



Province of Alberta

The 30th Legislature
Third Session

Alberta Hansard

Thursday afternoon, March 24, 2022

Day 15

The Honourable Nathan M. Cooper, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of Alberta The 30th Legislature

Third Session

Cooper, Hon. Nathan M., Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills (UC), Speaker
Pitt, Angela D., Airdrie-East (UC), Deputy Speaker and Chair of Committees
Milliken, Nicholas, Calgary-Currie (UC), Deputy Chair of Committees

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Allard, Tracy L., Grande Prairie (UC)
Amery, Mickey K., Calgary-Cross (UC)
Armstrong-Homeniuk, Jackie,
Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville (UC)
Barnes, Drew, Cypress-Medicine Hat (Ind)
Bilous, Deron, Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview (NDP)
Carson, Jonathon, Edmonton-West Henday (NDP)
Ceci, Joe, Calgary-Buffalo (NDP)
Copping, Hon. Jason C., Calgary-Varsity (UC)
Dach, Lorne, Edmonton-McClung (NDP)
Dang, Thomas, Edmonton-South (Ind)
Deol, Jasvir, Edmonton-Meadows (NDP)
Dreeshen, Devin, Innisfail-Sylvan Lake (UC)
Eggen, David, Edmonton-North West (NDP),
Official Opposition Whip
Ellis, Hon. Mike, Calgary-West (UC)
Feehan, Richard, Edmonton-Rutherford (NDP)
Fir, Hon. Tanya, Calgary-Peigan (UC)
Frey, Michaela L., Brooks-Medicine Hat (UC)
Ganley, Kathleen T., Calgary-Mountain View (NDP)
Getson, Shane C., Lac Ste. Anne-Parkland (UC)
Glubish, Hon. Nate, Strathcona-Sherwood Park (UC)
Goehring, Nicole, Edmonton-Castle Downs (NDP)
Gotfried, Richard, Calgary-Fish Creek (UC)
Gray, Christina, Edmonton-Mill Woods (NDP),
Official Opposition House Leader
Guthrie, Peter F., Airdrie-Cochrane (UC)
Hanson, David B., Bonnyville-Cold Lake-St. Paul (UC)
Hoffman, Sarah, Edmonton-Glenora (NDP)
Horner, Hon. Nate S., Drumheller-Stettler (UC)
Hunter, Grant R., Taber-Warner (UC)
Irwin, Janis, Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood (NDP),
Official Opposition Deputy Whip
Issik, Hon. Whitney, Calgary-Glenmore (UC),
Government Whip
Jones, Matt, Calgary-South East (UC)
Kenney, Hon. Jason, PC, Calgary-Lougheed (UC),
Premier
LaGrange, Hon. Adriana, Red Deer-North (UC)
Loewen, Todd, Central Peace-Notley (Ind)
Long, Martin M., West Yellowhead (UC)
Lovely, Jacqueline, Camrose (UC)
Loyola, Rod, Edmonton-Ellerslie (NDP)
Luan, Hon. Jason, Calgary-Foothills (UC)
Madu, Hon. Kaycee, QC, Edmonton-South West (UC)
McIver, Hon. Ric, Calgary-Hays (UC)
Nally, Hon. Dale, Morinville-St. Albert (UC)

Neudorf, Nathan T., Lethbridge-East (UC)
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Nielsen, Christian E., Edmonton-Decore (NDP)
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Panda, Hon. Prasad, Calgary-Edgemont (UC)
Phillips, Shannon, Lethbridge-West (NDP)
Pon, Hon. Josephine, Calgary-Beddington (UC)
Rehn, Pat, Lesser Slave Lake (UC)
Reid, Roger W., Livingstone-Macleod (UC)
Renaud, Marie F., St. Albert (NDP)
Rosin, Miranda D., Banff-Kananaskis (UC)
Rowswell, Garth, Vermilion-Lloydminster-Wainwright (UC)
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Deputy Government Whip
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Official Opposition Deputy House Leader
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Sawhney, Hon. Rajan, Calgary-North East (UC)
Schmidt, Marlin, Edmonton-Gold Bar (NDP)
Schow, Joseph R., Cardston-Siksika (UC),
Deputy Government House Leader
Schulz, Hon. Rebecca, Calgary-Shaw (UC)
Schweitzer, Hon. Doug, QC, Calgary-Elbow (UC)
Shandro, Hon. Tyler, QC, Calgary-Acadia (UC)
Shepherd, David, Edmonton-City Centre (NDP)
Sigurdson, Lori, Edmonton-Riverview (NDP)
Sigurdson, R.J., Highwood (UC)
Singh, Peter, Calgary-East (UC)
Smith, Mark W., Drayton Valley-Devon (UC)
Stephan, Jason, Red Deer-South (UC)
Sweet, Heather, Edmonton-Manning (NDP)
Toews, Hon. Travis, Grande Prairie-Wapiti (UC)
Toor, Devinder, Calgary-Falconridge (UC)
Turton, Searle, Spruce Grove-Stony Plain (UC)
van Dijken, Glenn, Athabasca-Barrhead-Westlock (UC)
Walker, Jordan, Sherwood Park (UC)
Williams, Dan D.A., Peace River (UC)
Wilson, Hon. Rick D., Maskwacis-Wetaskiwin (UC)
Yao, Tany, Fort McMurray-Wood Buffalo (UC)
Yaseen, Hon. Muhammad, Calgary-North (UC)
Vacant, Fort McMurray-Lac La Biche

Party standings:

United Conservative: 60

New Democrat: 23

Independent: 3

Vacant: 1

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Teri Cherkewich, Law Clerk
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Philip Massolin, Clerk Assistant and
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Alberta Hansard

Chris Caughell, Sergeant-at-Arms
Tom Bell, Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms
Paul Link, Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms
Terry Langley, Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms

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Jason Copping	Minister of Health
Mike Ellis	Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions
Tanya Fir	Associate Minister of Red Tape Reduction
Nate Glubish	Minister of Service Alberta
Nate Horner	Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Economic Development
Whitney Issik	Associate Minister of Status of Women
Adriana LaGrange	Minister of Education
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Kaycee Madu	Minister of Labour and Immigration
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Dale Nally	Associate Minister of Natural Gas and Electricity
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Ronald Orr	Minister of Culture
Prasad Panda	Minister of Infrastructure
Josephine Pon	Minister of Seniors and Housing
Sonya Savage	Minister of Energy
Rajan Sawhney	Minister of Transportation
Rebecca Schulz	Minister of Children's Services
Doug Schweitzer	Minister of Jobs, Economy and Innovation
Tyler Shandro	Minister of Justice and Solicitor General
Travis Toews	President of Treasury Board and Minister of Finance
Rick Wilson	Minister of Indigenous Relations
Muhammad Yaseen	Associate Minister of Immigration and Multiculturalism

Parliamentary Secretaries

Martin Long	Parliamentary Secretary for Small Business and Tourism
Jacqueline Lovely	Parliamentary Secretary to the Associate Minister of Status of Women
Nathan Neudorf	Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Parks for Water Stewardship
Jeremy Nixon	Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Community and Social Services for Civil Society
Searle Turton	Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Energy
Dan Williams	Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Culture and for la Francophonie

STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Standing Committee on the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund

Chair: Mr. Rowswell
Deputy Chair: Mr. Jones

Allard
Eggen
Gray
Hunter
Phillips
Rehn
Singh

Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future

Chair: Mr. Neudorf
Deputy Chair: Ms Goehring

Armstrong-Homeniuk
Barnes
Bilous
Frey
Irwin
Rosin
Rowswell
Sweet
van Dijken
Walker

Select Special Committee to Examine Safe Supply

Chair: Mr. Jeremy Nixon
Deputy Chair: Mrs. Allard

Amery
Frey
Milliken
Rosin
Stephan
Yao
Vacant
Vacant
Vacant
Vacant

Standing Committee on Families and Communities

Chair: Ms Lovely
Deputy Chair: Ms Sigurdson

Amery
Carson
Dang
Frey
Gottfried
Hunter
Loewen
Reid
Sabir
Smith

Select Special Information and Privacy Commissioner Search Committee

Chair: Mr. Walker
Deputy Chair: Mr. Turton

Allard
Carson
Dreeshen
Ganley
Long
Sabir
Stephan

Standing Committee on Legislative Offices

Chair: Mr. Rutherford
Deputy Chair: Mr. Milliken

Allard
Ceci
Dach
Long
Loyola
Rosin
Shepherd
Smith
van Dijken

Special Standing Committee on Members' Services

Chair: Mr. Cooper
Deputy Chair: Mr. Schow

Allard
Deol
Goehring
Gray
Long
Neudorf
Sabir
Sigurdson, R.J.
Williams

Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills

Chair: Mr. Rutherford
Deputy Chair: Mr. Jeremy Nixon

Amery
Frey
Irwin
Long
Nielsen
Rehn
Rosin
Sigurdson, L.
Sweet

Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections, Standing Orders and Printing

Chair: Mr. Smith
Deputy Chair: Mr. Reid

Aheer
Armstrong-Homeniuk
Deol
Ganley
Gottfried
Loyola
Neudorf
Renaud
Stephan
Williams

Standing Committee on Public Accounts

Chair: Ms Phillips
Deputy Chair: Mr. Reid

Armstrong-Homeniuk
Lovely
Pancholi
Renaud
Rowswell
Schmidt
Singh
Toor
Turton
Walker

Select Special Committee on Real Property Rights

Chair: Mr. Sigurdson
Deputy Chair: Mr. Rutherford

Frey
Ganley
Hanson
Milliken
Nielsen
Rowswell
Schmidt
Sweet
van Dijken
Yao

Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship

Chair: Mr. Hanson
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Dach
Feehan
Ganley
Getson
Guthrie
Lovely
Rehn
Singh
Turton
Yao

Legislative Assembly of Alberta

1:30 p.m.

Thursday, March 24, 2022

[The Speaker in the chair]

Prayers

The Speaker: Lord, the God of righteousness and truth, grant to our Queen and to her government, to Members of the Legislative Assembly, and to all in positions of responsibility the guidance of Your spirit. May they never lead the province wrongly through love of power, desire to please, or unworthy ideas but, laying aside all private interest and prejudice, keep in mind their responsibility to seek to improve the condition of all.

Hon. members, we will now be led in the singing of *God Save the Queen* by Ms Brooklyn Elhard. I would invite you to join in the language of your choice.

Hon. Members:

God save our gracious Queen,
Long live our noble Queen,
God save the Queen!
Send her victorious,
Happy and glorious,
Long to reign over us,
God save the Queen!

The Speaker: Hon. members, please be seated.

Introduction of Visitors

The Speaker: Hon. members, this morning I had the privilege to meet with a very special guest who's now joining us in the Speaker's gallery. Please welcome the ambassador of the Kingdom of Denmark, Her Excellency Hanne Fugl Eskjaer. [Standing ovation] Her Excellency is joined by Minister-Counsellor Louise de Brass; honorary consul general of Denmark, Rob Seidel; and his assistant Alexandra Hryciw. Thank you so much for joining us.

Introduction of Guests

The Speaker: Members, joining us in the galleries today we have a number of guests. A guest of the Member for Calgary-Peigan, Jackie Flegel. Also joining us in the gallery there are a number of United Conservative Party constituency association presidents. Please rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

Members' Statements

Premier's Leadership

Mr. Eggen: Mr. Speaker, the UCP is the most unethical, undemocratic, untrustworthy government Alberta has ever seen, and the legacy starts at the top. Alberta has a Premier who claims to support the rule of law, but his actions show that he does not consider that the rule of law applies to himself. The Premier tried to brush off allegations that his campaign ran a false, sham campaign designed solely to attack his opponents in the leadership race – a sham campaign designed to attack the Premier's opponents, Albertans know exactly – funded by an illegal, secret \$60,000 corporate donation. Despite his protests and claims that these allegations were merely gossip, it's now a hundred per cent clear that they were true. His staff wrote speeches, designed graphics, planned when the campaign would end, and even wrote the

concession speech for a campaign that was a sham from top to bottom, and it reached all the way to the top. The Premier even provided the whisky for the planning meeting.

Hundreds of thousands of dollars in fines were issued by the Election Commissioner, who then was subsequently fired by this government, with every member of the UCP applauding this action. The Premier dismissed allegations that voter fraud occurred in the leadership that elected him, but only yesterday the RCMP confirmed that an open, active investigation into voter irregularities is still ongoing.

And just like the Election Commissioner, the Premier now tries to find reasons to fire the RCMP because, apparently, in UCP land the only firing offence is for trying to hold the Premier to account, this Premier who changes the rules to suit him, doesn't follow the rules he tells others to follow, shuts down debate when he doesn't like the topic, and then hides when things get tough and much, much more. There is nothing this Premier will not do to stay in power. But Albertans see him and his actions for what they are, and in 2023 he will face the legacy of his legacy of corruption.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-Cross.

Traffic Offence Administration

Mr. Amery: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Now that Alberta is getting back to normal after the COVID-19 pandemic – and on average we have approximately 2 million traffic safety ticket challenges each year that are filed within the court system. This amounts to approximately 400,000 people entering Alberta's courthouses each year to deal with traffic offences. Now they can begin doing that.

This large volume of ticket challenges prompted Alberta's government to develop an administrative system for handling the resolution of traffic offences. Phase 1 implemented an adjudication process for impaired driving offences and became operational in the fall of 2020. Phase 1 has proven to be highly successful and has reduced court pressures over the past year; 89 per cent of all impaired driving matters have been diverted from the courts to SafeRoads Alberta, and enforcement has increased by over 46 per cent. Mr. Speaker, over 1,700 matters of impaired driving were resolved in just 30 days. Phase 1, or administrative judgment of impaired driving charges, will remain in place.

Mr. Speaker, phase 2 of the justice transformation initiative was designed to address violations of the Traffic Safety Act other than impaired driving. In late January we paused the implementation of phase 2 so that we could take a closer look at the program and engage with Albertans all across the province. After careful consideration and consultation with Albertans this government has decided not to proceed with phase 2. Albertans will continue to enjoy their right to due process, procedural fairness, and the presumption of innocence until proven guilty, as they've always known it to be.

We will continue to consult with Albertans to find new and innovative ways to decrease backlogs within the Alberta justice system. By doing so, we can save tax dollars and time when interacting with the justice system. Mr. Speaker, when Albertans speak, this government listens.

Thank you.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Peace River is next.

Member for Edmonton-South

Mr. Williams: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. The poor Member for Edmonton-South has been abandoned by his party and taken a

hit for the NDP caucus. After using backdoor hacking techniques to seek out the vaccine status of a government MLA and expose the status of a private Alberta citizen, he's tried to convince the province that he did it with justification. But let me tell you that there is no justification. There is no heroism in using shady tactics for political gain. In fact, Albertans have said the opposite. Unfortunately, the remainder of his political career will be spent at home, alone as an independent, left out to dry by his own leader. The members opposite have watched one of their own members contort himself in an attempt to explain how hacking private health care information was not only legal but an obligation. He has tried to save what's left of his time in Alberta politics, and his fellow NDP members are happy to show him the door so long as none of them go with him.

The member's vaccine obsession now makes sense, and Albertans have woken up. They see right through his explanation after he spent his Tuesday morning frantically trying to defend his position in exposing the same security flaws that he used to obtain vaccine records of private individuals. Mr. Speaker, those that elected him to this position scratch their heads, wondering: is this what they asked out of their elected representative? Is this the kind of representation they want for their family? Is this how they expect to see the cost of living go down in the province of Alberta? Not at all. They understand.

And his claims that it was ethical hacking fit about as well as the glove on O.J. Simpson's hand. Impersonating individuals and hacking to obtain personal health data is illegal. Full stop. The Member for Edmonton-South released a paper entitled *How I Did It – not If I Did It, not How I Would Have Done It* – where he admits to hacking and impersonating the individuals to obtain private personal health data. Sadly, in this province, Mr. Speaker, a lot of people seem to ignore this fact because they like his politics and the colour of his jersey. That is sad.

We need to understand why the Leader of the Opposition is doing the same. We have to know what she knew and when she knew it.

1:40

Budget 2022 Vote

Mr. Carson: Mr. Speaker, I'm honoured to be an MLA. We have responsibilities and privileges as members that only 87 people in this province get to have. We have a duty to support our constituents and bring their concerns to this House. We have the ability to vote on issues that matter to them in this Legislature, the ability to vote in ways they understand and can support.

