



Province of Alberta

The 29th Legislature  
Second Session

# Alberta Hansard

Monday afternoon, June 6, 2016

Day 39

The Honourable Robert E. Wanner, Speaker

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

Wanner, Hon. Robert E., Medicine Hat (ND), Speaker  
Jabbour, Deborah C., Peace River (ND), Deputy Speaker and Chair of Committees  
Sweet, Heather, Edmonton-Manning (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)  
Bilous, Hon. Deron, Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview (ND),  
Deputy Government House Leader  
Carlier, Hon. Oneil, Whitecourt-St. Anne (ND),  
Deputy Government House Leader  
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  
Cortes-Vargas, Estefania, Strathcona-Sherwood Park (ND),  
Government Whip  
Cyr, Scott J., Bonnyville-Cold Lake (W),  
Official Opposition Deputy Whip  
Dach, Lorne, Edmonton-McClung (ND)  
Dang, Thomas, Edmonton-South West (ND)  
Drever, Deborah, Calgary-Bow (ND)  
Drysdale, Wayne, Grande Prairie-Wapiti (PC),  
Progressive Conservative Opposition Whip  
Eggen, Hon. David, Edmonton-Calder (ND)  
Ellis, Mike, Calgary-West (PC)  
Feehan, Hon. Richard, Edmonton-Rutherford (ND)  
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)  
Gill, Prab, Calgary-Greenway (PC)  
Goehring, Nicole, Edmonton-Castle Downs (ND)  
Gotfried, Richard, Calgary-Fish Creek (PC)  
Gray, Hon. Christina, Edmonton-Mill Woods (ND)  
Hanson, David B., Lac La Biche-St. Paul-Two Hills (W),  
Official Opposition Deputy House Leader  
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)  
Kleinsteuber, Jamie, Calgary-Northern Hills (ND)  
Larivee, Hon. 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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Mason, Hon. Brian, Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood (ND),  
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McCuaig-Boyd, Hon. Margaret,  
Dunvegan-Central Peace-Notley (ND)  
McIver, Ric, Calgary-Hays (PC),  
Leader of the Progressive Conservative Opposition  
McKittrick, Annie, Sherwood Park (ND)  
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McPherson, Karen M., Calgary-Mackay-Nose Hill (ND)  
Miller, Barb, Red Deer-South (ND)  
Miranda, Hon. Ricardo, Calgary-Cross (ND)  
Nielsen, Christian E., Edmonton-Decore (ND)  
Nixon, Jason, Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House-Sundre (W),  
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Premier  
Orr, Ronald, Lacombe-Ponoka (W)  
Panda, Prasad, Calgary-Foothills (W)  
Payne, Hon. Brandy, Calgary-Acadia (ND)  
Phillips, Hon. Shannon, Lethbridge-West (ND)  
Piquette, Colin, Athabasca-Sturgeon-Redwater (ND)  
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, Hon. Marlin, Edmonton-Gold Bar (ND)  
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)  
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),  
Deputy Government Whip  
Woollard, Denise, Edmonton-Mill Creek (ND)  
Yao, Tany, Fort McMurray-Wood Buffalo (W)

**Party standings:**

New Democrat: 54      Wildrose: 22      Progressive Conservative: 9      Alberta Liberal: 1      Alberta Party: 1

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Shannon Dean, Law Clerk and Director of House Services	Philip Massolin, Manager of Research and Committee Services	Chris Caughell, Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms
Trafton Koenig, Parliamentary Counsel	Nancy Robert, Research Officer	Gordon H. Munk, Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms
		Janet Schwegel, Managing Editor of <i>Alberta Hansard</i>

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Sarah Hoffman	Deputy Premier, Minister of Health
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Oneil Carlier	Minister of Agriculture and Forestry
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Danielle Larivee	Minister of Municipal Affairs
Brian Mason	Minister of Infrastructure, Minister of Transportation
Margaret McCuaig-Boyd	Minister of Energy
Stephanie V. McLean	Minister of Service Alberta, Minister of Status of Women
Ricardo Miranda	Minister of Culture and Tourism
Brandy Payne	Associate Minister of Health
Shannon Phillips	Minister of Environment and Parks, Minister Responsible for the Climate Change Office
Irfan Sabir	Minister of Human Services
Marlin Schmidt	Minister of Advanced Education
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**STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA**

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

Chair: Mr. Coolahan  
Deputy Chair: Mrs. Schreiner

Cyr	McKitrick
Dang	Taylor
Ellis	Turner
Horne	

**Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future**

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Carson	Jansen
Connolly	Panda
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**Select Special Ethics and Accountability Committee**

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Clark	Nixon
Connolly	Renaud
Cortes-Vargas	Starke
Cyr	Sucha
Drever	Swann
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**Standing Committee on Families and Communities**

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**Special Standing Committee on Members' Services**

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Deputy Chair: Cortes-Vargas

Cooper	McIver
Dang	Nixon
Fildebrandt	Piquette
Jabbour	Schreiner
Luff	

**Standing Committee on Private Bills**

Chair: Ms McPherson  
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Kazim	

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

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Coolahan	McPherson
Cooper	Nielsen
Ellis	Schneider
Goehring	Starke
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Kazim	

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts**

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Clark	Malkinson
Dang	Nielsen
Drysdale	Rosendahl
Hanson	Woollard
Kazim	

## Legislative Assembly of Alberta

1:30 p.m.

Monday, June 6, 2016

[The Speaker in the chair]

### Prayers

**The Speaker:** Good afternoon. It's a beautiful day.

Let each of us in our own way reflect. Today marks the beginning of Ramadan, the holiest month for Muslims around the world, including thousands of Albertans. Let us reflect on a passage of Ramadan. Fasting has been prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you so that you may learn the piety of patience, compassion, gratitude, charity, and flexibility.

Hon. members, we will now be led in the singing of our national anthem by Mr. Robert Clark.

### Hon. Members:

O Canada, our home and native land!  
True patriot love in all thy sons command.  
Car ton bras sait porter l'épée,  
Il sait porter la croix!  
Ton histoire est une épopée  
Des plus brillants exploits.  
God keep our land glorious and free!  
O Canada, we stand on guard for thee.  
O Canada, we stand on guard for thee.

**The Speaker:** Please be seated.

### Introduction of Visitors

**The Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Human Services.

**Mr. Sabir:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise today and introduce to you and through you to all members of this Legislature Sobia Shahid. Sobia Shahid is a member of the Provincial Assembly of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. She is the chairperson of the Committee on Right to Information and a member of the standing committee on revenue in that Legislature. She has focused her work on improving education and health care in her province, and she also heads the women's youth wing of her organization. She has certainly inspired a new generation of women in politics in Pakistan.

Sobia Shahid is joined by Dr. Muhammad Nauman Zafar and Dr. Shazia Zahir, two physicians related to her. Shazia Zahir is her sister, who just recently migrated from Pakistan to Canada. I welcome them to Canada and this province as well. They are also joined by a family friend, Abdul Hameed Khan, who has been instrumental in getting them here to the Legislature. I ask Mrs. Sobia Shahid, Dr. Zafar, Dr. Zahir, and Abdul Hamid Khan to rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of this Legislature.

**The Speaker:** Welcome.

### Introduction of Guests

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Peace River.

**Ms Jabbour:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Hon. members, as some of you may be aware, four long-serving members of the Legislative Assembly security service, or LASS, will be leaving us at the end of this session. The LASS provides a vital service to each and every one of us, keeping the Chamber precincts, the Legislature Building,

and the committee meetings safe and secure as well as interacting with the hundreds of visitors who attend session each day.

I'd like to introduce each of the retiring members in turn. They are seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, and I'd ask them to rise as I call their names. Mike deVarenes started with the LASS in May 2006. He formerly spent 27 years with the Edmonton Police Service, working in patrol and the intelligence unit. Paul Warechuk began working with the LASS in January 2001. He came into the position after a 33-year career with the RCMP, which included 16 years with the Canadian Security Intelligence Service. Paul is joined today by his wife, Barbara. Russ Jackson began his employment here in February 2000. He previously spent 32 years as a front-line officer with the EPS and a further five years in communications. Finally, the procession today was led by Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms Gordon Munk. Gord joined the LASS in February 2000, having spent a varied 30-year career with the EPS. Gord has served in his current role since October 2009 and has attended this House with dignity and dedication. Watching from the Speaker's gallery is Gord's wife, Cecilia, his daughter Tracy Neufeld, and her husband, Cody.

In terms of combined years of service with the LASS, the total is 58 years and two months, on top of a further 122 years of aggregate police service, a staggering 180 years of total experience. I would ask, Mr. Speaker, that all members please show their appreciation and gratitude to all of these gentlemen for their many years of devoted service. I wish them health and happiness. [Standing ovation]

**The Speaker:** Welcome. I know I speak on behalf of all of the Assembly that that applause was very sincere. Thank you for your public service.

The hon. Minister of Infrastructure and Minister of Transportation.

**Mr. Mason:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour to rise today and introduce to you and through you to the other members of this Assembly several guests from my constituency of Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood. Mr. Abu Bakr Al-Rabeeah is a grade 9 student at Highlands junior high. He's also a Syrian refugee and is the subject of the book *Homes*, which tells his story of that horrific experience as well as the challenges and possibilities that he has discovered here in his new home. Accompanying Abu Bakr today is his mother, Nihad Addullah Saadon Al-Tameemi, as well as his ESL teacher from Highlands, Ms Winnie Canuel, who wrote this book based on Abu's story. Also in attendance is the principal of Highlands school, Mr. Brad Burns. I would ask Abu Bakr, his mother, Ms Canuel, and Mr. Burns to please stand and receive the traditional warm greeting of this Assembly.

**The Speaker:** Welcome.

The hon. Member for Calgary-Klein.

**Mr. Coolahan:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly Kristie Schneider, director of operations for Ghost River Rediscovery Society, a program we'll be hearing more about in my member's statement. I ask Kristie to rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

**The Speaker:** Welcome.

The hon. Member for Edmonton-South West.

**Mr. Dang:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to introduce to you and through you Perrin Michalshyn, who was a page at this

Assembly from 2011 to 2015. He was also the head page from 2014 to 2015. He is currently attending the University of Alberta, pursuing his bachelor of science, in his third year. I would ask him to rise and please receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

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

**Ms Jansen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have the distinct honour of rising to introduce to this House a group of dedicated individuals who have been advocating for improvements to the PDD system in Alberta. I am honoured to know them and proud to introduce them to this House. I ask them to rise as I call their names: Gary McCallum, Katie McCallum, Sydney Goss, Elizabeth Pollock, Brian Pollock, Ward McRorie, Taisa McRorie, the persistent and amazing Leah McRorie, Jessica Wells, Sheila Roth, James Bannatyne, Leah Lyons, Mike Lyons, Bev Hills, Jamie Post, Kelvin VanDasselaar, Marty Normand, and April DiVito. A warm welcome from all of us in the Assembly.

**The Speaker:** Welcome.

#### 1:40 Members' Statements

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Stony Plain.

#### Carbon Levy Public Debate

**Ms Babcock:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As Members of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta we have the right to engage in a vigorous and passionate debate on issues of public policy, but last week nine members of the Official Opposition took that debate to a place that was disappointing, at the very least, and hurtful to 300,000 Albertans. In a blog post they compared the Holodomor to the carbon levy.

I have been honoured to stand witness to the survivors and the victims of this atrocity, and it defies simple logic or basic human decency to compare a crime against humanity to a public policy measure that has already been successfully adopted in many jurisdictions. They have since apologized for the offensive statement and have deleted the post. Regardless, I believe this sad episode is a reminder to all of us of the impact of what we say or write.

The Holodomor was an act of genocide that took the lives of millions of Ukrainian women, men, and children, and 300,000 Albertans are survivors or descendants of those who survived this crime against humanity. When we speak of or write about this atrocity, it should be in one context and only one context. We need to remember the suffering of our fellow human beings, with a unified resolve to prevent it from happening again.

I believe that everyone in this House has come here for the same reason, to serve Albertans to the best of their ability. But when people hear such hurtful and obviously wrong statements by elected officials, they question the motives of us all. That is why I want to be on record today to say that I deplore what happened last week. When members of this House apologize, we accept those apologies at face value, but their sincerity will be judged on their future actions and whether they have learned anything from putting such bizarre, hurtful, and simply wrong comments on the public record.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Lac La Biche-St. Paul-Two Hills.

#### Ukrainian Heritage

**Mr. Hanson:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm extremely proud of my Ukrainian roots. I was a traditional Ukrainian dancer for over 10 years. I was born in and still reside within a vibrant Ukrainian community. My family still follows many of the customs and traditions of our Ukrainian ancestors. As a born and raised Albertan I'm especially lucky to have been able to learn about my heritage from first-generation Ukrainian migrants.

My great-grandmother was born in Kiev. She was part of the first wave of Ukrainian migrants who came to this country in search of a better life. It was only a few years later when genocide was committed against the people of her land. My ancestors narrowly escaped this atrocity.

The men and women who formed this first generation of Ukrainian migrants faced discrimination when they arrived. Anti-Ukrainian sentiment was rampant, and life was not easy as these new settlers established themselves in early Canadian society. They didn't know it then, but they were building a keystone of Canadian life, and they would go on to become one of our most vibrant and proud groups.

My great-grandmother, like so many others, lived through warfare, famine, and discrimination. Her life was defined by the evils of war and hardship. When she saw her generation carry on the traditions of our ancestors, she knew that she had prevailed and that everything she went through was worth while. Today Ukrainian culture is woven into the fabric of our communities.

Recently a column went out with my name on it that inadvertently made light of not just my history but the story of Albertans of Ukrainian heritage across this province. This was wrong, and I speak for all members involved. We apologize unreservedly for this post. We believe that for any political party to try and push an agenda or an attack using the tragedy of the Ukrainian people in the Holodomor is deplorable. Our caucus honours the victims of the Holodomor genocide and stands firmly with the people of the Ukraine as they continue to work against forces who object to their freedom both today and always.

To the Ukrainian people: please accept our heartfelt apology. Thank you.

#### Ukrainian History Remembrance

**Dr. Starke:** Mr. Speaker, in my maiden speech, four years ago this week, I related some of my family history. Most members know that I'm very proud of my German heritage, but there's more to that story. My mother's family was German, and she grew up in a village of German Lutherans. But the village wasn't in Germany; it was in Ukraine.

The atrocities suffered by the people of Ukraine at the hands of Joseph Stalin are well known, or at least I thought they were. The Holodomor was cultural genocide of horrific proportions, death by starvation, imposed by a brutal dictator who had no compunction to cause the deaths of millions of innocent men, women, and children. But the atrocities did not end in 1933.

I never met my grandfather, whose name I bear. On November 11, 1936, trucks loaded with Russian soldiers rolled in to my mother's village, and all men aged 16 and older, including my grandfather, were loaded up and taken away, never to be seen again. The German word is "weggeschleppt," which means dragged away. My mother was 14 at the time. For the rest of her life she was haunted by images of that night, until she passed away three years ago.

The suggestion that the Holodomor or the other atrocities carried out on innocent people living in Ukraine are somehow related to a

bill that we are debating is an outrage. It insults the memory of those who died, it insults the suffering of those who survived, and it insults the efforts of those who have sought to educate our people on this dark and detestable chapter of human history. To suggest that the Holodomor was somehow the fault of the victims is shocking in its inaccuracy and disrespect. To make that suggestion for political gain is heinous.

Surely, Mr. Speaker, political discourse in this province has not sunk so low.

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

### Medical Assistance in Dying

**Ms Luff:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I want to take this opportunity to honour a former constituent of mine, Donna Delorme. Donna was one of the first people who contacted me after I was elected, and her e-mail read:

Congratulations on your win. I'm thrilled for you.

Now, this is a difficult topic I know, but I am one of those disabled people who suffers incredibly 24/7 and want to be first on the list of those allowed doctor assisted death come February 6, 2016.

Donna was a fierce and persistent advocate for medical assistance in dying. She had been diagnosed with MS in her late 20s, and this, along with other complications, led her to being completely bedridden. She spoke out bravely, honestly, and passionately for the right of people to choose their own death. Through interviews, social media, and her blog Donna shared her day-to-day experiences, and I encourage all members of the House to take the time to read it.

Donna was thrilled with the Supreme Court of Canada decision to allow medical assistance in dying in Canada, thrilled that someone had finally listened to the voices of many who struggle and fight through insufferable pain every day. However, the laws did not come soon enough for her. I heard from Donna for the last time on August 25 of last year. She explained that even if change didn't come in time for herself, she would speak out in the hope of helping others. Donna ended her life a month later.

In a blog post that she wrote just five days before her death, Donna wrote, "On February 7, 2016 people like me can have access to our right to physician assistance to die . . . Please help me and those like me end our suffering by being as vocal as you can."

Mr. Speaker, I'm proud of a government committed to a range of options for Albertans so that patients and their families can experience this process with the least amount of disruption or distress.

Thank you, Donna, for your bravery and passionate advocacy. You are missed, but we know you are happy.

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

### Ghost River Rediscovery Society

**Mr. Coolahan:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise today to tell you about the Ghost River Rediscovery Society. The Ghost River Rediscovery Society is a unique leadership training program that has offered traditional and cultural-based leadership learning since 1997. The leadership program is aimed at First Nations youth, although it is open to all applicants who grew up in Calgary and haven't had the opportunity to explore a relationship with nature, helping them to strengthen and learn about relationships between themselves, community, and the natural world.

Leaders teach participants the importance of the natural world around us by conducting hiking and camping excursions that can be

up to five days in length. When not exploring the natural world, the leadership program educates and engages participants with the message that we strengthen our community through connection and celebration of both our commonalities and our diversity. Exploring the vitality of the past and the excitement of the present, they reach towards the future together, building strong and healthy communities.

**1:50**

Ghost River believes that by educating and engaging youth both on the land and in urban settings, it provides opportunities for youth to develop and learn new skills as well as offers guidance as they obtain a strong sense of self and explore connection to peers and cultural leaders.

In addition to the great work that they've done with youth over the years, Ghost River Rediscovery also offers aboriginal awareness training for individuals, businesses, and social services agencies as well as international groups through its affiliation with Rediscovery International.

I had the pleasure of visiting Ghost River's office, located in Calgary-Klein, and meeting Executive Director Adam Ross and Kristie Schneider, the director of operations. I'd like to thank Ghost River Rediscovery Society for its important work in engaging our future leaders.

Thank you.

**The Speaker:** Thank you.

Hon. members, I would recognize the Minister of Health.

### Members' Apologies

**Ms Hoffman:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise with regard to a point of order that was made last week and that you have provided your ruling on. I do respect your ruling; however, I acknowledge that some members of this House were offended by my remarks. I want to clarify that I did not intend to accuse any member in this House of making dishonest statements. Regardless, if that's the way those remarks were interpreted, I do apologize for that.

**Dr. Starke:** Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Member for Calgary-Hays, the leader of our caucus, I also would like to apologize to the House and withdraw the comments that he made on Thursday.

