



Province of Alberta

The 27th Legislature  
Second Session

# Alberta Hansard

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Issue 14

The Honourable Kenneth R. Kowalski, Speaker

# Legislative Assembly of Alberta

## The 27th Legislature

Second Session

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Mitzel, Len, Cypress-Medicine Hat, Deputy Chair of Committees

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## Legislative Assembly of Alberta

1:30 p.m.

Thursday, March 12, 2009

[The Speaker in the chair]

### Prayers

**The Speaker:** Welcome.

Let us pray. As we conclude for this week our work in this Assembly, we renew our energies with thanks so that we may continue our work with the people in the constituencies we represent. Amen.

Please be seated.

### Introduction of Guests

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

**Mr. Hayden:** Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to introduce to you and through you to all my colleagues a wonderful group of students, their parents, and a teacher from the Morrin school, which is situated in the west side of my constituency, just north of Drumheller, a proud, proud community. Over the years I have been able to attend some graduations there, and it's an amazing school and some amazing students. They're very proud of their school, proud of their heritage. They have a sod house, actually, in the town of Morrin that celebrates the pioneer spirit from the area. There are 22 grade six students who are led by their teacher today, Mr. Harvey Saltys, and their parents – there's one grandparent in this list, and I defy you to pick her out – Kandice Adams, Kendra Kiemele, Melanie Nelson, Lisa Wolf, Jolynn Kopjar, Leanne Framingham, Jo'Ann Telford, and Tami Lawrence. I invite you and all members of the Assembly to greet these people as they rise.

**The Speaker:** Hon. Member for Edmonton-Centre, you have two introductions to do?

**Ms Blakeman:** Indeed I do, Mr. Speaker. I'm delighted that I have two introductions today. The first introduction I'd like to make to you and through you to all members of the Assembly are two people who are very special to one of our pages, Kelsy Edgerton. The first person is Janet Edgerton, who is one of those moms that you see driving back and forth in their minivan taking their wonderful children to many different activities. Well, I want to note that Janet is also literally a lifesaver. She has now passed the 150 mark in the number of times she has donated blood. [some applause] Thank you for that. With her is her youngest daughter, Amber. Amber is a student at Windsor Park school and is also a really good downhill racer. She should be because she has been doing it since she was four. Both Janet and Amber are seated in the Speaker's gallery, and I would ask them to please rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My second introduction is to a wonderful group of seniors, but a pretty active bunch of inquiring minds is a better way to describe this group who are joining me from Minerva studies, which is housed in the Grant MacEwan Community College in my fabulous constituency of Edmonton-Centre. We have 13 visitors who are with the Minerva group, which is essentially a study group, and they're seated in the public gallery. I would ask them all to please rise and accept a rousing good welcome from the Alberta Legislature.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Health and Wellness.

**Mr. Liepert:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure today to introduce to you and through you to members of this Assembly a group of 19 hard-working members of the Alberta Health and Wellness staff, who are here as part of a public service orientation tour. I don't think that we get the opportunity often enough to thank those who work for us on a daily basis. I would ask members if they would please welcome our 19 guests in the members' gallery today. I'd ask them to stand.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs.

**Mrs. Fritz:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Over the past year staff from Housing and Urban Affairs have worked very hard to administer our homeless and affordable housing programs, and they've made a real difference in the lives of some of our most vulnerable people. I can tell you that they've done a fantastic job, and I'm just very proud of what they've accomplished. This is the first anniversary of our Premier's creation of the Housing and Urban Affairs department. I'm pleased to introduce to you and through you to members of the Assembly Marcia Nelson, deputy minister; Mike Leathwood, assistant deputy minister; Line Porfon, executive director of policy and urban affairs; and Faye Rault, executive director of corporate services. Barb Korol is here as well, our director of communications. I would ask that you please rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Seniors and Community Supports.

**Mrs. Jablonski:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very proud to rise today to introduce to you and through you to members of this Assembly some very special Albertans: two Albertans with disabilities and their service dogs, trainers, and a dog in training. Someone once said that dogs are not our whole life, but they can make our lives whole, and I'm sure that the people in the gallery that I'm introducing to you today would agree with that statement. The Alberta government is continually trying to improve the lives of the most vulnerable Albertans, and the new Service Dogs Act is just one of the ways that we are doing this. I would like to introduce to you Larry Pempeit and his dog, Charly; Greg Carrier and his dog, Chase; John Wheelwright, executive director for Dogs with Wings; Elisa Irlam, director of training at Dogs with Wings; and Everest, a service dog in training. Our guests are in the members' gallery, and I would ask them to rise or give a wave and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Sustainable Resource Development.

**Dr. Morton:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure to rise today and introduce to you and through you to members of this Assembly nine University of Calgary students and their instructor. They're on a field trip to the Legislature today as part of their political science course in electoral behaviour. Their names are Shadi Abuid, Danon Danesh, Leah Fawcett, Tierney Fitzgerald, Dustin Franks, Daniel Greig, Kathryn Kitchen, Nicolas Krause, and Tessa LaBastide. They're here with a good friend of mine and their instructor, Keith Archer. Dr. Archer and I worked together for 20 years at the University of Calgary. Somehow he ended up teaching at the Banff school, and I ended up in Edmonton. Please rise and receive this Assembly's traditional warm welcome.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Cypress-Medicine Hat.

**Mr. Mitzel:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise today and introduce to you and through you to all members of this Assembly a unique group of individuals who are visiting the Legislature today. The Palliser Triangle management group is made up of young farmers who meet regularly to share ideas and discuss things that impact all of them. Discussions regarding marketing, new varieties, commodities, and best practices are routinely brought up. They're on a three-day tour of this area, and this morning in particular they toured the Leduc incubator. Following that they came to this Legislature Building to meet with individuals from the department of agriculture. They're seated in the members' gallery, and I would ask them to rise and stay standing as I call their names: Gerard Oosterhuis, John Van Tryp, John Hopkins, George Poole, Ard Oldenzijl, David Geldreich, Koos Wysbeek, and Cory Nelson. I would ask the Assembly to greet them with the traditional warm welcome of this Assembly.

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

**Mr. Xiao:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today as part of Les Rendez-vous de la Francophonie I have the privilege of introducing to you and through you to this House a group of leaders of Alberta francophone multicultural groups. Alberta's Francophonie has grown significantly in the past 10 years, and although French-speaking Albertans share one common language, they represent more than 30 different cultures. Francophones contribute to our province's ability to be welcoming and inclusive communities through francophone settlement and integration agencies, youth centres, and a variety of integration projects aimed at raising awareness and fostering greater intercultural dialogue.

1:40

I would like to ask our guests to stand as I introduce them: members of the French-Canadian association of Alberta's strategic committee on immigration, including Mr. Gérard Bissonnette, president; Mrs. Marie Rose Bukuba; and Mrs. Ida Kamariza. Accompanying them are Mr. Lundja Okuka, director of the francophone multicultural association of Alberta; Mr. Georges Bahaya, director of Edmonton's francophone settlement agency; and Mr. Luketa M'Pindou, co-ordinator with the society of French-speaking immigrant youth and families. I would ask them to stand and receive the warm welcome of this Assembly.

Thank you.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar.

**Mr. MacDonald:** Yes. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I have guests that I would like to introduce to you and through you to all hon. Members of the Legislative Assembly this afternoon. These guests have come to visit the Assembly this afternoon to observe the proceedings and express their concern about the Adult Guardianship and Trusteeship Act. These individuals are Bill Pelech, Mary Pelech, Irene Stein, David Doull, Darrell Clarkson, May Opstad, Albert Opstad, Louis Adria, Ruth Maria Adria, Pauline Bizuk, John Bizuk, and Terry Hufnagl. They're all in the public gallery, and I would now ask them to please rise and receive the warm, traditional welcome of this Assembly.

### Statement by the Speaker

#### Eighth Anniversary of Elected Members

**The Speaker:** Hon. members, eight years ago today, on March 12, 2001, a provincial election was held in the province of Alberta. At

that time 11 members who are currently members today were elected to this Assembly for the first time. Would you join me in congratulating the hon. Member for Innisfail-Sylvan Lake and our Minister of Transportation, the hon. Member for Lac La Biche-St. Paul and our Minister of Municipal Affairs, the hon. Member for Vermilion-Lloydminster and the President of the Treasury Board, the hon. Member for Dunvegan-Central Peace and our Minister of Employment and Immigration, the hon. Member for Spruce Grove-Sturgeon-St. Albert and our Minister of Advanced Education and Technology, the hon. Member for Grande Prairie-Smoky and our Minister of Energy, the hon. Member for Calgary-Shaw, who also serves as the Minister of Tourism, Parks and Recreation, and the distinguished members for Calgary-Bow, Edmonton-Castle Downs, Whitecourt-St. Anne, and Edmonton-Riverview. Happy anniversary; it's eight years. The hon. Member for Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview has been around the circuit twice.

### Members' Statements

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for St. Albert.

#### Vancouver 2010 Paralympic Winter Games

**Mr. Allred:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm very pleased to recognize that today represents the one-year countdown to the Vancouver 2010 Paralympic Winter Games. Next year from March 12 to 21 approximately 1,350 of the world's best Paralympic winter athletes from 40 countries will compete in five events.

We all know about the stories of Olympic heroes like Alberta's Beckie Scott, and we often refer to athletes like Wayne Gretzky and Tiger Woods as people we look up to. I would like to add a few more names to the list of athletes we admire, Paralympic athletes with inspiring stories of courage, hope, and accomplishment, people like Edmonton's Matt Cook, a sledge hockey player who lost both legs to cancer and had surgery to remove a cancerous spot in his lungs, or 60-year-old Bruno Yizek from Cardston, a paraplegic who is one of the top wheelchair curlers in the country, and Calgary's Brian McKeever, a world-ranked blind cross-country skier who is seeking to compete in both the Paralympic and the Olympic Winter Games. These athletes are among the eight Albertans seeking to represent Canada at the Vancouver 2010 Paralympic Winter Games.

Mr. Speaker, I commend these athletes and others for their quest to be Paralympians and for showing Albertans the possibility of achieving one's goal in any situation. I ask the members of this Assembly to join me in saluting all of our Alberta-based Paralympic athletes, who train so hard to achieve their dreams and to make us proud.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar.

#### Adult Guardianship and Trusteeship Legislation

**Mr. MacDonald:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Seniors from across the province have expressed their concerns regarding the Adult Guardianship and Trusteeship Act. The intent of the act is to ensure that seniors can enjoy their golden years, for which they've worked so hard.

Recently, a group of seniors met at the Old Timers' Cabin to discuss the act and reveal serious flaws in it. They claim that section 103, for example, gives courts the ability to compel seniors to undergo capacity assessment, whether they agree to such an assessment or not. This is an assault on the human dignity of seniors. I hope that when I'm 70 or 80 years old and I tell a

government psychologist to get off my lawn because I don't feel like being analyzed, he or she will respect that demand. This act could rob seniors of that fundamental right.

Under the act seniors can be assessed in their absence. Imagine the idea of a stranger determining whether or not you're competent to take care of yourself without any kind of assessment at all, determining your fate at a distance without your consent.

They also revealed that any interested person can apply for the guardianship of any senior. Imagine a disenchanted relative taking guardianship in bad faith. Imagine the consequences for the senior. Why should the state have the power to place one citizen at the mercy of another without proper checks and balances? Perhaps worst of all, there is no ironclad guarantee of right to counsel.

This act must be re-examined by this House. There are seniors who can no longer take care of themselves, and we do need a process that puts legal guardians in place for those newly dependent adults. As the legislation stands, the potential exists to strip away the human rights of seniors who retain or regain their mental capacity.

I urge this government to please reconsider this legislation in order to return dignity and human rights to the men and women who have spent their lives building the province. They deserve no less.

Thank you.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Lesser Slave Lake.

#### Doug Spurgeon

**Ms Calahasen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For some Friday the 13th is a day of caution, reluctance, anxiety, and sometimes fear. However, in my constituency of Lesser Slave Lake this Friday the 13th is a day of excitement, celebration, and tribute because one of our local heroes, a radio show host, is celebrating four years since his arrival in High Prairie at The Fox radio station. That's Doug Spurgeon.

Radio hosts have always come and gone in most areas; in our town, gone usually in a short time, three months, six months, never staying longer. Not our Doug. In fact, rumour has it that he wants to stay in High Prairie forever, and we want him to stay. We want him to stay not only because he has one of the greatest and sexiest voices on air, but he spends his personal time volunteering with the RCMP, Métis settlements, various towns, First Nations, and nonprofit organizations. In fact, last year when he found out that the food bank was in trouble, he and his good friend Brian Holmberg brought in 6,000 pounds of food and \$8,000 in cash in four days. They worked day and night. There was no sleep for dear old Doug.

This sweet, sweet man takes every opportunity he can to showcase and promote the people and organizations that form the fabric of the High Prairie region. As you can see, Doug recognizes the importance of community involvement and takes his position with The Fox as an opportunity, an opportunity to connect all people of the High Prairie region to each other as they build on strengthening the foundation of our communities.

Doug, as our friend, thank you for all the work that you have done in our communities. We want you to stay longer and to continue to make a difference in our world.

Thank you.

**The Speaker:** Today, March 12, is the anniversary of his arrival in this world, so join me in congratulating the hon. MLA for Stony Plain, the Solicitor General and Minister of Public Security. Happy birthday.

Congratulations, too, to two of our members who were also

elected in 2001 but haven't gone that eight years yet: the hon. Member for Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview and the hon. Member for Cardston-Taber-Warner. Congratulations to both of you.

1:50

#### Oral Question Period

**The Speaker:** First Official Opposition main question. The hon. Member for Edmonton-Centre.

#### Disclosure of Information on Environmental Charges

**Ms Blakeman:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Premier's office is clearly involved in information suppression concerning the 90 charges laid against Suncor. The Public Affairs Bureau, which reports to the Premier, chose to enforce a policy to not inform the public at the time that these charges were laid, thereby avoiding an election campaign controversy and leaving the public uninformed. My questions are to the Premier. Will the Premier accept responsibility for the actions of the staff and admit the obvious, that there was political meddling in the public's right to know?

**Mr. Stelmach:** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Environment will answer this question.

**Mr. Renner:** Mr. Speaker, I just had a discussion with the media outside. As I indicated to them yesterday, I was under the impression that there was, in fact, a process for advising the public and the media any time charges were laid as a result of an investigation. I subsequently found out that there is a long-standing policy in Alberta Environment, that was put there by a minister previous to me, that is to the contrary, that disclosure does not come until after the court case has been decided. I also just advised the media that I made a decision yesterday afternoon and have advised my staff to the same, that that policy shall be revised immediately, and in the future there will be disclosure and transparency.

