

# Legislative Assembly Province of Alberta

No. 2

# **VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS**

First Session

Twenty-Sixth Legislature

Wednesday, March 2, 2005

The Speaker took the Chair at 3:00 p.m.

## **Speaker's Statement**

The Speaker offered a prayer and a moment of silence was observed in recognition of the Late, The Honourable Dr. Lois E. Hole, who passed away on January 6, 2005.

While awaiting the arrival of His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor, the Royal Canadian Artillery Band played a brief musical interlude.

His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor entered the Assembly and took his seat on the Throne.

## Speaker's Address to the Lieutenant Governor

The Speaker said:

May it please Your Honour, the Legislative Assembly have elected me as their Speaker, though I am but little able to fulfil the important duties thus assigned to me.

If in the performance of those duties I should at any time fall into error, I pray that the fault may be imputed to me and not the Assembly, whose servant I am, and who, through me, the better to enable them to discharge their duties to their Queen and Province, hereby claim all their undoubted rights and privileges, especially that they may have freedom of speech in their debates, access to your person at all seasonable times, and that their proceedings may receive from you the most favourable construction.

## **Statement by the Provincial Secretary**

The Provincial Secretary, Hon. Mr. Stevens, then said:

I am commanded by His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor to declare to you that he freely confides in the duty and attachment of this Assembly to Her Majesty's person and Government, and, not doubting that the proceedings will be conducted with wisdom, temperance, and prudence, he grants and upon all occasions will recognize and allow the Assembly's constitutional privileges.

I am commanded also to assure you that the Assembly shall have ready access to His Honour upon all seasonable occasions and that all proceedings as well as your words and actions will constantly receive from him the most favourable construction.

His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor then read the following Speech from the Throne:

## **Speech From the Throne**

Fellow Albertans, it is my privilege to welcome you to the First Session of the 26th Alberta Legislature.

#### The Next Alberta

It is my great honour to deliver the Speech from the Throne as it is my great honour to serve as this province's Lieutenant Governor. In this role I have big shoes to fill, or perhaps I should say big rubber boots. My predecessor, the Late, The Honourable Lois Hole, was much beloved by Albertans. She brought warmth, grace, kindness, and compassion to this office. She personified the very best qualities of this Province.

I had the honour and privilege of meeting Bill and Valerie and Jim and Marcia this afternoon and know that their mother's qualities are carried on in the family.

All of us here can do no less than endeavour to follow Mrs. Hole's example. We must strive to fulfill the duties of our offices with diligence and dignity. We must respect each other even when we disagree. Above all, we must always remember the people we serve and act in ways that will bring honour to them and this Province, as she did.

This year the Government will establish lasting tributes to Lois Hole. Later on I will announce two initiatives in recognition of Mrs. Hole's dedication to libraries and learning. The Government will also celebrate the Late Lieutenant Governor's first love, gardening, with the creation of a memorial garden on the grounds of the Alberta Legislature. There will be a seating area where visitors can enjoy the beauty of the garden and the grounds. The garden will be named after Lois Hole and will include a cairn with a plaque featuring her portrait and biographical highlights of her life and legacy.

During this centennial year we will also remember the legacies of the many other great Albertans who came before us and we will celebrate the wonderful province they helped to build.

#### The Centennial: A Century of Achievement

It's amazing to think of how far Alberta has come from its roots 100 years ago. Back in 1905 Alberta's population was only 185,000, much smaller than that of either Saskatchewan or Manitoba, and the people were outnumbered by the livestock. There were nearly a quarter million horses and a million cattle in Alberta at that time.

A look back at this province's first Speech from the Throne, delivered by Lieutenant Governor George Bulyea in the First Legislature at McKay Avenue School, shows some surprising similarities with the business that concerns us today. Mr. Bulyea noted, as I also will, the importance of agriculture to the Province. He spoke about the pressures a rapidly growing population puts on infrastructure, pressures we continue to face today. Back in 1905 Alberta was developing a telephone system, while 2005 will see the completion of the SuperNet.

