



Province of Alberta

The 29th Legislature
Third Session

Alberta Hansard

Thursday afternoon, November 9, 2017

Day 52

The Honourable Robert E. Wanner, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of Alberta
The 29th Legislature

Third Session

Wanner, Hon. Robert E., Medicine Hat (NDP), Speaker
Jabbour, Deborah C., Peace River (NDP), Deputy Speaker and Chair of Committees
Sweet, Heather, Edmonton-Manning (NDP), Deputy Chair of Committees

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Deputy Leader of the Official Opposition
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Anderson, Wayne, Highwood (UCP)
Babcock, Erin D., Stony Plain (NDP)
Barnes, Drew, Cypress-Medicine Hat (UCP)
Bilous, Hon. Deron, Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview (NDP)
Carlier, Hon. Oneil, Whitecourt-St. Anne (NDP)
Carson, Jonathon, Edmonton-Meadowlark (NDP)
Ceci, Hon. Joe, Calgary-Fort (NDP)
Clark, Greg, Calgary-Elbow (AP)
Connolly, Michael R.D., Calgary-Hawkwood (NDP)
Coolahan, Craig, Calgary-Klein (NDP)
Cooper, Nathan, Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills (UCP)
Cortes-Vargas, Estefania, Strathcona-Sherwood Park (NDP),
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Cyr, Scott J., Bonnyville-Cold Lake (UCP)
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Dang, Thomas, Edmonton-South West (NDP)
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Drysdale, Wayne, Grande Prairie-Wapiti (UCP)
Eggen, Hon. David, Edmonton-Calder (NDP)
Ellis, Mike, Calgary-West (UCP)
Feehan, Hon. Richard, Edmonton-Rutherford (NDP),
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Fildebrandt, Derek Gerhard, Strathmore-Brooks (Ind)
Fitzpatrick, Maria M., Lethbridge-East (NDP)
Fraser, Rick, Calgary-South East (Ind)
Ganley, Hon. Kathleen T., Calgary-Buffalo (NDP),
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Gill, Prab, Calgary-Greenway (UCP),
Official Opposition Deputy Whip
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Gray, Hon. Christina, Edmonton-Mill Woods (NDP)
Hanson, David B., Lac La Biche-St. Paul-Two Hills (UCP)
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Hoffman, Hon. Sarah, Edmonton-Glenora (NDP)
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Renaud, Marie F., St. Albert (NDP)
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Swann, Dr. David, Calgary-Mountain View (AL)
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Westhead, Cameron, Banff-Cochrane (NDP),
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Woollard, Denise, Edmonton-Mill Creek (NDP)
Yao, Tany, Fort McMurray-Wood Buffalo (UCP)
Vacant, Calgary-Lougheed

Party standings:

New Democratic: 54 United Conservative: 26 Alberta Party: 2 Alberta Liberal: 1 Progressive Conservative: 1 Independent: 2 Vacant: 1

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Kleinstauber	

Legislative Assembly of Alberta

1:30 p.m.

Thursday, November 9, 2017

[The Speaker in the chair]

The Speaker: Good afternoon. Please be seated.

Introduction of Guests

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

Mr. Westhead: Yes. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to introduce to you and through you students from Cochrane high school in the beautiful, charming, and historic town of Cochrane in my constituency. They are accompanied today by their teachers Mrs. Stretch and Miss Gill. The students from Cochrane have enjoyed their trip to the Legislative Assembly. I'd ask for the students to rise and to have the members give them the warm traditional welcome.

The Speaker: Welcome.

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Centre.

Mr. Shepherd: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to introduce to you and through you today three groups of guests. First, I'm pleased to introduce Niobe Thompson, Bonnie Thompson, and Rosvita Dransfeld, who last year teamed up with Alberta Health Services to make two groundbreaking documentary films. *Memento Mori* and *Vital Bonds* bring viewers into intimate contact with the stories of transplant patients, the families of organ donors, and the medical staff who make our incredible organ transplant system work. These films are receiving international recognition and send a strong message on the value of our screen production grant program.

It's my pleasure to also introduce four staff members from the University of Alberta hospital: Dr. James Shapiro, liver surgeon, CIHR/Wyeth clinical research chair in transplantation; Kim Worton, unit manager with organ and tissue donation; Dr. Jim Kutsogiannis, neurocritical intensivist and medical director in the human organ procurement and exchange program; and Margaret Lidstone, former human organ procurement and exchange coordinator. These are some of the outstanding staff who are pivotal in bringing transplant patients and donors into contact with the filmmakers in an ethical and sensitive manner.

Lastly, I'd like to introduce Leslie Keith and Carl Babchishin, who lost their son Matthew two years ago. They made the courageous decision to share their story, resulting in the first-ever real-time account of a family making the gift of life. The bravery of the Babchishin family means that people all over the world are learning more about the crucial need for organ donation and choosing to become organ donors.

I ask all of my guests to now rise and receive the warm welcome of this Assembly.

The Speaker: Welcome.

The hon. Member for Grande Prairie-Smoky.

Mr. Loewen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to introduce to all members of the Assembly the winner of the Royal Canadian Legion's dominion poem contest, Ryan Kosa. Ryan is joined in the Speaker's gallery by his family: Annette and James, his mother and father, and Sarah, his sister. Ryan and his family are from just north of Sexsmith, a town in my constituency, where Ryan attends grade 12 at St. Mary's Catholic school. I'm sure that many members will

recognize Ryan, who read his profound poem, *Deafening Silence*, at the Remembrance Day ceremony earlier today. I'm sure that I speak for all members when I say that we are truly moved by the thoughtful words of the poem. Personally, I'm proud to have such a smart young man as a constituent. I did want to take just a moment to read just a couple of lines from this poem, and I know other members will be quoting some parts from this poem, too. Just a couple of lines:

From Brussels to Baghdad,
Vimy to Vietnam, the memory lives on.

I would ask Ryan and his family to all rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of the House.

The Speaker: Welcome.

The hon. Member for Calgary-Mountain View.

Dr. Swann: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. A great honour for me to stand and introduce to you and through you to the Assembly Mr. Umair Ahad. Umair is a social worker in addition to having degrees in environmental science and political science. He's also the owner of a small business in Calgary. Umair is a committed Liberal and the regional chair for the federal Liberal Party of Canada. I'll ask him to rise, and we'll give him the usual welcome of the Assembly.

The Speaker: Welcome.

The hon. Member for Drayton Valley-Devon.

Mr. Smith: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to introduce to you and through you to the members of this Assembly two people who were helpful in assisting me with the bill that I will be introducing this afternoon. Kim Savard is part of a steering committee that organized a community conversation in Calgary with key stakeholders to gauge the interest and the capacity to develop a missing-seniors response in Calgary. A cross-section of stakeholders from all sectors agreed to move forward, and an action committee was formed as part of Calgary's age-friendly strategy. I had the pleasure of learning from Kim and others about their community pilot project, and I am pleased to have been able to use what they have learned about keeping seniors safe in drafting my private member's bill.

With them is my former legislative assistant, Maureen Gough, who brought the idea of the silver alert bill to me when she was caring for her mother, Anne McIntosh, who had advanced dementia and has since passed. This bill is in her memory.

May I ask Kim and Maureen to please stand and receive the traditional warm welcome of this Assembly.

The Speaker: Welcome.

The Associate Minister of Health.

Ms Payne: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to introduce to you and through you to all members of this Assembly representatives of the Canadian Primary Biliary Cholangitis Society, Alberta region. PBC is an autoimmune disorder that attacks the liver, and the Canadian PBC Society works towards education, awareness, research, and support to help improve the lives of those living with the disorder. I had the pleasure of meeting with these representatives earlier today, and we discussed ways to work together to improve quality of life for those living with PBC. I now invite Dr. Swain, Shauna Vander Well, and Kristy Peterson to rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

The Speaker: Welcome.

The hon. Member for Sherwood Park.

Ms McKittrick: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have two sets of introductions. It is my pleasure to introduce to you and through you Caleb Sorenson. Caleb is in the process of completing his political science degree at King's University and recently joined our team in Sherwood Park as a part-time constituency assistant. I would like Caleb to please rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to introduce to you and through you two members of the Alberta Thai Association, Councillor Ngamta Tekauyporn and Vice-president Katia da Silva Vissers. The Alberta Thai Association has been serving the Thai and multi-cultural communities in the greater Edmonton area and throughout Canada and throughout Alberta for over 30 years. I would like to ask my guests to please rise and receive the traditional warm welcome from the Assembly.

The Speaker: Welcome.

The hon. Minister of Health.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I have two introductions today. First, I rise in recognition of some of Alberta's medical radiation technologists who are seated today in our members' gallery. I am honoured to have these health care professionals join us this week, during MRT Week, to celebrate the outstanding contributions of MRTs to the well-being of Alberta patients. Whether it's active or palliative treatment during cancer, these professionals are at the side of our patients almost every day. I invite Fiona Mitchell and her colleagues Karen, Susan, Jackie, Cynthia, Laura, and Mona to please rise and accept our recognition and welcome to this Assembly.

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. For my second introduction today it's a pleasure to introduce two visitors in the members' gallery from the constituency of Edmonton-Glenora. I invite them to rise as I introduce them. They are Aidan Wharton and his father, Kevin Wharton. Aidan is an air cadet with 395 Edmonton Royal Canadian Air Cadet Squadron and attends Britannia junior high. He aspires to be a fighter pilot with the Royal Canadian Air Force and certainly makes his dad and all of his classmates very proud. Please rise, Aidan, and your father, Kevin, and receive our welcome to this Assembly.

The Speaker: Welcome.

Hon. members, are there any other guests today? The Minister of Economic Development and Trade.

1:40

Mr. Bilous: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise and introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly guests of mine, the Reiter family. There's David Reiter, David Reiter Jr., and Zoe Bungay. The Reiter family are joining us from the Beverly neighbourhood in my riding of Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview. David Reiter Jr. attends Beacon Heights elementary, where he is currently learning about the provincial government. He's very excited to see question period first-hand, and I have a feeling he's going to be in for a very eventful day. I invite them to rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

The Speaker: Welcome. I hope that they are good teachers.