Thank you.

**The Speaker:** Thank you, hon. members.

### Oral Question Period

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

### Carbon Levy

**Mr. Nixon:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last November Albertans were shocked as the Premier announced an expensive new carbon tax that would hit them hard in their pocketbooks at a time they could least afford it. They are frustrated this NDP government will be taking more of their money to hand over billions to new corporate welfare experiments. The Premier did not campaign on this. She knows that if she did, she would not be sitting on the government side of the House today. Will the Premier get a mandate from the people before implementing her expensive NDP carbon tax?

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

**Ms Notley:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The fact of the matter is that in the last election our party stood very clearly on the platform and on the position that we would take real and substantive action on climate change. That is what we're doing, and that was the referendum. I appreciate that it's awkward for the other side to talk about the election because half the time half of them didn't know if they actually thought climate change was real during that time. Nonetheless, we were very clear. We do think it's real, and we think it is our obligation to take action on it.

**Mr. Nixon:** With this carbon tax Alberta will have the highest fuel taxes in the prairies. Diesel will now be more expensive here than in Ontario. Families who have to drive to work or take kids to hockey practice will now be poorer because of it, all at a time when Albertans are struggling to find work. This NDP government has failed to be honest with Albertans about the full impact of this tax increase. Why won't the Premier let Albertans have their say, whether or not they want to pay this expensive NDP carbon tax?

**Ms Notley:** Again, Mr. Speaker, as I've indicated, the people of Alberta have had their say. In addition, as we talk about and we consult, which we did extensively after the election as well, with Albertans from all walks of life, we're going to do it on the basis of the best evidence and the facts. We will not engage in the kind of fearmongering hyperbole that we saw from this opposition just last week, which precipitated the round of apologies that we had to see today. We will not engage in that kind of debate. We will focus on the facts because we know they support our plan.

**Mr. Cooper:** Point of order.

**The Speaker:** Point of order noted.

**Mr. Nixon:** Economists have weighed in. The impact of the NDP's carbon tax is roughly the same as a 3 per cent sales tax across the economy. Alberta has legislation on the books, called the Alberta Taxpayer Protection Act, that handcuffs any Alberta government from bringing in a sales tax without a referendum. Albertans support this legislation. If a government is going to bring in the largest tax increase in Alberta history, they should follow that. Given that the Premier did not campaign on this NDP carbon tax, why won't the Premier at least commit today to the spirit of this law and hold a referendum on the NDP's carbon tax?

**Ms Notley:** Well, you know, Mr. Speaker, I believe I've answered that question now twice. But I will say that I was very pleased this weekend to see an opinion piece that was run in the *Calgary Herald* from the former Republican mayor of New York, who stated that Alberta is leading the nation and indeed the continent with our work on climate change and who identified the fact that this is what is necessary in order to promote economic diversification and economic growth and to prepare our economy for the future low-carbon economy, that all jurisdictions need to be ready for. I'm very proud of that. [interjections]

**The Speaker:** Hon. members, it's a lovely day outside. It's a beautiful day outside, and the sun is shining outside.

The hon. Member for Barrhead-Morinville-Westlock.

**Mr. van Dijken:** Mr. Speaker, the NDP carbon tax will have a negative impact on the transportation costs for Albertans, particularly those who live and work in locations without public transit alternatives. According to Statistics Canada fresh fruit and vegetable costs rose 11 and 12 per cent respectively, year over year, in April. Just going to get groceries, running the children to school,

sports, or music class, or travelling to work will cost all Albertans more. Rural Albertans, folks in small urban centres and across our major cities will end up paying more at the pumps. Why does the NDP insist on taxing working families at a time they can least afford it?

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

**Ms Notley:** Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Well, as the member opposite probably knows if he's read even some of the information that we put out, our climate leadership plan effectively recycles money to two-thirds of Albertans through rebates, so as a result, these costs are not necessarily going to be as dire as the member opposite suggests.

We also lowered the small-business tax so that small business can adjust to our new low-carbon economy, and we will reinvest revenue from the carbon levy into the very strategies that will create jobs, reduce our greenhouse gas emissions, and reposition our economy to be competitive in the 21st century, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. van Dijken:** Mr. Speaker, the NDP carbon tax will also send the costs of municipal services higher, costs that will inevitably be passed down to property taxpayers, working families. Services like busing, firefighting, police, and garbage collection will all need more to cover their day-to-day increases. To the Premier: what analysis was done on the impact of this carbon tax on ordinary Albertans, who will be facing higher costs for day-to-day municipal services?

**Ms Notley:** Well, Mr. Speaker, again, as I said, there was an extensive analysis done through Dr. Andrew Leach's work, that consulted widely with the people of the province, across the province last year. In addition, we've heard, for instance, from the mayor of Edmonton that he supports this plan. In addition, as I just mentioned, we heard on the weekend that the former mayor of New York supports the plan and actually identifies that their climate reduction initiatives created jobs and stimulated more growth in the city of New York than anything that was going on in the rest of the country at the same time and effectively repositioned that city for better economic ...

**The Speaker:** Thank you, hon. Premier.

**Mr. van Dijken:** Mr. Speaker, it is not just municipal services that will cost more. Provincial services like snowplowing and highway maintenance, whose budgets have been cut \$33 million over the last two years, will also cost more. This means a further deterioration of services and worsening road conditions, as witnessed by the minister's own performance measures. Highway maintenance will cost more as a result of the carbon tax. Since the contracts have already been negotiated, will the minister have to open up those contracts in order to ensure proper maintenance will not be affected?

**Mr. Mason:** The answer is no, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Little Bow.

2:00

**Mr. Schneider:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last month the Minister of Infrastructure admitted that his department hadn't done a proper study of how the carbon tax could negatively impact Alberta's construction industry. If the carbon tax isn't accounted for, it means that amounts listed in the capital plan for important projects like the Calgary cancer centre are now insufficient to cover the actual project costs. To the Premier: does the government intend to



provide revised capital plan figures that take the carbon tax into account, or will much-needed projects be delayed as a result of the carbon tax eating up infrastructure dollars?

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

**Mr. Mason:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As we've seen, our Wildrose friends over there like to light their hair on fire about the impact of the carbon tax and grossly overestimate its impact. I would point out to hon. members opposite that there'll be about a 6 and a half per cent effect on the price of gasoline, but gasoline prices have come down in the last couple of years over 30 per cent. Obviously, these costs are lower now than when the economy was booming two years ago, so I'm sure there's going to be no shortage of ability to handle the situation.

**Mr. Schneider:** Mr. Speaker, when the Minister of Labour was asked about where the jobs in the government's jobs plan were to come from, she said, "I would recommend that you talk to the Minister of Infrastructure with that question." Now, the government might be betting on the capital plan to create much-needed jobs, but after a year vague assurances and broken promises just won't cut it for Albertans anymore. To the Premier. We know that Infrastructure didn't bother to study the effect of the carbon tax on Alberta's construction industry. Did anybody bother to assess the impact on job creation?

**Ms Notley:** Well, indeed, Mr. Speaker, as I've said several times, we know that the climate leadership plan will have a positive impact on job creation. Actually, in the construction industry itself it's remarkable. I had the fabulous opportunity and privilege last Friday to engage in an announcement involving an ecosolar tour and to talk with a number of people in the construction industry who are very excited about the opportunity to engage in efficiency investments as well as renewable energy investments as they relate to construction. In fact, what we're going to do is that we're going to create more opportunity . . .

**The Speaker:** Thank you, hon. Premier.

**Mr. Schneider:** Mr. Speaker, in their desperation to draw in revenue after their credit-disintegrating budgets, this government couldn't be bothered to exempt even schools from their job-killing carbon tax. Edmonton public alone has estimated that the carbon tax will result in over \$600,000 lost per year. That's just from one board in our province. Why does this government think that education dollars are better used in a slush fund for pet projects rather than for funding schools or for building new ones?

**Ms Notley:** You know, Mr. Speaker, I'll tell you that when I think about the impact of our climate leadership plan on the province of Alberta and on the future, one of the things that makes me proudest is the degree of support that we have amongst the very kids inside those schools that the member opposite is talking about. They want a government that will move forward, be innovative, take bold action, and protect their environment for their future.

**Mr. Schmidt:** Because they're listening in science class.

**The Speaker:** Did I hear the Advanced Education minister say that someone was listening?

**An Hon. Member:** He's having trouble today.

**The Speaker:** Yeah. I know. I know.

Was it the accordion lessons they took you away from?  
I'm beginning to see a little bit of sunshine in here.  
Calgary-Greenway.

### **PDD Supports Intensity Scale Assessments**

**Mr. Gill:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have all heard how SIS is a contentious evaluation system which many PDD advocates, including our guests in the gallery, have been trying to get rid of for some time now. An additional concern which has been brought to my attention is the prohibitive cost of administering SIS. To the Minister of Human Services: can you outline for the House how much money it costs to administer SIS on an annual basis and how this compares to other models you're exploring?

**The Speaker:** The hon Minister of Human Services.

**Mr. Sabir:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, Member, for the question. I would like to begin by saying that the SIS was brought in by the previous government, and at that time I am not sure if they did any monetary calculations. But as of last Wednesday I said that we are not keeping the SIS.

**The Speaker:** First supplemental.

**Mr. Gill:** Again with the excuses.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister of Human Services has said that he needs to review 11,000 files before he could even suspend SIS. Eleven thousand files is a lot of work, especially given that these files are not simple yes/no issues; these are human beings whose entire livelihoods are affected by these decisions. Again to the hon. minister: what extra resources are being specifically dedicated to this monumental task?

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

**Mr. Sabir:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, Member, for the question. I'm happy to report that \$22 million extra has been added to that in addition to reversing the cuts that were proposed by the previous government. We have enough money allocated to that program to provide persons with developmental disabilities with needed and necessary supports.

**The Speaker:** Second supplemental.

**Mr. Gill:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think \$22 million is not going to go far.

Anyway, one concern that we have continued to hear from our PDD stakeholders is that they can't get timely responses. This is no disrespect to the minister or his hard-working staff. Human Services is a monumental task, and I'm sure you're all doing your absolute best. However, timely responses are critical in this area. Again to the minister: what specific processes or changes are you implementing to ensure a timely . . .

**The Speaker:** Thank you, hon. member. Which minister, hon member?

The Minister of Human Services.

**Mr. Sabir:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, Member, for the question. I think it's very important that people contacting my ministry get a timely response, and that's what our priority is. We have resourced our office well, and we have added money to the PDD budget. We will make sure that everybody gets the needed information and response in a timely fashion.

Thank you.

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

### Oil and Gas Well Land Reclamation

**Mr. Clark:** Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Last week the Court of Queen's Bench ruled that the federal Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act takes precedence over provincial law. Now, this means that money from the sale of bankrupted companies' assets will go first to the companies' creditors instead of being used to pay for the cleanup of abandoned or orphaned wells. This will have far-reaching implication for the province's energy sector and for all Albertans. The current liability rating system is already creating headwinds, and any changes to make it even more stringent could further hurt an industry that's already suffering. To the Premier: are you considering any changes to the LLR system?

**The Speaker:** Thank you, hon. member.  
The hon. Premier.

**Ms Notley:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, we're working collaboratively with the oil and gas industry to work at the issue with respect to the orphan wells problem as well as the other matters that were raised by the member opposite. We will look at, obviously, the evolving legal status as it exists and ensure that we can come up with a plan that works for everyone that takes into account the current status of the law.

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

**Mr. Clark:** Mr. Speaker?

**The Speaker:** My apologies. First supplemental.

**Mr. Clark:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It sounds like I may have caught the Premier by surprise on that one, so I'll try again.

The Orphan Well Association is funded by the oil patch through levies and security deposits based on well abandonment and reclamation liabilities, but their current funding only allows them to remediate barely 5 per cent of orphaned wells every year. Again to the Premier: with the number of abandoned and orphaned wells expected to increase in light of this ruling, will you commit to adding more funds to the Orphan Well Association to find a solution to this economic and environmental problem?

**Ms Notley:** Well, there's no question, Mr. Speaker, that the member opposite raises an important issue and, indeed, a much larger issue, which is that over the last 20, 30 years this liability has been allowed to exist and to grow, and we haven't taken action at the appropriate time to insist that the polluter-pay principle be properly implemented in Alberta. It's quite true that after 20 or 30 years we now have a growing liability. We're looking at ways to address it. As the hon. member opposite knows, we have a number of financial pressures within our budget right now, and we have to address this carefully amongst those priorities. We understand this is the outcome of many, many years of a failure to act.

2:10

**The Speaker:** Thank you, hon. Premier.  
Second supplemental.

**Mr. Clark:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's easy to say that it's industry's responsibility to reclaim the wells, but the fees already charged have, especially to smaller producers, a very negative impact. Instead of penalizing companies that want to rebuild our provincial economy, we should be enabling their success and at the

same time getting highly skilled oilfield service workers off the unemployment line and back to work. Again to the Premier: will you add to the orphan well fund to get Albertans with oilfield experience back to work while solving a significant environmental problem?

**Ms Notley:** Again, Mr. Speaker, as you're aware, we know that this was an ask that was put to the federal government as part of their overall economic diversification and capital investment plan. That was an ask that was put by Saskatchewan. We've indicated that it's worth reviewing. Again, as I say, the liability is huge, and the question becomes whether taxpayers of today should be paying for profits that were not applied to making these fiscally and environmentally responsible decisions in the past. It's a difficult issue to manage. We will certainly look at it. We're talking with our federal partners, and we'll consider the options that are there to balance those taxpayers' needs along with the fact that we now have an environmental . . .

**The Speaker:** Thank you, hon. Premier.  
The hon. Member for St. Albert.

### PDD Supports Intensity Scale Assessments (continued)

**Ms Renaud:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I continue to hear from constituents and members of the community of persons with disabilities on a daily basis, actually, about their concerns around the supports intensity scale. They told me that SIS was implemented with little consultation, and I know first-hand that it is a needs-based assessment. Given our government's commitment to ensuring all Albertans receive the supports they need in a respectful and timely manner, to the Minister of Human Services: what is our government doing to address these concerns?

**The Speaker:** The Minister of Human Services.

**Mr. Sabir:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for this important question. First, I would like to thank the member for her passionate and continued advocacy for persons with disabilities. Since we were first elected, the member has been raising concerns about PDD safety standards and the supports intensity scale. Her work and contribution certainly have helped our government to make a real difference in the lives of persons with developmental disabilities. I'm also pleased to report that we will end the use of supports intensity scales.

**The Speaker:** Thank you, hon. minister.  
First supplemental.

**Ms Renaud:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the minister. I know that members of the disability community will be happy to hear this news. Given the anticipation of seeing these changes, to the minister: when will our government move ahead with these policy changes?

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

**Mr. Sabir:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you again to the member. As of today persons with developmental disabilities are no longer required to go through the SIS. My department will work with the persons with developmental disabilities, their representative organizations, the Member for St. Albert, and all stakeholders to make sure that we are bringing a solution that is Alberta-made and that is respectful to the persons with developmental disabilities.

**The Speaker:** Second supplemental.

**Ms Renaud:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That is certainly good news. Given that our government is committed to working closely with people with disabilities in our community that have continued to express concerns about PDD policies, what else will the minister be doing to support persons with disabilities?

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

**Mr. Sabir:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you again to the member for the question. Since coming to office, we have been listening to the concerns from the PDD community about overly restrictive safety standards and the use of SIS. We have listened carefully to the advocates and their concerns, and we are taking action. When it comes to supporting persons with developmental disabilities, we are doing something that the previous government did not: listening to the PDD community and taking real action to address their concerns.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

### Premier's Office Expenses

**Mr. Cyr:** Another week, another story about how out of touch the Premier's office is with everyday Albertans. The NDP government has taken a page out former Premier Redford's handbook and has spent nearly \$340,000 to run her office in 2015. Times have never been better to be staff in the Premier's office; all the while Albertans have seen unemployment spike. My question is to the Premier. Can we expect to see more Redford-era spending but just underneath your banner?

**The Speaker:** The Deputy Premier.

**Ms Hoffman:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for the question. It's a fair question. Certainly, we were looking at expenses that were incurred by the previous government some 40 years into their many terms. When our government assumed office, we certainly did have some extraordinary expenses, including technology as well as relocation, that we covered, but we do not expect to have that same level of expenses in future years.

**The Speaker:** The first supplemental.

**Mr. Cyr:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that while tens of thousands of everyday Albertans are looking for work and the NDP government is carting in hyperengaged partisans from out of the province and given that the cost of moving all of the NDP partisans came with a price tag of over \$80,000, will the Premier acknowledge that NDP values are so out of touch with everyday Albertans that they simply couldn't find the staff to support her risky ideology in this province?

**Ms Hoffman:** Mr. Speaker, I'm very proud of the staff that have stepped up and want to make sure that we continue to support Alberta as we move forward under our new government – this includes many, many, many Albertans who stepped up and who are filling the political positions – as well as selecting some of the best from other jurisdictions, who had experience with things such as major flood conditions in terms of natural disasters in Manitoba and other jurisdictions. That's certainly valuable to our government, and we want to make sure that we have the best. I will not apologize for making sure that we did hire them.

**The Speaker:** The second supplemental.

**Mr. Cyr:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm sure that the many issues managers hired by the NDP government are attempting to manage the issue of their bloated and out-of-touch Premier's office. Given that 7 out of 8 people hired as issues managers by this NDP government were hired from outside of Alberta at a price tag of almost a million per year, how can the Premier justify hiring so many non-Albertans to institute the NDP world view, that nobody in Alberta wants?

**The Speaker:** The Deputy Premier.

**Ms Hoffman:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's certainly important to us that we have the right people in the right offices. Rather than relying on people in the public service to do issues management work that certainly had a connection to the Premier's office, we thought it was appropriate to house them in that area. It is also the same complement of political staff in the Premier's office currently as it was under the last government, one that is much smaller than it was under Redford's reign. Certainly, we've moved forward in a cautious and thoughtful way in making sure that we staff the offices appropriately. I'm proud of the people who are working in the Premier's office in issues management. We're supporting Fort McMurray and continuing to bring people back home.

**The Speaker:** Thank you, hon. minister.  
The Member for Calgary-North West.

### PDD Supports Intensity Scale Assessments (continued)

**Ms Jansen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't think I can even yell at the Human Services minister today. This is a good day. This is a fantastic day. I am so honoured to be joined by so many guests in the gallery today who represent the diversity within the PDD community. They are a nonpartisan group of people whose lives are personally impacted by decisions made by this government. So thank you to our Human Services minister. Please, if you could take this time to tell us what the plan is moving forward now that we have ended SIS.

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

**Mr. Sabir:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, Member, for not yelling. The problem is that every once in a while, when she would look at her own government's policies, she would feel like yelling. As I said, the supports intensity scale was used only to measure the amount of money people get. There is functional assessment in place, and we will continue to work with our partners in the community to make sure that we get it right.