**Ms Blakeman:** Well, Mr. Speaker, when the Public Affairs Bureau wants the public to know something, it tells the world. Witness the hoopla over the charges that were laid over the 500 ducks. But when the government wants to keep it a secret, its lips are sealed, even from its own MLAs. Again to the Premier: who in the Premier's office enforced that policy to not let people know what was happening in their own community? Who was responsible for burying this issue?

**Mr. Stelmach:** Mr. Speaker, as the minister explained, nobody was responsible for holding back any information. There was a policy in place. In fact, quite frankly, when the issue with Syncrude came up, we probably broke the policy that the Department of Environment had. I wasn't aware of the policy, and the minister wasn't aware, but now in keeping with openness and transparency, we'll change the policy. When any issues like that come up, they'll be made public as soon as we can, as soon as possible.

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

**Ms Blakeman:** Thank you. Going back to the Premier again: given that the Crown has to be pretty certain of its success before it is encouraged to lay any kind of charges, why would the government choose a policy to not disclose, to hide information in other words, especially information that was available around an election campaign? Why would you choose a policy to not disclose on water contamination until the conclusion of a court case? That runs contrary to why you send a Crown prosecutor out there.

**Mr. Stelmach:** The member is going in circles. Actually, they keep going to the election and saying that this was for some reason suppressed. Documents are public. Any time there is a charge laid, those documents are public.

The fact is that during a campaign there is a firewall between the government and the people operating the government during that period of time, and that's the way to do it. They followed the policy that was in Environment. You know, this is I don't know how many days now that the opposition is pointing to factors other than their very own issue of not being able to win the trust and confidence of Albertans, and that's why they're in the position they're in. They lost a whole bunch of members, both of those parties, because they didn't gain the trust and confidence.

**The Speaker:** Second Official Opposition main question. The hon. Member for Edmonton-Centre.

### Environmental Monitoring and Self-reporting

**Ms Blakeman:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Well, Albertans expect a government to be open and transparent, and Albertans expect answers, especially in cases of water contamination. Albertans are not getting that here in this Assembly, and the public's right to vital information about their water has been violated. My questions are to the Minister of Environment. People living downstream from the oil sands have been subjected to oil and grease spills, to tailings ponds leaks, and inadequately treated sewage. Can the minister explain how any of these fit into his oft-repeated mantra: "That's okay; this is a naturally occurring process"?

**Mr. Renner:** Mr. Speaker, the incident that led to this question is the matter of a case before the courts, so I cannot talk about the details specific to this.

Let me be very, very clear to this member and to all members of this House. There are two separate issues that need to be dealt with. One is to advise and be sure that anyone possibly influenced by downstream is informed when an incident takes place. Whether or not charges are laid subsequent to that is something entirely different. And they were informed when the incident took place.

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

**Ms Blakeman:** Thank you. Well, to the same minister. Yesterday the minister stated that water contamination near Calling Lake was not groundwater but, rather, surface contamination, but his department's own press release states: high levels of chlorine in the groundwater as a result of the contamination. So which is it, Mr. Minister?

**Mr. Renner:** Mr. Speaker, this instance has to do with contamination within an industrial site. There are wells that have been ordered as part of the compliance order to determine whether there is any need for further containment and also to delineate where the contamination took place. The fact is that this is leaching from the surface. We have concern that it could perhaps get into the groundwater, but at this point there's nothing to indicate that anything has left the property itself.

**Ms Blakeman:** Yeah, right, because water doesn't flow anywhere. Back to the same minister: given that the government's whole-hearted support of industry self-reporting is clearly resulting in significant delays in the public getting information on spills, leaks,

and releases in their water sources, will the minister move immediately to a system of government monitoring and enforcement?

**Mr. Renner:** Mr. Speaker, it would be nice if there were sufficient resources and people to have a policeman on every corner. We don't have that luxury, and in some cases, frankly, I'm not so sure that it would be a better world if we did. The fact of the matter is that we rely upon individuals being honest in order to maintain society. You gave the example the other day that we rely on individuals to be honest on their tax returns. We audit them from time to time, and when we find that they're not, we come down very hard on them. When we find that people are not reporting appropriately, we come down very hard on them as well.

**The Speaker:** Third Official Opposition main question. The hon. Member for Calgary-Currie.

### Effects of Economic Downturn

**Mr. Taylor:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When we talk about the economic downturn in here, we talk a lot about dollars and percentages and statistics and projections, but the downturn is really about people and how their government plans to help them get through what RBC is forecasting will be the sharpest contraction of all the provincial economies this year. To the Premier: within the context of the dollars he has to work with – I'm not asking for additional funding; I'm asking for some reallocation – what is the Premier prepared to do to protect our seniors, many of whom have seen a good chunk of their retirement savings evaporate?

**Mr. Stelmach:** The member raises a good point, and that is that many of our seniors that have been retired for a while or just recently retired within a few months or maybe just looking at retirement this year have seen a good portion of their investments diminish considerably, whether they be RSPs or other investments. As mentioned in this House before, our budget will be working to reflect the most vulnerable in terms of programs and do what we can to support those that have seen a considerable reduction in their investments over the last number of months.

**Mr. Taylor:** Mr. Speaker, given that you have to anticipate that students will have a harder time finding well-paying jobs this summer and that knowledge is the key to our long-term prosperity, what is the Premier prepared to do about the cost of postsecondary education so our students don't have to go deep into debt to get one?

**Mr. Stelmach:** As I said, part of our plan is to support both secondary and postsecondary education. There will be details in the budget coming forward on April 7 which will deal with all of these matters.

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

**Mr. Taylor:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that some of the first people to lose their jobs are the lower skilled working poor, who were some of the last people hired during the boom, what is the Premier prepared to do to help them cope? Or is it back to shelters and food banks for them?

2:00

**Mr. Stelmach:** Mr. Speaker, again, this is the conundrum that the member is going to have. When you have a limited amount of

revenue, you try to look at all of the needs within the province and decide which part is the most vulnerable, requires the most help. I'm sure that as the budget is delivered on April 7, he will be able to participate in that debate and impart some of his wisdom on where some of these dollars should go.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood, followed by the hon. Member for Wetaskiwin-Camrose.

#### Auditor General Office Funding

**Mr. Mason:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The Auditor General needs a mere \$2 million to carry out planned audits that could save taxpayers many millions more. Just last October he identified \$25 million in oil and gas royalties that were not collected. This \$2 million that he needs is the best investment government can make, and by denying the Auditor General proper funding, the Premier is creating a false economy. My question is to the Premier. Why won't you make the smart choice and give the Auditor General the \$2 million additional that he needs to do his job?

**Mr. Stelmach:** Mr. Speaker, the office of the Auditor General is, obviously, an office of the Legislative Assembly. The Legislative Assembly receives a budget. The committee that's been put together, of course, through a motion of this House will make the decisions on how the money that is coming to the Legislative Assembly will be divvied up amongst the many legislative offices.

**Mr. Mason:** Mr. Speaker, it's evident to anyone who watches closely that a government policy with respect to budget guidelines for these offices is being implemented. The Auditor General will be unable to complete his audit plan. In his 2003 report he identified up to \$4 million given to contractors who didn't provide the services they promised to people with disabilities. My question is to the Premier. Since giving the Auditor General the \$2 million he needs to complete his full audit program could save taxpayers many more millions, why doesn't the government . . .

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

**Mr. Stelmach:** Mr. Speaker, on March 4 as part of supplementary supply the office received an additional \$750,000, so there was an increase in the budget. It's incorrect to say that he has not received any additional in-year revenue going to his department. That's incorrect on behalf of that member.

**Mr. Mason:** Mr. Speaker, I didn't say that. He needs \$2 million more than the government is prepared to give him. The following audits will be deferred or cancelled: water quality, food safety, infection control, child care, persons with developmental disabilities, and 22 others. How can this Premier claim to be a smart spender when he sanctions the waste of millions of tax dollars by refusing to properly fund the Auditor General?

**Mr. Stelmach:** Mr. Speaker, according to Leg. Offices the Auditor General has the money in place to do the audits that had been specified but, you know, a \$750,000 increase mid-year. I believe this House decided to support the third party. We are supporting them in office budget based on a membership of four. There are only two. I don't know how much money that is. I thought it was around \$350,000. I may be wrong. Maybe he wants to take that money out of his budget and give it to the Auditor General.

#### Speaker's Ruling

##### Questions about a Legislative Committee

**The Speaker:** Hon. members, this is question period. This has to do with government policy, and I as the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta need to make a clarification for anybody out there who may be listening. This Assembly creates a number of all-party committees called legislative committees. There is such a committee called Legislative Offices. It's chaired by a member of this Assembly. It has representation from all parties in this Assembly. That committee determines the budget of all the legislative officers, which includes the Auditor General, the Chief Electoral Officer, the Ethics Commissioner, the right-to-privacy commissioner, and the Ombudsman.

Should it come to pass that the government is influencing any member of that committee as to what they have to do, then that would offer that particular member an opportunity to stand in this Assembly and raise a very distinguished and serious point about interference. To my knowledge this has never happened since I have been the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta, and I as the chair of the Members' Services Committee know this has certainly never happened to the chairman of that committee.

To suggest that it's the government that's setting the budgets for the Legislative Offices Committee begets the importance of the Legislative Assembly and denigrates the Legislative Assembly. As the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta I cannot allow that to happen. So I want everybody to be very, very cautious about this line of questioning, which leads to nothing but innuendo. Innuendo is not what we're about; truth is what we're about.

**Mr. Mason:** Mr. Speaker, with the greatest of respect . . .

**The Speaker:** No. There's no point of order or anything else. The Speaker made a statement.

The hon. Member for Wetaskiwin-Camrose.

#### Service Dogs

**Mr. Olson:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Seniors and Community Supports. I was very happy to see the proclamation of the Service Dogs Act January 1 of this year. It's, I think, a great example of proactive steps that our government has been taking to help Albertans with service dogs. I actually have a number of constituents who had been waiting for this legislation. Now, of course, they're looking for more information. I'm wondering if the minister might just describe some of the benefits that this act provides to Albertans with service dogs.

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

**Mrs. Jablonski:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Alberta government is committed to assisting Albertans with disabilities. The Service Dogs Act ensures that Albertans with disabilities who use a qualified service dog are guaranteed access to all places open to the public. This includes buses, taxis, restaurants, and even the Alberta Legislature. These are the same rights awarded to individuals with visual impairments who use guide dogs.

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

**Mr. Olson:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For the same minister. There are always, of course, detailed questions that come up. For example, in my constituency I have a constituent who has a service dog, but it's not certified. I'm getting some questions: how do we know

when a dog is properly trained for the safety of the person who needs it? On the other hand, how do we know when there's no issue of public safety? Are there minimum standards, and what's the process for certification?

**Mrs. Jablonski:** Mr. Speaker, there is a comprehensive training process to certify service dogs, which takes approximately six months. During this time they're trained daily and receive between 120 and 360 hours of training from an accredited school. For service dogs that have not been formally trained by an assistance dogs internationally accredited school, the province is establishing a pilot project to assess and determine if service dogs trained by other schools or their owners can be certified. With the training and pilot project as well as an application process for service dog owners to obtain ID cards . . .

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

**Mr. Olson:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Obviously, time is short. This is a good act, which has lots of good elements to it, so in the interest of just educating our members and members of the public, I'd like to offer the minister the opportunity to just expand a little bit on what benefits this provides.

**Mrs. Jablonski:** With the training and pilot project as well as an application process for service dog owners to obtain ID cards, Albertans can be assured that these dogs are properly trained to both assist their owners and not pose a risk to the public.

Mr. Speaker, I would just like to point out that these service dogs are especially trained to assist individuals with disabilities in everyday activities. For example, Charly is here with Larry, two guests that I introduced earlier today. Charly helps Larry by picking things up for him and retrieving things. Greg is here with his dog, Chase. Chase helps Greg by giving him balance and stability. So this is a great act.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Lethbridge-East, followed by the hon. Member for Leduc-Beaumont-Devon.

#### Long-term Care for Rural Seniors

**Ms Pastoor:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister of health dodged my questions regarding the future of long-term care for seniors in rural Alberta. The minister says: wait for the budget. However, hundreds of seniors are at home or in acute-care beds waiting to get into long-term care placement. To the Minister of Health and Wellness: again, what commitment is the minister willing to make to rural seniors so that when they need long-term care, they will not be moved from their family and community?

**Mr. Liepert:** Well, Mr. Speaker, there hasn't been any dodge in anything. I've been very clear in this House that what we need to do is a better job of ensuring that our senior patients have the kind and quality of care that best meets their needs. I think that in the budget we will be bringing forward you will see some initiatives so that, hopefully, we can provide care and not necessarily just provide facilities that we have to have seniors move out of their community to reside in.

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

2:10

**Ms Pastoor:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The goal of the continuing care strategy is to "encourage non-profit and private investment in

the development and operation of long-term care facilities." Will the minister include a provision so that a percentage of those encouraged facilities will be in rural Alberta?

**Mr. Liepert:** One of the options that we're looking at, Mr. Speaker, is working with the nonprofit and private sectors to say: how can we together have the facilities, whether they're long-term care, whether they're assisted living, daily assisted living, or designated assisted living, where it meets the need? I would suggest that there's really no differentiation between rural, urban, Edmonton, Calgary, Lethbridge. We need to have the facilities where the need is.

**Ms Pastoor:** Well, Mr. Minister, there really is a huge need in the rural area.

My next question would be to the Minister of Seniors and Community Supports. Helping seniors, especially rural seniors, stay in their communities is an integral part of the continuing care strategy. In the 2007-2008 annual report rural affordable supportive living was unspent by \$3.7 million. Could the minister explain why?

**Mrs. Jablonski:** Mr. Speaker, I certainly agree with the member across the way that having assisted living facilities in our rural areas is very important, and we are trying to focus on that. All the money has been appointed. There have been delays in construction, and this is because of delays in receiving permits. The availability of construction personnel delayed the start of construction on some of the projects. It's necessary to understand that at the beginning of a project we only give out half of the money, and we don't give the rest of the money until halfway through and at the end of the project.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Leduc-Beaumont-Devon, followed by the hon. Member for Calgary-Varsity.

#### Foster Care

**Mr. Rogers:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There has been much discussion recently in this House and in the media about the supports and services that the government provides to foster parents and foster children. Foster parents are a critical part of any successful foster care system because they care for some of our most vulnerable children and youth. I was privileged to recently attend the Crossroads Family Services celebration, where many foster parents from my constituency and other areas were recognized for many years of dedicated fostering. I believe it is critical that we support these dedicated men and women.

**The Speaker:** I'd sure like to know what the question is.

**Mr. Rogers:** I'm getting to that, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** Well, you're running out of time.

