



Province of Alberta

The 29th Legislature  
First Session

# Alberta Hansard

Tuesday afternoon, June 16, 2015

Day 2

The Honourable Robert E. Wanner, Speaker

**Legislative Assembly of Alberta**  
**The 29th Legislature**

First Session

Wanner, Hon. Robert E., Medicine Hat (ND), Speaker  
Jabbour, Deborah C., Peace River (ND), Deputy Speaker and Chair of Committees  
Feehan, Richard, Edmonton-Rutherford (ND), Deputy Chair of Committees

Aheer, Leela Sharon, Chestermere-Rocky View (W)  
Anderson, Shaye, Leduc-Beaumont (ND)  
Anderson, Wayne, Highwood (W)  
Babcock, Erin D., Stony Plain (ND)  
Barnes, Drew, Cypress-Medicine Hat (W)  
Bhullar, Manmeet Singh, Calgary-Greenway (PC)  
Bilous, Hon. Deron, Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview (ND),  
Deputy Government House Leader  
Carlier, Hon. Oneil, Whitecourt-St. Anne (ND)  
Carson, Jonathon, Edmonton-Meadowlark (ND)  
Ceci, Hon. Joe, Calgary-Fort (ND)  
Clark, Greg, Calgary-Elbow (AP)  
Connolly, Michael R.D., Calgary-Hawkwood (ND)  
Coolahan, Craig, Calgary-Klein (ND)  
Cooper, Nathan, Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills (W),  
Official Opposition House Leader  
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Cyr, Scott J., Bonnyville-Cold Lake (W),  
Official Opposition Deputy Whip  
Dach, Lorne, Edmonton-McClung (ND)  
Dang, Thomas, Edmonton-South West (ND)  
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Ellis, Mike, Calgary-West (PC)  
Fildebrandt, Derek Gerhard, Strathmore-Brooks (W)  
Fitzpatrick, Maria M., Lethbridge-East (ND)  
Fraser, Rick, Calgary-South East (PC)  
Ganley, Hon. Kathleen T., Calgary-Buffalo (ND)  
Goehring, Nicole, Edmonton-Castle Downs (ND)  
Gotfried, Richard, Calgary-Fish Creek (PC)  
Gray, Christina, Edmonton-Mill Woods (ND)  
Hanson, David B., Lac La Biche-St. Paul-Two Hills (W),  
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Hinkley, Bruce, Wetaskiwin-Camrose (ND)  
Hoffman, Hon. Sarah, Edmonton-Glenora (ND)  
Horne, Trevor A.R., Spruce Grove-St. Albert (ND)  
Hunter, Grant R., Cardston-Taber-Warner (W)  
Jansen, Sandra, Calgary-North West (PC)  
Jean, Brian Michael, QC, Fort McMurray-Conklin (W),  
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Kazim, Anam, Calgary-Glenmore (ND)  
Kleinstauber, Jamie, Calgary-Northern Hills (ND)  
Larivee, Danielle, Lesser Slave Lake (ND)  
Littlewood, Jessica, Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville (ND)  
Loewen, Todd, Grande Prairie-Smoky (W)  
Loyola, Rod, Edmonton-Ellerslie (ND)  
Luff, Robyn, Calgary-East (ND)  
MacIntyre, Donald, Innisfail-Sylvan Lake (W)  
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Miller, Barb, Red Deer-South (ND)  
Miranda, Ricardo, Calgary-Cross (ND)  
Nielsen, Christian E., Edmonton-Decore (ND)  
Nixon, Jason, Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House-Sundre (W),  
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Pitt, Angela D., Airdrie (W)  
Renaud, Marie F., St. Albert (ND)  
Rodney, Dave, Calgary-Lougheed (PC)  
Rosendahl, Eric, West Yellowhead (ND)  
Sabir, Hon. Irfan, Calgary-McCall (ND)  
Schmidt, Marlin, Edmonton-Gold Bar (ND),  
Government Whip  
Schneider, David A., Little Bow (W)  
Schreiner, Kim, Red Deer-North (ND)  
Shepherd, David, Edmonton-Centre (ND)  
Sigurdson, Hon. Lori, Edmonton-Riverview (ND)  
Smith, Mark W., Drayton Valley-Devon (W)  
Starke, Dr. Richard, Vermilion-Lloydminster (PC),  
Progressive Conservative Opposition House Leader  
Stier, Pat, Livingstone-Macleod (W)  
Strankman, Rick, Drumheller-Stettler (W)  
Sucha, Graham, Calgary-Shaw (ND)  
Swann, Dr. David, Calgary-Mountain View (AL)  
Sweet, Heather, Edmonton-Manning (ND)  
Taylor, Wes, Battle River-Wainwright (W)  
Turner, Dr. A. Robert, Edmonton-Whitemud (ND)  
van Dijken, Glenn, Barrhead-Morinville-Westlock (W)  
Westhead, Cameron, Banff-Cochrane (ND)  
Woollard, Denise, Edmonton-Mill Creek (ND)  
Yao, Tany, Fort McMurray-Wood Buffalo (W)  
Vacant, Calgary-Foothills

**Party standings:**

New Democrat: 53 Wildrose: 21 Progressive Conservative: 9 Alberta Liberal: 1 Alberta Party: 1 Independent: 1 Vacant: 1

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Robert H. Reynolds, QC, Law Clerk/ Director of Interparliamentary Relations	Philip Massolin, Manager of Research Services	Chris Caughell, Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms
Shannon Dean, Senior Parliamentary Counsel/Director of House Services	Nancy Robert, Research Officer	Gordon H. Munk, Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms
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Deron Bilous	Minister of Municipal Affairs, Minister of Service Alberta
Oneil Carlier	Minister of Agriculture and Forestry
Joe Ceci	President of Treasury Board and Minister of Finance
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Kathleen T. Ganley	Minister of Justice and Solicitor General, Minister of Aboriginal Relations
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Margaret McCuaig-Boyd	Minister of Energy
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Irfan Sabir	Minister of Human Services
Lori Sigurdson	Minister of Innovation and Advanced Education, Minister of Jobs, Skills, Training and Labour

## STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

### Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future

Chair: Mr. Coolahan  
Deputy Chair: Mr. Schneider  
Anderson, S. Jansen  
Carson Larivee  
Fitzpatrick McKitrick  
Gotfried Schreiner  
Hanson Sucha  
Horne Taylor  
Hunter

### Standing Committee on the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund

Chair: Ms Miller  
Deputy Chair: Mr. Nielsen  
Cyr Piquette  
Ellis Renaud  
Malkinson Taylor  
Miranda

### Standing Committee on Families and Communities

Chair: Ms Sweet  
Deputy Chair: Mr. Smith  
Goehring Pitt  
Hinkley Rodney  
Jansen Shepherd  
Littlewood Swann  
Luff Westhead  
Orr Yao  
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### Standing Committee on Legislative Offices

Chair: Ms Woollard  
Deputy Chair: Mr. Dach  
Bhullar Nixon  
Connolly Shepherd  
Cooper Sweet  
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### Special Standing Committee on Members' Services

Chair: Mr. Wanner  
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Fildebrandt Nielsen  
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Luff Piquette  
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### Standing Committee on Private Bills

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### Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections, Standing Orders and Printing

Chair: Dr. Turner  
Deputy Chair: Ms Fitzpatrick  
Carson Loyola  
Coolahan McPherson  
Cooper Schneider  
Ellis Starke  
Hanson van Dijken  
Kazim Woollard  
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### Standing Committee on Public Accounts

Chair: Mr. Fildebrandt  
Deputy Chair: Ms Gray  
Barnes Malkinson  
Bhullar Miller  
Cyr Payne  
Dach Renaud  
Gotfried Turner  
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Loyola

### Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship

Chair: Ms Kazim  
Deputy Chair: Mr. Loewen  
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Anderson, S. Rosendahl  
Babcock Schreiner  
Clark Stier  
Drysdale Sucha  
Horne Woollard  
Kleinsteuber

## Legislative Assembly of Alberta

1:30 p.m.

Tuesday, June 16, 2015

[The Speaker in the chair]

### Prayers

**The Speaker:** Let us pray and contemplate in our own minds. Give to each member of this Legislature a strong and abiding sense of the great responsibilities laid upon us. Give us a deep and thorough understanding of the needs of the people that we all serve. We'll take a moment. Amen.

Hon. members, as is our custom and way, we pay tribute on our first day to members and former members of this Assembly who have passed away since we last met. I will duly be mentioning the members in the Speaker's gallery today, but the families are with us.

**Mr. John Albert Gogo**  
February 15, 1932, to April 4, 2015

**The Speaker:** Mr. Gogo was first elected to the Legislative Assembly of Alberta as the Member for Lethbridge West on March 26, 1975. He was re-elected in the next four provincial elections, serving for a total of 18 years, two months, and 20 days, until his retirement on June 14, 1993. During that tenure, in addition to serving on numerous legislative committees, Mr. Gogo served as Deputy Speaker and Chair of Committees from 1986 to 1989 and minister of advanced education from 1989 until 1992. Mr. Gogo was a veteran of the Korean War. Mr. Gogo was a vocal proponent for his home city of Lethbridge, and as a result in 2007 he was awarded an honorary doctorate of laws from the University of Lethbridge.

**Mr. Frank Pierpoint Appleby**  
December 23, 1913, to May 18, 2015

**The Speaker:** Mr. Frank Pierpoint Appleby served as the Member for Athabasca from August 30, 1971, until his retirement on May 7, 1986. Mr. Appleby had a varied career. During his tenure as a Member of the Legislative Assembly he served on many committees, including as chair of the Select Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections. Mr. Appleby served as Deputy Speaker and Chair of Committees from 1979 until 1986. In 1985 he introduced the Forestry Profession Act and was subsequently recognized by the College of Alberta Professional Foresters, which now bestows an annual award bearing his name. For his dedication to lifelong learning and his efforts to establish Athabasca University, he was awarded an honorary doctorate degree from Athabasca University in 2005.

**Mr. Norman Allen Weiss**  
December 23, 1935, to June 2, 2015

**The Speaker:** Mr. Weiss was first elected on March 14, 1979, as the Member for Lac La Biche-McMurray. He served a total of four terms, the last for the electoral division of Fort McMurray. During his tenure he served as minister of recreation and parks from 1986 to 1989, associate minister of family and social services in 1989, and minister of career development and employment from 1989 to 1992. Upon his retirement from the Assembly Mr. Weiss, who was born in Edmonton, noted his love for northern Alberta and his gratitude for having the opportunity to contribute to the

development of programs and services for his northern constituency.

In a moment of silent reflection and prayer I ask each of you to remember Mr. Gogo, Mr. Appleby, and Mr. Weiss as you have known them. May we each take a moment of silence in recognition of our three members.

You may be seated.

### Introduction of Visitors

**The Speaker:** Hon. members, with our admiration and respect there is gratitude to members of the families who shared the burdens of public office and public service, and I know that each of you over the next years will appreciate that much more than you do today. We have with us today members of the Gogo, Appleby, and Weiss families. I would ask them to rise and remain standing as I call their names, and then we can welcome them all at the end with our applause and appreciation.

Representing the Gogo family are Joyce Gogo, wife of Mr. John Gogo; Susan Gogo-Quinn, daughter of John Gogo; Sharon Gillett, daughter of John Gogo; Shannon Donkersgoed, daughter of John Gogo; Sandra Hegland, daughter of John Gogo; and Doug Hegland, son-in-law of John Gogo.

Representing the Appleby family are Dorothy Appleby, wife of Frank Appleby; Brian Appleby, son of Frank Appleby; Liz Appleby, daughter-in-law of Frank Appleby; Kevin Appleby, grandson of Frank Appleby; Erin Echeverria, granddaughter of Frank Appleby; and Dawn Minns, niece of Frank Appleby.

Representing the Weiss family are Jill Weiss, daughter of Norm Weiss; Louise Stewart; and Graham Stewart, grandson of Norm Weiss.

Could I ask the members to please stand and show your appreciation. [Standing ovation]

Greetings of the House to each of you, and thank you for being with us.

### Introduction of Guests

**The Speaker:** Are there any school groups with us today?

**Mr. Piquette:** Mr. Speaker, it's my privilege to introduce visitors from my riding. Actually, I'm quite fortunate today. The Applebys are mostly from my riding – I'm glad you introduced them – but I also have with us today councillors from Thorhild county. If they could please rise, we have here Reeve Wayne Crosswell, Deputy Reeve Dan Bury, and Councillor Larry Sisson. Could we please give the customary warm welcome of the House?

I'm also fortunate to be able to introduce to you and through you the Martin family from Athabasca. They are prominent local business persons as well as active community members. If I could please have Fred, Elsie, and Trevor Martin rise. Could you please extend the warm greetings of the House?

1:40

**The Speaker:** The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Minister of Service Alberta.

**Mr. Bilous:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise today to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly a remarkable example of political engagement, dedication, and volunteerism. Sonia Varela has been a tireless volunteer for the New Democratic candidates, MLAs, and MPs in our great province for decades. Our recent success in the election does not solely belong to those who sit in the Assembly but also to those Albertans like Sonia who have dedicated their time, energy,

and money to making our province a better place. I'd ask Sonia to rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

**The Speaker:** The Minister of Education and Minister of Culture and Tourism.

**Mr. Eggen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to speak to you and through you to all members of the Assembly. I have 20 visitors from Alberta Education, who have come to check up on me and the rest of us here as well today. If they can rise as I read their names, please. I have Mrs. Robyn Hodge, Miss Shirley Han, Ms Amy Johnson, Tara Sliwkanich, Michael Skoreyko, and Aretha Greatrix. If they could rise and please receive the warm welcome of all the members of the Assembly.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House-Sundre.

**Mr. Nixon:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly a great Albertan. He was orphaned at 14, worked in the coal mines and forestry. He truly helped build this province. Along the way he had three children, 11 grandchildren, of which I am proud to be one, and 22 great-grandchildren. I would ask that my grandfather Ulric Lamontagne rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of this Assembly.

**Mr. Cooper:** Mr. Speaker, it's my great pleasure today to rise and introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly two school groups. They are home-schoolers, one from the great constituency of Airdrie and the other from the great, the fabulous, I might say, constituency of Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills, and two of the world's best teachers, I think you'll find they would tell you. We have Gunther, Linnea, and Martin Laubenstein, and the world's best teacher, Heather Laubenstein. We have Porter, Paxton, and Peyton Cooper – some resemblance – and my beautiful wife, Tanya, is also there.

**The Speaker:** I would particularly remind and thank the speakers that when we have children with us in this Assembly, we ought to look to them as our future. Thank you, hon. member.  
Edmonton-Whitemud.

**Dr. Turner:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The single best preventative health measure known is to reduce tobacco use. On May 31, shortly after our election, the Minister of Health announced that menthol-flavoured cigarettes would be banned. This will markedly reduce youth smoking and will save lives. The Campaign for a Smoke-free Alberta has been working on this project for many years, and the representatives of that group are in the gallery today. They've strongly supported our government's decision to ban menthol and other flavoured tobacco products.

Mr. Speaker, through you and to the members of the Assembly I would like to introduce the following, and if they could stand: Angeline Webb from the Canadian Cancer Society, Leigh Allard from the Lung Association of Alberta, Kayla Atkey of the Alberta Policy Coalition for Chronic Disease Prevention, and Les Hagen of Action on Smoking and Health. If you'll give them the usual warm welcome of this Assembly.

Thank you.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Calgary-Mountain View.

**Dr. Swann:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's my great honour to introduce to you and to the Legislature Eric Musekamp and Darlene Dunlop, no strangers to the Alberta Legislature.

They've been here every session for 11 years, first introduced in the House in 2005 by the current Education minister, from Edmonton-Calder. These human rights advocates have sacrificed in an extraordinary way to put farm workers on the agenda of this government after years and years of neglect. This year, in fact, they received supportive letters not only from the Queen but from the Pope.

They're here again today with a new sense of hope in their hearts to remind this House that 25 people died last year on farms. Hundreds of people were injured, many of them children, and they are in urgent need of protection. They're here to meet with ministers and work with this new government to redress past government negligence of both worker safety and fundamental human rights. I'll ask Eric and Darlene to rise and receive the usual warm welcome from the Legislature.

## Statement by the Speaker

### Rotation of Questions and Members' Statements

**The Speaker:** I would like to make a few comments first. This part is particularly to the guests. I do hope that you appreciate that the Speaker, including many of these members – we are learning, and I hope you will stick with us and have patience for that.

Hon. members, before we proceed with Members' Statements, I want to outline the rotation that will apply for Oral Question Period and Members' Statements. As noted in the procedural memo that I sent out to all members yesterday, the Speaker's office received a document on June 15, 2015, signed by the three House leaders, confirming their agreement on the rotation of oral questions and of members' statements. Copies of the Oral Question Period rotation are on members' desks along with the projected sitting days calendar, that outlines the members' statements rotation. With respect to Oral Question Period the agreement is based on 20 questions each day and follows an eight-day rotation.

I want to say at the outset that I take heart that the very first section of *Beauchesne's*, sixth edition, lists as the first principle of parliamentary law "to protect a minority and restrain the improvidence or tyranny of a majority." I have reviewed the agreement amongst House leaders of the three largest caucuses and find that the allotment of questions to the single-member parties and the independent member is reasonable. By having three questions every eight days, the single-member party leaders have more questions than was the case when this situation arose before, such as on February 8, 2012, in the Fifth Session of the 27th Legislature. If there are concerns, I would encourage House leaders to meet and see me if further refinements are necessary or possible.

1:50

With respect to the agreements reached by House leaders, I want to articulate the sequence so that it is clear in the record of the proceedings and to let people who are following the proceedings know what to expect. Flowing from the agreement, the Official Opposition is entitled to the first three main questions each day, and the PC caucus is entitled to the fourth question each day. Question 5 is allocated to the Liberal caucus on days 1, 3, and 6; to the Alberta Party caucus on days 2, 5, and 7; and to the independent member on days 4 and 8. Private members of the government caucus are entitled to the sixth question each day. In addition to the first three questions each day, the Official Opposition is entitled to ask the seventh, ninth, 10th, 13th, 16th, 18th, and 20th questions. In addition to the fourth question each day, the PC caucus is allocated the eighth, 11th, 14th, and 17th questions. Apart from question 6 each day, private members of the government caucus may ask the 12th, 15th, and 19th questions.

I want to remind members that questions and responses should be 35 seconds in length and that preambles to supplementary questions are only allowed for the first five rounds of questions each day.