2:20

**The Speaker:** The first supplemental.

**Ms Jansen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again to the Human Services minister: we have some really wonderful advocates here in the gallery, and I will ask you respectfully if you can take the time to speak to them so that, going forward, the process we do put in place is respectful to everyone.

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

**Mr. Sabir:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, Member. I can assure the House that that has been my approach. I have been working with the advocates. I can point to safety standard 8, where we consulted almost 2,000 Albertans, and I'm pretty sure that all of

these advocates were part of that consultation. Going forward, that's the thing I'm committed to do.

**The Speaker:** Second supplemental.

**Ms Jansen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't really know what to ask next but to say thank you on behalf of all the people we've worked with in PDD.

Thank you.

**Mr. Sabir:** You're welcome, and thank you.

**The Speaker:** More sunshine.

The hon. Member for Chestermere-Rocky View.

### Carbon Levy Revenue Utilization

**Mrs. Aheer:** Thank you. Alberta families are hurting, and they know that the NDP government is just making things worse. Albertans are angry. The NDP carbon tax is taking billions away from working families for an unaccountable green slush fund. The one thing Wildrose understands and the NDP doesn't seem to understand is that the money spent in this Legislature is not our money; it is the wages of working Albertan women and men. With no outcomes, transparency, or accountability for how this money will be spent, how can Albertans possibly trust this government to spend this money wisely?

**The Speaker:** The Minister of Environment and Parks.

**Ms Phillips:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Of course, there was plenty of opportunity to query the budget during budget estimates. I did notice that the Official Opposition took until minute 48 of their allotted 60 minutes to discuss climate change in the budget estimates because they were not interested. Clearly, this was building on not being interested in the climate change file through the entire consultation process, on which they took a complete pass. Utter silence from the Wildrose opposition. They don't have any alternatives because they reject the science of climate change.

**The Speaker:** I just want to caution again the House about the use of certain language that might cause an uproar in this place. Hon. ministers and members, I hope we abide by that.

First supplemental.

**Mrs. Aheer:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I didn't realize that working Albertans were a detriment to a question at all since that's what we're speaking of.

Since the new NDP slush fund will create over \$6 billion in new government spending over the next four years and given that that's more money than will be spent on hospitals and schools during that same period, how can the Premier or anyone in this government justify rolling out billions of new spending without any protections or accountability for how the money is going to be spent?

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

**Ms Phillips:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Of course, we've made significant commitments to Albertans, in particular on the innovation and technology side. As the Energy critic the hon. member will know that such job creators as CNRL, Devon, ConocoPhillips, Suncor, Cenovus, ARC Financial, Total, and Statoil all support the climate leadership plan. It allows us to ensure that our economy, in particular our oil and gas industry, is resilient in a low-carbon future, which is a reality, just like climate change.

**The Speaker:** I see more clouds coming.

The second supplemental.

**Mrs. Aheer:** Thank you. My question was actually about transparency, but I'll move on.

Since the NDP refuses to commit to being fully transparent with Albertans about how the carbon tax will be spent and given that Albertans right across the province will see their costs skyrocket for their gas and heating bills and given that Alberta families need to be able to see how this tax impacts their bottom line if they're going to be able to change their behaviour, will the NDP at the very least adopt some Wildrose suggestions to have every fuel receipt and bill for natural gas list the full amount of the carbon tax?

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

**Ms Phillips:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Of course, we've outlined a number of job creators who support the climate leadership plan, which is going to reinvest money back into our economy to ensure that we're resilient. Actual job creators support this initiative. These are the folks who are focused on a serious appraisal and evaluation of climate policy, unlike the Wildrose Official Opposition . . . [interjections]

**The Speaker:** Stop the clock. Please, if you ask the question, allow that the House can hear the answer.

Hon. minister, start again.

**Ms Phillips:** Well, Mr. Speaker, I've outlined a number of job creators who support the climate leadership plan, and that is because we will be making investments in innovation and technology and diversifying the economy with energy efficiency. Those are actual job creators that support this. These are the folks who are focused on a serious appraisal of climate policy, unlike the Wildrose, who are apparently . . .

**The Speaker:** Thank you, hon. minister. You've had your time.

The hon. Member for Airdrie.

### Children in Care

**Mrs. Pitt:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Wildrose believes in strong families and safe communities. The safety of children in care must be of paramount concern to this government. Stability for the children should also be a guiding principle when it comes to placing children in care. While keeping families together is always the goal, it is not always possible. To the Minister of Human Services: what current practices are in place to ensure that the safety of the children in care and a stable home life are the top priorities?

**The Speaker:** The Minister of Human Services.

**Mr. Sabir:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, Member, for the question. The member raises very important questions and concerns. We are certainly committed to making sure that every child in Alberta has the resources to flourish and succeed and for safety, permanency. These are the fundamental things that we work on with families. When it's not possible, we do have a rigorous process of selecting kinship parents, foster parents to make sure that they have a place to call home.

Thank you.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Mr. Speaker, given that when a child becomes a ward of the process, there can be a fluidity between going from mom and dad to a foster family then back to mom and dad over and over again and given that this sort of back and forth can create instability and

further difficulties for the child involved, can the minister please clarify if there is a current cap in place for reunification attempts, and if not, why not?

**The Speaker:** The Minister of Human Services.

**Mr. Sabir:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, Member, for the question. I certainly agree that stability is very important in a child's life. There is no cap on the attempts, and the reason for that is that every child is unique. Every case is assessed based on the best interests of the kid, so there is a subjective analysis, which we deal with based on the best interests of the kid in every situation.

**Mrs. Pitt:** Given that, as I've already mentioned, safety is paramount in these situations, Mr. Speaker, and given that we've seen many tragic episodes in our province where children were harmed because of failed reunification attempts, what is the minister doing to fix the reunification problem and provide assurances and a framework to show that the safety of the children in care is a top priority?

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

**Mr. Sabir:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, Member, for the question. When a child dies or gets injured in our care, certainly that's the most concerning situation. That's why the focus of our services remains on the safety of the individuals first and foremost. We make sure that whenever we intervene, we secure a safe environment for the children. I will mention that we have increased the budget for child intervention services. We have hired more staff to make sure that we can work with families, kinship providers, and foster parents to make sure that we provide . . .

**The Speaker:** Thank you, hon. minister.  
The hon. Member for Calgary-Lougheed.

### Assisted Dying Regulations

**Mr. Rodney:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. A full year ago the Supreme Court made a ruling on assisted death with a deadline of today, but the federal Liberal government failed to finalize a law for all Canadians, and the provincial NDP government failed to finalize regulations for all Albertans. Alberta's draft regulations involving this literally life-and-death issue were rushed through in this Legislature and are still not approved by this cabinet. To the Premier: when will you be passing the regulations, how will you be protecting vulnerable Albertans, including those with mental illness, and when will you be clearly communicating this to all Albertans?

**The Speaker:** The Deputy Premier.  
2:30

**Ms Hoffman:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker and to the member for the question. I'm very proud of the fact that our government brought draft regulations forward in a public and transparent way and that we had our debate in this Legislature, unlike what was happening in other provinces. I think it's important that we get feedback on the record. There were some comments that were given with regard to the actual regulations themselves, and we're certainly taking those into consideration as we work our way through cabinet. I expect that we will be able to provide clarity very soon, but I do want to make sure that cabinet has an opportunity to reflect on the feedback from this House and the What We Heard report, which gave feedback from 15,000 Albertans.

**Mr. Rodney:** As the minister has indicated, given that this cabinet has not yet made a final decision on the regulations, which will create critical guidelines for Albertans seeking medical assistance with dying, and given that last week the Health minister made it clear that cabinet would take two to three weeks to approve the regulations, to the Minister of Health: what possible reason could cabinet have for allowing this astonishing procedural gap, when exactly will cabinet approve regulations, what exactly will those regulations look like, and how exactly will they be communicated to Albertans?

**Ms Hoffman:** The questions that are asked are exactly the reason why this needs to go to cabinet, so that cabinet can have an opportunity to receive my recommendation. As members of any government, ministers bring forward a recommendation, but it's up to cabinet to decide what exactly gets approved. That's why we have a democratic process, Mr. Speaker.

What I did say was that it could take up to a couple of weeks. We're certainly working to have it done as quickly as possible. Regardless, we have a plan in place so that as of 12:01 tomorrow morning people can make sure that they have their rights respected and a process in place. We are moving very quickly with the regulations, and I will be happy to update the public as soon as those are finalized, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Rodney:** I believe the minister meant 12 midnight this past night.

Given that Alberta must now provide medical assistance with dying, which makes the lack of provincial regulations particularly concerning, and given that it's critical to monitor this sensitive, complex procedure, which may have already begun to occur, to the Associate Minister of Health: what specific data will be collected to track the number of Albertans who seek medically assisted death and the procedures used to take their lives, and will you commit to reporting this data in this House on a quarterly basis on an ongoing basis from now on?

**Ms Hoffman:** The law comes into effect, the Supreme Court decision, at 12:01 tomorrow morning, so after midnight tonight it becomes law for the country of Canada.

We are certainly ready to move forward. We have a number of pieces in place, including consultation that we did extensively with the College of Physicians & Surgeons, who are very supportive of the process that we have mapped out. We've worked with the medical examiners office to make sure that we can move forward in a way that tracks the instances moving forward. They've been very compatible with us in making sure that we can do that. As well, the motion that we did pass by government members in this House and one opposition member spoke to the fact that we are going to review this and make sure that we have a legal document that . . .

**The Speaker:** Thank you, hon. minister.  
The Member for Calgary-Mountain View.

### Off-road Vehicle Safety

**Dr. Swann:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Alberta remains the last jurisdiction in Canada with no law requiring off-highway vehicle riders to use helmets on public land. This government's previous commitment remains unfulfilled in this regard. There are now an average of 16 deaths per year in Alberta due to off-highway vehicle use, with almost 20 per cent being children under the age of 16. Almost 70 per cent of riders killed were not wearing a helmet. A public survey in 2008 showed over 80 per cent of Albertans support helmet legislation for off-highway vehicle use. To the

Transportation minister: when will your ministry bring in legislation demanding . . .

**The Speaker:** Thank you, hon. member.  
The Minister of Transportation.

**Mr. Mason:** Thank you very much to the member for that very important question. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There was a tragic accident this weekend involving two fatalities, including a very young man who apparently was wearing a helmet at the time. Helmets are not the only issue in terms of off-road vehicle safety, but they are an important one. I'm happy to tell the House we will be bringing forward legislation that includes mandatory helmets for off-road vehicles in the fall session of this Assembly.

**Dr. Swann:** Good to hear, Mr. Speaker. I've heard that before.  
Given that 1 in 5 deaths on off-highway vehicles are children under the age of 16, when will your ministry regulate ridership by children on off-highway vehicles that are designed for adults?

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

**Mr. Mason:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Another very important question. I can assure the hon. member that we're concluding our consultations, which have been extensive, over the summer. The issue of underage drivers of ATVs and other off-road vehicles is certainly something that's under very serious consideration.

**The Speaker:** Second supplemental.

**Dr. Swann:** Thanks, Mr. Speaker. My final question is for the environment minister. Given the supreme value of Alberta's eastern slopes for water and tourism and numerous studies indicating that off-highway vehicle watershed destruction already exceeds standards, can the minister tell Albertans why unregulated off-highway vehicle use continues to be the norm on our eastern slopes?

**The Speaker:** The Minister of Environment and Parks.

**Ms Phillips:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a very good question. What we have moved forward with is the following. We are engaged in linear footprint planning in the Porcupine Hills and Livingstone Range areas. We are working with the Crowsnest quad squad and others on the planning for the whole Castle region. We are moving forward with a number of initiatives that will regulate more carefully and encourage more responsible use of off-highway vehicles on Crown land.

### Openness and Transparency in Government

**Mr. W. Anderson:** Mr. Speaker, this NDP government was elected in part on a promise to be more open and transparent. During the government's transition last May there was significant controversy around the shredding of documents, to the point where the Premier herself issued a directive to cease all shredding. What has the Minister of Service Alberta done to ensure that such an event will never happen again?

**The Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Service Alberta.

**Ms McLean:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker and to the member for the question. I've been working very diligently along with the department in order to ensure that our protocols are sufficiently in place across government and that all departments are following equivalent standards. It's a matter of working across government

with all departments to ensure that we're all meeting sufficient levels of standards. There will be more information coming your way on this particular issue in the near future.

Thank you.

**The Speaker:** First supplemental.

**Mr. W. Anderson:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I didn't want to start my hair on fire on that one.

Given that the current fee to file a freedom of information and protection of privacy request is \$25, one of the most expensive fees in Canada and a fee that deters citizens from seeking information, and given that the federal government has moved to ensure all Canadians have the ability to access information by waiving all fees beyond the initial \$5, when can we expect this government to stand up for transparency and lower the \$25 fee?

**The Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Service Alberta.

**Ms McLean:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker and to the member for the question. This is the first I've been hearing of a request for lowering of a fee. It's certainly something that I will inquire about in my ministry, and I'm happy to bring back more information to the member with respect to how fees may be prohibitive to individuals accessing information. Additionally, I look forward to the work of the subcommittee, that all members of this House are participating in, with respect to transparency in government.

Thank you.

**The Speaker:** Second supplemental.

**Mr. W. Anderson:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, given that more often than not this government provides requested FOIP material as image files and given that many FOIP requests end up being hundreds of pages long and photocopies and picture files that are not specifically user friendly and seeing as the federal government has issued a directive to all federal FOIP officers that they must reformat requests in formats that are user friendly, will the minister commit to making sure that the data issued through FOIP requests is provided in a user-friendly format?

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

**Ms McLean:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker and to the member for the question. With respect to all FOIP requests and transparency our government is moving in a more open way than perhaps past governments have. We are looking at additional ways, and I have had some proposals brought to me with respect to how we can make the process easier and more transparent for Albertans and also to make sure that we're in line with other jurisdictions as that is an important aspect of this issue.

Thank you.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Vermilion-Lloydminster.

### Carbon Levy Revenue Utilization (continued)

**Dr. Starke:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last week during question period it was noted that former PC Finance minister Jim Dinning supported a carbon tax provided it was revenue neutral, and much to my surprise this received a thunderous ovation from the government benches. To the Premier: please set the record straight. Does your government support a revenue-neutral carbon tax, and if you do, why was your party the only one that voted against

amendments which would have made the carbon tax revenue neutral?

**The Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Environment and Parks.

**Ms Phillips:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Of course, the climate leadership plan, that we released in November, allows for a number of different ways in which the carbon levy revenues will be used. One is a broad rebate for up to 66 per cent of Albertans; another is to lower the small-business tax rate.

In addition, we will be making investments in green infrastructure and clean technology, which precisely mirrors the recommendations of the Ecofiscal Commission, of which Mr. Dinning is a part, in their Choose Wisely report, that was released earlier this year, Mr. Speaker.

2:40

**The Speaker:** First supplemental.

**Dr. Starke:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that on Thursday last week the Deputy Premier equated a revenue-neutral carbon tax with cutting public services, including firing nurses and firing teachers, and given that Bill 20 does absolutely nothing to fund teachers or nurses, leading one to question whether government ministers fully understand the concept of revenue neutrality, to the Premier: did you create a model for a revenue-neutral carbon tax in Alberta, and if so, why did you reject the model which has been effectively utilized in British Columbia?

**Ms Hoffman:** Just to clarify, Mr. Speaker, what was being proposed by a member of that caucus was that the revenue that we are receiving through the price on carbon be reduced in equivalence for the very wealthiest of Albertans, for profitable corporations, and what I said was that we were not elected to do that. While the Official Opposition was advocating for us to return to the proven methods of the '90s, which did result in significant layoffs, so would cutting taxes to the most profitable Albertans and to the major corporations. That's not what we were elected to do. We're reinvesting this money in diversifying the economy.

**Dr. Starke:** Mr. Speaker, given that Vancouver Mayor Gregor Robertson is taking his battle against Kinder Morgan to Ottawa and that Montreal Mayor Denis Coderre still thinks that Energy East will destroy Montreal and given that Alberta's climate change plan was supposed to garner social licence to gain approval for such projects and given that Mr. Robertson and Mr. Coderre seem intent to stick with their attitude of no pipelines ever under any circumstances, Premier, have you asked the federal government for assurances that they are prepared to utilize their authority and override municipal politicians, that have no say in pipeline decisions?

**The Speaker:** The hon. minister of the environment.

**Ms Phillips:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. What I will say about the relationship with the federal government is that they are pleased that a jurisdiction such as Alberta is exercising climate leadership. It certainly helps with conversations across this country about our market access and about the relative responsibility of our energy resources. In addition, what we have done is worked with them on things like the methane reduction strategy, which has been noticed by the rest of the continent. We're very proud of that.

**The Speaker:** Hon. members, I'm advised that the Minister of Justice and Solicitor General wishes to supplement an answer given

to a question on Thursday by the Member for Bonnyville-Cold Lake.

The hon. minister.

### Alberta Serious Incident Response Team

**Ms Ganley:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. On Thursday of last week the Member for Bonnyville-Cold Lake requested information regarding the Alberta Serious Incident Response Team, or ASIRT. The hon. Minister of Human Services was kind enough to provide a reply and included a reference to the budget increase we have provided to ASIRT to assist them in the essential work that they do. For the record I just wanted to provide clarification. ASIRT's total budget for 2016-17 is \$3.5 million, an increase of \$480,000 over last fiscal. I thank the member again for the important question, and I appreciate the opportunity to provide this supplemental reply.\*

### Members' Statements

(continued)

#### Carbon Levy

**Mr. van Dijken:** Mr. Speaker, sin taxes are the kind of taxes that governments levy on products they think people can do without, the kind of products, such as alcohol and tobacco, which could cause potential harm to the consumer. Governments have decided that for the well-being of individuals and society in general these products must be taxed.

This NDP government has now introduced legislation on a whole new era of carbon sin taxes, but unlike other sin taxes this carbon tax penalizes Albertans for consuming products that are essential to their family's everyday way of life: taxing the fuel necessary for mom and dad to get to work and for driving their children to school, music lessons, or soccer practice and taxing the natural gas families need to keep their homes warm. These are essential products Albertans need. This appears to be nothing more than a new tax grab.

As if that is not enough, through this new legislation the NDP government has arranged to funnel these new carbon sin taxes right into their NDP green slush fund. While other sin taxes go into general revenue, where priority is given to the needs of Albertans, whether that be health care, education, transportation, or similar programs, this carbon sin tax will be siphoned off and sent right into their new fund. At a time when this government is unable to pay all of their day-to-day expenses and is saddling Albertans with a mountain of debt, the NDP believes Albertans should trust them with a \$9 billion green slush fund. This government is willing to gamble these taxes on their pet projects without any clear economic analysis. This is not a credible plan. This so-called plan has very little potential to help create significant prosperity in Alberta. If this is a plan, it is a bad plan for Alberta. This government didn't campaign on it, and Albertans should not have to pay, especially at a time when they are already struggling. This is not what Albertans voted for.

