climate leadership plan, which included carbon pricing. Right now our GDP growth is up. It'll be up again in 2018. Ninety thousand new jobs have been created. When we talk about education, as a former educator I fully support that we teach about climate change in our schools. But I also support and have asked the minister many times: let's educate about our energy industry and how one isn't exclusive of the other.

Thank you.

**The Speaker:** Thank you.

### Rural Crime Prevention (continued)

**Mrs. Pitt:** Mr. Speaker, tonight in Airdrie MP Blake Richards and I are hosting a town hall to discuss the very serious problem we are experiencing in Alberta. This is not the first of its kind. Members of the Official Opposition have been participating in well-attended town halls all across this province. Local law enforcement officers, victims, and residents have been coming together in an effort to find

solutions so that families can once again feel safe. I often get asked why no one from the NDP government is attending these events. Minister, what reason would you like to give desperate Albertans tonight as to why this government does not come out to listen to them?

**The Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Justice and Solicitor General.

**Ms Ganley:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. We have been listening to Albertans. That's why we've taken action on this issue. We've been hearing from Albertans throughout the province, we've been hearing from their municipal leaders, and we've been hearing from the RCMP on this issue, and we absolutely believe that this is an issue that demands action. That is why, unlike the opposition, who would like to continue to study this issue, we have taken action, because people deserve to feel safe in their homes.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Mr. Speaker, given that the Official Opposition called an emergency debate on rural crime last year and given that only now, this month, the NDP government has finally acknowledged that there is a problem that requires some action and given that announcing funding for more officers is just a first step – it doesn't actually mean that there have been any recruits or new boots on the ground – Minister, when desperate Albertans ask me how long it will be before there are actually new officers in their communities, what answer can I give them? And I'd like a date.

**The Speaker:** The hon. minister.

**Ms Ganley:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. That recruitment is already under way, so those officers are already coming into our province even as we speak. We've been dealing with the RCMP on this issue for quite a while. When asked what their plan was, the Leader of the Official Opposition indicated that they needed a year to study the issue. We don't think that that is the appropriate response. We think that rural Albertans deserve action right now.

Thank you.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Mr. Speaker, I did ask for a date, and I didn't hear one.

Given that yesterday I sat down with MP Shannon Stubbs and several colleagues to discuss her motion in the House of Commons to tackle this complicated issue, rural crime, and given that this motion calls for an assessment to be done of rural crime rates and trends, of resources and partnerships with other levels of government and given that all levels of government need to work together to address this crisis, Minister, are you working with your federal counterparts, and do you support Ms Stubbs' motion? Yes or no?

**The Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Justice and Solicitor General.

**Ms Ganley:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. What we think and what we have been hearing from Albertans throughout the province is that they need action now. They don't need months of people sitting around and talking and more study. What they need is for people to take action on this issue. These individuals don't feel safe in their homes, and that's why this government is taking action to address that issue. What certainly doesn't help is the Official Opposition voting against the funds that would go to pay those RCMP officers to ensure that we can keep them working on the front lines.

2:20

**Mr. Nixon:** When I was Leader of the Opposition in this Assembly, I moved an emergency debate motion. The Minister of Justice spoke against that motion; so did the Government House Leader.

The fact is that the opposition has been bringing this issue forward for two years, has been advocating strongly to make sure it's fixed on behalf of our neighbours who are being victimized, while this government has sat on their hands. My question, Mr. Speaker, through you to the Justice minister, is: what has taken you so long to get into the game?

**The Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Justice.

**Ms Ganley:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Again, we think this is an issue that requires action. We've been hearing from Albertans, and that's why this government is taking action. The Official Opposition votes against funding that issue. The Official Opposition is in favour of spending a year studying it. The Official Opposition would like a motion in Ottawa to sit around and talk about whether this is something we should take action on. We think Albertans deserve better. They deserve action now, and that's why we've taken it.

**Mr. Nixon:** Mr. Speaker, given that we've been asking this minister and this government to take action for two years and given that they have not until just recently and given that they stood against a motion in this Assembly to stand up for rural Albertans on rural crime and given that the minister has not come once to central Alberta to talk to the victims of rural crime, to attend any one of our town halls, how can she continue to stand inside this House and say that she's taking this issue seriously? When will she bring concrete, real action into place to deal with the epidemic of rural crime in central Alberta, not paper action, not fake announcements but actual action? [interjections]

**The Speaker:** Order.

The hon. minister.

**Ms Ganley:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I certainly think that those RCMP officers who are moving into those crime reduction units, that have been proven effective through a pilot project in central Alberta, would feel that it's a little unfair to say that they aren't real action. Absolutely, they're real action. Ensuring that officers can focus their time on the front lines, where rural Albertans have asked us to have them more visible, is absolutely concrete action. It's action that's absolutely necessary, and that's why we're moving forward with our plan. This plan will ensure that RCMP officers can spend more time in their communities. It will ensure that there are more RCMP officers on the front line. We think that this will be a very effective strategy.

**The Speaker:** Thank you, hon. minister.

**Mr. Nixon:** Mr. Speaker, given that the RCMP themselves say that they cannot fill these positions for upwards of two years and given that most counties that have been trying to fill these positions themselves, because the government would not help them, have not been able to fill them for two years, what is the minister going to do for rural Albertans right now who are being victimized every day in our communities, who have asked this government for help? The minister knows she cannot fill those positions in any reasonable time. What will she do right now, today, for the people that are being robbed in our communities?

**The Speaker:** The hon. minister.

**Ms Ganley:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Well, what we will do is take concrete action to address the issue. What we will do is vote in favour of funding that concrete action to address the issue. What we will do is say that it is time to act, not time to sit around

and consider our policies, not time to sit around and consider motions about whether this is an issue that needs to be addressed. These people need action right away, and that's what this government is doing.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark.

### School Busing Regulations

**Mr. Carson:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. During the debates on Bill 28 the Minister of Education explained that the 2.4-kilometre requirement for receiving busing services to local schools would be reviewed in the regulations. I've had many conversations with members of my community of Westview Village who are concerned that the criteria only recognize the distance from the entrance of the community when there is a kilometre difference from the front to the back.

**Mr. Nixon:** Point of order.

**Mr. Carson:** Can the minister tell us if examples like this will be taken into consideration during the regulations?

**The Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Education.

**Mr. Eggen:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you very much for that question. When we were looking at reforming the walk limit for kids taking buses, the 2.4-kilometre walk limit really stood out as a challenge, a problem. It's been many years in the making. We took action on this. This whole issue that the hon. member is now bringing up in relation to walking into complexes and so forth: I'm very glad that he is bringing up this issue, because this is exactly what we need to do to make sure that we build the right regulation so that kids are safe, they're getting to school, and they're getting a bus in a timely manner.

**The Speaker:** First supplemental.

**Mr. Carson:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the same minister: will there be opportunities for communities like Westview Village to receive special exemptions in the future?

**The Speaker:** The hon. minister.

**Mr. Eggen:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, by opening this up here with Bill 28, I've received a lot of very favourable response from school boards and parents and so forth. They know that that 2.4-kilometre walk limit just wasn't working, right? That's like from here to the hockey arena, for example. I'm not sure how many hon. members would walk that distance. So for young kids we're looking for ways to build a system that is more reasonable, that's safer, and that is in a more timely manner. Certainly, we can include individual submissions around people walking into complexes and so forth, perhaps using Google Maps or . . .

**The Speaker:** Thank you, hon. minister.  
Second supplemental.

**Mr. Carson:** Thank you. Can the minister explain why these regulations were necessary in the first place and when we can expect the new regulations to be implemented?

**The Speaker:** The hon. minister.

**Mr. Eggen:** Yes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As everyone knows, we had Bill 28 in here in the fall. We're starting consultations immediately, quite extensive ones, throughout the province so that

we can have something in place over this next year and so that we have it for 2019.

Thank you.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Calgary-Fish Creek.

