



**Legislative Assembly
Province of Alberta**

No. 1

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

Third Session

Twenty-Sixth Legislature

Wednesday, March 7, 2007

This being the first Day of the Third Session of the Twenty-Sixth Legislative Assembly of the Province of Alberta, for the despatch of business pursuant to a Proclamation of His Honour the Honourable Norman L. Kwong, CM, AOE, Lieutenant Governor, dated the 14th day of February in the year of our Lord two thousand seven;

The Clerk of the Legislative Assembly read the Proclamation as follows:

[GREAT SEAL]
CANADA
PROVINCE OF ALBERTA

NORMAN L. KWONG
Lieutenant Governor.

ELIZABETH THE SECOND, by the Grace of God, of the United Kingdom, Canada, and Her Other Realms and Territories, QUEEN, Head of the Commonwealth, Defender of the Faith

PROCLAMATION

TO OUR FAITHFUL, the MEMBERS elected to serve in the Legislative Assembly of Our Province of Alberta and to each and every one of you, GREETING...

WHEREAS it is Our will and pleasure by and with the advice and consent of Our Executive Council of Our Province of Alberta to prorogue the Second Session of the Twenty-sixth Legislature of Alberta:

Terrence J. Matchett, QC,
Deputy Minister of Justice
and Deputy Attorney General

WE DO hereby prorogue, effective March 6, 2007, the said Legislature; and

WHEREAS it is deemed expedient for certain causes and considerations to convene the Legislative Assembly of Our Province of Alberta for the Third Session of the Twenty-sixth Legislature, WE DO WILL that you and each of you, and all others in this behalf interested, on Wednesday, the 7th day of March, 2007, at the hour of THREE o'clock in the afternoon, at Our City of Edmonton, personally be and appear, for the despatch of business, to treat, act, do and conclude upon those things which, in the Legislature of Our Province of Alberta, by the Common Council of Our said Province, may, by the favour of God, be ordained.

HEREIN FAIL NOT

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF We have caused these Our Letters to be made Patent and the Great Seal of Our Province of Alberta to be hereunto affixed.

WITNESS: THE HONOURABLE NORMAN L. KWONG, Lieutenant Governor of Our Province of Alberta, in Our City of Edmonton in Our Province of Alberta, this 14th day of February in the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Seven and in the Fifty-sixth Year of Our Reign.

BY COMMAND:

RON STEVENS
Provincial Secretary.

—

The Speaker entered the Assembly and took the Chair. After delivering the opening day prayer he invited Mr. Paul Lorieau to lead the Members of the Assembly and guests in singing Canada's National Anthem.

Speaker's Welcome to the New Premier

2006 was a very exciting year for the Alberta Legislative Assembly as we celebrated 100 Years of Democracy in this province. Over the last century the people and events that shaped this province were deserving of celebration and recognition, and it seems only fitting that as the year came to an end, we saw another historic moment take place on December 14, 2006, the swearing in of Alberta's 13th Premier, the Honourable Edward Michael Stelmach.

Premier Stelmach is no stranger to history and the significance it plays in our lives. He and his wife, Marie, raised their four children on the homestead that was first settled by his grandfather, Nicholas Stelmach, in 1898. History and tradition are an important part of our new Premier's life, just as they are valued by this Assembly.

In terms of public service, our new Premier also has an impressive history. In the House he has served as Minister of International and Intergovernmental Relations, Minister of Transportation, Minister of Infrastructure, and Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development. In his community he has served as a county reeve and school trustee, and held numerous other committee positions and memberships on boards and in organizations within his constituency.

From the date that Premier Edward Michael Stelmach was sworn in as our province's newest Premier, his every move and his every word will become a part of Alberta's political history. There is no telling what that future history might include, but looking back on his speech from the December 14 swearing-in, his words may foretell that future when he said "We have the means to build a stronger province and future . . . the future we want for our children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren."

Today in this Assembly, I hope we can all agree that that is the future we want and years from now it is the history we want to look back on. On behalf of all Members of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta I welcome you, Mr. Premier, as you take your place in this Legislature as Alberta's 13th Premier.