### Presenting Petitions

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Banff-Cochrane.

**Mr. Westhead:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I'm tabling a petition with over 1,300 signatures gathered from the citizens throughout the Banff-Cochrane constituency who are concerned with watershed values and are urging the government to "place an

\*See page 1449, left column, paragraph 10

immediate moratorium on clearcut logging operations in the Ghost Sub-basin.”

### Notices of Motions

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

**Mr. Cooper:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to give notice pursuant to Standing Order 15(2) that at the appropriate time I will rise to discuss the breach of privilege that occurred by the government prematurely advertising their climate leadership plan. I have the appropriate number of coffees – clearly, I need a coffee – the appropriate number of copies of the letter that was provided to your office by the appropriate time this morning.

### Tabling Returns and Reports

**Mr. Mason:** It’s my pleasure to table the requisite number of copies of my responses to each of the following: the Infrastructure Committee of Supply, the Transportation Committee of Supply, Motion for a Return 19, and Written Question 10.

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

**Mr. Cooper:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For the benefit of the House, I am just speculating that I will be referring to a number of documents at the appropriate time when the point of privilege is heard. In anticipation of that I would like to table the appropriate number of documents from the government’s website with respect to information on the carbon levy tax and rebates.

**The Speaker:** Hon. members, I’m pleased to rise and table the requisite number of copies of the Legislative Assembly Office 2015 annual report, *Thriving on the Challenges of Change*.

### Statements by the Speaker

#### Legislature Security Staff Retirements

**The Speaker:** Hon. members, if I could take a few moments of your time to acknowledge the retirement of four of the Legislative Assembly security staff as well as 11 of their pages. I want to reiterate the words by our Deputy Speaker today about the LASS staff for their unwavering service to this Chamber, this Legislature, in fact the entire office. The work those folks do for all of us to make this place safe and secure is very, very much appreciated. Thank you again for your many years of service.

2:50

#### Page Appreciation

**The Speaker:** I would also like to recognize today 11 pages who are retiring this year by reading out a letter that they have asked that I share with all of you. Do we have all of the pages here? Could you please go get them?

Come. Come in. The door is not secure now.

This is the letter that they asked that I share with you.

The end of Session signifies something different for everyone. Although many of you are excited to return to your families and constituents, for the Pages this is a bittersweet time. The end of the Session is accompanied by the realization that for some of us our time on the Chamber floor has come to an end. We would like to express our sincere appreciation for the incredible opportunity we have had to serve the Legislative Assembly of Alberta.

There are countless people who have made this into such an unforgettable experience. We would like to thank the Sergeant-at-Arms for teaching us the meaning of leadership; the Table Officers for their sense of humour and guidance; the staff in 315 and 412 . . .

Those would be room numbers.

. . . for their constant support, words of wisdom and kindness; and the Security Staff for showing us that it’s important to find a job you look forward to, with people you enjoy working with. As well we wish to extend our gratitude to you Mr. Speaker and all Members of the Legislative Assembly, without whom, our role in the Chamber would not exist. It has been an honour to serve every member of this Assembly, each with their own unique talents, coffee preferences . . .

This looks like one that should be framed.

. . . and comments under 29(2)(a).

Some of you folks could leave and write a book about that.

None of us could have anticipated the amount of knowledge we have gained throughout our time here. We now truly understand the good that parliamentarians and the parliamentary process does for society. We now appreciate that members are regular people, forming relationships, entering into negotiations, and resolving conflicts. Letting these members stand as an inspiration for ourselves, we wish to never cease striving for more than we ever thought previously possible.

As we reflect on our experiences at the Legislature, we recognize how fortunate we are to have had the “best seat in the house” to witness history in the making, along with previous generations of Alberta Pages. A 1913 *Edmonton Journal* article describes the Pages as “bright streaks of mischief,” and we are honoured to join the ranks of Pages whose laughter has echoed under the dome.

For many of us, walking into the Chamber on our first day here felt like walking into a history textbook . . .

There’s no need to make fun of my hair.

. . . and we feel extremely privileged to have played even a small role in that story. Through every point of order, amendment, and early morning divisions, our time here has been unforgettable. The generosity and hard work of all the Members in this Assembly has shown us the type of leaders we would like to become and the future we hope to aspire to. For many of us this has truly been more than a job, it has been our second home. It has been a great honour and privilege to serve on the floor of the Assembly and as we close the door to our experience in the Chamber – holding it firmly shut . . .

The wisdom of youth.

. . . we would like to say a sincere thank you for this incredible experience. Farewell, and don’t forget us.

Yours sincerely,

Joely Bragg, Josie Salmon, Erin de Kleer, Lindsay Hauser, Batul Gulamhusein, Cara Au, Azan Esmail, Samir Esmail . . .

Those would be the two guys that look alike.

. . . Richard Mallet, Lily Zheng, Morgan Stang, and Lucille Bergmann.

I would now on your collective behalf call upon the Deputy Speaker to present a small token of our appreciation to the head page on behalf of the Members of this 29th Legislative Assembly. [Standing ovation] Thank you, hon. members.

I have no doubt – and I believe this is the thought that is in everyone’s mind – that some, in fact I expect many, of you may well be back in this room at a different time in your life. Thank you again.

I believe we may have had a point of order which has been withdrawn. Is that correct? Thank you.

The hon. Opposition House Leader.



## Privilege Obstructing a Member in Performance of Duty

**Mr. Cooper:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today pursuant to Standing Order 15 to raise a point of privilege due to the actions of the government having offended the dignity and authority of the Assembly by running radio ads which presuppose that Bill 20 has already passed.

I'd like to start, first, with preliminary matters. Points of privilege must be raised at the earliest opportunity. The first I heard of this advertisement and the first time I heard the advertisement was on Thursday afternoon as I was driving back to the outstanding constituency of Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills. As such, I believe that this is the first opportunity I have had to raise this point of privilege, and therefore it is in order according to Standing Order 15(2).

Secondly, I provided the Speaker's office with a letter where I advised him of my intent to raise this point of privilege under Standing Order 15.

Mr. Speaker, let's get to the ad. The ad – and I'll do it with my best radio voice, I might add – is as follows: what would you say if I told you that Alberta families were about to get more energy efficient? Sounds good? Oh, yeah; keep talking. But what about my family budget? Introducing Alberta's climate leadership plan, a concrete action for change that strengthens Albertans' leadership on energy and the environment, and the transition will be made easier – this is an important part – with energy efficient programs and cash rebates for households that need them. The climate leadership plan: because it's the right thing to do. Learn more at [climate.alberta.ca](http://climate.alberta.ca). A message from the government of Alberta.

Now, I shudder to think what the cost of this message is, but that is not the point of privilege today. The point of privilege today, Mr. Speaker, surrounds the fact that this government has presupposed a decision of this Chamber. As you know, points of privilege are not to be entered into lightly because they are of a significant nature.

3:00

Presupposing a decision of this Assembly has been ruled on in this place on a number of occasions. One of the reasons why previous Speakers have ruled that this type of advertising is wildly inappropriate and presupposes a decision of the Assembly is because the advertisement of the day, including this one, didn't include any type of caveat with respect to what would happen. An example of that would be: subject to parliamentary approval. We wouldn't be here in this place at this time discussing this issue if the government had shown a wink of respect to the parliamentary process and approval that is yet to take place.

Now, the Government House Leader may stand up and argue that it merely says that it is introducing the climate leadership plan and that therefore it doesn't presuppose a decision. Or he might get up and say that Bill 20 isn't the climate leadership plan, that it is the climate leadership act, but without the act, the plan is nothing. The Government House Leader may argue as well with respect to the language around "introducing," but, Mr. Speaker, it's his job to try and defend the government. Sometimes he does it very well, and today I suggest to you that he may try to provide some wiggle room for the government. But let's be clear. Unless Bill 20 passes, then none of what they are advertising can occur. As a result they are communicating to Albertans, utilizing government resources, on a decision that has yet to be made in this Chamber.

Now, the ad goes on and asks us to check a website, so I did, Mr. Speaker, and imagine my surprise that the government has put up details on their carbon pricing plan which basically directly rely on the passage of Bill 20 through the Assembly. Perhaps someone in the minister's office wasn't checking details as appropriately as

they ought, or they weren't paying attention to the procedures here in the Assembly that would authorize this type of publication. Perhaps all of this information was released on Thursday afternoon given that the government – as we all know, the sessional calendar was to end last Thursday, and as far as I understand it, the ads all started running on Thursday, so it is quite possible that they then presupposed that the House would have risen and as a result purchased ads in advance of and in anticipation of that.

The point is, Mr. Speaker, that this action by the government has presupposed all of our role here, and it is a clear breach of privilege.

I might just highlight for you, Mr. Speaker, what it says, or at least what it said this morning, on the website in case there have been changes to such website to provide some further wiggle room for the government. On the website it speaks specifically about how the carbon tax will affect my family. Now, on the website it says "levy," but as you know, there's some debate about whether it's a tax or a levy. In this case it speaks about this mythical levy, and it says on the website that 6 of 10 Alberta households will – not may, but will – receive a rebate that covers the average cost of the carbon levy that they will pay.

Now, you know that there's a significant amount of debate around whether or not it will actually cover it. But the fact of the matter here today, sir, is that that rebate is not possible to be executed without the passage of Bill 20. As a result, not only does the advertisement presuppose the decision of the House, but also the backup documentation on a government website presupposes the decision of the House.

The other thing that the Government House Leader may rise and speak to is the fact that some of these measures may have been covered in Budget '16, but Budget '16, Mr. Speaker, does not implement the rebates for households, and if you check the website, the ad refers to just that. The website also references that starting on January 1, 2017, the carbon levy will be applied to fuels at a rate of \$20 per tonne and that one year later they will be increased to \$30 per tonne. Budget 2016 does not authorize the collection of a levy or a tax, yet it states on the government's website and in that ad that those things will be taking place. Now, I did spend a significant amount of time on the website looking for a small asterisk or something that would communicate that it is subject to the passage of Bill 20, and it certainly did not exist.

The Government House Leader is likely going to argue that Budget 2016 allowed them to do all of this. But, Mr. Speaker, if they've presupposed the decision of the House, what is the point in debating Bill 20? The Official Opposition has a significant number of amendments that may directly affect how the rebate program could be rolled out. I know that many of my colleagues are very strong in the gift of persuasion. It's quite possible that members on the other side will heed the wisdom of the opposition and, as a result, make a change to this. What the government has done is presupposed that all of the debate in this House has no value.

Now, don't get me wrong, Mr. Speaker. We have from time to time had debate on needless legislation in the Assembly, including Bill 1. But I find it offensive to the people of Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills, who expect members of this Assembly to be able to debate pieces of legislation free from the presupposition of the government making these decisions. You can correct me if I'm wrong, but as of this moment Bill 20 still sits in Committee of the Whole, where there are various amendments that are being suggested, which may, in fact, alter various items that the government is advertising.

Briefly, Mr. Speaker, *Erskine May* says about privilege:

Generally speaking, any act or omission which obstructs or impedes either House of Parliament in the performance of its functions, or which obstructs or impedes any Member or officer of such House in the discharge of his duty... directly or

indirectly, to produce such results, may be treated as a contempt even though there is no precedent of the offence.

Just as a reminder, this isn't the first offence of this nature that's been brought forward. In fact, Mr. Speaker, you cautioned the government on November 2, 2015, when, on page 401 of *Hansard*, you said:

While this is not a prima facie question of privilege, I would caution the government not to prejudge the actions of this Assembly or its committees into the future. It's my hope that this would not arise again, and I would stress to members that this Speaker, on behalf of this Assembly, does not take these matters lightly.

Mr. Speaker, I will give the Government House Leader credit that when you ruled on this particular occasion on November 2, there was a little more wiggle room than there is today. The government was much more cautious with how it used its language with respect to the decision that a committee may or may not make. In this case the government has thrown caution to the wind and clearly prejudged the actions of this Assembly.

3:10

In *Beauchesne's*, sixth edition, on page 25, it has this to say about privilege:

It is generally accepted that any threat, or attempt to influence the vote of, or actions of a Member, is breach of privilege.

Clearly, these advertisements are an attempt to influence the vote or actions of a member.

Mr. Speaker, I might just mention that Speaker Zwodzesky ruled on December 2, 2013, when he found a case where the government was advertising when they ought not. I know that the Premier on November 27, 2013, made some suggestions of the House that included this:

... members of this Assembly by including on the billboards the phrase "if passed." I would suggest that that is not the situation in this case because, needless to say, the brochure, which has quite irresponsibly and in an entirely inappropriate and overly political way – but nonetheless that's not in your purview – been sent out to Albertans' households, says simply that public-sector employees will take a wage freeze, and the only way that can happen is through the passing of Bill 46.

In 2013 the Premier argued that an advertisement that had been sent to Albertans' homes presupposed a decision of the Assembly. While this advertisement wasn't sent to people's homes, it was clearly heard on many radio stations all across this province, and that decision presupposed this Assembly's actions.

Mr. Speaker, if you find a prima facie case example of privilege here, I would be prepared to move that this matter be referred to the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections, Standing Orders and Printing for study and to allow the opportunity to report back to the Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, this case is clear. This government has not treated the Assembly with the respect and in the manner it deserves. It's my hope that you, too, will find a case that the privileges of members of this Assembly have been breached by this government.

**The Speaker:** Hon. member, the *Erskine May* page: are you able to identify that?

**Mr. Cooper:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I did not cite the page in my arguments, but I would be more than happy to provide it if you think it would be of assistance to your table officers.

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

**Mr. Mason:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. While we received notice this morning from the hon. Official Opposition

House Leader of his point of privilege that he wanted to raise in connection to radio ads, which have been airing on behalf of the government, we did not receive notice of extending that point of order to documents appearing on the government website. Therefore, I don't believe that appropriate notice has been provided with respect to that, and I am not prepared to speak to that. If you were to rule that we are going to be dealing with the point of privilege outlined in the notice that we received this morning, which is with respect to the radio ads, I am prepared to proceed.

**The Speaker:** Government House Leader, if you would like to proceed with respect to the matter that you have before you, that you understand that you did receive with adequate notice, I would welcome you to proceed.

**Mr. Mason:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Just to clarify, you're ruling that the point of privilege that the House is hearing strictly relates to the radio advertisement. Is that correct?

**The Speaker:** Government House Leader, if you would proceed with the matter that you've addressed with respect to the radio ads, I would then intend to give the Opposition House Leader an opportunity to add the connection, possibly, between the two, and there may be others in the House that wish to speak to that. Could you proceed on the basis of the radio ads that you cited in your first comments?

**Mr. Mason:** I reiterate, Mr. Speaker, my view that proper notice with respect to the government website has not been provided.

I want to begin, Mr. Speaker, by stating what the chair has repeatedly stressed in times past, that accusations that members have breached privilege are very serious accusations that ought not to be made lightly. Erskine May's *Treatise on the Law, Privileges, Proceedings and Usage of Parliament* defines parliamentary privilege as "the sum of the peculiar rights enjoyed by each House collectively... and by Members of each House individually, without which they could not discharge their functions." This is cited in *Beauchesne's* 24. The *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, 2009 edition, edited by O'Brien and Bosc, goes further to lay out the categories of rights and immunities enjoyed individually by members. It lists freedom of speech, freedom from arrest in civil actions, exemption from jury duty, exemption from being subpoenaed to attend court as a witness, and freedom from obstruction, interference, intimidation, and molestation.

Mr. Speaker, I want to assure all members that I as Government House Leader and indeed this government as a whole take this Assembly as a most serious, deliberative body and that we have the utmost respect for the practices and institutions of this Chamber.

With regard to the case at hand, the ads in question refer to this government's climate leadership plan, a plan that has been discussed at length in the public and in this Chamber. Let us review these timelines. On June 25 the government launched a review to be chaired by the Alberta School of Business professor Andrew Leach. On November 22, 2015, the Premier stood with Professor Leach as well as numerous employers such as CNRL, Cenovus, Suncor, and Shell and representatives from First Nations and environmental organizations to announce our government's climate leadership plan. On March 8, 2016, the Speech from the Throne further outlined our plan, including plans for an energy efficiency agency to help diversify our economy, reduce energy costs and greenhouse gas emissions. On April 14, 2016, the budget clearly outlined further details on how our government was preparing to implement the climate leadership plan, including investing the

carbon levy in Alberta through rebates to up to 60 per cent of Alberta families, efficiency programming, and much more.

3:20

Throughout this process the government has made numerous announcements and directly communicated with the public on the plan. The ads mentioned by the opposition reference this broad plan. Radio and online advertising began on May 25, and I was going to read them as follows, but the House leader of the Official Opposition did such a fine job, Mr. Speaker, that I could not hope to match his ventricular skills, whatever they are.

Bill 20, the Climate Leadership Implementation Act, is just one part of the broader plan outlined by this government. Specific measures set out in the legislation include a carbon levy and a carbon rebate, revenue recycling for those funds raised by the levy, and the establishment of Energy Efficiency Alberta.

I would note that there are elements of the plan not explicitly enacted by the bill. Notably, our work with communities impacted by the phasing out of emissions from coal-fired generation has already begun. I will indicate the other aspects of the plan, Mr. Speaker, that are not contained in this bill: the phase-out of coal-fired electricity in favour of 30 per cent renewables, methane reduction of 45 per cent over 2014 levels by 2025, an efficiency strategy, an economy-wide price, an emissions cap at 100 megatonnes, and an allowance for upgrading. In addition, the Leach panel discussed rebates to 60 per cent of Alberta households. Budget 2016 contained the budgetary aspects of Bill 20. All of this is part of the fact that we've been transparent with Albertans since the beginning, and I want to indicate just for the record, although it's quite obvious, that the budget has received final approval from the House.

In terms of precedents, two recent questions of privilege are directly relevant to this discussion. In October 2013 a point was raised regarding Bill 32, the Enhancing Safety on Alberta Roads Act. At the time it was alleged that advertising about this bill took place prior to its passage. A photo was submitted to support the point of privilege. The Speaker noted at the time:

It is difficult to conclude on the basis of a picture of one sign that the government had disregarded the Assembly's role in passing legislation.

The Speaker noted:

Any prior advertising about the nature of a bill must be undertaken very, very cautiously, if it is undertaken at all, so as to not create any impression that the contents of the bill are already law when the Assembly has not even seen the bill yet, much less debated it and passed it.

It is very clear from this ruling that the practices of this House do not preclude any and all advertising relating to a bill yet to be passed, let alone the advertising related to a plan of which a bill is just one part. Further, I would submit that these ads do not create the impression that the contents of the bill are law. They do not refer to the bill's passage, and they do not invite applications for a yet to be approved program. They merely provide overall, general information about the government's ongoing plan. Furthermore, it should be noted that no prima facie case of privilege was found in this case.