The people who heard Lieutenant Governor Bulyea's words couldn't have known all the struggles they would face. They didn't know how difficult it would be to build the roads, bridges, and railroad tracks that would connect this province to the rest of the country. They didn't know that fires, floods, and droughts were on their way. They didn't know that many of their sons and daughters would give their lives building this province and this country and defending it overseas.

What they did know was that theirs was a land blessed with beauty and natural resources. They knew they would have to work hard to turn the land's promise into prosperity. They knew that with provincehood came great responsibility. It was a responsibility they willingly accepted, and together they built a strong, vibrant province.

Today all Albertans owe a debt of gratitude to those who came before us: to the aboriginal people, whose deep connection to this land spans generations and centuries; to our seniors, who laid the foundations for the communities that took root all across this province and made it home; to the settlers, who came from all over the world to make a fresh start here, often bringing nothing more with them than dreams and determination; to those who fought for this nation in armed conflicts; and to everyone who had faith in this province and what it could become. The fruits of their labours are all around us.

Alberta now enters its second century with a strong economy, no debt, nation-leading rates of growth and employment, a high standard of living, and an enviable quality of life. The credit for all these achievements rests with Albertans themselves, and they are indeed achievements worth celebrating in this centennial year.

Albertans will mark the centennial in ways that are as grand and unique as Alberta itself. Among the highlights of the province's centennial celebrations will be a visit from Her Majesty the Queen and His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh this spring. In honour of the centennial a new graduate scholarship and fellowship program will be established. Beginning in the next school year 200 students enrolled in full-time masters programs in Alberta will each receive a \$9,300 scholarship, and 100 students enrolled in full-time Ph.D. programs will each receive a \$10,500 fellowship. A total of 300 students will receive nearly \$3 million through this program, a number that will grow with the number of graduate students in Alberta.

Another way Alberta will mark its centennial is by presenting centennial medallions to all schoolchildren and to Albertans who are 100 years or older.

As Albertans celebrate the Province's past, they will also look ahead with enthusiasm to the next Alberta, the Alberta our children and grandchildren will inherit. My Government's goal is to make sure that the next Alberta is even better than the Alberta of today.

#### The Next Alberta Will Be a Leader in Learning

That's why the next Alberta will continue to be a leader in learning. The children of Alberta already benefit from one of the best education systems in the world. Its success is due to dedicated students, outstanding teachers, and a high-quality curriculum. Alberta will continue to invest in its children's futures by supporting initiatives that build on the strong foundation of the kindergarten through grade 12 system and enhance learning opportunities for students across the Province.

Previous efforts to strengthen the education system are already showing results: class sizes are coming down and will meet the Learning Commission guidelines two years ahead of schedule, and our students continue to outperform their peers on national and international tests.

Now it's time to make sure that the Province's post-secondary education system is able to meet the needs of the next Alberta. A strong post-secondary education system is crucial for continued economic diversification, growth, and prosperity as well as personal fulfillment. Strengthening the post-secondary learning system is the Government's top priority during this centennial year.

The Government is taking immediate action to improve access to advanced education. Over the next three years 15,000 new spaces will be added to the post-secondary system. In six years that will double to 30,000 new spaces. By 2020 a total of 60,000 new spaces will be created. Our goal with this bold expansion plan is to move Albertans to the highest rate of post-secondary education in the country.

Particular attention will be paid to increasing training opportunities in areas experiencing skills shortages. Government will invest in new apprenticeship certification programs. Investment will also be directed to new apprenticeship training initiatives, particularly for aboriginal people. It will bring opportunities closer to the learner by exploring increased use of alternate delivery training mechanisms such as distance learning and mobile delivery to rural communities.

This Government will also make advanced education more affordable. The Government will pay the full cost of tuition increases at Alberta's public post-secondary learning institutions for the 2005-06 academic year. It will also create a new policy, the most innovative, entrepreneurial, and affordable in the country, to ensure that tuition and schooling costs aren't a barrier to learning in Alberta.

The first legislation introduced during this session will call for a significant new investment in the post-secondary learning system. Bill 1, the Access to the Future Act, aligns Government's fiscal strategy with its 20-year strategic plan. It will lay the groundwork for investments that will allow Alberta to continue to prosper in the increasingly globalized, knowledge-based economy.