With respect to members' statements the House leaders' agreement is based on a three-week rotation. According to Standing Order 7(4) each day up to six private members may make a statement of no more than two minutes in duration. Private members of the government caucus are entitled to three statements on Monday and Tuesday each week and on Wednesday of weeks 1 and 2 and four statements on Thursday each week and on Wednesday of week 3. The Official Opposition is entitled to two statements on Monday and Tuesday each week and on Wednesday of weeks 1 and 2 and one statement on Thursday each week and on Wednesday of week 3. The PC caucus is allocated one statement on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday each week.

Under the House leaders' agreement the Liberal, Alberta Party, and independent members will each have an opportunity to make a member's statement once in the three-week rotation. The leader of the Liberal caucus is allocated a statement on Thursday of week 1, the leader of the Alberta caucus on Thursday of week 2, and the independent member on Thursday of week 3.

Thank you, hon. members. I will table a copy of the House leaders' agreement at the appropriate time in the daily Routine today.

### Oral Question Period

**The Speaker:** I will make a brief comment. As I've said several times and will be no doubt saying again as we move forward, my first statement was that we have patience with each other and, particularly, patience with the Speaker. I wish, however, to remind members that once we have all learned together, the application of tradition and practice may begin to evolve. So as I acknowledge to the Leader of the Official Opposition that I may provide some licence today in terms of a request he has made for an allocation of additional time, I do not wish any member of this House to understand that to be a precedent for the future. It may well change.

The hon. Leader of the Official Opposition.

**Mr. Jean:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Before I ask my first question here, let me congratulate all the newly elected MLAs, the returning MLAs, and, of course, you, Mr. Speaker, on your recent election and the Premier for a historic election. Amazing.

I also want to indicate to the House, Mr. Speaker, that I knew both Mr. Appleby and Mr. Weiss – without Mr. Weiss I would not be here today – and indeed both gentlemen I awarded Queen's medals to, and they were great individuals. My condolences.

### Provincial Tax Policy

**Mr. Jean:** Albertans have high hopes for this new government, as we do. As the Official Opposition we want Albertans to know that we're here to work hard, to be honest and stand accountable for them, and to help this government make Alberta better for everyone. My first question is simple. I'm hoping it will also allow the Premier to get off on a good foot. Will the Premier today assure Albertans that her government will not bring in a provincial sales tax while she is Premier?

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

**Ms Notley:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Let me begin, of course, by offering to my colleague across the way, the hon. Leader of the Official Opposition, our caucus's congratulations on his election and his new position as Leader of the Official Opposition.

I think that leaves me about five seconds, Mr. Speaker, so the answer to his question is yes. He can be assured that we have no intention of bringing in a sales tax.

**Mr. Jean:** Well, that is great news, and Alberta's families, Alberta businesses will be very happy with that.

Wildrose believes that municipalities need stable, long-term, predictable funding to provide better infrastructure for Alberta families. Our 10-10 plan proposes that municipalities be allocated 10 per cent of the provincial taxes with absolutely no strings attached. Our municipalities expressed strong support for this infrastructure plan. Will the Premier commit today to implement the popular Wildrose 10-10 municipal infrastructure plan?

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

**Ms Notley:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. You know, we understand that municipal government in Alberta is the level of government that is closest to Alberta communities and provides important services to all Albertans, and we understand the value of the work that they do. We're very much looking forward to continuing the conversation with them with respect to the Municipal Government Act, and within that we will have conversations that include issues around predictable funding, around infrastructure as well as MSI as well as a number of other issues which are important to municipalities. I look forward to having those discussions and negotiations with municipal leaders, and I look forward to updating this Assembly with respect to the outcome of those discussions.

2:00

**The Speaker:** Second supplemental. The Leader of the Queen's Official Opposition.

**Mr. Jean:** Mr. Speaker, such great news. What a great answer.

I can see that help is on its way. I do think Albertans will be very pleased, and I'm certainly pleased. I know that all Albertans are very excited because we know that we pay the most income tax and the most tax dollars per capita of any province in Canada. We also know that Albertans are looking for additional good news, and I'm looking for an answer. Will the Premier today assure Albertans that during her time as Premier she will not give new taxing powers to our biggest cities?

**Ms Notley:** Well, Mr. Speaker, as I just outlined to the hon. leader, I respect municipal leadership, and I respect the work that they do in our communities. In order to do that, then, what we need to do is engage in fulsome, substantive negotiations with those leaders about a number of different options that they have to ensure that they enjoy the benefit of predictable, sustainable funding. The details of those discussions and those negotiations need to begin between this government and those municipal leaders, and as I've said before, once we reach those conclusions, we will happily inform the members opposite of the outcomes.

**The Speaker:** The Leader of the Official Opposition.

### Provincial Budget

**Mr. Jean:** Mr. Speaker, we'd like to help provide Albertans with clarity on another important issue after that strong "maybe." We certainly recognize that the Premier isn't ready to table a budget just yet, and that's sort of understandable, but it would be helpful for Alberta businesses and Alberta families to actually know what direction the province is going and, certainly, to know what the financial plan is for the years ahead. Will the Premier commit to

Alberta families and Alberta businesses that she will reconvene the Legislature on September 7 to consider a budget?

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

**Ms Notley:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The commitment that I have already made to Albertans and that I will make now to members of this Assembly is that this fall we will reconvene in this Assembly to have a thorough and fulsome discussion about the details of our budget. We will put forward a new budget, and I'm looking forward to working closely with the members of our caucus putting together that budget, and then I'm looking forward to hearing the input and the discussions from members throughout the Assembly when we debate that budget in the fall. It won't be on September 7; I can tell you that. It will be relatively soon after, and we will all have a fulsome opportunity to discuss . . .

**The Speaker:** Hon. Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Jean:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That answer just wasn't very helpful.

May I remind all members in this House that the last time the Legislature passed a budget here was over a year ago under Premier Redford, and in fact that was three Premiers ago. [some applause]

**Mr. Mason:** We're more stable now.

**Mr. Jean:** We're hoping.

Now, a few months' delay is certainly understandable, but the government can craft a budget in four months. It's been done before; it can be done again. Then we could introduce the budget in September. That would still mean the budget would not be passed until the end of this year. Albertans would like to know why – Mr. Speaker, I just noticed the thunderous applause on the other side might have taken some of my time.

**The Speaker:** The hon. member, I'm sure, will be hopeful that that applause will continue long into the future, and I must tell all of you that we must as a group retain that exchange that is happening amongst us in a very positive and constructive way.

I will recognize the hon. Premier.

**Ms Notley:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. My hon. colleague across the way, in fact, opined that one could probably put together a budget in roughly four months. That would mean that we'd be coming back roughly at the end of September, and I suspect that within more or less that range of time you will see us returning. But don't worry; we are going to have a very detailed discussion about a budget. Let me just say that that budget will be based on the principles that this government laid out to the people of Alberta in the last election. That's what the budget will include. It will reflect those opinions, reflect those principles, and reflect what the people of this province voted for.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Leader of the Official Opposition.

**Mr. Jean:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to clarify that even with the thunderous applause I have no aspirations whatsoever of ever leading the NDP Party.

Mr. Speaker, it looks like the Premier won't even have us considering a budget until November, and we may not pass it until December. That means, frankly, that it's unfair to Albertans. It's unfair to Alberta businesses. We all know the Premier isn't planning on any cuts whatsoever, so really the only budget questions are which taxes are going to go up and how much new debt Albertans

are going to have to pay off in the future. Why won't the Premier be ready to give us these two answers in September?

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

**Ms Notley:** Thank you. Well, as I think I've outlined and as I think the member opposite suggested before, we're looking at roughly about four months. This is a time consideration that's been passed on to us by the previous government. What we have said is that we will move forward to ensure that we put in place the fundamental principles that we talked about in this election, so Albertans have a general sense about where we are going and should have a general sense about where we are going. But we're going to make sure that we do it in a considered, detailed fashion. We don't want to introduce Prentice 2.0. We want to introduce NDP 1.0 because that's what the people of this province just voted for, and that's what we owe to them.

**The Speaker:** As we create a sense of constructive dialogue with each other, I think we all share in this room – and I realize that the time I take is very valuable in this question period. I would, however, extend thanks on behalf of all of us for the support that the legislative staff have provided to each of us as we find our way through these first sessions.

I would recognize the Leader of the Official Opposition with his third main question.

#### Government Accountability

**Mr. Jean:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. During the election all parties did make promises. Indeed, one of the most popular promises the Wildrose made was to conduct audits of key decisions made by the past PC government, speaking of which. A few weeks ago the Premier made news when she suggested that the PCs had deceived us all and expenditures and revenues were different than what they'd said. No real surprise there. Does the Premier think it would be helpful to call for a full-scale audit of the government and the ministers' offices, and if so, will she do it?

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

**Ms Notley:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As members of this Assembly would know, this government has been sworn in for I believe it's 22 days now, and we're getting ourselves up to speed with the issues that are going on within our ministries and within government. As we go through that process, we will evaluate the strength of the projections that were provided to Albertans in the past and the accuracy of our budgeting at that time. Once we've done that, we will in fact . . .

**Mr. Jean:** Mr. Speaker, the Government House Leader recently talked about finding skeletons in the closet. I'm sure there are many. The Premier suggested that she was deceived about the true state of our province's finances and spending. I know for a fact that some very large and unusual spending decisions were made after the election but before the Premier was sworn in. There is no doubt that multiple audits are required. No doubt whatsoever. Albertans want audits of the past government behaviour. Is the Premier going to call in the Auditor General to look at the PC government books? Albertans want to know.

2:10

**Ms Notley:** Well, I want to say that I think in many ways the hon. member across the floor and I have some common cause on this issue. We certainly want to make sure that Albertans have been and will be getting the most accurate information they can. But what we



first need to do is to do a bit of an environmental scan with respect to how things are at this point and then consider what the best way is to proceed going forward. So I understand the issues that the member is raising, but we're not quite ready to make that kind of decision quite yet. I want to be clear as well. I do not believe that I was ever deceived . . .

**The Speaker:** Second supplemental.

**Mr. Jean:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And to be clear, if you need help, there are 21 people on this side that would help you with the environmental cleanup situation.

Mr. Speaker, Albertans did vote for change in the last election. They wanted a new broom to sweep clean, and they wanted all the rocks turned upside down and the sun to shine into the dark corners of the PC universe. No question. Can the Premier tell us what she will do to ensure that Albertans actually get the transparency and accountability that they voted for in the last election?

**Ms Notley:** There are a number of different mechanisms, Mr. Speaker, that we can engage in in order to increase transparency and accountability, many of which were talked about by both sides of this House during the election and many of which we'll move forward on. I was very pleased that the Leader of the Official Opposition agreed with our government's initiative, in response in part to his initial proposition, that we put together a select special committee that will consider issues around election financing, around conflict of interest, and around whistle-blower legislation. I think that's an incredibly good first start. I look forward to working with all members of this Assembly to ensure that Alberta truly has a first-class . . .

**The Speaker:** I would hope that the hon. Premier acknowledges and appreciates the patience with respect to the opposition leader for time, as a couple of occasions apply today as well.

I'd like to recognize the leader of the third party, the Progressive Conservative Party.

**Mr. McIver:** Thank you. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to take a few seconds to congratulate the Premier, her cabinet, and all of the government caucus for their success in the election. Well done. I and all members of our caucus look forward to working with you and all members of this House for the betterment of Alberta.

### **Provincial Tax Policy** (continued)

**Mr. McIver:** My first question is to the Premier with regard to the 2 per cent tax increase planned for corporations. How much revenue does this government expect to raise by adding this corporate tax?

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

**Ms Notley:** Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. First of all, we're going ahead with respect to implementing this corporate tax because this was a critical issue that was discussed during the election. As we address the fact that our province has to deal with the fiscal crunch generated in part by our overreliance on royalty revenues after many, many years of the previous government's management decisions, we went to Albertans and asked them: how should we deal with this? And Albertans said resoundingly that those profitable corporations, who have profited during the boom times, need to pay their . . .

**The Speaker:** First supplemental.

**Mr. McIver:** Thank you. It's a little disturbing that the government is putting a tax in place and they don't have any idea how much revenue they're going to get. However, we'll move on.

Mr. Speaker, my next question, also to the Premier, with regard to the so-called progressive tax increases to be subtracted from the incomes of hard-working Albertans making over \$125,000 per year: how much revenue does this government expect to raise by adding this personal tax?

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

**Ms Notley:** Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I think that one of the things that first needs to be understood with respect to this government's progressive income tax change is that under our plan, versus the plan that that party ran on and introduced when it was in government, those Albertans who earn less than \$125,000 a year will pay less. The first thing to understand is that our approach to bringing in a progressive income tax was most focused on bringing in fairness and . . .

**The Speaker:** Second supplemental.

**Mr. McIver:** Thank you. So we're flying blind on two taxes. We have no idea how much revenue we're going to raise, but we're doing it anyway. That's what I heard.

Mr. Speaker, I have friends that earn over \$125,000 a year. Some are in one-income homes with children and are currently just making ends meet after paying for the normal expenses. Some of them intentionally live on a tight budget in hopes that their wages and benefits will increase due to the Alberta advantage that at least did exist. How much less will they take home each month?

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

**Ms Notley:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to learn that some of the hon. leader's best friends are people that earn over \$125,000 a year. I'm sure that community will feel represented.

That being said, what will happen here in Alberta is that Albertans will continue to pay less tax than people in any other province in the country. That's the first thing that needs to be remembered. What we heard on the doorsteps and on the campaign trail was that many people in Alberta who earned a bit more understood that it was perhaps time for them to contribute a little bit more.

**The Speaker:** The Speaker recognizes the hon. Member for Calgary-Mountain View.

**Dr. Swann:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Let me take this opportunity to congratulate all the elected officials today, new and old and older. It's a real honour to be with you, and I look forward to the session.

### **Flood Damage Mitigation on the Bow and Elbow Rivers**

**Dr. Swann:** My constituents are concerned about the inaction on upstream flood mitigation in Calgary two years after the worst flooding disaster to hit the province. The previous regime hastily announced the Springbank dry reservoir just a few days ahead of the 2014 fall election. The announcement preceded the receipt of an important engineering report that was to provide analysis of the cost benefit of the project. My question to the environment minister: what is your position on the Springbank dry reservoir project, and what should Albertans expect in mitigation efforts upstream of Calgary?

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

**Ms Phillips:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the hon. Member for Calgary-Mountain View for this important question, which I know is near and dear to his constituents' hearts and to many of our Calgary members as well. You know, Albertans were devastated by the 2013 floods. That event caused tremendous economic and social costs to our province, and many of the devastating effects on public services and to our businesses are still being felt to this day. Our government will make sure Alberta is better prepared for future adverse effects through world-class flood mitigation and better planning to reduce the costs and damages caused by flooding.

**The Speaker:** First supplemental.

**Dr. Swann:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll give the minister some leeway on that non answer.

Again to the minister: given the ambiguity over who controls reservoir flows upstream of Calgary, currently in the hands of TransAlta, and given the secret negotiations that went on with the previous government and TransAlta in pursuing a long-term agreement in the public interest, will this minister make public the negotiations and establish a long-term agreement in the public interest for upstream flows on the Bow and the Elbow rivers?

2:20

**Ms Phillips:** Well, you know, Mr. Speaker, the former PC government did not adequately prepare for the 2013 floods. They waited for the catastrophe to start work on flood mitigation. That is just plain backwards. We have a situation where the previous government did not have up-to-date flood maps. Without up-to-date information the government left communities ill prepared. We will be moving forward on a proactive approach to flood mitigation and planning to keep Albertans' homes and businesses safe.

**Dr. Swann:** I am going to try it again, Mr. Speaker. Will the minister commit to making public the negotiations with TransAlta, including financial compensation, relating to upstream flows in the Bow River?

**Ms Phillips:** Well, you know, Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for the question because it's quite clear to us and quite clear to me after 22 days that the situation that we inherited from the previous PC government on flood mitigation can only be described as a gong show. Therefore, our government will achieve adequate flood mitigation and planning. We will work with municipal and community partners to meet their specific needs.

**The Speaker:** I would remind the members that as we move on to the next questions – not that you may have noticed any particular preamble speeches in the first five questions, but as we move forward, it is definitive that there won't be any of these. Thank you for your support on that.

I'll recognize the hon. Member for Lethbridge-East.

### Elder Abuse

**Ms Fitzpatrick:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday, June 15, was World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. All of my questions are for the Minister of Seniors. Can the minister tell us how extensive the problem of elder abuse is in Alberta?

**Ms Hoffman:** Thank you to the hon. member for the question. This is something that my ministry staff brought to my attention early in my tenure, and I'm sure members opposite are well aware of the

extensiveness of the problem as well. In Alberta it's speculated that 1 in 10 elders, 1 in 10 people over the age of 65, is suffering the harmful effects of elder abuse, and I thank the members, the vast majority of whom are wearing their purple ribbon, for helping us address that issue as we move together as a province in service of all Albertans, including our seniors.

**The Speaker:** First supplemental.

**Ms Fitzpatrick:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that the 10 per cent figure that the minister has given us is only specifically reported cases and given that in rural areas there is less support for elder abuse, how do these grants support local initiatives?

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

**Ms Hoffman:** Thank you again to the member for the question, and thank you, Mr. Speaker. One in 10 elders, as has been noted, is at risk of facing abuse, and it's primarily at the hands of either somebody that they're related to or somebody that's in a position of power in relation to them. In terms of local autonomy and decision-making we've proudly announced grants in the million-dollar range for this year, \$3 million over three years so that local decision-making can be put forward. In the hon. member's riding \$50,000 was awarded for a local group, that's already doing advocacy in this area, to hire a part-time staff member.

**The Speaker:** Second supplemental.

**Ms Fitzpatrick:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that this issue has been a concern for so long, why have these local supports not been given out before?

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

**Ms Hoffman:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thanks again to the hon. member. What I can assure you of is that there are tremendous resources that have been created centrally through the Ministry of Seniors so that those who are in positions to be able to have opportunities to relay that information now will actually be able to give resources to the local communities so that they can actually staff their offices and make sure that information is actually shared more broadly. So I'm really proud of the fact that we're taking something that already was an initiative under way and actually making sure that it can have the legs, through this million dollars' worth of grants, to make life better for Alberta's seniors and their families.

Thank you.

**The Speaker:** I want to remind the members that there are no preambles.

I recognize the member for the great constituency of Cypress-Medicine Hat.