A perfect example: today there will be a vote on the budget, a budget that doesn't do much to help actual Albertans, a budget that does not support families, which does not secure our economic future, which makes life harder for our most vulnerable and makes life less affordable every single day. You know, a budget is a very interesting thing when it comes to the actual meaning of the vote because every single budget is actually a confidence vote in this House. It is asking each and every one of us: do we support this Premier? Do we feel he deserves to lead this province? I know there are a lot of us in here that don't, and they aren't just on this side of the House.

Don't ever forget that we are all here to represent the voices of all of our constituents. Do your constituents support this Premier? Do the people you talk to back home – your neighbours, your friends, volunteers, and community organizers – feel that this Premier should be allowed to lead this province? By standing and putting your name forward in favour of this vote, you are telling all of those people that you support the leadership as it currently stands.

I'm asking each and every single UCP MLA to think long and hard about why they were elected, about who elected them, and I'm

asking them to vote with their conscience. If you support this confidence vote today, you are supporting the continued leadership of this Premier, so in the future you might as well not even vote in any type of review. Your supporters will know where you stand and how you will vote because you will have just showed them today.

Thank you.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Highwood.

Member for Edmonton South

Mr. Sigurdson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The NDP vax hack scandal has gone from bad to worse. On Tuesday we learned that the disgraced Member for Edmonton-South hacked Alberta's vaccine records system using the identity of a member of this Chamber. That's bad, but what's worse is that he illegally obtained access to the personal health records of at least one private citizen in the process.

We all need to know more about what happened here, like why did he use the birthdate of a member of the government to hack the vaccine system instead of the birthdate of someone in his family or even his own caucus? Has he hacked sensitive government information before? If he thought it were necessary, would he do it again? Why did he think it was his job as a member of the Legislature to hack the private health records of Albertans?

But the biggest question here centres around the NDP leader and her role in this vaccine hacking scandal. Here's something we learned yesterday. In December, when the Edmonton-South MLA's private residence was raided by the RCMP, the NDP leader claimed to have no prior knowledge about this hacking, but this past week our government released an e-mail showing that her senior staff knew about the vax hack back in September. When asked, the NDP leader admitted that she knew the MLA had, quote, found a flaw in September.

This is shocking, Mr. Speaker. For months we listened to the NDP obsessively question government members about their vaccine status. This was all after the Member for Edmonton-South hacked the vaccine record system. Let me be clear. Any NDP member who used the private health records of Albertans to their political advantage in this Chamber must do the right thing and resign. This includes the NDP leader. This scandal has unearthed a shocking disregard for ethics in the opposition benches, and we need to get to the bottom of this scandal. [interjections]

The Speaker: Order. Order.

Budget 2022 and Personal Debt

Ms Sweet: Mr. Speaker, today the Legislature will vote on the UCP government's failed budget, which lacks a clear vision for the future of Alberta. Yesterday I spoke in this Chamber about the most recent MNP report on consumer debt in Alberta. The report was published before this budget, yet the government did nothing to address the real concerns that Albertans are facing. According to the report 50 per cent of Albertans are concerned about their current level of debt, with many only \$200 away from having to use their credit to pay their bills. That was in January.

Since January we have seen this no-help budget introduced, a budget that does nothing to support Albertans struggling with their personal finances. In fact, what this budget does is that it makes it harder for Albertans to pay their bills and put money into their savings – increases in property taxes, increases in insurance, increases in school fees, increases in all fees that make life more expensive – at a time when everything is becoming more expensive. The government could have done more to support the people of this

province. They will talk about their 13-cent rebate on gas, but I clearly heard yesterday that the government . . . [interjections]

Speaker's Ruling Interrupting Members' Statements

The Speaker: Order. Order. Order. The hon. Member for Calgary-Hays knows very well and truly that interrupting a member's statement is wildly unparliamentary, and I would expect better from him.

From the top.

Budget 2022 and Personal Debt (continued)

Ms Sweet: Mr. Speaker, today the Legislature will vote on the UCP government's failed budget, which lacks a clear vision for the future of Alberta. Yesterday I spoke in this Chamber about the most recent MNP report on consumer debt in Alberta. The report was published before this budget, yet the government did nothing to address the real concerns that Albertans are facing. According to the report 50 per cent of Albertans are concerned about their current level of debt, with many living only \$200 away from having to use credit to pay their bills. That was in January.

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The government could have done more to support the people of this province. They'll talk about their 13-cent rebate on gas, but I clearly heard yesterday that this government does not have a guarantee that it's even true. It was just a handshake with gas companies; it's a just-trust-us deal. Well, Albertans don't trust this government, Mr. Speaker, and this is just another false promise to an already financially stressed Alberta. The government says that this budget will create jobs, yet all we've seen are part-time jobs, not long-term, not full-time, not paying-the-bills jobs.

Mr. Speaker, I had hopes, when I saw that oil was going to balance this budget, that the government would set a vision for the Alberta economy and our future, a vision that would help address the economic stressors that many Albertans are facing. I was disappointed. This government did not invest in the people of Alberta. They balanced the budget on high oil, cutting \$2.8 billion in expenses, and increased the cost to Albertans. Even fiscal conservatives agree that a balanced budget isn't enough if the citizens of the province don't have the buying power to get the economy going. It's time this government listens to the people of Alberta.

Federal Liberal-NDP Agreement

Mrs. Allard: Well, there's no sugar-coating it, Mr. Speaker. The NDP-Trudeau alliance that will keep Justin Trudeau in power until 2025 is bad for our economy and bad for our oil and gas sector. Justin Trudeau's hostility towards our energy industry is well known. He's worked to kill pipelines, ban tankers, and impose lofty carbon taxes. Despite these provocations, however, our industry has managed to continue working and providing ethical energy to the free world. But this new unholy alliance between Justin Trudeau and the radical NDP poses a truly existential threat to our largest

industry and the hundreds of thousands of men and women who work in it.

Canadians did not vote for the NDP to have any decision-making powers in their federal government, and had they known, they may have voted entirely differently. The NDP is, after all, the party that passed the Leap Manifesto, a radical doctrine that opposes any new pipelines and includes a demand to, and I quote, leave the oil in the ground. Our industry needs certainty, Mr. Speaker, but the NDP-Trudeau coalition agreement only contains vague promises to, and I quote again, proceed with policies and programs meant to target climate change. Unquote.

Undoubtedly, the NDP has found one of their own in Liberal environment minister Steven Guilbeault, who was an activist for Greenpeace before he was appointed by Justin Trudeau. Guilbeault was once arrested for scaling the CN Tower in Toronto and unfurling a banner calling Canadians – wait for it – climate killers. Undoubtedly, the NDP will work with Guilbeault to shut down pipelines, keep Canadian oil in the ground, and pursue other anti-Alberta policies meant to harm our industry, our working families, and our country, Mr. Speaker.

Now more than ever Alberta needs a strong Conservative government to stand up for our energy and its workers. Our government supports the oil and gas industry, and we are more committed than ever to protecting it from this unholy alliance between the radical NDP and Justin Trudeau, who are bent on killing it. Why, Mr. Speaker? Because on this side of the House we stand up for Alberta.

Oral Question Period

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Glenora has question 1.

Budget 2022

Ms Hoffman: Mr. Speaker, today the House will vote on this Premier's no-help budget, but it hasn't happened yet, so there's still some time. He could stop his billion-dollar tax on inflation, taking more and more money out of Albertans' pockets. He could stop his hike on tuition and school fees. He could put a real cap in on electricity rates and offer a real rebate for natural gas. He could do more than 50 bucks on a \$700 electricity bill. He could actually make a difference. Why doesn't the Premier stop raising costs and put some real relief in this budget for Albertans today?

1:50

The Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board.

Mr. Toews: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. There is real relief in this budget. We call it a job for every Albertan who needs an opportunity. We call it fiscal responsibility so we're not downloading irresponsible decisions on the next generation. There is lots in this budget for Albertans, not only for this generation but for the next as well.

Ms Hoffman: Mr. Speaker, unlike this Premier, Albertans don't cheat or change the rules to get ahead. They work hard, and when times are tough, they expect their government to be there to help them.

Mr. Schow: Point of order.

Ms Hoffman: Families can't make ends meet, people are waiting for their surgeries, parents are fighting this horrible curriculum, yet the Premier is shutting down shop to go campaign for his own job.

To the Premier: you actually have a job to do right now; why won't you do it? Why won't you do anything to make life better for Albertans?

The Speaker: A point of order is noted at 1:51.

Mr. Jason Nixon: Mr. Speaker, we're right back to where we were three years ago, with the NDP focused on the politics of fear and smear. Dare I say that it might be just because their polling numbers keep dropping like a rock? This side of the House is not going to focus on the politics of fear and smear and the high school politics like you see coming from the NDP. We're laser focused on the economy, getting Alberta back to work. Great news: it's working. You know what the NDP is trying to hide? Just shortly, we're about to vote on the first balanced budget in 14 years inside this Chamber.

Ms Hoffman: Mr. Speaker, the Premier's Divided Conservative Party is crumbling all around him. Today at least two MLAs have called for his resignation. At least two. It could be more. I can barely keep track. Let me tell members on that side of the House that they can make a change today. They can vote nonconfidence on this horrible budget and eject the Premier. To the government: will any of them over there show the courage of their Facebook convictions and actually stand up to the current Premier? Now is your chance.

Mr. Jason Nixon: Mr. Speaker, I can guarantee you that any true Conservative MLA in about an hour and a bit is going to stand up and vote for a balanced budget. This side of the House is proud of returning all of the jobs that have been lost under the NDP, getting our economy back on track, getting pipelines built, and moving this province forward. The NDP, though, focuses on the politics of fear and smear. That's exactly what they do every time that they get in trouble in the polls. But don't worry. Through you to Albertans, Mr. Speaker, we're going to make sure they can never get back into power.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Glenora and the second set of questions.

Premier's Leadership

Ms Hoffman: The government is falling apart, Mr. Speaker. No one trusts this Premier or anyone on that front bench at this point. Today the MLA for Red Deer-South wrote to the Premier saying, "Confidence is lost, and for the good of the party, for the province, the Premier should be gracious [and] resign." Can the Premier inform this House how he can still expect Albertans to trust him when it's clear that his own members, his closest allies, are telling him that they've lost confidence in him?

Mr. Jason Nixon: Mr. Speaker, there is a confidence motion that will be before this House today, and I suspect – I don't know for sure what will take place – you're going to see that motion pass and the government stand with our Premier, who's bringing forward balanced budgets, returning jobs inside this province, and taking Alberta on track to lead the country in economic recovery and, most importantly, fixing all of the damage that the NDP did to this province. Again, to Albertans: we promise we're never going to let these guys get back into power.

Ms Hoffman: The Member for Bonnyville-Cold Lake-St. Paul is disgusted with the corruption and the disrespect. The Member for Airdrie-East is shocked that the UCP would be in the middle of an RCMP investigation and change the voting system. I could go on, Mr. Speaker. There is a nonconfidence vote in this Legislature today. I

know that there are members over there who want to vote against this Premier. Will the Government House Leader pledge here and now to let all of his MLAs actually vote with their conscience, or is this another example of a rigged vote by the UCP?

Mr. Jason Nixon: Mr. Speaker, that member, who is a member of a party who has covered up sexual harassment allegations about their own caucus, who had their ethics critic hacking members of this place's personal health care information, that they then covered up for months and hid from Albertans, and who, when they were in power, did not give the documents about the murder of a toddler to homicide detectives, has no business lecturing anybody in this Chamber, and that member should resign if that's how it's going to go.

Mr. Sabir: Point of order.

The Speaker: A point of order is noted at 1:55.

Ms Hoffman: So anyone who was hoping for a free vote, your House leader just said no.

The Member for Airdrie-Cochrane also said today that trust in the Premier has been shattered and that he wants a new leader. The UCP presidents just stood outside of this Legislature and said that they don't trust this Premier to hold a free and fair vote. That's right, Mr. Speaker. Party members, MLAs, volunteers don't trust this Premier to play by the rules. If the Premier will rig a vote among his own members to stay in power, imagine what he'll do to the rest of us.

Mr. Jason Nixon: Mr. Speaker, again you're seeing it happen at the beginning of this Legislature. The NDP, every time that they get themselves into political trouble, go back to the politics of personal fear and smear, the politics of egos, those types of situations. It's because their poll numbers are an absolute disaster. Here is where we are at, though. This government and the members of this government will continue to be focused each and every day on Albertans, and we promise we won't act like the Official Opposition and some members of this Chamber who are focused on their own ego. Instead, we're going to focus on continuing to make sure Alberta is a great success.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-Bhullar-McCall.

2017 UCP Leadership Contest and 2022 Review

Mr. Sabir: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Two years ago this government fired the Election Commissioner investigating the kamikaze scandal, but despite their best efforts the investigation into UCP corruption continues. That commissioner, that this government fired in a brazenly unethical act, laid over \$200,000 in fines with that scandal. Does the Premier regret his attack on the rule of law by firing the commissioner investigating the UCP? Will he reinstate this position now, ahead of the UCP leadership review vote, which seems to be filled by the same scandals?

Mr. Jason Nixon: Mr. Speaker, exactly what I said was going to take place: you're going to continue to see it from the Official Opposition as they become more and more desperate. That is completely and utterly ridiculous what that member just asked inside this Chamber, but through you to him, let's get down to the meat and potatoes of this week. When did he know that the Member for Edmonton-South was hacking members of this Legislature's private information? Did he participate in the cover-up of the NDP over the last several months to hide that from Albertans? Is he one

of the ones that was found to have done sexual harassment in his caucus, that his leader has confirmed they've been covering up?

Mr. Sabir: Point of order.

Mr. Jason Nixon: And, Mr. Speaker, that member hid Serenity's documents from the RCMP. [interjections]

The Speaker: Order. A point of order is noted at 1:58.

Mr. Sabir: Yesterday the RCMP confirmed that there is still an active investigation into voter fraud in the UCP leadership race, an investigation that has one-third of the UCP cabinet members and former top advisers questioned by the RCMP. This Premier's leadership race is being investigated by the RCMP for voter fraud, and he forced through a bill that makes it possible for people to buy memberships for people without their knowledge and consent. Can the Minister of Justice assure Albertans their identities will not be stolen to make votes for the Premier's leadership review?

Mr. Jason Nixon: There's the NDP putting forward false accusations that come from their rag the Broadbent Institute, Mr. Speaker. Here's the real question. What we do know – you want to talk about RCMP investigations? Get this. The NDP ethics critic has confirmed himself, in the document titled How I Did It, that he is under RCMP investigation, and in fact search warrants have been served on his home. To the hon. member, through you to that hon. member, have search warrants been served on his home, and is he part of the hacking of individual medical records?

Mr. Sabir: Transcripts from the office of the Chief Electoral Officer indicate that the Premier was present at a meeting where the kamikaze scandal, financed by a single \$60,000 donation, was planned. The commissioner uncovered a scheme to funnel corporate money into a fake campaign to attack this Premier's opponents. This type of behaviour should not be tolerated in Alberta politics, but this government defends it on a daily basis. Since they are incapable of doing the right thing, will they join me in calling on Elections Alberta to supervise this Premier's leadership review?

2:00

Mr. Jason Nixon: Mr. Speaker, continuing to make up fake allegations inside this Chamber is ridiculous.

Mr. Sabir: Point of order.

Mr. Jason Nixon: I challenge that member to go make those allegations outside this Chamber so that legal action could be taken against them. But here's the real question again, Mr. Speaker. When did the NDP leader know that the Member for Edmonton-South, her ethics critic, was hacking the government, and why did she allow her staff to cover that up? And is that why the Member for Calgary-Buffalo is now running around running for leader ... [interjections]

The Speaker: Order.

Mr. Jason Nixon: And, Mr. Speaker, are the concerns from the Official Opposition leader's cover-up of that hacking scandal why the Member for Calgary-Buffalo is now running for leader across Calgary?

The Speaker: The hon. member ... [interjections] Order.

Electric Utility Rebate and Provincial Fuel Tax Suspension

Ms Sweet: Well, Mr. Speaker, I don't believe I'm actually going to say this. Perhaps for the first time ever in this House, yesterday I

actually agreed with the UCP Member for Lac Ste. Anne-Parkland when he admitted that this government's \$50 electricity rebate is "paltry." It's a good word, actually. I could use other words – it's meagre, ridiculous, maybe disingenuous, a bit insulting – but let's stick with this. Why did the associate minister of electricity give Albertans such a bogus electricity rebate when even his own caucus members are calling it paltry?