### Indian Tariffs on Pulse Crops

**Mr. Gottfried:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Over 6,000 hard-working Alberta farmers make their living growing pulses. In November India introduced a 50 per cent tariff on dry peas and a 30 per cent tariff on chickpeas and lentils. The chickpea tariff was raised to 40 per cent in early February and inexplicably hiked to 60 per cent after Justin Trudeau's disastrous trip. The agriculture minister was in India just three weeks ago, where he attended the 2018 Pulses Conclave in New Delhi. To the minister: what specific reductions in these tariffs did you discuss with Indian officials, and how is Alberta lobbying to reduce or eliminate these stifling barriers to trade?

**The Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Agriculture and Forestry.

**Mr. Carlier:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker and to the member for the very good question, a very important question. Indeed, I was in India. I had an opportunity to talk with government officials and industry officials. I was a keynote speaker at the Pulses Conclave, where I talked to not just Indian processors and growers, importers, exporters but actually to people that grow pulses from around the world. You know, tariffs are affecting growers and exporters and importers around the world, not just Canada. It is a measure that has taken place because of the bumper crop they had in India, and it has political overtones as well, as 60 per cent of the population in India are farmers. Without a doubt, I had an opportunity to talk to many people about this.

**The Speaker:** Thank you, hon. minister.

**Mr. Gottfried:** Mr. Speaker, given that Alberta's agricultural trade with India was worth approximately \$82 million last year and given that the Trudeau Liberals have failed Albertans on pipelines, on carbon tax, and now they're failing Albertans on agriculture and given that Justin Trudeau embarrassed the entire country in India while also alienating their government with his conspiracy theories and frivolity, to the minister of economic development: has your government bothered to raise these concerning issues and negative outcomes with the Trudeau government, and if so, how?

**The Speaker:** The hon. minister of agriculture.

**Mr. Carlier:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker and to the member for the question. You know, as Minister of Agriculture and Forestry I'm in constant talks. Very often I'm in contact with the Canadian minister of agriculture talking about these very important issues and with India, you know, for sure. We also have some issues with our good cousins to the south around their trading practices of late. We have opportunity right around the world to expand our markets, to be able to make sure that the world gets an opportunity to enjoy the good products we grow here. That work continues.

**Mr. Gottfried:** Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure he has a pulse on the lobbying here.

Given that Alberta's international trade office should be lobbying the Indian government night and day to reduce or eliminate these tariffs in support of our agricultural producers and given that India is projected to be the world's fastest-growing large economy for the rest of the decade, again to the minister: at your direction has the

New Delhi office done an assessment of how these hiked tariffs affect Alberta farmers, and what have you specifically instructed your ministerial staff to do in their defence?

**The Speaker:** The hon. minister.

**Mr. Carlier:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker and to the member for the question. The member is right. India is poised to be the third-largest economy in the world here in a few years. I found it fascinating as agriculture minister that my first trip to India last year was the first one by an agriculture minister ever from the province of Alberta; this year was the second one ever from the province of Alberta. I also had the opportunity to meet with officials in the state of West Bengal, which was the first time that anybody from the government of Alberta has ever visited that state. Without a doubt, we understand the importance India will have and understand that India will continue being a very important part. We'll continue doing that great work, making sure our products get . . .

**The Speaker:** Thank you, hon. minister.

The hon. Member for Fort McMurray-Wood Buffalo.

### 2:30 Carbon Levy and Health Care Costs

**Mr. Yao:** Mr. Speaker, the carbon tax has spread its wings and reached every corner of the province. In Health particularly the departments have had to consider one of two options: decrease the life-saving services they provide or have taxpayers spend more of their hard-earned cash on something that will not improve Albertans' standard of care. To the Minister of Health: how much is the carbon tax costing Alberta Health and AHS in their operations, and how much of a decrease in the standard of care can we expect?

**The Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Health and Deputy Premier.

**Ms Hoffman:** Thank you so much, Mr. Speaker and to the member for the important question. We are very proud to be taking action on climate change not only so we can get those pipelines built, which is important, but so we can get the revenue from getting our product to that tidewater. That revenue helps support things like quality public health care, quality education. Instead of talking about 20 per cent cuts across the board, we're talking about getting top dollar for Alberta products so we can invest that in the people of this province, including health care and education.

**Mr. Yao:** Mr. Speaker, ambulance services spent over \$18 million more than they were budgeted, and given how stretched ambulance services have been across Alberta, can the Health minister explain how much of this money is being spent on the carbon tax and how much is increasing life-saving front-line services and accessibility for all Albertans?

**The Speaker:** The hon. minister.

**Ms Hoffman:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The reason why we put that money forward is to make sure that EMS is there when and where you need it. I have to wonder if the member opposite as a former EMS member – I commend him for all of his service in that area – agrees with the leader of his party, who's been pushing for 20 per cent cuts, who thinks we should be going after health care, including those front-line workers. I don't think so, but I'd really like to know. Do you stand with your leader, or do you stand with the front-line paramedics of this province? [interjections]

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Yao:** Mr. Speaker, the Health minister should read the Auditor General's report on the duplication of bureaucracy.

Given that the government plans to raise the carbon tax to \$50 a tonne, which will increase costs for heating and operating of hospitals, ambulances, the prices of disposable equipment, diagnostic imaging, and the list goes on, has the Ministry of Health performed an analysis on the new carbon tax increases and how that will affect the health care of Albertans?

**Ms Hoffman:** I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that when we launched our climate leadership plan, I was so proud that we were standing with industry, who knows that this will be good for them, the jobs that they employ, that we were standing with health care professionals, who know that the coal phase-out is the right thing to do for our environment. We were standing with working people from across this province, and we continue to stand with them. When B.C. tried to move up with their illegal blockades and slow down the process, it was working people from across this country who said, "That is wrong; we need to stand up together," including those who were working in health care. They're doing their part. We're doing our part. It's time that we got our product to tidewater so that we can all move forward with having a strong economy, diversified markets, and an even better health care system tomorrow than we do have today.

### Ministers' AAMDC and AUMA Convention Participation

**Mr. Hunter:** Mr. Speaker, as you are aware, today Edmonton is joined by AUMA members from across this great province. It is a time when municipal leaders can engage in open dialogue with their provincial counterparts. It's an integral part and tool used to keep the communication link between municipalities and their provincial representatives robust and meaningful. Can a member of this government tell us how many municipalities were denied an audience with ministers during this conference?

**The Speaker:** The hon. minister.

**Ms Hoffman:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker and to the member for the interesting question. We are certainly happy to engage in opportunities. I was proud to be a part of one of the panels yesterday and continue. There were some folks who asked for meetings, and we are very happy to arrange for those. It doesn't need to be just the three days here in Edmonton. Our front bench and all caucus members are travelling this province all the time and in cars because we sold the planes that the members opposite abused. We are throughout the province making sure that we're engaging with folks in their communities, and we're happy to arrange for those over the phone if they can't be done in person.

**Mr. Hunter:** Mr. Speaker, last year during AAMD and C the minister of environment demanded that I leave a public breakout session and given that the excuse of her chief of staff was, and I quote, so that she could be open with those in the room, and given that I had not asked any questions nor had I caused any reason for her not to be open with those people that she represented, will the minister be blocking me or any other opposition members this year when we attend AUMA and AAMD and C?

**Mr. S. Anderson:** Mr. Speaker, we won't be blocking anybody: media, opposition members, our members, or anybody. We are open and transparent. We have a great relationship with AUMA and AAMD and C. In fact, every time I meet with them, they tell us how many different ministers they've met with, how open we are, how it's never been like this before in the history of their organizations.

I am happy to have those open relationships where people can text me and ask me questions all the time. We'd be happy to have you guys whenever you guys want. [interjection]

**The Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mr. Hunter:** Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to know that we will no longer be blocked from these open sessions.

Mr. Speaker, given that this government has proclaimed over and over again about how they are going to be transparent and open, will this NDP government assure the opposition members that they will no longer be blocking any of us, no MLAs from this opposition, from AAMD and C or AUMA sessions?

**Mr. S. Anderson:** Mr. Speaker, I'd like the opposition members to actually understand that AUMA and AAMD and C are their own organizations and can do what they would like. We work with them hand in hand and in partnership. So if you would like to come to these sessions, discuss it with them, but we are always open to that, we always have been, and we always will be.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Grande Prairie-Wapiti.