### Health Care System Decision-making

**Mr. Barnes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister of Health recently announced that she would be eliminating the move towards decentralized decision-making in health care, this after the province has seen its health budget inflate further and further beyond the national average while producing consistently mediocre outcomes for all patients and declining services in rural communities. To the minister, Albertans clearly want to see changes made in health care. Do you really think that more of the same centralized decision-making in health care is the way forward?

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

**Ms Hoffman:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the hon. member for the question. What Albertans told us loud and clear in the election is that they were sick of the risk of mass cuts all across the province, centralization, decentralization, recentralization, disorganization. Albertans elected this government to make sure that we provide stability. The Premier made it very clear during the election campaign that that was our number one priority for health care, and I'm proud to be able to deliver on that.

**Mr. Barnes:** Mr. Speaker, during the election we all heard from people who said that the current health care system is broken, unresponsive, wasteful, and unaccountable to the needs of Albertans. Albertans sent a clear signal that they expect us to work towards changing and improving these failing services. Can the minister explain why she wants to stabilize a broken health care system that doesn't work for Albertans instead of making positive changes for Alberta patients and families?

**The Speaker:** The Minister of Health.

**Ms Hoffman:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know we heard a lot about health care on the doorsteps, and that's because of over 40 years of having a government in place that doesn't live by and promote the Canada Health Act. You don't have a government like that today. We have a government that is committed to following through on the requests of Albertans, which is to have a strong health care system in place. When they talked on the doorsteps about their issues on health care, it was around wait times. We're working on a plan to address that. It was around making sure that we have long-term care. We're working on addressing that. I didn't hear anyone say: we want to have more decision-making bodies distract us from what actually is happening. Disorganization is not the answer; focusing on front-line services is. This government is committed to that.

**The Speaker:** I wish to remind yet again that in this set of questions – if the preambles could be abbreviated considerably. Proceed to your second supplemental.

**Mr. Barnes:** We heard too often that important health decisions are set far away from local residents. The last government missed the mark on ambulance response times, access to physicians, hospital infrastructure, and a host of other issues that hit rural Alberta particularly hard. Minister, in our shared interest of creating a more responsive system, will you recognize the concerns of rural Alberta and commit to empowering communities by putting local decisions back in the hands of local decision-makers?

**Ms Hoffman:** Thank you very much for the question. Mr. Speaker, of course, a local voice in guiding decision-making is a priority for this government, and I'm sure it's a priority for all of us. That's why we have local constituencies. We're going to ensure that when we do this review, we're providing stability, not another set of letterhead but actual stability, and making sure that local decisions have a voice to make their way forward. I will be very proud when we have the details around that consultation, how we're going to roll it out, to share it with all members of this House and all members of Alberta. Local voice will be a priority moving forward.

**The Speaker:** The next question is from the hon. Member for Calgary-West. I wish to again underline and ask for the patience of the House. In practice the preamble does not exist in this part of the questions.

Go ahead, hon. member.

2:30

### Police Officer Fatality

**Mr. Ellis:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As a police officer for more than 10 years I can speak to the many dangers police face every day keeping our communities safe. I think everyone can join me in offering sincere condolences to the family of Constable Daniel Woodall, who was killed in the line of duty last week.

To the Minister of Justice. I have a two-part question I believe Albertans have a sincere interest in knowing the answer to. A fatality review is automatic. Will you make that review public, and will you commit to immediately adopting its recommendations so that we can protect our officers and victims ahead of the rights of offenders?

**Ms Ganley:** I'd like to thank the hon. member for the question. To begin with, I'd like to express the sincerest condolences to the family of Constable Woodall. We stand with you.

I would like to say that this government is absolutely committed to ensuring the safety of our front-line police officers and of our communities. The investigation is still ongoing at this point.

**The Speaker:** First supplemental. The Member for Calgary-West.

**Mr. Ellis:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again to the Justice minister. Given that I have been on the front lines and I have personally dealt with officers' families who have faced tragedy and given that this tragedy has terrible repercussions for the officer's family, what is the Justice minister doing to assist the family of Constable Woodall, his widow, Claire, and their two young children?

**Ms Ganley:** Thank you again to the member for the question. This government stands behind the families of officers, particularly in these tragic circumstances. I have been in contact with the widow, and we do plan to attend the funeral tomorrow. At this point she has not indicated that there is anything that is not being provided, but we are committed to providing any assistance they require going forward.

Thank you.

**The Speaker:** Second supplemental. The hon. Member for Calgary-West.

**Mr. Ellis:** Great. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for contacting her and the family.

Again to the Justice minister: given that the so-called, quote, unquote, freemen on the land are listed by other jurisdictions as a domestic terrorist group and locally continue to cause issues and costs for police, courts, and law-abiding citizens, what is this government doing or planning to do to address these extremists in Alberta?

**Ms Ganley:** Thank you again for the question. Again, I say that this government is committed to supporting our front-line workers and to ensuring that they have the resources necessary. At this point we're still in the process of review, but certainly that is an issue that has come up.

Thank you.

### Provincial Budget (continued)

**Mr. Fildebrandt:** Mr. Speaker, we want to help Albertans understand this minibudget. The NDP want to pass a minibudget that encompasses approximately 50 per cent of the government's operating costs. Added to the interim supply passed before the PCs made a very fateful decision to call an election, this province will

have run on interim supply for eight months. That's eight months without details, eight months without any real fiscal plan. Will the hon. Minister of Finance work with the opposition and commit to giving us a budget within six months, not eight?

**Mr. Ceci:** I'd like to thank the hon. member for the question. Mr. Speaker, I think the Premier has already made the answer to that clear. We'll be working closely with ministers and their ministries as we move into the early fall to bring forward a budget that will be before this House in the fall. I can commit to working hard through the summer, giving up my vacation, and bringing that report back to all of the members here in the fall. That's what I'll commit to.

**Mr. Fildebrandt:** I would gladly give up my vacation if I got to write the budget.

Mr. Speaker, to the Finance minister again. Crafting a budget so that Albertans know how their government is spending their money is the most important part of the minister's job. Albertans want to give this government a chance, but they don't want to give it a blank cheque. Given that the minibudget to be tabled is approximately 50 per cent of the size of a normal budget, will the minister not agree that Albertans deserve at least 50 per cent of the debate time given to a normal budget in this House?

**Mr. Ceci:** I thank the hon. member for the question. He and his members on that side will get a hundred per cent of the time to debate this budget when we get to the budget.

**Mr. Fildebrandt:** Mr. Speaker, we were referring to the mini-budget.

To the Minister of Finance. Once the full budget is passed, this fiscal year will nearly be over. This minibudget is likely to encompass 50 per cent of the government's operational costs, yet this minibudget is likely to provide very little in the way of details. Given that the minibudget being tabled is approximately 50 per cent of the full budget, will the minister not agree that Albertans deserve at least 50 per cent of the details?

**Mr. Ceci:** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member keeps asking about something that is not before this House. We're going to have an interim supply bill that's before this House in a few short days. That is known. In terms of the process what we will be able to look at are a number of revenue lines, a number of capital lines, a number of expenditure lines, so if he wants to talk about that, he can talk about that.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Chestermere-Rocky View.

### Pipeline Development

**Mrs. Aheer:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We heard the throne speech talk about the importance of market access for Alberta's resources. This sounds like welcome news, and we want to help the government make this happen, but we have some questions. We all know the Energy minister's chief of staff lobbied against Energy East and what Leadnow calls an illegitimate pipeline. We also know the NDP are against the pipeline to the west coast, and they're disinterested in going south. So can the Energy minister then explain how exactly we'll achieve market access without actually building pipelines?

**Ms McCuaig-Boyd:** Thank you for the question. Mr. Speaker, first of all, Alberta is an energy province, and our government cares deeply about what energy brings to the prosperity of our province. We are committed to assisting the energy sector in getting product

to market. We're pretty isolated here in Alberta. We lack ports. So we've begun that already, those discussions in our royalty review. Last week we were in Calgary three times talking to over 50 energy senior advisers and over six groups that represent the sector . . .

**The Speaker:** First supplemental.

**Mrs. Aheer:** Yesterday in a press conference the Premier went on at length talking about our market access and shipping our oil and gas to market without once using the word "pipelines" or the word "rail." Now, we're pretty sure there isn't a third alternative way of shipping oil and gas out of Alberta. So is this government actually committed to building any pipelines or expanding rail use?

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

**Ms Notley:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Just to be clear, I'm very committed to ensuring that our energy industry is supported, and we understand that part of that means ensuring that they can get their product to market. When I say "ship," it's a verb. But let me be very clear. I understand that pipelines are, in fact, the safest way to get product to market, and I have every intention of working, along with my Minister of Energy and my minister of environment, with our industry to ensure that we establish a reputation and a process that will ensure that other parts of this country will welcome their partnership with us and industry.

2:40

**Mrs. Aheer:** Wonderful to hear.

Albertans need some clarity about where the NDP stands on these issues. In the opposition the NDP called pipelines job killers. The Energy minister's chief of staff, her top adviser, was the executive director for a group that said that pipelines and rail put "our communities, livelihoods and environment in harm's way." Will the Energy minister be crystal clear and commit today to advocate to expand market access through environmentally responsible pipelines?

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

**Ms Notley:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to make two things perfectly clear. First of all, our position on the Keystone was that if we ship unprocessed bitumen to Texas, according to this government and to the American government we will give tens of thousands of Alberta jobs to Texas, not to Albertans, and that's not what Albertans want to see. The second thing that I want to make very clear – I want to make this very clear. For too long Albertans have been trapped in a discussion where when you stand up for our air and our land and our water, you are accused of being a job killer. What that does is that it contributes to the very record which is actually inhibiting our ability . . .

**The Speaker:** Thank you.

### Education Funding

**Ms Jansen:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by thanking our new government for putting more than \$100 million into our education system, including \$6 million for private, charter, and independent schools. As a parent of a child in a charter school I could not be happier. But given that your party has formerly stated that funding private and charter schools was draining money from the public system, it's a little bit confusing. To the Education minister: do you support the public-private model?

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

**Mr. Eggen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thanks very much for that question. I think it's very important for everyone to understand that our government was voted in to make sure that we have stable funding for education here in the province of Alberta, and to that end we put in \$103 million to meet the needs of 12,000 new students moving into the school system here in the fall. It was a major contribution, and we included in that contribution money to charter schools, to home-schooling, and to private schools as well. It's important to use our capacity, and that's what we chose to do.

**The Speaker:** First supplemental.

**Ms Jansen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the Education minister once again. You said yourself, and you just said that Albertans want stability in the education system. Yes, we do. Can you assure us, the parents, that you have no plans to change this model in the future?

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

**Mr. Eggen:** Thanks, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for that question. It's very important for us to use the capacity that we have at our disposal here in the province of Alberta. We know with 12,000 moving into the schools in the fall and many more young children just waiting to go to school that we use the capacity we have available to us. That's why in interim supply I put money into the public schools. We put it for charter schools, private, and home-schooling as well to meet the needs of all Albertans.

**The Speaker:** Second supplemental.

**Ms Jansen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I still haven't heard a yes. It was a pretty simple question.

Given that our independent schools save Albertans more than \$145 million every year and given that NDP governments in other provinces have attempted to bring in changes, we would just like the Education minister's word. Will he fix what isn't broken by cutting funding to charter, private, and independent schools? Tell the truth.

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

**Mr. Eggen:** Thanks, Mr. Speaker. Certainly, actions speak as loudly as words or even louder. We put the money into this interim budget to ensure that everything was funded, from private to charter to home schools and so forth. We need to use the capacity in our system and to make sure that the stability is there so that people know, moving forward, that we've made that commitment for all students in the province of Alberta. It's as simple as that. You can't just be putting words into other people's mouths. Sorry.

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

### Donations to Political Parties

**Miranda:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. During the last election some candidates and political parties received tens and even hundreds of thousands of dollars in contributions from corporations. The question is to the Minister of Justice. What is this government going to do to stop the flow of campaign financing from corporations and from unions?

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

**Ms Ganley:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member. Our policy is to stop donations from corporations and unions going

to political parties and to put the voice back to the people of Alberta to choose who it is that they want to lead them, and we are committed to putting that through.

**The Speaker:** Hon. member, first supplemental.

**Miranda:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that limiting contributions to political parties will mean that candidates and parties have less money to spend during elections, to the Minister of Justice: what impact do you anticipate this change will have on elections in the future?

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

**Ms Ganley:** Thank you again, and thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is our intention to give the voice back to the people of Alberta because we think that they are the people to whom we should be accountable, and by taking away union and corporate donations, we give that voice back to the people to choose. So, yes, it will have an effect on elections going forward, and I think it is an effect that the people will support.

**The Speaker:** Hon. member, second supplemental.

**Miranda:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that voters in Alberta want to ensure that it is their voices that are being heard and given that most Albertans cannot spend \$30,000 in donations to political campaigns, unlike some corporations, to the Minister of Justice: what is this government's plan to address this and ensure that Albertans' voices are being heard?

**The Speaker:** The Minister of Justice.

**Ms Ganley:** Thank you again, and thank you for the question. This government is committed to ensuring that union and corporate donations are banned. There are other moves that we want to make going forward, and together with the Official Opposition we have agreed to form a committee that will go forward. We are committed to studying other ways that we can improve our democracy to ensure that it is Albertans who have the primary voice going forward in our elections.

### Members' Statements

**The Speaker:** Hon. members, in 30 seconds I will call for the first of several members' statements.

I recognize the Member for Edmonton-McClung.

#### Constable Daniel Woodall

**Mr. Dach:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to speak for the first time in this Assembly, with the greatest of respect and humility, to deliver a message of solidarity and hope from the people of the constituency of Edmonton-McClung. Hon. members and all Albertans will mark the death and celebrate the life of Edmonton Police Service Constable Daniel Woodall as his funeral service is held tomorrow. Constable Woodall gave his life in dedicated service to all of us one week ago today. His wife, two young children, and extended family all suffered a terrible loss. Our thoughts are also with Sergeant Harley, who is recovering from wounds sustained in the same incident.

2:50

There was another, unrelated shooting in the same neighbourhood about a week earlier in the parking lot of Our Savior Lutheran

church. In response to both these violent acts one local pastor, Philip Penrod of Our Savior Lutheran church, organized a community prayer walk to allow the local community to express their sorrow over the shootings and make clear their determination that these violent acts would not define their neighbourhoods. Clerical leaders and members of all faith communities in the riding accepted Pastor Penrod's invitation to encircle the neighbourhood's pain with their resolve to re-establish the normally peaceful nature of our home territory. Over 100 residents marched together to pay respect to Constable Woodall and bear witness to his sacrifice.

My own home, sir, is only about three blocks away from where Constable Woodall died. I personally appreciated the opportunity to come together with my neighbours to mourn Constable Woodall's death, celebrate his life, and resolve to look out for each other more than we ever have before. This week that message is one that all Albertans can take to heart as we lay to rest one of this province's best.

I'm confident, sir, that the government of Alberta understands the value of safe communities. It will be working with determination to ensure that safety and security to live our lives is assured to all.

Thanks.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Chestermere-Rocky View.

#### Jaydon Sommerfeld

**Mrs. Aheer:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today with a heavy heart to honour the life and spirit of Jaydon Sommerfeld. In many ways Jaydon was not unlike a lot of 17-year-old boys. He was an amazing athlete – a lacrosse star – he was an excellent student, and he was supposed to graduate from Chestermere high school next year along with my youngest son, Sehran, and the class of 2016.

Tragically, Jaydon won't get to celebrate this milestone, and our community won't get to watch him grow up, graduate from university, start a career, or marry someone he loves. What made Jaydon truly special was the way that he touched and left an everlasting, positive impression on those around him. The absolute outpouring of grief and sadness since Jaydon's death is a testament to the beautiful life he led and the priceless memories he shared in just 17 short years.

Jaydon was taken from us at the intersection of highways 1 and 791. This intersection is notoriously dangerous, and the questions that we need to have addressed are: why has nothing been done, and why are we still losing people at this intersection? The intersection forces drivers to turn out in front of two lanes of highway traffic and then attempt the dangerous merge. I've driven this road since 1986, and I assure you that it's just as gut-wrenching as it sounds.

As legislators we owe Jaydon and his family more than words. While devastating and tragic, Jaydon's death is a call to action. Chestermere needs a new overpass at this highway intersection, and I will be fighting for this project in my capacity as an MLA.

Even in death Jaydon's kind spirit is bringing light and life to the world. His organs have been donated to eight needy recipients, that will get a second chance at life because of this. In fact, his beautiful heart has already found a home.

Jaydon and his family have given so much to this province, and I urge this House to help me give them something back.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### Police Officer Safety

**Mr. Ellis:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It is with great humility, respect, and sadness that I rise in the House today to offer,

again, condolences to the family and colleagues of Constable Daniel Woodall, who died in the line of duty on June 8. It was only three months ago that I rose in this very same House to remind Albertans that front-line emergency workers risk their lives every time they go to work. There are lessons to learn from last week's tragedy, and as the PC opposition critic for Justice I will do my best to ensure police have everything they need to perform their job safely.

As a former police officer and incident commander I can tell you that having all the tools is critical to any operation, especially when dealing with the unknown. The threat of the unknown is something that an officer experiences every time they have contact with the public. Officers perform these acts and the public perceives them as routine, but I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that there is no such thing as a routine contact. The threat of the unknown is always present in the mind of every police officer during every interaction, and the officer is prepared to give their life for you without hesitation.

Many citizens never know what the police do to keep them safe, and they shouldn't as that is the privilege of living in a free, democratic society. We as police know that most interactions with an officer usually result in a warning or a ticket, and we shoulder that abuse from the public, which we accept. But we are still prepared to run towards gunfire because that is our duty; that is our job.

Countless officers like Constable Woodall perform acts of heroism each day. For many, they do not even receive a simple thank you, and they don't ask for it, because it's what we do. It's who we are. It's what any hero would do. That is why I said on June 8, after the tragedy, that if you have an opportunity, please go out and say thank you to a police officer when you see one, not because they have asked but because they deserve it.

Mr. Speaker, we must always put the rights of victims of crime ahead of the rights of offenders. God bless you, Daniel. Thank you for your service.

Thank you.

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

#### Speech from the Throne

**Ms Renaud:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my great pleasure to speak for the first time in this House. Yesterday was another historic day for Albertans, and I'm pleased to rise and share my thoughts about the throne speech. As we heard, this Assembly welcomed 70 new MLAs with a wide range of backgrounds. I, too, feel and share Albertans' enthusiasm and hope for change in this great province that we call home.