**Mr. Rogers:** Okay. My question is to the minister of children's services. Can the minister advise the House what types of supports are provided to foster parents in Alberta?

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

**Ms Tarchuk:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can tell you it's a priority of ours to give foster parents the appropriate supports, and while provinces report differently, I understand that we do rank among one of the highest in Canada. Our financial reports can be found on our website. They vary depending on the age of the child, skill level of



the parent. I think the average is just over \$1,400 per month per child as well as some recreation and vacation allowances. In addition, we know that every child and every foster family is unique and that they have different needs and different resources and capacities. We also have available assistance with child care costs, equipment, in-home assistance, mentorship, and training.

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

**Mr. Rogers:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I understand that level 1 foster parents can have up to two children in their home, level 2 foster parents can care for up to four, and that in the first year new foster parents can only care for no more than two. Can the minister explain how often and under what circumstances there could be more than four children in a foster home?

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

**Ms Tarchuk:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today we have around 2,300 foster homes in Alberta, and our average is two foster children per home. Of the 2,300 foster homes about 120 of them are licensed to have more than four children. In order to be licensed, certain criteria have to be met. Obviously, there has to be a desire on behalf of the parents to want additional children. As well, we have minimum standards in terms of skills and training and capacity. They have to have an appropriate home environment and proper supports in place. I can say that larger home placements work really well in a number of situations, including accommodating siblings.

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

**Mr. Rogers:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again to the same minister: Madam Minister, what kind of success are you seeing with your ongoing foster parent and aboriginal caregiver recruitment program?

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

**Ms Tarchuk:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think we're seeing great success. Since the launch of the recruitment campaign in October we have approved 234 foster homes and kinship care homes. I think a lot of this success has been due to some really innovative approaches taken by staff in our communities as well as others, like the Member for Calgary-Montrose, who just this past weekend hosted an information session in Calgary with over a hundred attendees, which is wonderful. We're going to continue with this campaign. We all know that the more foster parents we have, the better able we'll be able to match children.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Calgary-Varsity, followed by the hon. Member for Edmonton-McClung.

#### Postsecondary Education Affordability

**Mr. Chase:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Postsecondary students in Alberta pay the fourth-highest tuition fees in the country despite a promise by this government four years ago that Alberta's tuition would be the most affordable. At the University of Calgary tuition will be increasing by another 4 per cent this year. To the Minister of Advanced Education and Technology: having failed to keep the promise to Alberta's postsecondary students, what does the minister have to say to those students who have to take on additional work, reduce their course load, drop out, or who can't afford to attend in the first place?

**Mr. Horner:** Mr. Speaker, we have one of the most beneficial student finance and student assistance programs in the country. I think the member has obviously been chatting with the CAUS students who were making the rounds of MLA offices this week, and I encourage them to do so. In fact, I met with them earlier this week. We had a very open and frank discussion about the world economy and what was happening with some reports generated out of eastern Canada touting a possible 25 per cent increase in tuition. I gave them the commitment that our policy of capping tuition at CPI was not changing.

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

**Mr. Chase:** Thank you. The best investment we could possibly make, whether in a recession or during a boom, is in postsecondary education. One of the biggest costs for students is housing. With low vacancy rates and high rents many students cannot afford accommodation. The very limited residences at Alberta's universities and colleges are full, forcing 90 per cent of students to look for accommodation elsewhere. When will the minister be building new resident spaces which will provide students with affordable and safe places to live?

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

**Mr. Horner:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm curious whether the hon. member has been away the past few weeks because in the city which he represents, they've recently announced some 600 new spaces by the University of Calgary. We are the backstop for those residences. The government of Alberta does actually backstop the borrowing for those residences.

The other thing, Mr. Speaker, is that I agree with the hon. member. Investment in postsecondary is the best investment that either the government or the student can make.

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

**Mr. Chase:** Thank you. The new residences of which the minister speaks will not increase the ability to house only 7.4 per cent of University of Calgary students on campus. Eastern campuses on average are able to accommodate 21 per cent of their students. We can do better; we have to. For many students who rely on student loans to finance their studies, the expected parental contribution reduces their ability to access support. This is magnified in this economic downturn, with many families not able to afford the expense. When will the minister make changes to the student loan system to reduce the requirements for parental contributions, making it easier for students to access student loans?

**Mr. Horner:** Mr. Speaker, again, I'm curious about where the hon. member has been. We actually dealt with this question in this House a couple of days ago, and I would encourage the hon. member to review *Hansard* for his answer regarding parental contributions. I would also like to advise the hon. member, if he wasn't aware – and I recognize he's not the critic for the department – that the student finance system is a national system: 60 per cent federal government, 40 per cent provincial government. In order for us to make drastic changes – granted, Alberta has stepped out on its own in a number of areas, but it is a national system – we'd have to have federal government support.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Edmonton-McClung, followed by the hon. Member for Edmonton-Riverview.

### Changes to Building and Fire Codes

**Mr. Xiao:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Edmonton's devastating MacEwan fire in 2007 highlighted the importance of fire safety. In 2008 this government committed to take action to help protect Albertans from high-intensity fires. Today it was announced that the province is updating its building and fire safety codes. Can the Minister of Municipal Affairs please explain what the new building codes changes are and when they are coming into effect?

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

**Mr. Danyluk:** Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The updated building codes will make Albertans safer from fire. Also, the building codes come into effect on May 3 of this year. They are going to include fire-resistant requirements for buildings that are built close to each other or close to property lines. Also, there will be new sprinkler systems for multifamily units and fire-resistant requirements for homes with attached garages.

2:20

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

**Mr. Xiao:** Yes. My second question is for the same minister. Exactly how will these updated codes reduce the occurrence and severity of these fires?

**Mr. Danyluk:** Well, Mr. Speaker, these changes buy time for people to get out of their home and also for firefighters to respond. These new codes prevent the spread of fire. I want to say that when you prevent the spread of fire, it gives, as I said before, time for firefighters to be able to come to the fire scenes and be able to respond to smaller fires.

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

**Mr. Xiao:** Yeah. My final question to the same minister: although these changes are important, they will certainly impact Albertans by adding to the cost of building a new home. Can the minister please explain who was consulted before these new codes were introduced?

**Mr. Danyluk:** Well, Mr. Speaker, what we did was an extensive study with stakeholders. The stakeholders did include, of course, the fire departments, the fire chiefs, also the builders in the province. We also included the Safety Codes Council. We included municipalities. This was a gathering of all the interest groups for the building of residences and because the high-intensity fire is a concern to all residents. It is critical that we bring that direction forward, as we have.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Edmonton-Riverview, followed by the hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood.

### Labour Protection for Paid Farm Workers

**Dr. Taft:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question will be to the minister of agriculture. This government continues to ignore calls to include paid farm workers under the province's labour laws. Almost three years ago we asked the then minister of human resources to take action. He said that he was, quote, working closely with the minister of agriculture on the issue. Today we still see consultation and still no action. To the minister of agriculture: why has this government stalled this process for so long?

**The Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development.

**Mr. Groeneveld:** Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Of course, if the hon. member had been listening for the last three days this week – the Premier talked about it, and I talked about it – the Employment and Immigration ministry and myself have been coming up with a plan that we're working on. But we have to involve the agriculture industry. We're not going to move ahead without doing that. That's going to take some time. Let me be very clear: I've never gotten a request from the agriculture industry to do that.

**Dr. Taft:** You know, Mr. Speaker, that's exactly the kind of answer we've been getting for years. People are dying. People are getting seriously injured. We know the stalling to protect paid farm workers is not because of financial constraints, that it's not because of a lack of resources, and it's surely not because of a lack of calls for action on the issue, so we're left to assume that it's because this government is protecting someone's interests though certainly not those of farm workers. To the minister: just who is opposed to stronger safety standards for farm workers?

**Mr. Groeneveld:** Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm not protecting anyone at all and the big secrecy of the whole thing. I would like the member to sit down with me and look at the last – he's talking about the farm. I think he brought up a figure of 220 the other day. I'd love to sit down with the hon. member, go through them, and have him show me where legislation would prevent these accidents. He just has to stop looking at the headlines, and he has to start getting to the facts.

**Dr. Taft:** It's shocking. You look at B.C. You look at Saskatchewan. You look at every other province that has legislative standards, and they have better safety records than this province. I cannot believe this minister.

A Provincial Court judge recently recommended in a public fatality report that "paid employees on farms should be covered [under] Occupational Health and Safety . . . with the same exemption for family members and other non-paid workers that apply to non-farm employers." A judge of Alberta is saying that in a fatality inquiry. To the Minister of Employment and Immigration: when will he be introducing legislation to amend the act as recommended and at last – at last – protect the health and safety of paid farm workers?

**Mr. Goudreau:** Mr. Speaker, the hon. Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development indicated that we are working together to look at the input from the agricultural community. The member opposite alluded to the fact that the judge made some recommendations, but evidence at that particular inquiry found that this particular fatality in question would not have been prevented by regulations. So we need to balance all of these as we move forward.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood, followed by the hon. Member for Cypress-Medicine Hat.

### Meat Packer Owned Cattle

**Mr. Mason:** Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. Family farms who sell livestock are at the mercy of the big packers. If the packers want to pay less for cows from the family farm, they can just drive the price down by flooding the market with their own supply because

this government lets packers keep captive stock. The question is to the minister of agriculture. Why won't you stand up for Alberta's family farms and implement a ban on packer-owned cattle?

**Mr. Groeneveld:** Mr. Speaker, I find that a little tough to take, that I don't stand up for family farms. The hon. member would like to check the statistics of the slaughter capacity in western Canada and find how many people are involved. Then he wants me to go after those people, perhaps try and take them out of business if I possibly can, and we would be down to one slaughter plant. What if that slaughter plant goes on strike? Think about it, hon. member. Just think about it before you just spout off what you hear out in the hinterland.

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

**Mr. Mason:** Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. Well, I wonder if the minister can guess who said this: "When meatpackers own livestock they can manipulate prices and discriminate against independent farmers." The answer is that it's a direct quote from U.S. President Barack Obama, who wants a ban on packer-owned cattle. This government will not do it because they support the monopoly of Cargill and XL Foods and not the family farm. To the minister of agriculture: once again, why won't you protect the family farm and ban packer-owned cattle?

**Mr. Groeneveld:** Mr. Speaker, this is something that was brought up south of the border a few years ago and many times. Some of the states have tried to pass this type of legislation. If the hon. member would think very shallowly, he would find how easily that could be circumvented – how easily that could be circumvented – and it was.

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

**Mr. Mason:** Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. Food safety, quality, and the food supply would all be better off if the livestock market was more competitive, not to mention the price of beef in grocery stores. This government has given two Alberta companies a stranglehold on the entire Canadian beef market. They put nearly 3,400 family farms out of business between 2001 and 2006. To the minister: why don't you support a competitive market that will benefit both farmers and consumers and put a stop to packer manipulation of prices?

**Mr. Groeneveld:** Well, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to see the statistics that show that the packers put 3,400 farmers out of business. If he would share that material with me that has some basis, I'd gladly look at it. I would refute that. It's pretty easy to pick numbers out of the air, but I've watched this gentleman before, and he's excellent at it.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Cypress-Medicine Hat, followed by the hon. Member for Calgary-McCall.

#### **Agricultural Research and Development**

**Mr. Mitzel:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Over the last several months several of my constituents have voiced their concerns over the need for agricultural research into improved varieties of grains and increased oilseed yields. Last year this government made a decision to discontinue malt barley variety testing and, instead, focused on feed barley varieties. I fully understand the quality component of Canadian grains for the export markets, but we've fallen behind with varieties of many grains and oilseeds where we should be trying,

instead, to increase quality and production. My question is to the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development. Will your department support our agricultural farm industry by providing tools for more research and development?

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

**Mr. Groeneveld:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Absolutely we will do that. Agriculture and Rural Development is involved in many projects as a funder and research provider. We certainly will continue to support research and development. Some of the examples I might like to bring up are the barley genetic improvement and variety development research that we're doing at the Field Crop Development Centre and development of the new crop-based foods and beverages at the Food Processing Development Centre in Leduc. Some of the people were there today.

Thank you.

2:30

**Mr. Mitzel:** To the same minister, Mr. Speaker. I know Alberta agriculture continues to test pulses and grains and oilseeds in many areas of the province. Given that every area of the province is better suited to specific types of crops, will the minister inform this House how he plans to use these results gained to assist our agricultural producers?

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

**Mr. Groeneveld:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Certainly, Agriculture and Rural Development's role is to co-ordinate the regional variety testing program, or RVT, as we like to call it. Our support ensures that research continues without any interruptions. It's so important to keep that research going on a continuing basis. The results of the regional variety testing are made available to producers through a number of channels, including hub offices that we have out there. They certainly are on our website as well.

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

**Mr. Mitzel:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the same minister: how, then, does your department plan to continue to support future research and development in such areas as dryland beans, for example, to help ensure sustainability through better diversity opportunities for our farming industry?

**Mr. Groeneveld:** Well, Mr. Speaker, it certainly is a good question because research money becomes harder and harder to find as we move along. But we'll continue partnering with other groups that are out there to ensure that the research continues and that the results are accessible to our producers. We're also working with the U of A and the minister of advanced education and the Alberta Research Council on developing water use efficient and drought-tolerant crops and ways to improve nitrogen efficiency in barley, all potential impacts that could move our fertilizers along and keep these projects on a valuable footing.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Calgary-McCall, followed by the hon. Member for Calgary-Hays.

#### **Freedom of Information Fees**

**Mr. Kang:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A former manager of the freedom of information and protection of privacy unit of Alberta Infrastructure has stated that it was the general policy of the former

Minister of Infrastructure that there would be no FOIP fee waivers. To the Minister of Service Alberta, responsible for the FOIP Act: why are ministers of this government allowed to set policies that block legislative rights of Albertans to have FOIP fees waived? Why was there political interference in the public's access to information?

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

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With respect to the freedom of information act it's a very important act to protect Albertans' information. It's there to balance the right to information and the right to protection of information. With respect to the fees, there are fees charged for that, but the act is there for a very important reason, and we ministers all abide by that act.

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

**Mr. Kang:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know you don't abide by the act. I have documents showing this, which I will be tabling today. Thank you.

To the Minister of Infrastructure: why did the ministry have a policy to block fee waiver requests? Why was the minister making it financially impossible for Albertans to use the FOIP Act?

**Mr. Hayden:** Mr. Speaker, I have no idea what the member is referring to in this instance. If he'd like to send me a copy of what he's referring to, I'd be glad to look into it.

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

**Mr. Kang:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will be tabling the document showing that.

To the Minister of Service Alberta: which other ministries have policies to block FOIP fee waivers?

