



**Legislative Assembly
Province of Alberta**

No. 24

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

Fourth Session

Twenty-Fifth Legislature

Monday, March 29, 2004

The Speaker took the Chair at 1:30 p.m.

Speaker's Statement - Leader of the Official Opposition

Honourable Members, I received earlier today from the Honourable Member for Edmonton-Mill Woods, a letter resigning his position as Interim Leader of the Official Opposition. In his letter he requested that the newly elected Leader of the Liberal Party of Alberta, the Member for Edmonton-Riverview, be recognized as the Leader of the Official Opposition. I therefore recognize the Honourable Member for Edmonton-Riverview as the Leader of the Official Opposition in the Legislative Assembly of Alberta.

Recognitions

Mr. Maskell, Hon. Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark: Over 600 Alberta performers and artists to be featured by Alberta Scene at 94 events hosted by the National Arts Centre in Ottawa from April 28 to May 10, 2005

Mr. Lord, Hon. Member for Calgary-Currie: Lesa Stringer of Calgary, a member of the first Canadian women's bobsled team to qualify for the Olympic Winter Games

Dr. Pannu, Hon. Member for Edmonton-Strathcona: Raging Grannies, public health care advocates

Mrs. Jablonski, Hon. Member for Red Deer-North: Taryn Penrice of Red Deer, recipient of an Alberta Great Kids Award on March 12, 2004

Rev. Abbott, Hon. Member for Drayton Valley-Calmar, on behalf of Mr. Stelmach, Hon. Member for Vegreville-Viking (Minister of Transportation): Lamont High School boys' curling team who recently won the Provincial Curling Championship in Drayton Valley

Mr. Cao, Hon. Member for Calgary-Fort: International Avenue Business Revitalization Zone in Calgary

Dr. Massey, Hon. Member for Edmonton-Mill Woods: Lee Ridge School which recently held a read-a-thon during which students read for over 4,140 hours

Tabling Returns and Reports

Hon. Mr. Hancock, Government House Leader:

Letter dated March 25, 2004, from Hon. Dr. Oberg, Minister of Learning, Hon. Mr. Woloshyn, Minister of Seniors, Dr. Pannu, Hon. Member for Edmonton-Strathcona, and Dr. Massey, Hon. Member for Edmonton-Mill Woods, to Hon. Mr. Hancock, Government House Leader, confirming the schedule for Committee of Supply consideration of the 2004-05 Main Estimates of the Department of Learning on the afternoon of April 22, 2004 and Alberta Seniors on the afternoon of May 6, 2004, with all affected parties agreeing to the change in dates

Sessional Paper 203/2004

Dr. Pannu, Hon. Member for Edmonton-Strathcona, on behalf of Mr. Mason, Hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands:

Letter dated September 5, 2003, from Corinne Pohlmann, Director, Alberta/NWT (Edmonton) and Dan Kelly, Vice-President, Western Region (Calgary), Canadian Federation of Independent Business, to Hon. Mrs. Nelson, Minister of Finance, and Mr. Renner, Hon. Member for Medicine Hat, including associated attachments, providing information concerning the increasing cost of commercial insurance and its effect on small and medium-sized enterprises in Alberta

Sessional Paper 204/2004

Hon. Mr. Kowalski, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly:

Letter dated March 29, 2004, from Dr. Massey, Hon. Member for Edmonton-Mill Woods, to Hon. Mr. Kowalski, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, resigning as Interim Leader of the Official Opposition and requesting Dr. Taft, Hon. Member of Edmonton-Riverview, be recognized as Leader of the Official Opposition effective March 29, 2004

Sessional Paper 205/2004

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Written Questions

The following Written Questions were accepted:

WQ31. Moved by Mr. MacDonald:

How many of the 30,271 Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped and 28,278 Supports for Independence cases recorded in the Ministry of Human Resources and Employment 2002-2003 annual report included children?

WQ36. Moved by Ms Blakeman:

What is the total dollar amount spent by the Ministry and Department of Seniors on the development and implementation of the Alberta Seniors Shelter In-Take Survey form between April 1, 2002 and February 17, 2004?

WQ41. Moved by Dr. Nicol on behalf of Ms Carlson:

What progress has the Government made in implementing the Auditor General's recommendation that the Department of International and Intergovernmental Relations adhere to the laws of Alberta by enhancing its intergovernmental agreements systems to comply with section 11 and schedule 6 of the Government Organization Act?

WQ42. Moved by Dr. Nicol on behalf of Ms Carlson:

What stage of the process is the Government at in implementing the Auditor General's recommendation contained in his 2002-2003 Annual Report to change Government accounting practices in order to improve accountability for the Government's spending of taxpayers' dollars?