### Agricultural Society Funding

**Mr. Drysdale:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Three and a half months ago I was pleased to hear the minister of economic development confirm that ag societies enrich the lives of rural Albertans, yet midway through the fiscal year the government abruptly withheld their operating funds, putting their community facilities and programs at risk. To the agriculture minister: will you please ask the President of Treasury Board not to play the same kinds of games with the funding for ag societies this year?

**The Speaker:** The Minister of Agriculture and Forestry.

**Mr. Carlier:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker and to the member for the question. You know, I do believe I have a very good relationship with the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board. Having said that, I'm also having good relationships with ag societies right across this province. I understand the value that they have running curling rinks, Boys & Girls Clubs, 4-H clubs, curling rinks. Yes, I do like curling. I've met with ag societies in Whitecourt, Darwell, Sangudo, Alberta Beach. That's in my own district, across the province. I understand their importance and will continue to visit them and understand more about what they do.

**The Speaker:** First supplemental.

**Mr. Drysdale:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that we know it's Treasury Board and Finance that ultimately decides the level of operating funding that ag societies will receive in the coming year and given that ag societies need to have confidence that they can keep their facilities' lights on year-round, to the President of Treasury Board: as we've never heard why ag society funding was suddenly put in jeopardy last fall, would you please tell us now?

**The Speaker:** The hon. minister.

**Mr. Carlier:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker and to the member for the question. As a government, as a minister, all this front bench and behind me as well understands fully the importance ag society is to the basic cultural fabric of rural Alberta, how important they are in maintaining halls. I was just this last year at a hall that celebrated its 80th anniversary. You know, these organizations are important

to rural Alberta, continue to be the lifeblood of these small communities, and we'll continue to support them.

**The Speaker:** Second supplemental.

**Mr. Drysdale:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that last year ag societies were surprised to learn that even with the funding earmarked for them in the 2017-18 budget, this government almost cut it midstream and given that the ag societies' operating year will be almost half done before they see the amount allocated to them in this year's budget, to the Finance minister: can they at least count on the number in next week's budget and not be left in the lurch like last year?

**The Speaker:** The hon. minister.

**Mr. Carlier:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker and to the member as well. Last year I was very pleased to be able to apply this funding to these organizations, their full funding. Those cheques went out to the ag societies at the beginning of October. Like I've said already, I understand the importance of this. I'm sure the member knows that the Minister of Finance, you know, would have a say in it if I let anything leak from the budget that will be released next week. What I can tell the member and tell Albertans is: let's wait for next week, when the budget is dropped.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** The Member for Edmonton-Mill Creek.

2:40

### Support for Vulnerable Albertans

**Ms Woollard:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Ensuring that people in need such as the homeless, the hard to house, and those living with a disability are well supported is challenging. This is especially true for young people who may find themselves without a support structure when they leave the school system. To the Minister of Community and Social Services: how are we making sure that vulnerable Albertans are not slipping through the cracks?

**The Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Community and Social Services.

**Mr. Sabir:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, Member, for the question. Our government is committed to making sure that Albertans have access to the housing and support they need. Instead of making reckless cuts, we are investing \$184 million to combat homelessness across this province. To ensure that Albertans with disabilities have the support they need, we have increased funding to AISH by \$103 million and to PDD by \$98 million. We have also increased FCSS funding by \$25 million to support community-based programming. We also added ambient community supports.

**The Speaker:** Thank you, hon. minister.  
First supplemental.

**Ms Woollard:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the same minister: what are we doing to ensure that these Albertans are able to find a home in an inclusive environment?

**The Speaker:** The hon. minister.

**Mr. Sabir:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, Member, for the question. We believe that every Albertan deserves a safe place to live with access to the supports they need for meaningful engagement and success in their communities. For instance, last year we implemented guidelines for LGBTQ youth housing and

shelters to support the youth homelessness initiative and to support inclusion. We also repealed the PDD safety standard, which was treating persons with developmental disabilities differently than other Albertans. The community told us that . . .

**The Speaker:** Thank you, hon. minister.  
Second supplemental.

**Ms Woollard:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Albertans with limited finances may also face challenges finding housing. To the Minister of Seniors and Housing: how is our government supporting affordable housing for people who may have trouble paying for their housing?

**The Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Seniors and Housing.

**Ms Sigurdson:** Thank you. Our government believes that everyone should have access to a safe and affordable home. Last year I launched the province's first affordable housing strategy. As part of this strategy we're creating over 4,100 homes for Albertans through our \$1.2 billion investment. The previous government spent years neglecting housing, leaving \$1 billion in outstanding repairs and maintenance. Now they want to impose a reckless plan that would give big tax giveaways to those at the top and cut the supports that vulnerable Albertans depend on. We see a better way. We're standing with working people and protecting the public services they count on. Affordable housing is . . .

**The Speaker:** Thank you, hon. minister.

Hon. members, in 30 seconds we'll continue with Members' Statements.

### Members' Statements (continued)

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Calgary-Bow.

#### WinSport

**Drever:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise before you in recognition of our spectacular Olympic athletes and the world-class athletic facility in Calgary and in my riding of Calgary-Bow, WinSport. At the recent Olympic Winter Games in Pyeongchang 23 of Canada's 29 medals were won by athletes that have trained or competed at WinSport facilities at Canada Olympic Park. Forty-four of Canada's 55-member Paralympic team have also trained or competed at WinSport.

Mr. Speaker, it's been 30 years since Calgary hosted the 1988 Olympic Winter Games, a world-class event that Calgarians and Albertans are proud of to this day. WinSport's Canada Olympic Park hosted ski jumping and many other spectacular winter sports in the 1988 Olympics and has since become a multipurpose facility enjoyed by Calgarians year-round. Over 1.2 million people visit WinSport every year, and I'm very proud to have this organization and facility in my backyard. As a Calgarian who was born in the year of the 1988 Winter Olympics, I have witnessed the incredible value that this not-for-profit community organization brings to Calgary, Alberta, Canada, and to our athletes.

Mr. Speaker, two of the women from Team Canada's women's hockey team lived in Bowness and trained at WinSport. I'll always remember the day when I ran into women's hockey gold medalist Hayley Wickenheiser at my favourite local coffee shop, Cadence Coffee in Bowness.

I know that we are all incredibly proud of the athletes that showcased Alberta's legacy of athletic success on the world stage

in Pyeongchang. We thank them for their commitment and their determination. I also want to thank WinSport for their continued support for athletes of all ages and levels.

Thank you.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Spruce Grove-St. Albert.

#### Gay-straight Alliance in Spruce Grove

**Mr. Horne:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am truly honoured to rise today and share with you and the Assembly the incredible work growing in Spruce Grove. In January a new after school GSA was formed. The Spruce Grove GSA is run by the Spruce Grove Youth Action Committee. Their mission is to come together to provide an accepting environment for LGBTQ youth and their allies.

Together they empower youth to support other youth and provide resources and encouragement so that youth can make informed decisions. Youth of all sexual and gender identities are celebrated and supported. Among their goals are to bring together awareness within our community of LGBTQ minorities, to promote self-esteem and integration of youth, and to provide a safe space for interaction with peers and for peer support. In the three months that they've been open, the Spruce Grove GSA has doubled in size and includes kids from six schools in the Parkland school division and from both Stony Plain and Spruce Grove.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to see this work in my community. I was so incredibly proud to attend the opening of this GSA. While I am a cisgendered man in a committed heterosexual relationship, there was a point in my life where I wasn't so sure about all that. I felt alone, different, and unsure of my own identity. I am so happy to see that, going forward, youth in communities across this province will have access to loving, safe, supportive communities regardless of who they are and who they love. Further, following the passing of Bill 24, youth have the right to share who they are with who they want, when they want.

I want to thank everyone who has organized or participated in a GSA for making the world a better place, and I want to thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity to share some of the great work in my community.

#### Chronic Wasting Disease

**Dr. Swann:** Mr. Speaker, we learned nothing from the BSE crisis. Mad cow disease, an incurable and rapidly fatal infectious prion disease of the brain, devastated our cattle industry 15 years ago at roughly a cost of \$10 billion in lost markets. Conventional wisdom at the time assured us that this could not be transmitted to humans. This proved wrong, and variant CJD cost over 200 human lives.