The hon. Member for Calgary-Currie.

Mr. Malkinson: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to introduce to you and through you Blair McCormick. Blair is the

executive director of the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology Students' Association. Blair is a SAIT alumnus who has worked with the students' union for more than 14 years now before coming into his current role last year. He is a graduate of SAIT, a fan of hockey and craft beer, and as we all know in this House, we are fans of both students and craft beer. We're proud to work with individuals like Blair and SAIT students to make life better for Albertans. If you could please rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of the House.

The Speaker: Welcome.

Are there any other guests? The Minister of Community and Social Services.

Mr. Sabir: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly Deb Teed and Arnold Hanson. They're also joined by Deb's daughter Elizabeth and her friend Gabby. Arnold Hanson is president of the board of the FCSS Association of Alberta, and Deb Teed is the association's executive director.

The association provides crucial support to over 200 FCSS programs across our province, including advocacy, training, and professional development, and a variety of tools and resources to the programs. At the annual FCSS Association MLA breakfast this morning I spoke about the critical work that Alberta FCSS does in their communities. They make an incredible difference to children, youth, families, and seniors, and that's why our government was proud to increase our financial support to enable them to address issues like poverty, isolation, and family violence. We are proud to continue our partnership and collaboration with all of the association members to make life better for all Albertans.

I ask my guests to rise and receive the traditional warm welcome.

The Speaker: Welcome.

Ministerial Statements

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health and Deputy Premier.

Remembrance Day

Ms Hoffman: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Earlier today we gathered for a solemn and moving ceremony in remembrance of all those who sacrificed greatly so that we might live in peace and enjoy our democratic rights and freedoms. Thousands upon thousands of Albertans and Canadians and indigenous peoples left everything behind to go into the unknown and fight for everything we hold dear. So many of them did not come back, and the ones who did return were changed forever by what they had to endure.

Mr. Speaker, 2017 is a particularly poignant year to mark these sacrifices. This year is the 75th anniversary of Dieppe and the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge, and tomorrow is the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Passchendaele. We know several Alberta regiments were among the Canadians who captured that Belgian village and its ridge. British, Australian, and New Zealand troops had tried in vain to take back the village since July. We accomplished that victory in two weeks. Nine Canadians won the Victoria Cross for valour, but the cost in human life was unimaginable: 4,000 soldiers killed and 12,000 wounded. Those who died at Passchendaele were among the 66,000 Canadians who gave their lives in the Great War and among the more than 172,000 who were wounded. It would be another year after that battle before the Great War finally ended.

We remember all of those who served and sacrificed in the Great War, but we also remember those who have served in almost 100

years of war and peacekeeping duties since then, and we remember those who are still serving today. They are standing guard, they are keeping the peace, and they are bringing relief and comfort to those who have lost everything to disasters.

Mr. Speaker, many of us, on all sides of this House, have had the honour of meeting some of the incredibly brave and resolute women and men who've served in the last 100 years and who are still serving today. They are Albertans' parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents. They are Albertans' brothers and sisters. They are Albertans' children and grandchildren. Every single one of them has the heart of a lion, and we say to them: thank you.

On behalf of the Premier and our entire government we remember them, and we give them our most heartfelt thanks. This debt of thanks we owe to those defenders, living and dead, is expressed best through our actions. So I respectfully encourage all of us to act on this great debt even in small ways, even in acts of kindness, to fight for freedoms everywhere and to make life for Albertans better, for Canadians better, and for those beyond our borders better.

Thank you.

Mr. Hunter: Mr. Speaker, today we stop to reflect, honour, and remember the brave, our ancestors and the soldiers who were willing to sacrifice their lives in order to protect our way of life. They fought and died for this great nation and for this great province, but more importantly they fought for the right to live free. Our veterans recognize the incredible importance of freedom from tyranny and oppression. In fact, they were willing to give the ultimate sacrifice, even their lives, in its defence. It is right that we pause and consider the hopes and the dreams of the soldiers who courageously and selflessly gave their lives so that we could be free.

Freedom is not an end; instead, it is a continual pursuit. Mr. Speaker, we must be ever vigilant in our quest to remain free. Freedom allows us and allows individuals and communities to flourish and live happily. When all people are equal before the law and can interact peacefully one with another, great things can happen and often do happen. Freedom, peace, and democracy should never be taken for granted. We must remain alert as there are still people in this world today that seek to eliminate our democratic rights, our religious freedoms, our right to free speech, and much, much more that our society has to offer that makes life so beautiful and so rewarding.

It is my hope that our children and our grandchildren continue to cherish this day and recognize the sacrifices that were made by those who came before. Let us teach them to be selfless and to use the freedom fought for and won by their ancestors to pursue what is noble, what is good, and what helps their neighbours and fellow citizens.

Mr. Speaker, this morning we heard a poem written by a young man named Ryan Kosa entitled Deafening Silence. I was moved by his words as I could tell that even though Ryan had not experienced war, he was able to empathize with those who had. I share with you a few lines from his poem that stand as a reminder that we must never forget.

Two minutes,
A small price to pay.

One minute for those who returned
The other for the souls we've lost.

A two minute suspension of daily duties,
In respect to those who paid their duties.

Lest we forget, Mr. Speaker. Lest we forget.

Mr. Mason: Mr. Speaker, I would seek unanimous consent that we extend Orders of the Day to the completion of the Routine in order

to allow for such members who are not members of the two main parties who may wish to respond to the ministerial statement.

[Unanimous consent granted]

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

Mr. Clark: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Today we remember the men and women who have made the ultimate sacrifice in defending our province and our country and also those who are currently serving our country with honour at home and abroad. Each year on November 11 we take time to show our gratitude and respect to those who have fought so bravely for our rights and for our freedom.

Through our history conflict has touched the lives of Canadians of all ages, all races, all religions, and all regions. Fathers, mothers, sons, and daughters: they were killed in action, they were wounded, and thousands who returned home lived their lives with the physical and mental scars. We must remember and help those who served and continue to suffer.

This year we mark the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Passchendaele. It was another in the long list of battles that Canadians won where others had failed, but this victory came at a terrible cost, with thousands of Canadians losing their lives over the two-week battle.

We must also remember indigenous veterans. It is estimated that more than 12,000 indigenous people served in world wars I and II and the Korean War. Of those, more than 500 made the ultimate sacrifice, and none were treated with the equality at home that they enjoyed on the battlefield.

Each year it is my great honour to attend the Remembrance Day ceremony at the Military Museums in my constituency of Calgary-Elbow. Thousands of Albertans, young and old, come to pay tribute to veterans who have served overseas, veterans who have served their country at home and those who continue to serve.

To all of Canada's military men and women, thank you for your service. Lest we forget.

1:50

Oral Question Period

The Speaker: Hon. members, before we start the clock, I would just make a request of the Leader of the Official Opposition. I could use your assistance. I continue to receive notes indicating that someone in the Official Opposition continues to say: tell the truth. I would ask for your assistance to find out if, in fact, that's true, and if it is, if you would ask that member to no longer do that.

Mr. Nixon: Happily, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: I recognize you for the first main question.

Provincial Fiscal Policies

Mr. Nixon: Mr. Speaker, I know that the NDP want to avoid talking about their record, but here are some disturbing facts. According to Stats Canada Albertans' disposable income dropped a staggering 7.4 per cent in 2016, the NDP's first full year in office. Yes, we know that the drop in global energy prices hit our province hard, but this NDP government appears to have done everything in its power to make matters worse. When Albertans were already hurting, the NDP's response was to hike taxes. Given these devastating stats will the NDP admit their devastating mistakes and reverse their damaging tax hikes?

The Speaker: The hon. Deputy Premier.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity to talk about our plan and how it is working. We are working effectively to make sure that we get better value for our oil. We actually care about Albertans, and that's why we're working to make sure we get our pipelines built. You know what? Our plan is working. Just yesterday we learned that Chevron is investing up to a billion dollars more in the oil patch. Cenovus has more than doubled production this year, and the best one yet is to come. We will break the landlock, and we will get full value for our oil. Things are looking up.

Mr. Nixon: The NDP can try to shrug this off, but our neighbours in Saskatchewan, who were also hit by the drop in energy prices, only saw a disposable income drop of .8 per cent. This is not a coincidence, Mr. Speaker. The NDP have taxed our job creators, taxed income and property, and have also implemented the largest tax hike in Alberta's history, the job-killing carbon tax, which they never campaigned on and hid from Albertans. A simple question: do the NDP think that their ridiculous tax hikes increased or decreased Alberta's disposable income?

The Speaker: The hon. Deputy Premier.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Let's talk about some facts. Most recent numbers show that Saskatchewan lost 4,000 jobs; Alberta gained 12,000 jobs. Projections keep showing that Alberta is the fastest growing economy anywhere in Canada, and I'm not going to apologize for that. I'm going to work hard to keep bringing those opportunities for growth and development to the province of Alberta. Members opposite keep cheering for its demise, but we stand up for Alberta, and we are getting results.

Mr. Nixon: Since the NDP took office, sadly over 52,000 private-sector jobs have been lost, but at the same time the public sector has increased by tens of thousands. While Albertans were taking massive pay cuts or losing their jobs entirely, the NDP increased government spending. We can't have a strong public sector, Mr. Speaker, without a vibrant private sector. That is just common sense. Will the NDP admit that its policies suppress private-sector activities, which in turn decrease government tax revenues, making the NDP debt crisis even worse? It's obvious.

Ms Hoffman: You know what I'll proudly admit, Mr. Speaker? That we moved forward to make sure that education and health care were funded so that when kids showed up to school, they had teachers, and when nurses went to work, they didn't get layoff slips in the mail. We're working hard to protect good jobs, not doing what the members opposite are calling for, which is 20 per cent cuts. That is not responsible or fair to anybody in the province of Alberta. We're working with the private sector. Investment is up, jobs are up, and we're protecting the public sector at the same time, something the members opposite want to gut.

The Speaker: The second main question.