The signature piece of this Act will allow for the creation of a \$3 billion endowment fund to sustain Alberta's post-secondary education system into the future. The Access to the Future Fund will support innovation and excellence in post-secondary education. For example, it will provide matching contributions to help create a new centre for Chinese studies at the University of Alberta. This landmark institute will promote greater understanding of the culture, language, and history of one of the world's largest economies and a country with which this Province has long enjoyed a special relationship.

The new fund will also support the development of an Alberta-wide digital library that will allow all students and faculty, wherever they are located in the Province, to access the resources and knowledge currently held in the individual libraries of our post-secondary institutions. To be named the Lois Hole Digital Library, this leading-edge initiative is centred on the work already under way at the University of Calgary. The Government will also create the Lois Hole Humanities and Social Sciences Scholarship. Beginning in the next academic year four students will each receive a \$5,000 scholarship toward his or her post-secondary studies.

This Government is committed to removing obstacles from the path of any Albertan who wants to get an education, whether it's from a university, college, or technical institution, and it will show its commitment through its actions.

#### The Next Alberta Will Have a Diverse and Growing Economy

Having an educated workforce is key to ensuring continued prosperity in the next Alberta. We know that a strong economy is not an end unto itself; rather, it is the means to achieve the things we want as a society such as strong health and education systems and supports for those who are vulnerable. This Government remains committed to the fiscal principles that have served the Province so well: balanced budgets, no debt, and low taxes. These principles have made Alberta the economic leader of the nation. We're at the head of the pack, and we're staying there.

Growth brings its own challenges, and among them are tremendous pressures on infrastructure. This Government will maintain one of the most aggressive infrastructure programs in Canada to make sure Albertans have the roads, schools, hospitals, and facilities they need.

Work will begin this year on the southeast portion of the Edmonton ring road thanks to a public/private partnership that will see the road's completion in just two and a half years. Government will explore continued use of this innovative form of financing for large capital projects as it aims to complete the ring roads around Edmonton and Calgary within the next decade.

Secondary highways are also critical to the Province's continued economic growth. These roads are vital links to and between rural communities, and many are long overdue for improvements. This year the Government will increase its investment in this area to rehabilitate and upgrade more provincial highways throughout the Province.

Our Government will work with municipal partners by allocating the \$3 billion that has been committed to address municipal infrastructure needs beginning in Budget 2005.

Now that the Province's debt has been paid off, the Government will begin inflation-proofing the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund to ensure that it is sustained as a legacy for future generations.

We will take steps to protect consumers by strengthening legislation on collection practices, credit reporting, public auctions, and loan brokering. We will also introduce standardized, plain-language contracts for residential natural gas and electricity consumers.

Alberta will continue to implement its water for life strategy this year, including developing a provincial plan for water conservation in partnership with the Alberta Water Council.

We will increase consultation with aboriginal people on resource development and land access issues to help them participate fully in the growing economy.

This Government will continue to stand by agricultural producers, who face the future with renewed optimism. The economic hardships of recent years have prompted improvements to the agriculture sector, including increased domestic processing capacity and the expansion of value-added products, which will make the industry more competitive than ever.

We will work to strengthen this vital sector by continuing to advocate for marketing choice for wheat and barley. The global market place is demanding that we move to a more competitive marketing system. Alberta will push for a new business model for the Canadian Wheat Board, one with market choice so that Alberta farmers can be more competitive in the value-added market.

Vibrant rural communities are vital to this Province. That's why this Government will act on the recommendations of the rural development strategy to sustain and strengthen the rural economy.

Much as the land sustains the agriculture industry, it also sustains other economic mainstays such as energy, forestry, and tourism. Wise land management is crucial to ensure the sustainability of these sectors and continued prosperity for Albertans. That's why this Government will develop a land-use management framework supported by effective resource and environmental policies and shared, integrated information systems. It will also continue to leverage energy resources to their full value.

The Government will explore ways for the economy to be more knowledge based by adding value to primary resource industries and expanding manufacturing and business services.

Taking a coordinated approach will help protect the Province's environment and ensure that all the Province's resources are wisely managed with their benefits maximized for future generations.