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

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With respect to fee waivers, if individuals apply and want some information, there are many situations where we will waive the fees for access to information. There are definite fees in place for that. But, as I stated before, if an individual has a particular situation where we have to waive the fees – we look at every situation and take everything into account.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Calgary-Hays, followed by the hon. Member for Calgary-Buffalo.

### Changes to Building and Fire Codes

*(continued)*

**Mr. Johnston:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The recently announced updated building codes will help slow the spread of fire among new homes, but I understand that many fires happen during the construction phase of the home. My questions are all for the Minister of Municipal Affairs. Can the minister please explain what measures have been taken to protect Albertans from fires that start on construction sites?

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

**Mr. Danyluk:** Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Individuals in the construction industry will have to do things just a little bit

differently, but that will help make a lot of individuals a lot safer. Those construction companies will have to ensure that vulnerable properties next to their sites are safe, to ensure access for emergency personnel. Also, the hot materials that are used on roofs: some of the regulations around there need to be changed.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to say one thing. These updated . . .

**The Speaker:** Well, I'm sure you do, but we do have a time policy. The hon. member.

**Mr. Johnston:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Investigations have indicated that the high-intensity residential fire that started on the MacEwan Green construction site was caused by arson. Can the Minister of Municipal Affairs please explain how the updated fire code will enhance security on construction sites?

**Mr. Danyluk:** Mr. Speaker, the new code will have tougher security, and it will protect work sites better. Safety is the responsibility of everyone. I encourage Albertans to visit our website to learn more about fire safety and what our regulations are bringing forward.

**Mr. Johnston:** Mr. Speaker, my final question: can the minister please explain how the public will be educated about these same code changes?

**Mr. Danyluk:** Well, I do want to say that these code changes are two years ahead of the national safety council code. We are going to use radio and print ads to inform the construction industry on the role they play – I believe that education is the key to keeping Albertans safe – and, as I said before, our website, Mr. Speaker. Safety is paramount for this government, and we are very committed to Albertans' safety.

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

### Grizzly Bear Management

**Mr. Hehr:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Like the Rhinestone Cowboy, Glen Campbell himself, my office has been receiving cards and letters from people I don't even know regarding the grizzly bear and particularly its fate. To the Minister of Sustainable Resource Development: are you going to extend the moratorium on the spring hunt of the grizzly bear, or will you allow this animal to be hunted for sport?

**Dr. Morton:** Mr. Speaker, with respect to the Rhinestone Cowboy I won't comment, but with respect to the grizzly bear, as I have explained numerous times to this Assembly, we're completing the final phase of the DNA study. We'll wait for those results before we make any final decision. We did extend the suspension of the hunt for another year. This is an important decision. We'll take our time and make it when we have all the information.

**Mr. Hehr:** The government's own scientists indicate that grizzly numbers are far below what is considered minimum for a healthy population. Can the minister tell us whose evidence he relies on: the scientists' or that of sport hunters reporting bear sightings? Which does the ministry consider more accurate?

**Dr. Morton:** Well, Mr. Speaker, I think the Rhinestone Cowboy is referring to a very interesting report that was put together by the Willmore Wilderness Foundation. These aren't just a bunch of

yahoos. They're outfitters, backcountry people that spend a lot of time in the woods, and they reported a variety of sightings, 350 different sightings. They've put it both into a great film, which I'd recommend – I even appear in that film – but also a database. We're going to compare that database with the DNA database. We've got them working together, and we're going to get good results.

**Mr. Hehr:** There is no disputing that grizzly numbers in Alberta are low, well under 500, yet there is still no plan in place despite the recommendation of the government's own scientists. When will this minister put in place the recovery plan recommended by its own grizzly bear team?

**Dr. Morton:** Mr. Speaker, that's simply not accurate at all. We spent the entire last year doing a fairly detailed mapping of both primary and secondary grizzly bear habitat. We have the BearSmart program and a variety of programs, and the grizzly bear habitat will fit into the regional plans under the land-use framework. Things are moving ahead on plan, as they should be.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Whitecourt-Ste. Anne.

#### Labour Protection for Paid Farm Workers

*(continued)*

**Mr. VanderBurg:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Statistics from other provinces related to farm death have been presented to this House. However, I understand that the way Alberta collects its data is very different from other provinces. My first question is to the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development. Is it accurate to compare stats from other provinces like B.C., Saskatchewan, Manitoba to ours?

2:40

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

**Mr. Groeneveld:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. We've heard innuendoes from the other side of the House about this before. The short answer is no, it's not possible. The numbers that have been presented are WCB statistics. In Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and B.C. WCB collects data on paid workers only. Alberta data includes paid workers and everyone else: paid, unpaid workers, deaths that result from activities not work related. It's impossible to accurately compare jurisdictions and irresponsible to suggest that you can.

**Mr. VanderBurg:** Mr. Speaker, my next questions are both to the Minister of Employment and Immigration. I've been hearing a lot about our farmers being left unprotected in the workplace. At one time I was self-employed, and I was able to voluntarily buy compensation coverage. I understand that all self-employed people in Alberta have that opportunity. To the minister: is this true for our farmers and ag producers? Can they buy coverage?

**Mr. Goudreau:** Mr. Speaker, any business may apply for voluntary workers' compensation for both owners and workers. This coverage provides income replacement and any necessary medical and rehabilitation services for injured workers. This no-fault insurance coverage is the only kind that offers protection from lawsuits for employers, workers, and other parties covered by the Workers' Compensation Board.

**Mr. VanderBurg:** To the same minister. Again, when I was self-employed, I paid a rate of so many dollars per thousand of my payroll that I took myself. What would the coverage be for my agricultural producers, Mr. Minister?

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

**Mr. Goudreau:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Individual rates would depend on the type of operation and the producer's safety performance. The average premium rate for agricultural producers in 2009 is \$3.31 per \$100 of insurable earnings at present.

**The Speaker:** Hon. members, that was 96 questions and responses today. In a few seconds from now we'll call upon the first of three other members to participate in Members' Statements.

#### Members' Statements

*(continued)*

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Strathmore-Brooks.

#### Alberta Emergency Management Agency

**Mr. Doerksen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure to rise today and talk about the exceptional work of the Alberta Emergency Management Agency. Earlier this week my colleagues and I were fortunate to participate in a tour of the government's agency response readiness centre, or ARRC, and the emergency operations centre, the GEOC, located in west Edmonton. We saw the inner workings of how the government's emergency system works to keep us safe and secure.

Through the ARRC, staff are there 24 hours a day, seven days a week, ready to respond. When an emergency occurs, be it a flood, a fire, a chemical spill, or a severe storm, the ARRC staff are there to collect and share critical and timely information with emergency agencies, police, municipalities, MLAs, and Members of Parliament. The ARRC serves as the single point of contact providing everyone with the information they need to co-ordinate the emergency response. If the emergency escalates, the GEOC is activated. GEOC provides a critical service by co-ordinating a government-wide response to the incident when municipalities or industry require assistance.

During the tour I was impressed with the expertise and dedication of agency staff in providing support to Albertans in municipalities during a crisis. The importance of timely and decisive response to potential emergency situations cannot be overstated, early and effective intervention to mitigate potential disaster situations. By working in partnership with other provincial departments and local emergency response teams, we are truly creating a government-wide response to emergencies. Thanks to the agency's focus our province is seen as a leader in emergency response management across the country.

I want to acknowledge the staff of the agency and the proactive decisions of several years ago that resulted in the establishment of the agency to mitigate potential disaster situations for Albertans.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood.

#### Long-term Care

**Mr. Mason:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Today there is a crisis in our province's hospitals. Emergency rooms are overcrowded, sometimes dangerously so. With no long-term care beds available over a thousand patients wait in hallways, supply closets, and expensive acute care beds. Worse, seniors are being moved from long-term care beds to private supportive living facilities that they cannot afford and are inappropriate for their needs. This

government promised to invest \$300 million to create 600 new long-term care beds to help these patients, and this government broke that promise.

Not only are few spaces available, but our Auditor General has found that their staff are underpaid and overworked. As a result vulnerable seniors have again and again been left unfed, untoileted, and unbathed because there are simply too few health care workers to handle everyone. Front-line personnel report that because of the short-staffing they fear for the safety of residents. Hiring and training staff in this critical sector would raise standards to an acceptable level and create good jobs in a time of rising unemployment.

The government charges its critics in this issue with wanting to institutionalize people. This is false. We want sufficient long-term care beds available but only for those who require them. This government has so far failed to provide these. Mr. Speaker, unless this government lives up to its commitment to our seniors, long-term care facilities will still be bursting at the seams while hospital emergency rooms remain packed and in crisis. Meanwhile, our seniors wait on long lists for basic health services they need while this government continues along its path of broken promises.

Once again everyday Albertans are raising their voices and waiting for the government to solve the problem, but the government is not listening.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### Foster Care

**Mr. Bhullar:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This past Saturday I was pleased to host a foster parents information session at the Monterey Park Community Association. This event was very well attended by families interested in becoming foster parents, members of the cultural media, and community leaders from a multitude of different backgrounds, including the Chinese, Vietnamese, Filipino, Somali, Pakistani, Lebanese, and Indian communities.

My desire to raise awareness about the foster parent program is simple and stretches back many years. I want to help recruit foster parents, and I want to raise awareness about the program amongst different ethnic communities in an effort to help add diversity to our foster parent system. Being separated from parents can be a difficult process for all children. For a young child three or four years old from a cultural background, who has only been exposed to one type of food, one culture, one language, this process can pose additional challenges. My hope is that through my efforts we can help add diversity in our foster parent system and make a difficult situation just a little bit better for young children.

I would like to thank everybody involved, including the Calgary and area child and family services and the Alberta Foster Parents Association for their involvement. Mr. Speaker, I will continue to encourage Albertans from all corners of the province and all different backgrounds to consider becoming foster parents and ask all members to do the same.

Thank you.

#### Presenting Petitions

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

**Mr. Denis:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm here today to table not a Twitter or Facebook page but, rather, a petition regarding the recognition of marriage and family therapists under the Health Professions Act. The petition reads:

We, the undersigned residents of Alberta, petition the Legislative Assembly to urge the Government to introduce amendments to the Health Professions Act that would recognize marriage and family therapists as a regulated profession under that Act.

Mr. Speaker, there are 31 signatures, and they are primarily from Calgary but also from southwestern Alberta.

**The Speaker:** Are there others? The hon. Member for Calgary-McCall.

**Mr. Kang:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Relating to my earlier questions, I would like to table five copies of statements given to the RCMP by Frances Cruden, former manager of FOIP.

**The Speaker:** I think, hon. member, we're into petitions right now. We'll come back to you a little later.

**Mr. Kang:** Oh, sorry.

**The Speaker:** Not a problem.

#### Notices of Motions

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

**Mr. Hancock:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise pursuant to Standing Order 34(3.1) to advise the House that on Monday, March 16, the government will accept written questions 4 and 15. Additional written questions shall stand and retain their places on the Order Paper.

I'd also like to give notice that on Monday, March 16, 2009, Motion for a Return 16 will be dealt with that day, and additional motions for returns will stand and retain their places.

2:50

#### Introduction of Bills

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Airdrie-Chestermere.

##### Bill Pr. 1

#### Beverly Anne Cormier Adoption Termination Act

**Mr. Anderson:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to introduce Bill Pr. 1, the Beverly Anne Cormier Adoption Termination Act.

[Motion carried; Bill Pr. 1 read a first time]

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Strathmore-Brooks.

##### Bill Pr. 2

#### Caritas Health Group Statutes Amendment Act, 2009

**Mr. Doerksen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the hon. Member for Edmonton-Calder I request leave to introduce Bill Pr. 2, the Caritas Health Group Statutes Amendment Act, 2009.

[Motion carried; Bill Pr. 2 read a first time]

##### Bill Pr. 3

#### Les Filles de la Sagesse Act Repeal Act

**Mr. Dallas:** Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill Pr. 3, Les Filles de la Sagesse Act Repeal Act.

[Motion carried; Bill Pr. 3 read a first time]

## Tabling Returns and Reports

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

**Mr. Hancock:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I'm tabling the requisite number of copies of a schedule proposed for the 2009 main estimates. Pursuant to Standing Order 59.01(2) the schedule is to be prepared by the Government House Leader in consultation with the opposition. With your leave I'd just like to advise that while we haven't got full agreement on everything, we have had consultation.

We've attempted to make sure and, I think, made sure – there's extra information on the schedule to show that we've met with the request from opposition relative to making sure that, first of all, estimates are scheduled in committee rooms A and B. There had been an indication that estimates for larger departments might be scheduled on the floor of the House in the committee, but opposition requests were that we have them in adjacent rooms for ease of members moving back and forth, so all committees are scheduled for committee rooms A and B. We've also made sure that opposition critics are not scheduled for two committees at the same time, which obviously makes sense.

I would note that under Standing Order 59.01(2)(d) the estimates for Executive Council will be heard in Committee of Supply in the Assembly Chamber on April 15 and that pursuant to Standing Order 59.03 the votes on the estimates are scheduled for May 7.

**The Speaker:** Hon. Government House Leader, in addition to tabling that document, will you be circulating one for all members this afternoon as well?

**Mr. Hancock:** We'll arrange to have that done.

**The Speaker:** Okay. Thank you.

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Riverview on tablings?

**Dr. Taft:** Tablings, yes. First of all, I want to begin this comment just in response to what we just heard. The opposition takes great concern with the schedule that's being tabled right now.

I do rise on behalf of two of my colleagues with two other tablings. On behalf of the Member for Calgary-McCall this is a document that was referred to in the question raised by the Member for Calgary-McCall. It's five copies of a statement given to the RCMP by a former manager of a FOIP unit at Alberta Infrastructure. It says, "The general policy from the Minister Ty Lund's office was that there would be no fee waivers." That's what the member was referring to in his concerns about political meddling in FOIP.

My second tabling is on behalf of the Member for Lethbridge-East. It is the continuing care strategy put out by the Alberta government. There are five copies here. It's the document that she referred to in her question.

Thank you.

**The Speaker:** We don't mention members' names in the House.

**Dr. Taft:** I was quoting from a document.

**The Speaker:** Well, you can quote the document all you want, but we still don't mention names.

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood.

**Mr. Mason:** Yes. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to table the appropriate number of copies of a document from Statistics Canada dealing with the family farm in Alberta. The document indicates that between the 2001 and the 2006 census of agriculture

the total number of family farms declined from 48,590 to 45,195, a drop of 3,395 farms, or 7 per cent of the total in Alberta.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

## Projected Government Business

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar.

**Mr. MacDonald:** Yes. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise under Standing Order 7(6) requesting, please, from the Government House Leader the projected government business for the week commencing Monday, the 16th of March.

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

**Mr. Hancock:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just in general it's our anticipation that on Tuesday and Wednesday of next week the primary orders of business will be the appropriation acts, Bill 21 and Bill 22, and the bill that I would refer to as the TILMA Act, Bill 18.