In December 2013 the Speaker did find a prima facie question of privilege. At that time the question was about a government brochure, entitled *The Building Alberta Plan*, which was alleged to prejudge the actions of a committee of this Assembly as well as prejudging the passage of certain bills. At that time Speaker Zwozdesky ruled that this was a prima facie case of privilege as

the brochure created the impression that legislation was in effect concerning public service salaries when, in fact, the bills had not been introduced.

In making this ruling, the Speaker made reference to a ruling in Ontario whereby Speaker Stockwell, referring to a previous ruling, stated:

In ruling that there was no case for contempt, Speaker Fraser appears to have accepted the submissions of government ministers that the government had never intended the advertisements in question to be anything more than "informational" and that it had never been "the government's intention to suggest that legislation would not be submitted to Parliament for debate."

As stated above, it is my view that the ads referenced in this question of privilege are purely informational. For these reasons I submit that this is not a question of privilege. To find that this is a matter of privilege would be to find that the government cannot communicate with members of the public regarding virtually any matter that it intends on bringing forward until that matter has been passed in the Assembly. As noted, the ads make reference to the government's plan, of which Bill 20 is just one part, the ads are informational, and they do not leave anyone with the impression that the Assembly has concluded its consideration of Bill 20.

That is my submission, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** The House leader for the third party.

**Dr. Starke:** Mr. Speaker, very briefly on the point of privilege, we have seen this before, this exact sort of situation or very similar situation, where the government uses its considerable resources to begin advertising something that is still before the Legislative Assembly. Now, the Government House Leader outlined a number of things that are within the climate leadership plan that are not within Bill 20 and that can be advertised, I would suggest, because they are part of the government's plan of attack, if you wish to call it that, part of the climate change leadership that he mentioned; for example, methane reduction and some of the other measures. These are not items that are currently up for debate.

I think, really, there's a very specific area here that the Official Opposition House Leader is referring to – and I do think that it is important that that not be included yet in government advertising because it presupposes the decision of the Assembly – and that has specifically to do with the rebates. There could be amendments made to the suggested rebates, that are very much part of Bill 20, and if those rebates are adjusted in some way or a decision is made, for example, to alter them significantly, then the advertisements that have gone out are in fact not accurate.

In this situation I certainly concur with Speaker Zwozdesky's ruling on December 2, where he did find, in a really, very closely parallel situation to what we're dealing with today, that the government, the previous government in this case, had committed a breach of privilege in that the advertising of portions of a proposal that had not yet been dealt with by committee or indeed by the Assembly was already going out as a fait accompli to the general public.

That clearly is not the way we should be conducting business here. Under the current circumstances and with what we're dealing with today, I do think that there's a very strong prima facie case of privilege in this particular situation, and I would ask that you rule accordingly.

Thank you.

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

**Mr. Cooper:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With respect to the question that you asked immediately prior to the Government House Leader rising as to whether or not a case could be made for the use of the website within whether or not notice was provided, I would just add that the advertisement in question clearly made reference to the website. As such, it is not the role of the opposition to ensure that the Government House Leader is prepared to defend the actions of his government. It is our role to provide notice of the concern. Our concern was specifically about the ad and, as such, the content in the ad, which included the website.

I might just add that the advertisement isn't just talking in generalities. It says that the transition will – not maybe but will – be made easier with energy efficiency programs, which, I might add, Mr. Speaker, are not possible unless the carbon levy is collected, and cash rebates, which are not possible unless the bill passes. When you say that the transition will be made easier, you have clearly presupposed the decision of the Assembly.

I know that you'll have an opportunity to review the decision of December 2, when Speaker Zwozdesky speaks specifically about this. In light of the time that we've used, I'll leave that for your reading pleasure.

3:30

**The Speaker:** Hon. members, let me begin by saying that I intend to defer a decision on this matter because of the fact that it is, first of all, a point of privilege. It is significant and requires complete knowledge of all the background referenced in the various arguments put forward. It may well be that after, as a result of that review, I may wish to hear additional arguments that may need to be addressed tomorrow as a result of the second point that the Government House Leader is making. There may be a requirement to hear additional information after I have a better understanding of the case put forward today. I would defer the decision until I've had time to review the background.

### Orders of the Day

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

**Mr. Mason:** Yes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would respectfully request that we get unanimous consent for the following motion: that the Assembly proceed to consideration of Government Bills and Orders rather than private members' business, which would normally be considered under Standing Order 8.

[Unanimous consent granted]

### Government Bills and Orders Second Reading

#### Bill 23 Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, 2016

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

**Mr. Mason:** Thank you. Mr. Speaker, I'll move second reading of Bill 23, Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, 2016.

As I indicated at first reading, this bill has been circulated in all its parts to all parties in the Assembly and should receive passage without debate.

**The Speaker:** Are there any members who would wish to speak to the motion for second reading of Bill 23?

Hearing none, would the hon. minister wish to close debate?

**Mr. Mason:** No. Thank you.

[Motion carried; Bill 23 read a second time]

### Government Bills and Orders Committee of the Whole

[Ms Jabbour in the chair]

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

#### Bill 23

#### Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, 2016

**The Chair:** We have under consideration Bill 23, Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, 2016. Are there any questions, comments, or amendments with respect to this bill? The hon. Member for Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House-Sundre.

**Mr. Nixon:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I rise today for what I'm sure will be the first of many times this evening to begin to discuss Bill 20. [interjection] Oh, we're on 23? Sorry. I changed my mind.

**The Chair:** Do we have any other speakers wishing to speak to Bill 23?

Seeing none, are you ready for the question?

**Hon. Members:** Question.

[The clauses of Bill 23 agreed to]

[Title and preamble agreed to]

**The Chair:** Shall the bill be reported? Are you agreed?

**Hon. Members:** Agreed.

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

**Mr. Mason:** Thank you very much, Madam Chair. I move that the committee rise and report.

[Motion carried]

[The Deputy Speaker in the chair]

**Mr. Rosendahl:** Madam Speaker, the Committee of the Whole has under consideration a certain bill. The committee reports the following bill: Bill 23.

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

**Hon. Members:** Aye.

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

**Mr. Mason:** Madam Speaker, I'd like to again beg unanimous consent of the House that notwithstanding Standing Order 77 the Assembly proceed immediately to third reading of Bill 23, the Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, 2016.

**The Deputy Speaker:** We've had a request for unanimous consent to waive the standing order. Is anyone opposed to this request?

[Unanimous consent granted]

**Government Bills and Orders  
Third Reading**

**Bill 23  
Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, 2016**

**Mr. Mason:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I'll move third reading of Bill 23, the Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, 2016.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Are there any members wishing to speak to this bill?

Hearing none, hon. minister, do you wish to close debate?

**Mr. Mason:** No. Thank you.

[Motion carried; Bill 23 read a third time]

**3:40 Government Bills and Orders  
Committee of the Whole  
(continued)**

[Ms Jabbour in the chair]

**The Chair:** I'll call the committee to order.

**Bill 20  
Climate Leadership Implementation Act**

**The Chair:** We have under consideration Bill 20, the Climate Leadership Implementation Act. Are there any questions, comments, or amendments with respect to this bill? The hon. Member for Calgary-West.

**Mr. Ellis:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I rise today to move an amendment. I have the requisite number of copies, and I'll begin reading once the table allows me to proceed.

**The Chair:** This will be known as amendment A5.  
Go ahead, hon. member.

**Mr. Ellis:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I move that Bill 20, Climate Leadership Implementation Act, be amended in schedule 1 as follows: (a) section 54 is amended by adding the following after subsection (2).

(2.1) If any record or property is provided to the Minister or an officer pursuant to section (1)(c) or (d), the Minister or officer shall give a receipt to the person who provided the record or property for any record or property provided at a location other than at the premises at which the record or property is kept.

And (b) section 58 is amended by adding the following after subsection (3):

(3.1) If any record is removed by the Minister or an officer pursuant to subsection (3), the Minister or officer shall give a receipt for the records to the person who provided the records.

This amendment, Madam Chair, would require an inspector under part 3 to provide receipts for records that they take for the purpose of copying them. Receipts enable both the person being investigated and the inspector to keep accurate track of the records removed for copying. An amendment would be required to the following clauses which concern the minister or an inspector or investigator to remove records: 54(2)(b) and 58(3).

A clause like this exists in several other pieces of existing Alberta legislation; for example, the Employment Standards Code, Oil Sands Conservation Act, tobacco and smoking reduction regulations, Drug Program Act, Scrap Metal Dealers and Recyclers

Identification Act, Funeral Services Act, Occupational Health and Safety Act, and the Pharmacy and Drug Act.

When we told the minister's office about this amendment, we were clear to state that this is not intended to have any political overtones. This amendment will make the act more effective by improving the process of inspections under this act. Hon. members, it is important that we, of course, get legislation correct. Even if we do not all agree with the overall intent of the bill, this amendment will make any circumstance in which the above scenarios come to fruition easier for Albertans and enforcement alike to manoeuvre and feel confident in.

Of course, I encourage all to support this amendment. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**The Chair:** The hon. minister of environment.

**Ms Phillips:** Well, thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you to the hon. member for the amendment. Indeed, it mirrors legislation in other levies and so on. Certainly, there's no problem with it, and we will be supporting this amendment.

**The Chair:** Any other hon. members wishing to speak to the amendment? The hon. Member for Grande Prairie-Smoky.

**Mr. Loewen:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, looking at this amendment – of course, I just received it in my hands now – it seems like it's a fairly common-sense initiative to have an amendment where for any of the records that are removed by the minister, you know, the person that they're removed from gets a receipt so that they know what's been taken. I think, obviously, that would make sense.

You know, we're talking a lot about the different effects of Bill 20, the Climate Leadership Implementation Act. Of course, there are a lot of negative effects to the people of Alberta when it comes to this tax, that's really a burden at a time when it's just, really, not great for Albertans. A lot of jobs have been lost, and a lot of people are hurting. A lot of people have taken cuts in wages and that sort of thing. So we're bringing in this bill – the government is putting forward this bill – at a time when Albertans really are suffering.

I think that as we go through this today, just like we did last week, there are going to be a number of amendments brought forward, and we would like to see the government, of course, look closely at all of them. It seems like there may be some support on this bill itself, so hopefully the government will look closely at some of the other amendments that we'll be bringing forward.

Now, we've talked about this before, where Alberta is perceived by many to need stronger policies on the environment and climate change and that sort of thing. We do need to really point out that Alberta is very strong in its environmental regulations as it is right now. Of course, rather than, you know, calling ourselves down or calling us embarrassing cousins or whatever the Premier and the government like to call us, as Albertans we need to really be trumpeting our stance and our strong environmental record. We can always do better, and we would strive to do that, but we feel that this bill, Bill 20, is brought in at a time when it's really just going to hurt the economy and hurt Albertans.

We have a strong resource industry in Alberta, of course, and we have to protect that, too. We need to make sure that that industry gets the support it needs. We've talked a lot about pipelines and that sort of thing in this House. We've seen, of course, where the fire in Fort McMurray shut down some of our oil production there and how it has an effect on the entire economy in Canada. We need to really have a chance to trumpet our successes in the industry and to

really, I guess, draw attention to the positive record we do have. I think it would be great if the rest of the world could catch up to some of our standards and the things that we're doing here.

Now, the government, of course, has talked about the rebates that they want to give back to households in Alberta. You know, as we went along here, I think even the government realized that those rebates aren't full rebates. The cost of this tax is going to be a cost on everything that Albertans rely on. It's not just the gas to drive, but of course that's a big part of it. Everybody needs fuel to get somewhere or go somewhere to receive the goods that they receive, so a tax on fuel is incredibly burdensome. You know, the government has said: well, the price of gas is down compared to what it was a year or two ago or whatever. You know, compared to its height, it is down from where it has been in the past, but it's rising right now, Madam Chair. As the price of gas goes up, when we add on these extra taxes, it just makes it even more burdensome for people. I don't think it's fair to sit here and say: well, the price of gas is lower now than at the height a year or two ago. I don't think it's fair to look at that and say that if the price is lower than the highest it's ever been, therefore it's fair to add tax onto it and make it even more.

I think we need to realize the total cost of all this and really be able to make Albertans aware. As far as making Albertans aware, we've talked about studies to show the actual cost, economic impact studies. This government has voted those down. We don't know the full cost. We're coming up with the best analysis that we can. We would have liked the government to do a proper economic impact assessment on this to see where we're headed with this so Albertans would really know what they're up against as far as this tax.

**3:50**

In this bill also is the increase in tax on natural gas. Of course, a large majority of people in Alberta heat their homes with natural gas, and raising that price is going to be a burden to everybody. Of course, that cost of heating goes to all the businesses, to homes. It goes to hospitals, schools, everything. This kind of tax hike on heating affects everybody, too, and every part of our economy. This tax will virtually make everything . . .

**The Chair:** Hon. member, are you referring to this amendment?

**Mr. Loewen:** Yes, I am, Madam Chair.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

**Mr. Loewen:** What I'm getting to, Madam Chair, is that we're looking for ways to improve this bill. We've tried a lot of things to improve this bill, but the government hasn't been agreeable to any of these things. This is an amendment that could really help this bill, and we would like to see this amendment pass. If the government is in agreement, of course, it would pass.

I guess we'll leave it at that, and again I'll add my support to this amendment. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**The Chair:** Any other hon. members wishing to speak to amendment A5? Bonnyville-Cold Lake.

**Mr. Cyr:** Thank you, Madam Chair. First off, I'd like to say thank you to the member for bringing this forward. I believe this is actually a strong addition to Bill 20, and this shows that the opposition can work hand in hand with the government to make legislation better.

I myself have had dealings with this sort of process before in working as an accountant in my past. The fact is that the Canada Revenue Agency regularly writes receipts to the taxpayer that

they're taking records from, and the reason is that when a receipt is given, that protects both sides. It protects both the government and also the citizen or the resident that the records are being taken from.

This is an important point, and I will bring up a good example. What happened was that I had a Canada Revenue Agency agent take records out of my office. We used to host audits done in my office. What happened was that we didn't know that the agent had taken those records. She just put them in her carry-on bags there, and what happened was that when those documents had left, because of the way that she had done it, there was no way for us to know that those documents were no longer there. The reason this is important is that if original documents get misplaced, then who is to blame? Is it the government? Is it the resident? The resident no longer has the ability to state that they have the ability to prove or disprove the position that they are in.

Now, in this case what happened was that that agent in the end refused to acknowledge that they had done wrong. We moved through a process saying that taking documents away from an audit site without written permission was wrong, and I went through the process of going through the complaint process. Now, I'm uncertain, and I would love to hear from the hon. member if there is going to be a process in place. If there is a breach in not writing one of these receipts, how exactly is it that this resident is going to be able to hold the government to account?

Now, in this case there was a board that the CRA had put forward, and you would have a form that the CRA agent would fill out and that they would hand to you. If they didn't have that form, then they would have another form for you to complete the complaint saying that there was no form. It seems a little bit red tape-ish, but there was still, at least, a process there. My concern here is that we've got a bit of an open hole here if there is no process to make that complaint. Now, I don't know. Maybe this is something that could be done through regulation or something along those lines, some process that's already in place that I might not be aware of.

The concern for me is that if we do have one of these agents of the government deciding that they will unilaterally either give no receipt or, in the case of some CRA agents, that they would take records, well, it isn't very clear exactly what they took. I would say that that's probably not sufficient. A lot of times what happened was that when they actually did up one of those receipts, we would make them detail exactly what they took so that we could identify it later. The reason is that in the case of the CRA the taxpayer is responsible to be able to provide the records to be able to show their case.

Now, in this case, if these documents are, say, misplaced or shredded – in some cases, because of the fact that the government is such a large entity, with the CRA the problem was that they would accidentally shred things. I know it's horrific, but you've got to remember that we're talking about a big government here, right? If this does, say, hit the wrong desk and into a shredding unit, how exactly is it that we're going to be able to resolve that these documents actually existed? That is a point that I would like to bring up here.

I think that this is great. I think that this is actually a good move in the right direction, but I would like to bring up that there should be a process if there isn't one. I would like to know: who would be responsible should there be accidental shredding or lost documents or, let's say, even a breach in privacy?

That's what I wanted to say. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**The Chair:** The Member for Lacombe-Ponoka on the amendment.

**Mr. Orr:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I'd just like to speak in favour of the amendment. I think it's definitely an improvement to the bill

generally, precisely because it protects Albertans from loss of their property, from loss of evidence in the case of a dispute, from loss of funds in the case of fines or whatever recourse is being administered to them. Quite frankly, it's an abuse of power for the government to take documents without this kind of an amendment in place because it destroys the right of recourse for the individual involved in a dispute.

I definitely speak in favour of this amendment, and I'd like to suggest that all the other amendments to this bill are so intended as well, to make it actually better than it was in spite of the fact that it was referred to the other day as being so perfect that it did not need any review. The reality is that the amendments are intended to make it better, to make it more just, to resolve some of the inequalities that are in it, and to soften some of the costs to Albertans.

I speak in favour of the amendment. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Any other hon. members wishing to speak to the amendment?

Seeing none, I'll call the question.

[Motion on amendment A5 carried]

**The Chair:** Back on the main bill, are there any further questions, comments, or amendments with respect to the bill? The hon. Member for Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House-Sundre.

**Mr. Nixon:** Well, thank you, Madam Chair. I have already gotten to speak, of course, on this bill in second reading, and I think it's well known to my colleagues on the other side that I don't support this bill, mainly because it's a massive attempt to drastically shift our economy, to carve out billions in new spending at a time when our economy is struggling. In addition to that, this government did not campaign on this carbon tax. They did not. They'll try to say that they did, but they did not. Most of the constituents I'm speaking to feel that it is nothing more than a provincial sales tax, just with a different name.

Quite frankly, Madam Chair, if the government is so confident that the people of Alberta support them in this move, they would be quite happy to take this carbon tax and bring it to a referendum and show it to the people. As such, I have an amendment that I would like to move, and I have the appropriate copies, which I will send to you.

4:00

**The Chair:** This will be known as amendment A6.  
Go ahead, hon. member.

**Mr. Nixon:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I move that Bill 20, the Climate Leadership Implementation Act, be amended in schedule 1 as follows: (a) by adding the following after section 78.

Referendum

78.1(1) After the date on which this Act receives Royal Assent, the Lieutenant Governor in Council shall order a referendum under this section, and sections 4 to 10 of the Constitutional Referendum Act are deemed to apply.

(2) The question to be put to electors in a referendum under this section shall be the following:

Do you approve of the Climate Leadership Act and the carbon levies imposed by that Act?

(3) An order under subsection (1) is deemed to be an order under section 5 of the Constitutional Referendum Act.

And (b) by striking out section 82 and substituting the following:  
Coming into force

82 This Act comes into force on the later of the following:

(a) January 1, 2017;

(b) the date on which the results of a referendum under section 78.1 in which the majority of the electors who voted in the referendum voted in the affirmative are announced by the Chief Electoral Officer.

Repeal

83 If a majority of the electors who vote in a referendum under section 78.1 vote in the negative, this Act is repealed on the date on which the results of the referendum are announced by the Chief Electoral Officer.