While awaiting the arrival of His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor, the Speaker introduced three Junior Non-commissioned Officers from the 1st Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, all who have served in Afghanistan: Master Corporal Peter MacLean, Corporal Gordon Whitton, and Corporal Kimberly Smith-Samms. The Speaker also introduced Master Corporal Paul Franklin, who lost both legs as a result of a suicide bomb attack in Kandahar.

The Royal Canadian Artillery Band then played a brief musical interlude.

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

His Honour then read the following Speech from the Throne:

Speech From the Throne

Fellow Albertans, welcome to the Third Session of the 26th Alberta Legislature. I am honoured once again to deliver the Speech from the Throne.

As we continue our journey into Alberta's second century, Albertans have much to be proud of and much to look forward to. Our current prosperity is the result of foresight by Albertans whose values we honour, values such as fiscal vigilance, community spirit, and self-reliance. It is a result of a strong respect for the environment and an appreciation for lifelong learning. It is because of these shared values, and through the hard work of Albertans, that this province is looked to as a leader in Canada and across the globe.

Alberta is fortunate, but Albertans have made good use of the resources that nature has bestowed upon our province, and they have made wise choices, including the bold and often difficult decisions made during the past decade. Many of those decisions were made with a thoughtful eye on the future. Fellow Albertans, that future is now.

Now more than ever the government must work with Albertans to ensure the good fortune we enjoy today is not squandered. We must respect and build on the work and the sacrifices that were made in the past. We must plan ahead to ensure the prosperity this province enjoys today is secured for our children and grandchildren. This means making the right choices so that Alberta's economic growth remains sustainable and that the world-class quality of life Albertans enjoy includes a clean and healthy environment.

A New Approach to Working for Albertans

With a wealth of new opportunities to be seized and some tough challenges to be addressed, this government is taking a fresh look at how it works on behalf of Albertans and the priorities on which it will focus. Albertans expect their government to reflect the realities they are facing today. They expect a new approach by their government, one that recognizes the unique qualities of Albertans and their province, one that recognizes the opportunities and challenges we face. Your new government has that plan.

In carrying it out, the government will be guided by the values of Albertans. It will ensure respect for the environment and compassion for others. It will be open and accountable, fiscally responsible, and inclusive. At this unique time in our history Albertans expect their government to have a clear plan and to deliver tangible results. Ladies and gentlemen, your government will deliver on behalf of all Albertans.

Acting on Albertans' Priorities

The Government of Alberta will act on Albertans' priorities to ensure a higher standard of living, greater opportunities, and an even better quality of life for all citizens of this province. The government will act thoughtfully and decisively on behalf of Albertans. The Government of Alberta will govern with integrity and transparency, manage growth pressures, improve Albertans' quality of life, provide safe and secure communities, and build a stronger Alberta.

Governing with Integrity and Transparency

Governing with integrity and transparency is the first priority of this government for a deeply fundamental reason. Albertans put their highest trust in the women and men elected to represent their best interests. That trust will be honoured and respected.

Your government will introduce legislation to establish a lobbyist registry. Bill 1, the Lobbyists Act, will give all Albertans public access to information regarding individuals and organizations seeking to influence government decisions. It will also take measures to improve information provided to the public about who has contracts with government. These measures will increase transparency, openness, and accountability, and will enhance public trust in the institution of government.

Your government will also review the way agencies, boards, and commissions are governed to ensure greater accountability. It will look for more efficient and productive ways of conducting the business of government, and it will look for opportunities for all parties represented in the Legislature to work together to better serve Albertans.

Managing Growth Pressures

Alberta's economy is leading the country with a record pace of development. More than half a million people have moved here from other provinces in the past half-dozen years. The Government of Alberta has reinforced its determination to effectively manage the pressures that come with rapid economic growth. It will act decisively to minimize the price we are all paying for prosperity and address pressures on housing, labour, infrastructure, and the environment.

Your government recognizes that adequate housing is essential for all Albertans to share in the prosperity of their province. It has created a provincial task force to find ways to make affordable housing more accessible to Albertans. It will focus on solutions for homelessness and the provision of affordable housing.