I've spent the majority of my adult life working to create inclusive communities for people with disabilities. Yesterday I was moved by the language chosen related to persons with disabilities. People with disabilities need not be labelled as our most vulnerable but as people first, people who require and deserve our support and the opportunity to be fully contributing and participating members of our communities. I am confident that is the commitment of this government.

I along with all Albertans am keenly aware of the challenges before us. I know we are resolute in our commitment to the people of Alberta that we will meet these challenges head-on by offering unprecedented co-operation, by listening to each other and taking the best ideas from all Albertans to create solutions that pave the way for all of us.

Yesterday we heard so many inspiring commitments for an inclusive future, a future in which there is freedom from poverty, violence, and exclusion. I'm so proud to be a member of this Assembly under the leadership of this Premier, a visionary woman

who has inspired people throughout this province and beyond. I am confident in her leadership, and I look forward to working towards an inclusive Alberta for all of us.

Every morning when I wake up, I look and I see a quote that I have on the wall of my home. It's a quote from a hero of mine, Mahatma Gandhi, and it says that you must be the change you wish to see in the world. We in this Legislature can be that change.

Thank you very much.

**Mr. Mason:** Mr. Speaker, I believe that we require unanimous consent of the House to continue with Orders of the Day past 3 o'clock. If it's your wish, I would make such a motion.

[Unanimous consent granted]

**The Speaker:** Thank you very much.  
The Member for Calgary-Klein.

### Workplace Fatalities

**Mr. Coolahan:** Thank you. Mr. Speaker, there's been a recent and tragic workplace death in Calgary, the death of 35-year-old Maryam Rashidi. She was killed attempting to stop a gas-and-dash where she worked.

Ms Rashidi was a chemical engineer from Iran who studied at the prestigious Sharif University of Technology. Ms Rashidi, her husband, Ahmed, and her six-year-old son were recent immigrants to Canada, first settling in Montreal, then both finding jobs at oil and gas companies in Calgary, eager to contribute to their new home. Her dream of making a new and better life for her family is a dream that all in this House can relate to as many of us are immigrants or our families are immigrants.

3:00

Ms Rashidi was recently laid off from a job at a Calgary oil and gas company. In trying to support her family, Ms Rashidi swallowed her pride to ensure income for her family and took the first job that was offered to her, working as a gas station attendant on the busy thoroughfare of 16th Avenue in Calgary.

Tragic events like this remind us of our duty to ensure that every single employee has a safe workplace and is trained on the hazards of their job. To me, a workplace death is the most tragic of all. Merely providing for your family should not be a game of chance that you won't return home after your shift.

Safety on the job is an issue that is close to my heart. As a business representative for the United Utility Workers' Association my priority was always to ensure that safety was at the top of the agenda. Still, injuries and death continue to occur to the women and men of our province earning a living to provide for their families.

I had the honour of speaking at Ms Rashidi's funeral. This was a brilliant and popular woman who will be greatly missed by her family, Calgary's Iranian community, and all those whom she touched. In addition, she has donated her organs, and six more people will be impacted by her life.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to be a member of a party and a government that cares about the safety of workers. Every Albertan deserves to go home safely to their family. This government will act effectively to make this a reality for working people.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Highwood.

### Flood Recovery

**Mr. W. Anderson:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This Saturday, June 20, will mark the two-year anniversary of the southern Alberta floods. Although several communities, including Calgary, were

directly affected by this event, this once-in-a-generation flood had a severe and devastating effect on the town of High River, a wonderful place in the southern end of my constituency, and they're still recovering from that. Thousands of residents were displaced, a large number of homes and businesses were destroyed, and the recovery has been arduous and painful for many.

This anniversary will be a time to reflect on the incredible acts of courage and bravery we witnessed in 2013, acts of bravery from first responders, local officials, volunteers, charitable groups, and everyday Albertans who just showed up and said: what can I do to help? However, it will be a time to reflect on the incredible losses we suffered and to pay tribute to the five Albertans who lost their lives.

I'm pleased to hear that the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs will be taking time from his busy schedule this Saturday to visit High River, and I'm hopeful he'll meet with some important people, Mayor Craig Snodgrass and Jim Ross, chair of the DRP advocacy group, just a few of the individuals in our community who have been directly involved in the recovery process. I look forward to meeting with the minister and providing him and his team with an update on several key DRP and flood mitigation issues. I also look forward to working collaboratively with the minister to resolve ongoing issues quickly and effectively.

The 2013 floods challenged Albertans in a way we've never been challenged before, and we answered the call and showed the world our true resilient spirit. But there is more work to be done, more businesses to be built up and built back, more homes to be made whole, and more hearts to be mended. By working together, we can finish this recovery and make sure that every flood-affected Albertan is back on his or her feet and that they feel strong and they feel better sooner rather than later.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

### Tabling Returns and Reports

**The Speaker:** Hon. members, I'm pleased to table today the requisite number of copies of the House leaders' agreement respecting Oral Question Period and Members' Statements.

### Statements by the Speaker

#### Election of Deputy Chair of Committees

**The Speaker:** Hon. members, there is one outstanding item of business carried over from the election of presiding officers on June 11, 2015. The Official Opposition House Leader raised what he termed a point of clarification concerning the Deputy Chair of Committees and whether that member could continue in a caucus position. His intervention and that of the Government House Leader are found at pages 5 and 6 of *Alberta Hansard* for June 11, 2015.

Let me address a few preliminary matters. First, it is inappropriate for the Speaker to address any points of order or questions of privilege on the day the presiding officers are elected as the causes for summoning the Assembly have not yet been given. That is the purpose of the Speech from the Throne.

Secondly, there is no item known as a point of clarification, but I appreciate the expression, that has been used in connection with a request under Standing Order 13(2), to explain a Speaker's decision. Having said that, I undertook to address this matter.

As members know, on June 11 they elected the Member for Edmonton-Rutherford as Deputy Chair of Committees for the 29th Legislature. He was duly nominated and elected, and he is not a member of the Executive Council. There is no impediment to his nomination or subsequent election. It is my view that the Speaker

has no jurisdiction over this matter. There is nothing in the Legislative Assembly Act or the standing orders that addresses this matter, and the authorities are silent on this specific point. Accordingly, the Member for Edmonton-Rutherford is the Assembly's choice for Deputy Chair of Committees, and there is no reason for the Speaker to intervene in that decision.

### 15th Anniversary of Elected Member

**The Speaker:** Hon. members, I understand that the Minister of Transportation and Minister of Infrastructure, our longest serving member in this Assembly, celebrated his 15-year anniversary as a Member of this Legislative Assembly last Friday, June 12, 2015. As this is the first opportunity after the previous days' events to extend our collective best wishes, I would ask now that the hon. member step forward to receive his 15-year Mace pin and congratulate him on his outstanding service not only to his constituents but, in fact, to all Albertans.

I understand that there may be a point of order raised by the House leader for the Official Opposition.

### Point of Order Anticipation

**Mr. Cooper:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure sort of to rise on the first day while we talk about points of order. I might just add, before we get to the meat of the matter here this afternoon, that while I know that I may be ruled out of order because you've made a ruling, it would have been delightful to be able to add some of our perspective prior to your making that ruling.

3:10

But specifically for today I will cite Standing Order 23(e) with respect to the question from the member opposite about a bill, particularly Bill 1, that will be a matter of debate later today in the House, and 23(e) reads that a member will be called to order when it "anticipates, contrary to good parliamentary practice, any matter already on the Order Paper" – we are all very clear; Bill 1 is on the Order Paper – or notice has been given for that day. Clearly, I want to be able to try and use this as an opportunity for us all to get better together, but it is my opinion that the question was certainly out of order.

**Mr. Mason:** Mr. Speaker, first of all, I don't have a copy of the Blues in front of me, so I don't know precisely what was said. But my recollection of the question was that it was not specifically on the bill but on the points of policy contained in the bill. Nevertheless, the rules require that a point of order be raised at the time. The hon. member has not raised it at his first opportunity. Perhaps he was unfamiliar with that rule. Nevertheless, you have to make your point of order at the time of the transgression, and then it's dealt with at the end. I don't know if the hon. member made that point during the question or just now.

**Mr. Cooper:** We sent a note.

**Mr. Mason:** You sent a note at the time. You need to rise, but that's fine.

**The Speaker:** Could I seek the guidance of the Clerk?

Hon. members, the point being raised, I'm taking it under advisement. We'll make best efforts to consider the points raised.

However, hon. members, pursuant to Standing Order 7(7) the daily Routine is now concluded.

## Orders of the Day

### Government Motions

2. Mr. Mason moved:  
Be it resolved that
  - A. Select standing committees for the present Legislature be appointed for the following purposes:
    - (1) Privileges and Elections, Standing Orders and Printing,
    - (2) Public Accounts,
    - (3) Private Bills,
    - (4) Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund, and
    - (5) Legislative Offices
 and, in addition thereto, there be appointed for the present Legislature a Special Standing Committee on Members' Services;
  - B. Legislative policy committees for the present Legislature be appointed for the following purposes:
    - (1) Standing Committee on Families and Communities,
    - (2) Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future, and
    - (3) Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship.

[Government Motion 2 carried]

### Committee Membership Appointments

3. Mr. Mason moved:
  - A. Be it resolved that the following members be appointed to the Assembly's five select standing committees and one special standing committee:
    - (1) Standing Committee on the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund: Ms Miller, chair; Mr. Nielsen, deputy chair; Mr. Cyr; Mr. Ellis; Mr. Malkinson; Miranda; Mr. Piquette; Ms Renaud; and Mr. Taylor.
    - (2) Standing Committee on Legislative Offices: Ms Woollard, chair; Mr. Dach, deputy chair; Mr. Bhullar; Mr. Connolly; Mr. Cooper; Cortes-Vargas; Mr. Kleinsteuber; Mr. Nixon; Mr. Shepherd; Ms Sweet; and Mr. van Dijken.
    - (3) Standing Committee on Private Bills: Ms McPherson, chair; Mr. Kleinsteuber, deputy chair; Mr. W. Anderson; Ms Babcock; Mr. Connolly; Mr. Dang; Ms Drever; Mr. Drysdale; Mr. Fraser; Mr. Hinkley; Mrs. Littlewood; Ms McKittrick; Mr. Rosendahl; Mr. Stier; and Mr. Strankman.
    - (4) Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections, Standing Orders and Printing: Dr. Turner, chair; Ms Fitzpatrick, deputy chair; Mr. Carson; Mr. Coolahan; Mr. Cooper; Mr. Ellis; Mr. Hanson; Ms Kazim; Ms Larivee; Mr. Loyola; Ms McPherson; Mr. Schneider; Dr. Starke; Mr. van Dijken; and Ms Woollard.
    - (5) Standing Committee on Public Accounts: Mr. Fildebrandt, chair; Ms Gray, deputy chair; Mr. Barnes; Mr. Bhullar; Mr. Cyr; Mr. Dach; Mr. Gotfried; Mr. Hunter; Mr. Loyola; Mr. Malkinson; Ms Miller; Ms Payne; Ms Renaud; Dr. Turner; and Mr. Westhead.
    - (6) Special Standing Committee on Members' Services: Mr. Wanner, chair; Mr. Schmidt, deputy chair; Mr. Cooper; Mr. Fildebrandt; Ms Goehring; Ms Luff; Mr. McIver; Ms McLean; Mr. Nielsen; Mr. Nixon; and Mr. Piquette.



- B. Be it resolved that the following members be appointed to the Assembly's three legislative policy committees:
- (1) Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future: Mr. Coolahan, chair; Mr. Schneider, deputy chair; Mr. S. Anderson; Mr. Carson; Ms Fitzpatrick; Mr. Gotfried; Mr. Hanson; Mr. Horne; Mr. Hunter; Ms Jansen; Ms Larivee; Ms McKittrick; Mrs. Schreiner; Mr. Sucha; and Mr. Taylor.
  - (2) Standing Committee on Families and Communities: Ms Sweet, chair; Mr. Smith, deputy chair; Ms Goehring; Mr. Hinkley; Ms Jansen; Mrs. Littlewood; Ms Luff; Mr. Orr; Ms Payne; Mrs. Pitt; Mr. Rodney; Mr. Shepherd; Dr. Swann; Mr. Westhead; and Mr. Yao.
  - (3) Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship: Ms Kazim, chair; Mr. Loewen, deputy chair; Mrs. Aheer; Mr. S. Anderson; Ms Babcock; Mr. Clark; Mr. Drysdale; Mr. Horne; Mr. Kleinstauber; Mr. MacIntyre; Mr. Rosendahl; Mrs. Schreiner; Mr. Stier; Mr. Sucha; and Ms Woollard.

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

**Mr. Clark:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Pursuant to Standing Order 18(1)(h) I rise to speak against Government Motion 3. It is a long-standing parliamentary tradition that parties are given first choice of membership on committees, and in light of the new spirit of co-operation, which I sincerely hope is sweeping through this House, I would hope that the government would consider this request.

I'm going to table three documents. A letter that I wrote on May 11, 2015, to former Speaker Mr. Zwozdesky expressing my interest in the Standing Committee on Public Accounts. I will table the second document, a print of an e-mail dated Wednesday, June 10, 2015, to all House leaders, forwarding the letter to Speaker Zwozdesky and expressing my interest in the Standing Committee on Public Accounts. Finally, an e-mail printout sent to all House leaders, including the Government House Leader, dated Friday, June 12, expressing my regret at not being included on the Standing Committee on Public Accounts and noting that of the 74 – I said in my e-mail 74; in fact, there are 73 – private members 52 sit on multiple committees, and of those three sit on three committees.

I believe it is in the interest of all Albertans for all parties to be represented on the Standing Committee on Public Accounts because it deals with all ministries and all departments. I note also that my friend the hon. Member for Calgary-Mountain View also did not receive his first choice of committee. So I ask that the members of the Assembly vote against this motion to give the House leaders and, in particular, the Government House Leader the opportunity to reconsider the makeup of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** Are there any other members that wish to speak? I invite the hon. Government House Leader.

3:20

**Mr. Mason:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. We tried to accommodate everyone. I recognize that this committee is the hon. Member for Calgary-Elbow's second choice. I did believe that we had accommodated the request which we heard verbally from the leader of the Liberal opposition to the committee that he was appointed to. Unfortunately, it's not always possible for the House to accommodate the specific wishes of members, particularly members who are independents, but I believe that there are some very positive opportunities for both members to participate in the

work of the House, and we'll be prepared to review this in due course.

Thank you.

[Government Motion 3 carried]

4. Mr. Mason moved:  
Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly resolve into Committee of the Whole, when called, to consider certain bills on the Order Paper.

[Government Motion 4 carried]

5. Mr. Mason moved:  
Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly resolve itself into Committee of Supply, when called, to consider supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

[Government Motion 5 carried]

#### Evening Sitings

6. Mr. Mason moved:  
Be it resolved that pursuant to Standing Order 4(1) commencing Tuesday, June 16, 2015, the Assembly shall meet on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday evenings for consideration of government business for the duration of the first session of the 29th Legislature 2015 spring sitting unless on motion by the Government House Leader made before 6 p.m., which may be made orally and without notice, the Assembly is adjourned to the following sitting day.

[Government Motion 6 carried]

#### Transmittal of Estimates

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

**Mr. Ceci:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I received a certain message from Her Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor, which I now transmit to you.

**The Sergeant-at-Arms:** Order!

**The Speaker:** The Lieutenant Governor transmits interim supply estimates of certain sums required for the service of the province and of certain sums required from the lottery fund for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2016, and recommends the same to the Legislative Assembly.

Please be seated.

The hon. President of Treasury Board and Minister of Finance.

**Mr. Ceci:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I now wish to table the 2015-16 interim supply estimates (no. 2). This interim funding authority will ensure continuity in the business of the province while our government takes the time necessary to study, deliberate, and prepare its plans for the entire 2015-16 fiscal year and then the further time needed for this Assembly to discuss, debate, and enact 2015-16 funding in full. When passed, these estimates will authorize the approximate spending of \$56 million for the Legislative Assembly, \$15.4 billion in expense funding, \$2 billion in capital investment funding, \$765 million in financial transaction funding for the government, and \$387 million for the transfer from the lottery fund to the general revenue fund. These interim supply amounts include government commitments to provide additional funding to school boards, postsecondary institutions, and Alberta

Health Services over and above the funding planned by the previous government.

Thank you.

### Government Motions

(continued)

7. Mr. Mason moved:

Be it resolved that the message from Her Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor, the 2015-16 interim supply estimates (no. 2), and all matters connected therewith be referred to Committee of Supply.

**Mr. Mason:** Thank you.

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

**Mr. Cooper:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to briefly put some comments on the record with respect to Motion 7 and the process moving forward. My real concern today is around our inability to support Motion 7 in sending the supply to committee with respect, actually, to Motion 8 in the time that's been allotted for that debate.

It appears that the new government has a very similar sort of tone to the old government when it comes to the amount of debate that they're willing to allow in this place. I must say that I was very hopeful in the early, early days of this government, when we had begun to discuss some of the processes moving forward. As many of you will know, the Wildrose and myself have introduced or shared a document that we believe would make the House work substantially better. But so far today we've seen the government introduce a motion for evening sittings on the first day of this Assembly, something that I personally have witnessed the Premier speak against when they were in opposition. We've seen in newspaper reports the minister for the status of women speak specifically to night sittings. This is not the sort of tone that we were hoping for when it comes to the debate in the Assembly, and particularly now we see that we're going to be sending this absolutely massive supply bill into committee.

Standing Order 61(1) states that "interim and supplementary estimates shall be considered for not less than 3 hours," and that is a minimum amount. Today we've seen the order on the Order Paper that it will be debated for 3 hours, being the maximum amount of debate. It's very difficult for the opposition to support a motion to send something this sizable to committee when debate is already going to be stifled by this government.

I understand that we just did some preliminary number crunching here. It looks like there's going to be \$18 billion that we debate in a three-hour period. I did some early calculations, guessing that it might be around \$15 billion, and we're going to be talking about spending \$83 million a minute during that three-hour period.

**The Speaker:** Hon. member, if I might, would you clarify for the Speaker and the House. Are you speaking to Motion 7 or to Motion 8?

**Mr. Cooper:** I'm speaking to Motion 7 and our inability to support Motion 7 as it relates directly to the rest of our proceedings. We're unable to support Motion 7 – and that's specifically what I'm speaking to – as a result of our concern with the direction of the Assembly.

Shall I continue, sir, or do you feel like you need to rule?