Madam Chair, this government likes to call Bill 20 a levy when in reality it is a tax. This bill will tax every litre of gasoline and every joule of natural gas. It will tax Alberta's energy consumption, and because energy is input into every product and service that is delivered in our economy, this tax will effectively be a sales tax. Bill 20 – or, as some have called it, the NDP PST – is a backdoor way for this government to sneak their sales tax past Albertans, and this is unacceptable, especially since our province has legislation in place to deal with the decision-making authority of a sales tax.

The Alberta Taxpayer Protection Act clearly states:

A member of the Executive Council may introduce in the Legislative Assembly a Bill that imposes a general provincial sales tax only if, before the introduction of the Bill, the Chief Electoral Officer announces the result of a referendum conducted under this Act on a question that relates to the imposition of the tax.

Madam Chair, by not honouring the spirit of the Alberta Taxpayer Protection Act, the NDP are completely sidestepping the laws of our province. Instead of playing games, this government should do the right thing and honour the laws of Alberta. Albertans deserve to decide if they can trust this financially irresponsible government to take an extra thousand dollars a year out of their pockets.

This amendment makes the question as clear as it can be: do you approve of the Climate Leadership Act and the carbon levies imposed by that act? It's a very simple question, Madam Chair. I believe that this government has refused to put this bill to a referendum because they know that the people of Alberta do not trust this government to manage more of their money.

Let me be clear. I'm not advocating for every bill that goes in front of the Assembly to be put to a referendum, but in this instance the law is already very clear. A PST needs to go to a referendum. As I'm certain the minister responsible for democratic renewal would agree, the government has an opportunity to make this right and empower Albertans. Economists have speculated that this carbon tax will be the equivalent of a 3 per cent PST, so why won't the government honour the spirit of the Alberta Taxpayer Protection Act?

Madam Chair, I asked the hon. Premier these questions earlier today in question period, but I received no answers. I'm hopeful that through the discussion on this amendment, we'll be able to hear from more government members as to why exactly they want to keep this important decision-making power away from Albertans.

Now, Madam Chair, I look forward to hearing other comments from other members of the Assembly on this amendment, but one thing. Going back home, as I'm sure all of you will agree, for the weekend is always a way to clear your mind on what you see in the dome and to talk to constituents that you represent. Every constituent that I saw back in Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House-Sundre thought that this was a PST and was unanimously against this and unanimously against the direction of this government.

So if this government truly feels that the people of Alberta are with them, they should not fear a referendum; in fact, they should endorse a referendum so that they could clearly have a mandate for their tax agenda. But they know, Madam Chair, that the people of Alberta are not with them, and they are trying to avoid answering to the boss, the people of Alberta, the taxpayers that are actually

going to be expected to pay for these ideological agendas of the NDP government.

My constituents and constituents all across Alberta expect better from this government, and it's time that we give them a chance to have a say in a tax that is being attempted to be imposed on them by this NDP government.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

**The Chair:** Any other hon. members wishing to speak to this amendment? The hon. Member for Battle River-Wainwright.

**Mr. Taylor:** Thank you. I appreciate this amendment to Bill 20 because, frankly, it truly needs to have a referendum that speaks to the people, that speaks to them about what the implications are going to be of what's happening here, a referendum on the sales tax mandated. And whether you call it a levy or you call it a tax, it really comes out to the same thing.

The previous government had put in a law that said that if you're going to make any changes, you have to make them through a referendum. This levy looks and sounds and does everything – it quacks like a duck, walks like a duck, so it must be a duck, you know. That's what it's doing. It is imposing a tax. This carbon levy is a tax. The law that was passed in this Legislature was clear that when you introduce a PST, this has to be done through a referendum.

This is going to affect the economy across Alberta. It's going to affect everyday Albertans. Everyday Albertans look at this as being a tax, as being like a PST. It's going to cost literally hundreds of dollars out of the pockets of every Albertan. It's not revenue neutral. If this was a revenue-neutral one – it may not be looking that way, but it's going to be taking money out of the pockets, not in a revenue-neutral way, and it's going into the coffers, into this green slush fund that the government is setting up.

It's important for us to be able to look at this referendum as a way to clearly identify to Albertans what this government is doing, what we as legislators are doing in this House. We need to be able to take a step back and show Albertans exactly what's happening in here. Because this comes into force as of January 2017, we'd have time to be able to do this if the government just got to doing it.

The fact is that it's going to cause higher fees for schools. It's going to cost in higher fees for all Albertans. It's going to be higher fees for our food. The tax is going to be imposed on hospitals. It's going to be imposed on, like I say, schools, the school busing. It's going to be imposed on all sorts of food and services and, of course, the gasoline that's being used by everyday Albertans.

So asking for a referendum on it I don't think is unreasonable. It's the right of Albertans to be able to have a say, that we can have an honest opinion on this.

**4:10**

If there's nothing that the government is afraid of about what they're doing, what they're proposing, if they're not afraid of what they're bringing forth with Bill 20, well, this carbon tax referendum, I think, would speak to it clearly. This is a way for Albertans to be able to say yes. This is a tax. It looks just like a PST, acts just like a PST. They have a right to be able to say that, yes, they want this or that, no, they don't want this. Clearly, if Albertans want this type of a PST thing, then they will vote for it, but they deserve to have the opportunity to be able to say that this is going to be a yes or a no for them.

On that, I am in favour of this motion and of it being amended as has been written down here. With that, I'll just quit and say thank you.

**The Chair:** Any other members wishing to speak to amendment A6? The hon. Member for Grande Prairie-Smoky.

**Mr. Loewen:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes. I'd like to speak in favour of this amendment. I think it only makes sense that since the government didn't campaign on this, they actually ask the people of Alberta how they feel about it. They seem to have a lot of confidence that the people are wanting this and are supporting this. Of course, I don't see it myself. I think there's one way to show Albertans that they actually care about what they think, and that's to ask them.

There's an act in place already, the Alberta Taxpayer Protection Act. It was passed by Premier Klein, and it says: no general sales tax without a referendum. I don't think anybody believes that this is anything but a sales tax. Based on this government's new-found love for Ralph Klein, I think maybe they should pay attention to the bill that he brought in. In fact, maybe we need to get some I Love Ralph buttons for all the NDP members of caucus there because they seem to talk very favourably about the Finance minister during Ralph Klein's era. They quote him all the time now. He may even have been the Finance minister when they passed this Taxpayer Protection Act.

You know, they were quoting from an article about the previous Tory Finance minister, but there are some things that they haven't actually included as quotes of what he said. Dinning said that he has reservations about how the NDP plans to use this revenue from the carbon tax. So as much as they like to quote him as loving the carbon tax and everything, they don't quote everything that he says. They just selectively choose the words that they want to use to support their view. There's a quote from the previous Finance minister, and he goes on to say a few other things, too. Dinning said that he would shrink the rebate program and put the money towards tax reductions in an effort to make the levy truly revenue neutral.

Now, of course, we all remember, Madam Chair, that when the government announced this report, the Climate Leadership report, this was going to be revenue neutral. Of course, the people that stood on the stage with the minister and the Premier obviously had to have believed them, what they were saying, that this was going to be revenue neutral. Obviously, we've found out since then that that wasn't the case. This tax is not revenue neutral. Now, I'm not sure if they had a misunderstanding of the definition or if they were just trying to lead people down the wrong path, but clearly it's not revenue neutral.

Now, he goes on to say that he's also concerned that the government may end up in the role of picking winners and losers as it decides on investments with the tax revenue. Of course, that's a huge concern. The government talks about how they're going to be giving rebates from this tax revenue, but there's an enormous amount of that money that isn't going back in rebates. Where is it going? Now, we just came through a question period here where we saw the environment minister asked three times regarding how this money would be spent, and exactly three times we received absolutely no answer. In fact, it was basically on to rhetoric and no answer to the questions. It didn't even come close to answering the questions, actually. Of course, things like this make people even more concerned about what this government plans to do with that money. It is a lot of money, Madam Chair. It's a lot of money.

Now, they also like to quote an article that talked about revenue recycling. I just want to quote a couple of paragraphs out of that article. It talks about carbon pricing having two clear challenges. "The first is related to the fact that carbon pricing invariably leads to changes in product prices." There's the first sentence for you: carbon pricing invariably leads to changes in product prices. That's



true, Madam Chair. The price of everything will go up because everything involves oil and gas to either be produced or transported.

It goes on to say:

In particular, the price of carbon-intensive energy will increase. Since it is usual that lower-income households spend a higher fraction of their income on energy-related products than do households with higher incomes, carbon pricing has the potential to be regressive and thus unfair.

Madam Chair, we've brought this up multiple times now, and I guess it needs to be brought up again that this carbon tax is going to affect lower income individuals the most. Of course, the government talked about the rebates, but we now know that those rebates are not full rebates. They're partial rebates at best because the government didn't take into consideration all the factors of all the prices that would increase. So this is going to obviously affect lower income households the most, and that's not fair.

It goes on to say:

While carbon pricing is not necessarily regressive, this possibility is more likely in provinces with electricity-generation systems based on the burning of coal and other fossil fuels.

It just so happens that Alberta relies a lot on electricity generation based on the burning of coal and other fossil fuels. Therefore, Alberta is going to be even more damaged than other provinces would be by bringing in this carbon tax.

Now, it goes on to say:

The second challenge follows from the fact that different jurisdictions are not equally far down the road of carbon pricing, and differences between carbon prices across jurisdictions can create problems.

Madam Chair, what they're saying there is that there's a challenge because if Alberta raises its carbon tax higher than everywhere else, that puts us at a competitive disadvantage to other provinces and other jurisdictions. We compete with the U.S. for a lot of industry and that sort of thing.

It says:

Specifically, a more aggressive carbon pricing policy in any one Canadian province can lead to competitiveness pressures for businesses in that province, especially ones that are both emissions intensive and actively competing with firms from jurisdictions with a lower carbon price.

Madam Chair, that explains even more clearly the problems with raising our carbon tax and not having other jurisdictions follow suit. We need to use what we do as leverage to encourage others to do the same.

The Premier got up today in question period and commented on how the former mayor of New York loves our carbon tax. Now, I'm not sure how much carbon tax the former mayor of New York is going to be paying here in Alberta, but I'm going to guess that it's not very much. I don't know if he's got any friends and family in Alberta that are going to be affected by this carbon tax, but I'm going to guess very few, if any. It is interesting how far this government will go to find a supporter, and I would suggest that if it's not going to cost the former mayor of New York anything, then I'm not sure if Albertans are really concerned about what his opinion is on this.

4:20

Now, I would guess that the eastern U.S. has a lot of natural gas, and I would guess that if ours is priced higher than theirs, that'll make theirs easier to sell, so he may really, really like this carbon tax. He might really like it because it might be really good for the economy there and for the people that he knows and does business with. One thing I know for sure is that I don't believe it's going to affect his pocketbook at all, but I know it's going to affect everybody in Alberta in their pocketbooks.

We've seen the government run expensive ads selling this carbon tax to Albertans. Now, if Albertans support this so much, I'm not sure why this government is spending all this money supporting this and trying to sell it to Albertans. Albertans should just be accepting it. I'm not sure why they would need to be inundated with ads on the radio regarding this.

Madam Chair, when we look at this referendum, I think it's a really good idea. This amendment will allow Albertans to have their say, and I don't see why we can't give the opportunity to Albertans to have their say with such a huge, huge bill.

When I look through Bill 20 – of course, we've gone through it before, and we can go through it again – it's all about tax collection. It's all about taking tax from Albertans and how they're going to do it and what they're going to tax, how they're going to collect it, how they're going to enforce it. But there's one table in here called Carbon Levy Rates, and this gives an idea of what this is going to cost. Aviation gas: 4.98 cents a litre. That's in 2017. Come 2018, it will be 7.47 cents per litre. Aviation jet fuel: 5.17 cents per litre and, come 2018, 7.75 cents a litre. Bunker fuel: 6.36 cents a litre, going up to 9.55 cents a litre. These are all increases on top of the already existing prices of our fuel.

Butane: 3.56 cents per litre, and as of 2018 it increases to 5.34 cents a litre. Coal coke: \$63.59 per tonne in 2017, increasing in 2018 to \$95.39 per tonne. Coke oven gas: 1.4 cents per cubic metre and, in 2018, 2.1 cents per cubic metre cube.

Diesel fuel. That's, of course, what we use the most of in Alberta for transporting our goods, for transporting everything, you know, our food, our groceries. Every product that we use in Alberta has to be trucked in from somewhere. It has to be brought in from somewhere else. It's going to go up. As of 2017 it's 5.35 cents per litre. So every time you fill up with diesel as of January 2017, there will be an extra 5.35 cents of tax, and that's on top of the already existing tax on diesel fuel. Come 2018, it'll be going up 8.03 cents per litre. Again, that's an increase on top of what you're already paying for gas or diesel fuel in Alberta and on top of the already existing taxes on it.

Ethane: 2.04 cents per litre as of 2017, 3.06 cents per litre as of 2018. Gas liquids: 3.33 cents per litre and, as of 2018, 4.99 cents per litre. Gasoline. Of course, that's what the majority of Albertans will burn when they're travelling around Alberta: going on holidays, taking their kids to hockey, taking their kids to school, travelling to and from work. As of January 1, 2017: 4.49 cents per litre. Again, that's on top of what we're already paying for gas. I think right now in the city it's almost \$1.10 per litre. Well, if we are sitting at \$1.10 per litre on January 1, it'll be over \$1.14. Come 2018, we're going to go up 6.73 cents per litre. Heating distillate oil: 5.51 cents per litre and, as of 2018, 8.27 cents per litre. Heavy fuel oil as of 2017: 6.35 cents per litre and, in 2018, 9.53 cents per litre. High-heat-value coal: \$44.37 per tonne and, as of 2018, \$66.56 per tonne. Kerosene: 5.14 cents per litre and, as of 2018, 7.71 cents per litre.

Locomotive diesel: 5.94 cents per litre, 8.9 cents per litre as of 2018. Now, obviously, locomotive diesel is how farmers transport their grain to other jurisdictions where we sell. That's the most common way for grain to be transported. We have to compete in the world market selling our grain. Obviously, we'll become less competitive in the world market as it costs more money to transport our products to the markets that need them and want to buy them. So locomotive diesel is huge. Again, that's something that can affect everything. You know, we see on the trains the different products that are being hauled. We have automobiles quite often being hauled by trains. Any increase in fuel will obviously increase the cost of that product.

Low-heat-value coal: \$35.39 per tonne and, as of January 1, 2018, \$53.09 per tonne. Methanol: \$2.18 per litre and \$3.26 per litre as of January 1, 2018. Naphtha: \$4.49 per litre and, as of January 1, 2018, \$6.73 per litre.

Natural gas. Now, this is the big one, really, or one of the really big ones. Of course, that's what the majority of Albertans use to heat their homes. It's used for heating businesses. It's used for heating apartments. It's used for heating hospitals, schools. An enormous amount of the heating that goes on in the buildings in Alberta goes on with natural gas. Of course, natural gas is used heavily in industry, any products that need to be dehydrated. Farm products that need to be dehydrated use an incredible amount of natural gas. Processing sugar beets, potatoes, all those things: an incredible amount of natural gas goes into dehydrating those products. It's \$1.011 per gigajoule as of January 1, 2017, and as of January 1, 2018, is \$1.517 per gigajoule. So there's a huge increase. Obviously, that's something alone that's going to affect every person in Alberta because everything will become more expensive because of it.

Raw gas: \$1.15 per gigajoule in 2017 and, in 2018, \$1.72 per gigajoule. Pentanes plus condensate: an additional 3.82 cents per litre as of 2017 and 5.73 cents per litre as of 2018. Propane: 3.08 cents per litre in 2017 and, in 2018, 4.62 cents per litre. Refinery gas: 3.77 cents per cubic metre and, as of 2018, 5.65 cents per cubic metre. Now, Madam Chair, these are increases in the prices of all of these different products brought about by the carbon tax.

Refinery petroleum coke: \$63.86 per tonne as of 2017 and, as of 2018, an increase to \$95.79 per tonne. Finally, we get to upgrader petroleum coke: \$58.50 per tonne, increasing in 2018 to \$87.75 per tonne. These are all the increases that the government has in its Bill 20.

4:30

Madam Chair, there's really nothing in our economy that isn't going to be affected by this. Nothing. It includes everything. We have a bill here, Bill 20, the Climate Leadership Implementation Act, and it's a tax act. It talks about nothing but taxes, how much and how to collect it.

There isn't anybody in Alberta that doesn't believe the environment is important. There isn't anybody in Alberta that doesn't believe we need to be leaders when it comes to dealing with climate change, but we have to do a couple of things. We need to consider the economy we're in right now, and we also need to consider those around us, that need to follow us. We can be leaders, but we have to make sure that people are behind us because if we don't, then we're left alone.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Any other speakers to amendment A6?

Seeing none, the hon. Member for Lacombe-Ponoka.

**Mr. Orr:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I appreciate the opportunity to rise and speak in favour of this referendum amendment. I think it's extremely important. The government claims over and over again that they have a mandate from the people although this was not part of what the people were asked to vote for, this massive tax grab. They didn't even hear about this until after the election.

The reality is that in politics oftentimes the vote is a vote against what they don't like, not necessarily a vote for. To say that they have a complete mandate to proceed with this is a bit of a stretch, but if they're that confident that they do, then a referendum would actually verify that and give them even more confidence to be able to move forward. It would be a strong assurance to them that they do in fact have the mandate of the people. I suspect that the reason

they won't adopt this amendment is because recent polls seem to indicate the contrary, and they're probably afraid that they wouldn't in fact have the mandate of the people if they actually put it to the people and asked them.

If they really want the mandate of the people, then it would be very appropriate that they seek a referendum from the people and let them have their say on it. This is a massive, massive tax grab. It is not a direct reduction of carbon tax. It is, quite frankly, a massive tax grab. I would like to remind the House of the report to the minister on this, the actual supposed guiding document that led to the direction of this entire bill. In that document the authors of the document actually point out that they have

taken great care to ensure this is a progressive policy that offsets impacts on [most] Alberta households and small businesses, while [also] protecting our core industries and supporting the transition needs of affected workers and communities.

Here's an issue of taking great care to protect the very, very people that we're saying should have, actually, the opportunity to express their opinion on this: the households and the small businesses, the core industries, the workers and the communities that are directly affected by this. The Climate Leadership report actually brings this into the fore and states that there needs to be great care taken with regard to this. I suspect that this government is rushing ahead, not willing to allow the very people that are identified in this report to express any concerns, to have their vote and their voice and their say in this thing. I find that quite troubling, Madam Chair, that that, in fact, would be the case.

Then if you go to another page, under the carbon competitiveness regulation part, page 5, part (b) talks about the "rebate to mitigate the impacts of carbon pricing on low- and middle-income Albertans." Maybe we should just ask low- and middle-income Albertans what they think about this, if they feel that it's an adequate rebate, if they feel that the cost that it's going to charge them – why not just give them an opportunity to express their approval or give their vote on it? I think that would be extremely important.