On Tuesday, March 17, under Government Bills and Orders in Committee of the Whole Bill 18, Bill 21, and Bill 22, as I just referenced, and for third reading Bill 18; second reading of Bill 7, Public Health Amendment Act; Bill 12, Surface Rights Amendment Act; Bill 13, Justice of the Peace Amendment Act; Bill 16, Peace Officer Amendment Act; Bill 17, Securities Amendment Act; Bill 19, Land Assembly Project Area Act; and Bill 20, Civil Enforcement Amendment Act. Other than Bill 7, which we anticipate being debated, those others for second reading are primarily to move them at second reading.

On Wednesday, March 18, in the afternoon under Government Bills and Orders for third reading bills 18, 21, and 22; second reading of Bill 24, the Animal Health Amendment Act; Bill 25, Teachers' Pension Plans Amendment Act; and Bill 26, Wildlife Amendment Act. In Committee of the Whole Bill 1, Employment Standards (Reservist Leave) Amendment Act; Bill 2, Lobbyists Amendment Act; Bill 3, Credit Union Amendment Act; Bill 5, Marketing of Agricultural Products Amendment Act; Bill 8, Feeder Associations Guarantee Act; and Bill 15, Dunvegan Hydro Development Act.

On Thursday, March 19, under Government Bills and Orders for second reading bills 17, 19, 20, 24, 25, and 26, as previously referenced; in Committee of the Whole bills 7, 8, 12, 13, and 15, as previously referenced; for third reading bills 1, 2, 3, and 5, as previously referenced; and as per the Order Paper.

## Orders of the Day

### Government Bills and Orders

#### Second Reading

#### Bill 21

#### Appropriation (Supplementary Supply) Act, 2009

**The Speaker:** The hon. President of the Treasury Board.

**Mr. Snelgrove:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to move second reading of Bill 21, the Appropriation (Supplementary Supply) Act, 2009.

On March 2 the government of Alberta tabled supplementary supply estimates for just over \$128 million for three departments and the office of the Auditor General. The estimates, when approved by the Legislature, will provide spending authority to departments only in order to deal with the issues arising from that fiscal year. They are consistent with the third-quarter fiscal update, which updates the 2008-09 fiscal plan for all government entities.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Dr. Taft:** Yes. I think, Mr. Speaker, that it's very important to repeat on the record our concerns about a budgeting process that needs at this point now two supplementary supply bills, this one running, as the President of the Treasury Board said, well over \$120 million.

3:00

We spent some time on this in earlier debate, so I don't need to prolong this, but I need to register as a member of this Assembly my very, very deep concerns about the budgeting processes of a government that seems unable to stay within its budget. We have seen over the years huge budget overruns, and there are as a result much more serious constraints on a capacity to deal with this foreseeable downturn in the economy.

There has been a singling out of the Auditor General's expenditures in the comments from the President of the Treasury Board, and I think it's worth noting that those expenditures are not going to allow the Auditor General to proceed with the audits that could very easily end up saving the taxpayer a lot of money. I think there's a real risk in that particular decision that we are being penny-wise and pound-foolish.

I am increasingly uneasy, as I now enter my eighth year as an MLA, with a budget process that every single year is hundreds of millions and sometimes billions of dollars off the target on the spending side. I wanted to drive that home. I'm sure the President of the Treasury Board is paying close attention. I'm sure he's not thrilled with going over budget, but I sure as heck wish that this government would get its budgeting process in order so that we don't have so many supplementary supply bills.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar.

**Mr. MacDonald:** Yes. Thank you very much. Certainly, I listened to the comments from the hon. Member for Edmonton-Riverview. When we look at the supplementary supply here and we quickly go through it, we see Agriculture and Rural Development, we see Employment and Immigration, we see the modest amount for Transportation, and we see a three-quarters of a million dollar allocation for the office of the Auditor General.

I think of this supplementary supply, Mr. Speaker, and I go back to what was discussed in question period this afternoon regarding the Auditor General and the budget. I believe it was the question from the hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood, in that order. It's not Norwood-Highlands; it's Highlands-Norwood. Correct? When we look at the past budgets of the Auditor General, we see where in any given year the Auditor General has been very prudent in his budgeting. In fact, in the last number of years there has been a significant amount returned to the legislative office, the LAO, in some cases up to \$400,000 and in some cases I believe – and I could stand corrected – \$500,000. So the office of the Auditor General is a very prudent office.

I sit on the Legislative Offices Committee, and I had no idea that we would be asking for this appropriation. Maybe I wasn't paying attention, but I certainly was paying attention when government members of that committee suggested that they had instructions, in this case from the President of the Treasury Board, to limit and restrict further increases to the Auditor General.

Now, I heard the hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood speak at Public Accounts yesterday regarding an additional sum of \$2 million that will be needed for the Auditor to ably carry on his

necessary work. So when I look at the three-quarters of a million dollar amount, it's alarming to me in the first place that the Auditor would have to ask us for this money, but it's obvious that it's going to happen.

Mr. Speaker, we all recognize in this Assembly the good work that the Auditor needs to do. I know the government initiated this CIA. The hon. Member for Edmonton-Riverview can correct me, but I believe CIA in this case stands for the chief internal auditor or perhaps the committee of internal auditing. It's not affectionately called on this side of the House the CIA.

There is an internal audit function that was expanded about four or five years ago, and perhaps the hon. Deputy Premier can refresh all members of the House if my information is inaccurate on this. There was an expansion of this CIA function, and how the committee of internal auditors works remained a bit of a mystery. I at one point had been referred by a cabinet minister, if I had any questions, to seek out this committee and see what auditing they had done or had not done. I don't have the confidence in that internal audit function that I have in the office of the Auditor General. I have a great deal of confidence in the office of the Auditor General.

As I said before, this amount that we are looking at here will certainly be used wisely to ensure that we are receiving value for the taxpayers' dollars in the delivery of programs. It would also identify waste. What the Auditor is going to do with that money, I don't know, but I do know what is on the Auditor's wish list that needs to be done and cannot be done. These are deferred or cancelled projects. I was startled as Public Accounts chair to receive this information that had been requested by the committee, which as we know is an all-party committee, and the committee voted. I believe it was unanimous. I'm not sure, but the committee did vote to receive this information from the Auditor.

We can just go through the departments alphabetically. We can start with advanced education. A follow-up audit on Mount Royal has been deferred to October of this year. Postsecondary institute facility capacity and utilization project: the Auditor had something in mind there. That was cancelled. Postsecondary institute program planning: that audit has been cancelled. As was discussed in question period earlier today, in Agriculture and Rural Development a food safety follow-up has been deferred to October 2009. I can't believe that that would occur with the issues that we have around food safety. Children and Youth Services: financial support for children with disabilities system. This project has been deferred until 2010. Monitoring daycare and day home services: this is a knowledge of business audit project, and it has been deferred and no date given.

Culture and Community Spirit, Horse Racing Alberta: deferred and – I was talking about this earlier – the report date to be announced later. The \$50 million that we grant to the horse racing industry: I fully expect that the President of the Treasury Board is finally going to put his foot down and say that enough is enough. I will be very surprised if that's a line item in the budget on April 7. In fact, I'm willing to bet that it won't be. Those days are gone. I think the Premier sort of suggested that yesterday.

Education: improving school performance. That was to be a knowledge of business audit project. That has been deferred, no date given. Employment and Immigration: in here we are looking for an additional \$50 million. We discussed that at second reading on this bill. We had quite a discussion on that. The homeless eviction prevention fund: because of a shortage of resources that audit project is being deferred to October 2009. I believe, from the Minister of Employment and Immigration – and industry has been removed from that department. I'm not going to go there, Mr. Speaker.



3:10

The homeless eviction prevention fund: we're going to have a look at that. Of course, workplace health and safety. We've seen a recent report in the newspapers where 166 workers in this province, unfortunately, as a result of their jobs lost their lives in the last year, but the Auditor doesn't have money to have a look at that program. Now, speaking of money, in the Energy department: ensuring the collection of royalties. This has been deferred, and it's to be at a later date. I know the hon. President of the Treasury Board is worried about the resource royalty stream that we're going to have. I can't imagine why we would not allow the Auditor to have a very good look and a follow-up to his excellent work that he did in the fall of 2007.

In Environment there are some issues around water quality. Executive Council: again the Public Affairs Bureau comes up. That doesn't surprise me. With Executive Council the Public Affairs Bureau always seem to be coming up, and this is in regard to some contracts with Highwood Communications. Finance and Enterprise, measuring the effectiveness of the fiscal regime: this is a knowledge of business audit project, and it's deferred until 2011, Mr. Speaker, 2011. I can't believe it.

Health and Wellness is a department that gets more money all the time, doesn't know how to handle it. In fact, we're \$1.3 billion additional dollars in the red in that department this year. Now, in Health and Wellness the Auditor doesn't have the resources to deal with academic medicine governance and accountability, and the follow-up is not going to occur again until this time next year. Food safety, a very important issue. Infection control: I talked about that a little earlier in debate.

Seniors and Community Supports, persons with developmental disabilities persons in care: this knowledge of business audit has been cancelled. I think we should have a look at this.

I would urge all hon. members to consider the resources that we're providing to the office of the Auditor General, and I would say that we should change our minds because if there's any money left, and I'm confident with the office of the Auditor General that there will be from the additional allocation that is desired, it'll be returned to the taxpayers through the LAO.

Service Alberta: the network security review is deferred. Now, we know what the Auditor had to say about some of the security systems that we have or that could work better. This is a key recommendation from the Auditor on Service Alberta. The Auditor points out:

We recommend that the Ministry of Service Alberta consider providing internal control assurance to its client ministries on its centralized processing of transactions." How are taxpayers to have confidence in the department if something as necessary and as basic as network security reviews are not being done?

The Auditor also has other projects, interestingly enough, Mr. Speaker, going on in Service Alberta that I'm glad to see are being done: protecting information assets, the registry agencies, Service Alberta contract management, Service Alberta performance measurement systems, and TILMA implementation and compliance.

**Dr. Taft:** TILMA. Now, does that cover farm workers?

**Mr. MacDonald:** TILMA I don't think would cover farm workers. Certainly, if the minister of agriculture and food and the Minister of Employment and Immigration can't get together, maybe there will be some good come out of TILMA. It could be a regulatory method to make farm workers in this province have the same level playing field as far as workplace health and safety and labour laws as they

do in B.C. and in Saskatchewan and Manitoba. But we're only talking about B.C. here, Mr. Speaker; I realize that. Saskatchewan and Manitoba are a little bit cautious and nervous about TILMA, and I think they have every right to be nervous.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I don't want the hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood to be distracting me in my discussion and my participation in this debate, but certainly whenever we look at these supplementary estimates and we look at where the money is to be provided, it's a modest amount when you compare this request to previous supplementary estimates. It certainly is a modest amount when you review the list that the hon. Member for Edmonton-Riverview talked about earlier. It certainly is, however, a concern that this government never can stick to a budget that it introduced.

When you look at past budgets – and I know that the President of the Treasury Board wasn't involved in this. I'm confident that if the hon. minister had been involved, this wouldn't have happened. It's only two or three years ago when . . .

**The Speaker:** I'm sorry, hon. member, but the time has now elapsed. Standing Order 29(2)(a), however, is available. The hon. Member for Cypress-Medicine Hat.

**Mr. Mitzel:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The hon. member in his opening statements and through his whole thing spoke to a bunch of the audits that were not done, and he spoke to them under the assumption that these weren't done because of the lack of money. The hon. member might want to comment on whether the Auditor General perhaps decided that he didn't want to do them at this time or that there weren't enough other contractors, other auditors and other consulting firms, available to be able to do these. Also, as the hon. member knows and might have put on the record, the Auditor General returned \$408,000. If he really wanted to do any of those, perhaps a few of these audits that he mentioned – he went through the whole list of, I think, 23 out of the 80. Perhaps some of these audits could've been handled with this \$408,000.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar.

**Mr. MacDonald:** Thank you very much. I appreciate those questions. Certainly, the hon. member is right that the Auditor General returned I think it was \$403,000 in the last budget that I had information from. In previous years he has returned equal amounts, if not greater. That's what I said earlier in my comments, that the office of the Auditor General is very prudent and wise and manages money very well.

I would also like to point out to the hon. member that with the change in economic conditions, regardless of whether it's a construction worker or an auditor, there are a lot more of both available now. I'm not putting words in the office of the Auditor General on the floor of this House, but from what I understand from the discourse we've had with the Auditor General, it's much easier now to hire and retain outside audit staff for the office. There are certainly peaks in the auditing season, which the Auditor General has explained to us very well, and these resources are available. But it was clear in Public Accounts yesterday that an additional \$2 million is needed for this vital work.

Now, the hon. Member for Cypress-Medicine Hat, of course, is the chair of the Legislative Offices Committee, and he was present when other hon. members – one from Rocky Mountain House, one from Calgary-Montrose – clearly discussed on the record that there was a government direction from the hon. member regarding the budget of the Auditor General and what was to be expected. I believe it was a 3 per cent increase. That's all on the record, Mr. Speaker. It's for every member to review.

3:20

Certainly, when we look at the good work and the work that can be done by the Auditor, I would just like to again put on the record that the \$750,000 that has been requested here is different than the amount – and maybe the hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood can also clarify this. Yesterday in order to fulfill this work, we needed an additional \$2 million. None of this money, if it was to be provided to the office of the Auditor General, would be wasted.

We have a large government budget here. In fact, Mr. Speaker and hon. member, since I was elected – I didn't know this, 12 years ago, and thank you for informing me of that, Mr. Speaker; the years go by really fast – the provincial budget has expanded from \$14 billion to over \$40 billion. Now, that's a lot of cash. That is a lot of cash. This is a Conservative government who acts like a New Democratic government on steroids. The budget is just going up and up and up, you know. [interjections] I'm sorry.

Mr. Speaker, we look at all the money that this government is spending, and we have to make sure that we're getting value for that money and the programs and policies that that money is financing . . .

**The Speaker:** Hon. Government House Leader, the Q and A session is finished. You're participating on the debate?

**Mr. Hancock:** Yes. I'd like to move that we adjourn debate.

[Motion to adjourn debate carried]

## Bill 22 Appropriation (Interim Supply) Act, 2009

**The Speaker:** The hon. President of the Treasury Board.

**Mr. Snelgrove:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to move second reading of Bill 22, the Appropriation (Interim Supply) Act, 2009.

On March 2, 2009, the interim supply estimates were tabled in the Legislative Assembly. These estimates are to provide funding authorization until the new budget is approved. I would, Mr. Speaker, like to apologize if I miss some comments. I have an ear infection, and I have a very difficult time hearing. Although I do have to admit that with that certain malaise that I'm suffering, it does make some of the speeches far more presentable.