Mr. Nixon: Mr. Speaker, this government has broken records on layoffs since they've been in government.

Carbon Levy and Fuel Costs

Mr. Nixon: Last week I drew attention to the fact that Albertans will soon face a 75 per cent tax on natural gas. In the middle of the winter the NDP are slapping Albertans with a massive, cruel tax on home heating. I've since heard from a number of Albertans that were shocked by this number. They weren't aware of how bad the NDP's

tax on home heating actually will be. Does the NDP acknowledge the damage that their tax will have on Albertans and their families?

Ms Hoffman: I'm very happy to acknowledge that we brought in a cap on electricity rates, Mr. Speaker. The members opposite want to keep them skyrocketing; we want to make life more affordable. The members opposite want school fees to go up; we rolled them back 30 per cent. The members opposite want to lay off teachers and nurses; we're protecting those jobs and the services that they provide to the people of Alberta.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to see some evidence actually tabled in this House from the member opposite, but I'll tell you that the real evidence is that things are looking up in Alberta. We're on the right track. The recovery hasn't hit everyone, but it certainly is looking up in the province of Alberta, and I'm so glad to be able to deliver as part of this government.

Mr. Nixon: The cap is actually double the original price, so thanks for nothing, Madam Minister.

The NDP are clearly trying to hide the reality of their tax hikes from Albertans' eyes. Albertans know that GST is 5 per cent. They see it on their receipts every day. Why not apply the same standard to natural gas? If the NDP is so proud of their carbon tax on natural gas, why not let Albertans know? Will the NDP require that the tax appear as a percentage of the retail price on Albertans' bills and stop hiding this tax increase from the good people of Alberta?

The Speaker: The hon. Deputy Premier.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. On this side of the House we are proud. We're proud of Alberta, we're proud of our jobs, we're proud of the markets that we're accessing. After decades in Ottawa and decades with Conservatives here in Alberta, we weren't able to break the landlock. But we've got approvals under the NDP government to be able to break that landlock, bringing great economic opportunities to the people of Alberta and also helping them with their costs. This is really good news for the people of Alberta, and I wish the members opposite would get onboard.

Mr. Nixon: Mr. Speaker, the landlock was broken until under their leadership, and it got cancelled.

But let me repeat it again: a 75 per cent tax on home heating. Not a 75 per cent increase of the tax; a 75 per cent tax, period. Shame. When you buy \$2 worth of natural gas, the NDP slap you with \$1.50 worth of tax. I'm happy to table it. It's appalling, Mr. Speaker. I ask again: if the NDP are so proud of their carbon tax on home heating, why not make it clear on the bills, tell Albertans the truth, and stop hiding this from them?

Ms Hoffman: We're really proud of the fact that Albertans came up with a plan to protect and support Albertans. I know the members opposite love spending their time in Ottawa and focusing on Ottawa's policies, but here we're focused on Albertans, making sure that we get jobs for Albertans. That's why we got two pipelines approved, Mr. Speaker. We know the members opposite want them jeopardized. They think that these pipeline approvals shouldn't go through. They're cheering every day for them to fail. But on this side of the House we're standing up for Albertans, we're standing up for our plan, and we're going to get those pipelines built. You mark my words.

The Speaker: Hon. Member for Grande Prairie-Smoky, you have guests here. I hope you won't disappoint them. I keep hearing your voice too loudly. I'm sure that won't happen again though, will it?

The third main question, I believe.

Carbon Levy Economic Impact

Mrs. Pitt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This NDP government just doesn't get it when it comes to real-world impacts of their policies. Yesterday I told this House about a woman in my constituency whose life has been significantly impacted by the NDP carbon tax. Groceries and other household necessities are more expensive. Natural gas has skyrocketed, and the rebates just don't cover it. As a result, her modest fixed income doesn't go nearly as far as it used to and her quality of life has suffered. To the Premier: what do you have to say to this woman and to other seniors across the province whose lives have been made much worse by your policies?

The Speaker: The hon. Deputy Premier.

Ms Hoffman: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, but I beg to differ. Even with the levy increase in January natural gas prices are still the lowest they've been in the last 10 years, less than half the rate they spiked to in the winter of 2014 and less than a third of the rate they reached in 2006 and again in 2008. We've got a system in place that we're working hard to provide stability to all Albertans, including seniors. I'm proud of that record, and I stand up for it. I wish the members opposite would stand with us.

Mrs. Pitt: Mr. Speaker, the seniors in my riding are not liars. In less than two months the carbon tax is set to increase to 50 per cent, which means that the burden it places on Alberta families will also increase by 50 per cent. With so many struggling under the weight of this carbon tax, that the NDP didn't campaign on, Premier, your advice in the past to lessen the impacts of your carbon tax have been for Albertans to buy a new car or take the bus. What out-of-touch advice do you have for us this time?

2:00

Ms Hoffman: I've got a reality check for the members opposite, Mr. Speaker. Their leader, Jason Kenney, is arguing that we should be moving forward to a model more like B.C. or Saskatchewan. You know what happens to seniors in B.C.? They'd lose \$230 a month because Jason Kenney's Conservatives would cut the Alberta seniors' benefit to match comparable rates. Two hundred and thirty dollars a month: that is not appropriate. Albertans receive more supports in this province than they do in our neighbouring provinces. We're proud to stand up for Albertans, protect their investments, and I'm really proud of the fact that about half of Alberta seniors are receiving the carbon levy rebate. That's going a long way to helping them make ends meet, and we're happy to do that.

Mrs. Pitt: Mr. Speaker, it's so unfortunate that this government just doesn't get it while millions of Alberta families have been hit so hard by this carbon tax. Virtually everything that we spend money on, from electricity to fresh produce to our kids' hockey fees, has gone up as a result of this tax. On top of this Alberta families also have to contend with job loss and unemployment as an unintended consequence of this NDP tax. Again to the Premier: will you apologize for what your policies have put Albertans through and immediately suspend the upcoming carbon tax increase? And don't tell me it's gotten us any social licence.

The Speaker: The Deputy Premier.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I am very proud of the fact that on this side of the House we stand up for Albertans. We make sure that the 2,000 desperately needed long-term care and dementia care beds are getting built in this province. We protect health care. We protect education. We protect seniors' drug programs. Members opposite are calling for 20 per cent cuts to the

very services that are designed to protect the people of this province, and I will not stand for that. I will stand up for the people of this province. They gave us that as our job. It's a promise we made to them during the election. Promise made, promise kept.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-Mackay-Nose Hill.

School Transportation and Bell Times in Calgary

Ms McPherson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In September I hosted a round-table in my constituency, talking with parents who are concerned about bus scheduling and bell time changes in Calgary. The Education ministry promised to follow up on a number of issues. We have not received the answers that were promised at the round-table. These parents went out of their way to give their advice and ask questions of the ministry and trusted the ministry's word when they said that they would hear back from them in a timely fashion. To the Minister of Education: where are the answers to their questions, and why is it taking so long to address their concerns?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Education.

Mr. Eggen: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Certainly, from September we've been working closely with the Calgary board of education – I have them under an operational review – where we were looking at, generally, their expenses but also specifically in regard to transportation. So, you know, we have made some advances, certainly, in regard to the congregated stops with them and putting more yellow buses on the road as well. We will continue to work closely with some of the new trustees and so forth and the Calgary board of education. I'd be happy to follow up on the information that the hon. member is specifically asking about.

Thank you.

The Speaker: First supplemental.

Ms McPherson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's clear that the new busing system isn't working for kids or for parents. Both the CBE and the Minister of Education need to take responsibility for the untenable situation that's been created and start over. We haven't heard anything since the preliminary audit information was released on September 14, which needs to be complete in order to provide some answers to parents who are concerned over the chaos caused by busing and staggered bell times in Calgary. Why haven't we seen this report? Does the Education minister plan to release more information any time soon?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Education.

Mr. Eggen: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Certainly, it's very important that we work with the Calgary board of education closely. We have been doing so. Certainly, the operational review will continue on through this year so that we are looking for ways not just to build a better transportation system but looking at other operational issues. The Calgary board of education is our largest school board in the province and certainly does a great job in educating our kids, but there's always room for improvement. I'm looking forward to working with some of the new board members and so forth to make improvements and to ensure that kids are safe and getting the best education they can.

The Speaker: Thank you.

Second supplemental.

Ms McPherson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Bill 1 had some serious unintended consequences, and the responsibility must be shared

between both the ministry and the CBE. Earlier this fall the Alberta Party asked the minister to reset, complete the ministry audit, and try again next year. On September 14, when the preliminary audit results were released, the minister said that he hoped the CBE would have concrete solutions by Thanksgiving. Once more for the Minister of Education: has the CBE submitted solutions, and when can parents expect a resolution to these disruptive changes?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Eggen: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Bill 1, An Act to Reduce School Fees, did just that, more than \$54 million going back into families' pockets. We're very proud of that. It's an act to reduce school fees, to make life more affordable for Alberta's families. Certainly, it had the two different things, between transportation and so forth and other decisions that the Calgary board of education made, that were separated from what we did in Bill 1, which was very, very successful. Again, we work closely in collaboration with the Calgary board of education, and the number one thing that we did was to make sure we put money in for funding. If you take away 20 per cent from education, all bets are off.

Thank you.

The Speaker: Calgary-Shaw.

Craft Breweries

Mr. Sucha: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Summer has officially ended and with it the ability to enjoy a delicious beverage outdoors at the establishment of your choosing. Many small businesses across the province prosper in part with the ability to sell liquor on patios and outdoor spaces. To the Ministry of Treasury Board and Finance: what previous barriers prevented small craft breweries from thriving in Alberta?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Ceci: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Small businesses are the engine of our economy, and everybody knows that that engine is starting to fire on all cylinders as a result of our GDP growth this year in this province being 4 per cent. Our government has supported small businesses in this province with a one-third tax cut to the small-business tax rate. More restaurants can open their patio spaces without onerous reservations or red tape. Brewers in this province can sell their great products at farmers' markets and involve themselves in the community more often. While the opposition would keep onerous prohibition era laws, we are open . . .