On the same page section (c) talks about the need to "improve the mechanism by which trade-exposed industries are protected." Why would we not ask industry, by means of a referendum, whether or not they think that in this bill they are protected "to ensure their competitiveness while encouraging and rewarding top performance"? What possibly could go wrong with a perfect bill by giving the people their vote and their opportunity to express their opinion on it?

Then I also would like to draw attention to a further page if I can get my fingers to it. Here we go. I'm looking at page 9, and I see there, just close to the middle part of it, that "successful implementation of these initiatives (based on a \$125M/year investment) could yield emission reductions of up to 1.5MT/year by 2020." That's an interesting couple of numbers. If you just do the quick little division there, it boils down to \$83 million a megatonne, or \$83,333 a tonne. We're asking Albertans to pay for each tonne of emissions \$83,000. That's a very, very high price for carbon, especially when the assessments will be set at \$20 and \$30 a tonne. I think we should give Albertans the opportunity to have a vote on whether or not they feel that's a fair price to buy carbon at so that it goes out of the system. That's a pretty expensive price per tonne, \$83,000 per tonne. Why should Albertans not have their opportunity to voice their opinion on that?

Then further on in the Climate Leadership report, page 11, there's quite a bit there on that page. The authors of the report actually acknowledge that these more stringent policies "would come at significant cost to the province due to lost competitiveness, with negligible impact on global emissions." Then they go on and talk

about the fact that if they put in more stringent requirements, it would not be tenable at all “until our peer and competitor jurisdictions adopt policies.” Then they talk about “not sacrificing wealth and prosperity [of Alberta] to emissions leakage.” Then they say that this “is the most stringent approach we felt we could recommend.”

I wonder how Albertans feel. I wonder if we should give the opportunity for Albertans to look at the plan, look at the legislation, and see if they agree with this: we felt this is the best approach to take. It’s a pretty subjective approach, and I think it’s something that Albertans ought to actually have the opportunity to speak on.

Then they go on to talk about how “greenhouse gas policies are often painted as win-win” – I’m reading right out of the carbon leadership report to the minister – “yet, at the granular level, they may not be.” You know, I think Albertans should have the opportunity to at least express their opinion. In fact, they may be a win-win, but maybe Albertans don’t have that same opinion or don’t have the same feeling about that since this is based on a “we felt” approach. The opportunity for them to express their vote in a referendum would only be fair and democratic.

During the campaign the government party opposite spoke strongly of democratic renewal, spoke of democracy in glowing terms as if they were going to bring back democratic renewal and democratic process and democratic openness, all these things, but, you know, the actions of this government betray the people. I don’t see that democratic renewal, and as well I don’t think very many people out there do.

4:40

People should have a say on one of the biggest policy and economic shifts in the history of Alberta. This is the kind of tectonic bill that actually does call for a referendum. Referendums aren’t really that rare. They are, quite frankly, part of the democratic process, and many jurisdictions use them quite regularly. I don’t see why, on such a major bill and such a massive economic bill, the opportunity for people to express their opinion would not be granted to them.

I strongly vote in favour of this referendum amendment and encourage everyone in the House to do the same. Thank you.

**The Chair:** The hon. Member for Innisfail-Sylvan Lake.

**Mr. MacIntyre:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I support this referendum amendment wholeheartedly. This government constantly chants the myth that on the 5th of May 2015 a majority of Albertans voted in support of the NDP’s platform of change and in support of the NDP world view and that they somehow have a mandate for this tax by default, I suppose. Well, let’s have a fact check. Only 40 per cent of Alberta voted NDP in that election, which means the vast majority, some 60 per cent, did not vote in favour of the NDP world view of things. They voted for someone else.

The inconvenient truth, Madam Chair, is that the NDP do not have any honest mandate for anything, not really, not with 40 per cent of the vote – not with 40 per cent of the vote – but especially a new and invasive and aggressive, society-transforming tax such as this one. They have no mandate whatsoever for such a tax as this. At no time did charities or school boards or farmers or restaurateurs or anyone else in Alberta go: “Yes, yes, tax me some more. Tax me as much as you want. Yeah, bring it on.” No one voted for that. This government does not have such a mandate.

You know, Madam Chair, one of the other principles of sustainable energy management plans – and I know they are going to get sick and tired of hearing me on this, but that’s just too bad –

is a concept known as universal buy-in. Now, I’ve spoken at length to this House about sustainable and workable and successful energy management plans. One of them, of course, was to begin by using less, which this government did not do. On another one an hon. member – you know, I wish I knew where she was from – introduced an amendment on measurement and verification, I called it, but she called it something else. But that’s all right. The government side voted it down because they do not want accountability in this thing. Nevertheless, that is a principle of successful energy management, a principle which, if not followed, will lead to ultimate collapse and failure of that energy management plan.

Another principle of sustainable and successful energy management planning is a concept known as the universal buy-in. Now, when it comes to buy-in, there are two ways of accomplishing buy-in in any organization, whether it be your house, with your own little family, or whether it be an entire region like the province of Alberta or maybe a multinational corporation. You can either have voluntary universal buy-in, or you can have forced universal buy-in, buy-in by decree, buy-in that does not take into account the people. It simply issues a decree: this is the way it’s going to be, and you’d better buy into it.

However, when we’re talking about sustainable, successful energy management master planning, of all the concepts and of all the principles – I’ll call them the laws of a successful energy management plan – universal buy-in is the most difficult one to achieve because you’re dealing with people. You’re dealing with people, who have opinions, who have feelings about things. Sometimes people are afraid of change, so voluntary buy-in becomes a difficult thing to achieve but certainly not impossible. There are literally thousands of successful energy management plans out there that have been executed well, that are saving companies, multinational companies and small companies, literally billions of dollars in energy costs because they got universal buy-in and did it in a voluntary way. The voluntary method of achieving universal buy-in is slow. It does take time because you are having to take the time to listen to other people’s concerns and, rather than invalidate those concerns, to listen honestly, empathetically to what their concerns are.

This government has not done that. They have forced a carbon tax on the people of Alberta with no mandate to do so, no mandate to do so at all. They have done this under the guise of saying: we need to bear this pain in order to eliminate emissions or reduce emissions in this province. But they never took the time to actually educate Albertans and really ask all Albertans to consider a tax as the mechanism by which we will reduce emissions in this province. That was never asked of Albertans. As I said earlier, the restaurateurs, the school boards, the charities at no time stood up and said: “Rah-rah. Tax me some more.” None of them, not one, and they still don’t. They still don’t. There is no universal buy-in, which means that this energy management plan is doomed to fail.

Now, the reason why universal buy-in is so important goes this way. When you’re talking about an energy management plan within an organization and you achieve universal buy-in, every person in that organization, right from the bottom to the very top, is looking for ways to save energy. Everybody is involved in the process, and all those little things that everyone does achieves the goal. It works toward achieving the goal. Everyone is on the same team; everyone is pulling in the same direction. That’s the value and the power of universal buy-in. That’s why in the field of energy management so much time is taken to achieve buy-in.

Now, universal buy-in is achieved by lots and lots of communication. Universal buy-in is also achieved by something else I pointed out just the other day, and that is the alpha, beta

portfolio-wide concept of introducing changes within an organization: either taking advantage of energy savings opportunities or emissions mitigation opportunities, ESOs and EMOs. If you start with a small one like an alpha test like I outlined the other day, you prove your point. You prove to the general population within your region or your organization that, hey, this is actually working. Then you do that test again as a beta, and you say: "See? We've done it twice now, and it works." That goes miles, Madam Chair, in achieving buy-in because now people see tangible results, results that are measured, that are verified and communicated to people, measurement and verification, which the other side voted down.

I found that rather odd, that they would not want measurement and verification, because the very act of measuring and verifying the results proves your point. It proves your point that what you're doing is actually accomplishing what you claimed it would do. The other thing that M and V does is that it allows you to say: "Oh, Well, you know what? We achieved 80 per cent or 70 per cent of what we were trying to achieve. If we just make this little change and that little change, we can get ourselves closer to 100 per cent." That's the value, the huge value of measurement and verification. It allows you to tweak things on the fly. Then as you duplicate what you're doing in other jurisdictions across the province, you duplicate it with the new changes, the changes that get you closer to achieving 100 per cent success. All along the way you're communicating the good and the bad.

4:50

Part of the communication methods that we utilize within energy management is through newsletters in corporations or sometimes governments. These newsletters point out the successes, the failures, the changes that are going to be taking place in order to achieve an even greater success. The most successful ones, that I've researched, anyway, are those where in the communications they spell out: "You know what? We did really well here, but it didn't work right there." And they're honest about it: "Okay. It didn't work right there because of this and this and this, and we're going to institute these changes, which will help us." Then when they run the beta test with the changes, they report back again and say: "Well, guess what? You know, half of our suggested improvements did lead to a higher success rate." And maybe they'll need to do, you know, another beta test.

The goal is to get your plan tweaked to the point where success can be achieved and, once you get it there, to then go portfolio-wide right across the entire jurisdiction. Whether it be a company with 17 branches across the world or whether it be a region with 100 or 200 counties and towns, you do an alpha, a beta, a portfolio-wide, lots and lots of communication all along the way, lots of education all along the way because your mission is to achieve universal buy-in.

What we have seen from this government from the get-go is a complete lack of understanding about how to achieve universal buy-in. We saw it with Bill 6, where they rolled it out and told us: it's fine the way it is. The farmers revolted, and the opposition dug in. We fought hard, and out came five pages of amendments to a bill that we were assured was just fine in its first iteration. Again, no understanding of how to achieve buy-in and, instead, using their majority to force things on Albertans and denying even standing committees the ability to bring in witnesses and to pick these bills apart and come up with solutions that would make them better. None of that. Instead, it's like rule by decree, using their majority in this place to have a forced buy-in, and that right there dooms this whole thing to fail.

The people of Alberta do not support this carbon tax. The people of Alberta deserve to have a referendum and deserve to have a say in this thing. The last government we had was thrown out on the grounds that they were not listening to Albertans.

**Mr. Rodney:** What was that?

**Mr. MacIntyre:** They were thrown out on the grounds that they were no longer being compassionate and listening to the good people of Alberta, and Albertans took them from a 70-seat majority to where they're at today.

This government is following in the very same footsteps. They are acting in a manner that is not considerate of the views of Albertans, and the fear that they are currently demonstrating in not approving accountability amendments demonstrates to me that they know full well that they do not have a mandate from the good people of Alberta for this carbon tax. They demonstrate thoroughly that they do not have that mandate, and they know it.

If they really, really believe that Albertans are in support of their NDP world view when it comes to this carbon tax, then I recommend they put their money where their mouth is. Let's see a referendum of the good people of Alberta and make that question a very straightforward question. Let's put it out there to the people. Or are they afraid of the very people that they claim have given them a mandate to put this tax upon us? Put your money where your mouth is. Let's have this referendum. Let's see what the people of Alberta say, and then listen to what the people of Alberta have said.

Madam Chair, this government had within their platform in the election that they were going to do things differently. You all remember that? You all remember that there was going to be better government, government that listened to the people, more accountability? Do you remember more accountability? I remember that statement. Yes, more accountability. Well, here's your opportunity to demonstrate more accountability. Let's have some accountability with the good people, the voters of Alberta, on this carbon tax. Let's have some accountability right on this issue right here. If you don't have the intestinal fortitude to go to the people of Alberta and ask their opinion on this, then you genuinely reveal what you already know, and that is that you don't have any mandate whatsoever for this invasive, oppressive tax.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

**The Chair:** Any other members wishing to speak to amendment A6? The hon. Member for Drayton Valley-Devon.

**Mr. Smith:** Thank you, Madam Chair. There was such passion in that last member's address. It was a rallying cry, I think, for all Albertans. A rallying cry. I would like to congratulate the previous member on getting us so inspired when it comes to governance in this province. [interjection]

Now, while the member from the opposite side may feel that his witticism is leading Alberta down the path to greater democracy . . .

**An Hon. Member:** Albertans disagree.

**Mr. Smith:** I would suggest that when I first stood up to speak, Madam Chair, to this issue, I brought to the attention of the government that legitimacy was going to be a problem for this government, that because they had not campaigned on this, that legitimacy, knowing that they could actually with a straight face stand in this Legislature and say that they had the will of the people behind them, was going to be a problem. You know, legitimacy is an important thing. [interjections] You know what? I'm not sure that that's a topic fit for this Chamber, and I will let this hon. member deal with that between himself and his wife.

**An Hon. Member:** Which one?

**Mr. Smith:** I'm not going there. I'm sorry. I'm going to assume that the hon. member across the way is as much in love with his wife as he said he was earlier in this session.

You know, we had a situation earlier in the session where we brought up a bill that really wasn't a bill: Bill 1, a Potemkin bill, a facade. When you bring forward a bill that really doesn't do anything, that gives the minister, supposedly, the ability to do his job when having appointed him as a minister has already given him the ability to do that, you've got to ask yourself: why are you bringing this before the House? You see, governments don't have to worry about legitimacy, I suppose, for a bill when that bill doesn't do anything, but when the bill actually does bring forward significant issues and significant changes to the province of Alberta and to how we're going to live our lives as the people of Alberta, then the government actually needs to have some legitimacy, and that bill needs to have legitimacy. That's the argument that we brought earlier, that when you actually are trying to pass a significant piece of legislation and you have not campaigned on it, you need to think about whether you have the legitimacy to actually pass that bill.

5:00

Now, this bill does make significant changes, and many hon. members have spoken to those changes. This climate leadership plan is going to create a series of taxes on everything, and that's going to hit the average Albertan family for at least a thousand dollars and probably a whole lot more.

This is going to affect school boards and hospitals in very significant ways. When we take a look at the heating costs, we know that the school boards have already published their best guesses as to how much this is going to impact their bottom line, yet when we look at the Education budget, we see that they have not built in the appropriate monies to be able to cover these very serious carbon costs. Heating costs: every single school, every single hospital, seniors, all of these are going to be affected by the increase in the price of heating. We know that that's going up about \$1 per gigajoule.

We know that transportation costs are going to be rising. All of those buses that all of those kids ride on for sometimes an hour to an hour and a half a day: they are going to have to find some way of paying for those costs. We know that this is happening. We know that it's going to occur, yet this government has not built into these budgets, the Education budget or the health care budget, these costs. So you've got to ask yourself: well, where's the money going to come from? Well, I think we know that potentially it could come from that green slush fund. You know, we know that it's going to create pressure on the purchasing of supplies for hospitals and schools because everything that is transported under this bill is going to be costing more – everything that is transported by rail, everything that is transported by truck – because there's a diesel tax that's going to be affected.

It's a little hilarious – well, it's hilarious if it wasn't for the fact that it's hurting our economy so badly – for this government to come back to us and say: well, at least 50 to 75 per cent of the costs of this carbon tax on businesses is going to be covered by the businesses themselves. What? When was the last time a government raised its taxes on gasoline and you saw the oil companies covering the costs of that increase in taxes? I would love to be able to see in detail how they came up with those figures. Businesses won't eat these costs. Businesses are going to have to compete both against businesses trading into Alberta from outside of Alberta, coming in from the United States, as well as against

other Alberta companies, and they're not going to be able to swallow those costs just because this government would like them to.

Everything is going to cost Albertans more, and because this is putting so much pressure on the rest of the business world, that we have to depend on for jobs, this government should be considering how it is going to get the legitimacy to be able to pass this bill and be able to say that they actually have Albertans' support. This government could call an election. If they really wanted to see if they had the support of Albertans, you could, on this issue, call an election and let the people of Alberta decide whether or not they will give you the support that you need in order to pass this piece of legislation. That is one option.

Now, I can understand – I can see the hon. minister across the aisle, smiling at me, and looking: oh, how could we ever do that? But, you know, I mean, governments have called elections on significant issues, and this could be one of them. However, you know, it would allow Albertans to decide whether they want \$3.4 billion in increased taxes being taken out of their pockets. They could make the decision on that election, but I don't think that's probably going to happen because this government understands that it might not get elected – it's almost a certainty – on this particular issue. This is a significant issue. I can actually understand that. Self-interest does usually reign supreme in the hearts of most people.

Our suggestion would be that this government consider a referendum or a plebiscite, Madam Chair, that would allow Albertans to speak. Now, when I was in my classroom – referendums and plebiscites are a little bit different. A referendum is a question that is put before the people where they get the opportunity to vote yes or no on a particular issue, and then the government is legally bound to actually implement the choice that the people have made, yes or no, on that issue. Plebiscites are a little bit different. A plebiscite follows the same process. You have an issue. You have a question. The electorate is allowed to vote on it, but the government has some wiggle room. They have the ability to decide, based on the results of the plebiscite, whether they're going to follow through with it or not.

We would suggest a referendum. However, people sometimes have different ideas about what the question should be in a referendum. Now, that's purely in the government's hands. The kind of question that they could put forward is entirely in their hands. However, the idea behind a referendum is that the question would actually be crafted in such a way that the people could clearly understand the issue, clearly see what the issues are that surround it, clearly get the knowledge and the understanding of what is surrounding it, and then would be able to make a clear yes-or-no decision as to whether or not they wanted this climate leadership plan.

You know, we do live in a democracy. I realize that for most decisions it's a representative democracy, but when you're a government that has not campaigned on this major issue and you're lacking legitimacy, a referendum would allow you the ability to move forward with some sense that the people of Alberta are behind you. You know, you could ask a question as to how you want to spend that \$3.4 billion worth of taxation. Do they want a climate leadership plan that is truly revenue neutral, or do they want one where they just are creating a great big giant slush fund, with the government able to dole out the money as they wish? You can ask the question, but you need to get the direction of the people if you want to have legitimacy on this issue.

Now, there's a long history in this nation of having referendums and having plebiscites. This is not something that is being devised by somebody that's outside of the NDP world view. This goes beyond left wing and right wing. Referendums have been used by

political parties from across the spectrum, and this should not be something that the NDP should be able to reject simply on political grounds. We have a long history of referendums.

Now, for a Baptist like me – I looked it up. I didn't realize it, but one of the first plebiscites in the history of our country was on Prohibition in 1898. Now, you know, I guess . . .

**Mr. Mason:** How did it go?

**Mr. Smith:** Well, it's interesting that you should ask. It was actually quite interesting. If we look at Prohibition in 1898 – I looked it up on Wikipedia here, and it said that in Alberta and Saskatchewan, because we were one territory, 68.8 per cent of the people were for Prohibition and 31.2 per cent of the people were against Prohibition. Now, if you had wanted a drink, hon. member, you could have moved to Quebec because Quebec was the only province to vote against Prohibition: 81.2 per cent of the people. I guess there was only about 18.8 per cent of the people that were Baptists.

Well, you know, interestingly enough, the government, because this was a plebiscite, decided that the support in 1898 for Prohibition was too close – the vote, even though it was a majority vote for Prohibition, was too slight a margin – and that there were too few people that had voted, so they chose not to adopt the measure. I guess, from the view of most of the people in this House, that was a good choice.