**The Speaker:** We've moved the bill, have we?

**Mr. Snelgrove:** I did, yes.

**The Speaker:** Others?

**Dr. Taft:** Well, I'm sorry if the President of the Treasury Board won't hear every single word that we say over here.

Again, my main comments on this particular bill, interim supply, are about process, Mr. Speaker. There was a commitment from this government under the current Premier to try to move the budget cycle earlier. I thought that that was a great idea. It's something I had supported for a long time. I think we have to be very clear, and I want all government members to understand this because what their process is doing is causing real problems for other organizations.

The fiscal year begins April 1. All kinds of organizations depend on provincial funding for them to make plans for their fiscal year.

Some organizations have fiscal years that begin in September, like many school boards. Regardless, all of those organizations depending on provincial funding have to plan. If they, as many of them do, begin their fiscal year April 1 and they do not know how much provincial funding they're going to get, they cannot properly plan. So we are building inefficiency and difficulty into our public financing system because of this process.

I was very pleased when the Premier announced – I think it was two years ago – that one of his priorities was to move the provincial budget process earlier in the year. It's an easy way to make the public sector across the board in Alberta more efficient. It's just basic good sense. Unfortunately, we have not achieved that. In fact, we haven't even come close.

I would like to have seen a budget brought in, you know, by no later than the middle of February, and if possible, even earlier. I know that the world is in uncertain times economically, but that hasn't stopped other governments in other jurisdictions from bringing forward budgets, and I don't know why it should have slowed this government down. As a result, instead of voting on a full budget, we're voting on interim supply. We are being asked as members of this Assembly to approve a very substantial sum, many billions of dollars here in spending, more or less on trust. We don't know how this fits into a larger agenda. We don't know what goals are hoped to be achieved because of this. This is sort of asking us to just give a blank cheque for many, many billions of numbers to the government. I am uneasy, I am unhappy about that.

I think this government could do better. I look at the Member for Cypress-Medicine Hat, for example, who at one time chaired a regional health authority. I don't want to speak for him, but I can well imagine that setting the budgets for that regional health authority would have been easier if the regional health authority had known before they were well into their fiscal year what the provincial funding would actually be. Maybe that's one of the reasons that they're still waiting for hospital renovations in Medicine Hat after some two decades or more. I don't know. In any case, this is an easy way to make the public sector more efficient. I don't know why this government can't get its act together on this.

I'm not happy about having to debate this bill. I look forward to maybe next year not having an interim supply bill because by this point we'll have actually dealt with a budget. In the meantime we're stuck with this bill. I don't like it, and I've explained why.

Thank you.

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

**Mr. Hancock:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's always interesting when members want to debate interim supply by saying that we'd really like to debate the budget. The budget is coming. They will have the opportunity to debate it.

The interesting piece in it, of course, is that in almost every year you will have interim supply if you have a lengthy budget debate as we provide for in this Assembly. We now provide, for this year, I think it's 75 hours of debate in committee on the estimates. That's up from many hours of debate. I think last year it was 60, and previous to that it was shorter. So certainly an improved budget debate, lots of opportunity to look at the numbers.

At this time, Mr. Speaker, I move that we adjourn debate.

**The Speaker:** Well, I will certainly move to the adjourn debate thing, but we have this interesting little quirk called Standing Order 29(2)(a). On the previous bill the hon. Government House Leader got up and simply adjourned the debate. In this one he proceeded to be involved in debate, so we have now five minutes of questions and

responses if anybody would like to direct a question to the hon. Government House Leader. The hon. Member for Edmonton-Riverview.

**Dr. Taft:** Well, thank you. I think the Government House Leader missed the point. My point was that the date for bringing the budget to this Assembly should be moved up ideally into January, in my mind, certainly no later than the middle of February.

As to his comments concerning the hours of debate, I think it's important to get on the record that, in fact, the process for budget debate that we're looking at this year in my view is reprehensible. It pulls the rug out of what little bit was left of accountability over this budget. The opposition is looking at a situation where we will have a responsibility for debating upwards of 30 bills, maybe by then 40 bills, in addition to handling two government department budget debates in the evening. We begin the very day after the budget is tabled, so there's no time to prepare. If you compare the 75 hours that's allocated for budget debate in Alberta to what's allocated in many other provinces, it amounts to next to nothing.

3:30

So I want it to be on the record, and the Government House Leader is welcome to reply, that as an opposition we think the proposed budget process is a complete and utter failure and a betrayal – a betrayal – of good public accountability.

**The Speaker:** Additional questions or comments, or shall I call the question?

**Hon. Members:** Question.

[Motion to adjourn debate carried]

### Government Bills and Orders Committee of the Whole

[Mr. Mitzel in the chair]

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

#### Bill 18

#### Trade, Investment and Labour Mobility Agreement Implementation Statutes Amendment Act, 2009

**The Deputy Chair:** Are there any comments, questions, or amendments to be offered with respect to this bill? The hon. Deputy Premier and Minister of International and Intergovernmental Relations.

**Mr. Stevens:** Thanks very much, Mr. Chairman. I thought that I would start out with a bit of overview, then introduce some amendments, and then provide some answers with respect to points that were raised in second reading. So that's going to be generally where I will be going with this.

**The Deputy Chair:** Hon. minister, are you moving an amendment?

**Mr. Stevens:** I will be.

**The Deputy Chair:** Okay. Thank you.

**Mr. Stevens:** I was doing one of those, you know, speech tricks, where you tell people what you're going to tell them and then you

tell them and then you tell them what you told them. I'm still in the telling them what I'm going to tell them, in a very introductory way, phase. So with your permission, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to move into that.

Mr. Chairman, I'm very pleased that we're just a few weeks away from fully implementing Canada's most comprehensive interprovincial trade agreement. As I'm sure most members in this House now know, by April 1 more than a hundred regulated occupations will have full labour mobility between Alberta and British Columbia. All skilled tradespersons such as plumbers or welders or highly trained professionals like teachers or nurses certified in Alberta or B.C. will be able to move between provinces and keep working without having to go through extensive recertification or retraining.

Businesses will have one set of requirements for registering and reporting in Alberta or B.C. or in both. Alberta and B.C. companies will have increased opportunities to bid on government contracts in both provinces, particularly in engineering, architecture, and related services, which will be in greater demand as infrastructure construction projects get under way. Unnecessary differences between regulations in the two provinces will be eliminated. This means that Alberta businesses face less red tape and can be more efficient and productive.

Full implementation of TILMA comes at an important time for Alberta and British Columbia. As all provinces in Canada work to combat the effects of the global recession, TILMA will improve our competitiveness both domestically and abroad. Investors, businesses, and workers will look to Alberta and B.C. because we have reduced government red tape. In short, TILMA will do great things for Alberta.

Now, Mr. Chairman, Bill 18 amends existing statutes and ensures that provincial legislation and the TILMA align. As I've indicated previously, Bill 18 really is a nuts-and-bolts, technical piece of legislation. In total 11 acts will be amended. Indeed, we're going to provide some additional amendments at this time to this otherwise technical legislation, which is the way these things sometimes go.

Mr. Chairman, at this point in time if the amendments could be handed out. I'll make my comments with respect to the amendments after everybody has them before them. In the interim, with your permission, I'll just carry on and answer some questions that were raised in second.

**The Deputy Chair:** Okay. Fine.

**Mr. Stevens:** Okay. While the amendments are being handed out, I'll address some of the points that have been raised. I actually addressed some of those in second reading in my closing remarks, so these really are supplementary to those answers I provided at that time.

One or more of the hon. members raised concerns over the misconception that there was no debate over the TILMA. The fact of the matter is that every step toward reaching the TILMA has been made public in one way or another. There were website postings, news releases, consultations with affected groups. In fact, Mr. Chairman, there was consultation with over 200 representatives from the MASH sector.

Mr. Chairman, I'd like to also note that we issued a press release out of my ministry last year – I believe it was on June 25 – where we dealt with the municipalities. In that we clearly indicated that the AUMA president on behalf of his organization, the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association, was satisfied that municipal concerns that his association raised on behalf of its members had been addressed through the negotiation process regarding the MASH provisions. Indeed, in that very same press release the president of

the AAMD and C on behalf of his organization also indicated that the consultation process on TILMA gave them the opportunity to bring the concerns of the membership of that organization forward and that, as a result, revisions arising out of that collaborative process would better meet the needs of local government. They were very pleased with the consultation process.

In essence, Mr. Chairman, the TILMA process has been transparent. It has been open. While the agreement itself is not the subject of debate in this Assembly, for the reasons I stated the other day, the process itself has been open and transparent. Many people that wanted to be involved have been involved. We did very much the same thing with previous bills 38 and 1, that relate to the TILMA, and now Bill 18.

Another concern yesterday, Mr. Chairman, was raised by the hon. Member for Calgary-Varsity. The hon. member wondered if the TILMA could somehow be used to circumvent Calgary's wage policies. The answer to that is no. A B.C. company that's looking to operate in Alberta still must follow Alberta laws just as Alberta companies must follow B.C. laws. The simple example I'd like to use is speed limits. The B.C. speed limit is 90 kilometres on the highways. In Alberta it's 100. If an Albertan who is in B.C. on business is caught speeding, they will not be able to say that B.C.'s lower speed limit is an impediment to trade or investment and use the TILMA as a defence, and vice versa should that arise.

Mr. Chairman, during the debate it was suggested that the TILMA will lower labour standards. The answer to that is: not true. In fact, both Alberta and B.C. have specifically committed to promoting high labour standards. We've worked together with more than 60 regulatory bodies that represent the hundred professional and skilled trade occupations covered under the TILMA. These regulatory bodies are directly involved in these negotiations, which is why we are very confident that high standards will continue. In most cases we are finding that mutual recognition is the option most regulatory bodies are going with.

**3:40**

I believe that everybody now has the amendments, so I'll just deal with that at this time, Mr. Chairman. I would like to move these four proposed amendments for the consideration of the Assembly. They will make Bill 18 a better bill.

The first one is to the Legal Profession Act. The proposed amendment is to allow this specific portion of Bill 18 to be proclaimed at an appropriate time. This flexibility will provide the necessary time for the Law Society to update its own rules as well as its professional oath of office. The Law Society is unable to make these changes until the next convocation of its benchers, or in other words, the next meeting of its benchers, which will occur in mid-April.

The second and third amendments apply to the Business Corporations Act, Cooperatives Act, and Partnership Act. In principle this amendment is required to ensure there is full authority for Alberta to make the regulatory changes necessary to implement an integrated system of seamless corporate registration for businesses in Alberta and B.C. Currently the act permits regulation regarding collecting information and documents from corporations, co-operatives, and partnerships. The amendment would allow regulations to be developed that would cover documents provided by the other registry. We also need to improve the wording of these acts to set regulations that are consistent with the requirements of an integrated business registration system in Alberta and British Columbia. The wording in our existing acts was never originally developed with these requirements in mind.

The last proposed amendment is intended to modify the definition

of "extra-provincial limited liability partnership" contained in the Partnership Act.

Those, Mr. Chairman, are my comments with respect to the amendments. I'll just go back to answer some of the points raised by hon. members during the debate in second reading.

It is important to point out that all provinces have followed Alberta's and B.C.'s lead, agreeing to full labour mobility under the AIT. The hon. Member for Edmonton-Strathcona in her remarks indicated that she was a bit concerned we would give loans "to people, farms, businesses outside of the province." I can tell you this: the only way access to money will be had is if your shovel is in the ground in Alberta. Your business address may be in B.C., but the work you do must be in Alberta.

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Strathcona also reraised a common misconception that TILMA will negatively affect the public interest, especially in municipalities. Mr. Chairman, I can tell you that the TILMA does not affect a municipality's ability to make laws such as zoning bylaws, height restrictions, signage rules, and land-use decisions that they believe are in the best interests of their citizens. It also does not interfere with social housing programs or assisting the less fortunate. I referred to the press release of June 2008 earlier in my remarks, where the representatives of the two municipal umbrella organizations here in Alberta clearly indicated that they were satisfied with the consultation process and that their concerns had been addressed.

TILMA preserves each government's right to establish regulations relating to public policy objectives such as public safety and security, environmental and consumer protection, and protection of the health, safety, and well-being of workers, such as workplace safety standards.

Mr. Chairman, after our extensive consultation with the MASH sector we reached agreement on new procurement thresholds under the TILMA. The thresholds are now \$75,000 for goods and services and \$200,000 for construction. Under the AIT, agreement on internal trade, thresholds were \$100,000 for goods and services and \$250,000 for construction projects.

Mr. Chairman, finally, I'd like to refer to the changes to the Government Organization Act. I made remarks to this effect also in my comments in second reading. I want to clearly outline how this change will work and why we need it. Changing the Government Organization Act will empower the Lieutenant Governor in Council to make regulations to temporarily amend noncompliant legislation. Temporary means for only a maximum of three years. Ideally, we would be able to bring legislation forward much sooner than that. Examples of when we would need this anticipatory ability might occur when prompt change is required to implement a TILMA panel ruling or for Alberta to avoid a challenge from B.C. under the TILMA when the Legislature is not in session. Mr. Chairman, I must point out that there is precedence for this to the Government Organization Act and that it is not inconsistent with past parliamentary practices. There are, for example, similar provisions in the Municipal Government Act and the Animal Health Act. Let's be clear about this: we will continue to make changes under the existing legislative process. This change to the Government Organization Act is anticipatory and will only be used as a last resort.

Mr. Chairman, those are some comments I have with respect to the bill generally, the points that were raised by the hon. members in earlier debate on this matter, and with respect to the amendments I'm putting forward for consideration. TILMA will in fact create Canada's second-largest market, of almost 8 million people, and a combined GDP of more than \$400 billion. It will eliminate duplicate and overlapping government red tape between the provinces, making the flow of goods, services, and people much easier. In the

end TILMA is designed to help Albertans. With that, I would ask for the hon. members to give favourable consideration to the amendments and Bill 18, ultimately, as amended.

At this time, Mr. Chairman, I would ask that we adjourn debate.

[Motion to adjourn debate carried]

**The Deputy Chair:** Shall progress on Bill 18, the Trade, Investment and Labour Mobility Agreement Implementation Statutes Amendment Act, 2009, be reported when the committee rises? Are you agreed?

**Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**The Deputy Chair:** Opposed? That's carried.  
The hon. Government House Leader.

**Mr. Hancock:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that the committee rise and report progress on Bill 18.

[Motion carried]

[Mr. Mitzel in the chair]

**Mr. Johnston:** Mr. Speaker, the Committee of the Whole has had under consideration a certain bill. The committee reports progress on the following bill: Bill 18. I wish to table copies of all amendments considered by the Committee of the Whole on this date for the official records of the Assembly.