The following Written Questions were accepted as amended:

WQ28. Moved by Ms Blakeman on behalf of Ms Carlson:

What is the total dollar amount of public property lost due to theft in the Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development for the 2002-2003 fiscal year?

Hon. Mr. Hancock, Government House Leader, on behalf of Hon. Mrs. McClellan, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development, moved the motion be amended to read:

What is the total dollar amount of public property lost due to theft in the Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development *and the departments referred to in Written Questions WQ29, WQ30, WQ34, WQ46, WQ60 to WQ65 inclusive, WQ72, WQ73, WQ80, and WQ81* for the 2002-2003 fiscal year?

WQ38. Moved by Mr. MacDonald:

How many complaints did the Government call centre receive from Albertans regarding high natural gas bills between January 1, 2000 and February 17, 2004?

Hon. Mr. Coutts, Minister of Government Services, moved the motion be amended to read:

How many complaints did the *Utilities Consumer Advocate* call centre receive from Albertans regarding high natural gas bills between *November 23, 2003* and February 17, 2004?

WQ39. Moved by Mr. MacDonald:

How many complaints did the Government call centre receive from Albertans regarding deregulation or high electricity bills between January 1, 2000 and February 17, 2004?

Hon. Mr. Coutts, Minister of Government Services, moved the motion be amended to read:

How many complaints did the *Utilities Consumer Advocate* call centre receive from Albertans regarding deregulation or high electricity bills between *November 23, 2003* and February 17, 2004?

WQ43. Moved by Dr. Pannu:

Of the monies the Government receives annually from health care premiums, what amount was remitted by employers for the fiscal year 2002-03 and from April 1, 2003 to February 20, 2004, and of that amount, how much was paid by employers on behalf of employees?

Hon. Ms Evans, Minister of Children's Services, on behalf of Hon. Mr. Mar, Minister of Health and Wellness, moved the motion be amended to read:

Of the monies the Government receives annually from health care premiums, what amount was remitted by employers for the fiscal year 2002-03 and from April 1, 2003 to February 29, 2004.

WQ44. Moved by Dr. Pannu:

For the fiscal years 2001-02, 2002-03, and from April 1, 2003 to February 20, 2004, what was the total amount paid to collections agencies for collecting arrears on health care premiums broken down by agency?

Hon. Mr. Zwozdesky, Deputy Government House Leader, on behalf of Hon. Mr. Mar, Minister of Health and Wellness, moved the motion be amended to read:

For the fiscal years 2001-02, 2002-03, and from April 1, 2003 to February 29, 2004, what was the total amount paid to collections agencies for collecting arrears on health care premiums broken down by agency?

WQ45. Moved by Dr. Pannu:

For the fiscal year 2002-03 and from April 1, 2003 to February 20, 2004, how many health care premium accounts were in arrears by one day or more, by three months or more, and by one year or more, and what is the total amount of those arrears in each of these fiscal years?

Hon. Mr. Zwozdesky, Deputy Government House Leader, on behalf of Hon. Mr. Mar, Minister of Health and Wellness, moved the motion be amended to read:

For the fiscal year 2002-03 and from April 1, 2003 to February 29, 2004, how many health care premium accounts were in arrears by one day or more, by three months or more, and by one year or more, and what is the total amount of those arrears in each of these fiscal years?

The following Written Questions were rejected:

WQ35. Moved by Ms Blakeman:

Which correctional facilities is the Solicitor General planning to close and what is the time table for the closures?

WQ37. Moved by Ms Blakeman:

What is the total number of Government employees who have been charged with fraud against the Alberta Government between January 1, 1993 and February 17, 2004 inclusive?

WQ40. Moved by Dr. Nicol on behalf of Dr. Taft:

What calculations have been used by the Department of Health and Wellness, as required under section 8(3)(d)(v) of the Health Care Protection Act, to evaluate the cost-effectiveness of contracts for services with private surgical facilities, for each contract approved under the Health Care Protection Act?

The following Written Questions were ordered to stand:

WQ47, WQ48, WQ49, WQ50, WQ51, WQ52, WQ53, WQ54, WQ55, WQ56, WQ57, WQ58, WQ59, WQ66, WQ68, WQ69, WQ71, WQ75, WQ76, WQ77, WQ78, WQ79.

Motions for Returns

The following Motion for Returns was accepted as amended:

MR16. Moved by Ms Blakeman on behalf of Dr. Taft:

That an Order of the Assembly do issue for a Return showing:
The current information technology services contract tendering policy and process for the Ministry and Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development.