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. member. [interjections] Thank you, hon. minister.

First supplemental.

Mr. Sucha: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that I could barely hear the response because of the heckling about our small craft brewery industry and given that there are now three times as many craft breweries in Alberta than before our government took power, to the same minister: what are you doing to remove regulatory barriers to help encourage the industry?

The Speaker: The Minister of Finance.

Mr. Ceci: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'll start with: beer is good. Our government has consistently stood up for small brewers in Alberta. It's undeniable that the craft sector has enjoyed tremendous growth. In the last year alone 18 new breweries have

opened their doors, the largest year-over-year increase ever in this province. I hear constantly from brewers that our grant program is the reason they opened their doors, hired staff, and expanded production. Troubled Monk Brewery in Red Deer says that the grant is the government sending a message that we'd rather support our local businesses and brewers and employ Albertans than . . .

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.
Second supplemental.

Mr. Sucha: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that we all know it takes more than just water to make good-quality beer – it takes hops, wheat, barley, and other agricultural products that Alberta already excels in producing – to the Minister of Agriculture and Forestry: in what ways does our craft brewing industry collaboratively work with our local producers?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Agriculture and Forestry.

Mr. Carlier: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and the member for the question. Here in Alberta we grow the best hops, wheat, and barley in the world. Our rural communities are benefiting from new local markets thanks to this government. The Village Brewery in Calgary, for example, has developed a direct relationship with the Alberta producers they buy from. That same kind of partnership exists and has been developed by Northern Girl Hops, who operates right in my constituency. This month the Alberta Hop Producers' Association will form because of the increased number of hop producers. I look forward to seeing this local industry continue to grow and create opportunities for Alberta's fine agriculture products.

2:10 Opioid Addiction Treatment for Youth

Mr. Fildebrandt: Mr. Speaker, the emergency opioid commission has determined that treating those currently addicted is beyond their scope. While preserving preventative measures that the commission put forward is a step in the right direction, we still need to help those who are in desperate need once they're addicted, just like the 17-year-old kid from my constituency that I spoke about last week. Excluding treatment is running off thousands of people who could still be saved. Could the minister please tell us why the commission believes that its mandate does not cover youth addictions treatment?

The Speaker: The Associate Minister of Health.

Ms Payne: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and to the member for the question. When the commission reviewed the recommendations around expanding subsidized access for treatment, one of the key things that was found was that we were lacking enough treatment spaces and having enough prescribers across the province. As a result, the commission decided that we should first prioritize expanding the number of treatment spaces. We have done that. We've doubled the capacity in the Calgary region as well as expanded access with thousands of new spaces across the province.

Mr. Fildebrandt: Mr. Speaker, this year over 450 Albertans have died from opioid drug overdoses. Luckily, the 17-year-old from my constituency was saved in time. He was a good student who got addicted to prescription opioids after he was thrown from his horse and ended up on street drugs. Given that it cost his mother and father \$18,000 out of pocket to get him the treatment that he needed because it simply wasn't available here in Alberta, will the minister please tell us: if not the commission, who is responsible for addressing youth opioid addictions treatment in Alberta?

The Speaker: The Associate Minister of Health.

Ms Payne: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are working with doctors across the province to increase access to prescription treatment for people suffering from an opioid-use disorder. We've also been working very closely around prescription guidelines for opioids so that patients such as the member opposite's constituent have the support that they need from their family doctor before their opioid prescription becomes a problem. There is more work to be done, and we are continuing to move forward.

Mr. Fildebrandt: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that, but none of these measures are new.

This family came to me and told me that they don't want a penny of that \$18,000 reimbursed to them by Alberta taxpayers. They told me instead to ensure that the next kid who finds themselves in this situation will have the resources that their son did not. Given that I made her a promise that I would do everything I could to honour her request, will the minister and government honour this mother's request by expanding the scope of the commission to find a remedy to this growing addictions treatment problem and make sure that this doesn't happen to another Alberta family?

The Speaker: The hon. associate minister.

Ms Payne: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and to the member for the question. One of the key areas that the opioid commission is working on is how we can offer better supports for families who have a loved one who is struggling with opioid-use disorder. The commission is also looking at ways that we can continue to expand treatment across the province. We know that this is a very serious concern. This is an emergency unlike one we've ever faced before, and it is not going to be solved by pretending that this is not a medical condition. This is a serious issue that has many deep roots in inequality as well as concerns about how we treat people with . . .

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

The hon. Member for Calgary-Greenway.

Workers' Compensation Board Surplus Funds

Mr. Gill: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The WCB has chosen not to return \$350 million of 2016 premium surpluses to employers, as per its long-term practice. Employers who pay the premiums knew that the accident fund was in surplus, so they were naturally expecting their rebates to arrive early in 2017, and it is now almost 2018. Minister, as the WCB has more than \$10.5 billion in reserve, why does it need employer surplus money, too?

The Speaker: The Minister of Labour and democratic renewal.

Ms Gray: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Our government is working to make sure that all workers have the right to a safe, fair, and healthy work environment and as part of that has engaged in a review of the WCB, the first in 15 years, to make sure that there was a sustainable system that offered fair rehabilitation to all injured workers.

The WCB is governed by a board, and that board has made a decision to not return the surplus to employers at this time. We will work with the WCB and with employers as we review the panel report that has been submitted to us and make recommendations.

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

Mr. Gill: The board reports to you, Minister.

Given that this government claims that it has cut the business tax by 1 per cent, but it fails to confess that it has added far more in burdens such as the carbon tax, Bill 6, and increases to corporate

taxes, and given that the carbon tax is clearly remaining in place for now and that it's going up again in a few months, which means we will have to liberate Albertans from it now, Minister, if you won't help businesses with your policies, will you at least return \$350 million to business owners?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms Gray: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The member opposite is confused about the system. It is not a decision made by me or this government. We continue to work through the process that we've set out with the WCB. We are very interested in making sure that workers have access to fair rehabilitation when they need it. A system that, unfortunately, hadn't been reviewed in 15 years is shameful. We need to make sure that that system is sustainable. We need to make sure that it is there to protect workers. I think Jason Kenney and the conservatives want to make life harder for injured workers. We will be working with them.

The Speaker: Calgary-Greenway, you've got a second supplemental coming, but I want you to concentrate on listening because you were talking when the minister was giving her answer. Please proceed.

Mr. Gill: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that \$350 million is a lot of money and given that we know this government likes to buy Albertans with their own funds and that another thing we also know is that this NDP government is frightened about the Hon. Jason Kenney winning in Calgary-Lougheed and sitting in this very Chamber, Minister, is your government holding businesses' money so that it can release it during the by-election campaign?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms Gray: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I and all members on this side of the House look forward to talking to Jason Kenney directly about jobs being up, wages being up, manufacturing being up, retail sales being up. Our plan is working. We will continue to work for Albertans and with Albertans to make sure that all of the systems that they need are there to support them.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Grande Prairie-Wapiti.

Calgary Southwest Ring Road Completion

Mr. Drysdale: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Construction on the \$1.4 billion southwest Calgary ring road is well under way, but an environmental appeal has threatened its completion. The case has been before the Environmental Appeals Board since August, and a decision is still weeks away. To the Minister of Transportation: how much of the project has been completed to date? Please answer in terms of a percentage.

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Transportation.

Mr. Mason: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I can tell the hon. member that the schedule is well under way, that we are slightly ahead of schedule on the completion of this road. We have looked very carefully at the stay that was brought in, that he mentions. It will not delay construction. We are working to complete that project well ahead of schedule, and we will do that.

The Speaker: First supplemental.

Mr. Drysdale: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that I do not have to remind the minister that if the road is not completed by May of

2022 the land reverts to the Tsuut'ina Nation and given that the province lost valuable construction time this summer due to a court delay and that we cannot afford any further delay if it is to be finished before the deadline, to the Transportation minister: how will you ensure, one way or the other, that the southwest Calgary ring road is built on time?

2:20

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Mason: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The member acknowledges the deal that was signed by the Transportation minister who is now the whip for his party and that if the road is not completed within seven years, the land reverts back to the Tsuut'ina and they get to keep the \$360 million and all the land at Bragg Creek. That was a deal that I inherited when I became the minister, and I have been working diligently to make sure that we get this project completed ahead of time. On time isn't good enough; we need to make it go really fast.

The Speaker: Thank you.
First supplemental.

Mr. Drysdale: Thank you. Given that when you became Transportation minister, the project was ready to roll and now it hangs in the balance and given that there is great urgency for this government to act decisively, to the minister: will you promise us today that this ring road will be finished on time?

Mr. Mason: Not only will I promise that it will be finished on time, Mr. Speaker; I promise that we will finish it ahead of schedule.

Government Announcements and Advertising during Election Periods

Mr. Cooper: Mr. Speaker, the United Conservative caucus has pressed this government repeatedly on when they'd be calling a by-election to provide Jason Kenney the opportunity to fight for a seat in this House. While they've yet to give us a straight answer, we also have some very serious concerns about underhanded, cheap political tricks that the NDP may use during the upcoming by-election, including government funding announcements. This is the exact type of policy that the government used to fight against while they were in opposition, but they've neglected to make any changes to the law. Will the Premier commit today that this government will not make any funding announcements in the upcoming by-election in due course?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Labour.

Ms Gray: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As the minister responsible for democratic renewal talking about changes to our Election Act and election financing is my responsibility. I'm very proud that our government has done such important things like banning corporate and union donations, making sure we have spending caps. We will be discussing banning government advertising or rules around government advertising that make sense during elections and by-elections. Making sure that we have a fair, democratic system is very important, not trying to find loopholes and get money in the back door.

Mr. Cooper: Mr. Speaker, given that last year this government used hard-earned tax dollars to subsidize their own political advertising and given that the NDP was found in contempt of Parliament for illegal advertising, we all know that they have an unquenchable thirst for government advertising even if it breaks the

rules. Will the Premier commit today to stopping all government announcements and advertising during the upcoming by-election, and when can we expect some transparency, including laws, that would prevent government advertising? [interjections]

The Speaker: Government House Leader, your side of the House as well.