**The Acting Speaker:** Does the Assembly concur with the report?

**Hon. Members:** Agreed.

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

## Government Bills and Orders

### Second Reading

*(continued)*

#### Bill 12

#### Surface Rights Amendment Act, 2009

**The Acting Speaker:** The hon. Member for Livingstone-Macleod.

**Mr. Berger:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This government is committed to listening to Albertans and making legislation more effective. With that commitment in mind, it is my pleasure to rise today to move second reading of Bill 12, the Surface Rights Amendment Act, 2009.

Mr. Speaker, these changes address administration and dispute resolution processes to improve the efficiency of the Surface Rights Board and make it more responsive, flexible, and cost-effective. The Surface Rights Board is a quasi-judicial board. It currently conducts hearings when operators and landowners or occupants can't agree on entry or compensation related to resource activity on privately owned or occupied public land.

The Surface Rights Act has a number of outdated provisions that prevent the board from operating as responsibly as it could. The current act defines the roles of a number of the board positions. The amendments remove these restrictions and allow the board to be more responsive in how it uses its human resources. For example, the duties of a secretary can be determined by the needs of the board rather than defined by statute.

3:50

Mr. Speaker, board hearings can be lengthy and costly for both parties involved and for the board. With the amendments formal hearings will not be compulsory. Instead, the board will have the flexibility to assist parties to resolve disputes outside of a formal hearing process. Clients will have the option to use more informal and flexible forms of dispute resolution that will save time and money. These changes will pave the way to a higher level of satisfaction for all parties and make for more efficient use of board resources.

The amendment will allow for a process that responds to the needs of Albertans. Alternate dispute resolution is being used in other jurisdictions across Canada. For example, the Manitoba Surface Rights Board, the Yukon Surface Rights Board, the B.C. Mediation and Arbitration Board, and the National Energy Board use similar processes. Closer to home, alternate dispute resolution is used by the Alberta Utilities Commission, the Energy Resources Conservation Board, the Environmental Appeals Board, the Alberta Labour Relations Board, and the Métis Settlements Appeal Tribunal.

The Energy Resources Conservation Board has a variety of options available to concerned parties to manage disputes. These include direct negotiation between affected parties, ERCB staff facilitation, third-party mediation, arbitration, and an ERCB public hearing. The ERCB has been very successful with its appropriate dispute resolution program. In 2007 it had a success rate of 92 per cent using dispute resolution options that involved staff facilitation or third-party facilitation. Moving to alternative dispute resolution will bring more efficiency to the Surface Rights Board, which will in turn provide a better service to Alberta landowners and all Albertans.

Mr. Speaker, I emphasize that alternative dispute resolution is entirely voluntary, not mandatory. The landowner or the operator may still choose to have and hold a formal hearing. Also, the proposed amendments are entirely procedural, and they do not address other matters such as compensation. The power to issue compensation orders will be preserved. The amendments simply enable the board to use processes other than a hearing to determine compensation.

As a government we are committed to ensuring Albertans receive fair and timely processes from tribunals. These amendments will help us reach that goal for the Surface Rights Board and will bring it into line with other legislation governing tribunals in Canada. Having an efficient Surface Rights Board is extremely valuable. I ask you to support the Surface Rights Amendment Act, 2009.

Thank you.

**The Acting Speaker:** Any other members wish to speak? The hon. Member for Calgary-*Buffalo*.

**Mr. Hehr:** Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It is a pleasure to rise and speak to Bill 12, the Surface Rights Amendment Act, 2009. I appreciate the work that the MLA sponsor has done on this bill. He was very prompt with providing me an overview of the bill, and I really appreciated him doing that. Nevertheless, at this time I'm still somewhat hesitant to offer full support, but I'm sure that with some questions asked and talking to a few more stakeholders, this could be a bill that we could support.

As was indicated by the mover, this bill has some good intentions to it. If we look at attempting to deal with the administration procedures and to in effect streamline them in order to expeditiously resolve surface rights disputes, clearly, this is an admirable goal.

The amendments to the act are on the procedural side generally and are aimed at making the process of the board more efficient.

Again, these are very laudable goals that should no doubt be pursued in any regulatory model that we here in Alberta pursue. That being said, it needs to also ensure fairness and a chance for people to be heard and all of those good things that we consider that a regulatory body should have to ensure that procedures of natural justice are recognized.

Here's a little background. As indicated, the Surface Rights Board is a quasi-judicial board authorized under the Surface Rights Act to determine compensation related to energy activities. Parties are encouraged to use mediation as the primary way to resolve disputes that come before the Board. Unlike a formal hearing, the parties have control over the outcome and are more likely to be satisfied with mediated results than with decisions imposed by the Board.

Those, again, are tremendous goals. If we can have people solve problems for themselves, well, it's a much better way to go.

That being said, let's face it. Surface rights is often a balance of competing interests, much like this House sometimes. The landowner wants to get as much money as he can from the ratepayer, utility provider, energy company, whoever you may have, and that energy company, whoever it is, wants to pay the least amount that they can. That's just the simple nature of the way these businesses or individuals operate. The Surface Rights Board is there to try and manage these types of situations.

You know, if we look at what we're talking about here, too, it also extends primarily to the right of entry that may be granted by the board on both private and Crown land for the following activities that are happening all over our province: mining, roads connecting to mines, construction and operation and removal of pipelines, construction of tanks and other structures related to mining and the oil and gas industry, exploration on public lands, drilling or operation of a well, and enabling reclamation in limited circumstances. You see, this bill affects the way that Albertans both do business now and into the future.

Obviously, some people are not always happy when an energy company says: I want to drill on your north 40. Sometimes they don't even want the well there despite the fact that it may offer them some financial reward. Nevertheless, that's why we have the system in place, to try and deal with these tensions.

Surface rights boards are very busy places. If we look at even just last year, the Surface Rights Board had 898 scheduled hearings: 403 of those were heard, 293 settled, 193 rescheduled – so I assume that they're going to be heard sometime in the future – six withdrawn, and three adjourned. As we can see from these statistics, the caseload for the Surface Rights Board is increasing every year, and only around half the cases are actually heard. The result of this has been the drawn-out process. This causes expenses for both the drilling companies as well as the farmer or landowner, as the case may be.

Let's look at the sectional analysis. In section 2 the current change in the new act repeals sections 3(3) to (7). The section deals with the composition of the members of the board. The major change here is the substance of the new section, and this allows the chair of the SRB to select a member or a panel of members to deal with any matter or class or group of matters. It also gives the member or the panel all the powers and jurisdictions of the board in many matters.

Well, that opens up the case of: what is the panel? If you look at the way this act is now put together, a panel can be one person.

4:00

This may in certain cases, sometimes, be a good thing, but also I think it can be fraught with difficulty. There seems to be too much authority vested in one individual member, and I'm cautious about

delegating all the powers of a surface rights board hearing to one member. I'm not sure if industry supports this or if landowners support this. I'd like to actually hear if that has come forward, that they feel comfortable that one person can decide these cases, generally. If that's the case, well, that's the case. Nevertheless, it gives me some cause for concern.

There's another. If we look also at section 3, what basically this does is repeal the appointment of "a secretary, an assistant secretary, inspectors, land examiners and any other employees required to carry on the business of the Board." Now, what I'm primarily worried about is, you know, the elimination of the secretary. We've all been in many board meetings. We never really think that the secretary is doing much until we get to the next board meeting, when we try to figure out what we did at the board meeting before. Then we read the secretary's notes, and it becomes clear: "Well, yeah, I guess we did do something. Now let's follow up: did we do any of these things we said we were going to do in between the meetings?" Having some record, some care and control of the documents, what decisions have been made: maybe you can just enlighten us as to how that's now going to occur as I'm sure that somehow the decisions are going to be carried forward. It's probably a very simple answer but, nonetheless, a question I ask.

Section 5. In the old act one of the things was that the board was allowed to make decisions based on both written and oral hearings instead of just written submissions. Now the change has occurred where we only go to written submissions. We all know that all individuals aren't the best at writing down concerns, but most of us can bring our concerns in a verbal fashion much more easily and clearly. It's much more forceful when we're given an opportunity to meet with an adjudicator or meet with the other side face to face and to actually have our 15 minutes in the sun or however long the board would allow. I think this has the great potential, of course, of speeding things up, but it also has a serious potential for impeding a landholder's or a company's right to be heard and right to speak up and right to present their case. To be honest, I'm more worried about the individual landowner in this case than I am about the companies. The companies will find a way to hire a wordsmith to write a very eloquent reason as to why they're right. Sometimes that may be lost if we take away the oral arguments section.

Those are my primary concerns with the bill. Like I said, we are reserving our judgment right there. We'll see what some of these answers to the questions are. There are some things in here that are good, that seem like they're going to streamline the process.

Here's one more thing I'd like to mention on the record here before I close. It's section 12. It amends certain parts of section 28 on the termination of the right of entry. This section allows an owner to apply for the termination of right of entry if the operator has not commenced operations within two months. If we look at this amendment, the only problem that could be inferred is that if the board decided not to grant the termination order, there is no mandatory hearing for the owner of the land to present their arguments. This could potentially have the impact of depriving a landowner of their right to a hearing. You can see that in section 12 if you could take a look at that. Maybe that's another concern that we have.

Other than that, we're waiting to hear from a couple more stakeholders, like I said. This is a very important bill as it relates to compensation for landowners who have resource activity on their land. Any changes to it must carefully consider and must achieve the best balance possible between the rights of the owners of the land and the rights of the operators and the owners of the minerals or otherwise on the land. There's no doubt that streamlining this process, if it can be done to expedite matters but still allow individu-

als to be heard, would be appreciated. Like I said, we'll see what answers come back. We'll hopefully hear from a couple more stakeholders, and then we'll give our opinion from there as to whether we can fully support this bill or not.

Thank you very much for allowing me to get those concerns on the record. At this time I will adjourn debate on this bill.

[Motion to adjourn debate carried]

### Bill 13

#### Justice of the Peace Amendment Act, 2009

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

**Mr. Hancock:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise today on behalf of the hon. Minister of Justice and Attorney General to move second reading of Bill 13, the Justice of the Peace Amendment Act, 2009.

Currently the Justice of the Peace Act authorizes justices of the peace to be appointed for a 10-year term. However, the act contains a provision for mandatory retirement at age 70. This bill will permit a sitting or presiding justice of the peace to sit past age 70 up to a maximum of age 75 or until his or her original 10-year appointment expires, whichever occurs first. The bill will ensure that highly experienced justices of the peace who are willing and capable of serving in a part-time or full-time capacity for their full 10-year term are not prevented from doing so simply because they've reached the age of 70. This bill ensures consistency with the similar provisions in the Provincial Court Act applicable to judges and the provisions of the Court of Queen's Bench Act applicable to masters in chambers.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Justice and the Attorney General strive to make Alberta's civil and criminal justice system more effective, efficient, and accessible. The Justice of the Peace Amendment Act will help to further that goal by retaining the knowledge and experience of justices of the peace with many years of service for their full year term. I would ask members of the House to support Bill 13.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker:** Do any other members wish to speak?

The hon. Member for Calgary-Buffalo.

**Mr. Hehr:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It is an honour for me to rise and speak to this bill and, in fact, support this bill as I believe it will allow justices of the peace to serve up to their 10 years, even past, say, turning 70 if they're competent and able and willing to do the job. It will allow them to sit up to a maximum of age 75 or the end of their 10-year term, whatever comes first. This proposed amendment would be consistent with other provisions in the Provincial Court Act applicable to judges and to provisions in the Court of Queen's Bench Act on the masters in chambers. Again, I believe that this is a good bill. It harmonizes much of the legislation that is out there. Like I mentioned, we will be voting in favour of this.

However, there are a few additional comments I'd like to get on the record here that show that possibly our justice system could be working a little more harmoniously with some more foresight and thought into the process of what is actually going on.

4:10

Just some background here. In addition to conducting bail hearings and presiding over traffic court, justices of the peace provide other front-line judicial services. These JPs work around the

clock to grant search warrants, approve the apprehension of children in danger, and authorize emergency protection orders that keep abusive family members out of the home.

At the end of January – that's this most recent January – the number of experienced justices working in Edmonton fell from 17 to three because their 10-year appointments had expired on January 31. Clearly, this really can't be excused other than the fact of a lack of planning or a lack of planning around the appointments of most of these people and not realizing that a staggering would be necessary to keep some of these justices of the peace working beyond this drop-dead date that is apparent in the legislation. In the *Edmonton Journal* last month Brian Hurley, the president of Alberta's Criminal Trial Lawyers Association, noted that the poor planning on the part of the Justice officials was "horrendously irresponsible."

Sources within Justice note that their biggest concern is the backup of bail hearings. Because an accused has the right to a bail hearing within 24 hours of their arrest, delays may allow criminal defence lawyers to launch Charter applications to have their clients' charges stayed due to delays. Clearly, that is something we don't want happening here in Alberta.

Part of the issue for those who may consider hearing applications as a JP is that unlike outgoing justices, new appointees can't work as defence lawyers while they serve in the positions. Assistant Chief Judge Allan Lefever said that provincial court judges are expecting an influx of hearings in their court but concerns about Charter violations arising from backlogged bail hearings are unfounded.

Anyways, we are hoping that this addition and changes to the court system will allow for our justice system to run more smoothly. Nevertheless, I think something has to be done towards the planning of when these terms end so that we don't have 14 of our 10-year terms ending at the same date and leaving us with a void of experienced prosecutors to deal with the day-to-day goings-on in Alberta's court system. So we support this as it will be a measure to ensure the smooth operation of the courts. It does boggle the mind how it took the government quite a while to get moving on this even after what has just happened.

Anyway, those are my comments. I will adjourn debate on Bill 13.

[Motion to adjourn debate carried]

### Bill 16

#### Peace Officer Amendment Act, 2009

**The Acting Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Sustainable Resource Development.

**Dr. Morton:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to move second reading of Bill 16, the Peace Officer Amendment Act, on behalf of the hon. Solicitor General and Minister of Public Security.

This bill is important for the many police services which benefit from the work of auxiliary constables. There are currently about 360 of these auxiliary constables in Alberta. They volunteer their time and work with the RCMP throughout rural Alberta and with police services in Taber, Medicine Hat, Lacombe, and the Blood tribe reserve.

Auxiliary constables are not fully sworn police members. They have limited authority granted to them under the Peace Officer Act. They help provide community policing at safety events, become involved with schools, businesses in the local community, and help engage the community in crime prevention awareness. Their services play a vital role in helping police throughout Alberta.