3:30

**The Speaker:** Proceed.

**Mr. Cooper:** Thank you. We're looking at spending \$83 million a minute during that debate period. We have had some discussion with the government about changing the tone, and in fact the former government in the last set of estimates, supply estimates, allowed for six hours' debate, and here we're going to be into a situation . . .

**An Hon. Member:** Thank God. Great debates, they were.

**Mr. Cooper:** Yeah. In fact, not only six hours of debate for interim supply but also six hours of debate for supplementary supply.

This government is working on the bare minimum that is permitted by the rules, so it sounds like there's been no change from the previous government to the new government. In fact, I was hoping that we would be under new management, but as it turns out, we're not under new management. This government is requiring us to support a motion that ultimately will end in three hours of debate, and it's totally unacceptable. It seems to me that orange, in fact, is the new blue.

It seems to me that there has been little commitment from the new government, and I recognize that we're in early days, but let me assure you that today is the best day for change. September, October, November, wherever we're heading: once we finally get around to talking about making the House work better, I can assure you that we will see more and more of this and less of change. It's for these reasons that I am unable and I would suggest that the vast majority of our caucus will be unable to support Motion 7.

However, I'm here to try and provide a strong, working Assembly for all members. Mr. Speaker, I can assure you that I would be in the subsequent moments in this House more than willing to accept an amendment from the Government House Leader to Motion 7 that would see six hours of debate in committee tomorrow, on June 17. That would allow for a spirit of cooperation, a change in the culture to this place, that in fact, sir, you so eloquently wrote about in your procedural memo of yesterday.

In closing, I would like to emphasize that with so many new members elected to the 29th Legislature, it represents a unique opportunity to create a new and constructive culture in the Assembly. As an aside, limiting debate to three hours on an \$18 billion supply budget is certainly not creating that constructive culture. I ask you all to be leaders in ensuring a culture of respect and cooperation, where the differences of opinions never undermine the credibility or public confidence in this cherished institution. Unless we can see a potential change from the government, we are unable to support Motion 7.

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

**Mr. Fildebrandt:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to thank my hon. colleague from Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills for articulating the position of the Wildrose Official Opposition with regard to Motion 7 and the interim supply bill. I will not repeat too much of what my colleague has said but will expand upon several of our concerns as the Official Opposition. Normally an interim supply bill is for a few hundred thousand dollars or a few million dollars. I would chance to say that it is extraordinarily rare that an interim supply bill would be for several billion dollars, let alone up to 18 and a half billion dollars, that we see added up in the motion and interim supply bill before us today. This is an extraordinarily large sum of money. One of the things that Albertans were concerned about – one of the reasons they voted for change was because they believed that the previous government was frivolous with their money, that they spent first and asked questions later if they would even accept questions.

We need to get off to a better start here. This is a new government and a new Legislature with nearly entirely new members. We need

to start with an atmosphere of respect for this Legislature and the period given to debate and also being serious with taxpayers' money. My colleague from Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills has said that we will be debating for the maximum of three hours how to spend \$83 million every minute. That works out to more than \$6 billion an hour. I don't know about you, but that scares me, and I think it would scare taxpayers if they knew that we were that frivolous with their money.

Mr. Speaker, we understand that the government is unable to prepare a full budget at this time, but more details would otherwise be needed. This is not a budget; this is a brochure. This is intended merely to give the government a blank cheque to spend money. Traditionally it is the constitutional obligation of the Legislature and of the Official Opposition in particular to scrutinize money bills before the House, to do due diligence in ensuring that when the executive comes before this Assembly and asks for funds, we are not giving them a blank cheque and we are doing our due diligence. The Wildrose will not be voting to give this government a blank cheque.

We are trying to be helpful, and we are trying to be co-operative in this new Legislature, so I will repeat the words of the Official Opposition House Leader, that if the Government House Leader would be open to an amendment to extend debate to six hours, which would mean we're only debating \$3 billion an hour, we would be willing, then, to accept the motion before the House.

Thank you.

**The Speaker:** The hon. House leader.

**Mr. Mason:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Well, I want to thank the hon. members from the Wildrose Official Opposition for their comments with respect to this motion, and I have a few comments to make. I don't think that the context that they're placing this motion in is actually fair or correct.

First of all, Mr. Speaker, as they have correctly pointed out, the previous government brought forward an interim supply bill, which was passed before the calling of the election. That was given six hours of debate, but we didn't have enough speakers from the party opposite to continue that for the full six hours. [interjection] Well, yeah, and you had to deal with it. Yeah.

So it didn't receive the full six hours that it was allocated by the previous government in the first place.

The point that I would really like to make is that this interim supply bill is in almost all ways the same as the interim supply bill that was debated before the election. We have made four changes. Only approximately 10 per cent of the allocation in this interim supply bill is new. The other 90 per cent has been discussed to the full extent of the opposition's desire to do so.

The second point I'd like to make, Mr. Speaker, is that the hon. Opposition House Leader did raise this question in our House leaders' meeting. The suggestion that I made at that time is that we could consider extending the three hours based upon estimates of each opposition party and how much time they wish to spend on that debate. We did not hear from any of the opposition parties with respect to that and made a decision to go forward with the three hours as originally proposed.

3:40

Mr. Speaker, the timing of this is unfortunate, and it is awkward. The previous government chose to introduce a budget, not pass the budget, and then take it to the people in an election. They did not expect that the people would not like their budget and that they would actually be defeated in the election based largely on an unpopular budget. That has left the new government in a position

of creating a new budget. The hon. members have acknowledged that you cannot just pull a brand new budget out of thin air, that it takes some time, and we're going to take that time because this is, in case people have forgotten, the first change of government in 43 years. It will take us some time to get it right, but we want to get it right, and we will bring forward a budget for full debate in the fall session of this Legislature. This is not what we chose. This is not how we wanted to do it, but it is the only way we can do it.

I think hon. members opposite should know this. We had an option of proceeding by special warrants, which means simply not meeting the House, not debating it, and simply borrowing the money to continue. We chose instead, despite being a brand new government, to face the House very quickly, to bring forward our interim supply bill, and to bring forward our bill with respect to changes to the tax structure so that Albertans would know where we stood.

So, Mr. Speaker, we are going to bring forward a complete budget in the fall, and I assure all hon. members that they'll have a full chance to debate that, but this particular interim supply bill is 90 per cent the same as the bill that was discussed before the election for five hours, I understand from the hon. member. There are only four departments in which changes have been made to the previous government's interim supply bill, and I would respectfully suggest to hon. members that they may wish to focus there.

But, Mr. Speaker, we need to get on with governing. We need to be able to pay the bills, pay our employees, meet the obligations of the government, and that is what the interim supply bill is for. It does not represent the final budget of this government. It is not a minibudget; it is an interim supply bill.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for the PC Party.

**Mr. McIver:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thought it was important that I rise after listening to the previous debate and point out that two members of the Official Opposition actually tried to adopt the previous government's time allotment for supply, I guess endorsing what the previous government used to do.

Mr. Speaker, I point out that the government of the day's House leader took some time to say that . . .

**The Speaker:** Hon. member and the House, I'm advised that a standing order indicates that once the mover of the motion stands, in fact, it is intended as a closure on the debate and, thus, the reason why I called for the vote and will now call.

**Mr. Mason:** Mr. Speaker, if I may.

**The Speaker:** Yes.

**Mr. Mason:** I would ask the House for unanimous consent to allow the hon. member to finish his remarks.

[Unanimous consent granted]

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

**Mr. McIver:** Thank you, colleagues and Mr. Speaker, and I will reward you by being brief. I just thought it was important to point out that two members of the Official Opposition tried to adopt the previous government's time allotment for supply, and the government of today didn't use the word "generous," but I think suggested, if not outright said, that the previous government provided more than enough time, because it wasn't filled.

I would say, Mr. Speaker, that members of our party might be the only ones left in the House that realize that we made mistakes in the

last government. While the rest of our colleagues might not acknowledge that, we are determined to learn the lessons of the past and go forward and look forward to debating the supply estimates.

**The Speaker:** Are there any other questions?

The hon. House leader to close debate.

**Mr. Mason:** I have closed.

[Government Motion 7 carried]

8. Mr. Mason moved:  
Be it resolved that pursuant to Standing Order 61(2) the Committee of Supply shall be called to consider the 2015-16 interim supply estimates (No. 2) for three hours on Wednesday, June 17, 2015.

[Government Motion 8 carried]

### **Consideration of Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor's Speech**

Mr. Connolly moved, seconded by Ms Kazim, that an humble address be presented to Her Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor as follows.

To Her Honour the Honourable Lois Mitchell, CM, AOE, the Lieutenant Governor of the Province of Alberta:

We, Her Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly, now assembled, beg leave to thank Your Honour for the gracious speech Your Honour has been pleased to address to us at the opening of the present session.

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

**Mr. Connolly:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It is my honour to open debate on the Speech from the Throne, and I wish to thank Her Honour for the remarks that she brought to this Chamber yesterday.

I would also like to thank and congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, on your election both to this Assembly and to the chair. I trust that you will be a good and fair arbiter of the proceedings here. Further, I would like to congratulate all of my hon. colleagues in this Assembly on their election to this Chamber and thank the countless volunteers, regardless of which party they toiled for in the most recent election, for their commitment to our democracy and to their communities. Finally, of course, I would like to thank the hon. Premier for honouring me and the residents of Calgary-Hawkwood with the opportunity to open debate on Her Honour's speech.

The speech represents the plan that the voters of my riding chose on May 5. They chose fairer taxes, safeguarding vital education, health, and human services, and a renewed democracy. The opportunity to represent the citizens of my riding, which is located in northwest Calgary and includes the communities of Arbour Lake, Citadel, Hawkwood, Ranchlands, and Silver Springs, is truly humbling. I'm excited to get to work with the Premier to implement the fresh start so many residents of these communities hoped for when they cast their ballots.

Calgary-Hawkwood is a riding that represents so much of what Alberta is and why people from all over the world flock to our province to join our communities and pursue their dreams with relentless optimism. The communities in my riding are relatively new – the oldest was only developed in 1972 – but they have come to be remarkable, vibrant places where a diverse range of people from all walks of life make their homes. Much like our incredible province, my riding has grown quickly, and its residents work in a wide range of industries. With the Bow River forming the southern

border and the scenic nature of the foothills in which it is nestled, it is no surprise that people are drawn to the natural beauty of this place and the wonderful green spaces and parks that have grown alongside its communities.

Despite the hopeful, optimistic, and entrepreneurial spirit of the people of Calgary-Hawkwood, the residents of my riding understand that our communities and our province face real challenges that our government is tackling in a straightforward and steadfast way. So many in my riding understand that the priorities laid out in Her Honour's speech are vital to the health and vitality of our province. They hope for better health care for all of us, for a society that takes care of its most vulnerable citizens, and for a diversified and stable economy that benefits all of us. They also know and believe that you should be safe from discrimination and violence regardless of who you are and who you love.

3:50

It is an honour, Mr. Speaker, to rise today as one of the first openly LGBTQ-plus MLAs. The LGBTQ-plus community in Alberta has long fought for equal human rights, for recognition that despite who we love, we are Albertans just the same. As recently as last December this Assembly struggled with ensuring that our LGBTQ-plus students are treated fairly and equally. The debates around Bill 10 and Bill 202 were one of the many reasons that spurred me to run as MLA for Calgary-Hawkwood.

Since May 5 I have met with many individuals in the LGBTQ-plus community, and almost everyone has made me promise that I will help represent them because they feel like they have never had a voice in this Legislature. We have never had someone who truly understands what it's like to keep a secret from their friends and family for years, we've never had someone who knows what it's like to be afraid to hold their partner's hand in public, and we've never had someone who felt the fear every day of being kicked out of your home or fired just for being who you are, until now.

The Member for Strathcona-Sherwood Park, the Member for Calgary-Cross, and I are proud to be members of the LGBTQ-plus community and to represent our community in this Legislature. The three of us have different life experiences, different educations, and different upbringings, but we are united to fight for both our constituents and our LGBTQ-plus community. It was truly overwhelming to march alongside them with our incredible caucus of LGBTQ-plus allies in Edmonton's Pride parade earlier this month. The diversity of this caucus is one that I am incredibly proud to see in this Assembly.

Another key priority for the voters in Calgary-Hawkwood and for me is a strong education system that brings the best out of all Albertans. This is particularly important for me. My mom is a teacher. My sister is training to be a teacher, and her partner is also a teacher. I see every day through those that I love and respect the impact that passionate educators can have on the lives of their students, especially when they are given the tools that they need from their government. When I hear Her Honour speak of our new government's commitment to stable and predictable funding for our schools, I know that the Premier has the same priorities as my family as well as those of so many other families in Calgary-Hawkwood.

I understand that education does not end when we leave high school either, Mr. Speaker. Why, it wasn't so very long ago that I myself was a university student, as some of my colleagues in this Assembly will undoubtedly know and continuously remind me of. I know that postsecondary education fuels our dreams, expands our worlds, and helps us grow our economy and compete globally. When I see the Premier acknowledge that there is no better investment our province can make than to ensure prosperity, I know

that Albertans can face the challenges ahead and come through stronger and better than ever before.

Mr. Speaker, I could go on about all of the exciting, positive new starts we are seeing in our amazing and resilient province – real action on mental health, making life a little easier for those of us who earn the minimum wage, a renewal of our democracy, and a new relationship of respect with our indigenous brothers and sisters – but I will simply conclude by thanking the people of Calgary-Hawkwood for the trust they have placed in me and in the Premier. This is truly a humbling experience, and I am looking forward to the challenges and opportunities that face our province of farmers and feminists, workers and entrepreneurs, settlers and indigenous peoples, students and teachers. We are truly an amazing province, and I am so very proud to be part of this new chapter in our history.

Thank you.

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

**Ms Kazim:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my honour to rise today and speak for the first time to this Assembly. To be a part of such a small group of individuals who have sat as elected members of this House is truly a privilege. I'm truly humbled that the people of Calgary-Glenmore chose to put their trust in the Premier, the NDP, and myself. I promise to work every day in this House to represent the people of Calgary-Glenmore and bring about the change they voted for in May.

The riding of Calgary-Glenmore is one of only two Calgary ridings that have not been divided since the electoral boundaries changed substantially in 1959, a riding that encompasses important landmarks such as the Glenmore reservoir; important tourist sites like Heritage Park; a huge diversity of people, including a strong Jewish community; people who speak many different languages like Cantonese, Mandarin, Urdu, Hindi, Punjabi, German, Spanish, and more; people who were born in Alberta, in other provinces, and across the world; people who have decided to make Calgary-Glenmore their home. While campaigning, I met some of these people, and I heard their incredible stories. These are the people and the riding that I'm honoured and humbled to represent and the people I will do my best for every day in this House and in the community.

Like many of my colleagues in this House, I have not been in politics long. In fact, it feels like I even have a bit of catching up to do, even to some of my newest colleagues. This election has taught me a lot, not just about the democratic process but about patience, perseverance, and dedication. Truly, in Calgary-Glenmore every vote counted. This historic election has proven that every vote, that every voice, that every constituent matters. Calgary-Glenmore has a long history of electing high-ranking politicians, including Premiers Aberhart and Klein, Speakers Arthur Dixon and David Carter, and Lieutenant Governors John Bowlen and Grant MacEwan. I hope one day in the future my name is added to that list of notable Calgary-Glenmore politicians.

I have long worked to make our province and my community a better place. Before my election as an MLA I spent many years working in the field of engineering. I completed my undergraduate degree in chemical engineering and then pursued a master's in environmental engineering at Western University in London, Ontario. Since then I have spent years in oil and gas and in research and development. I have developed knowledge of one of Alberta's most important industries. I did this work and completed these degrees because I wanted to find ways to make chemical engineering processes more environmentally friendly. I wanted to ensure that we were protecting our air, our land, and our water and that the work I was doing was not jeopardizing the health of our

environment. These are goals I will continue to work towards in my new role. I believe this experience will serve me well as an MLA, and I'm looking forward to the new challenges that lay ahead.

I got into politics because I wanted to make a difference. I always believed that victory not necessarily lies in the winning but in making a difference. I wanted to make sure that Albertans' voices were heard and their wishes were respected. That is why I'm so excited to get to work on the issues that are important for the people of Calgary-Glenmore. Being the voice of my constituents in this Assembly is my number one priority.

During the campaign and since I have been elected, I have heard people tell me that they are worried about their parents who need a long-term care bed but cannot get one because the wait-lists are so long. They have told me that they just can't afford the huge costs associated with caring for their elderly parents. I understand the importance of good seniors' care, and I'm so excited for our government to ensure that seniors have a safe, healthy, and dignified place to live.

Parents have told me how important their children's schools and teachers are. They told me how their children's classes already had 30 students and that their children were already struggling to get the support they need. They told me about the importance of programs for English language learners, for First Nations and Métis students, for exceptional needs students. In short, they told me how important our education system was to them and their children, and I have to say that I feel the same way. That is why I feel so strongly about ensuring that our schools, teachers, and students get the stable funding that they need.

I have heard concerns about balancing our growing infrastructure needs while ensuring we are good stewards of our environment. The people of Calgary-Glenmore told me that they were worried about the province's roads, hospitals, and schools. They want to make sure that when they bring their children to the Rockyview hospital, the hospital is a safe and healthy environment and that they are able to access the health care that they need when they need it. Our government understands the importance of public infrastructure, of roads and schools and hospitals. While all of these important projects may not be completed right away, we are making a step in the right direction.

4:00

The people of Calgary-Glenmore told me that care for seniors, education, and the infrastructure that they rely on are important, and the Speech from the Throne clearly shows that these are important to the government as well. This is the new start that we are all looking forward to. Albertans wanted change, so they voted in a government with new ideas and new people who are ready to get down to work for Albertans.

While the challenges associated with our health care system, our education system, and our infrastructure will not all be resolved in the next few weeks, it is clear to me that this is a huge first step. I look forward to working to ensure that the priorities of my constituents and of Albertans are met. I believe that we are moving in the right direction, and we will make a difference.

I'm hopeful that we can build a relationship of trust and respect with Alberta's indigenous peoples, especially our neighbours in the Tsuut'ina Nation.

I'm honoured and humbled to have been a part of this monumental change in Alberta's government. Albertans and the people of Calgary-Glenmore put their trust in me and in our new Premier. I got into politics because I wanted to make a difference, and by investing in health care, education, and human services as was outlined in the Speech from the Throne, we can truly make the lives of Albertans a little easier.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak and for the opportunity to serve as the MLA for Calgary-Glenmore.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Drayton Valley-Devon.