Mr. Mason: Sorry, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms Gray: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. When talking about important issues like this, protecting our democracy, it's very important that we understand the issues at play. What the member opposite seems to be asking for is for the government to stop communicating with Albertans at all during any by-election or election. I think that that is a step too far. [interjections] We need to take a measured approach, and we need to do that as we have done with all things, like banning corporate and union donations, making sure that there are reasonable spending limits, and giving democracy back to Albertans.

Mr. Cooper: Mr. Speaker, there is no bigger money than government money in politics, and we just heard that the minister wants to use it in the upcoming by-election to advertise government programs. [interjections] Will the minister commit to stopping all government announcements and government advertising during the upcoming by-election, that will clearly favour the government?

Speaker's Ruling Decorum

The Speaker: Hon. members, you may remember – I believe it was yesterday – that I reminded you that in any event where one single member in this House was victimized by a group and not treated with respect, I'm going to call and name some people. So please respect each other and just don't as a massive group in any way detract them from their job to serve not only in this House but also in this government. Please.

Government Announcements and Advertising during Election Periods (continued)

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms Jansen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, it was pretty interesting to hear the other side talk about cheap political tricks. Why, I remember in – where was it? – Calgary-Elbow, where a school announcement went out, and that school announcement happened to coincide with the former . . .

Mrs. Pitt: You were in government.

Ms Jansen: Exactly. And why do you think I'm over here now?
You know, Mr. Speaker, I can honestly tell you that anything they're complaining about on the other side should be done with a bit of sheepishness because they wrote the book on that kind of behaviour.

Mrs. Pitt: You did. You did.

The Speaker: Hon. Member for Airdrie.

Ms Jansen: I can honestly say that when they talk about dark money, PAC money in this . . .

The Speaker: Thank you.

Carbon Levy and Forest Industry Costs

Mr. Schneider: Mr. Speaker, I reference a FOIPed document from Ag and Forestry titled Advice to Premier: Summary of Carbon Levy Impacts to Forest Products Industry. Within it is expressed concern that the carbon tax affects all major stages of the supply chain of forestry, which consumes fossil fuels of all types. Premier, despite attempts by this side to provide amendments that would have seen exemptions for forestry operations in which those fuels are used, you ignored our suggestions and advice from your own department. Why did you do that?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Agriculture and Forestry.

Mr. Carlier: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and to the member for the question. I'm very proud of our forestry industry right across Alberta. It supports close to 20,000 jobs. It continues to be very prosperous, very sustainable. It continues to be so. As a matter of fact, they have near-record profits this year. You know, the member is questioning that they're somehow burdened by the carbon levy. When I talk to the forest industry, what I hear is: what can they do; what can they do to do their part to help with the greenhouse gas emissions reductions?

Mr. Schneider: Given that it takes fuels such as gasoline and diesel and propane and natural gas in order to harvest, log, and transport trees to the mill and given that trees need to enter the manufacturing process and then the finished product can be shipped to market and given that Alberta's forest product manufacturing is an export-oriented business competing in a global commodity market, Premier, what has your government done to help this situation of increased cost to the forestry business as a result of your carbon tax?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Carlier: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and to the member for the question. Again, the forestry industry has had a very good year, even with the challenges around international markets. On those international markets both the Minister of Economic Development and Trade and I have been going on trade missions to promote all our products in Alberta, agriculture and forestry. I can tell you that those products are respected around the world. We're continuing that good work to make sure that all world markets can appreciate the good products we grow right here in Alberta.

Mr. Schneider: Given that this industry, like so many that are struggling through the economic devastation caused by this government's ideological agenda, cannot continue to pass on costs to their customers that the increase forces upon them and given that this is confirmed by the internal document, which, unfortunately, is mostly made up of an industry analysis that has been redacted, Premier, will you admit that your government didn't think before it acted and postpone your reckless pursuit of a \$30-per-tonne carbon tax until a proper economic assessment is completed, or are you already sitting on one?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

2:30

Mr. Carlier: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and to the member for the question. We had some very good news earlier this year that there is an OSB plant that's going to reopen. They're reopening because the markets are good. They're reopening because the policies of this

government have allowed them to continue to be sustainable, continue to pursue those markets. I'm proud of the work we do. I'm proud of the work our department does, our professional foresters do. I'm proud of our industry, and I'm very proud to continue to support it.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-Hays.

Provincial Fiscal Sustainability

Mr. McIver: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Canada's Parliamentary Budget Officer took an extraordinary step recently of sending a strong warning to Alberta that its current fiscal policies are unsustainable. This NDP government was told that it must provide corrective action to avoid creating a fiscal hole so deep that it will force higher taxes and drastic spending cuts on future Albertans. The minister's response: a dismissive shrug. To the Finance minister. The Premier won't give a responsible answer. Will you?

Mr. Ceci: You know, when we look at the plan this government has brought in, Mr. Speaker, that plan is working. We will lead the country in economic growth this year and next year. We are firing on all cylinders after the deepest recession in two years. We've inherited a big hole from the previous government. They did not save money. They had deficits, deficits, deficits. We're turning the corner in this province. We're getting us back to balance in 2023.

The Speaker: First supplemental.

Mr. McIver: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that the Parliamentary Budget Officer's forecasts are not science fiction and given that the minister's are, since he actually had no net debt when he came into government, so he's not giving us the facts – in fact, the forecast from the Parliamentary Budget Officer looked at 2022, 2028, and lots of short-term increments – and given that this government will have a \$60 billion debt by the time the next election comes around and that, in fact, by 2041 it will be \$10 billion a year in interest payments alone, to the minister: will you actually deal with the facts instead of ignoring them? You're even being warned by Ottawa . . .

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

Mr. Ceci: Mr. Speaker, the facts are clear. This province is going to grow fastest in the country. We are addressing the short-term problems. We're investing in this province. People are getting back to work in the thousands. We led western provinces with 12,000 net new jobs last month. People are coming back. They're working. Investment is occurring. We're going to get back in the saddle.

Mr. McIver: Mr. Speaker, given that it all looks good when you're spending as fast as you can until the money runs out – I'm sure it feels good right now to the minister – and given that the former Saskatchewan NDP Finance minister has warned the minister and given that, judging by the Premier's popularity ratings, Albertans are also severely concerned about the damaging effect of this NDP government's ideological fiscal policies, to the minister: do you and the Premier honestly believe that you're right and everybody else in the world is wrong?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Finance.

Mr. Ceci: Thank you very much. You know, the Conservatives seem to have the same answer for everything, but it doesn't work, Mr. Speaker. You can't cut your way to prosperity. We're seeing that in Saskatchewan right now. You have to invest in the future. We're doing that, and it's working. Retail sales are up. Manufacturing

is up. Drilling is up. Car sales are up. I know Jason Kenney doesn't like it, but Alberta is looking up.

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

Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities

Ms Renaud: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In 2017, for the first time in a very long time, the Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities has 15 members from across Alberta representing diverse communities and disabilities of all kinds. We have service providers, advocates, and a government MLA. The primary function of this council is to provide advice to the Ministry of Community and Social Services and the government in order to create legislation, policy, and regulations that are inclusive of all abilities as much as possible. To the Minister of Community and Social Services: please share with Albertans a working example of this council's advice on how it will enhance inclusivity for people with disabilities.

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Community and Social Services.

Mr. Sabir: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, Member, for the question. We are proud to have appointed a very talented, incredible group of people to this council. We have appointed Sheila Serup, Cam Tait, Darby Lee Young, Cheryl Cunningham-Burns, Alison Cutknife, Stephanie Myrick, Shino Nakane, Ann Nicol, Neil Pierce, Nabeel Ramji, Inara Samoylove, Cathy Smith, John te Linde, and Regan Treewater-Lipes. We look forward to working with them to make sure that we get the disabilities file right.

The Speaker: Thank you, Minister.
First supplemental.

Ms Renaud: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Of the many new members appointed to the Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities, there are four people who are also members of the consultation team for the PDD safety standards review. Would the minister please explain why those appointments were made?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Sabir: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just to add another name, a very credible name: the hon. member who's asking me the question, the Member for St. Albert.

The reason, Mr. Speaker, we appointed those four people is because the review the consultation team did was exemplary and, in fact, groundbreaking in terms of how we reached out to the communities. That's why we have appointed them. Through their expertise, by working with them, we will make sure that persons with all abilities have the opportunities to be successful and meaningfully included . . .

The Speaker: Second supplemental.

Ms Renaud: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On December 3 we will celebrate the International Day of Persons with Disabilities with people from around the world. In Alberta the council will lead the celebrations by supporting community events and awards recognizing individual and community efforts. To the same minister: why is it vital that we continue to recommit to the UN declaration on the rights of persons with disabilities?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Sabir: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As government we believe in a province that is inclusive of Albertans of all abilities. That is why we are absolutely committed to protecting and advocating for the rights of persons with disabilities. That is why we have increased the supports for persons with disabilities instead of decreasing them. On that side of the House their plan is to cut 20 per cent from those supports. Some of them – for instance, the Member for Calgary-Hays – call these supports giveaways.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Lacombe-Ponoka.

Tourism Destination Marketing Funds

Mr. Orr: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Hotels all over this province are concerned that changes to the Municipal Government Act and city charters will strip their ability to work together to grow tourism through voluntary destination marketing funds. Hotels are rightly concerned that if cities are allowed to administer destination marketing funds, local governments could redirect funds from their intended purpose of growing tourism to general revenues, as now occurs with the provincial tourism levy. Will the tourism minister assure industry that destination marketing funds will not be co-opted as a source of municipal revenue?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Culture and Tourism.

Miranda: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and to the member for the question. I'm very proud of the work that we're doing within the tourism industry because we know that it creates the kinds of jobs that put food on the table and pay mortgages. We know that it's a resilient sector of the economy. We're going to continue working with our industry partners to ensure that we can promote tourism in this province, continue the visitation in our province, including promoting LGBTQ travellers to this province as well. I understand the concerns that are being raised. It's something that we will continue to work on with our partners.

Thank you.