Hon. Mr. Hancock, Government House Leader, on behalf of Hon. Ms Calahasen, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, moved the motion be amended to read:

That an Order of the Assembly do issue for a Return showing:
The current information technology services contract tendering policy and process for *all Ministries and Departments in the Government of Alberta referred to in Motions for Returns MR17, MR50, MR51, MR54, MR63, MR74, MR76, MR77, MR106, MR107, MR124, MR125, MR126, MR127, MR144, MR145, and MR206.*

The following Motions for Returns were rejected:

MR14. Moved by Ms Blakeman on behalf of Ms Carlson:

That an Order of the Assembly do issue for a Return showing:
The total dollar amount spent by the Ministry of International and Intergovernmental Relations on contracts for information technology services, broken down by company and total dollar amount for each, for the 2002-2003 fiscal year.

MR15. Moved by Ms Blakeman on behalf of Ms Carlson:

That an Order of the Assembly do issue for a Return showing:
The total dollar amount spent by the Ministry of Sustainable Resource Development on contracts for information technology services, broken down by company and total dollar amount for each, for the 2002-2003 fiscal year.

The following Motions for Returns were ordered to stand:

MR18, MR19, MR23, MR24, MR25, MR26, MR27, MR28, MR29, MR30, MR31, MR34, MR35, MR36, MR37, MR38, MR39, MR40, MR41, MR42, MR44, MR45, MR46, MR47, MR48, MR49, MR52, MR53, MR55, MR56, MR57, MR58, MR59, MR60, MR61, MR62, MR64, MR65, MR66, MR67, MR68, MR69, MR70, MR71, MR72, MR73, MR75, MR78, MR79, MR80, MR81, MR82, MR83, MR84, MR85, MR86, MR87, MR88, MR89, MR90, MR91, MR92, MR93, MR94, MR95, MR96, MR97, MR98, MR99, MR100, MR101, MR102, MR103, MR104, MR105, MR108, MR109, MR110, MR111, MR112, MR113, MR114, MR115, MR116, MR117, MR118, MR119, MR120, MR121, MR122, MR123, MR128, MR129, MR130, MR131, MR132, MR133, MR134, MR135, MR136, MR137, MR138, MR139, MR140, MR141, MR142, MR143, MR146, MR147, MR148, MR149, MR150, MR151, MR152, MR153, MR154, MR155, MR156, MR157, MR158, MR159, MR160, MR162, MR164, MR165, MR166, MR167, MR168, MR169, MR170, MR171, MR172, MR173, MR174, MR175, MR176, MR177, MR178, MR179, MR180.

Unanimous Consent

Hon. Mr. Hancock, Government House Leader, requested and received the unanimous consent of the Assembly to move to the next order of business, consideration of Private Members' Public Bills.

Public Bills and Orders Other Than Government Bills and Orders

Second Reading

On the motion that the following Bill be now read a Second time:

Bill 203 Canada Pension Plan Credits Statutes Amendment Act, 2004— Ms Kryczka

A debate followed.

Debate adjourned, Mr. MacDonald speaking.

Adjournment

Pursuant to Standing Order 4(1), the Speaker adjourned the Assembly at 5:30 p.m. until 8:00 p.m.

Motions Other Than Government Motions

505. Moved by Dr. Massey on behalf of Dr. Taft:

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly urge the Government to eliminate healthcare premiums.

A debate followed.

The question being put, the motion was defeated.

506. Moved by Mr. Strang:

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly urge the Government to take measures to establish a tourism levy to be dedicated to the Province's tourism marketing framework to promote the tourism industry in Alberta.

A debate followed.

Pursuant to Standing Order 8(3), debate adjourned, Ms Carlson speaking.

Committee of Supply (Day 1 — Main Estimates)

According to Order, the Assembly resolved itself into Committee of Supply.

(Assembly in Committee)

And after some time spent therein, the Deputy Speaker resumed the Chair and Ms Graham reported as follows:

Mr. Speaker:

The Committee of Supply has had under consideration certain resolutions, reports as follows, and requests leave to sit again:

Resolved that a sum not exceeding the following be granted to Her Majesty for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2005, for the Departments and purposes indicated:

Support to the Legislative Assembly

\$38,664,000 Operating Expense

Office of the Auditor General

\$17,646,000 Operating Expense and Equipment / Inventory Purchases

Office of the Ombudsman

\$2,130,000 Operating Expense

Office of the Chief Electoral Officer

\$13,735,000 Operating Expense

Office of the Ethics Commissioner

\$447,000 Operating Expense

Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner

\$4,072,000 Operating Expense

International and Intergovernmental Relations

\$8,524,000 Operating Expense and Equipment / Inventory Purchases

The question being put, the report and the request for leave to sit again were agreed to.

Adjournment

On motion by Hon. Mr. Hancock, Government House Leader, the Assembly adjourned at 10:07 p.m. until Tuesday, March 30, 2004, at 1:30 p.m.

Hon. Ken Kowalski,
Speaker

Title: Monday, March 29, 2004