CWD, chronic wasting disease, is a similar, decades-old prion disease which began in deer and elk farms and is now growing across western Canada in the wild. It is spread easily from body fluids, not only from eating the meat, across the deer family, with weak and inconsistent provincial and federal control measures. Both game farming and wildlife management are provincial issues, but the federal food inspection agency, CFIA, sets the standards for meat safety and just last year relaxed the regulations for controlling this disease.

Paul Glover, the CFIA director, wrote the following: since 2010 CWD has spread and become firmly established in wild cervids in Saskatchewan and Alberta and cannot be eradicated with the tools currently available. End quote. This highlights the failure of co-operation between federal and provincial governments in control measures.



Recent U of C studies on CWD showed that it can be transmitted to experimental monkeys after they eat the flesh of infected deer. This is mobilizing the wildlife and hunting community, especially indigenous communities who depend on wild game. It's also the agricultural community's worst nightmare. We know that a significant number of infected deer and elk are consumed without being properly tested.

Dr. Neil Cashman, a noted neurobiologist and prion scientist from UBC, recently said, quote, we appear to be waiting till CWD is found in humans, end quote, before taking serious action on control and elimination of the disease.

This provincial government is negligent. We have learned nothing from . . .

**The Speaker:** Thank you, hon. member.

2:50

### Introduction of Bills

**The Speaker:** The hon. Leader of the Official Opposition.

#### Bill 202

#### Alberta Taxpayer Protection (Carbon Tax Referendum) Amendment Act, 2018

**Mr. Kenney:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to introduce a bill, being the Alberta Taxpayer Protection (Carbon Tax Referendum) Amendment Act, 2018.

It proposes to expand the requirement for a referendum prior to the imposition of a sales tax to include a potential carbon tax and to also require a referendum of the Alberta people before the current carbon tax can be increased.

[Motion carried; Bill 202 read a first time]

### Tabling Returns and Reports

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville.

**Mrs. Littlewood:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to table the requisite copies of the TD Economics provincial economic forecast released today. In the forecast it shows that Alberta's GDP has led the country in growth in 2017, '18, and '19. It shows that jobs are up, GDP is up, housing starts are up, and while it's true that many have not felt the recovery, Alberta's economy is looking up regardless of what the UCP would want Alberta to believe.

**The Speaker:** Hon. members, I believe we are at points of order, with two, in fact, to deal with.

#### Point of Order

#### Remarks Off the Record

**Mr. Nixon:** Can I rise, Mr. Speaker?

**The Speaker:** Yes, please.

**Mr. Nixon:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for recognizing me. I rise on 23(h), (i), and (j). In question period today the Finance minister heckled and said to the Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition comments in regard to whether or not he was a real Albertan and whether or not he was from this province.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I don't know your status and where you have come from. I certainly think you are an Albertan. You are the Speaker of the Assembly, and you are definitely an Albertan. I was born in this province, in Calgary. I'm a born and raised Albertan, proud to be from this province. My friend the hon. Member for

Calgary-Greenway immigrated to this province, and he most certainly is an Albertan. I'm sure that you would agree with me.

In regard to the hon. Member for Calgary-Lougheed he has lived in this great province for 27 years. He served this great province inside the House of Commons for almost two decades, is a member of the Privy Council of Canada, has served as a cabinet minister, has served his province with great integrity. The idea that the NDP, led by a minister of the Crown, would continue to question the hon. Member for Calgary-Lougheed's, the Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition in this Assembly, status as a member, as a citizen of this province is insulting, and I think you would agree, Mr. Speaker.

It is certainly likely to create disorder in this House. It is right now. As I'm trying to explain to you the situation of the point of order, the NDP are still heckling us. This is just like yesterday. It's unfortunate that this continues, Mr. Speaker.

I think that you would agree with me that whether you are like the hon. Member for Calgary-Lougheed, an almost three-decade resident of this province, or like me, a lifetime resident of this province, or like the Filipino community in Sundre, who work with us in our sawmills, have moved there and have only lived here for a few months, and that the Member for Calgary-Lougheed and I visited with just recently, we are just as much Albertans.

So I would ask, then, Mr. Speaker, that you rule that this should not continue in this House, that the Finance minister do the right thing – stand up, apologize, and withdraw his comments – and that the NDP stop doing this on a daily basis.

**The Speaker:** Hon. member, are there particular citations that you may have?

**Mr. Nixon:** As I said when I rose, Mr. Speaker, I rise on 23(h), (i), and (j), particularly language to cause disorder in this House.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Government House Leader.

**Mr. Mason:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. This is interesting, the tactics that are being followed by the UCP since their new leader has joined us, with his protestations of decorum and, you know, civility in the House. For the second time the Opposition House Leader has risen in his place and made accusations about statements that were not on the record that have allegedly come from members of our government.

Mr. Speaker, just yesterday the Official Opposition House Leader stood up and accused the Minister of Advanced Education of heckling, saying to the Member for Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills: you hate disabled people. That was yesterday. Now today the same Official Opposition House Leader is accusing the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board of accusing the Leader of the Official Opposition of not being an Albertan.

Now, yesterday we dealt with the accusation that was levelled against the Advanced Education minister, who denied saying it. Other people sitting very close to him didn't hear him say it. It was amazing, then, that in the Official Opposition, across the benches, they did hear him say this. Today, Mr. Speaker, we have the same situation, where the Minister of Finance denies saying what the House leader opposite is accusing him of. Nobody around him – and I sit very close to him – heard him say any such thing. It is amazing, again, that on the other side of the House they hear these things.

Mr. Speaker, clearly this is a tactic, a new tactic, of the Official Opposition, under the leadership of the current, new leader, that they have to attempt to suggest that members of the government have said things that they have not said. I would call on the Official Opposition to cease and desist from this disreputable tactic because

our hon. members and ministers here have said no such thing. It is high time that the Official Opposition stopped playing games and got down to business.

**The Speaker:** Would any other member like to speak to the point of order?

**Mr. McIver:** I'm going to speak to the point of order and the hon. Government House Leader. Mr. Speaker, the tactics are on the government side. Making these personal insults repeatedly and then denying them is the tactic. It's disreputable to this House, it's not becoming of a minister of the Crown, and I would suggest that the government ministers cease and desist and that the hon. Government House Leader take it upon himself to instruct the ministers and members of cabinet to stop doing what they have begun doing.

**The Speaker:** To the Opposition House Leader. I don't have the benefit of the Blues for the matter that you're speaking to. I actually thought there was another issue that you may have been raising a point of order about. Do you have access to the place, the reference in the *Hansard* Blues where this statement was made?

**Mr. Nixon:** Mr. Speaker, I don't have access to the Blues. You would have more up-to-date information on what *Hansard* may or may not have caught, but I don't have access to the Blues.

3:00

**The Speaker:** Hon. members, I think we've been doing reasonably well in here in the last four days. It seems to me, though, that this point, again, might be very similar to the one that I ruled on yesterday in that I never heard this comment being made. There seems to be a suggestion by the Government House Leader that the comments were not made. As is the common practice, as has always been a consistent practice, if I do not see or do not hear the allegation being made, it would seem to be difficult to rule on the matter. Therefore, I would rule in this particular situation that there is no point of order.

Opposition House Leader, I think you had a second point of order, is that right?

**Mr. Nixon:** I already withdrew it.

## Orders of the Day Committee of Supply

[Ms Jabbour in the chair]

**The Chair:** I'd like to call the Committee of Supply to order.

### Interim Supply Estimates 2018-19 General Revenue Fund and Lottery Fund

**The Chair:** Hon. members, before we commence this afternoon's consideration of interim supply, I'd like to remind you where the committee left off. There are eight minutes of consideration remaining. When progress was reported yesterday, we had completed a rotation with members of the Official Opposition, so we will now proceed to members of the third party should any be interested in speaking.

If that is not the case, then we can go to any independent members should they be interested in speaking.

Seeing none, we will return to the government side. Are there any government members who would like to participate?

Seeing none, the rotation will now return to the Official Opposition. Do you have any members wishing to ask questions? The hon. Member for Calgary-Hays.