The Speaker: First supplemental.

Mr. Orr: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that the industry fears that if control of destination marketing funds is given over to municipalities, voluntary fees will become a mandatory tax, bureaucracy and administration costs will increase, and accountability and transparency to the industry will disappear, why is the Minister of Municipal Affairs writing ministry of tourism bills, and who is going to ensure that destination marketing funds remain effective, nimble, and efficient for tourism and for attracting visitors to Alberta?

Thank you.

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Miranda: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and to the member for the question. DMFs are actually a municipal jurisdiction. We're going to continue working with our partners to ensure that we have the best products in this province to offer to attract more travellers and ensure that this resilient part of the economy continues to grow.

Thank you.

2:40

The Speaker: Second supplemental.

Mr. Orr: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Hotels are very concerned that any talks about destination marketing funds are not being led by the Minister of Culture and Tourism. Given that this government

claims that they want to champion tourism as an engine of economic growth and diversification, why has the Minister of Culture and Tourism not been a part of this conversation directly, and how will he stand up for the tourism industry he represents, or is the DMF just a sacrificial lamb for the MGA?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Miranda: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very proud of the work that we do with the DMFs around the province. They know their regions best. They are able to promote their regions by collecting the voluntary fees that are being given through the DMF levy. We're going to continue working with them to ensure that we have the best tourism products in this province, that we can promote this province, that we have continued air service to our province. We will have ongoing dialogue with our partners, including the Minister of Municipal Affairs.

Thank you.

Teck Resources Frontier Oil Sands Project

Mr. Panda: Mr. Speaker, yesterday I tabled an Alberta Energy report from Jacobs Consultancy that laid bare the Carnegie oil-climate index as junk science slandering future investment in the oil sands. Now the federal government has granted an eight-month delay to the joint panel reviewing the \$20 billion Frontier oil sands mine proposed by Teck Resources. To the Minister of Energy: did you stand up for the industry and object to Ottawa holding up the investment?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms McCuaig-Boyd: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, I'd like the opportunity to clarify that the report that was referred to in that question yesterday was a report that was ordered by our previous government at a time when oil was very high.

You know, we work every day for the oil industry, and we will continue to do so. In addition to new projects, we have many projects that are onboard right now. Suncor just announced one recently. Cenovus, CNRL, Chevron: they're all coming onboard.

Mr. Panda: Mr. Speaker, given that we have eight mines already producing safely in the Athabasca oil sands and in compliance with the Alberta Energy Regulator for decades and given that the joint panel reviewing Teck's project has seen all this before and will see this all again, to the Minister of Energy. The joint panel was already given a three-month extension, now another eight months. Jobs and the business reputation of the province are at risk. Isn't it time to cut the red tape and get on with it?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms McCuaig-Boyd: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, we've said time and time again that things are looking up here in Alberta. Jobs are up in the oil industry, wages are up in the oil industry, drilling is up, and so is production. That's because there's confidence in Alberta energy, and we're continuing. The work doesn't end. What I can say is that the reckless rhetoric coming from that side and the risky plan that they propose are only going to hold Alberta energy back. We're not going to let that happen. We're standing up for our Alberta energy folks.

Mr. Panda: Mr. Speaker, given the number of cancelled projects in Alberta since the NDP came to power and given that the NDP's risky ideological policies have chased investors to Saskatchewan, North Dakota, and Texas, has the government learned any lessons,

or will you stand on the sidelines and quietly watch the potential cancellation of this \$20 billion project, as you watched Energy East and Northern Gateway?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms McCuaig-Boyd: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know what? I'm not going to talk about potential cancellations of things. I'm going to talk about what's going on right now. Line 3 is currently under construction. If you go out to Hardisty, you can go see that. Make no mistake; we're working hard for Trans Mountain. Make no mistake; that pipeline will be built.

The Speaker: Hon. members, in 30 seconds we'll start with Members' Statements.

Members' Statements

Cochrane Cenotaph

Mr. Westhead: Mr. Speaker, on Saturday Albertans will gather at cenotaphs across the province to honour the courage and sacrifice of our veterans and those who continue to serve our country. This year's Remembrance Day in Cochrane will be made even more significant thanks to the efforts of the Cochrane Legion and the entire community, that made significant contributions to the town's cenotaph enhancement project.

Just in time for Canada's sesquicentennial and the Legion's 90th year, in late October Her Honour the Honourable Lois Mitchell and His Honour Doug Mitchell visited Cochrane to witness the unveiling of a life-sized bronze statue of a Canadian First World War soldier at the current Cochrane cenotaph to stand guard over the memorial. The bronze statue, unveiled by Her Honour and Cochrane Mayor Jeff Genung, is from the foundry of local artists Don Begg and Shirley Stephens-Begg of Studio West bronze foundry and is truly remarkable and impressive in every sense.

Thanks also to Todd Puzey for conceiving this vision to create a more welcoming space for visitors to the cenotaph park. The park is intended to be used and enjoyed as a place of reflection and as a landmark in the community.

Last week I was pleased to present a cheque for \$25,000 to Legion First Vice-president Mr. David Usherwood from the community facility enhancement program towards the cenotaph revitalization project. These enhancements to Cochrane's cenotaph are a significant milestone in the town's already rich history. They also help us renew our gratitude towards those who stand guard for our country, the injured, and those who made the ultimate sacrifice.

In Flanders fields we will remember them. Lest we forget.

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

Silver Alert Program for Persons with Dementia

Mr. Smith: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In 2016 over 500,000 Albertans were aged 65 and older, accounting for about 12 per cent of the total population. This number is expected to almost double by 2035, with further growth expected beyond that. By 2041 it is expected that almost 1 in every 5 Albertans will be 65 years or older. A decline in cognitive functioning is associated with aging, and the risk of dementia doubles every five years after the age of 65.

In Calgary the Alzheimer Society estimates that more than 13,000 individuals are living with Alzheimer's disease or related dementias and that for every person diagnosed, 10 to 12 people are directly impacted. A significant concern associated with cognitive

decline and dementia is wandering. The Alzheimer's Association indicates that 6 out of 10 people with dementia will wander.

I would like to highlight a community-based response in Calgary that holds much promise for the rest of the province. A steering committee was organized to host conversations with key stakeholders to gauge the interest and capacity to develop a missing-seniors response for the city. This group is developing a framework for the community area's silver alert program. Dr. Liu and her team from the U of A and the Seniors Advocate, Dr. Sheree Kwong See, have been involved to pilot the program in Calgary. This strategy addresses both prevention and education to ensure that we learn more about the needs of seniors. I would like to commend all those involved in developing this made-in-Alberta approach.

The bill that I will be introducing this afternoon will provide a provincial framework that will support community efforts to protect our vulnerable seniors.

Thank you.

Remembrance Day

Mrs. Littlewood: Mr. Speaker, this Saturday, November 11, at 11 a.m. Alberta will join countries across our Commonwealth to remember those that fought and still fight and those that made the ultimate sacrifice defending our rights and our freedoms.

At Tofield school yesterday, under the guidance of Tofield Legion branch president Barbara Ferguson, I was reminded how important education is in telling the stories of those that have fought and died defending us. Students wrote poetry and created art as a means to tap into our past and connect with the present.

We were joined by Master Corporal Wilkins. She was asked by some: how do we show gratitude? And she said: just say thank you. Simple thanks is the least we can show for those who choose to enlist not for pride or glory but because they love their country.

2:50

Sombre milestones are being remembered this year, Canada's 150th: 100 years since the Battle of Vimy Ridge and the Battle of Passchendaele, 75 years since the Dieppe Raid. These battles earned Canada a lasting place in the memory of grateful nations. In more recent history we remember combat in places like Kapyong in North Korea and Kabul and Kandahar in Afghanistan.

Today I'd like to also thank the Royal Canadian Legion and its members for their leadership in Remembrance Day ceremonies everywhere and for their service year-round: raising money through the poppy campaign for those not properly provided for with federal government benefits and, on lighter days, fundraising through meat draws, hosting steak suppers and dart tournaments, and supporting our cadet programs. Their presence is felt throughout our communities.

So I want to thank all our veterans and all those serving in our military and all of our Legions for their service, past, present, and future. No government will ever be truly worthy of our military and their sacrifice. Let's we forget.

King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand

Ms McKittrick: Mr. Speaker, I am wearing black today in memory of a great king and father of the Thai nation. His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej, the ninth king of the Chakri dynasty, passed away peacefully in Bangkok on October 13, 2016, at the age of 89 in the 70th year of His Majesty's reign. He was the longest reigning monarch in the world. Following Buddhist rites, His Majesty's cremation was performed on October 26, 2017, in an elaborate ceremony at Sanam Luang in Bangkok. Albertans with roots in

Thailand can be found in all parts of the province, and members of the Thai community in Alberta have been in mourning since the death of His Majesty.

In 1964, when I first lived in Thailand, I heard about the work of His Majesty. It was when I returned twice again to work in community development that I truly came to understand his legacy, for this was no ordinary king and certainly not the kind you find in fairy tales living a regal life of pleasure and luxury. This was a king who was dedicated to serving his people from the very first day that he ascended the throne till the very last days of his existence.

His Majesty travelled widely throughout Thailand, meeting with his people in order to understand their problems and seek solutions. I remember nearly daily seeing pictures of His Majesty sitting with Thai farmers, labourers, and office workers, listening and taking notes. His Majesty the king worked hard to ensure that all Thais had enough to support themselves. His Majesty also sponsored numerous economic and community development projects using his own funds. In his long reign the king witnessed many changes in his beloved country, but through it all he maintained a stabilizing, moral leadership.

The passing of His Majesty comes as an immense loss to the Thai nation. My condolences to the Alberta Thai community and to the people of Thailand. [Remarks in Thai]

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Reconciliation between Indigenous and Nonindigenous Peoples

Dr. Swann: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For nine months I've been part of the Ministerial Panel on Child Intervention, which seeks to understand how government action and inaction may have contributed to harm or death of children taken from their birth families and what we can do to improve it. Indigenous children make up over two-thirds of those brought into child intervention, consistent with the family disruptions that we heard about two years ago in the mental health review. Likewise, indigenous people are overrepresented in the criminal justice system, the homeless population, and the health system.