#### The Next Alberta Will Be the Healthiest Province in Canada

Having a strong economy gives Alberta the ability to invest in areas like health care, but Albertans, and indeed all Canadians know that if simply adding money to the system was enough, the challenges in health care would have been resolved long ago. The days of endlessly studying and debating health care reform are over and the time for action is here. That's why Albertans will pioneer a new way of health care.

Alberta's third way for health care is about making sure Albertans get the best health care services, what they need and when they need it, at a price taxpayers can afford. We're going to get on with the things that need to be done such as developing systems to improve wait-list management and allowing electronic referrals between family physicians and specialists. We'll make whatever legislative changes are needed to allow innovation to occur throughout the health system.

We'll keep looking at new ideas. In May Alberta will host an international symposium to examine best practices in health care delivery. The symposium will give Albertans an opportunity to examine a range of solutions that could benefit our Province.

And we'll take steps to make Albertans the healthiest people in the world because even the best medical treatments aren't as good as staying healthy in the first place. The Government will work with community partners to find new ways of encouraging Albertans to make health and wellness part of their daily lives. We will examine a range of wellness strategies promoting healthy outcomes for all Albertans.

The Government will introduce daily physical activity in schools for grades one through nine beginning this fall. It will also introduce a wellness initiative starting at the kindergarten level beginning in 2006 to help foster a lifelong commitment to healthy and active living in students.

We will take steps to manage future health risks. The Government will develop a plan to reduce the unacceptably high number of deaths and injuries on Alberta's streets and highways. We will invest in water infrastructure to provide a safe, clean water supply, and we will complete an emergency response plan for communicable disease emergencies.

#### All Albertans Will Share in the Alberta Advantage

Albertans are caring, compassionate people who want every member of this Province to have the opportunity to share in the Alberta advantage both today and in the next Alberta. This means making sure that Albertans are protected in their workplaces and that they feel safe and secure in their communities.

This year the Government will review employment standards to make sure that the laws dealing with overtime, vacation, hours of work, and other workplace standards are current and relevant. It will raise the minimum wage to \$7 per hour, a rate that reflects the strength of Alberta's economy. Albertans are being consulted about whether this increase should be phased in or introduced all at once. We will work closely with affected employers to see that the impact on business is minimized.

Following the review of the Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped Program, Government will increase financial benefits for program recipients. Details of these changes will be announced during this legislative session.

This spring we will implement programs to provide dental and optical assistance to seniors and help cover annual increases in the education portion of their property taxes.

We will also review the Dependent Adults Act and revise accommodation standards for long-term care and seniors' housing.



Government will update the Police Act to enhance civilian oversight of police services. The Province will continue to be the leading voice in pushing the Federal Government for conditional sentencing reform. Our position on this issue is very clear: in order to maintain the public's confidence in the justice system, those convicted of serious offences must face real jail time.

We will fight to protect our children from crimes such as sexual exploitation. The Government will introduce an education campaign to help prevent sexual exploitation of young people through Internet luring, child pornography, and child prostitution.

Government will strive to reduce family violence through effective interventions, including treatment, through the Province's specialized domestic violence courts. Increased emphasis will be placed on training police and Crown prosecutors to investigate and prosecute family violence cases more effectively.

The system of parent link centres will be expanded, and Alberta will become the first province in Canada to introduce a child care worker accreditation program.

We will also continue to fulfill our commitment to children through Alberta's Promise and encourage all sectors of our communities to contribute their time, volunteer efforts, and finances to benefit young people.

These initiatives and others will help Albertans who are vulnerable receive the supports they need to participate fully in the social, economic, and cultural life of the Province.

#### The Next Alberta Will Be a Leader in Canada and the World

In these past hundred years Alberta has grown from humble roots. It's gone from being a long shot on the Canadian prairie to becoming a magnet for modern-day pioneers from all around the world. It's gone from being a rough-edged frontier to offering among the best qualities of life of any province in Canada, with world-class museums and libraries, breathtaking parks and recreational opportunities, and a vibrant arts and cultural scene. It's gone from being the new kid at the Canadian family's table to playing a major role on the national stage, and Albertans are ready to play an even bigger role in Canada because, as this Province's 100-year history illustrates so unmistakably, Albertans have what it takes to be leaders.