**Mr. Smith:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, hon. members, and, indeed, the first two that have stood up and done their maiden speeches. It has been very interesting to hear your points of view. Thank you.

I'm honoured today to be able to rise and address this House in response to the Speech from the Throne. I would like to extend my congratulations to Mr. Wanner on being elected as the Speaker of the House, and I'm sure that we've chosen very well. You'll do a good job. I would also like to extend my congratulations to the rest of the elected members of this Legislature on their well-earned victories in this most historic of elections. Good job.

No candidate is successful without the support of their family. To my wife, Lisa, and to my children, Joshua, Luke, and Sarah: your love has sustained me, and it underlies everything that I do. To my mother and my father, Marlyn and Wayne Smith: you've invested your lives and your love into my life, and I'm so very grateful, and I want to say thank you.

I would be remiss if I did not thank the constituents of Drayton Valley-Devon for the support and the trust that they have placed in me. They placed their trust in me to represent them in this, the greatest of all democratic models, the Westminster parliamentary system of democracy, and I pledge to the best of my ability to represent their concerns in this Legislature, to uphold the rule of law, and to be a loyal servant of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

Elections are not won by a single individual, and I want to thank the many volunteers who worked so hard to ensure that a strong Wildrose voice would be heard in the Legislature from the Drayton Valley-Devon constituency.

The Drayton Valley-Devon constituency is a reflection of the broader Alberta that I serve today. It has a proud First Nations foundation as it encompasses the Maskwacis and Louis Bull reserves. The area was explored by David Thompson and was part of the great fur-trading empires of the North West Company and the Hudson's Bay Company. The descendants of Gabriel Dumont and Louis Riel reside in the area, reminding us that diversity and blending of cultures can and has made us stronger as Albertans.

We are a proud and we are a diverse constituency made up of veterans and farmers, oil workers and entrepreneurs. We are tied to the history of this province, and we are tied to the people who have helped make this one of the greatest places in the world to live.

In my 30 years of teaching in the Drayton Valley-Devon community, I've taught the descendants of Sir John A. Macdonald, I have visited with World War II veterans who flew over 50 bomber missions over Germany, and I have heard the descendants of John McCrae recite *In Flanders Fields*. This amazing constituency is a reflection of the great events in Alberta, in Alberta history. It has communities that can trace their beginnings to the families of freed black slaves that immigrated to Alberta and to the waves of immigrants from Britain and eastern Europe.

As you drive across this constituency from Lodgepole in the west to Winfield, Alder Flats, and Pigeon Lake in the south and to Devon on the north and eastern edge of the constituency, you see places of worship that represent a wide variety of religious faiths and doctrines. Eastern Orthodox onion-domed steeples blend with faiths as new as the Muslim and the Sikh communities that live within this constituency.

We are a constituency of ever-increasing ethnic diversity that has welcomed people from around the world to live in our communities, to use their talents and abilities to raise strong families and to create strong and vibrant communities where people through hard work,

creativity, and an entrepreneurial spirit are creating a prosperous and vibrant Alberta.

We are a constituency whose economic foundation is built upon the triad of industries that have made this province the economic engine of Canada. We are, first and foremost, a constituency based upon agriculture. Our cattle, grain, and dairy industries are a reflection of our history and a continuing legacy of the importance of agriculture to the fabric of this province.

We are a constituency where oil is of vital importance. Indeed, it was in this constituency where Leduc No. 1 was first brought online and where men and women have for several generations placed their energies and ingenuity into developing the companies that allow us to harvest this important resource.

We are also a constituency where timber plays a large role in our prosperity, and as your MLA I will do my best, to the best of my ability, to work towards ensuring the wise stewardship of these resources while also looking forward to diversifying our economic base as we move on into the 21st century.

In addition to this abundance, our constituency also is blessed with beautiful scenery and landscapes that attract people to fishing, hunting, camping, and all kinds of outdoor activities.

Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to rise today and respond to this first-ever Speech from the Throne by a New Democratic government. Being a social studies teacher, I cannot help but reflect on the many historic events that have shaped this province, this Legislature, and this nation. As we consider the Speech from the Throne and the direction that our new government would take Alberta, I believe it is important to place this new path in the context of the political events of the past that have impacted this province.

Alberta's motto is Strong and Free, and I know that this motto is a very appropriate description of the values and beliefs of all Albertans. This fall the physical representation of our motto, one of the most historic of all democratic documents, will be coming to this Legislature. The Magna Carta, the Great Charter, that was signed by King John in 1215, which is the foundation of all democratic liberty in this nation and in this province, speaks clearly to Albertans' desire for freedom, liberty, and a monarchy that governs at the behest and the will of the people. Indeed, the ceremonies surrounding the Speech from the Throne speak to our heritage of good governance and freedom.

As your MLA I will uphold and defend the freedoms that this Legislature and all Albertans hold so dear. As an educator I remember that this Legislature first met in a school just a few blocks from where we now meet, that our first Premier, Alexander Rutherford, was a Laurier Liberal and that the second leader of the opposition was R.B. Bennett, a future Prime Minister of this country.

#### 4:10

Alberta has always had a strong political influence on the direction of this country. I am so humbled to sit in a Legislature where great Alberta statesmen like Ernest Manning, Peter Lougheed, and Ralph Klein have served the people of Alberta so ably.

The rise of new political movements that have swept the nation have been born in Alberta. Indeed, the descendants of Irene Parlby, one of the Famous Five suffragists, live within the Drayton Valley-Devon constituency. Social Credit, the Progressive Conservatives, the Reform Party, and the Wildrose Party all speak to the willingness of Albertans to think outside the box politically. It is this same forward-looking attitude that will enable Albertans to diversify and look confidently towards the future, a future that will, like Devon in my constituency, prepare an environmentally responsible, diversified economy.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to working with all the members of this House, and I am encouraged that the new government believed it was important to address the democratic deficit in this province. Albertans believe in democracy, and this government would be wise to pursue a path that would consider and implement the ideas of recall and free votes. Albertans believe in fiscal accountability, and I would encourage this government to remember that they must be wise stewards of our economy and not leave a legacy of high taxes and debt. Should they choose the latter path, the people of Alberta will look for an alternative government, and the Wildrose Party will be ready to serve in a fiscally responsible manner as the next government of Alberta.

That the people of Drayton Valley-Devon chose me to represent them in this 29th Legislature is truly humbling, but it also speaks to one of the real strengths of our democracy in Alberta. In this Legislature there are people who come from all walks of life. We are greatly blessed with a democracy where you do not have to be wealthy to get elected, for I am definitely not, and you do not have to come from a famous political family with generations of political influence. Otherwise, I would not have been chosen. Rather, it is the ideas of the political party that you represent and the character of the individual candidates in this Legislature that play the greatest role in determining election night victory, and we should all be very grateful for and proud of that fact.

We have been elected to do a job. We are called to listen to our constituents and, to the best of our ability, make wise choices to ensure that prosperity and the freedom of the people of this province are the result. We are called to provide good governance, reflective of the wishes and the aspirations and the beliefs of our constituents. We are called to find ways to balance differences of opinion and conflicting ideas. We are called mostly to represent what is good and true in our society. With God's help and by His grace, the Members of this Legislative Assembly will do just that. God bless Alberta. God save the Queen.

**The Speaker:** Members of the House, I am reminded that under Standing Order 29(2)(a) there is the opportunity to ask questions of the previous speaker.

Hearing no requests, I would propose to move to the Member for Chestermere-Rocky View.

**Mrs. Aheer:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm truly honoured and sincerely humbled to rise before you on behalf of the constituents of Chestermere-Rocky View and to address the Assembly in response to the Speech from the Throne. It is time for all members of this Assembly to roll up our sleeves and get to work representing each of our constituents and indeed all Albertans. I invite you as my esteemed colleagues to collaborate on many levels so that we can make Alberta a better place for all Albertans. Our new government needs to demonstrate and respect that we work on behalf of the people of this fine province and that we are here to help.

Albertans voted for change, and it is time to proceed with that change. Where things were hidden, they can now come forward. Where things were clouded, we have an opportunity for transparency. Where government has been disingenuous, it can act instead with integrity. We can work together and move forward in creating stability where there has been instability. We can create accessibility where there has been inaccessibility. We can create savings where we have been overspending, and we can earn trust where there has been mistrust. We can use this opportunity to get back to grassroots politics.

Over the past five months Albertans spoke, and this is what they asked for: honest government, transparency, a government that is willing to collaborate with its opposition, insight, thoughtfulness,

to do more than what's expected, and to stabilize the energy sector and get the product to market, showing Albertans that we work for them and that the money we spend in this government is theirs and not ours.

How do we accomplish these common-sense goals and aspirations of our constituents? It begins with outreach. We need to know our constituents. They are the experts about the issues facing them. Some of these issues for the constituents of Chestermere-Rocky View are local health care, flood mitigation, property rights, education, seniors' care, and safe roads. Our constituency is very different from many other ridings because we have urban and rural issues to address. We have hamlets, villages, towns, cities, acreages, ranches, farms, and homesteads. All have specific needs that are close to their hearts. The diversity within this constituency is what makes it both beautiful and complex. The only way to accomplish our goals is to make sure that all people have a voice. This is what I plan to do for my constituents in Chestermere, Langdon, Conrich, Indus, Kathryn, Keoma, Delacour, Dalroy, Dalemead, Balzac, Springbank, Bearspaw, Elbow Valley, Redwood Meadows, Cochrane Lake, the Tsuut'ina First Nation, and numerous farms and ranches in between.

Being trusted as the shadow cabinet minister with the portfolio of Energy in this energy-rich province of ours is an honour and a challenge that I will tackle head-on. Working together, we can move Alberta forward by creating solid public policy that benefits all Albertans. Our energy sector needs the support of a government that listens to all stakeholders because strong economies are created through the intelligence of leaders who understand the different sides to each of the stories. What we do not yet understand, we need to learn by reaching out and truly connecting with the leaders and experts in Alberta's energy marketplace. This same outreach approach to listening and learning can and should be used in all sectors of our economy as we strive to diversify and meet the cyclical challenges head-on. There is an educated and intelligent workforce in all of our industries which needs the support and less bureaucracy to continue to grow and thrive.

To me, successful leadership means drawing the best out of each person in order to achieve results for the greater good. Leadership does not mean making unilateral decisions that best suit the leader. As elected leaders in this province we will be successful if we first seek the input and the expertise of Albertans when they work towards common-sense policy decisions. We need clarity and commitment from the government and its intentions in the energy sector. To create the desired stability, this requires our government to show leadership and to promote a climate for investment and growth. This sector, like all sectors, employs us to make sound decisions in our future. It is this sector that will also allow us to diversify, and it received little attention in the speech.

I have to say that being part of the tradition of the House, sitting here amongst my colleagues, participating in creating the future of our province, is just phenomenal, and I take to heart many of the positive attributes in the throne speech such as, "We believe in looking after our children and making sure they are safe, healthy, and have access to excellent education." Being a mother, I applaud this statement and look forward to seeing how our government will follow through with this and with life-saving infrastructure in Chestermere-Rocky View. Jaydon Sommerfeld's tragic death on Wednesday, June 10, must not be forgotten, and this tragedy must serve as a reminder for all of us in this House that we have a responsibility to create safe roads for our citizens. On this we must agree.

4:20

The constituency of Chestermere-Rocky View requires a strong stance on flood mitigation that will benefit both the city of Calgary

and the affected municipalities surrounding the city. This, again, requires good public policy. We have families in Chestermere-Rocky View who lost their cabins and second homes in the flood of 2013 and who to this day are not able to seek compensation for their losses and continue to pay mortgages on properties that no longer exist.

A friend of mine often says to me that there are no limitations on good ideas, and I firmly believe in this philosophy. It takes humility and the ability to listen to information, to take it in, and to truly collaborate. Alberta's prosperity was built collaboratively. Albertans work collaboratively to create an advantage that at one time attracted investment, thereby creating jobs, low taxes, and a strong economy through the investment in the people of Alberta.

Small businesses make up 90 per cent of all businesses and are responsible for 35 per cent of all private-sector employment in this province. Small businesses and the entrepreneurial spirit are alive and well in this province. These businesses need to be nurtured and encouraged to generate wealth, respected, and not punished for their hard work.

Again I refer to the throne speech. "Alberta's new government will work closely with all members in this House and will take careful account of your views and those of all Albertans." I hope to hear in the future of our government's plans to balance the budget. Remember that we are here to help. This is something that all Albertans need and deserve for the future. This will create the stability the government has spoken about, and Albertans spoke about it so passionately at the doors. We do not have a revenue problem. We need proper management of Albertans' money. Let me state this again: Albertans' money. We need not throw more money into the pot when we are not privy to the state of our finances.

We are an Assembly of many new faces, and we have much to learn and even more to accomplish moving forward. Let's understand the privilege we hold, the responsibility we bear by sitting in these seats. Let's build a better future and leave a legacy stronger than it was for our children and beyond. Let's learn from the triumphs and the challenges of those who have been here before us and those who are returning to sit here with us. I would love to thank my friends, both old and new, my family, and my constituents for placing their faith in me. Remember that we are here to help.

Thank you.

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

**Mr. Mason:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I have enjoyed listening to the speeches on both sides in the response to the Speech from the Throne. I would now move that we adjourn debate on the Speech from the Throne.

[Motion to adjourn debate carried]

## Government Bills and Orders Second Reading

### Bill 1

#### An Act to Renew Democracy in Alberta

**Ms Ganley:** I'd like to move second reading of Bill 1, An Act to Renew Democracy in Alberta.

This bill will amend the Election Finances and Contributions Disclosure Act so that corporations, unions, and employee organizations will be banned from making political contributions in this province. Once the bill is enacted, it will come into force on the day it was first introduced; that is, June 15, 2015.

[The Deputy Speaker in the chair]

Only residents of Alberta will be allowed to provide political donations to political parties, constituency associations, candidates for election and senatorial selection, and leadership contestants. Candidates will need to talk and listen to Albertans to gain their support instead of relying on donations from organizations. It will help to ensure that Albertans' voices are heard in the Legislative Assembly and assure voters that political contributions from organizations weren't a deciding factor in the candidate's success.

Madam Speaker, we've had a lot of support for these legislative changes. Albertans have told us time and again that equity and fairness in election financing is important. Albertans value democracy. We've consulted with the Chief Electoral Officer about these amendments.

Madam Speaker, June 15, the effective date, will have implications for candidates who ran in the May 5 general election. It means that those candidates will no longer be able to accept union and corporate donations to eliminate any deficits remaining from the past election. It also prevents political parties from rushing to fund raise before a deadline. These are implications that will affect everyone, no matter which political party they represent. It will ensure that under this Legislature only Albertans can contribute to political entities. Our political system has been far, far too dependent on funds from a narrow range of donors with deep pockets and too far removed from the interests of ordinary people.

This bill, Madam Speaker, will reform election financing and give voters back their voice. It is a needed evolution in our electoral process and of our democratic rights. Together with a new special legislative committee which will be looking into Alberta's elections, whistle-blowers, and conflict-of-interest legislation, it represents just the beginning of our efforts to renew democracy in our province and to ensure that all parties are accountable to Albertans.

Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you, hon. minister.

The Member for Bonnyville-Cold Lake.

**Mr. Cyr:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I appreciate the privilege of rising this afternoon and joining the debate on Bill 1, An Act To Renew Democracy in Alberta. We are commencing this spring sitting on an important note. Accountability and fairness in the democratic process are fundamental cornerstones of a healthy political system and responsible campaigning. In fact, my colleagues and I are championing the need to introduce more robust accountability measures that would keep undue corporate and union influence out of the electoral process. To this end, I regard the amendments proposed in Bill 1 as positive steps in the right direction, and I applaud the intent behind the bill. As such, I want to help the government to achieve our shared goal of making sure politics are conducted in the best interest of Albertans, with Albertans as the focus.

Madam Speaker, if passed, Bill 1 will ban corporate and union donations to political parties, which would be effective on June 15. This would mean that only Albertan residents could make private contributions to parties, candidates, constituency associations of their choosing. The intent here is to bring an end to the enormous influence organized entities can have when they choose to invest large sums of money into the political process. More specifically, this will bring an end to the ability of corporations and unions to steamroll the will of individual Albertans, who are the real voters. I reiterate: this is where political influence should be coming from, Albertans.



4:30

Currently, Madam Speaker, the federal government along with the governments in Manitoba, Nova Scotia, and Quebec have legislation banning corporate and union donations. If Bill 1 is successful, Alberta would join that list. The principle underlying this bill is sound. It reflects what we in this caucus have been advocating for a long time. For years we have campaigned on the principle of banning corporate and union donations, and it is a pleasure to see that one of our policies is being adopted.

As such, I find it encouraging that democratic accountability is starting to get some acknowledgement for its importance. Indeed, it is a necessity for the effective representation of all Albertans regardless of the size of their bank accounts. It became regrettably commonplace for the previous governing party to receive untold millions in corporate donations, and while the new governing party has enjoyed the benefits of union donations, it is pleasing to see that they're taking the initiative in forsaking some of those donations going forward.

I certainly support the principle at hand, one we have long advocated for. In fact, if anything, I would suggest that Bill 1 doesn't go far enough, Madam Speaker. On this note, I have a few questions I would hope to get some clarity on. In the interest of helping government to achieve this goal and renewing democracy for Albertans, I would like to outline a few of these concerns for the House this afternoon.

When I say that this bill is not going far enough I mean that it still leaves open loopholes that weaken the overall effectiveness of this bill. Essentially, the bill in its present form is still allowing third-party advertisers to exercise their influence in elections. These third-party groups have actually been considered to be more influential in many of the elections that they've been presiding in. This includes Ontario and the United States. In those jurisdictions we have been told of the amount of power that they are able to wield by throwing large amounts of money into third-party advertising campaigns.

Let's look at Ontario, for instance. During the province's 2014 election third-party advertisers spent \$8.4 million.

**An Hon. Member:** How much?

**Mr. Cyr:** Eight point four million dollars. It's a stunning amount of money.

We need to consider if we really want to leave this door open to a wave of third-party advertisers wielding undue influence in Alberta's elections. Albertans certainly deserve better, I'm sure we can all agree.