The final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada revealed the terrible genocidal policies, intergenerational trauma, and residential schools, with the inescapable cycles of family breakup, poverty, violence, and mental illness. Indigenous people have a better chance of breaking these cycles when they have adequate, culturally appropriate services, are involved in decisions affecting them and their families, and when they recover their own cultural identity. This requires real collaboration between the federal and provincial governments and ministries.

The mental health review also heard that our mainstream Canadian culture is also producing more and more mental distress and addictive behaviour in our own children and families. Some experts point to our individualistic, competitive, and money-focused society as contributing. Indigenous communities acknowledge that they need healing. It is now time that our western culture, in humility, acknowledge the same. Indigenous people value community, sharing, and Earth care. More of these values are clearly needed in our western culture.

Reconciliation means the exchange of positive values in the spirit of humility to replace and repair the negative stereotypes that continue to damage both our cultures. Our western indigenous cultures got to where we are in the 21st century together, and we

must find a way to move forward and heal together. After all, we are all treaty people.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Fall of the Berlin Wall 28th Anniversary

Mr. Fildebrandt: On November 11 we will mark Remembrance Day. Remembrance Day this year hits particularly close to home for many in Strathmore after the passing of George Freeman on November 6. George was a community leader, a war hero, and, like my maternal great-grandfather, a D-Day veteran.

But today, November 9, is also an important day for us to mark. Today marks the 28th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall. The Berlin Wall stood as the greatest symbol of oppression and tyranny for the latter half of the 20th century. Most walls are meant to keep an enemy out, but like a prison, the Berlin Wall was built to keep a people in, from escaping to a better life in the free and democratic and capitalist west. It stood as a visible and daily reminder that communism is slavery.

While many, including my family, risked their lives to flee the communist east, the Berlin Wall fell without firing a shot 28 years ago today. The will of free men and free women to live in unity, justice, and freedom – “Einigkeit und Recht und Freiheit” – proved more powerful than the will of the Red Army and the Socialist Unity Party to cling to power. The peaceful fall of the wall was part of a chain reaction that saw communist dictatorships across the world fall. Never in world history have so many people gone from slavery to freedom in such a short period of time.

Nations that do not have to fight for their liberty become complacent and too easily bargain it away for small comforts. Benjamin Franklin is often misquoted as saying: any society that would give up a little liberty to gain a little security will deserve neither and lose both.

Let us be grateful that our generation has not been called upon to defend freedom as those of our fathers, but let us not forget the sacrifice that they made for our freedoms and be ever watchful against trading it away for small comforts piece by piece.

Notices of Motions

The Speaker: The Deputy Government House Leader.

Mr. Bilous: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm rising to give notice that pursuant to Standing Order 34(3) Written Question 18 will be dealt with on the next available Monday.

Introduction of Bills

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

Bill 210

Missing Persons (Silver Alert) Amendment Act, 2017

Mr. Smith: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg leave of the House to introduce Bill 210, the Missing Persons (Silver Alert) Amendment Act, 2017.

This bill is patterned on the Amber Alert system already in place in Alberta, creating a silver alert system, which enables a notice to be issued when a senior citizen or other adult with cognitive impairment, a mental disorder, or a medical condition which may result in them being particularly vulnerable goes missing. The idea behind this is to ensure that when an individual goes missing, if this situation is deemed to be critical and they are in medical danger, the relevant authorities would have more tools to return that individual to safety.

I would not have been able to bring this bill forward without the fantastic individuals seated in the public gallery who I introduced earlier – Dr. Liu from the University of Alberta and Dr. Kwong See, the Alberta Seniors Advocate – along with Raymond Swonek and Irene Martin-Lindsay from the Alberta Seniors Communities and Housing Association. All of these individuals were integral to making this bill a reality, and I extend my most sincere thanks to all of them.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[Motion carried; Bill 210 read a first time]

The Speaker: The Deputy Government House Leader.

Mr. Bilous: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to request unanimous consent to waive section 7(7) and continue with the Routine past 3 p.m. today.

[Unanimous consent granted]

3:00 Tabling Returns and Reports

Mr. Dach: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to table five copies of an article from the *Edmonton Sun* dated August 28, 2016, which I referenced this morning during debate on Bill 24, An Act to Support Gay-Straight Alliances. Specifically, I referenced Mr. Kenney's answer to the question, "If you could have one super power, what would it be?" to which Mr. Kenney answered, "To be able to go back in time." I believe that trip back in time will be in a little blue truck with the transmission firmly welded into reverse gear, eyes firmly glued on the rear-view mirror, careening into the ditch . . .

The Speaker: Okay, hon. member.

The hon. Member for Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville.

Mrs. Littlewood: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to table five copies of ATB Financial's economics and research team's publication the Owl entitled Wage Increases Show Momentum. It shows that things are looking up in Alberta with wages up, and it states that the weekly take-home pay of employed Albertans grew to \$1,134, with wages up in mining, quarrying, oil and gas, finance, and insurance.

I have a second tabling.

The Speaker: Go ahead.

Mrs. Littlewood: My second tabling is five copies of the policy resolution, referred to this morning by the Minister of Infrastructure, from the PC convention last November that pledges to out gay kids in schools, supported by Team Kenney.

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

Mr. Ceci: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to table a number of tablings today. The first is five copies of the Horse Racing Alberta 2016 annual report. The horse-racing industry is thriving thanks to our government's long-term commitment to the industry, and I'm pleased to report that thoroughbred racing has returned to Calgary. I was pleased to see it this past weekend live and win a bet.

Next, Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to table five copies of the Alberta Securities Commission annual report 2017. I'm pleased to continue to support the local Alberta-led regulator that meets the unique needs of Alberta's capital markets.

Next, I'm pleased to table five copies of the Alberta Capital Finance Authority annual reports for 2014, '15, and '16, Mr.

Speaker. As members will see, our government is pleased to continue supporting municipalities, school boards, and local entities like our airports with flexible funding for capital projects at a very reasonable cost.

Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased to table five copies of the judges and masters in chambers pension plans reports for 2013-14, '14-15, and '15-16.

I'm very pleased to table my last report, five copies of the Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission 2016-17 annual report and 2016-17 Year at a Glance, Mr. Speaker. As this Chamber knows well, our local brewing industry is thriving. Since the changes our government has brought forward, we've added 18 new breweries this year alone. This is the single largest year-over-year increase in Alberta's history, and I'm very proud of the grain-to-glass culture we're building in Alberta. As I said before, beer is good.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Stony Plain.

Ms Babcock: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to table five copies of ATB Financial's economics and research team's Owl publication entitled Drilling Activity to Provide Lift to Economic Growth. This shows that things are looking up here in Alberta. In the report it states that "the latest drilling data . . . shows that Alberta's energy sector will be central to . . . the province's return to growth" and that "as of August, the total number of developmental wells drilled in the province was up 129 per cent."

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark.

Mr. Carson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise today to table five copies of BMO's provincial monitor entitled Sunny Skies. It shows that things are looking up in Alberta. In the report it states: "Alberta's economy has returned to growth, and could potentially lead the country this year at 4.1%." In the same report it downgrades Saskatchewan's GDP forecast to just 1.7 per cent.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Drumheller-Stettler.

Mr. Strankman: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to rise also to table five copies of a memorandum to the minister from January 17, 2017. This is a federal memorandum discussing the potential impacts of carbon pricing on the primary agricultural sector. Its purpose is "to provide a preliminary assessment of the financial impacts on the primary agricultural sector from the implementation of the announced pan-Canadian pricing on carbon emissions." I think it's absolutely relevant to the carbon-taxing regime here in Alberta.

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

Mr. Westhead: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to table the requisite number of copies of a document to which I referred yesterday in my speech on Bill 24. It's dated November 2 and entitled GSA Bill Provides Important Clarity. This is from the Alberta Teachers' Association, and just a short quote from President Jeffery who says, "Teachers will be able to point to the law and tell students and parents clearly [that] student privacy, safety and security comes first," and President Jeffery is "calling for all-party support for the bill."

The Speaker: Hon. members, I am tabling a memorandum I received yesterday from the Government House Leader advising of a printing error in connection with Bill 27, the Conflicts of Interest Amendment Act, 2017, which incorrectly named the Minister of Justice and Solicitor General as the sponsor but should have named the President of Treasury Board and Minister of Finance. He further confirms that printed copies of the corrected bill are to be

distributed prior to this afternoon's proceedings and that the content of the bill has not changed apart from the correction of the name of the sponsor.

I would also like to table five copies of the 2016-17 Public Interest Commissioner fourth annual report, which was received in my office on November 8, 2017.

Finally, I would like to table five copies of the 2016-17 Alberta Ombudsman's 50th anniversary annual report and five copies of the office of the Ethics Commissioner of Alberta 2016-17 annual report, received in my office also on November 8.

Tablings to the Clerk

The Clerk: I wish to advise the Assembly that the following document was deposited with the office of the Clerk: on behalf of the hon. Ms Phillips, Minister of Environment and Parks and minister responsible for the climate change office, the Ministry of Environment and Parks environmental protection security fund annual report, April 1, 2016, to March 31, 2017.

Orders of the Day

Government Bills and Orders Committee of the Whole

[Ms Jabbour in the chair]

The Chair: Hon. members, I would like to call the Committee of the Whole to order.

Bill 24

An Act to Support Gay-Straight Alliances

The Chair: Are there any questions, comments or amendments with respect to this bill? The hon. Member for Calgary-Mountain View.

Dr. Swann: Well, thank you, Madam Chair. I did want to get on the record, as I missed the opportunity in second reading. Our caucus will enthusiastically support the bill with some reservations and some comments about how we would like to have seen things roll out in a more constructive way.