Like those who were faced with the task of building this Province back in 1905, Albertans today cannot know what challenges lie ahead. We know only that we will meet them, as Albertans have always done, with courage, innovation, and determination. We live in a land rich in blessings, and like those who came before us, we are willing to work hard to make it even better for those who will follow us.

This centennial year people across Alberta will celebrate the amazing province we call home, and from this firm foundation we will look ahead to the prospect of building something even greater: the next Alberta.

Thank you, ladies and gentlemen, and may God bless you all.

God bless Alberta. God bless Canada. God save the Queen.

The Speaker then invited Mr. Paul Lorieau to lead the Members and guests in the singing of God Save the Queen.

His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor then retired from the Assembly.

## **Government Bills and Orders**

Upon recommendation of His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor, it was Ordered, That the Honourable Mr. Klein have leave to introduce a Bill entitled "Access to the Future Act." Hon. Mr. Klein accordingly presented the Bill and the same was received and read a First time.

## **Tabling Documents**

The Speaker informed the Assembly he had obtained a copy of the Speech of His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor, which was laid on the Table. Sessional Paper 1/2005

## Announcement by the Clerk of the Assembly of Members Elected

Mr. Speaker, I have received from the Chief Electoral Officer of Alberta, pursuant to the Election Act, two reports containing the results of the General Election conducted on the twenty-second day of November, 2004. The first report states that an election was conducted in the following electoral divisions and the said report further shows that the following Members were duly elected:

Airdrie-Chestermere	Carol Haley
Athabasca-Redwater	Mike Cardinal
Banff-Cochrane	Janis Tarchuk
Barrhead-Morinville-Westlock	Kenneth Kowalski
Battle River-Wainwright	Doug Griffiths
Bonnyville-Cold Lake	Denis Ducharme
Calgary-Bow	Alana DeLong
Calgary-Buffalo	Harvey Cenaiko
Calgary-Cross	Yvonne Fritz
Calgary-Currie	Dave Taylor
Calgary-East	Moe Amery
Calgary-Egmont	Denis Herard

Calgary-Elbow Calgary-Fish Creek Calgary-Foothills Calgary-Fort Calgary-Glenmore Calgary-Hays Calgary-Lougheed Calgary-Mackay Calgary-McCall Calgary-Montrose Calgary-Mountain View Calgary-North Hill Calgary-North West Calgary-Nose Hill Calgary-Shaw Calgary-Varsity Calgary-West Cardston-Taber-Warner Cypress-Medicine Hat Drayton Valley-Calmar Drumheller-Stettler Dunvegan-Central Peace Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview Edmonton-Calder Edmonton-Centre Edmonton-Decore Edmonton-Ellerslie Edmonton-Glenora Edmonton-Gold Bar Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood Edmonton-Manning Edmonton-McClung Edmonton-Meadowlark Edmonton-Mill Creek

Ralph Klein Heather Forsyth Len Webber Wayne Cao Ron Stevens Arthur Johnston Dave Rodney Gary Mar Shiraz Shariff Hung Pham David Swann **Richard Magnus** Greg Melchin Neil Brown Cindy Ady Harry Chase Ronald Liepert Paul Hinman Leonard Mitzel Tony Abbott Shirley McClellan Hector Goudreau Ray Martin David Eggen Laurie Blakeman Bill Bonko Bharat Agnihotri Bruce Miller Hugh MacDonald Brian Mason Daniel Backs Mo Elsalhy Maurice Tougas Gene Zwozdesky

Edmonton-Mill Woods Edmonton-Riverview Edmonton-Rutherford Edmonton-Strathcona Edmonton-Whitemud Foothills-Rocky View Fort McMurray-Wood Buffalo Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville Grande Prairie-Smoky Grande Prairie-Wapiti Highwood Innisfail-Sylvan Lake Lac La Biche-St. Paul Lacombe-Ponoka Leduc-Beaumont-Devon Lesser Slave Lake Lethbridge-East Lethbridge-West Little Bow Livingstone-Macleod Medicine Hat Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills Peace River Red Deer-North Red Deer-South Rocky Mountain House Sherwood Park Spruce Grove-Sturgeon-St. Albert St. Albert Stony Plain Strathcona Strathmore-Brooks