**Mr. McIver:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I will ask the government Finance minister about the interim supply. Are there any details specific to any ministry that he can share with the House where something more or less is going to be spent this year than in the same period of time in the last fiscal year? Since he's asking for all this money, I thought he might share a little more information than has been shared thus far about what indeed he intends to spend more or less money on.

**The Chair:** The hon. minister.

**Mr. Ceci:** Thank you very much. You know, this has been a challenging time period for Albertans, particularly in the area of income supports, Madam Chair. We have had the backs of Albertans this entire time. We know that the recession has been problematic for many, many people and their families. The government of Alberta, though, has desired to make sure that they get through that challenging time in the best way possible. Now those better times are in Alberta, but there is a lag with regard to people's incomes, frankly. Many lost their jobs. Tens of thousands of Albertans suffered as a result of the world price of oil dropping significantly, so Albertans were no different than other oil-producing provinces. They suffered greatly, and throughout that, we have made sure that Albertans who have needed income supports got them. It has meant that we have had to change some processes, improve processes, particularly in that area.

The kinds of things that were done differently there were as a result of the great number of people coming out for income supports, having a 24-hour answer line, a line that people could call and get information about income supports. We extended the amount of time that offices were open so that many people could get there. Many come from, of course, rural areas, and they need to find their closest location, so we extended times both on the early hours and the late hours so that people could access supports they needed for themselves and their families. We also increased the number of front-line staff so that those services could be delivered in as quick a way as possible for Albertans. All of those things were done, Madam Chair, so that people could get through this recession.

The lag: of course, we saw that in terms of personal income taxes as well. Because people didn't have as much money – they'd lost work and had income supports sometimes to supplement that lost employment salary – it meant that they didn't have as much personal income to be taxed. Just as we saw a lag in that, we're seeing an increase, frankly, in the amount of money being spent in the area of income supports.

Madam Chair, that's one significant responsibility that this government has undertaken. That's one commitment that this side has made sure that we've fulfilled. I would suspect that the other side would want to do the same things. I don't think they're necessarily heartless in that regard. But, you know, the focus we had, to make sure that people didn't suffer through this recession, was important, was something we made sure happened. That was a significant amount of money that we have made accessible to people who required it.

I will gladly answer other parts of questions should they be posed to me, but that's one area I know that was a commitment that we wanted to make sure happened.

**Mr. McIver:** Thank you, Minister, for the answer. I appreciate that. Listen, I know that the minister is sincere about these things and he wants to do these things, so I won't say that the government is

treating this like the lowest priority because they're not. That's the first thing they would stop doing. I don't believe the minister would do that. But, Madam Chair, you have to, you know, appreciate that when we wonder on this side if that's the thing they're not going to do, then that would be the lowest possible thing, so I don't think they would stop doing that first. This is an area where we agree them, that people in need need to be looked after.

I guess we're of the opinion that they should find something not as severe, as high and necessary a priority as what the minister just described to stop doing but to find something less important to stop doing. What he just pointed out was one of the things that we'd never want the government to stop doing, looking at Albertans in need, when we're a little bit troubled that the government couldn't have chosen to look at all the other things government does and find something less important than what the minister just described.

3:10

I've known the minister for a long time, and I know he cares very much about the issues that he was just talking about. I don't think for a second that the government would stop looking after those people. I don't. But I would hope that the government would find something less sensitive, less important, less urgent to the people of Alberta that they could stop doing so that they don't have to ask for more money with two weeks left in the year.

You'll have to just forgive us if we're just a little bit skeptical. Again, to be clear, I don't think I would accuse the government of stopping looking after the people in need. I would suggest and on our side we would suggest to the government that with two weeks left that they look for things less urgent to do less of and to redirect those monies to the urgent areas that the minister just described. I think all members of this House can agree that people that are in urgent need have to be looked after. They indeed can't wait two weeks. You know, there are some Albertans in certain situations that can wait two weeks for this service or that service, but the people, if I understood well, that the minister just described are amongst the people that cannot wait two weeks.

I hope that the government can forgive us on this side of the House for thinking that with two weeks left in the year and the massive amount of money that the government is asking for to get through the last two weeks that they can probably make better decisions. With all due respect, we have to remember, too, that they passed a budget in this House, and what we're dealing with is the government's mistakes, where they didn't get it right. To be clear, it's a big budget. We don't expect it to be perfect, but when it becomes clear at the end of the year that they're not perfect and they need more money as a result of them being inaccurate in what they estimated and what they thought and what they believed they would need, they shouldn't expect Albertans to pick up . . .

### **Vote on Interim Supply Estimates 2018-19 General Revenue Fund and Lottery Fund**

**The Chair:** I hesitate to interrupt the hon. Member for Calgary-Hays, but pursuant to Government Motion 8, agreed to on March 13, 2018, the allotted time of three hours has elapsed. I must now put the following questions.

Agreed to:  
Support to the Legislative Assembly: \$13,528,000

**The Chair:** Shall the vote be reported? Are you agreed?

**Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** Opposed? That's carried.

Agreed to:  
Office of the Auditor General \$4,200,000

**The Chair:** Shall the vote be reported? Are you agreed?

**Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** Opposed? That's carried.

Agreed to:  
Office of the Ombudsman \$ 715,000

**The Chair:** Shall the vote be reported? Are you agreed?

**Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** Opposed? That's carried.

Agreed to:  
Office of the Chief Electoral Officer \$6,504,000

**The Chair:** Shall the vote be reported? Are you agreed?

**Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** Opposed? That's carried.

Agreed to:  
Office of the Ethics Commissioner \$161,000

**The Chair:** Shall the vote be reported? Are you agreed?

**Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** Opposed? That's carried.

Agreed to:  
Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner \$1,153,000

**The Chair:** Shall the vote be reported? Are you agreed?

**Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** Opposed? Carried.

Agreed to:  
Office of the Child and Youth Advocate \$2,571,000

**The Chair:** Shall the vote be reported? Are you agreed?

**Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** Opposed? Carried.

Agreed to:  
Office of the Public Interest Commissioner \$192,000

**The Chair:** Shall the vote be reported? Are you agreed?

**Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** Opposed? Carried.

Agreed to:  
Office of the Election Commissioner \$396,000

**The Chair:** Shall the vote be reported? Are you agreed?

**Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** Opposed? Carried.

Agreed to:	
Advanced Education	
Expense	\$469,320,000
Capital Investment	\$106,400,000
Financial Transactions	\$80,750,000

**The Chair:** Shall the vote be reported? Are you agreed?

**Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** Opposed? That's carried.

Agreed to:	
Agriculture and Forestry	
Expense	\$318,625,000
Capital Investment	\$2,458,000
Financial Transactions	\$219,000

**The Chair:** Shall the vote be reported? Are you agreed?

**Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** Opposed? Carried.

Agreed to:	
Children's Services	
Expense	\$241,208,000

**The Chair:** Shall the vote be reported? Are you agreed?

**Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** Opposed? Carried.

Agreed to:	
Community and Social Services	
Expense	\$654,814,000
Capital Investment	\$91,000

**The Chair:** Shall the vote be reported? Are you agreed?

**Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** Opposed? Carried.

Agreed to:	
Culture and Tourism	
Expense	\$116,993,000
Capital Investment	\$340,000
Financial Transactions	\$152,000

**The Chair:** Shall the vote be reported? Are you agreed?

**Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** Opposed? Carried.

Agreed to:	
Economic Development and Trade	
Expense	\$59,453,000
Capital Investment	\$436,000

**The Chair:** Shall the vote be reported? Are you agreed?

**Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** Opposed? Carried.

Agreed to:	
Education	
Expense	\$786,700,000
Capital Investment	\$12,100,000
Financial Transactions	\$2,853,000

**The Chair:** Shall the vote be reported? Are you agreed?

**Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** Opposed? Carried.

Agreed to:	
Energy	
Expense	\$43,759,000
Capital Investment	\$150,000
Financial Transactions	\$11,200,000

**The Chair:** Shall the vote be reported? Are you agreed?

**Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** Opposed? Carried.

Agreed to:	
Environment and Parks	
Expense	\$143,959,000
Capital Investment	\$15,622,000