The Speaker: The hon. the Associate Minister of Natural Gas and Electricity.

Mr. Nally: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. After four years of NDP government and a series of poor policy choices Albertans are seeing higher electricity prices, but as we pursue longer term solutions to the high price of electricity, we're coming out with short-term relief, things like the \$150 ... [interjections]

The Speaker: Order. Order. You know what the government did? They provided the hon. Member for Edmonton-Manning some courtesy to allow her to ask the question. I think the opposition is capable of the same; some people may not.

The hon. associate minister.

Mr. Nally: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As we pursue longer term solutions to the higher prices that we see in electricity, we are offering short-term solutions such as the \$150 rebate that every ratepayer will see on their electricity bill. In addition to that, we're cancelling 13 cents a litre on the gas tax.

Ms Sweet: Well, Mr. Speaker, it's \$50 per household when my constituents' bills in Edmonton-Manning have gone up \$500 in a single month. The natural gas rebate from this government is completely disingenuous. Honestly, it's never going to happen. The budget featuring this fake rebate is being voted on today. Will the minister at least rise and concede that his natural gas rebate isn't real and that it's never going to happen? If he won't, I have to ask: has he even read the budget?

Mr. Nally: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank the hon. member for the question. I can tell you that the only support they provided Albertans was an electricity cap which did not apply to 60 per cent of Albertans. Not only did it not apply to 60 per cent of Albertans; it also only related to a small portion of people's electricity bill. Over two years their program was worth \$108 million. Over three months our program is worth over \$280 million, far more generous than anything they ever did.

Ms Sweet: Well, Mr. Speaker, the UCP Member for Lac Ste. Anne-Parkland also admitted yesterday that the government's removal of the tax on gas at the pumps may not actually lead to lower prices. He admitted that there is nothing, not a thing, being done to prevent companies from simply raising prices and collecting the profits for themselves. Will the minister admit that his so-called gas tax relief program is also fake? It's so fake that even his own colleagues know it. Why doesn't the minister?

Mr. Toews: Mr. Speaker, we're very proud to actually reduce and in this case eliminate the fuel tax in Alberta effective April 1. This is a real elimination annualized. It will provide \$1.3 billion in tax savings to Alberta households, Alberta businesses, and Alberta seniors. [interjections]

The Speaker: Order. The hon. Member for Calgary-South East is the only one with the call.

Corporate Taxation and Investment Attraction

Mr. Jones: Mr. Speaker, the United Conservative government recently tabled a balanced budget, only the second balanced budget in over a decade. Balancing the budget was partly the result of higher corporate tax revenues. Despite the extreme challenges brought on by the pandemic, Alberta continued to see investment flood into the province, and Albertans are now enjoying the jobs and revenues that came with it. To the Minister of Finance: can you tell the House how reducing the corporate income tax rate has impacted revenues for the province?

The Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Finance and the President of Treasury Board.

Mr. Toews: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker and to the member for the question. A competitive tax rate is a very important ingredient in an attractive business environment, and we have one of the most attractive business environments in North America. That's resulting in the attraction of billions and billions of dollars of investment into this province, leading to economic growth and expanded fiscal capacity. This is reflected in our corporate income tax revenue line in this budget. We will collect \$400 million more in corporate income tax revenues at 8 per cent than the NDP did at 12.

Mr. Jones: Mr. Speaker, yesterday the members opposite said that they would increase the tax on job creators by 50 per cent, back up to 12 per cent. Given that when the NDP were in government, they increased the tax on job creators to 12 per cent, leading to a decrease in revenues, and given that the current government's budget estimates show that corporate tax revenue is estimated to grow by 31 per cent in 2022 under an 8 per cent corporate tax rate, to the same minister: what would a significant tax increase do to the investment climate here in Alberta?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Finance.

Mr. Toews: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can't imagine a more disastrous policy. At a time when we're attracting investment by the billions, at a time when the capital markets, the business communities see Alberta as a predictable, certain, competitive tax jurisdiction, to jack up the tax rate by 50 per cent would drive investment out. Jobs gained over the last year would be lost, and I project that our actual corporate revenue lines would decrease.

Mr. Jones: Given that the NDP decimated the investment climate in this province and given that the government has, thankfully, implemented measures such as lowering the tax on job creators down to 8 per cent and given that the NDP continue to announce programs that cost millions of dollars with no real plan to pay for those measures, to the same minister: can you explain what responsible fiscal management means for Albertans?

The Speaker: The Minister of Finance.

Mr. Toews: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. We inherited a government that was spending \$10 billion more per capita than similar provinces, and the trajectory was going up by 4 per cent per year. Over the last three years we've flattened that curve and we've effectively brought this government from what would have been a \$6 billion deficit to a \$500 million surplus. What that means is a certain fiscal environment that will, again, attract more investment, create jobs and opportunities for Albertans, and ultimately result in expanded fiscal capacity and expanded revenues for the government of Alberta.

Anti-Racism Act

Mr. Shepherd: Mr. Speaker, if we ask Indigenous or racialized Albertans, they will tell us that systemic racism is real, embedded, felt, and experienced throughout the very systems that we all depend on, from health care to education to justice to social supports to the job market. Unchecked biases in these systems have real impacts on Indigenous and racialized Albertans, and in order to remedy this, we need to collect the data to track its impacts. I'm tabling the bill today to support that. Now, the minister of labour has spoken in this House that he believes systemic racism is real, in his own experiences. Will he support this bill to have fair and open debate on the floor of this Legislature?

The Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Health.

Mr. Copping: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the hon. member for raising a real issue that we need to address here in Alberta in our health care system. Our government is committed to providing the necessary care and equitable health care access to Indigenous people living on- and off-reserve. Racism has no place in our health care system, and all patients must receive the care they need with respect and compassion. Alberta Health is working closely with First Nations and Métis partners to address racism. I'm working right now – and I actually just had a conversation earlier today – with my colleague the Minister of Indigenous Relations to be able to put forward a plan to work with Indigenous partners to be able to address racism.

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

Mr. Shepherd: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Now, given that the government released a report from the Alberta Anti-Racism Advisory Council about a year ago and given that their recommendations called for a government-wide approach to addressing racism and for that to include the collection of race-based data to identify the rate and impacts of systemic racism throughout public services and given that the legislation that I will introduce today would enact that recommendation, will the Minister of Justice or the minister of labour support Bill 204 to receive fair debate in this Assembly?

The Speaker: The hon. minister of labour.

Mr. Madu: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, for four years, between 2015 and 2019, the NDP lifted no finger in addressing issues of racism and discrimination in all of this province. All of a sudden this has become an issue for them. We are the party and government that banned carding for the first time in the history of our province. We are the party that amended the Police Act through Bill 38 to include the first Indigenous policing in our Police Act. We walk the talk.

2:10

Mr. Shepherd: Mr. Speaker, given that this is not a partisan bill – this is something that comes from our caucus undertaking a series of conversations with Indigenous and racialized Albertans and community leaders on solutions to combat racism in Alberta – and given that during those conversations about health, education, public safety, community support, economic and democratic participation we repeatedly heard the importance of collecting race-based data and given that many of those Albertans are watching today, will the Associate Minister of Immigration and Multiculturalism state his support for this bill having the opportunity for fair debate in this Assembly?

Mr. Madu: Mr. Speaker, on this side of the aisle we are not interested in party and foolish politics. We are interested in actually solving the problem. Racism and discrimination are real, but the last thing we want to do is to allow the NDP to play politics with this serious matter. We have done so much to deal with racism and discrimination. We are the political party, once again – despite the protests between 2016 and 2018 on the steps of this Legislature, the NDP couldn't do anything about it. We took action, and we have so much work to do on that particular front.

Racism Prevention and Premier's Leadership

Mr. Deol: Mr. Speaker, at one of his rallies to save his leadership, this Premier declared that as long as he is Premier, voices of racism, hatred, and intolerance will find no home in the UCP. I applaud this. Racism has no business in our government, Legislature, or society, and I welcome the Premier's words agreeing on this. So will the Premier embrace this new spirit and finally apologize for allowing Chris Champion to try and put racist views in the draft social studies curriculum?

Mr. Madu: You know, Mr. Speaker, the funny thing is, again, that for four years the NDP did nothing with respect to the curriculum, to deal with racism and discrimination, or to include minority people in the curriculum. We have a draft curriculum that I am proud to have nominated two eminently qualified Black professors to work on, the social studies curriculum. That work is being done. I want us to make progress. I don't want us to embark on petty politics. Through you, Mr. Speaker, I ask that particular member: where was their leader between 2015 and 2019?

Mr. Deol: Given that this Premier employed and defended a speech writer who wrote horrifically racist statements about Indigenous and racialized people, including calling the tragic history of residential schools a "bogus genocide story," a statement condemned by Indigenous community leaders and survivors of residential schools, but given that the Premier now says that racist views are not being tolerated in the UCP, will he apologize for the extremely energetic defence he gave for his racist speech writer?

Mr. Madu: You know, Mr. Speaker, all that the members opposite need to do is to look at the membership of the folks on this side of the aisle. On this side of the aisle we speak more than 10 languages right here, we cut across all of our provinces, and I look forward to working with my colleagues to do the heavy lifting that is required to build a province in which all of us can be respected and live our full potential. No petty politics, no going to our communities for dances and for shows.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Deol: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that I'm glad to hear this government is ready to tackle racism in the UCP and given that communities, individuals, and victims of racism have been waiting for this Premier to commit to taking real action, that has not happened for the three years he has been in office – while the party has been consulting and proposing deals, our party has been consulting and proposing real solutions – can the Premier commit that he will stand up against racism in his party, in his caucus, and in his office even once his job is no longer on the line and he needs votes of racialized Albertans?

Mr. Madu: Mr. Speaker, in short order, I am proud of the achievement that we have made on this particular issue. I as Minister of Justice established a hate crime co-ordination unit within the Justice

department. As Justice minister I appointed a community liaison on hate crime. As Justice minister we established the Alberta security infrastructure grant to help vulnerable communities. As Justice minister we banned carding, we reformed street checks. There is so much more to be done, and we will get the job done. [interjections]

The Speaker: Order.

Federal-provincial Relations

Mr. Barnes: It has now been nearly two years since the Fair Deal Panel. As a proud member of this panel I provided the government with additional measures it should undertake to negotiate an equitable deal, yet there has been no meaningful action. The federal carbon tax has increased, Bill C-69 has not been fixed, Bill C-48 remains in place, the fiscal stabilization program is still capped, and the equalization program continues to transfer enormous wealth out of our province. My question to the Premier: after two years of inaction, are you ever going to get serious about fighting for a fair deal for Albertans?

The Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board.

Mr. Toews: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. The member certainly identifies an issue, and that is the fact that Alberta makes a disproportionate contribution fiscally to the rest of the nation. We are taking action. We have in fact received the support of every province and territory on correcting the fiscal stabilization program. We made that a number one priority. Our position was that caps need to be taken off. Unfortunately, this federal government did not respond to every Premier and every provincial and territorial leader, but they did raise the caps from \$60 to \$170. That meant \$500 million a year for Albertans.

Mr. Barnes: Mr. Speaker, this week the Prime Minister announced a deal with the NDP. Given that part of the deal ensures Quebec never loses any seats in the House of Commons regardless of population changes, given that, in short, when it comes to fighting for a fair deal within Confederation, the Prime Minister just called Alberta's bluff, given that Quebec has 78 MPs compared to Alberta and B.C.'s combined 76 and given that Alberta and B.C. have a million more citizens than Quebec, my question again to the Premier: why is your fight for basic fairness limited to empty platitudes and strongly worded letters while Albertans suffer?

Mr. Toews: Mr. Speaker, we fight every day for fairness in this Confederation. We fight every day for the interests of Albertans, unlike the member opposite. We've worked every day to create an investment climate in this province that would attract billions of dollars of investment, create tens of thousands of jobs, and provide Alberta small businesses with additional opportunity. This is resulting in expanded fiscal capacity. This is resulting in a balanced budget. This is resulting in a future for future generations.

Mr. Barnes: Mr. Speaker, given that it seems to me the rules of Confederation are rigged worse than a UCP leadership review – and the Premier is fine with both – and given that this Premier appointed himself as Minister of Intergovernmental Relations almost three years ago and given that Alberta has achieved absolutely nothing when it comes to winning a fair deal and given that this Premier has fired ministers for far smaller failures, my question again to the Premier: when are you going to fire your do-nothing intergovernmental affairs minister?

The Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Municipal Affairs.

Mr. McIver: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The one thing I know about getting things done in intergovernmental affairs is that you have to get along with people. You don't get yourself kicked out of the party. [interjections]

The Speaker: Order. The hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs has the floor.

Mr. McIver: You don't call yourself a conservative and then vote against a balanced budget. Actually, the Premier has gotten the other Premiers in this country to vote with him, to face the federal government with him, on a whole range of issues. He's not hiding in the corner by himself having to have his own way on everything, like some people in this place. [interjections]

The Speaker: Order.

Health Care System and Women

Member Irwin: The Associate Minister of Status of Women is introducing legislation today related to health care. I'm interested in how this will impact both women who work in health care and women's access to health care, and I hope that any changes are substantive and not merely symbolic. Many health care professions are women dominated. They've been heroes throughout this pandemic, but many are facing burnout and mental health concerns. The UCP are proposing wage cuts to many health professionals, including respiratory therapists, speech pathologists, social workers, to name just a few. Will the Associate Minister of Status of Women rise today and commit that she will not allow one of these professions to take a pay cut?

Mr. Copping: Thank you to the hon. member for the question. Mr. Speaker, our budget is expanding health care capacity. We are adding an additional \$600 million this year, \$600 million next year, and \$600 million the year after that. We are expanding jobs, and as the hon. member pointed out, many of those jobs are filled by women, so we are providing more opportunities for women in terms of our health care system. That includes doctors. That includes nurses. We have hired more nurses in the system now than we've ever had, and we actually have more doctors as well.

2:20

Member Irwin: Given that we will not forget Bill 207, a bill that posed a real threat to the health care of many Albertans, especially women, and particularly targeted reproductive health and access to health for members of the LGBTQ2S+ community – while this bill was defeated thanks to the push-back from countless Albertans, we are vigilant, and we are quite worried that reproductive rights are still not safe under this UCP government – and given the Premier's long-standing opposition to access to abortion, will the Premier confirm today that reproductive rights are fully safe under his watch and that he will block any attempts from his MLAs to limit access to abortion?

The Speaker: The hon. the chief government whip and Associate Minister of Status of Women.

Ms Issik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the Associate Minister of Status of Women I must say that my job is to make sure to support women to be successful, to protect their rights, to protect them, and keep them safe. I can tell you that I will continue to do that work. I have been doing that work. We are working on many women's health initiatives, and we are going to continue to do that work.

Member Irwin: Given that many women across this province have shared their concerns with me, including concerns about reproductive health – in fact, I should mention that it is Endometriosis Awareness Month and that many women are suffering from this condition and that they're not getting any support – and that the loss of family doctors and specialists is particularly damaging to women's health right now, since I didn't get an answer from that minister earlier, will she, again, repeat her support for reproductive rights, and will she commit to ensuring that no specialists and no more doctors leave this province?

The Speaker: The hon. the Associate Minister of Status of Women.

Ms Issik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I said earlier, I am committed to protecting the rights of women, to protecting women's health. We're working on health initiatives, and actually this very afternoon we will be introducing legislation that speaks right to that. I think the members opposite will be very interested, and I hope that they will support that bill.

Homeless Supports and Affordable Housing

Member Loyola: So many Edmontonians rely on public transit. Throughout the pandemic transit stations have also become a place of shelter and refuge for many who don't have a home and are struggling with mental health. It's not their fault. They have nowhere else to go, which is the fault of the UCP. The city of Edmonton has requested during every UCP budget more social support and to fund permanent supportive housing so that people who are forced to stay in transit stations could have a home as well as mental health support. The UCP already has done one rewrite of their budget. Why were the most vulnerable left out of it?