Another concern I have relates to the retroactivity of this bill. Generally speaking, I oppose the notion of retroactive legislation. The problem in this particular case is that we are currently in an election period. Madam Speaker, this means that this bill, if passed, would change rules governing the current election period while it's still ongoing. So I have to wonder whether this leaves the bill liable to certain court challenges. What are the legalities here? Is the integrity of the bill jeopardized by the retroactivity of the bill? Would it not be more prudent to wait for an effective date in early July, when the writ period is officially closed? This is something that needs to be cleared up, and perhaps the government can help to provide some clarity on the issue. Officially the writ period still has three weeks remaining, as it runs for 60 days after the election.

Madam Speaker, there are also some, frankly, bizarre provisions in the bill that specifically allow unions and corporations to backstop loans. According to the bill as it's currently written, corporations and unions would be allowed not only to backstop loans but to make payments on the loans as well. These payments

would only be considered illegal donations if they were not reimbursed by the party taking out the loans. Does this not conflict with the principle behind the bill? The intent is to keep unions and corporate influence out of the electoral process. How do these strange provisions move us in this direction of keeping the unions and corporate influence out of the electoral process?

In the interest of helping the government to attain its goal on this bill, I would ask for an explanation on the matter. As it presently stands, these unusual aspects of the bill are cause for concern in an otherwise praiseworthy piece of legislation. The integrity of democratic accountability is at stake, so we want to make sure this bill is as strong as we can make it and as comprehensive as possible. We want to assist the government in making sure this is the case.

Madam Speaker, I believe the fundamental question at hand is this: how do we prevent third-party interests from influencing our elections while also protecting their freedom of speech? What we need is to strike a balance, and this is ultimately what we need to bear in mind while we move forward in considering Bill 1.

These things aside, Madam Speaker, this bill would accomplish something worth while, keeping political influence at the hands of individual Albertans, where it belongs. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. Member for Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House-Sundre.

**Mr. Nixon:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. It's my pleasure to stand today in support of this important bill to renew democracy in Alberta. The bill at its core is the brainchild of the Wildrose Party. So first of all, on behalf of the Wildrose Party's grassroots I say: you're welcome. I hope this government keeps it up. We have a few other ideas, too, if you'd like to check out our policy book.

**An Hon. Member:** No good ones.

**Mr. Nixon:** Well, you sure liked this one.

As mentioned, the Wildrose has a long history of campaigning to end corporate and union donations, and it's a policy we are happy to see being brought in with Bill 1. We believe that the only influence in politics should be the influence of the voter, and this bill sets the stage for that. In the past we have seen former government parties rake in millions in corporate donations tied directly to government contracts. In fact, in the closing days of the 2012 election the former government received a \$400,000 donation from a big corporate donor. This practice is not just wrong; it's dead wrong. And thanks to the Wildrose, this bill will finally make actions like that a thing of the past. It is no secret that this current government has received massive donations from unions and other special-interest groups, and I'm encouraged that they are willing to adopt a bill founded on Wildrose policy that will close these donations off.

While the bill is largely Wildrose, there are aspects that even I have trouble understanding. For instance, why is this government enacting legislation retroactive to June 15 in the middle of an election period? This is akin to changing the rules of a hockey game in the middle of the game. While I'm sure there is an argument to be made for increasing the size of the net, you simply don't do it in the middle of the second period. We have questions about enacting this bill retroactively. Does it leave the law vulnerable to court challenges from other parties?

4:40

If we truly want voters to have the only influence in politics – and the Wildrose does – then we must ban corporate and union donations and commit to adopting legislation that does more than simply lip service to reform. This means banning corporations and

unions from making payments on party loans at all except in the case of default. This means empowering the Chief Electoral Officer with tools to penalize any party any amount, not less than the amount of the loan they have not repaid in the manner of the act.

While I am excited to see this government moving in the right direction, there is much more that can be done. But we'll be clear. The Wildrose supports this bill because it will serve to organize and measure the best of our energies and skills and because it's the right thing to do, and when it comes to democracy, nothing less is acceptable.

We look forward to further debate, Madam Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Hon. members, Standing Order 29(2)(a) allows for five minutes now of questions and answers should anyone wish to avail themselves of that.

Seeing none, any other hon. members wish to speak? The hon. Minister of Health.

**Ms Hoffman:** Sorry, Madam Speaker. This is my first go at debating a bill. Actually, I'd rather enter into debate than questions. Have I missed my opportunity for such?

**The Deputy Speaker:** No. If no one takes advantage of 29(2)(a), then we go back into the debate. You wanted to speak to the main bill?

**Ms Hoffman:** To the main bill, yeah.

Just for clarity, how do we put our names forward to be on the list?

**The Deputy Speaker:** Send me a note.

Did you wish to speak now? I believe I can recognize you now, hon. minister.

**Ms Hoffman:** Sure. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

To my friends at *Hansard*, I hope this doesn't count as my maiden speech. It is my intent, though, to speak in strong support of Bill 1 at this point and to thank my colleague the Minister of Justice for bringing it forward. Actually, she brought it forward yesterday, on her birthday, so what a nice present, that she might see support both from the governing party and the Official Opposition on her first bill. I think that would be a great tone to set for our House.

In 2008, when I was working here as a researcher, this was something that we put in our platform and something that we were really proud to make sure was moving forward because we had seen evidence of how some of the wealthiest corporations and unions were having undue influence on our democratic system here in Alberta and also in other jurisdictions. We might recall concerns over wealthy business owners who could benefit from a downtown arena donating the max as well as their friends and neighbours, and I think there was even maybe a pet on the list donating the max as well as the business. So this is definitely something that we need to address.

I think that the voters of Alberta spoke loud and clear with the big shift in this election by sending both parties here in the capacity of government and Official Opposition who had this as a pillar in their platforms, not just in this election but in past elections. That, I think, is to be commended for all of us and for Albertans, for speaking so strongly on that.

I want to address the point that was raised around closing loopholes, and I agree that that's our intention, to make sure that we do close loopholes. In terms of the retroactivity, that's one of the reasons why at this point I'm leaning towards supporting it. I think it would be disingenuous of us to pass legislation and allow some

of the richest corporations and unions to continue donating the max for the period from which we gave notice that we won't allow them to donate until a point several weeks down the road. I think that it would actually create a bit of a gravy train effect should we not pass this legislation retroactively. That's my logic on it.

I think it's fair for us to say to our corporate and union friends: no, thank you. No, thank you, effective the date immediate that the bill was tabled. No, thank you, effective the moment that we first have the power as legislators to bring this legislation into effect. I think that if we were to delay that, as has been mentioned, by a few weeks, it would actually be counter to the intent of the actual legislation. I, too, wonder about retroactive bills, but this is retroactive to the date it was tabled. It's not retroactive to five years ago, making all of those donations illegal.

The other point I just want to raise is around guaranteeing a loan, being allowed to make interim payments as long as during the period that money is paid back. I think that that's the point. We want to make sure that there aren't any donations. In terms of guaranteeing a loan, I might be a small-business owner who needs to access a line of credit during my election period and have no intention of actually donating to that campaign but need to make sure that I have a guarantor for that loan. There may be a need to maintain my small-business reputation and my financial standing to make payments on a loan if the donations aren't coming in in a timely manner but, of course, not actually to make donations. So I think that that little cushion, allowing individual candidates to be able to have somebody to lean on in their time of need to make sure that that loan is being guaranteed, creates that opportunity. Of course, there would be a penalty to both the candidate as well as the donor if that was not paid back to the guarantor of that loan.

I appreciate the questions that have been raised. In terms of the loophole piece I worry that if we don't act to make this retroactive to the date on which it was tabled, we're actually indeed creating a larger loophole. That's some of my logic around it.

I am so excited for us to be moving forward in this direction. I think it really speaks to the democratic principles upon which every good democracy is founded, and that is around individuals having the right to set and determine the best government for themselves, for their jurisdiction.

I agree that we need to look at third-party advertising, and I know that there will be greater legislation, that we'll need to examine for that, around freedom of speech and other items. As an individual member of this caucus I want to say that I'm excited at having an opportunity to pursue that down the road, but I don't personally think that it fits into this bill that we're here to debate today.

I think there are other pieces of legislation we might want to visit as well. As a former public school board trustee I know that some of those campaigns can get into the multizero budgets as well. I think that the way the legislation stands right now, there's room for corporate and union donations for other orders of government, obviously not for federal, but we're looking at other orders of government here in Alberta.

In terms of municipal governments and elected school board governments I think that's something that we will want to examine as well. I know that there have been a few editorials speaking in that regard, and I personally as one member see opportunity and hope and that, moving forward, we've got a little window before the next municipal election comes around. I hope that that's something we can tackle together as a House in ensuring democracy not just at this level but in other orders of government as well for Albertans.

Thank you, Madam Speaker, and thank you to my colleagues for the opportunity to share my remarks on Bill 1.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Hon. members, the provisions of Standing Order 29(2)(a) would allow for questions and answers, five minutes, should anyone choose to take advantage of that. The hon. Member for Cypress-Medicine Hat.

**Mr. Barnes:** Thank you. Well done, Madam Speaker. Thank you for the opportunity to be recognized.

Thank you for what you've contributed to the debate. The question I want to ask you, though, centres around parts that are unclear to me. If a corporation or a union ends up making the payment for a candidate or a party because of the loan guarantee and because of that nature, it's not clear that that money has to be paid back by the candidate or the political party, leading to tremendous unintended consequences of a big corporation, a union, whatever, having their fingers in a lot of pies and having a lot of influence over a situation where, you know, they have a lot more influence than what this bill is intending. What this bill, of course, is intending, as my colleagues from the Wildrose have pointed out, is an opportunity to make individuals, those of us that actually vote, have a real say in our democratic system.

Could you please touch on the fact that if a union or corporation has to step in and make a payment, should the candidate or the party ultimately have to pay that back to the union or the corporation?

**Ms Hoffman:** I raised it, but I think the mover is actually in a better position to be able to respond to that question. So if I might ask the mover of the bill, my colleague the Minister of Justice, to please respond. [interjection] I can speak to this question in the close of debate if you like, say my colleagues. I personally don't feel like I'm in a position to be able to answer the specifics around that. It's a valid question, and we will ensure that you have a valid answer in response to that.

Thank you very much, hon. member.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Any other member wishing to take advantage of 29(2)(a)?

If not, then I will recognize the hon. Member for Calgary-Elbow.

4:50

**Mr. Clark:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise to speak in support of Bill 1. I think it is a very important act, and I offer my praise to the government for their quick action in making this the first order of legislative business here in the 29th Legislature. I'm particularly pleased to see them take this early action, because I understand, based on the previous history of some other parties, that on that side of the House it gets intoxicating after a while. So I praise you for doing it early before you get too used to some of the perks of power.

I would say, though, that there are some opportunities for improvements and some specific amendments that I look forward to discussing in committee. In particular, I wonder why the government hasn't taken the opportunity now to in fact reduce the amount that individuals can donate. I suspect that that's something they would find broad support for in this House. Although I recognize that there has been a committee struck, an all-party committee – and being a member of a party in this House, I sincerely look forward to being a part of that committee. I'm also finding that at this end it's actually a nice view of the entire Legislature. Much as I desire to move towards the middle of the House over time, it's quite a nice view at this point. As I say, I believe this House would agree to reduce the total amount that individuals would be able to donate, and that's something I look forward to discussing in committee.

The other thing I think that we probably would find some agreement on is eliminating public spending announcements during elections. This became a particular issue during the recent by-

elections last fall, where we had sod-turning upon sod-turning. In fact, the way I think the foundations for some of those schools are going to be built is simply with golden shovels digging the entire foundation.

So that's one, public spending announcements, and the other, of course, is using the office of a minister to make public policy announcements during a by-election and making those announcements clearly for political gain, something I refer to as the Gordon Dirks rule, something that had something of an impact on the by-elections in October of 2014. I think, again, that's something that we would likely find some wide support for in this Assembly. I look to the province of Manitoba and what they have done with their legislation, and I would encourage the House to consider that.

I also agree with the hon. Minister of Health, the Member for Edmonton-Glenora, in her comments that perhaps we should look at municipal campaign finance reform. That's something that likely would come up under the auspices of that committee as well, probably something that would be a little too deep for Bill 1. Again, I come back to the principles of the bill and agree absolutely that it is an admirable bill. As leader of the Alberta Party opposition I will be voting in favour of Bill 1. Thank you again to the government for bringing it up.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Standing Order 29(2)(a) comes into effect should anyone have questions.

**Mr. Barnes:** I'd like to ask the hon. member what he thinks of the June 15 deadline and changing the rules in the middle of the contest and how he thinks this may affect some of the candidates who, say, weren't as big, as high a fundraiser, maybe weren't successful. Do you foresee that changing the rules in the middle of the game is a problem, maybe its even being court challenged?

**Mr. Clark:** Thank you, hon. Member for Cypress-Medicine Hat, for that question. It is a challenge. There's absolutely no question. At the same time, I understand completely the rationale behind that change, that there would then be a mad rush to get as much corporate and union money into the coffers of political parties as possible in whatever time frame would remain. I recognize that that may leave it open to court challenges. I'm not a lawyer, so I can't speak to that personally. I understand absolutely the rationale for the June 15 deadline. It is a challenging issue, but my position at this point is to support that aspect of the bill.

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

**Mr. Mason:** Yes. Thank you. I just wanted to respond to the hon. Member for Calgary-Elbow, who asked about other aspects of it. All of those things that you mentioned, hon. member, are things which are certainly on our minds and under consideration here and, I'm sure, on other sides of the House as well. This is not our last kick at the can in terms of this, and you've mentioned the committee as well. So I think you should look forward to a good discussion amongst all parties about where we go with regard to these matters. Certainly, spending limits was one of the things that you mentioned, that I think deserves careful consideration. It was matter of preparing a bill that would be ready for an early session and a short session, so many things were left out.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Any other speakers on 29(2)(a)? Go ahead.

**Mr. Clark:** I believe that was phrased in the form of a question, so I will. . .

**Mr. Mason:** It's questions or comments.

**Mr. Clark:** Questions or comments? All right.

**The Deputy Speaker:** On 29(2)(a)? The hon. Member for Calgary-Lougheed.

**Mr. Rodney:** Thank you. I thank the hon. House leader for pointing out that, indeed, it's not just questions or comments. In the spirit of all-party co-operation as requested by the Speaker in the past, it's practice, as we know, not to refer to each other by names because we're representing our constituents. It's about them, not about us. If we said some of the things that occur here, some would claim that it would be defamatory and otherwise. Again, to make a positive suggestion, just a thought of encouragement for the member and others, it's not practice to bring up the names of those who are not in this House and cannot defend themselves. A reference was made in a rather unflattering way of a person who was the former Education minister, and I just wonder if we could respect the good work that people have tried to do in previous administrations dating back to 1905.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you.  
Any others?

**Mr. Nixon:** I was just wondering if the hon. Member for Calgary-Elbow would agree, in regard to the retroactiveness of the bill, if it would be appropriate that the government would disclose what they have received, since they formed government during the same writ period, from unions and corporations before they went ahead and retroactively changed the rules in the middle of the game.  
Thank you.

**Mr. Clark:** I would agree with the Member for Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House-Sundre that that is a good idea. Of course, I'm sure the government would respond that that will be done in accordance with Elections Alberta rules, and I would anticipate that that would absolutely be the case. But, yes, I would love to see that as quickly as possible.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Any other questions on 29(2)(a)?  
If not, we'll go with the hon. Member for Cypress-Medicine Hat.

**Mr. Barnes:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. It's a privilege to rise and speak to Bill 1. The province has indeed seen a tremendous change in its government, and I'm glad that now we are discussing making some much needed changes to our province's election financing laws.

Albertans made it clear when they chose to change the government that they needed trust restored to our political system. Albertans deserve accountability, integrity, and ethics in our political system. I find it appropriate that this legislation follows on the heels of a campaign in which we all heard again and again from constituents and all Albertans about trust. Albertans clearly have significant concerns about the trust that they can place in the system to fairly represent them. I heard many times from many people that their government no longer seemed accountable to them as citizens. They struggled to see how the system could serve them while being improperly influenced by long-standing, entrenched special interests.

This bill aims to ban corporate and union contributions, but in a larger sense we're discussing the issue of restoring trust and accountability in our political system and our institutions. The importance of this as the foundation of our democracy cannot be overstated. I'm proud to stand and say that the Wildrose has long

believed in the elimination of corporate and union donations. We have previously attempted to make these changes, but the government of the day was not receptive. I'm glad that we'll be able to work with the new administration, that shares our belief on these important issues and is committed to adopting our policy proposal. I'm also encouraged to see that the governing party is bringing in these changes despite having benefited in the past from large union and special-interest contributions.

5:00

Eliminating these types of contributions is even-handed and fair, and I am supportive of this limitation. The reason we in the Wildrose stand so firmly for the elimination of corporate and union donations is because we have a fundamental belief that Alberta's political system should not be influenced by special interests but only by Albertans. Furthermore, the integrity of our political system demands that political parties not be seen to be influenced by special interests who can exert this influence with their money. This legislation is long overdue and badly needed, but we must also be sure to use this opportunity to create meaningful, lasting, and effective change.

I am supportive of this bill, but I do think that it could be further strengthened to better meet its objectives of removing financial influence from parties. We are certainly in agreement in regard to the principles that underpin the bill, but I do have some questions and concerns that I hope will be addressed by this House in future debate and in Committee of the Whole. I'm concerned that the government has made the legislation retroactive to the date before the end of the election period. This piece of the bill may jeopardize the entire legislation as a whole by exposing it to legal challenges, legal challenges from candidates and parties who operated under the existing rules of the previous campaign. It would be very unfortunate if this legislation were put into doubt because of this one thing. For the overall health of the bill I think it would be wiser to make the effective date in early July, after this election period has come to a close.

My second concern is that the ability of corporations and unions to make loan payments on behalf of its parties is still available. This still constitutes fairly significant monetary assistance, which I believe is contrary to the spirit of this legislation. Every legislation has unintended consequences. It's important to keep it consistent with the spirit. If it is our goal to remove special-interest financial influence over parties and over the political system, then we ought to do it fully and comprehensively. That would involve banning corporations and unions from making these loan payments for parties in all cases except for the extreme case of default.

In the event that these special interests, like corporations or unions, do make loan payments for parties, I would like to see that we have concrete, absolute assurances that parties cannot profit based on this mechanism. Any attempt by a corporation or union to improperly pay off debts on behalf of a party or a candidate would violate the spirit of the law and the goals that this law sets forth. We must ensure that the Chief Electoral Officer penalizes any party that does not repay debts paid on its behalf. This penalty should strongly discourage any party or candidate from acting inappropriately to subvert the rules by accepting improper contributions in the form of debt payments.