Despite so many people moving to Alberta each year, our economy is in dire need of people to answer the calls for "help wanted" across the province. To help meet this demand, your government will focus on better coordination of economic development, immigration, and labour force planning. It will craft a made-in-Alberta solution to labour needs.

Like the early settlers who helped build our province, immigrants today come here with hopes of creating a better life for themselves and a better future for their children. The Government of Alberta will help new Albertans realize their dreams. It will encourage them to put down roots, raise their families here, and contribute to, and share in, Alberta's prosperity.

Your government will increase support for First Nations and Métis skills, training, and labour force development so those Albertans with the deepest roots in this province will also have more opportunities to reap the rewards of Alberta's prosperity.

The current economic growth is placing great pressure on our province's infrastructure. Your government will develop a long-term capital plan that will address infrastructure needs and inflation costs while exploring options to fund new capital projects. It will also place great emphasis on controlled spending to ensure Albertans get the best possible value for their tax dollars.

The Government of Alberta will continue to build on its solid record in environmental management with some of the most progressive legislation and action-based strategies in the country. Working with Albertans, the government will turn current environmental challenges into new opportunities. This will enhance Alberta's standing as a leader in practical, innovative, and sustainable environmental policies.

Your government will encourage all Albertans to take personal responsibility for energy efficiency and reduced consumption because the environment is a shared responsibility between government, industry, and all members of society.

Alberta's legislation for regulating greenhouse gas emissions was the first in Canada specifically addressing climate change, but this government knows more must be done. This spring the Government of Alberta will introduce legislation that will complete implementation of Alberta's groundbreaking climate change plan. It will establish greenhouse gas emission intensity targets for industry under the specified gas emitters regulation. These will be the first legislated emission intensity reduction targets for large industrial emitters in Canada.

At the same time, the government will work with Albertans to outline its next steps on this important issue. By fall 2007 Alberta will have a new climate change action plan to move beyond what's been accomplished so far.

To maintain our high quality of life, it is essential that Albertans properly manage our province's water supplies. The Government of Alberta's Water for Life strategy is North America's most comprehensive water management plan. Since 2003 it has provided Alberta with an action plan to manage water supplies during this time of unprecedented economic growth. It is essential to ensure this plan is based on current realities. Later this year the Alberta Water Council will consult with Albertans on updating the Water for Life strategy and provide recommendations to government by year-end.

Your government will introduce strategies and provide new funding to respond to growth pressures related to the development of Alberta's oil sands. As a first big step, the Government of Alberta has committed almost \$400 million in new funding over the next three years to complete new water and waste-water treatment facilities, develop 300 affordable housing units, and address health pressures in the Wood Buffalo region. It will also create an oil sands sustainable development secretariat to better plan and coordinate delivery of services as this important resource is developed. In addition, the Oil Sands Multi-Stakeholder Committee will complete its work and recommend strategies and policies, based on Albertans' input, to guide future development.

Your government will also complete its land-use framework, which will guide the way to balancing the economic, environmental, and social needs of Albertans. These initiatives will mark the beginning of a new era in managing the overall environmental effects of development. It will blend Alberta's environment-related policies, including Water for Life, the climate change action plan, and the land-use framework, to ensure Alberta's environment continues to be protected.

Improving Albertans' Quality of Life

Albertans have told their government that economic prosperity must not come at the expense of quality of life, and the Government of Alberta is listening. It will ensure that services, programs, and infrastructure are in place to maintain Albertans' high quality of life.

Albertans have always placed a high value on learning, and this government recognizes that education is key to improving quality of life. Your government will continue to look for innovative ways to improve Alberta's outstanding K to 12 education system. It will work with community partners, school boards, and educators to develop effective strategies that support teachers, parents, students, and administrators in continuing to provide a first-rate learning environment.

Your government will also increase access and quality in post-secondary education while strengthening its support for community education and literacy programs. It will work to improve high school completion rates and increase access to post-secondary education with an emphasis on the Campus Alberta approach. The government will ensure Alberta's post-secondary institutions have defined roles and responsibilities within a comprehensive advanced learning system. Investments in advanced education will be targeted towards a comprehensive framework that will make post-secondary education, trade and occupational training more accessible to adult learners.