Mr. Ellis: Mr. Speaker, I actually reject the premise of that question. We have committed \$140 million over four years; we have \$20 million in this particular budget. Vulnerable people are very important to this government. I can tell you that numerous ministries are spending time to help those who are most vulnerable, and we are proud of the work we have done here in Edmonton with the VODP, with the HELP teams, with the Edmonton Police Service, along with building relationships with the fire department to continue to help vulnerable people.

Member Loyola: Given that the Minister of Transportation used to be the Minister of Community and Social Services and that she's fully aware of these concerns from the lens of transit safety and much-needed social support and given that the current Minister of Community and Social Services can't even provide an approximate estimate in this Chamber of how many Albertans live in poverty – it is no wonder he is blatantly unaware of the desperation that so many Edmontonians are facing – will the Minister of Transportation rise and commit to working with the city of Edmonton so that all people in Edmonton have a safe, dignified place to call home?

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

Mr. Luan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This government stands strongly, supporting vulnerable Albertans. I have mentioned several times in this House that Budget 2022 maintained core funding for all the support services: income support, AISH, and services to people with disabilities. I'll just give you one more example: the AISH budget. We increased it \$12 million in Budget 2022. Facts speak louder than political rhetoric.

Member Loyola: Given that there are hundreds of millions of dollars available for affordable housing through the national housing strategy but the UCP are not doing the work to get it and leaving municipalities and housing providers high and dry and given that business leaders are calling for supportive housing to be a part of the economic recovery and that there have been so many tragic deaths of people experiencing homelessness in places such as Dumpsters and that there are about five preventable drug poisoning deaths happening every day, how many people have to die before the UCP start doing their job and working with municipalities to provide homes with mental health supports to those in need?

Mr. Ellis: Mr. Speaker, I know the NDP want to continue with their woke plans to deal with the addictions crisis, but we are committed to a recovery-oriented system of care. It's a continuum of care that starts from when a vulnerable person enters the system to a point where they exit the system, actually into housing. It's part of the recovery-oriented system of care. We're proud of the work that we've done. We're proud of the relationships we're building. We're continuing to help Albertans. My question is: why do the members opposite not want to help people into a position where they do not have to rely on drugs as the only method of support?

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-Falconridge.

Culture-related School Bullying and Discrimination

Mr. Toor: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last week I received a heart-wrenching e-mail from a constituent who shared concerns about her son, who is regularly bullied at school. It is a sad reality, but there are instances in which new Albertans are on the receiving end of hurtful comments and actions from their peers specifically related to race, culture, and religion. Could the Minister of Education tell the House what actions are being taken to educate teachers and school staff on how to deal with culture-related bullying and discrimination?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Education has risen.

Member LaGrange: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. School authorities are required to provide a welcoming, caring, respectful, and safe learning environment. This includes a code of conduct that must be publicly available and prohibit discrimination as per the Alberta Human Rights Act. Additionally, Alberta is renewing the draft K to 6 curriculum, and, once finalized, Alberta will have the most equitable and diverse kindergarten to grade 6 curriculum this province has ever seen. This includes specific foundational knowledge about treaties, residential schools, and reconciliation as well as emphasis on Black history. Students will also learn about the legacy of racism and anti-Black racism.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-Falconridge.

Mr. Toor: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the minister. Given that the Calgary-Falconridge constituency is made up of a diverse community of different cultures and backgrounds and given that this diversity can cause division and in some cases has resulted in bullying and harassment towards students, can the same minister tell Albertans about the work that the United Conservative government has done to welcome first- and second-generation Canadians into our province and how their children are being supported in our schools?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Education.

Member LaGrange: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the daughter of immigrants myself, I know how very important this is. School

authorities are required to provide a continuum of supports and services that are consistent with the principles of inclusive education and that can be accessed by every student, including newcomers to Canada. A specialized learning support grant now supports school boards in providing a variety of supports and services to meet the learning needs of students within an inclusive learning environment. These grants support our most vulnerable students and children, including those for whom English is a second language as well as refugee students.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-Falconridge.

Mr. Toor: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the minister. Given that youth whose families have immigrated to Alberta from other countries can be subject to discrimination based on their race, religion, or culture and given that this can have severe impacts on the mental well-being of an individual and given that our government is committed to providing a safe and inclusive learning environment for all students, can the same minister tell the House how the United Conservative government has supported mental health for students in our education system?

The Speaker: The minister.

Member LaGrange: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for this important question. It's very top of mind right now. Mental health and well-being are very important to us and to our schools. There is definitely a heightened level of effort in this area due to the pandemic. In Budget 2022 targeted funding of \$110 million over three years, including \$30 million in the '22-23 school year, will enable schools to support students experiencing academic challenges and create school environments supporting student well-being and positive mental health. During the pandemic Alberta's government provided more than \$53 million to make it easier for students, families, and Albertans to access mental health.

2:30

Climate Adaptation Funding

Mr. Schmidt: If there's one thing that we learned from the tragedies of the wildfires in Wood Buffalo, Slave Lake, Paddle Prairie, the floods of Calgary, Fort Mac, and British Columbia, it's that we as a province must always invest in protecting communities and people from natural disasters. That's why it's so concerning that in the 2022 provincial budget the UCP is planning to gut the funding for climate-resilience projects. This is money that would go towards projects designed to protect communities from disasters before they happen: flood mitigation, fire stops, and more. I know that this government is reluctant to spend anything on Alberta communities, but does the minister even see the value in investing in climate adaptation?

Mr. Jason Nixon: Mr. Speaker, nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, this government has invested significantly, in partnership with our industry, in climate-resilience projects. Again, unlike what he wanted to do and did when he was in government, we don't have a consumer carbon tax in Alberta. The federal government, unfortunately, is still imposing that on Albertans. We continue to work with our large emitters to make sure that our world-class industry can remain competitive. That's our focus on investment when it comes to climate. If I was him, I'd have a conversation with the federal government on the fact that they continue to take Albertans' money for the carbon tax and not invest it properly back into this province. Better yet, how about we just get rid of the federal carbon tax.

Mr. Schmidt: Given that a recent report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change warns of the potential for more extreme weather and natural disasters and given that investments in climate adaptations seek to mitigate and protect communities and people from these disasters but given that on page 143 of their fiscal plan the UCP makes it clear that taking action to protect communities isn't their top priority, will the minister explain who he expects to address this critical issue since he's actively taking Alberta backwards on this? Municipalities? Homeowners? Or does he think it will just go away?

Mr. Jason Nixon: Mr. Speaker, this government is investing billions of dollars when it comes to flood adaptation – in particular the Springbank dry dam; my department continues to work on the new Bow River dam, as examples – billions of dollars in irrigation projects across the province that do help with flood mitigation, has released more flood maps to municipalities than any government in the last 30 years. The list goes on and on, hundreds of millions of dollars invested in being able to protect our community from climate-level events. But, again, back to this issue of the carbon tax, that member continues to support the federal carbon tax. Will he finally stand up in this place and vote with this government to call on the federal government to get rid of the carbon tax once and for all?

Mr. Schmidt: Given the shameful response of this government to the 2020 hailstorm, the fourth-largest natural disaster in Canadian history, which devastated northeast Calgary, and given this budget cut, which means that the government is seeking to get out of the business of protecting families and communities from the increasing risk posed by climate change, will the minister reconsider his senseless cut to protect Alberta communities and families? Or is it the policy of the government to ignore the climate crisis until it's too late?

Mr. Jason Nixon: Mr. Speaker, again, the member never lets the facts get in the way in his ridiculous questions.

Mr. Sabir: Point of order.

Mr. Jason Nixon: Again, this government continues to invest in protecting communities when it comes to flood events, fire, and will continue to in the years to come. But the reality is that the federal government continues to have a consumer carbon tax on the citizens of this province. They should get rid of it once and for all because the hon. member is right about one thing, that the federal government is not investing the carbon tax revenue back into this province as they promised. Again, will he stand up, finally, and call on the federal government to get rid of their ridiculous carbon tax?

Victims of Crime Program

Mr. Sabir: This government is failing victims of crime. In budget estimates the Minister of Justice and Solicitor General confirmed that since the government passed legislation to take money out of the fund, 60 per cent of it has been diverted towards other initiatives. This means less support going to those who need support recovering from violent crime and more people being denied support. Will the Minister of Justice acknowledge that these changes have been hurting Albertans and really commit to reversing them before more people impacted by crime lose their supports?

The Speaker: The hon. the minister of . . .

Mr. Shandro: Justice and Solicitor General.

The Speaker: Justice.

Mr. Shandro: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's all right. It's Thursday. It's the end of the day on Thursday. And thank you, through you, too, to the member for the question. As I answered his question at estimates, previously the government had taken the victims of crime fund, and it continued to support victims through the victims of crime fund – it's also now the victims of crime and public safety initiative fund – of course, continued to make sure that the money and the supports for victims continue to get to those victims through various supports in the community. That's going to continue to be included in the victims of crime and public safety initiative fund.

Mr. Sabir: Given that in December our caucus raised the concerns of Emma Wilson, who was a victim of crime, whose claim for financial assistance was denied because of this government's change to the victims of crime fund, and given that this government, rather than listening to the victims and reversing these harmful changes, created a working group to consult with key stakeholders in creating a new model, when will the government release the findings of this working group? Until they do, will the minister reverse the changes to the program that are causing harm to the victims of crime?

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

Mr. Shandro: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, through you, to the members who are involved in the review of the victims' services units that we have throughout the province and made sure that we had recommendations on how we could improve the VSUs and the way that money gets to the communities and gets to victims in the most efficient way, maximize the way that we get money and supports to those victims. We have almost completed a review of that and hope to be able to implement the changes in the near future. Thank you again to those MLAs for those valuable recommendations.

Mr. Sabir: Given that the victims of crime are waiting for far too long for this government to announce its so-called new model, will the minister tell us and the victims or survivors of crime, who will be watching this response, when this government will announce the new model and how much funding will go to support that new model? Or is he going to continue in this House proudly while cutting away supports from Albertans who desperately need these supports now?

Mr. Shandro: Well, I answered that question. That was his second question, and he's repeating it, Mr. Speaker, but I'll answer for him again. We have now almost completed our review of the report and the recommendations that were provided to us by the MLAs who had been involved in the review committee. We are now very close to the point where we'll be able to present to Albertans the new model on how we'll be able to make sure that the maximum amount of funding can get to victims in the community, because that's got to be our focus as all MLAs and as government, making sure that the most amount of supports can continue to get to those victims.

Provincial Fiscal Policies

Mr. Rowswell: Mr. Speaker, living within our means is very important to me. Therefore, I was happy about Alberta's recovery plan, which aims to invest more money in profitable petrochemical, technology, and film sectors. Achieving a balanced budget for 2022-23, with record spending on health care, despite hardships levied by the pandemic and a history of accumulated deficit is a feat we should be proud of. To the Minister of Finance: can you elaborate on work

done to ensure Budget 2022 is balanced and plans to maintain responsible fiscal management in the future?

The Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Finance.

Mr. Toews: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker and to the member for the question. We would not have a balanced budget in Budget 2022 without responsible, sustainable fiscal management informed by three fiscal anchors: keeping our net debt to GDP ratio below 30 per cent, aligning our per capita spend with that of similar provinces, and getting to a balanced budget as soon as possible. We have allowed those anchors to inform our decisions. And in spite of the fact that we inherited a government spend that was \$10 billion higher than similar provinces, we turned that spending down. It will take sustained responsible management to keep . . .

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Vermilion-Lloydminster-Wainwright.

Mr. Rowswell: Given that under the NDP platform Alberta's per capita spending was more than British Columbia, Quebec, and Ontario yet comparatively Alberta did not witness better outcomes and given that one of the key commitments was to bring ourselves in line to be at least as efficient as other large provinces in the delivery of government-based services, to the same minister: can you update the House on the progress made towards this goal?

The Speaker: The Minister of Finance.

Mr. Toews: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to update the House on our fiscal progress because, again, we inherited a high-spending government, the highest spending government of any in the nation. We have thoughtfully and carefully turned that spending down, at the same time increased health care by \$1.8 billion in this budget alone, at the same time added \$600 million to our labour, jobs, and talent strategy. But we will not take our eye off the ball. We will continue to deliver responsible fiscal management for Albertans.

2:40

Mr. Rowswell: Given that Albertans have faced one of the worst economic crises in the past two years, compounded with high inflation, and given that in response we implemented measures such as lowering the corporate tax rate to 8 per cent – this has resulted in projected collections of \$400 million more in corporate tax revenue; Mr. Speaker, our projections for balanced budgets in the coming years have also sparked questions on what will happen with surplus funds – can the minister elaborate on whether growth will be retained in the heritage savings trust fund or continue to be put into general revenue?

The Speaker: The Minister of Finance.

Mr. Toews: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, one of the real positive outcomes of a balanced budget is that it gives the government options for reinvestment. I was explicit in the fiscal plan. Any surplus up to the earnings level of the heritage savings trust fund will be reinvested in that trust fund. That's good news for Albertans. Unlike the members opposite, who robbed that trust fund year after year after year, we will reinvest.

The Speaker: Hon. members, that concludes the time allotted for Oral Question Period. In 30 seconds or less we will return to the remainder of the daily Routine.

Members' Statements

(continued)

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-Klein has a statement to make.

Government Policies and Economic Recovery

Mr. Jeremy Nixon: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to need more than two minutes to explain all the good things that are happening in our province, but let me try anyway. For the first time in almost a decade our United Conservative government has balanced the budget. Job numbers have been rising for four straight months, and unemployment is back down below prepandemic levels. Almost all pandemic restrictions are gone, and we have the fastest growing economy in the country. In every corner of this province major private-sector companies are investing serious capital in Alberta's economic future. It hasn't been easy, but our government has managed to create this economic prosperity. We did this by maintaining the lowest taxes in Canada.

Alberta is once again a lighthouse, a beacon of economic opportunity for those seeking a better life, as evidenced by the fact that net migration to our province is now higher than at any point under the disastrous NDP government. If you listen to the NDP leader, however, none of this is true. She said that our harmful policies our keeping many people from moving to Alberta. The reality is that far more people are coming to this province than leaving it. She said that we are hiking taxes because personal income tax revenue is up when the reality is that we are taking in more income tax revenue because more people are working and have better paying jobs.

She continues to fearmonger about this fictitious \$4.7 billion business tax cut when the reality is that we collect \$400 million more with our 8 per cent than they ever did with their 12 per cent. This all speaks to the incredible investment climate and low-tax advantage that we have restored over the last three years. After years of disastrous NDP policies that saw 200,000 jobs and billions – billions – of dollars disappear in this province, Alberta is back and we are booming.

I understand why the NDP leader is mad. Her policies failed, and her government is fading into a bad memory for everyday Albertans. Albertans, meanwhile, are looking forward to the next great chapter in Alberta history.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Sabir: Mr. Speaker, I will raise a point of order at the appropriate time. I will seek your, I guess, guidance on the matter.

The Speaker: A point of order is raised at 2:44. [interjections]

Order. I would like to provide a friendly reminder to the Assembly that members' statements are to go uninterrupted.

The hon. Member for Edmonton-South.

Government Data Security

Mr. Dang: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are well into the 21st century. The vast majority of government services now rely on digital infrastructure. Everything from health records to banking information is regularly transmitted online with our personal identification. The pandemic has greatly accelerated our transition to digital government.

Last year I uncovered a vulnerability on a government of Alberta website that provided access to Albertans' personal health information. As a result, I am facing an RCMP investigation, and I've stepped aside from my role in the Official Opposition while I

await the outcome of that investigation. Whether or not you agree with how I approached this issue, what we cannot lose sight of is how important these issues are. It is incumbent upon this House to act in the public interest and to protect Albertans. The government is not doing enough to make sure the delivery of government services is secure and defended from cyberwarfare.

Today I'm extending an offer to work with the government to take immediate action to defend Albertans from cyberthreats. There are three actions the government can take immediately to help improve our cyberdefenses and protect Albertans. The first is to establish an independent office of information security and cyberdefense. We need a co-ordinated and specific office that is focused on ensuring the security and integrity of our digital infrastructure.

The second is establishing a vulnerability disclosure program like the ones that are offered already by major software and hardware companies around the world. The government of Alberta must immediately establish a set of guidelines for responsible testing and disclosure for developers and security professionals. This will ensure that vulnerabilities will not go unreported due to fear of repercussions. Vulnerability disclosure should be encouraged, and we should be rewarding Albertans who are protecting public information.