**Bill 21**  
**Appropriation (Supplementary Supply) Act, 2009**

**Bill 22**  
**Appropriation (Interim Supply) Act, 2009**

**The Acting Speaker:** I hesitate to interrupt the hon. Minister of Sustainable Resource Development, but in accordance with Standing Order 64(3) the chair is required to put the question to the House on every appropriation bill standing on the Order Paper for second reading.

[Motion carried; bills 21 and 22 read a second time]

**The Acting Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Sustainable Resource Development to continue.

**Bill 16**  
**Peace Officer Amendment Act, 2009**  
*(continued)*

**Dr. Morton:** Thank you. Continuing. When section 25(3) of the Peace Officer Act comes into effect on May 1, 2009, it will restrict the terms and symbols that can be used to identify these auxiliary constables. This section was included in the act to prevent anyone except fully sworn police officers from calling themselves constable or special constable. The intent was to establish clear, distinct identities for sworn officers and auxiliary constables and to keep the term “constable” exclusively for sworn officers.

However, complying with section 25(3) would require police services with auxiliary programs to change their auxiliary constables’ uniforms and insignia, creating extra costs for those services. Mr. Speaker, this was never the intent of the Peace Officer Act, and these extra costs would be especially burdensome in these uncertain economic times. For example, it would require the RCMP auxiliary program to purchase new uniforms or uniform markings for their 335 auxiliary officers, similarly for the 26 auxiliary constables in other police services.

This proposed amendment would allow police services to ask the Solicitor General and Minister of Public Security for an exemption to this section of the act. They could then use similar uniforms and titles, both sworn and auxiliary constables who attend scenes together. Passing this amendment now, before section 25(3) comes into effect on May 1, will ensure police services with auxiliary police programs do not have to use limited budget dollars to make changes to their uniforms and insignia. There are no costs related to this amendment to the government.

Mr. Speaker, the passage of Bill 16, the Peace Officer Amendment Act, will allow Albertans who dedicate their personal time to supporting their local police services to continue to do so without incurring any extra costs.

Thank you.

**The Acting Speaker:** Any other members wish to speak? The hon. Member for Calgary-*Buffalo*.

**Mr. Hehr:** Well, thank you very much. It again gives me great pleasure to rise and speak to Bill 16, the Peace Officer Amendment Act, 2009. At this time I’m somewhat hesitant to offer our full support as it appears that under this, although it seems to be a relatively straightforward procedure, just simply allowing for a change to what you call yourself on a uniform, there may be, in fact, more at play. Now we are going to a level of bureaucracy. In fact, our sheriffs and constables and whatever, the public security peace

officer program, all that stuff we’re raising here is creating, at least to my mind, a little bit of confusion and delay. I stole that from Thomas the train, if anyone was interested there. Yes. Yes. Confusion and delay. Yes.

But, anyways, on that note, we’re still unsure. Let me just give you a little bit of a reasoning here. The original Peace Officer Act in 2006 replaced the term “special constable” with “peace officer.” The act established new levels of authority for peace officers. These levels were the Alberta peace officer levels 1 and 2 and community peace officer levels 1 and 2. Now it appears that they will once again be utilizing the term “special constable.” I remind people that this was changed back in the original act.

4:20

The question, for me anyway, is: why is this being done? It’s not an overly burdensome change, but if the intent of the original bill was to change the name of the special constable program to public security peace officer program to raise the profile of this aspect of law enforcement, establishing various levels of authority based on the peace officers’ roles and responsibilities and ensuring effective communication between peace officers and other law enforcement agencies, then why reintroduce the phased-out terminology?

Where we just changed the bill back in 2006, we’re implementing the same language that we phased out at that point in time. Really, maybe this is much ado about nothing, but it’s a concern for what in fact appears to be happening out there in that we’ve got 47 different levels of police officers out there, or quasi-police officers or sheriffs or peace partners. We haven’t included the Guardian Angels yet under this amendment, but it seems that someday that, too, may be coming. It just gives me some concern as to where in fact we’re going and what is in fact happening out there.

If we look, we’ve had a tremendous expansion of our sheriffs program, and many people, including myself, would say that they’re doing a very good job out there. Nevertheless, was the continued growth of this sheriffs program really what the people in our cities and in our small towns needed? When you look around, our policing numbers in Calgary and Edmonton are significantly lower per capita than when we look at other major cities. You look at places like Toronto, Vancouver, and places like that, that have higher numbers of police officers, boots on the streets, like people like to say. I’m just wondering at this time, with the expenditure of dollars, value for money, why we went down this path when maybe the support was more needed with our local police officers and with the troubles our local communities were having.

That’s nothing to take away from what our sheriffs are doing. What it is representing is maybe a choice of what our government expenditures and priorities should be. I leave that out there for us probably to continue discussing at some other time in this honourable House. Let’s face it; at least on its face most police agencies are at least saying that they’re enjoying the use of the sheriffs, and I take them at face value. Let’s hope that this decision continues to ensure the safety of Alberta’s citizens. I’m hopeful it will, but I’m just cognizant that maybe the timing of these real expenditures was maybe not made on enough of a priority basis. They should have been made to our civic policing unit.

Nevertheless, those are my comments, and on that note I adjourn debate.

[Motion to adjourn debate carried]

**Bill 17**  
**Securities Amendment Act, 2009**

**The Acting Speaker:** The hon. Member for Calgary-*North Hill*.



**Mr. Fawcett:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a great pleasure to rise today to move second reading of Bill 17, the Securities Amendment Act, 2009.

Mr. Speaker, Bill 17 furthers the work that Alberta has done in modernizing, streamlining, and harmonizing securities legislation over the last five years, work necessary to support the passport system for securities regulation. Before I outline the proposed amendments, I'd like to address the federal budget proposal to establish a single federal securities regulator and federal securities legislation.

I understand that the federal government has invited all provinces and territories to participate in this federal initiative. Alberta is strongly opposed to the federal move to a single regulator. Securities regulation is a provincial responsibility, and this federal initiative would be an intrusion into an area of provincial jurisdiction. We continue to believe that the passport system is a practical model that provinces and territories can implement to create a national regulatory system that is flexible, responsive, and which respects provincial jurisdiction. As such, it is important that we continue our work to develop the passport system, which includes making the necessary changes to our legislation to keep it strong. The move to a single regulator could take years, Mr. Speaker, and we're ready to move with the passport system now. This is not the time to consider the significant structural changes required to move to a single regulator, given today's turbulent economic climate, which could further unsettle capital markets.

Alberta has taken a leadership role in reforming Canada's securities regulatory system and will continue to do so. For this reason Alberta is prepared to consider these aspects of the Hockin report designed to improve Canada's regulatory system, provided they respect provincial constitutional authority over securities regulation. We have identified eight Hockin report recommendations that merit further consideration and 16 recommendations that are already implemented or on which work is well under way.

Returning now to Bill 17, Mr. Speaker. The proposed amendments will further harmonize enforcement sanctions, improve

disclosure to consumers, and restore rescission rights to mutual fund investors until harmonized rules for those are adopted. The amendments will support a joint project of securities and insurance regulators known as the point-of-sale project. The point-of-sale project will improve disclosure to consumers by requiring that they receive short, simple, and clear documents called fund facts.

Other amendments to this legislation will expand the commission's power to reprimand registrants to include others and to extend the power to revoke or vary orders to include the executive director. This means that the commission will be able to reprimand any market participant, not just the registrant. It also clarifies that the executive director may revoke or vary any decision the executive director has made.

Lastly, the amendments will restore on an interim basis, Mr. Speaker, rescission rights available to investors purchasing mutual funds. Rescission rights mean that an investor has the right to cancel their purchase without penalty. These rescission rights were inadvertently repealed in 2008 as part of the larger process of removing nonharmonized prospectus provisions from the Securities Act. The harmonized prospectus rules implemented in 2008 did not contain harmonized rescission rights, but the Alberta Securities Commission advises that the harmonized rule requirement will be adopted within the next two to three years. So this step is just an interim measure.

I urge all members of this Assembly to give their support to Bill 17, and I move to adjourn debate. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[Motion to adjourn debate carried]

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

**Mr. Hancock:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In light of the hour I'd move that we adjourn until 1:30 p.m. on Monday.

[Motion carried; the Assembly adjourned at 4:29 p.m. to Monday at 1:30 p.m.]



## **Bill Status Report for the 27th Legislature - 2nd Session (2009)**

**Activity to March 12, 2009**

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 200 or higher are Private Members' Public Bills. Bills with lower numbers are Government Bills. Bills numbered Pr1, etc., 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 it comes into force "on proclamation," "with exceptions," or "on various dates," please contact Legislative Counsel 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 a chapter number until the conclusion of the fall sittings.

- 1      Employment Standards (Reservist Leave) Amendment Act, 2009 (Stelmach)**  
First Reading -- 6 (Feb. 10 aft.)  
Second Reading -- 90-93 (Feb. 17 aft., passed)
- 2      Lobbyists Amendment Act, 2009 (Redford)**  
First Reading -- 9 (Feb. 11 aft.)  
Second Reading -- 93-94 (Feb. 17 aft.), 121-23 (Feb. 18 aft.), 212-14 (Mar. 3 aft., passed)
- 3      Credit Union Amendment Act, 2009 (Berger)**  
First Reading -- 17 (Feb. 11 aft.)  
Second Reading -- 123-24 (Feb. 18 aft.), 202-03 (Mar. 3 aft., passed)
- 4      Post-secondary Learning Amendment Act, 2009 (Bhullar)**  
First Reading -- 17 (Feb. 11 aft.)  
Second Reading -- 124 (Feb. 18 aft.), 353-56 (Mar. 11 aft., adjourned)
- 5      Marketing of Agricultural Products Amendment Act, 2009 (Griffiths)**  
First Reading -- 17 (Feb. 11 aft.)  
Second Reading -- 125 (Feb. 18 aft.), 214-15 (Mar. 3 aft., passed)
- 6      Protection of Children Abusing Drugs Amendment Act, 2009 (Forsyth)**  
First Reading -- 18 (Feb. 11 aft.)  
Second Reading -- 356-60 (Mar. 11 aft., adjourned)
- 7      Public Health Amendment Act, 2009 (Liepert)**  
First Reading -- 18 (Feb. 11 aft.)
- 8      Feeder Associations Guarantee Act (\$) (Groeneveld)**  
First Reading -- 18 (Feb. 11 aft.)  
Second Reading -- 203-08 (Mar. 3 aft., passed)
- 9      Government Organization Amendment Act, 2009 (Campbell)**  
First Reading -- 18 (Feb. 11 aft.)  
Second Reading -- 360-61 (Mar. 11 aft., adjourned)
- 10     Supportive Living Accommodation Licensing Act (Dallas)**  
First Reading -- 18 (Feb. 11 aft.)  
Second Reading -- 361-62 (Mar. 11 aft., adjourned)
- 11     Fisheries (Alberta) Amendment Act, 2009 (VanderBurg)**  
First Reading -- 19 (Feb. 11 aft.)  
Second Reading -- 362-63 (Mar. 11 aft., adjourned)
- 12     Surface Rights Amendment Act, 2009 (Berger)**  
First Reading -- 19 (Feb. 11 aft.)  
Second Reading -- 383-85 (Mar. 12 aft., adjourned)

- 13 Justice of the Peace Amendment Act, 2009 (Redford)**  
First Reading -- 19 (Feb. 11 aft.)  
Second Reading -- 385 (Mar. 12 aft., adjourned)
- 14 Carbon Capture and Storage Funding Act (\$) (Knight)**  
First Reading -- 138 (Feb. 19 aft.)  
Second Reading -- 208-10 (Mar. 3 aft., adjourned)
- 15 Dunvegan Hydro Development Act (Oberle)**  
First Reading -- 105-06 (Feb. 18 aft.)  
Second Reading -- 210-11 (Mar. 3 aft., passed)
- 16 Peace Officer Amendment Act, 2009 (Lindsay)**  
First Reading -- 106 (Feb. 18 aft.)  
Second Reading -- 385-86 (Mar. 12 aft., adjourned)
- 17 Securities Amendment Act, 2009 (Fawcett)**  
First Reading -- 106 (Feb. 18 aft.)  
Second Reading -- 386-87 (Mar. 12 aft., adjourned)
- 18 Trade, Investment and Labour Mobility Agreement Implementation Statutes Amendment Act, 2009 (Stevens)**  
First Reading -- 161 (Mar. 2 aft.)  
Second Reading -- 211-12 (Mar. 3 aft.), 349-52 (Mar. 11 aft., passed)  
Committee of the Whole -- 381-83 (Mar. 12 aft., adjourned, amendments introduced)
- 19 Land Assembly Project Area Act (Hayden)**  
First Reading -- 161 (Mar. 2 aft.)
- 20 Civil Enforcement Amendment Act, 2009 (Denis)**  
First Reading -- 161 (Mar. 2 aft.)
- 21 Appropriation (Supplementary Supply) Act, 2009 (\$) (Snelgrove)**  
First Reading -- 283 (Mar. 9 aft.)  
Second Reading -- 377-80 (Mar. 12 aft.), 386 (Mar. 12 aft., passed)
- 22 Appropriation (Interim Supply) Act, 2009 (\$) (Snelgrove)**  
First Reading -- 344 (Mar. 11 aft.)  
Second Reading -- 380-81 (Mar. 12 aft.), 386 (Mar. 12 aft., passed)
- 24 Animal Health Amendment Act, 2009 (Griffiths)**  
First Reading -- 303 (Mar. 10 aft.)
- 25 Teachers' Pension Plans Amendment Act, 2009 (\$) (Evans)**  
First Reading -- 283 (Mar. 9 aft.)
- 26 Wildlife Amendment Act, 2009 (Mitzel)**  
First Reading -- 303 (Mar. 10 aft.)
- 201 Traffic Safety (Vehicles with Unlawfully Possessed Firearms) Amendment Act, 2009 (Hehr)**  
First Reading -- 106 (Feb. 18 aft.)  
Second Reading -- 165-76 (Mar. 2 aft.), 284-86 (Mar. 9 aft., defeated on division)
- 202 Municipal Government (Municipal Auditor General) Amendment Act, 2009 (Johnston)**  
First Reading -- 138 (Feb. 19 aft.)  
Second Reading -- 286-96 (Mar. 9 aft., adjourned)
- 203 Local Authorities Election (Finance and Contribution Disclosure) Amendment Act, 2009 (Johnson)**  
First Reading -- 251-52 (Mar. 5 aft.)
- Pr1 Beverly Anne Cormier Adoption Termination Act (Anderson)**  
First Reading -- 376 (Mar. 12 aft.)

**Pr2 Caritas Health Group Statutes Amendment Act, 2009 (Elniski)**

First Reading -- 376 (Mar. 12 aft.)

**Pr3 Les Filles de la Sagesse Act Repeal Act (Dallas)**

First Reading -- 376 (Mar. 12 aft.)

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