The Government of Alberta will continue to encourage and support Albertans in taking steps to improve and maintain individual, family, and community health. A sustained focus on wellness, injury reduction, and disease prevention combined with efforts to improve productivity and accountability in health care delivery will provide the framework to ensure a sustainable public health care system.

Building the health workforce of the future will be a top priority. Albertans will see stronger emphasis on primary health care and self-management of chronic diseases through the provision of information, resources, and support.

The Government of Alberta will assist people living in the community with serious mental illness, and their families with improved access to support services and treatment. A new pharmaceutical strategy will capitalize on opportunities to improve the range of drugs available and to reduce or avoid costs. Your government will work to expand long-term care capacity, improve standards, and ensure facilities and supports are available to seniors as the population ages. Your government will continue to improve the quality of life in First Nations and Métis communities, and it will ensure that government policies better reflect the needs of persons with disabilities.

This province is known as one of the best places to live and raise a family, in large part because of the spirit of community that Albertans cherish. Albertans value compassion, and they take pride in coming together to volunteer time and money to help others in need. Reflecting these values, the Government of Alberta will lead the creation of a community spirit program for charitable giving. The program will support increases for private charitable donations through tax credits, and establish a community spirit fund to provide matching grants for eligible donations to Alberta-based registered charities. The government will establish an all-party MLA committee to guide the creation of this program.

Providing Safe and Secure Communities

Albertans place a high priority on living in a peaceful society, where laws are respected and consideration for others is practised. They want to be assured that their communities will remain safe and secure as the province undergoes rapid growth and change. The Alberta Government will act on this priority. It will work with communities to make neighbourhoods stronger and safer.

To this end, your government will work with community leaders to establish a crime reduction and safe communities task force that will consult with Albertans on how to reduce crime and improve public confidence in the justice system. This initiative will build on the work being done by 13 partnering government ministries to develop and implement an integrated crime reduction strategy. Through this collaboration the province will see a future in which Albertans experience less crime, feel less fearful of crime, and work together to make their communities safer.

Building a Stronger Alberta

Albertans and their government know that the province's economic success must not be taken for granted. The Alberta Government will act now to build an even stronger Alberta. It will conduct an open and transparent review of the resource royalty system through an independent committee recently established. At the end of the review Albertans must be confident that the right system is in place, one that is fair to both industry and to Albertans, who own the resources.

Your government will also develop strategies to ensure Albertans have long-term access to reliable and diverse sources of energy for homes, small businesses, and larger industries, and it will encourage the upgrading and refining of non-renewable resources in Alberta to obtain maximum value for Albertans and to create new business opportunities and long-term jobs.

The Government of Alberta will develop a comprehensive energy strategy, which will ensure the sustainable development of the province's resources in an environmentally responsible manner, making full use of innovations such as near zero emission coal. The strategy will look at all of Alberta's energy resources with a focus on renewable resources, including electricity generated by winds and bioenergy such as ethanol and other biofuels. Development in these areas will provide new opportunities for rural Alberta and the agriculture community. While much of the focus on sustainable development is directed at industry, individual Albertans must play their part as well to promote energy efficiency and reduce consumption.

A strong Alberta requires strong municipalities. This government recognizes that municipalities provide many of the day-to-day services upon which Albertans rely. Your government has therefore renewed efforts to work with municipalities to better serve Albertans. This includes developing a long-term funding arrangement that is sustainable and recognizes the challenges municipalities have in raising revenues to provide essential services on the front lines of Alberta's tremendous growth. This cooperative effort has already yielded results that will benefit all Albertans. The Provincial Government has committed an additional \$1.4 billion in annual funding to municipalities, which will be phased in over the next four years.

Albertans want to be sure revenues they entrust to their provincial government are used prudently to build a stronger Alberta today and for generations to come. Your government is taking action by developing a surplus management policy that reflects Albertans' long-term priorities. Details of this policy will be announced with the 2007 provincial budget.

Your government will ensure that savings are targeted to the province's future needs. It will strengthen the governance of its investments so that the funds Albertans entrust to it are managed most effectively.