Third, we must provide a state of the information infrastructure report. The government of Alberta must regularly provide a report into its IT infrastructure. Security through obscurity is not security at all. Instead, we need thorough and proper assessment of our public IT infrastructure. Outside analysts and professionals can critique and offer the best chance at success in modern cyber-defense.

The government must act now. Thank you.

Notices of Motions

The Speaker: The Government House Leader.

Mr. Jason Nixon: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to give oral notice of Government Motion 17: "Be it resolved that the period referred to in Standing Order 74.11(2) be extended from eight sitting days to 11 sitting days in respect to Bill 203, Technology Innovation and Alberta Venture Fund Act."

Introduction of Bills

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Chestermere-Strathmore.

Bill 10 Health Professions (Protecting Women and Girls) Amendment Act, 2022

Mrs. Aheer: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to request leave to introduce Bill 10, Health Professions (Protecting Women and Girls) Amendment Act, 2022.

Our well-being as a society is only as good as our humanity. It is critical that the safety and security of women and girls is a priority. The fear of physical or psychological violence because of sex and gender must be removed. The premise of coercive control and the accompanying practices must be eradicated. We are not rejecting cultural rationalities but rejecting violence perpetuated against women in the name of cultural practices. Every woman and girl deserves to live free from fear and violence.

Approval of the proposed amendments will strengthen the existing laws that ban female genital mutilation in Alberta. No other

jurisdiction has professional legislation that speaks directly to the issues of FGM.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I move the first reading of Bill 10. Thank you.

[Motion carried; Bill 10 read a first time]

The Speaker: The Government House Leader.

Mr. Jason Nixon: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First, I wish to advise the Assembly that pursuant to Standing Order 7(8) the daily Routine may continue beyond 3 p.m. if needed.

I also move that pursuant to Standing Order 75 Bill 10, the Health Professions (Protecting Women and Girls) Amendment Act, 2022, be moved onto the Order Paper under Government Bills and Orders.

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

Mr. Shepherd: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure to rise and request leave . . .

The Speaker: My apologies to the hon. member. I'll let you begin again from the top on that.

Hon. members, the motion that was moved by the hon. Government House Leader is a nondebatable motion, but it does require a vote of the Assembly.

[Motion carried]

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

Bill 204 Anti-Racism Act

Mr. Shepherd: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure to rise and request leave to introduce Bill 204, the Anti-Racism Act, 2022.

This bill flows from input received from the very individuals and communities who experience racism, overt and systemic, daily and addresses recommendations that were made by the Alberta Anti-Racism Advisory Council. Those recommendations called for the collection of race-based data in all departments as well as the analysis of this data to track and evaluate the progress being made and identify existing gaps between racialized and nonracialized communities in order to promote equitable access to public services and partnerships with government.

2:50

Bill 204 would do just that through the establishment of an antiracism office that will, in addition to consulting with communities and others on the establishment of data standards and other regulations, track and monitor impacts of racism throughout public services and provide recommendations on how to address them. I hope that all members of this Assembly will support this bill and give it the opportunity for fair debate in this Legislature.

[Motion carried; Bill 204 read a first time]

Tabling Returns and Reports

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Manning, followed by the Government House Leader.

Ms Sweet: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday I referenced the MNP report on consumer debt indexing, Albertans' Confidence in Personal Finances, Debt Repayment Abilities Plummets amid

Pandemic Fatigue and Uncertainty. I am now tabling the requisite copies.

The Speaker: The Government House Leader.

Mr. Jason Nixon: Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. First, I rise on behalf of the hon. the Premier to table written responses to questions during Executive Council's main estimates.

I also have all the necessary copies of documents that I referred to yesterday during the point of privilege regarding the MLA for Edmonton-South and his hacking record for the record.

The Speaker: Hon. members, we are at points of order. At 1:51 the hon. Deputy Government House Leader rose on a point of order.

Point of Order Parliamentary Language

Mr. Schow: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise on a point of order under 23(h), (i), and (j). At the time the Member for Edmonton-Glenora was speaking and referring to the Premier. I don't have the benefit of the Blues, but she did say something to the effect of: unlike the Premier, we don't cheat. This is actually uncharacteristic of that member as she usually maintains a reasonable level of decorum in this Chamber, but this language is certainly unparliamentary, and I do believe that it should be apologized for and should be withdrawn.

The Speaker: The hon. the Deputy Opposition House Leader.

Mr. Sabir: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't have the benefit of the Blues, but I do remember that the Member for Edmonton-Glenora referenced those words in relation to the Premier's leadership race, which is under investigation for voter fraud, and some recent changes in the upcoming leadership review. I think that that's a matter of fact and debate, not a point of order.

The Speaker: Thank you. I am prepared to rule if there's no additional submissions. I do have the benefit of the Blues. It says, "Mr. Speaker, unlike [the] Premier, Albertans don't [get to] cheat." It sounds a lot like an accusation or remarks which question the member's integrity or character, which are not in order as pursuant to page 619 of *House of Commons Procedures and Practice*. I'm sure that all members are aware of the reference. So is the Member for Edmonton-Glenora, so I'm sure she'll be happy to apologize and withdraw.

Ms Hoffman: I am happy to apologize and withdraw, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: I consider this matter dealt with and concluded.

At 1:55 the hon. Member for Calgary-Bhullar-McCall rose on a number of occasions, including 1:55 and 1:57. I believe that perhaps we can co-ordinate these into one point of order, but I'll leave that to your discretion.

Point of Order Allegations against a Member

Mr. Sabir: Thank you. We can certainly do that. There were a number of things. Again, I don't have the benefit of the Blues, but it was a matter in relation to sexual harassment allegations levelled by the Government House Leader, and on previous occasions other government ministers have done the same. There are, Mr. Speaker, extensive rulings on that issue, extensive caution provided by you on that issue. I think the Government House Leader and the government side continues to ignore those cautions, and I urge you to rule this out of order once and for all.

Mr. Schow: Well, I certainly, Mr. Speaker, don't have the benefit of the Blues, and I don't know what was said in specific. If something was said to the Member for Calgary-Bhullar-McCall that was unparliamentary, I'd be happy to hear if you may have that. If it is unparliamentary, then I will withdraw and apologize. But I would like to know where you're at.

The Speaker: I do have the benefit of the Blues, and in the interest of time as well as repeating perhaps unparliamentary language, I will defer from reading them all. But I do want to say this. The hon. Member for Calgary-Bhullar-McCall is correct that there have been extensive cautions, ongoing reminders that this type of allegation is unacceptable. On April 21, 2021, I said:

But in the strongest possible ways I will provide a caution on this very, very sensitive issue. In particular, these situations often end in a tit-for-tat, where members of the opposition will raise similar allegations and vice versa, and we end at the bottom of a [very] negative spiral making . . . allegations [against one another]. While I will provide the strongest caution to the minister, I hope that both sides will avoid these sorts of allegations in the future.

They certainly do rise to the level of a point of order and certainly do not assist in the decorum inside the Assembly.

This is a point of order. I insist it not happen in the future, and I'm happy to take an apology and withdrawal.

Mr. Schow: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With your direction and out of respect for this Chamber and the Member for Calgary-Bhullar-McCall, I do withdraw and apologize on behalf of the Government House Leader.

The Speaker: I consider this matter dealt with and concluded.

At 2:53 the hon. the Deputy Opposition House Leader rose on a point of order.

Point of Order Allegations against a Member

Mr. Sabir: Mr. Speaker, I think I have another point of order at 2 p.m. Again that was the Government House Leader in response to my question where I asked about the investigation into the Premier's leadership race fraud. The Government House Leader said: he makes up false allegations. Again, that was directly pointed at me as an individual. That's clearly offside these rules, and I urge you to rule that as such.

The Speaker: My apologies to the Member for Calgary-Bhullar-McCall. That is correct. You did call a point of order at 2 p.m. when the Government House Leader was speaking. I'm happy to have you provide additional comments should you feel like it's necessary, or I'm happy to have the Government House Leader respond.

Mr. Sabir: I think that I don't have the benefit of the Blues, but I'll look for your guidance.

Mr. Schow: I would suspect that if the Member for Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House-Sundre, the hon. Government House Leader, said something to the effect that the member is making stuff up, that would be unparliamentary. I don't have the benefit of the Blues. I'll defer to you, Mr. Speaker. If that is, in fact, the case, again, happy to withdraw and apologize.

The Speaker: I do have the benefit of the Blues for the point of order at 2 p.m. The hon. the Government House Leader said the following: "Mr. Speaker, continuing to make up [false] allegations inside this Chamber is ridiculous. I challenge that member to go

make those allegations outside this Chamber so that legal action could be taken against them.” And a point of order was called, and the member proceeded to ask his question.

Like, I think further to the previous ruling – and I think it’s prudent to provide a reminder to members of the Assembly from *Erskine May*, 497, I believe. To be clear, this is not a point of order. But what I do want to do – and I often do this on a Thursday afternoon so that members can go home and consider themselves accordingly about how we’ll function next week. It’s imperative that we recall *Erskine May Parliamentary Practice*, page 497, where it says, talking about making allegations about other members, that the chair is often required

on the Member to withdraw the words,
including words imputing false motives
or unavowed motives; the misrepresentation of the language of
another and the accusation of misrepresentation; and charges of
uttering a deliberate falsehood.

3:00

I just want to provide that caution. This isn’t a point of order. I don’t think that he was making a particular accusation against the member but more statements that he was referring to. Not a point of order. I consider the matter dealt with and concluded.

I hope that the level of decorum can increase next week as we move further into the week.

That now brings us to the point of order of 2:33, where the hon. the Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar had asked a question and a point of order was raised by the Opposition Deputy House Leader.

Mr. Sabir: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On the previous ruling I certainly missed the part where the member said that I should say it outside; a lawsuit will follow. I can certainly do that.

Point of Order

Language Creating Disorder

Mr. Sabir: Moving to the point of order at 2:33, 2:34, again, the Government House Leader said, specifically referring to the Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar, that the member never lets facts come in the way, something to that effect. It’s a roundabout way of saying to somebody that he is not telling the truth, that he’s lying, those kinds of things that have been ruled unparliamentary. Again, I think it’s offside the rules of this House.

Mr. Schow: I don’t have the benefit of the Blues, but in the earlier points of order the language from the Member for Calgary-Bhullar-McCall was far more specific. I believe we are now starting to grasp at straws. This is not a point of order but a matter of debate. Until I hear something from the Blues that suggests otherwise, I would say that this is not a point of order. Let’s move on.

The Speaker: Thank you. I do have a very rough copy of the Blues. The member says something to the effect of: the member never lets the facts get away in his ridiculous questions. I think the member meant to say that he never lets the facts get in the way of his ridiculous questions. You know, members day in and day out try to find creative ways to make such statements. It happens on both sides of the Assembly. I don’t believe that this rises to the level of a point of order. I consider the matter dealt with and concluded.

Immediately following the member’s statement for the Member for Calgary-Klein, the Opposition Deputy House Leader rose and asked a question about raising a point of order. I’m happy to take that question now, and we’ll govern ourselves accordingly following.

Point of Order

Allegations against a Member

Mr. Sabir: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do recognize that on a number of occasions you have talked about decorum in the House when member statements are made. You have talked about that members should be allowed to make them uninterrupted. But at the same time, when that much latitude is afforded to a member to make that member’s statement, I suspect that members won’t be allowed to say things that they’re otherwise not able to say. The Member for Calgary-Klein, who was referring specifically to the Leader of the Official Opposition, said that she continues to fearmonger about some \$4.7 billion. I think referring to the member and making that accusation directly at a member should be offside the rules of this House. The \$4.7 billion number is at page 144 of their first budget in 2019.

The Speaker: This sounds a lot to me like we’re continuing a matter of debate. If that same logic was applied to every member’s statement that members of the Official Opposition or the government made, we would have a lot more congratulatory member statements to our constituents, which may be a very good thing for all of the decorum in the Assembly. But that is a decision for each and every member to make when they rise to their feet. This is not a point of order. I consider the matter dealt with and concluded.

I wish that this period of time in our day had concluded. However, yesterday the hon. Government House Leader rose on a point of privilege, and the hon. Member for Edmonton-South, who was the subject of the point of privilege, deferred his opportunity to respond until today. I will hear the response now.

Privilege

Misleading the House

Mr. Dang: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will attempt to keep my comments brief in responding to the point of privilege raised yesterday.

Yesterday the Government House Leader argued a *prima facie* breach of privilege has occurred by means of a member misleading the House. As outlined in the fourth edition of *Parliamentary Practice in New Zealand*, the test for this is three parts and as follows: one, “the statement must . . . be misleading;” two, “the member must have known that the statement was inaccurate at the time the statement was made;” and, three, “the member must have intended to mislead” the Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to the first part of that test, that a statement must be misleading, I have not admitted to committing any crimes, have not been charged or arrested with any crimes, and continue to co-operate with the RCMP in respect to the matter which they are investigating. I believe, clearly, any statements I have made in the House are not misleading to this effect.

Second, the member must have known that the statement was inaccurate at the time the statement was made. Clearly, I did not believe then and do not believe now that any statement I made in the House is misleading.

Finally, the member must have intended to mislead the Assembly. Mr. Speaker, I did not and do not intend to mislead the Assembly with respect to my white paper and the ongoing investigation; hence, my openness and publication of the document describing the entirety of my test and situation. If the member opposite believes differently or has a different interpretation of those facts, they may be matters of debate.

I will refer to your ruling, Mr. Speaker, on March 22, 2022, where you cited *Beauchesne*’s paragraph 494: “It has been formally ruled

by Speakers that statements by Members respecting themselves and particularly within their own knowledge must be accepted.” As I have stated already, my arguments today are with regard to matters respecting myself, and I would ask that you and the House accept my knowledge on those matters.

Further, I will also refer to a point of privilege that was raised on October 25, 2021, on *Hansard* page 5649, by the hon. Deputy Opposition House Leader. The Deputy Opposition House Leader argued that the Premier had misled the House with respect to his knowledge of the COVID-19 modelling data. The following day, on October 26, the current Government House Leader then made arguments that the word of a member, in this case the Premier, must be accepted as per *Beauchesne’s* 494. This was then ruled by you, Mr. Speaker, on page 5750 of *Alberta Hansard*, that you accepted members at their word and no prima facie breach of privilege had occurred.

As I have shared the facts of the matter as I understand them, Mr. Speaker, accordingly I ask that you rule in the same manner and find that no prima facie breach of privilege has occurred in this case.

Thank you.

The Speaker: Hon. members, points of privilege are serious matters, and any member of the Assembly does have the opportunity to provide their remarks even if they aren’t subject to the point of privilege. However, that would possibly be unique in this situation. I want to provide that opportunity to other members of the Assembly should they wish to do so.

Seeing none, I will take both the argument made by the Government House Leader as well as the Member for Edmonton-South under advisement, and I will report back to the Assembly at my earliest opportunity, which I would anticipate to be in the first days of next week.

Hon. members, Ordres du jour.

Orders of the Day

Government Bills and Orders

Third Reading

Bill 7

Appropriation Act, 2022

The Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Finance and the President of Treasury Board.

Mr. Toews: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I’m really pleased to rise and move third reading of Bill 7, the Appropriation Act, 2022.

[Mr. Milliken in the chair]

Budget 2022 is about responsible fiscal management. Mr. Speaker, it’s no secret that we inherited the highest spending government of any across the nation. Over the last three years we have worked hard, worked collectively across ministries, across government, to make responsible, surgical, thoughtful decisions to deliver more value for Alberta taxpayers. I’m very pleased to say that Budget 2022 reports on our progress, and in fact we have turned that spending down. In the upcoming year we will have aligned our per capita spend with that of other provinces’ governments, and that puts this province on a sustainable fiscal trajectory.

Mr. Speaker, there’s more. Budget 2022 really reports on the progress of revenue creation, reports on the progress of wealth creation by our private citizens and businesses, all of that leading to expanded fiscal capacity and increased government revenues. There’s not a data point in this budget that represents that fact in a more clear way than the fact that we will be collecting \$400 million

more per year in corporate income tax revenues over the course of this fiscal plan at an 8 per cent rate than the previous government collected at a 12 per cent rate.

3:10

The great advantage with responsible fiscal management is that now this government and the people of Alberta have additional options. Mr. Speaker, that’s why Budget 2022 includes a \$1.8 billion investment in health care over the course of the fiscal plan. This investment will in part be allocated to increased health care capacity, health care capacity that has shown itself deficient as we’ve worked to deal with the pandemic.