Weslyn Mather Kevin Taft Richard Miller Raj Pannu David Hancock Ted Morton **Guy Boutilier** Edward Stelmach Mel Knight Gordon Graydon George Groeneveld Luke Ouellette Ray Danyluk **Raymond Prins** George Rogers Pearl Calahasen Bridget Pastoor Clint Dunford Barry McFarland David Coutts Rob Renner **Richard Marz** Frank Oberle Mary Anne Jablonski Victor Doerksen Ty Lund Iris Evans Doug Horner Jack Flaherty Frederick Lindsay Rob Lougheed Lyle Oberg

Vermilion-Lloydminster	Lloyd Snelgrove
West Yellowhead	Ivan Strang
Wetaskiwin-Camrose	LeRoy Johnson
Whitecourt-Ste. Anne	George VanderBurg

Mr. Speaker, I have also received a second report from the Chief Electoral Officer of Alberta, pursuant to Section 149 of the Election Act, containing the results of the General Election conducted on the twenty-second day of November, 2004, for the electoral division of Edmonton-Castle Downs and the said report declares the Member duly elected as of January 24, 2005:

Edmonton-Castle Downs Thomas Lukaszuk

## **Government Motions**

Moved by Hon. Mr. Klein:

It was resolved that the Speech of His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor to this Assembly be taken into consideration Thursday, March 3, 2005.

Moved by Hon. Mr. Hancock:

It was resolved that the Select Standing Committees for the present Session of the Legislative Assembly be appointed for the following purposes:

- (1) The Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund,
- (2) Legislative Offices,
- (3) Private Bills,
- (4) Privileges and Elections, Standing Orders and Printing, and
- (5) Public Accounts

and, in addition thereto, there be appointed for the duration of the present Legislature, a Special Standing Committee on Members' Services.

Hon. Mr. Hancock moved that the following Members be appointed to the Assembly's five Select Standing and one Special Standing Committees:

#### ALBERTA HERITAGE SAVINGS TRUST FUND (9 Members)

Liepert (Chair)	Goudreau	McFarland
Rogers (Deputy Chair)	MacDonald	Pham
Cao	Mather	Snelgrove

## **LEGISLATIVE OFFICES** (11 Members)

Tarchuk (Chair)	Griffiths	Pannu
Ducharme (Deputy Chair)	Lougheed	Rodney
Blakeman	Magnus	Strang
Flaherty	Marz	

## **PRIVATE BILLS** (21 Members)

Brown (Chair)	Johnson	Pham
Liepert (Deputy Chair)	Johnston	Prins
Agnihotri	Lindsay	Rodney
DeLong	Lukaszuk	Shariff
Eggen	Mitzel	Swann
Elsalhy	Morton	Tougas
Groeneveld	Oberle	VanderBurg

## PRIVILEGES AND ELECTIONS, STANDING ORDERS AND PRINTING (21 Members)

Haley (Chair)	Flaherty	Lukaszuk
Cao (Deputy Chair)	Groeneveld	MacDonald
Abbott	Herard	Marz
Amery	Johnson	Mitzel
Blakeman	Knight	Pannu
Danyluk	Liepert	Pastoor
DeLong	Lougheed	Zwozdesky

## PUBLIC ACCOUNTS (17 Members)

MacDonald (Chair)	Danyluk	Oberle
VanderBurg (Deputy Chair)	Eggen	Prins
Abbott	Griffiths	Rodney
Blakeman	Johnston	Rogers
Bonko	Lindsay	Webber
Chase	Morton	

#### MEMBERS' SERVICES (11 Members)

Kowalski (Chair)	Horner	McFarland
Ducharme (Deputy Chair)	Jablonski	Shariff
Ady	Knight	Taylor
Backs	Martin	

The question being put, the motion was agreed to.

Sessional Paper 2/2005

# Adjournment

On motion by Hon. Mr. Hancock, Government House Leader, the Assembly adjourned at 3:58 p.m. until Thursday, March 3, 2005, at 1:30 p.m.

Hon. Ken Kowalski, Speaker

Title: Wednesday, March 2, 2005