The Alberta Government will also establish an institute for agriculture, forestry, and the environment, which will put research and innovation to practical, real-world use to benefit Albertans and the environment. The institute will develop market-based solutions to environmental sustainability challenges surrounding agriculture and renewable resource sectors such as forestry. As all Albertans know, much of Alberta's economic strength is based on natural resources.

To ensure Alberta remains prosperous for future generations, it is essential to seize the opportunity now to further strengthen and diversify our economy. Your government will build on Alberta's traditional strengths, which include energy, agriculture, forestry, tourism, and the people of this province. It will build on these strengths to develop a robust, knowledge-based economy to compete in world markets.

The Alberta Government will develop a long-term strategy for technology commercialization and economic diversification. It will continue to focus on research in priority areas of energy, information and communications technology, and life sciences. In addition, it will place an increased emphasis on nanotechnology, the science of small. Research in this field has the potential to impact every sector of our economy and to diversify and sustain Alberta's prosperity for generations. Led by world-class researchers at the National Institute for Nanotechnology in Edmonton, our province is positioned to become an international leader in this field.

Conclusion

Fellow Albertans, the Government of Alberta is making a solemn commitment to you. In all that it does, it will reflect your values and act on your priorities. It will conduct itself with the recognition that it is an honour and a privilege to serve as government, not a right, and that it must continuously earn that privilege. Your government will listen to, and work with, Albertans because together we can do great things.

We are faced with a unique opportunity to build for the future and to secure the long-term prosperity of our great province. Your government has a solid plan to accomplish these goals. It will take full advantage of that opportunity.

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.

Introduction of Bills (First Reading)

Ordered, That the Honourable Mr. Stelmach have leave to introduce a Bill entitled "Lobbyists Act." Hon. Mr. Stelmach 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 1/2007

Government Motions

1. Moved by Hon. Mr. Stelmach:

Be it resolved that the Speech of His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor to this Assembly be taken into consideration on March 8, 2007.

The question being put, the motion was agreed to.

2. Moved by Hon. Mr. Hancock:

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

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

The question being put, the motion was agreed to.

3. Moved by Hon. Mr. Hancock:

Be it resolved that the following Members be appointed to the Assembly's five Select Standing Committees:

ALBERTA HERITAGE SAVINGS TRUST FUND (9 Members)

Johnston (Chair)	Griffiths	Mar
Rogers (Deputy Chair)	MacDonald	Mather
Doerksen	Magnus	Pham

LEGISLATIVE OFFICES (11 Members)

Rodney (Chair)	Coutts	McFarland
Magnus (Deputy Chair)	Ducharme	Pannu
Blakeman	Flaherty	VanderBurg
Cao	Marz	

PRIVATE BILLS (21 Members)

DeLong (Chair)	Dunford	Mitzel
Brown (Deputy Chair)	Eggen	Pham
Abbott	Elsalhy	Prins
Agnihotri	Jablonski	Rogers
Amery	Johnson	Shariff
Calahasen	Lougheed	Swann
Doerksen	Lukaszuk	Tougas

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

Zwozdesky (Chair)	Flaherty	Lukaszuk
Johnson (Deputy Chair)	Forsyth	MacDonald
Abbott	Fritz	Marz
Amery	Griffiths	Mitzel
Blakeman	Hancock	Oberle
Cardinal	Herard	Pannu
Cenaiko	Lougheed	Pastoor

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS (17 Members)

MacDonald (Chair)	Chase	Johnston
Prins (Deputy Chair)	DeLong	Miller (Edmonton-Rutherford)
Bonko	Dunford	Rodney
Brown	Eggen	Strang
Cardinal	Forsyth	Webber
Cenaiko	Herard	

The question being put, the motion was agreed to.

Sessional Paper 2/2007

Adjournment

On motion by Hon. Mr. Hancock, Government House Leader, the Assembly adjourned at 3:57 p.m. until Thursday, March 8, 2007, at 1:30 p.m.

Hon. Ken Kowalski,
Speaker

Title: Wednesday, March 7, 2007