There’s more. As I’ve travelled across the province over the last number of months, I’ve encountered a labour shortage across sectors and across regions, that at a time when we’ve had an unemployment rate north of 7 per cent. Mr. Speaker, as we’ve worked to understand the fundamentals driving this inconsistency, we’ve recognized that many Albertans that have perhaps lost their jobs in 2016 or 2017, during the last downturn, in part brought on by the economic and fiscal policies of the members opposite, many of those Albertans don’t have the skills, the confidence today to re-enter the workplace. That’s why we’re investing \$600 million in Budget 2022 to ensure that every Albertan has the opportunity to reskill, to enter a postsecondary program, to pursue an occupation or profession, perhaps one that didn’t even exist in this province 10 years ago.

We’re seeing an ever-increasingly diversified economy in the province of Alberta, Mr. Speaker. This \$600 million investment will go towards providing an additional 7,000 seats in our great, world-class postsecondary institutions. Again, this will create opportunities for Albertans to reskill and ultimately graduate in a profession, an occupation where they can provide well for themselves and their families, where they can make a great contribution to their communities, where they can again support the nonprofit organizations and charities that are an important part of the fabric of this province.

Mr. Speaker, I’m presenting a balanced budget today. In fact, we presented it in late February. We’re going to be passing it, I trust, with the support of members of this House later today. This budget is balanced while maintaining the highest levels of support for seniors, while maintaining the highest levels of support for the most vulnerable, because these are the values that are held by Albertans and these are the values that are held by this government.

But, most importantly, Budget 2022 is an inflection point. Budget 2022 marks a time when and where we will no longer place the burden of irresponsible fiscal decisions on the next generation, robbing our children and grandchildren of opportunity and prosperity – opportunity and prosperity – Mr. Speaker, that I was privileged to have. So I urge all members of this Assembly to support Bill 7, the Appropriation Act, 2022.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

I see the hon. Member for Edmonton West Yellowhead has risen to join debate.

Mr. Carson: Almost, Mr. Speaker. Edmonton-West Henday.

The Acting Speaker: Oh, Edmonton-West Henday.

Mr. Carson: Thank you for the opportunity to rise this afternoon to speak to Bill 7. As you might imagine, Mr. Speaker, I am not quite as excited as this Finance minister might be other than the fact that we do here in the Assembly today have the opportunity, both on this side of the House and on the other side of the House, to truly show this Premier and this Finance minister that they are indeed on the wrong path and that they have made decisions that aren’t to the

benefit of all Albertans through this budget. That is indeed what I have been hearing in my community from the correspondence that I get through my office and through the phones on a daily basis on a number of fronts, first off being, which this government continues to ignore, the fact that there are many Albertans that are accessing AISH benefits, many Albertans that are accessing Alberta Works benefits and other benefits that are provided to Albertans to ensure that they can continue to survive in our province. Unfortunately, while this government believes they are balancing the budget for future generations, they aren't even balancing the budget for the current generations in terms of the fact that they are making so many decisions and, at the end of the day, cuts to these important programs. Again, we hear it every day in my office and, I imagine, in every single office of our MLAs across the province, the damage that the decisions that this government is making are having on Alberta families and some of the most vulnerable people in our society.

Unfortunately, we can continue to look back to the initial decision of this government to deindex AISH benefits, to deindex seniors' benefits. We look at what that means in real numbers. For example, a senior couple receiving the Alberta seniors' benefit is set to lose \$750, and that is truly remarkable, Mr. Speaker, considering the state that we find ourselves in, with inflationary pressures continuing to hammer on the budgets of our families and, again, in many respects even more so on those that are relying on assistance from the government to simply survive.

For this Finance minister to say that these are the values held by Albertans, that we are making the decision to, quote, unquote, balance this budget by cutting important services like the indexing of AISH, like the indexing of seniors' benefits: I don't buy it, not for one second. Mr. Speaker, I don't think that those are the values that Albertans hold, to leave these people behind, these vulnerable people, to, again, essentially find ourselves in a position where this government can call it a balanced budget, but it truly is anything but that.

Of course, we have spent a lot of time talking about the fact that Albertans cannot trust this government. The same can be said about this line around a balanced budget, because we are truly balancing, quote, unquote, again, Mr. Speaker, on the backs of the most vulnerable. At the end of the day, it continues to be truly dependent on the price of oil for that day, and we might not see ourselves in the same situation a week from now, a month from now. Unfortunately, we can see ourselves with again a balanced budget, but at the same time these vulnerable Albertans will continue to be left behind.

I believe that this budget is anything but aligned with the values of Albertans. We can look at other increases that this government has had direct opportunities to take care of. When it comes to insurance costs, we've been dealing with this for several years now, at a time when insurance companies continue to see some of the best returns that they've seen in quite some time, Mr. Speaker. We are hearing accounts from everyday Albertans where they're seeing their insurance increase upwards of 30 per cent per year, this at the same time when they are driving less, this at the same time they have maybe never seen themselves receive a ticket or been in a collision. It is truly based on the decisions of this Finance minister and this government to remove the cap, to make backroom deals with insurance lobbyists.

At the same time that Albertans are actually seeing their benefits reduced in terms of caps on minor injuries, at the same time that this government is telling Albertans that they are going to receive less in compensation if they are in a collision that causes them long-term disabilities, potentially life-altering disabilities, they are actually going to be compensated less but, at the same time, very

possibly will be seeing year to year their insurance increasing upwards of 30 per cent.

3:20

Again, Mr. Speaker, this is on top of the many other costs that are being piled on Albertans. We've heard a lot of talk about utility bills increasing. It's hard to explain, truly, how much of an effect this is having on Albertans. Some are seeing their utility bills essentially double. We've seen that in cases that have come to my office. And what has this government offered them? A \$50 rebate a year from now, potentially. A year is a long time for those Albertans to wait, and they truly see through what this government is trying to put forward to them as a solution, because it truly is not that.

Again, we can look at the budget of Advanced Education as we continue to look at Bill 7, the Appropriation Act, Mr. Speaker. This, again, is a ministry and a part of our economy that is so important, yet we see this government jeopardizing the long-term competitiveness of the postsecondary institutions and industry across this province. We see through Budget 2022 a cut of \$600 million in real terms for the Advanced Education ministry, and on top of that, this government is actually asking Alberta students to pay more on the debt that they are being forced to accumulate because of the decisions of this government. They're actually continuing to pay higher interest rates because this government has really shown that they are leaving the students in this province to fend for themselves and, even worse, is actually taking counterproductive actions against those students, who are the future of our economy.

We should be doing everything we can to ensure that they believe Alberta is the best place for them to stay or to come to in the first place, potentially. We have heard discussions around brain drain and the concerns that we've seen around that. If we aren't ensuring that there are competitive programs and processes in place, whether we're talking about tax credits, whether we're talking about any other rebate, Mr. Speaker, we should be doing everything we can to ensure that our advanced education system, our postsecondary education system, is as competitive as possible in terms of the programs that we're offering, in terms of the cost to take a four-year degree or longer and, of course, not just a four-year but any type of postsecondary education. Unfortunately, again, what we're seeing through this budget is a downloading of costs to our postsecondary institutions, which, in turn, is to some extent forcing those institutions to download those costs onto students.

It's truly unfortunate that this is where we find ourselves, Mr. Speaker. I think that our decision, under the NDP government from 2015 to 2019, to freeze postsecondary tuitions for the most part was the right decision and, at the same time, continuing to fund them at a level where they were able to succeed. Unfortunately, we're seeing a complete reversal of not only the cost of tuition but the amount of funding that this government is providing to postsecondary institutions. It's going to have a devastating effect on our future economy and even on the economy that we have today.

Again, when we look at other decisions that this government has made in regard to relationships with our municipal partners and the continued downloading of costs, whether we're looking at the gutting of MSI, municipal sustainability initiatives, and the funding that our municipal partners are receiving to support the important infrastructure in each of those communities, we've seen a complete reversal, of course, from what this government initially campaigned on. Of course, I've raised the point before that they supported the big-city charters when we were in government and campaigned on upholding that. Yet, again, just like we saw on supports for AISH, supports for seniors' benefits, the government has done a complete reversal on supporting our municipalities.

Of course, it goes further than just supporting infrastructure. Whether we're talking about the need for mental health supports in our municipalities, whether we're talking about the need for affordable housing, we have heard from municipalities across the province that on those important issues this government is failing as well.

It becomes even more unfortunate, Mr. Speaker, when we reflect on the Appropriation Act that we have before us and the need, specifically in this instance, for affordable housing. We see federal dollars on the table. We see municipal partners ready to access that funding and ready to move forward with agreements, but instead of the provincial government coming to the table and understanding that we need to do everything we can to access those dollars, they are not providing those dollars. So we will see federal funding left on the table, and it's truly unfortunate because we should be doing everything we can to access those dollars. There's no doubt that those relationships are important. There's no doubt that there continues to be strain on our affordable housing system, even more so because of decisions that this government is making when it comes to AISH supports and Alberta Works supports.

Again, when we look at the supports that are being offered by this government, when we look at the Alberta child and family benefit not being indexed, Mr. Speaker – I mean, the list is long about the decisions that this government is making that are going to have a long-lasting effect on Albertans and a long-lasting effect on the children that are counting on this government to take meaningful action to support them. Coupled with the decision to not index the Alberta child benefit, we see a minister responsible for the rollout of the federal child care program also not willing to put the dollars forward to ensure that we see \$10-a-day child care rolling out across this province in a timely manner, bringing into question whether we will see that program successfully fulfilled.

There are so many problems that we see within this. I do not believe, to any extent, that it reflects the values of Albertans to place the burden on the most vulnerable in our society, to place the burden on children and seniors and those trying to access postsecondary education and, further, onto our municipalities, who in turn will be forced to download those costs onto taxpayers in those respective municipalities. At the end of the day, if the province is funding less to municipalities – we know that there are agreements in place across the province, in our cities, that they have to have a balanced budget at the end of the year. So if the government is telling them that there is less funding for them, there is only one way for them to get that back, and that is to increase taxes on the people in those communities, which is truly unfortunate, again, with respect to all the other things that are being put on Alberta families.

Again I would encourage members to truly consider whether this is the right direction for our province, whether they truly believe that these are the values that Albertans hold when we look at the billion-dollar tax grab that this government is moving forward with in terms of bracket creep, something that the Premier himself used to rail against for many years when he was part of the Canadian Taxpayers Federation, when he was an MP in the federal Parliament. But, my, how things have changed, Mr. Speaker.

There is a lot to be desired in this bill. I think that this is truly an opportunity for both sides of the House to show clearly that we are headed in the wrong direction. I think that to some extent I understand – well, not really. I was going to say that I understand where the government is coming from, but I truly don't because there is just so much wrong in what we're seeing before us. I continue to hear from Albertans, above and beyond what I've discussed already, when I go to school council meetings and the concerns that they have for our education system, with this government's continued reluctance to fund for enrolment – that

continues to be an issue that is having terrible effects on our K to 12 system – the completely flawed rollout of the draft curriculum that this government will do everything but roll back, will continue to push off, continue to try and find somebody, anybody, any school board that would pilot this but has been rejected so many times.

There are just too many things in this budget, Mr. Speaker, that are completely wrong for me to be able to even consider supporting it. With that, I hope that we may see other members of the Assembly join in this discussion and share why they are so concerned with what we see here. I think that, again, there are likely members within the government's own caucus that have concerns one way or another, and I would appreciate hearing from them as well.

With that, I will take my seat. I appreciate the opportunity to rise and share my concerns with this bill.

Thank you.

3:30

The Acting Speaker: Thank you very much to the hon. member for the great constituency of Edmonton-West Henday.

I see the hon. Member for Edmonton-Castle Downs has now risen.

Ms Goehring: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise in the House today to speak to Bill 7, the Appropriation Act, 2022. I have to say that I would like to echo a lot of what the hon. member has shared about concerns with this budget. I think that this is simply a budget that we cannot support. We look at what has been proposed by this government, and it's ridiculous that this budget comes at a time when the cost of absolutely everything is going up: utility bills, insurance rates, tuition fees, property taxes, park fees, and there's a way that this government has found an opportunity to tax inflation. And, you know, I think when we're looking at the real struggles of what families are facing, this budget does nothing to support them.

Yesterday in this House I rose and asked a question about aid that is being provided to some of my constituents, who I hear from, hundreds talking about their inability to make ends meet. With the cost of everything going up, they are hurting, and this government won't address it. They yell at us and, you know, make all of these ridiculous claims, but when you look at a \$50 rebate when my constituent wrote to me about a \$750 utility bill, a \$50 rebate does nothing. People are struggling. They can't afford their bills. They can't afford food, Mr. Speaker. I hear just devastating stories every day, and I know that members of the government are hearing the same. It baffles me that they're so tone deaf about what is happening to Albertans right now.

When I was in estimates for Culture, I had the opportunity to ask questions. Unfortunately, it wasn't shared time; it was block time. You know, part of my job as the critic is to listen to those that are impacted by this government's decisions, and it's something that I've heard for the three years when it comes especially to nonprofits and community organizations, that they're not feeling heard.

In last year's budget I had asked the previous minister on behalf of two organizations if she would meet with them. It was the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues and the Federation of Calgary Communities. They indicated for this budget that, again, they still hadn't heard from the previous minister or from the current minister, and when I asked the minister in estimates why he hadn't been meeting with these organizations, he said that there are simply too many. Well, I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues represents 161 community leagues. That's one organization that represents 161 community leagues. The Federation of Calgary Communities represents 230 nonprofits and 151 community associations. This

has been a plea from these individuals that represent so many, that also represent thousands of Albertans that don't have voice. That's concerning to me, when I hear that they've made decisions on a budget without talking to some major, major community leaguers.

We all know that the communities are the heart and soul of each and every one of our constituencies. They know first what's going on. They know when needs are required, and they step up and provide support to Albertans when this government has failed them. They failed them in their first budget. They cut things like CFEP, which communities rely on for support. Not even to mention what happened with the pandemic and the mishandling of that. So many communities leagues were struggling to find ways to support their communities because this government's failed leadership in how to handle the pandemic impacted communities, impacted families, impacted Albertans. And who stood up and answered the call to support? Our community leagues, our agriculture societies, our charities, with no help from the government.

These wonderful communities have come together, and they continue to reach out to the many organizations and individuals that they serve on behalf of Albertans. Vibrant Communities Calgary created a report called Alberta Budget 2022's Business as Usual Approach Falls Short. They say simply that it falls short. They say that the "new spending priorities don't address issues that matter to struggling Albertans."

I would like to just read to you the first two paragraphs of this article, Mr. Speaker, that I think is very impactful in their summary of what Budget 2022 is saying. It says:

Holding the government to account on budget issues is a complex and difficult task. However, a small number of nonprofit organizations regularly provide this type of analysis. The Edmonton Social Planning Council, the Alberta Seniors Community Housing Association, and the Calgary Chamber of Voluntary Commerce have all called attention to the government's inadequate support of important public services, the nonprofit sector, and affordable housing in Budget 2022.

In 2021, VCC's response to the budget stressed the importance of investments to tackle inequities that were exposed by the pandemic, including systemic racism, income security, and precarious work. In Budget 2022, our concerns remain unaddressed. Spending was maintained in most areas, although when inflation and growth are taken into account, most budgets were decreased. And, where we do see funding increases, as is the case with child care and affordable housing, this is primarily attributed to federal government transfers.

This was a huge missed opportunity. These are organizations that have been pleading to have a voice at the table of government. To me, Mr. Speaker, this is an absolute no-brainer. When you want to know how best to serve Albertans, you talk to Albertans. If you're not talking to Albertans, maybe even talk to those that represent Albertans in our communities. They are the pulse of what is happening in each and every one of our communities. They know what's going on. They know which families are struggling. They know where the gaps in services are. They are also incredibly skilled at being resourceful and coming up with strategies and ideas and ways of how to support. Had the government simply met with some of these individuals, perhaps we wouldn't see this budget in such disarray. Perhaps we could stand proudly in this House and vote for a budget based on what Albertans are asking for.

However, Mr. Speaker, that is not the case. We're standing in this Chamber debating a budget that doesn't actually support Albertans in ways that they actually need. I don't understand why there are all of these wonderful opportunities to connect with so many individuals that represent Albertans, and this government just turns a blind eye.