My final concern is with the role of special interests in conducting third-party advertising. My goodness, we've seen elections in Ontario and the United States completely influenced by third-party advertising. Let's not do the same in Alberta. I think we can all agree that we do not want to see special interests with vast financial resources unduly controlling our democratic system. As I said earlier, we must let and we must have individual Albertans have the

ultimate influence over their government and their political institutions.

In the coming debate on Bill 1 I hope that all these concerns can be discussed and addressed. The changes that this bill aims to make are admirable and much needed for the overall health of democracy in Alberta. For this reason I am happy to support the intent of this bill, and I'm happy to support it on second reading, and I look forward to all the constructive discussion ahead.

Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Any questions or comments under 29(2)(a)? If not, I'll recognize the Member for Drayton Valley-Devon.

**Mr. Smith:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I want to sincerely thank the government for placing before the House Bill 1, An Act to Renew Democracy in Alberta. When I campaigned in the recent election, one of the concerns of my constituents revolved around how we could make our democracy better. My message to my constituents was that democracy is never a static system. We can do democracy differently, and we can do it better. So I'm very pleased that the first order of business that this Legislature will craft revolves around attempting to make our electoral process more representative of the will of the people by changing some of the rules around who can make donations to political parties.

In a democracy we place few restrictions on the free expression of ideas during an election. Elections are nothing if not about determining the wishes of the people. That can only happen when the people are allowed a full and free range of expression. Indeed, Bill 1 is all about trying to ensure that the people – not corporations, not unions – are heard in a general election. Money should not be able to determine the outcome of an election but, rather, ideas and candidates and the wishes of the electorate. For this reason there is much to support in Bill 1.

While Bill 1 takes positive steps towards ending corporate and union donations to political parties, I would caution that I believe that for many of my constituents Bill 1 will need to be expanded. It will need to deal with some issues that it does not address. I believe that democracies must always balance rights, and that there needs to be further discussion by the members of this House on how this bill will address the issue of third-party advertising. The Election Finances and Contributions Disclosure Act establishes rules for third parties that raise funds and incur expenses for election advertising related to provincial elections. Individual corporations and groups engaged in such activities must register with Elections Alberta if they place or plan to place election advertisements in any media if expenses or contributions exceed \$1,000.

I would encourage the members of this Legislature to consider the damage that can occur to the democratic process when union dues are used to fund third-party advertising or when corporations use their deep pockets to influence the results of an election through third-party advertising. Discussion needs to take place and this bill amended to ensure that the money that was a problem when given as a straightforward political donation is not, in turn, recycled into as big a problem with third-party advertising. Bill 1 takes positive steps, but we must keep in mind that sometimes our actions have unintended consequences, and rushing forward with legislation sometimes opens the door to results we hadn't planned for.

I look forward to further discussion on this bill and about democratic reform in Alberta in the future. But to return to the main point, ending corporate and union donations in Alberta is a major step in the right direction. Even though I would ask for clarification around third-party advertising, I'm proud to speak in support of this bill. This is a long overdue change in Alberta.

5:10

**The Deputy Speaker:** Any questions or comments under 29(2)(a)? If not, then I'll call on the hon. Member for Lac La Biche-St. Paul-Two Hills.

**Mr. Hanson:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I'll start by saying that Bill 1 is a good document with a couple of flaws. We as Wildrose campaigned on the principles in this bill, but I believe Albertans would be very disappointed if we did not address the issues of the loans being able to be paid off by corporations and unions.

We do support the legislation in principle, but we are unsure why the NDP have left those so-called transitional provisions in place, that allow companies and unions to pay off loans for the rest of this year. We don't see why corporations or unions would be allowed to make loan payments at all, even if they are later reimbursed, since this is still considered monetary assistance. We want reassurance that no party can profit from letting corporations or unions pay off its debts as this would be a violation of the spirit of the law.

Again, I'll reiterate that it would be very disappointing legislation for Albertans to witness.

Thank you very much.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Any questions or comments under 29(2)(a)? Any further speakers who wish to speak on the bill? You wish to speak on the bill, hon. member?

**Mr. Cooper:** Please.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. Member for Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills.

**Mr. Cooper:** Madam Speaker, it's an absolute pleasure to rise today to speak to something we can agree on and not a point of order or a motion that the opposition disagrees with, with the direction of the House, but around some common ground, and that is specifically with respect to banning union and corporate donations.

For a number of years the opposition has been adamant about the need to put democracy back into the hands of the people. The Wildrose is a grassroots organization that believes that Albertans are primarily responsible for making Alberta a great place and that while business and corporations play a vital role in everyone's success, it's Albertans that are the ones that are responsible. So it's important that we take all the steps that we can to ensure that our democracy is continually held in the hands of just that, of Albertans.

I commend the government for taking this important first step of banning corporate and union donations. I spoke a number of times during the campaign and particularly on election night that, certainly, there's going to be a lot to oppose. We view the world through a very different set of glasses, so where it is required for us to do that strong opposing, I can assure you that the Wildrose will be here to defend the interests of all Albertans. However, today is not necessarily that day because we have found some common ground, so we look forward to the steps forward around that.

Now, while there is a significant amount of common ground, a number of my colleagues have quite eloquently laid out some of the real concerns that we have. The role of opposition is not just to oppose but to highlight areas where we can all be better together. So that's what our goal is here at second reading, to really highlight some of those concerns, particularly around this concept of corporations and, particularly in the case of the present government, unions being able to backstop loans. There is one party in this House who has a long track record of utilizing other people's money to backstop and run their campaigns, particularly when it

comes to debt-financing campaigns. It's certainly not the party of the Official Opposition. So it creates a little bit of uncertainty in the opposition when we see what appears to be a clause in a piece of legislation that is specific to a past problem that one political party or another may have had, and that comes in the form of fundraising, and it comes in the form of debt-financing campaigns and requiring loans in order to manage their financial affairs.

We've seen a significant period of time in Alberta where the government had a track record of introducing legislation that was of net benefit to one political party over another. While I cannot reiterate enough how supportive I am of banning corporation and union donations and the heart of what I believe the current government is trying to do, it does bring great pause to see this little wiggle room that's being provided in the form of this, which, traditionally speaking, has certainly been used by the party of the government that is in place today.

So we look forward to some real clarification around that. I would expect that there is a very high likelihood that we can see some amendments from the Official Opposition when we get to Committee of the Whole to try and better this piece of legislation because at the heart of it is ensuring that at the end of the day the best idea wins, not the government's idea, not our idea, but the best idea. While we're, you know, probably two-thirds of the way there, to the best idea, why not go ahead and make it as fair as possible, something that I know the party of the left is certainly hoping to do for everyone on every file, making it as fair as possible? We might as well move in that direction and go all the way when it comes to getting corporations and unions out of election financing. We're just about there, but we have one more giant step for Alberta political parties to go.

I'll move briefly to this issue of being in the middle of a writ period, of an election period. One of my big concerns is the mechanisms which will be put into place that would potentially prevent a candidate from reporting appropriately or not. You know, under the previous rules any candidate could and does report their financing over an election period. Nobody submits their bank statement that says, "This corporate donation came in on the 8th," or "This union donation came in on the 16th." We report an election period.

So I'm curious to know from the hon. Minister of Justice just what the mechanisms are and will be, during committee or perhaps at the close of debate today, should we get there. What will those mechanisms will be? It's critically important that we set out a set of rules and that we all follow them. Changing them, which would potentially encourage a candidate to be, like, "Hey, I received this on the 14th, not the 15th," I think puts candidates in an awkward position. As a number of my colleagues have said, clearly, it creates the potential for a court challenge. The rules were set out, you changed the rules halfway through, and now we can be in a situation where a candidate would want to challenge that in court. Additionally, it could encourage them to be more prone to bending the rules.

Certainly, no one in this Assembly would partake in such an activity, but let's keep in mind that there were, you know, approximately 220 other individuals in this great province who did their portion of public service by putting their name on a ballot and defending the ideals that are important to them. Not only are we debating this bill for us, but we're debating it for them, so I think it's important that we consider that. It's a very small change in the legislation to move it to the 4th or 5th of July. Keep the rules as is. To create this sense that there's going to be this mad rush of corporations trying to spend their last possible dime on a political party I just don't think is exactly what's going to happen. I think we had a set of rules, and we ought to stick to those rules.

5:20

In closing, again let me thank – now there's a day I didn't think would come – the NDP government for this area of common interest and common benefit for all Albertans when it comes to banning corporate and union donations. We want to help, so in the spirit of co-operation I encourage you to reflect strongly upon a number of the issues that the opposition have brought forward today and consider them as we move through the stages of debate so that we can be together for a better Alberta.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Any questions or comments under 29(2)(a)?

**Ms Hoffman:** Yes. To the member who spoke last, I actually have a comment.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Yes. Go ahead.

**Ms Hoffman:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I would like to just say: please don't rule out other opportunities to commend this government. We are absolutely committed to bringing forward the best ideas possible. Of course, the committee structure that we have in place will enable us to do that as well as members on both sides of this House. I'm looking forward to the opportunity to continue to have you commend and to say even those letters, NDP, in the House. It's music to my ears, hon. member.

**Mr. Cooper:** Yeah. We have lots of policies if you want to see many more good ideas. We're more than happy to send them over.

Conversely, I look forward to a very fulsome discussion with the House leaders about ways that we can make committees work better in this place. You know, traditionally speaking, committees very rarely see a bill before them. They've traditionally spent a lot of time on things like high-speed rail and run-of-river power, and very little legislation heads in that direction. The pace at which I believe even this government is going to pass legislation is certainly concerning.

So I hope that, in fact, we can just do that, utilize the committee system to ensure that the best idea can win and remove things from what at times can be a highly partisan environment here in the House by referring a number of important pieces of legislation so that Albertans can have their feedback, so that we can have expert witnesses.

I think you'll see that in the next couple of days a number of pieces of legislation that are significant will be ushered through, rammed through. Maybe that's a little strong for today. Hopefully, we can do just that and make sure that we utilize the committees in a way that is respectful of the process.

**Ms Hoffman:** I'm glad to hear the member opposite talk about wanting to ensure that there's time to bring our best work forward, wanting to make sure there's time for us to make sure that good ideas are what drives government and not working to some temporary timeline or false timeline. I hope that the hon. member and all of the colleagues in that party have the same confidence in our ability to work as individuals in ensuring we bring the best budget forward to Albertans, not just the fastest budget.

**Mr. Cooper:** Madam Speaker, May, June, July, August, September: five months from the election. I think that is a very ample amount of time to provide a budget.

**Ms Hoffman:** I just want to make sure that all members of this House are assured that every dollar that this government allocates will be treated with the same due diligence as any dollar that any individual has in their pocket. When you're talking about, for

example, the status of the Health budget, when you're talking about \$18 billion, I don't think you want me rushing those decisions, and I don't think you want this government working in a way that won't ensure a fair process and consultation with our stakeholders as well. I just want to say that we will bring forward a fantastic budget, and we look forward to seeing your support and to you commending the work that we do in that regard as well. You may have to wait a few weeks longer than you'd like.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Just a comment, hon. members, on the use of 29(2)(a), questions and comments. Please try to restrict it to the bill or the matter at hand as opposed to going off on some other topic.

Any other comments on 29(2)(a)? We still have a few seconds, I guess.

If not, I'll recognize the hon. Member for Calgary-Bow on the bill.

**Ms Drever:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. We are all here as elected members because we are elected by Albertans. This was something I heard on the doorsteps in my riding. This bill will keep us, as elected officials, accountable to Albertans. I've heard from my constituents. I support this bill, and they support this bill. Individuals should be the only stakeholders allowed to donate.

Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Any questions or comments under 29(2)(a)? Go ahead, hon. Member for Airdrie.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. In response to this bill perhaps we should make it retroactive to election day, May 5.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Excuse me, hon. member. Are you speaking on 29(2)(a), questions or comments, for the Member for Calgary-Bow?

**Mrs. Pitt:** Yes. Sorry. My apologies. First time.

My suggestion in response to your speech is that to make it fair for everybody, would you agree that we make this bill retroactive to the date of election?

**Ms Drever:** As is. To June 15.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Any further questions or comments?

Any further speakers to the bill?

If not, then I'll call on the hon. Minister of Justice to close debate.

**Ms Ganley:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I'd like to thank all the members for their supportive comments and for their other comments as well. Just to close debate here, I'd like to begin by saying that this was an election promise that this party campaigned on. We are bringing it forward as Bill 1 to fulfill that promise. We think that this will have incredible benefits for the people of Alberta and that it will make all of us accountable to the people of Alberta, and that is one of our primary goals.

I will speak to many of the comments that were made in order. I will begin by dealing with the issue with respect to contributions to third-party advertisers. We absolutely agree that that is something that needs to be considered. However, before passing legislation which affects the rights of individuals, in particular the Charter of Rights, in this case freedom of speech, careful study and consideration of what those impacts will be is required. We were unable to compete that study fully before now, so we are looking into getting an opinion on that. I mean, as so many courts have said, our Charter rights are our most fundamental rights as individuals, so before we pass any legislation that affects the freedom of speech of any

persons in Alberta, we wanted to be sure that we had clearly gone over the implications and didn't rush into judgment.

I would also hasten to point out that in addition to being a promise in this election, this has been an NDP policy for a considerable length of time and, I believe, since before my friends were a party.

5:30

To speak to the issue of loan payments and loan guarantees, which are two separate pieces, the preamendment legislation, the legislation as it existed before this bill was introduced, already allowed both those payments and guarantees, so we're not actually creating an exception. The reason why we needed amendments to deal specifically with those issues is because it is possible, given that we are currently in the middle of an election period, that there was already a guarantee existing. It's possible that a corporation or a union had presented a guarantee already. Now, if the political entity, so the candidate or whatever it is, fails to make a payment on that loan, that union or corporation would then become legally required to make a payment on that loan.

The concern is that these organizations put forward these guarantees in good faith when it was legal for them to do so, so it would be unfair to then turn around and punish them for doing that which they are legally required to do; i.e., make a payment in terms of the guarantee. That's why those provisions have been brought in. It's to ensure, essentially, that we aren't punishing corporations and organizations for doing what they are legally required to do.

In addition, I'd like to clarify that these sorts of interim payments or guarantees can't become donations. They can't become donations under the legislation now. If a payment is made and it is not repaid by the time the political entity, whether it be a candidate or a party, is required to clear its debt, then those payments automatically become a contribution to the party, and those contributions would be unlawful under the new amendments. So that's just to clarify that piece there.

Since this essentially raises the issue of retroactivity, I will speak to that as well. The present bill has been carefully considered, and we're confident that it meets the needs of Albertans. If someone wishes to challenge it in court, that is, of course, their right in a free and democratic society. One of the crucial purposes behind the presumption against retroactivity is the idea of notice. In the present case on June 15 everyone was put on notice that this legislation was being introduced, so it's not possible at this point for someone, a corporation or a union, to make a donation to a political entity and then turn around and say: well, we didn't know. The reason for that is because we introduced the bill as written on June 15, the same date that the legislation comes into effect. So the result is that everyone was made aware that the rule existed before the rule would be enforced.

Hon. members have also raised the issue of unintended consequences. What we didn't want was an unintended consequence in the sense that we would cause a run on donations, as it were. We think that this best protects the interests of Albertans.

Finally, I'd like to address many of the comments made that this bill doesn't go far enough. To that I would simply say that we agree with you on that. It is our intention to bring forward further amendments to the Election Finances and Contributions Disclosure Act. However, this was a clear campaign promise. It was something that Albertans clearly supported us on. So we are moving right away, while we have the support of other parties, to put this into law. As we go forward, the committee that we have set up will consider future amendments, and the Chief Electoral Officer has made recommendations as well. All of that will be considered in due course.

All right. The issue of making it retroactive to the beginning of the election period was also raised. I think the difficulty there is exactly the piece which I've just raised; that is, notice. So it would seem unfair for us to say, you know, that a corporation or a union who has made a donation in good faith while that was lawful is now going to be punished for having made that donation. I don't think that is what Albertans support, so I would not support that amendment.

In conclusion, I'd like to say that I appreciate the support from both sides of the House, that this bill has received. We are incredibly excited to take these first steps to renewing democracy in Alberta and to ensuring that individual Albertans have the strongest voice in this Legislature, in who it is that is sent to this Legislature. We are excited to work with you to take future steps going forward.

Thank you.

[Motion carried; Bill 1 read a second time]

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

**Mr. Mason:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I think we have made some excellent progress for the first regular day of our sitting, passing Bill 1 at second reading with full participation.

**An Hon. Member:** We knew you'd like our policy, Brian.

**Mr. Mason:** Yes. And I know how you came by that policy, all right, because I had something to do with it.

Nevertheless, it's great progress today, Madam Speaker. I think that all members deserve to be congratulated on an auspicious start to this term in the Legislature and to this Legislative Assembly and for all of the members. So with that in mind, I would move that we adjourn until 1:30 tomorrow afternoon.

[Motion carried; the Assembly adjourned at 5:37 p.m. to Wednesday at 1:30 p.m.]







## Table of Contents

Prayers .....	11
In Memoriam	
Mr. John Albert Gogo, February 15, 1932, to April 4, 2015 .....	11
Mr. Frank Pierpoint Appleby, December 23, 1913, to May 18, 2015 .....	11
Mr. Norman Allen Weiss, December 23, 1935, to June 2, 2015 .....	11
Introduction of Visitors .....	11
Introduction of Guests .....	11
Statements by the Speaker	
Rotation of Questions and Members' Statements .....	12
Election of Deputy Chair of Committees .....	21
15th Anniversary of Elected Member .....	22
Oral Question Period	
Provincial Tax Policy .....	13, 15
Provincial Budget .....	13, 17
Government Accountability .....	14
Flood Damage Mitigation on the Bow and Elbow Rivers .....	15
Elder Abuse .....	16
Health Care System Decision-making .....	16
Police Officer Fatality .....	17
Pipeline Development .....	18
Education Funding .....	18
Donations to Political Parties .....	19
Members' Statements	
Constable Daniel Woodall .....	19
Jaydon Sommerfeld .....	20
Police Officer Safety .....	20
Speech from the Throne .....	20
Workplace Fatalities .....	21
Flood Recovery .....	21
Tabling Returns and Reports .....	21
Orders of the Day .....	22
Government Motions	
Committee Membership Appointments .....	22
Evening Sittings .....	23
Transmittal of Estimates .....	23
Consideration of Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor's Speech .....	26
Government Bills and Orders	
Second Reading	
Bill 1   An Act to Renew Democracy in Alberta .....	30

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