**5:10**

You know, we have a long history, as I said, of having referendums. We could go back to World War I, when we had to make a decision about whether or not we were going to have conscription, and the decision on conscription was so controversial, Madam Chair, that it tore this country apart. In 1917, in the middle of World War I, when, quite frankly, the allies were losing the war, this conscription crisis tore the country apart.

It set the stage so that in World War II Mackenzie King, the Prime Minister of the country at the time, was again faced with this issue of going into a war that was going to be a total war. He knew that. He knew that we were going to have significant challenges when it came to manpower – we were a country of, I think, something like about 12 million people – that we were going to have to put together an army that was going to have to be capable of fighting for a significant period of time. He went into the war knowing that he was leading a divided country.

**Dr. Starke:** What was his famous quote?

**Mr. Smith:** His famous quote: “Not necessarily conscription, but conscription if necessary.”

**Dr. Starke:** And he got that from his dog.

**Mr. Smith:** Or maybe after a seance with his mother.

What we've got is a situation here where in order to solve the problem – as the war progressed, by 1942 it had become obvious to our Prime Minister and to the government of Canada that they had a significant problem. We were running out of volunteers.

We have a long history or tradition in this country of volunteer armies, Madam Chair. It's probably the reason why the Canadian armed forces have always been able to punch above their weight, the fact that a volunteer army is an army made up of people that see the need or the cause for the war. They're fighting because they understand the need for it and they understand the justice of it. They are there, putting their lives on the line, in order to stop whatever

the forces are that they're fighting against. We have a long, proud tradition of a volunteer army.

He understood that if he was going to have to bring in conscription at some point in time, he was going to have to have the support of Canadians and that a referendum was going to be important if he was going to have the legitimacy to be able to enact conscription. So Canadians went to the polls in 1942 in a referendum that said, “Are you in favour of releasing the government from any obligation arising out of any past commitments restricting the methods of raising men for military service.” A very clear question: will you allow us to get out of our pledge not to have conscription? Canadians had to consider in this referendum – and in a democracy that's not a bad idea, asking the people what they would like to do.

On conscription in 1942 Alberta voted 71 per cent in favour and 28.9 per cent against, Madam Chair. Again, the only province that was different: only 27.9 per cent of the people in Quebec voted for it, and a total of 72.1 per cent were against. Again, a wise Prime Minister looked at the results, and even though the vast majority voted in favour of it, he went back, and he said to the people of Quebec: I'm going to do everything I possibly can to not bring in conscription. Of course, it wasn't until about this time in 1944, when we'd invaded Europe and when we started to take casualties in France and moved into Belgium and finally Holland, that the Canadian government was forced to bring in conscription. But it was not nearly as divisive because not only did the government have the legitimacy of the people through a referendum, but the people of Quebec could see that this government had done everything that it could not to bring in conscription. See, referendums, while they can be divisive, are also very good at drawing together consensus as well.

We know that referendums in this country have occurred not just in our far distant past but are actually being used, and used quite frequently, all throughout and across this country. We know, for instance, that in the federal election of 2004 the federal NDP came out with a policy that said that if the Liberal government of Paul Martin were elected in a minority government, they would press for electoral reform if the Liberals would be willing to use a referendum to get the support for that electoral reform. Of course, the electoral reform that they wanted . . .

**The Chair:** The hon. Member for Grande Prairie-Smoky.

**Mr. Loewen:** Yes. Thank you, Madam Chair. Of course, I'm in favour of this amendment, but I was so enjoying the previous member's discussion that I thought maybe we could have him continue and carry on. Thank you very much.

**Mr. Smith:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I have the hon. members across the way into this history lesson, and I really think that if they just listen to this history lesson, they will understand the wisdom and the value of this amendment.

Now, let us break into history again, and let us be helpful, as we always try to be, and help you to understand that this is not a particularly partisan thing. The reality is that the NDP in 2004 were willing to work with the Paul Martin government and bring in proportional representation if the government would find the legitimacy to do so by asking the people of Canada in a referendum. You see, this isn't left wing. It's not right wing. It's called democracy. It's called going back to the people and asking the people about a major issue, something that's going to radically affect their lives, something that's going to have a huge impact on their lives. You go back to the people and you ask them.

If you have campaigned on it, that's one thing. If you have not, then you need to go back to the people. That's what democracy is supposed to be all about. I think we've established quite clearly that this government did not campaign on the length and breadth and width of this kind of legislation for this climate leadership plan, so it really has a moral obligation to go back to the people of Alberta through a referendum to be able to ask their opinion about whether or not they would like to be taxed in the way that this government is asking them or going to be taxing them.

You see, Madam Chair, we can see that referendums are used across this country. We've had referendums in British Columbia. We've had referendums in Newfoundland. As a matter of fact, if we take a look at Newfoundland, Newfoundland entered Confederation because of a series of referendums that asked the people of Newfoundland: do you want to become a part of Canada? Will this solve the economic problems that Newfoundland was struggling with and the poverty that Newfoundland was struggling with? Rather than being a self-governing colony, could they become a part of this country? You see, even though it was divisive, even though there were some people on one side of the issue and another side of the issue – democracy doesn't claim that you're not going to deal with divisive issues; it only claims that the issues will be decided based on the will of the majority as long as that majority does not infringe on the rights of the minority. That's important. I agree with the hon. member across the way.

When we take a look at a history of referendums, we can see that there's been referendums in New Brunswick. We can see that there's been referendums in Nova Scotia. We can see that in 2007 there was a referendum in Ontario. We've had referendums in Prince Edward Island. We've had referendums in Quebec, of course, the famous referendums in Quebec in 1980 and 1995.

5:20

See, the idea is that wise government understands that there are times when it needs to go back to the people to achieve the legitimacy that it needs to move forward in another direction. For the people of Quebec: did the government of Quebec have the legitimacy to pull the province out of this country? You can't make a decision that important without the consent and the will of the people. We see in 1995 just how close we came, Madam Chair. In the 1995 referendum on national unity, on whether or not Quebec would stay in this country, it was 49.42 per cent for yes, they would leave, and 50.58 per cent for no, against leaving this country. We were so close to losing this valuable part of our country.

What many people don't understand or believe is that the Premier of the day had written a letter the evening before the results were in and was waiting to post a letter to the Prime Minister that said: if the results of this election are in favour of separation, we are immediately claiming the Canadian armed forces that are stationed in Quebec as Quebec forces. Madam Chair, I can hardly – it shakes me to the core to believe what could have happened to this country if the Premier of Quebec had been so irresponsible as to continue to send that letter to our Prime Minister.

Referendums are important. Referendums decide serious issues. Referendums allow the people to have the say, and in this democracy, in this country, and in this province we still believe that the people should have the ultimate say. I've heard people say that referendums are too divisive, that we should never have a referendum because they divide people.

I've heard people say that we should never have referendums because they allow ignorant people to be able to have a say on things they don't know anything about. You know what? Even though there may be members on the other side that believe, "Oops; too late," the reality is that the people and the common sense of the

common person in this province through a little over 100 years of democracy have made good choices. They are not ignorant people. They understand their own self-interests. They can deal with these issues. They deal with them in a civil, civilized way, and even though our emotions may get tied up into things, we deal with this in a way that breeds tolerance and respect. Once the decision is made, we move on, and we proceed to try to figure out how we can best lead each other in this democracy.

I would argue that this government does not have the legitimacy to pass this legislation and that it needs to go back to the people. You did not campaign on it. This is significant legislation, and you either need to call an election or you need to have a referendum of the people.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

**Mr. Mason:** Well, that was a very interesting and enjoyable speech. I have always liked history, and, you know, I think the hon. member across the way is probably a pretty good history teacher.

What I'd like to say here is that it's true that there have been referenda on any number of very important issues, but I think what's happened here with the so-called carbon tax, in terms of our friends in the Wildrose, is that there's a loss of perspective. I think we've seen that. It was a very unfortunate thing that happened the other day, which we all dealt with today, but mostly that was just a matter of not seeing things in perspective.

The opposition has been lighting its hair on fire over this. You know, we've talked about any number of other things, other aspects of the climate change plan, dealing with methane, putting a cap on absolute emissions – there are many aspects – phasing out coal, and the carbon tax, which is what they like to call it, which is moving towards \$30 a tonne on carbon. All of the experts who are serious about climate change and who are serious about the economics of dealing with climate change are shifting towards favouring these types of levies or taxes on carbon as a way of accomplishing the goal of reducing emissions.

I think that members opposite, whatever their views are with respect to the science of climate change, probably realize that we do have to reduce our carbon emissions and that Alberta as a province needs to do so. We have invested billions and billions of dollars in oil sands, and that's going to continue for some time, and hopefully there will be more upgrading here in the province, more diversification in the petrochemical industry and in other areas. The point being that you need tools and you need mechanisms.

But it's about perspective. The hon. member has mentioned a number of referenda that have been held in this country on whether or not liquor should be banned, like, made illegal in the country as a whole, whether or not we should conscript men to go fight in world wars, whether a province should join Confederation or whether a province should leave Confederation, or the very form of our democracy. All of these are very large, important, and critical issues of a great magnitude and great importance, and I believe that that's where referenda may have a use, depending on the circumstances.

Again, it comes down to perspective. The Wildrose is concerned – and it's fair ball – that we're going to put a 6 and half cent tax on gasoline. Yeah, that's a totally legitimate issue to argue whether that's a good thing or not and what goals or what things will be accomplished by doing that versus what the costs are – totally legitimate debate – but it's not on the same order of magnitude of whether the country breaks up or whether we go to war. That, I think, comes back to the lack of perspective with our friends in the Wildrose. They're lighting their hair on fire about the carbon tax, and, sure, it's a great issue for you guys. You know, I can see that. But let's keep the thing in perspective, right?

Let's talk about the real issue facing us in this country and in the world, and that is the ongoing impact of the change in the world's climate and the unusual and destructive weather events that come as a result of the changing climate, the potential for rising sea levels in some of the most very, very productive and populated areas of the world. You know, it's not just Bangladesh; it's also New York City. It's also London. It's also Vancouver. We need to be addressing this, and if not our way, then what way?

Let's talk about what the Wildrose alternatives are. You know, we accept their statements on the face of it that a number of them, anyway, do believe in the science of climate change, that it's a human-caused activity and that it's potentially threatening to billions of people who live on this planet. Then what is the answer that you propose? This is really what I would like to talk about.

In terms of this amendment, you know, my view is that it's not appropriate because it's not on the same level of magnitude as the issues that the hon. member talked about in his history lesson for us. You know, let's get on with a good debate. Are the costs, which I think our friends in the Wildrose have vastly inflated, of this carbon levy worth the results that we get? That's a legitimate debate. We believe it is; you obviously do not. But it is not a world-ending situation. It's not comparable to man-made famines in history. It's not comparable to the conscription crisis that almost tore this country apart. It's not the same thing as whether or not Quebec is going to break up the country.

5:30

So let's have a little perspective, and let's get the debate back to what I think is a very legitimate debate. Are the results that we're going to get from this worth the costs? What are the costs, and what are the results? That's a good debate to have. I'm glad we're having it.

**The Chair:** The hon. Member for Innisfail-Sylvan Lake.

**Mr. MacIntyre:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Let's talk about perspective for just a moment. Alberta is a democracy – that is, a participatory democracy here – with the people of Alberta determining our own future. The mayor of New York doesn't get a vote, yet he was quoted earlier today as though he's got something to tell us. In addition to that, whether there are experts that say this or experts that say that, the issue is and the perspective is that the people of Alberta are to determine their own future themselves, for themselves. This is not an aristocracy. It is not a monarchy. It is not a New York-archy or anything else. We are a democracy, and Albertans are the ones who are supposed to have the say here. Your fear of going to a referendum points out the fact that you're afraid of the very people who are supposed to determine their own futures, and that is shameful.

That's all I have to say.

**The Chair:** The hon. Member for Lacombe-Ponoka.

**Mr. Orr:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I won't be as passionate as my friend from Innisfail-Sylvan Lake. But I think in terms of putting this in perspective, you know, I'm going to keep going back to the Climate Leadership Report to Minister. The Climate Leadership report actually quite heroically tried to warn the government that there would be concerns, and to minimize the concerns, to say that the concerns are trivial or not important is, I think, completely unrealistic.

I will quote again from the portion entitled What We Heard. What did they hear in the public open houses? Albertans shared some ambitious goals, for sure, but then there were also "concerns about the state of Alberta's economy and the impact of new policies."

Then with regard to the online survey, it "demonstrated the more polarized views of engaged citizens, while polling showed the wider population to be more pragmatic and diverse in opinions and beliefs." To say that this is a small, little issue, that it's out of perspective – you know, even the Climate Leadership report tried to say that this is going to be a controversial issue. There are very diverse opinions. There are very wide opinions, and they will be different.

I go on a little bit further, the next paragraph, the fact that more were "concerned that efforts from Alberta will have costs to the province which outweigh the benefits." So, I mean, we're not bringing up unrealistic things here. The Climate Leadership report says these things.

Then with regard to First Nations and Métis communities and the organizations that responded to that: "many comments we received centred on the impacts these communities will feel." Then they go on to say that this is "something we encourage government to address alongside the implementation of their response to our proposals." Well, I think we've seen that the government is more than happy to implement the proposals, but I don't see very much caution here even with regard to the very warnings in the report to be careful about this and to be cautious about how it happens.

Then I notice on the previous page, page 14, that in addition there were public open houses held in Calgary and Edmonton. I find that very interesting because Calgary and Edmonton combined are only half the population of this province. The other half of the population, the half that is most impacted, that will feel the costs the greatest, wasn't even included in those open houses. That was really a biased sampling of people making contributions. Now, I know there were all kinds of other ways by which to contribute, but the truth is that the open houses were a very biased sampling, and the people who were most affected were probably not even there.

I just think that we do need to put it in perspective. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**The Chair:** Any other members wishing to speak to amendment A6?

Seeing none, we'll call the question.

[The voice vote indicated that the motion on amendment A6 lost]

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 5:35 p.m.]

[Fifteen minutes having elapsed, the committee divided]

[Ms Jabbour in the chair]

For the motion:

Aheer	Hunter	Rodney
Cyr	Loewen	Schneider
Drysdale	MacIntyre	Smith
Ellis	Nixon	Starke
Gill	Orr	Taylor
Gotfried	Panda	Yao
Hanson		

Against the motion:

Babcock	Kleinstaub	Phillips
Carlier	Littlewood	Renaud
Carson	Loyola	Rosendahl
Ceci	Luff	Sabir
Connolly	Malkinson	Schmidt
Cortes-Vargas	Mason	Shepherd
Dach	McCuaig-Boyd	Sucha
Dang	McKitrick	Swann



Eggen	McLean	Sweet
Feehan	Miller	Turner
Ganley	Miranda	Westhead
Horne	Nielsen	Woollard
Kazim		
Totals:	For – 19	Against – 37

[Motion on amendment A6 lost]

**The Chair:** We are back on the bill. Are there any further questions, comments, or amendments with respect to this bill? The hon. Member for Calgary-Mountain View.

**Dr. Swann:** Thank you very much, Madam Chair. I have one of two amendments to put forward. [interjection] Yeah. It doesn't matter. We can do it after.

**The Chair:** I already recognized the hon. Member for Calgary-Mountain View. Go ahead, hon. member.

**Dr. Swann:** Okay. Madam Chair, I'll just circulate the amendment, and we'll take it as it comes. I'll wait until it's distributed.

**The Chair:** The amendment is A7.  
Go ahead, hon. member.

**Dr. Swann:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm pleased to rise and give notice of an amendment to Bill 20, the Climate Leadership Implementation Act, to amend it under section 77. The topic is establishment of performance measures.

77.1(1) Within 6 months of the coming into force of this Act, the Minister shall establish and make public performance measures to assess the effectiveness of the carbon levy and any initiatives funded by its revenue, including but not limited to those developed by Energy Efficiency Alberta, in reducing emissions of greenhouse gases or otherwise supporting Alberta's ability to adapt to climate change.

(2) The Minister shall make public a report at least once each calendar year on the progress towards the performance measures established under this section.

I think, Madam Chair, the amendment speaks for itself. We're talking about a lot of money. We're talking about a major shift in policy in Alberta. We're talking about trying to impact not only carbon but jobs. We're talking about employment. We're talking about electricity prices. We're talking about costs of all kinds of activities, goods, and services in the province and so far haven't seen a lot of evidence about what we're going to be measuring and how we're going to assess the benefit and the cost of these measures. I think it behooves the government, if they're making such a dramatic change, to provide some indications of what the criteria are for measuring success, that they be identified explicitly in the bill, and that we, all Albertans in fact, have some sense of where success is going to be measured and who's going to be measuring it.

It's a challenge for any government to embark on a new direction. I've applauded the government already on the need for a carbon tax.

I think that in principle I support this bill, but I can't support any bill that asks for billions of dollars without any performance targets. It's just the basic requirement of all legislation and all good legislators, that we have some sense of what we're going to be measuring. Is it jobs? Is it carbon? Is it electricity prices? Is it the cost of food? That's basic for assessing the cost benefit of any public policy.

**Mr. Yao:** Even the Liberal caucus gets it.

**Dr. Swann:** Yeah. Thank you. I'm not sure whether that was a compliment or not. I take everything as a compliment; it's the least I could do.

I'm very pleased at this late hour to encourage people to discuss this: if not, why not? Why not have some explicit indicators so that all Albertans know what we're going to be measuring, how we're going to assess success, when we're going to say: no, this isn't what we had hoped for; we're going to make some changes. I think most people here have had this discussion to some extent already, but I think this is a little more clear, a little more explicit.

My constituents are saying: we don't see evidence that they've thought through the whole process and that they have some accountability measures there. I'll be having another amendment later that has to do with who should be measuring these and who should be overseeing some of the accountability measures as well, but for this particular amendment it's all about performance measures.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

**The Chair:** Any other members wishing to speak to amendment A7? The hon. minister of the environment.

**Ms Phillips:** Well, thank you, Madam Chair. I rise to thank the hon. member for his amendment. Certainly, I thank him for his consideration of this bill and for his appreciation for the seriousness of climate change.

There are a couple of issues with this. First of all, Madam Chair, we already have performance measures within the Department of Environment and Parks and the climate change office's business plan, and reporting on those is contained already within the annual reports. That information is consistent with the fiscal transparency act and the operation of the government of Alberta all told. Of course, there are a number of different times during which all members of this House may query the details within those reports, not the least of which is during budget estimates but also upon the release of the annual reports, which happens each June.

In addition, one of those performance measures is, of course, greenhouse gas emissions. The Auditor General has asked for some stock-taking of the previous government's specified gas emitters regulation, Madam Chair, and in our . . .

**The Chair:** Hon. member, I hesitate to interrupt, but pursuant to Standing Order 4(4) the committee will now recess until 7:30 tonight.

[The committee adjourned at 6 p.m.]



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