On this side of the House we stand and we ask questions on behalf of those we represent. We share stories of those that are being impacted by the reckless decisions that this government has made, and it falls on deaf ears. People are pleading to have a voice at the table.

When the pandemic first started, Mr. Speaker, one of the things that the NDP called on, alongside artists, was for artists to have a voice at the table when it comes to the economic recovery plan. They wanted to be able to have an impact on how services and resources and supports were given to Albertans. These are creative thinkers. It was ignored. We've seen so many reports coming from these industries on ways that would make a significant impact on the day-to-day lives of Albertans, and they're being ignored.

We saw the culture industry being one of the very first industries that was impacted by the pandemic and will be one of the last industries to recover. This budget doesn't do anything to support that recovery.

3:40

In the budget from 2019 this government slashed supports and services for the arts community, for culture prepandemic. During the pandemic there was no one around to listen. We held news conferences. We requested meetings. We stood in this Chamber and pleaded for supports to be provided, and nothing. What happened was that there was a considerable amount of inconsistency in the mandate regulations, so we had organizations that were just left on their own, and right now Albertans are left on their own. This is a budget that we simply cannot support.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I would like to cede my time and listen to the debate. Thank you.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

I see the hon. Government House Leader has risen.

Mr. Jason Nixon: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that we adjourn debate.

[Motion to adjourn debate carried]

The Acting Speaker: I see the Government House Leader has risen.

Mr. Jason Nixon: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to ask for unanimous consent to go to one-minute bells for the duration of the sitting day.

[Unanimous consent granted]

Bill 8

Appropriation (Supplementary Supply) Act, 2022

The Acting Speaker: I see the hon. Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board has risen.

Mr. Toews: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise and move third reading of Bill 8, the Appropriation (Supplementary Supply) Act, 2022.

Bill 8 provides the authority for government to pay from the general revenue fund for additional costs that are not already covered or otherwise provided for during the current fiscal year. The supplementary estimates include \$1.2 billion in spending and \$1 million in capital investment. Mr. Speaker, the funding in Bill 8 will ensure the government can cover health care costs required to deal with the pandemic, it will send aid and equipment to the people of Ukraine, and it will provide electricity rebates to Albertans

struggling with rising costs. It will also support child care workers and parents of young children and build municipal infrastructure.

Mr. Speaker, I need to point out that while we're presenting this supplementary supply bill, we've not lost sight of the importance of fiscal management. We can never lose sight of the importance of fiscal management, and within the expenditures represented in this bill, the expenditures of \$1.2 billion, there's an offset in revenue side of close to \$1 billion. In fact, the net effect on Alberta's fiscal situation for our current fiscal year, the year that ends in only a few days, will be just over \$200 million. Yes, there was required and necessary spending beyond the fiscal plan. We were in a time of pandemic. The tragic geopolitical events in Ukraine have also required a response from this government, and we know that Albertans are supportive of that initiative.

Mr. Speaker, with that, I urge all members of this House to support passage of Bill 8.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

I see the hon. Member for Edmonton-Whitemud, with 20 minutes should she choose it.

Ms Pancholi: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise and speak to this supplementary supply bill, Bill 8. I'd like to take this opportunity to comment on what I heard when I was in debate in this House on this supply bill, which I think is very concerning. I know it's taken this government a very long time to even superficially acknowledge the importance of affordable, accessible, quality child care for both our children's education but also for our economic recovery in terms of expanding access for more families so women can participate in the workforce more often and we can increase our GDP. Very reluctantly, and only because there were federal dollars on the table, did this UCP government finally acknowledge that, after, of course, ending the former NDP government's \$25-per-day program. What we saw in supplementary supply debate is that that commitment by this government to child care is actually paper-thin. It's not only paper-thin, but it falls far too short.

What we learned in supplementary supply and in this bill is that not only is there no actual commitment to getting to \$10-per-day child care by this government, but they continue to underfund and underspend on child care. During this discussion and the debate, despite saying that in the fiscal year 2021 there would be \$315 million spent by this provincial government on child care, the Minister of Children's Services acknowledged that it was actually only \$295 million and that, in fact, \$55 million of provincial funds that were dedicated for child care have not been spent, and she could not account for where those dollars would be spent.

Why is this important, Mr. Speaker? In light of, of course, the significant investment by the federal government into child care, it seems as though this government is content to let the federal government be the primary funder of what is their provincial responsibility, which is the delivery of child care and early childhood education. But it also means that this government is actually failing to live up to its commitments in agreements with the federal government that provincial funding for child care would not be replaced by federal funding. As we've heard clearly, it is being replaced. Through this bill the UCP government is asking for, you know, hundreds of millions of dollars of federal funding to go to the child care sector while acknowledging that they underspent \$55 million on child care.

Why that's also relevant, apart from the fact that the government is not living up to its commitments, is also that there was so much that could have been done this past fiscal year with \$55 million to strengthen our child care system. Importantly, movement could have been made to actually create more child care spaces. But most

importantly, Mr. Speaker, child care spaces are only relevant if there are staff there to fill them. We have a staffing shortage, and we'll continue to have a sizable staffing shortage in the early childhood education sector for some time, which will mean that this government will not fulfill its commitment to create 42,500 nonprofit spaces in Alberta over the next few years if we don't have staff. Those dollars would have been critical to keep staff in the sector, to keep educators, to retain them, and to attract new educators. Key to that would have been investing in an increased wage top-up or implementing a wage grid to make sure that early childhood educators get paid a decent wage for the professional work that they do, yet this government didn't do that. They just didn't spend \$55 million which they allocated for child care. They chose not to spend it. That, I mean, raises the question of: where did those dollars go? We don't know. The minister could not account for those dollars.

This is the second year in a row that this government has significantly underspent in child care. The previous year, Mr. Speaker: \$108 million because, yes, there was lower enrolment during the pandemic. Again, child care programs were crying out for greater PPE support, greater paid leave support for their staff so they could stay home. Maybe child care programs could have stayed open, even with lower enrolment, had they actually invested those dollars, that \$108 million that year before. But, no, the government not only did not invest it in child care; they handed it out in a quick cheque. At the end of the fiscal year they had \$108 million, and they thought: ooh, let's try to buy some support by sending out a one-time cheque to some parents, not even all parents – some parents – for child care purposes. Guess what? That didn't do anything to lower their fees the following month, didn't do anything to create more spaces. It didn't do anything to attract and retain new child care educators.

So two years in a row, Mr. Speaker, this government has significantly underspent on child care. That's \$163 million that they have not invested in child care, dollars that were set aside in their budget for that purpose that they have not used. I mean, honestly, at this point I think it's already established that this government cannot be taken seriously when it comes to investing in child care. That's important, of course, for all the families who had to wait an additional four months, five months while this government played politics to even sign that deal for the federal government, to actually see any benefits.

3:50

Even now, while some families and, hopefully, most families are seeing a significant reduction in their fees, we know that the lowest income families are not seeing the same kind of reduction. We even know that some low-income families who are eligible for full subsidy support are actually now – some of them are actually paying more under the way this government has rolled out this program. This is at a time, Mr. Speaker, when families all across this province are struggling with their bills, so any benefits that they're seeing – perhaps reduced child care fees are being eaten up now by skyrocketing utility bills, by property tax bills, by their car insurance, by school fees.

Any benefit that this government or that Albertans might have seen in reduced fees is now being eaten up by a budget that does not address the needs of Alberta families, that boasts a surplus but doesn't actually make life more affordable for Albertans. It's not creating jobs. It's not doing any of the things that this government is saying other than they get to cheer and pat themselves on the back. That's great. That's great that we have higher oil prices. No, that's not because of anything this government did. It does help their bottom line, but it is not helping Alberta families.

When we see how fiscally irresponsible they are by not even being able to invest their own child care budget into child care – \$163 million in two years, Mr. Speaker. That's how much this government has not spent on child care even though it was allocated for child care. So for all those families who over the past two years have been struggling to pay their fees, to find a child care space, to the 96 per cent of the workforce that are women, who are earning just above minimum wage as early childhood educators, who are working two jobs, who are wondering why they would stay in the child care field when they can earn more working at Tim Hortons – when all of those Albertans could have used the support from this government to actually create child care spaces, make it more affordable, attract more workers, this government did nothing. They actually pocketed that money and handed it out, \$55 million.

We don't even know – at this point this is where we're at with this government. They don't even blink about hiding \$55 million, about not accounting for it. It's just that that's the level of fiscal responsibility that this government expects Albertans to expect from them. But we know that Albertans expect higher, especially at a time when all Albertans are pinching their pennies. When they're very concerned about every dollar, this government seems incredibly irresponsible and unconcerned about how they spend Albertans' dollars.

Mr. Speaker, I have a very difficult time supporting a bill that, clearly, just demonstrates the fiscal irresponsibility of this government and their lack of commitment to investing in child care, the lip service that they continue to pay to something that is critically important not only to Alberta families but to our economy.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I'll cede my time to one of my colleagues.

The Acting Speaker: I see the hon. Minister of Children's Services has risen.

Ms Schulz: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I do want to take a quick few minutes to respond and correct the record in terms of a few of the things the member opposite just said. Now, I know this is going to be a difficult concept for the members opposite, but fighting for Albertans is what we were asked to do. It's what we were sent here by our constituents to do, fight for a fair deal for Albertans, okay?

Now, I know, Mr. Speaker, the member opposite just said that we should have signed a little faster. I heard her colleague the Member for Calgary-Buffalo say that the other night when we were in fact talking about this as well. I know that that is very difficult for them to understand. We know what they would have done because I think their past performance would have been a really good indicator.

Ms Pancholi: Where's the \$55 million, Minister?

The Acting Speaker: I think that the last hon. member who had an opportunity to speak was able to be heard. Now I'm having trouble hearing the hon. minister as I believe there is a bit of a response happening. The only person with the floor is the hon. Minister of Children's Services.

Please continue.

Ms Schulz: Thank you very much. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know that this is very difficult sometimes for the members opposite to understand. We know that past performance is a really great indicator of future activity, and what did we see the members opposite do? Sell out Albertans to our Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau. That is always what they were happy to do. Sign on the dotted line, they say. Sign on the dotted line. If we had signed on the dotted line, here's what we would have had, something very

similar to the program under the NDP, the pilot program that left out thousands and thousands of families right across Alberta. You selected certain centres and certain operators who could choose. Signing on the dotted line would mean that we would have gotten agreements like other provinces, like B.C. or Nova Scotia, who have been in fact signing agreements that would leave out – leave out – private operators. I know that is what the members opposite would have done.

Every single province is making choices when it comes to how they invest these dollars, and what did we do, Mr. Speaker? Instead of using ideology to lead our plan, we listened to Albertans. We know that between 60 and 70 per cent of child care operators are entrepreneurs. They are private operators. They are often female entrepreneurs who stepped up and said: hey, when the economy was good, we needed child care. What did they do? They stepped up to help their neighbours and grow our economy and opened up these child care centres. They are not the enemy. They are not the enemy.

When they say, Mr. Speaker, that we should have just signed on the dotted line, sell out Albertans to Justin Trudeau, that is what we would have gotten, a system that would have really just focused on nonprofit, public spaces. That was not good enough for Albertans – we heard it loud and clear – because they saw it under them.

What we did was we took the time. We took the time to listen. We took the time to gather feedback. We presented a plan, a plan that worked, a plan that worked for Albertans, nonprofit and private operators alike, Mr. Speaker. That is what we did. [interjections]

The Acting Speaker: Hon. members, one more time I'm just going to remind that the only person with the floor right now – and I know that sometimes comments made by both sides may not be agreed upon from both sides, but previously the member did have the opportunity to make her points, and now I think that there's a response happening. If the other members from the opposition are having issues with this, there will be ample opportunity to stand and take opportunities to speak as well.

The hon. Minister of Children's Services has the call.

Ms Schulz: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. We did. We took the time. We took the time to get it right, to listen to Alberta parents, to listen to Alberta child care operators. Not only did we include private operators; we also respect parent choice. What does that mean? I know that's, again, an interesting concept for the members opposite to understand. That means taking a look at the types of choices parents are making and making sure that there is flexibility in our system to meet their needs, things like preschool.

You know, that's a type of care that is very important for part-time working parents, parents who are staying at home, parents who are working from home, parents who want their children to have access to early learning and development opportunities. We included them in our plan. They weren't included under the members opposite. Not at all. We took the time to get this right. We did. We took the time to get it right. Yes, we . . .

Mr. Williams: Will the member give way?

Ms Schulz: Oh, absolutely, I will.

Mr. Williams: Well, thank you very much, Minister, for that speech. It seems members opposite are paralyzed in the sedentary position when they could rise and intervene. I'm taking the opportunity to ask the minister: approximately how many Albertans are better served now in terms of numbers where they would not have been served under the NDP pilot program? If we had continued with that, how many Albertans would not have had day

care because of their ideological drive to only have one solution rather than being flexible in an Alberta-based decision?

The Acting Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms Schulz: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm happy to speak to that. When we look at private operators, 60 to 70 per cent of our operators would have been left out. They were left out under the NDP pilot program. They actually believed that they were fundamentally going to have to shift their entire business if the members opposite would have been able to expand their plan. Why? Because they were not open for business. They did not respect parent choice. They created spaces in areas that were politically expedient. They closed child care centres because of oversaturation and not using data to drive space creation. [interjections]

Now, the member opposite, Mr. Speaker, has said – and I hope she's listening. I know she's heckling quite a bit here, but I do want her to hear this answer. She has said that we have lost child care spaces. I can tell you that we have actually grown 10,000 spaces since March of 2020. Ten thousand spaces. Throughout a pandemic, a time that has been very difficult, we invested \$165 million in child care operators right across this province because we knew that they needed those supports. We saw 10,000 additional spaces created even during a pandemic.

Let's talk about their record for a second. I mean, look at us. We want to talk about jobs, okay? Let's compare jobs for a second. I would like to talk about the record of 180,000 jobs lost under the NDP. We created 130,000 jobs last year during a pandemic. We added 10,000 child care spaces right across this province. The members opposite also want to say that we have lost early childhood educators. Mr. Speaker, not true. It's just not true. The numbers do not show that the arguments made by the members opposite have any semblance of fact.

We, in fact, were around 18,000 educators. That number did drop during the pandemic, Mr. Speaker . . .

4:00

Mr. Schow: Will the member give way?

Ms Schulz: Absolutely.

Mr. Schow: Thank you, hon. member and Minister of Children's Services. I do have a question specifically regarding something that the hon. minister had just said about misrepresenting certain facts and not having the facts correct. I'm wondering if the minister could maybe elaborate on some more inaccurate facts that the NDP has tried to peddle in this Chamber, specifically the Member for Edmonton-Whitemud, as that member chooses not to listen but . . .

Mr. Sabir: Point of order.

The Acting Speaker: I hear that a point of order has been made. The hon. Member for Calgary-Bhullar-McCall has risen.

Point of Order

Allegations against a Member

Mr. Sabir: Under Standing Order 23(h), (i), and (j). I think that insofar as the member is talking about the NDP as a whole, that's fine, but when you specifically pick on an individual member, that's offside these rules. It's a point of order, and I urge you to rule that as such.

The Acting Speaker: I see the Deputy Government House Leader.

Mr. Schow: Well, two things, Mr. Speaker. One, there was no point of order cited, no standing order . . . [interjection] You can sit down. You've had your chance to speak.

Second, Mr. Speaker, I was specifically referring to statements made by the Member for Edmonton-Whitemud, the critic for Children's Services, and that member, in my opinion, has made a number of accusations and misrepresented or used inaccurate facts in this Chamber. I am simply asking the minister if that minister could cite some of the inaccurate facts that the Member for Edmonton-Whitemud has used. It's not a personal attack, and I know it gets the members opposite very riled up when they hear this . . .

Mr. Eggen: Because we're trying to debate the budget.

Mr. Schow: Again, it's my opportunity to speak, Mr. Speaker. Should the member from Edmonton – I forget the constituency – choose to speak, he has an opportunity.

Not a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you, hon. member. [interjections] Order.

I have taken into account both sides. I do think that we are getting frightfully close to the line with regard to language that could create disorder in here. There is always an opportunity within debates to disagree among facts. At this point, though, I do not believe that this is a point of order. However, as I've kind of intimated at the start, I would caution members with regard to the language that they are using.