**The Chair:** Shall the vote be reported? Are you agreed?

**Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** Opposed? Carried.

Agreed to:	
Executive Council	
Expense	\$3,113,000

**The Chair:** Shall the vote be reported? Are you agreed?

**Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** Opposed? Carried.

Agreed to:	
Health	
Expense	\$3,745,994,000
Capital Investment	\$31,972,000
Financial Transactions	\$12,392,000

**The Chair:** Shall the vote be reported? Are you agreed?

**Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** Opposed? Carried.

Agreed to:	
Indigenous Relations	
Expense	\$40,600,000
Capital Investment	\$4,000

**The Chair:** Shall the vote be reported? Are you agreed?

**Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** Opposed? Carried.

Agreed to:	
Infrastructure	
Expense	\$110,000,000
Capital Investment	\$185,000,000
Financial Transactions	\$6,750,000

**The Chair:** Shall the vote be reported? Are you agreed?

**Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** Opposed? That's carried.

Agreed to:	
Justice and Solicitor General	
Expense	\$286,439,000
Capital Investment	\$2,742,000

**The Chair:** Shall the vote be reported? Are you agreed?

**Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** Opposed? That's carried.

3:20

Agreed to:	
Labour	
Expense	\$38,415,000
Capital Investment	\$317,000

**The Chair:** Shall the vote be reported? Are you agreed?

**Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** Opposed? Carried.

Agreed to:	
Municipal Affairs	
Expense	\$271,477,000
Capital Investment	\$1,143,000
Financial Transactions	\$24,815,000

**The Chair:** Shall the vote be reported? Are you agreed?

**Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** Opposed? Carried.

Agreed to:	
Seniors and Housing	
Expense	\$71,422,000
Financial Transactions	\$2,450,000

**The Chair:** Shall the vote be reported? Are you agreed?

**Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** Opposed? Carried.

Agreed to:	
Service Alberta	
Expense	\$78,500,000
Capital Investment	\$16,900,000
Financial Transactions	\$1,700,000

**The Chair:** Shall the vote be reported? Are you agreed?

**Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** Opposed? Carried.

Agreed to:	
Status of Women	
Expense	\$1,140,000
Capital Investment	\$8,000

**The Chair:** Shall the vote be reported? Are you agreed?

**Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** Opposed? Carried.

Agreed to:	
Transportation	
Expense	\$201,821,000
Capital Investment	\$183,181,000
Financial Transactions	\$16,326,000

**The Chair:** Shall the vote be reported? Are you agreed?

**Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** Opposed? Carried.

Agreed to:	
Treasury Board and Finance	
Expense	\$33,726,000
Capital Investment	\$380,000
Finance Transactions	\$604,000
Transfer from the Lottery Fund	\$239,907,000

**The Chair:** Shall the vote be reported? Are you agreed?

**Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** Opposed? Carried.

The Committee of Supply shall now rise and report.

[The Deputy Speaker in the chair]

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. Member for Edmonton-South West.

**Mr. Dang:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. The Committee of Supply has had under consideration certain resolutions, reports as follows, and requests leave to sit again.

The following resolutions relating to the 2018-19 interim supply estimates for the general revenue fund and the lottery fund for the fiscal period from April 1, 2018, to May 31, 2018, have been approved.

Support to the Legislative Assembly, \$13,528,000; office of the Auditor General, \$4,200,000; office of the Ombudsman, \$715,000; office of the Chief Electoral Officer, \$6,504,000; office of the Ethics Commissioner, \$161,000; office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner, \$1,153,000; office of the Child and Youth Advocate, \$2,571,000; office of the Public Interest Commissioner, \$192,000; office of the Election Commissioner, \$396,000.

Advanced Education: expense, \$469,320,000; capital investment, \$106,400,000; financial transactions, \$80,750,000.

Agriculture and Forestry: expense, \$318,625,000; capital investment, \$2,458,000; financial transactions, \$219,000.

Children's Services: expense, \$241,208,000.

Community and Social Services: expense, \$654,814,000; capital investment, \$91,000.

Culture and Tourism: expense, \$116,993,000; capital investment, \$340,000; financial transactions, \$152,000.

Economic Development and Trade: expense, \$59,453,000; capital investment, \$436,000.

Education: expense, \$786,700,000; capital investment, \$12,100,000; financial transactions, \$2,853,000.

Energy: expense, \$43,759,000; capital investment, \$150,000; financial transactions, \$11,200,000.

Environment and Parks: expense, \$143,959,000; capital investment, \$15,622,000.

Executive Council: expense, \$3,113,000.

Health: expense, \$3,745,994,000; capital investment, \$31,972,000; financial transactions, \$12,392,000.

Indigenous Relations: expense, \$40,600,000; capital investment, \$4,000.

Infrastructure: expense, \$110,000,000; capital investment, \$185,000,000; financial transactions, \$6,750,000.

Justice and Solicitor General: expense, \$286,439,000; capital investment, \$2,742,000.

Labour: expense, \$38,415,000; capital investment, \$317,000.

Municipal Affairs: expense, \$271,477,000; capital investment, \$1,143,000; financial transactions, \$24,815,000.

Seniors and Housing: expense, \$71,422,000; financial transactions, \$2,450,000.

Service Alberta: expense, \$78,500,000; capital investment, \$16,900,000; financial transactions, \$1,700,000.

Status of Women: expense, \$1,140,000; capital investment, \$8,000.

Transportation: expense, \$201,821,000; capital investment, \$183,181,000; financial transactions, \$16,326,000.

Treasury Board and Finance: expense, \$33,726,000; capital investment, \$380,000; financial transactions, \$604,000; and transfer from the lottery fund, \$239,907,000.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Does the Assembly concur in the report? Say aye.

**Hon. Members:** Aye.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Opposed? So ordered.

I wish to advise the Assembly that according to Standing Order 61(3) upon the Assembly concurring in the report by the Committee of Supply, the Assembly will immediately revert to Introduction of Bills for introduction of the appropriation bill.

The hon. Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board.

## Introduction of Bills

(reversion)

### Bill 3

#### Appropriation (Interim Supply) Act, 2018

**Mr. Ceci:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I request leave to introduce Bill 3, the Appropriation (Interim Supply) Act, 2018. This being a money bill, Her Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor has been informed of the contents of this bill and recommends the same to this Assembly.

[Motion carried; Bill 3 read a first time]

## Government Bills and Orders

### Second Reading

#### Bill 1

#### Energy Diversification Act

[Adjourned debate March 13: Mr. Coolahan]

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. Member for Calgary-Klein. You still have time left.

**Mr. Coolahan:** I will cede my time to my counterpart. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Any other members wishing to speak to the bill? The hon. Member for Edmonton-Manning.

**Ms Sweet:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise in this House to speak to Bill 1, the Energy Diversification Act. My colleague from Calgary-Klein spoke about the vision behind Bill 1. That vision is to diversify our energy industry as part of a diverse and growing economy, to provide good jobs for people and families, growing industries for our communities, and exciting new projects for export.

3:30

I will add to his overview by pointing out that Bill 1 acts directly on the recommendations from Alberta's Energy Diversification Advisory Committee. Our Premier appointed the committee because even after decades of development the people of this province are still not getting full value for our energy resources. The advisory committee brought together leaders from industry, training, labour, and indigenous business. Their recommendations are based on in-depth consultation with both industry and nonindustry interests. Bill 1 is the first step in acting on visions for our economy outlined in that report.

My colleague from Calgary-Klein already explained how Bill 1 will extend and expand the petrochemicals diversification program. I will look at other components of Bill 1; that is, partial bitumen upgrading. As components go, it's a huge one. The topic is already familiar to this House. Late last month our Premier hosted a news conference to thank the Energy Diversification Advisory Committee for its work and at the same time announced support for the full-scale commercialization of partial bitumen upgrading technology in Alberta. That support could reach up to a billion dollars in investment over the next eight years. Bill 1 creates a mechanism to make good on that commitment. Bill 1 provides the authority to create a new Alberta program to enable large-scale partial bitumen upgrading technologies by lowering the risk associated with their commercialization.

What is partial bitumen upgrading? Bitumen is thick, also solid. It needs to be diluted before it can move through a pipeline. Partial bitumen upgrading is an innovative process that reduces the thickness of oil sands bitumen so that it can flow through pipelines more easily and effectively without having to be diluted. That saves on the cost of the diluent. Because the bitumen won't need to be diluted, partial upgrading will allow more bitumen to move through the existing and future pipelines. This means we can get greater use of the safest, most efficient, and greenest way to transport our bitumen.