I think that, in noting the time, I'm going to take up less of it given that 4:15 is coming imminently, and the hon. Minister of Children's Services, I hope everybody here understands, is the only one with the call.

Debate Continued

Ms Schulz: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I have a feeling it's going to get a little quieter in here now for this round of my comments.

Just to clarify, we have made significant investments in this year's budget, and I do want to tie this to the budget and also respond to the question that the Member for Cardston-Siksika had raised, which is, you know: what is some of the misinformation that we've heard today so that we can get it on the record and clarify the record?

You know, the members opposite said that there's no support for educators, that there's no plan to create spaces, that there's no plan to move forward with reducing child care costs further. That couldn't be further from the truth. We signed an agreement with the federal government, unlike the members opposite, fought for a made-in-Alberta plan. We did not take the first offer that was slid across the desk, because that is not what Albertans sent us here to do.

So let's talk about this budget. This budget has over a billion dollars to invest in early learning and child care. [interjection] Absolutely.

Mrs. Aheer: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and, through you, to the minister. Because you're speaking about how you're connecting to the budget, could you also speak about the incredible amount of consultation that you did? I know that much of that consultation came through my riding and many other ridings. It's really important to understand how those dollars were leveraged, especially because of the immense amount of consultation that you did.

Thank you.

The Acting Speaker: The minister.

Ms Schulz: Thank you very much, and thank you for that question. We took part in the first consultation in over a decade with child care operators. The MLA for Grande Prairie led a lot of that when it came to our legislation, but we also heard a lot about what people wanted to see in this plan, Mr. Speaker. We did in fact travel the province, again, and met with nonprofit and private operators alike so that we could make sure that we got this plan right.

This million dollars and this plan that we signed with the federal government, Mr. Speaker, despite what the member opposite said, absolutely do seek to create 42,500 spaces in the nonprofit and home-based sector alone, with additional growth being required. We need the growth in the private sector as well, because we know the innovation and high quality that many of those programs provide. We need that if we want to meet the terms of the agreement with the federal government, and that is right in the plan. We are committed to looking at the wage grid and: how can we do a better job of recruiting and retaining in a time when we're going to see huge economic growth?

We're already seeing the job growth, Mr. Speaker. We know that there's going to be a labour market shortage, so how can we do things better to bring more early child educators into the field and keep them there? We are consulting on that because the answer isn't simple. It's not a one-size-fits-all. We want to be flexible, and the feedback we heard was diverse, so instead of moving ahead based on our own thoughts or ideology, unlike what we saw from the members opposite, we're continuing to listen. We do have \$1 billion to invest, and I just do want to clarify one thing. One thing I just want to end on is that, unlike the members opposite – borrow, tax, spend; borrow, tax, spend; borrow, tax, spend – this budget is a good budget.

I was sent here on behalf of my constituents to deliver a balanced budget, investing in things that matter to Albertans like child care, health care, education, and a balanced budget. We didn't sign on the dotted line, but, Mr. Speaker, there is one taxpayer here. One taxpayer. These are good investments on behalf of the people of Alberta.

Thank you for the opportunity to correct the record.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you, Minister.

I see the hon. Member for Edmonton-Ellerslie has the call.

Member Loyola: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As you can see, the United Conservatives like to pat themselves on the back and claim that this budget actually serves Albertans. But I can tell you something: there are a number of Albertans out there that aren't patting this government on the back. That's for sure. That's for sure. Now, I know that the members opposite like to claim that they're listening to all Albertans, but you know what I would say? They only like to listen to the Albertans that actually support their own ideological perspective.

Mr. McIver: Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: The hon. minister has called a point of order.

Point of Order

Language Creating Disorder

Mr. McIver: Clearly, under Standing Order 23(h), (i), and (j), the member opposite said that our party, our side, only likes to listen to people that agree with us, Mr. Speaker. That's entirely not true. Under (h) and (i) it's a false and unavowed motive applied to

another member. It's "abusive or insulting language of a nature likely to create disorder."

The Acting Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister. I appreciate the comments.

I think I'm prepared. However, if somebody does want to . . .

Mr. Sabir: It's not a point of order.

The Acting Speaker: That is what I'm going to say as well.

The hon. member can please continue with the call.

Debate Continued

Member Loyola: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. But that's what we can expect from this government, because when they don't like the truth being stated inside of this House, they simply like to heckle. They like chirping over there, just like you can hear them right now, right? The reality is that they're not listening to all Albertans, because if they were actually listening to all Albertans . . . [interjections]

The Acting Speaker: Hon. members, as you know, I always try to be as unbiased as possible in here, but during the previous speaker there were some comments being made that made it difficult for me to hear the debate. The only member with the call right now is the hon. Member for Edmonton-Ellerslie.

Please continue.

Member Loyola: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. You see, that's the problem. They like to overshoot, and they just think that if it doesn't fit with their ideological perspective, then it doesn't deserve any time of day. [interjections] You know, the members on the other side: there they are heckling again. Heckling again, just like they always do in this House, right?

4:10

So this is the truth: we have been elected to be inside this House and represent all Albertans. When I come into this House and I express opinions – you know what? I'll qualify this even further, Mr. Speaker. I know that the members on the other side of the House are getting the same e-mails I'm getting because they're copied on them. They're copied on them. So how can they claim to be listening to all Albertans when Albertans are saying that their insurance is going up? Insurance is going up, utilities are going up, and life is becoming more unaffordable for Albertans with this particular budget.

You know, they got this windfall – they got this windfall – and they could have applied it and actually made some decisions that were actually better for Albertans. But they chose, "No; we're going to stick to our own plan; we're going to do what we want to do, our ideological perspective," which, as I've said in this House a number of times, Mr. Speaker, is completely outdated, this trickle-down theory that giving money and perks to the most wealthy in our society is somehow going to create more and more jobs for Albertans. What we're seeing: we're seeing part-time jobs. We're seeing part-time jobs at Walmart. You know, I have nothing against Walmart. I personally don't like going there myself, but I'll tell you this. The people who are working at Walmart, in jurisdictions even outside of Alberta, don't have enough money. They actually have to go to the food bank because they don't make enough money.

Now, you apply the fact that this Conservative government is actually giving perks and money away to big corporations, and then on top of that, Mr. Speaker, as if bad didn't come to worse, they have the perspective that they're going to take benefits away from workers, good-paying union jobs where people get additional benefits, which

is a part of the way that they're remunerated. They're going to take those away. You have one policy with another policy, so when holistically you start looking at the policies of Conservative governments, you see that they're actually disadvantaging, creating disadvantage for Albertans. They like to call themselves the party that's bringing back the Alberta advantage. [some applause]

The Acting Speaker: Order. Order.

With limited time available, the hon. member.

Member Loyola: This is the kind of clowning around that these members like to do inside of this House, Mr. Speaker. This is the kind of clowning around that they like to do, because anybody who gets up and actually debates against their perspective . . .

Mr. Schow: Point of order.

The Acting Speaker: Hon. member, I was listening, and I'm going to say right now that there is not a point of order from what I heard. I was listening very carefully.

Mr. Schow: I called a point of order on that member.

The Acting Speaker: I will listen to this one, then, because I was listening to the member. I don't have the benefit of the Blues, and I think that, actually, from what I just stated, I can't call a point of order on something that I didn't hear. I know that we are short on time with regard to this because 4:15 is coming up quick. Please do not use a point of order for the purposes of potentially joining debate. However, I recognize that that wasn't your intention. It still does not discount the ruling that I have.

The hon. member.

Member Loyola: Mr. Speaker, this government, this UCP government, is creating more and more disadvantage for Albertans. They're making life less and less and less affordable with the decisions that they've made. They've made insurance go up. They've made utilities go up. And what they're replacing it with is part-time jobs for Albertans. What Albertans truly need is full-time, mortgage-paying jobs, ones that they know they can rely on. They need jobs that are going to be able to provide benefits for them and their families, for their children. That is real advantage. You can bet that in 2023, when this next election happens, we're going to be on that side of the House to actually come through with a plan that will provide advantage for all Albertans in this province.

The Acting Speaker: Hon. members, I hesitate to interrupt the hon. member because I was enjoying the debate today. I could have sat here for hours, actually, with the way things were going. However, unfortunately, the time is 4:15. I hesitate, of course, to interrupt the hon. Member for Edmonton-Ellerslie, but in accordance with Standing Order 64(5) the chair is required to put the question to the House on every appropriation bill standing on the Order Paper for third reading.

Bill 7 **Appropriation Act, 2022** *(continued)*

[The voice vote indicated that the motion for third reading carried]

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 4:16 p.m.]

[One minute having elapsed, the Assembly divided]

[Mr. Milliken in the chair]

For the motion:

Aheer	Lovely	Sawhney
Allard	Luan	Schow
Amery	Madu	Schulz
Armstrong-Homeniuk	McIver	Shandro
Copping	Nally	Sigurdson, R.J.
Dreeshen	Neudorf	Singh
Ellis	Nicolaides	Stephan
Fir	Nixon, Jason	Toews
Frey	Nixon, Jeremy	Toor
Getson	Orr	Turton
Glubish	Panda	van Dijken
Hunter	Pon	Walker
Issik	Rehn	Williams
Jones	Rowswell	Wilson
LaGrange	Rutherford	Yao
Long	Savage	Yaseen

4:20

Against the motion:

Carson	Goehring	Pancholi
Eggen	Hoffman	Sabir
Feehan	Loyola	Schmidt

Totals:	For – 48	Against – 9
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[Motion carried; Bill 7 read a third time]

Bill 8 **Appropriation (Supplementary Supply) Act, 2022** *(continued)*

[The voice vote indicated that the motion for third reading carried]

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 4:22 p.m.]

[One minute having elapsed, the Assembly divided]

[Mr. Milliken in the chair]

For the motion:

Aheer	Lovely	Sawhney
Allard	Luan	Schow
Amery	Madu	Schulz
Armstrong-Homeniuk	McIver	Shandro
Copping	Nally	Sigurdson, R.J.
Dreeshen	Neudorf	Singh
Ellis	Nicolaides	Stephan
Fir	Nixon, Jason	Toews
Frey	Nixon, Jeremy	Toor
Getson	Orr	Turton
Glubish	Panda	van Dijken
Hunter	Pon	Walker
Issik	Rehn	Williams
Jones	Rowswell	Wilson
LaGrange	Rutherford	Yao
Long	Savage	Yaseen

Against the motion:

Carson	Goehring	Pancholi
Eggen	Hoffman	Sabir
Feehan	Loyola	Schmidt

Totals:	For – 48	Against – 9
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[Motion carried; Bill 8 read a third time]

The Acting Speaker: I see the Government House Leader has risen.

Mr. Jason Nixon: Mr. Speaker, I rise to ask for unanimous consent to waive the necessary standing orders in order to proceed immediately to consideration of Government Motion 17.

[Unanimous consent granted]

Government Motions

Bill 203 Committee Referral Timeline

17. Mr. Jason Nixon moved:
Be it resolved that the period referred to in Standing Order

74.11(2) be extended from eight sitting days to 11 sitting days in respect to Bill 203, Technology Innovation and Alberta Venture Fund Act.

The Acting Speaker: Are there any members wishing to join debate?

[Government Motion 17 carried]

The Acting Speaker: The Government House Leader.

Mr. Jason Nixon: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that we adjourn the House until Monday at 1:30 p.m.

[Motion carried; the Assembly adjourned at 4:28 p.m.]

Bill Status Report for the 30th Legislature - 3rd Session (2022)

Activity to Thursday, March 24, 2022

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 Sittings.

Bill 1 — Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Recognition Act (\$) (Kenney)

First Reading — 4 (*Feb. 22, 2022 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 94-97 (*Mar. 7, 2022 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 140-44 (*Mar. 10, 2022 aft., passed*)

Third Reading — 230-34 (*Mar. 17, 2022 aft., passed*)

Royal Assent — (*Mar. 24, 2022 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force on proclamation]

Bill 2 — Financial Statutes Amendment Act, 2022 (\$) (Toews)

First Reading — 110 (*Mar. 8, 2022 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 312-19 (*Mar. 22, 2022 aft.*), 391-95 (*Mar. 23, 2022 eve., adjourned*)

Bill 3 — Special Days Act (Orr)

First Reading — 124 (*Mar. 9, 2022 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 327 (*Mar. 22, 2022 eve., adjourned*), 343-45 (*Mar. 22, 2022 eve., adjourned*), 346 (*Mar. 22, 2022 eve., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 375-78 (*Mar. 23, 2022 aft.*), 379 (*Mar. 23, 2022 eve., passed*)

Third Reading — 389-91 (*Mar. 23, 2022 eve., passed*)

Royal Assent — (*Mar. 24, 2022 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force March 24, 2022]

Bill 4 — Municipal Government (Face Mask and Proof of COVID-19 Vaccination Bylaws) Amendment Act, 2022 (McIver)

First Reading — 110 (*Mar. 8, 2022 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 163-77 (*Mar. 14, 2022 aft.*), 360-66 (*Mar. 23, 2022 aft.*), 396 (*Mar. 23, 2022 eve., passed*)

Bill 5 — Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2022 (Sawhney)

First Reading — 202 (*Mar. 16, 2022 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 319-26 (*Mar. 22, 2022 aft., adjourned*)

Bill 6 — Emblems of Alberta Amendment Act, 2022 (Orr)

First Reading — 228 (*Mar. 17, 2022 aft., passed*)

Bill 7 — Appropriation Act, 2022 (\$) (Toews)

First Reading — 272-73 (*Mar. 21, 2022 eve., passed*)

Second Reading — 310-11 (*Mar. 22, 2022 aft., adjourned*), 327-36 (*Mar. 22, 2022 eve., adjourned*), 345 (*Mar. 22, 2022 eve., passed on division*)

Committee of the Whole — 366-75 (*Mar. 23, 2022 aft.*), (*Mar. 23, 2022 eve.*), 395 (*Mar. 23, 2022 eve., passed on division*)

Third Reading — 411-14 (*Mar. 24, 2022 aft.*), 419 (*Mar. 24, 2022 aft., passed on division*)

Royal Assent — (*Mar. 24, 2022 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force March 24, 2022]

Bill 8 — Appropriation (Supplementary Supply) Act, 2022 (\$) (Toews)

First Reading — 297 (*Mar. 21, 2022 eve., passed*)

Second Reading — 311-12 (*Mar. 22, 2022 aft., adjourned*), 336-43 (*Mar. 22, 2022 eve., adjourned*), 345-46 (*Mar. 22, 2022 eve., passed on division*)

Committee of the Whole — 379-89 (*Mar. 23, 2022 eve.*), 395 (*Mar. 23, 2022 eve., passed on division*)

Third Reading — 414-19 (*Mar. 24, 2022 aft.*), 419 (*Mar. 24, 2022 aft., passed on division*)

Royal Assent — (*Mar. 24, 2022 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force March 24, 2022]

Bill 9 — Public's Right to Know Act (Shandro)

First Reading — 309 (*Mar. 22, 2022 aft., passed*)

Bill 10 — Health Professions (Protecting Women and Girls) Amendment Act, 2022 (Aheer)

First Reading — 408 (*Mar. 24, 2022 aft., passed*)

Bill 201 — Eastern Slopes Protection Act (Notley)

First Reading — 156 (*Mar. 14, 2022 aft., passed; referred to the Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills*)

Bill 202 — Public Health (Transparency and Accountability) Amendment Act, 2022 (Loewen)

First Reading — 110 (*Mar. 8, 2022 aft., passed; referred to the Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills*), (*Mar. 22, 2022 , committee recommendation that Bill proceed reported to Assembly; motion on concurrence to take place Monday, March 28, 2022*)

Bill 203 — Technology Innovation and Alberta Venture Fund Act (Bilous)

First Reading — 228 (*Mar. 17, 2022 aft., passed; referred to the Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills*)

Bill 204 — Anti-Racism Act (Shepherd)

First Reading — 408 (*Mar. 24, 2022 aft., passed*)

Bill Pr1 — Calgary Young Men's Christian Association Amendment Act, 2022 (Jones)

First Reading — 309 (*Mar. 22, 2022 aft., passed; referred to the Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills*)

Bill Pr2 — Calgary Heritage Authority Amendment Act, 2022 (Nixon, JP)

First Reading — 309 (*Mar. 22, 2022 aft., passed; referred to the Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills*)

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