Another thing. Bitumen that goes to market without upgrading or refining faces significant discounts because of the higher processing costs at the other end. Partial upgrading will improve the quality of the product, and that will increase the number of refineries that are able to process it economically. So partial upgrading will help to reduce the oil price differential that is costing us billions of dollars every single year, and it will create a much bigger market for our product.

There will also be a cost to kick-start partial bitumen upgrading. The \$1 billion that was talked about is what's likely to be needed to bring the five commercial-scale projects into production. Bill 1 authorizes that investment in a variety of ways, including grants, loan guarantees, royalty credits, and equity ownership. That support is expected to leverage about \$5 billion in private capital

investments. In turn, those projects are expected to create about 4,500 direct jobs per year. Also, hundreds of millions of dollars will come back to the government as revenue.

Let me say that those jobs and those services make such a difference in people's lives. In my work as the MLA for Edmonton-Manning I've knocked on thousands of doors and met with hundreds of families. Many of my constituents are still looking for work or working more than one low-paying job to make ends meet, and even those who have a job are worried about what happens if there's another hiccup in the price of oil. They're tired of the boom-and-bust roller coaster, Madam Speaker. They're tired of waiting for the other shoe to drop. They want stability. They want certainty. In short, they want an economic recovery that is built to last. So, to me, any endeavour that creates jobs and generates revenue is about much more than statistics. It is about how people live, support their families, and make their lives better. When we say that the partial bitumen upgrading will help Albertans get better value for their oil sands resources, I see the measure of that value in the prosperity of our communities and in good jobs and services for families.

In short, the provision under Bill 1 for partial bitumen upgrading will attract billions in investment and create thousands of Alberta jobs. The bill will make the oil sands even more competitive by reducing costs, increasing pipeline capacity, and creating new market opportunities. This bill will unlock the full potential of the oil sands to contribute to Alberta's economy and quality of life. I think those are very good reasons to support Bill 1, and I urge my colleagues in this Assembly to do the same.

Thank you.

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

**Mr. Panda:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise to speak to Bill 1, the Energy Diversification Act, put forward by the hon. Minister of Energy. There is a lot going on in this bill, yet there is also a whole lot of nothing. Almost everything in this Bill 1 can be achieved already through other statutes and the minister's authority vested in the Government Organization Act.

The real substance of Bill 1 is not in the bill, but it's out there in the trio of press releases from Alberta Energy over the past two weeks and the report from the Energy Diversification Advisory Committee, a report called the EDAC report. Bill 1 is a nice piece of window dressing, and it gets everyone excited that the NDP is going to put Albertans back to work after three years of them being in office. The prize is beautiful, and, yes, Alberta has very cheap feedstock to supply diversification of the petrochemical industry, but Alberta faces a 10 to 20 per cent premium on capital. It's expensive to build here, and the EDAC report does say so.

I see that the minister is announcing programs offering up to \$800 million in loan guarantees for partial upgrading, which is an experimental technology. I see another \$500 million in loan guarantees for straddle plants to collect the ethane needed for the petrochemical plants. Instead of offering the money, the minister could have ordered the industry to do the ethane extraction without compensation, just as Trudeau is doing with the methane leak regulations. With these announcements I start asking myself: if the government needs to cosign the loans, has the market already spoken and said no to Alberta?

Madam Speaker, let's review the litany of activities the NDP government has done to scare away capital and shake investor confidence in Alberta. I just want to talk about how we got here. First, we had the royalty review, done at the start of the downturn, encouraging capital flight and spooking the oil and gas industry. Despite the downturn, the royalty review did much to convince corporate Calgary to hold on to their capital for another year. And

when the results of the review were released and we found out that all was well, just as the Official Opposition had said before, and only a few tweaks around the fringes would be done, there was a huge sigh of relief from the industry, but there was also anger that the NDP had contributed to spiking a construction and drilling season.

Then we had Bill 2, An Act to Restore Fairness to Public Revenue. This is where the Minister of Finance raised corporate income taxes from 10 per cent to 12 per cent and personal income taxes went on a tiered system and went up for many people. Tell me: who wants to invest where the taxes just got higher?

Next was the infamous Bill 6, the Enhanced Protection for Farm and Ranch Workers Act, igniting a rural revolt against this NDP government. Bill 6 would make farming and ranching more expensive, attacking the family farmers and ranchers and pitting the Hutterian Brethren against those who choose not to live in a religious community. People had to give up their private, superior insurance for farm workers in order to take on the more expensive, with less benefits, WCB's. Who wants to invest in agriculture and start a farm if the government treats you this way?

Somewhere in there, the NDP raised the carbon tax and started the coal phase-out, ignoring the advice from the public service and triggering the mass dump of the power purchase agreements, PPAs. Who wants to be held to a contract where you lose money? Not a single businessperson. Ask one of my constituents who's a business owner. He and his wife are business owners. They came here to hear the debate on Bill 1. No one in business wants to lose money, but somehow in NDP land it's okay to lose money supplying electricity for the masses.

3:40

This one act alone is costing the taxpayers hundreds of millions if not billions of dollars in order to backstop the purchasing pool. It's crazy, Madam Speaker. The NDP come to the table filled with good intentions, trying to drive the power prices lower only to find out that the prices can't go lower because the stuff costs money. So they saddled the taxpayers with the bill and tried to hide the misdeeds from the electricity bills as long as possible.

We could talk about Bill 20 now, Madam Speaker, the Climate Leadership Implementation Act, but I think the Auditor General's report from February 22, 2018, shows just what kind of a boondoggle this slush fund of spending on all things green really is. The only good thing to come out of this is the funding for the green line in Calgary, which the city of Calgary overpromised and underdelivered by only building half the distance but at the full cost of the entire line.

How else has the market said no to Alberta, Madam Speaker? Let's invite radical Tzeponah Berman and Karen Mahon to mess around with the oil sands industry. That was all about Bill 25, the Oil Sands Emissions Limit Act. In comes the 100-megatonne cap on oil sands production, and exactly as the Official Opposition predicted would happen, the exodus from the industry was on. The multinationals left. Companies like Shell, Statoil, ConocoPhillips, Chevron, Total, Murphy, Marathon all left, and we ended up consolidating the industry under CNRL, Suncor, and Cenovus.

The NDP saint, Tommy Douglas, would be proud of our Premier for kicking the multinationals out and making the Athabasca oil sands all Canadian. That's what he wanted, and he said so in a speech from the late 1970s. But the markets spoke. The consolidation of the oil sands meant layoffs, and downtown Calgary was decimated, with office vacancy rates soaring over 30 per cent in some of the most prime real estate anywhere in the country.

But the NDP wasn't done yet. They brought in Bill 27, the Renewable Electricity Act, and Bill 34, the Electric Utilities

Amendment Act, 2016. Both bills did a lot to mess up our electricity system in order to force added renewable electricity onto the province. We have over 16,000 megawatts of installed generating capacity in Alberta, and we are now using roughly 10,000 megawatts. Why do we need more? The NDP set a target of 30 per cent renewables, and 30 per cent renewables makes the electrical grid unstable. We can't guarantee the electricity because the grid would be unstable. But you know what, Madam Speaker? Saint David Suzuki would be very proud of this NDP's actions.

There was no protection for the landowners in bills 27 or 34. If a wind farm wanted to set up and got landowner permission and then went bankrupt, the landowner is left to clean all that steel and concrete. That's bad, Madam Speaker. Not only that, Bill 27 will force the construction of new electrical transmission lines all over Alberta to collect all that wind- and solar-generated electricity. The cost of those transmission lines will be paid by the ratepayers and guarantee the transmission line company a 9 per cent rate of return per annum. No wonder Warren Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway bought AltaLink. The law as written is a licence to print money.

Madam Speaker, the NDP knows how to send market signals. Yes, indeed, they know: "Come and invest here. Look, we have the capital investment tax credit and the Alberta investment tax credit. If you fill out all the paperwork and navigate the red tape on a first-come, first-served basis, you might get a tax credit, but we won't tell the members of this Assembly, the elected officials in this House, who is getting the tax credits in budget estimates." I asked those questions, Madam Speaker, and the NDP government said that, no, they can't give me that information. Instead, the NDP will have a press release and a photo op for the Minister of Economic Development and Trade with the lucky recipients of our tax credits. They won't tell the members of this Assembly because they are not allowed to know who gets the free money. So there you go. A litany of market signals that the NDP has sent to the whole world, and the market's response has been to bypass Alberta.

Now we have Bill 1 here, that is essentially saying to the market: "Please, please come back. We have the grants and loans and handouts for you to show that we are not all that bad." We pray that those grants and loans and guarantees are enough to cover the existing reality of the high capital costs, high labour costs, and lower productivity in the winter. We hope it is enough to cover the bad NDP boondoggle policies that chased the investors away from the market in the first place.

Bill 1 may be a charm offensive, but we can do better, Madam Speaker, and we will do better. We'll try and make Bill 1 better while we wait for a change in government.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Questions or comments under Standing Order 29(2)(a)? The hon. Member for Calgary-Klein.

**Mr. Coolahan:** Well, thank you, Madam Speaker. Just a quick question and an observation. The Member for Calgary-Foothills talks a lot about the rear view of what's been happening, and we're trying to move forward with this bill. Inter Pipeline and the chemistry association during that announcement certainly didn't feel like looking back. They wanted to move forward. I would just like to ask the member under 29(2)(a) what his plans would be for diversifying our economy.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. member.

**Mr. Panda:** Thank you, Madam Speaker, and thank you to the Member for Calgary-Klein for asking me that question. Yes, we did meet with those stakeholders, the Chemistry Industry Association

and others, who have told us – and I'm guessing they told NDP members exactly the same thing, too. I asked them: "Hey, you're coming and telling us all these things. Have you told the government also the same thing?" Every one of the stakeholders I met: yes. But the government chose not to listen or not to act on their suggestions.

What they asked, Madam Speaker, was to look at the big picture, the big picture being that Alberta is the third-largest province in petroleum resources. They say that we have to diversify the economy. We get that. Alberta has been on diversification because agriculture and forestry and tourism are all contributing to our GDP. At the same time, the energy sector, which has been the bread and butter of not only Alberta but the whole of Canada, needs to be built on its strengths, not to be undermined. That's what this government did. Ever since they came into power, that's what they did. That's why all those multinationals left. If the member heard me saying . . . [interjections] It does.

Also, the Finance minister, who is actually heckling me, yesterday at about 11:30 a.m., if you look at the Blues, instead of asking questions of this side of the House, was answering, saying: oh, in 2015 we got the mandate; we got 54 MLAs, so we got a licence to do whatever we want. If that is the mandate he's taken ever since – there were three by-elections. He knows the results. I don't want to go into that. There are two more by-elections coming very soon. If Albertans are giving them the mandate, we will see what mandate they'll get. If they want to run on their record . . . [interjection] At least, they should start listening to Albertans now.

3:50

What the industry stakeholders were saying is to look at the big picture, that we are sitting on \$11 trillion of resources. Let's leverage that for the benefit of all Canadians. Because of your government policies, they are chasing the investments away. That's the big picture. If all those multinationals wouldn't have left, we would still have job opportunities for Albertans here. If we had those hundred thousand Albertans working here, they would have paid taxes. Then we wouldn't have the deficit in the budget because we would have gotten an additional \$5 billion in revenue.

Instead of doing that, they're doing these Band-Aids of giving grants and loan guarantees and all these unsustainable policies. They're not admitting the flaws in their policies and not addressing them. They still have another 14 months to go. They have time on their side. If they really want to listen to the stakeholders and Albertans and the voters in the last three by-elections and the upcoming two by-elections, if they get the message, then they will act in the interest of Alberta and Canada. But if that is not their motto, if they're just there one time, if that's their one-time life opportunity won and done, then they'll take us on this path, which is what my stakeholders were telling me, including the Chemistry Industry Association.

If that is the path they're on, God help Alberta. But we won't let them do it.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Transportation.

**Mr. Mason:** We're not doing 29(2)(a)?

**The Deputy Speaker:** We have no more time for 29(2)(a). That time has expired.

**Mr. Mason:** Oh. Thanks very much.

Well, Madam Speaker, I understand that there's some bad weather in Calgary and parts of southern Alberta, and a number of



MLAs on both sides of the House have requested an early adjournment to allow them to get home for the weekend. Therefore, I move that we adjourn until 1:30 Monday afternoon.

I would like to wish all members of the House a safe journey this weekend.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Hon. minister, before we can do that, we have to adjourn debate on the bill that's under discussion.

**Mr. Mason:** Oh. I thought I had said that. First, I'll move that we adjourn debate on the bill.

[Motion to adjourn debate carried]

**The Deputy Speaker:** And on the motion by the Government House Leader to adjourn.

[Motion carried; the Assembly adjourned at 3:53 p.m.]



## **Bill Status Report for the 29th Legislature - 4th Session (2018)**

**Activity to Thursday, March 15, 2018**

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

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

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

### **Bill 1 — Energy Diversification Act (McCuaig-Boyd)**

First Reading — 6 (*Mar. 8, 2018 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 50-51 (*Mar. 13, 2018 morn.*), 184-87 (*Mar. 15, 2018 aft., adjourned*)

### **Bill 2 — Growth and Diversification Act (\$) (Bilous)**

First Reading — 118 (*Mar. 14, 2018 aft., passed*)

### **Bill 3 — Appropriation (Interim Supply) Act, 2018 (\$) (Ceci)**

First Reading — 184 (*Mar. 15, 2018 aft., passed*)

### **Bill 4 — Appropriation (Supplementary Supply) Act, 2018 (\$) (Ceci)**

First Reading — 165 (*Mar. 15, 2018 morn., passed*)

### **Bill 201 — Employment Standards (Firefighter Leave) Amendment Act, 2018 (W. Anderson)**

First Reading — 118 (*Mar. 14, 2018 aft., passed*)

### **Bill 202 — Alberta Taxpayer Protection (Carbon Tax Referendum) Amendment Act, 2018 (Kenney)**

First Reading — 179 (*Mar. 15, 2018 aft., passed*)







## Table of Contents

Statement by the Speaker	
Mr. Speaker's MLA for a Day Program .....	167
Introduction of Visitors .....	167
Introduction of Guests .....	167
Members' Statements	
Sana Ayesha Ghani.....	168
Energy Efficiency Programs in Rural Alberta .....	169
Alberta Party.....	169
WinSport .....	178
Gay-straight Alliance in Spruce Grove.....	178
Chronic Wasting Disease.....	178
Oral Question Period	
Carbon Levy and Pipeline Approvals .....	169
Federal Energy Policies .....	170
Rural Crime Prevention .....	171, 173
Education Concerns.....	171
Sexual Assault and Harassment Services .....	172
Abortion Rights and Freedom of Speech and Assembly .....	172
Carbon Levy .....	173
School Busing Regulations.....	175
Indian Tariffs on Pulse Crops.....	175
Carbon Levy and Health Care Costs.....	176
Ministers' AAMDC and AUMA Convention Participation .....	176
Agricultural Society Funding .....	177
Support for Vulnerable Albertans.....	177
Introduction of Bills	
Bill 202 Alberta Taxpayer Protection (Carbon Tax Referendum) Amendment Act, 2018.....	179
Bill 3 Appropriation (Interim Supply) Act, 2018 .....	184
Tabling Returns and Reports .....	179
Orders of the Day .....	180
Committee of Supply	
Interim Supply Estimates 2018-19	
General Revenue Fund and Lottery Fund.....	180
Vote on Interim Supply Estimates 2018-19	
General Revenue Fund and Lottery Fund.....	181
Government Bills and Orders	
Second Reading	
Bill 1 Energy Diversification Act.....	184

*Alberta Hansard* is available online at [www.assembly.ab.ca](http://www.assembly.ab.ca)

For inquiries contact:

Managing Editor

*Alberta Hansard*

3rd Floor, 9820 – 107 St

EDMONTON, AB T5K 1E7

Telephone: 780.427.1875