3:10

Historically, we're extremely proud of our pivotal role as a Liberal caucus in forcing the hand of the former PC government on GSAs. That's why we support this legislation, which supplements and builds on the Alberta Liberal's original vision for GSAs under former MLA Laurie Blakeman, entitled Bill 202, Safe and Inclusive Schools Statutes Amendment Act, 2014. We might not be here today had we passed that original bill because it addressed this issue in the original bill. Unfortunately, this was taken over by the PCs and watered down in order to be more palatable to their members and their constituents, I presume.

GSAs became mandatory in schools where students request them, and those steadfastly opposed have used a variety of means to skirt the law. The issues now relative to some schools not complying with the GSA legislation would have been avoided through the passage of the Alberta Liberal original GSA bill. The government is right to ensure that school boards follow both the spirit and the letter of the law by closing loopholes and giving the minister more tools to enforce the law.

GSAs unquestionably save lives and have been shown to reduce bullying for the entire school population where they have been implemented. It is therefore imperative that students wanting a GSA at their school are not denied the opportunity to create one.

We know that outing kids before they're ready, even if well intentioned, puts them at risk of family ostracism, self-harm, homelessness, and even suicide. If those aren't reason enough to legislate a student's right to privacy in regard to sexuality and gender identity, then I don't know what is. If there's a risk of students being outed by school officials on account of their membership in a GSA, it could very well mean the end of these groups because kids won't feel safe.

It's been suggested that Bill 24 is little more than a pre-emptive public relations strike by the current government, aimed at highlighting how extreme Jason Kenney is on this issue. From the perspective of the Alberta Liberals, the measures proposed in Bill 24 are warranted, notwithstanding the NDP-Jason Kenney political circus.

Jason Kenney has repeatedly raised the spectre of children as young as five years old participating in GSAs and school officials not being permitted to engage their parents. This is a red herring and detracts from the real issue here, which is protecting LGBTQ youth.

For its part, this current government would do well to tone down its hyperpartisan attacks on Mr. Kenney and start doing a better job of explaining why this legislation is necessary. Saying "Jason Kenney is the reason" is hardly good public policy and only reaffirms in the minds of many that this bill is more about politics than substance.

The NDP is also being heavy handed in their approach and dismissive of parents, school boards, and faith communities who are struggling to come to terms with this new reality. It is a little bit reminiscent of the poor rollout of Bill 6.

Having said all that, Madam Chair, I'm certainly prepared to support the bill, as I know many are in this House and across Alberta. It's part of our new age. It's part of a new reality and a new awareness of evidence and a new acceptance that the LGBTQ community has been marginalized, vilified, and in some ways damaged because of past policies and the lack of sensitivity across our society, including schools. So this is progress. It's not easy, but let's get on with it and help schools and communities and faith groups come to grips with what is an essential part of moving into the 21st century.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

The Chair: The hon. Member for Strathcona-Sherwood Park.

Cortes-Vargas: Thank you, Madam Chair. It's an honour to rise and to speak to Bill 24 in Committee of the Whole. I was making a few comments beforehand, but I think it's important to clear up and to clarify the importance of Bill 24 and the specific sections of it that really do make a difference and have been a part of addressing and seeing the implementation of Bill 10.

Of course, that starts with ensuring that the policies under section 45.1 of the School Act affirm the rights of the students and staff provided in the Alberta Human Rights Act and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. I think that that in itself is an important step that was there, and it provides clarification both for the students and the staff. I think that is an important part of this discussion.

I have some comments that I'll do later, but they're in regard to all of these, so I'll read these out. I think another section that is extremely important is to protect the students that join the GSA. I think this is a big part of the conversation. Of course, we had an amendment that was brought forward. One of the reasons that that section in Bill 24 exists is to clarify that the voluntary student associations, including GSAs, are not subject to the notification requirements. I think that that fundamentally is part of what we're

doing here today and why it's so important. I think it's also part of the overall, broader societal conversation as to: how do we bring forward this conversation about protecting LGBTQ students? What does it look like for parental involvement and making sure that everyone is part of this process?

I think the last part that I wanted to just point out is protecting the establishment of the GSAs from political interference. I think one of those comes in the amending of section 16.1 of the School Act. I think that what it does is to clarify the role of school authorities and the principals. I think this is really important because when a student is asking for a GSA, it shouldn't be on them to go through the burden of figuring out what it takes to get this GSA started. I think the professionals involved need to have a clear understanding of what their role is in that process and make sure that they make it as easy as possible for that GSA to begin and that it doesn't get stuck in the processes back and forth, in having to discuss with the broader board if this GSA is going to be possible. It's very clearly articulated in Bill 10 that if a student asks for a GSA, they should be able to start one up. I think that what we've seen in some examples are delays for various reasons, for lack of clarity, and I think it is important to move forward on a bill that really identifies who's in charge of what and what they need to do.

It brings me to the section where we talk about the timelines that principals are expected to work around when creating GSAs. The last one confirming – and this is, again, something that the member previous to me had mentioned. The previous Bill 202 actually already had this, which is making sure that the students have the right to name the organization a GSA and a QSA.

I think that a personal pet peeve of mine and, I know, of many members of the LGBTQ community is that we can exist as long as we don't talk about it. I think it underlines this conversation that it is hard to have this discussion, that it is a new, in fact, conversation, and that, yeah, we're making progress, but still there's this sense of discomfort or trying to tell us how to frame the conversation so it's palatable. I think that when we do that, we also underline the reasons why it's difficult to come out in the first place because it's hard to have that discussion. I think that's the fundamental reason. When you clear up those roles, responsibilities at the different levels of the people that are part of this process, it makes it easier on the student. Fundamentally, that's what this bill is about.

I go on to that because it's about the student, but it's a broad process of getting to that point. Madam Chair, I'm going to discuss these sections in a letter written to me by a constituent of mine that went through this process with their child. I think that that perspective really helps to explain that the GSA is part of the process and that it's part of a supportive role but that receiving support from their parents and all of that stuff can happen in its own way as well. You can come out to your parents, they can be supportive, they can meet with your teacher, and if those are all the parts that the student is looking for, that all happens. I think the story that he tells is very articulate on that.

I think that what GSAs really provide is a support group, and that's what they're meant to, right? It provides an additional support for these students. If that support isn't there at home, if that situation does occur, they have this to go to. That's why, when they ask for the GSA, it should be done in a timely fashion.

3:20

Madam Chair, I'm happy to table this on Tuesday to make sure that I follow the procedures, but I want to read some of this.

My name is Karson... and I am an advocate for LGBTQ2S+ individuals, issues and rights. From birth to age 12 I grew up and was raised in the small rural communities [all across Alberta]... Wembley... the City of Grande Prairie [and

a few others]. I mention these places because of the isolation, ignorance and [like-minded people] who lived in these places and nurtured me as I grew up. I'm sad to say that as a youth I was 100% a product of my environment. I cannot recall knowing anyone who was openly gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered or otherwise a sexual or gender variant person . . . The extent of my knowledge of the LGBTQ2S+ community was the phrase, "That's so gay" which meant lame or dumb and was thrown around way too often. I learned quickly that "That's so gay" was a negative thing. As I grew up and started to express myself through clothing, hairstyles and piercings I would . . . regularly be labeled as gay. Because my . . . knowledge of the word gay was centered around being lame or dumb I took offence to this and I believe this eventually developed into a form of homophobia.

I'm going to just interject there. I know that the language being used here in many ways can impact a lot of different people in different communities, and I just want to recognize that, that definitely the intent is to tell this narrative from a very authentic place, where he's coming from. I decided not to edit this.

To continue:

Around Grade 10, my uncle that I idolized growing up, in a tragic series of events came out as gay. Because of the pain, and fear he had, and the magnitude of how he revealed to us his family that he was gay was so heavy, it really opened my mind to how ignorant my thinking was about anyone who is a sexual or gender variant person. Once he came out, and found the love of his life it really hit me. Happiness [is about truth] and truth is achieved when we allow ourselves to be who we really are, not what boxy and prescribed social norms say we have to be.

As I got older and went to university I was exposed to people that I never had before. The type of person who was the "norm" in the small towns I grew up in were few and far between in the big city of Edmonton. Around this time my wife and I had our first child. Like every parent, I will say the birth of my child is the best thing that ever happened to me. My child fills my heart with love . . . and has forced me to expand and challenge my rigid thinking in . . . many ways. For the first two years of our child's life we believed we actually had a son as male was the gender assigned at birth. However, as soon as expression would allow we quickly realized we couldn't have been more wrong. We most definitely had a daughter. At first we were confused and uneducated. Until the age of six, she didn't care what clothes she wore or what her haircut was so to anyone who looked at her, they would have seen a little boy. However, if you talked to her or watched her play it was evident that she was a little girl. Our daughter [had always led] the way and just last year, while in grade 1, at the age of 6 she [bravely and courageously transitioned to] align her outer expression of clothing, and hairstyle to match who she is on the inside. We didn't know how unhappy and unconfident she was until we saw the overwhelmingly confident and happy little lady that emerged when she finally let the world know [who she was, who the real her was]. Our daughter is currently in grade 2 and still attending the very same school she attended when she transitioned her physical expression from male to female last year. My wife and I decided to keep her at the school where she transitioned because she has a great group of friends who really support her in many different ways. However, there are many friends, and students who are not friends, that are compelled to share her story with people who do not and would never know that she at some point appeared as a he. We do not blame the children for their curiosities and internal desire to fill . . . unassuming people in with our daughter's story. We have come to terms that no matter how great [or close our] circle of friends are, there is a great possibility that our daughter will continue getting outed as transgender as long as she stays at her current school. That is extremely troubling as we look and plan ahead for adolescence. For those reasons we are actively

searching for [a new school] to enrol her in the new year that have strong GSAs and policies that are put into action that will protect our child's privacy from being outed and otherwise.

Where my wife and I feel . . . incredibly lucky to have such a strong and confident daughter we also know that she is very lucky to have supportive parents and family members who support her in all aspects of her life. We are well aware that . . . many LGBTQ2S+ individuals . . . do not have supportive families. We have met many of these individuals and our hearts break for what they have and are currently still going through. Many of these individuals who have unsupportive families hide and suppress who they are, causing emotional, psychological and physical harm to themselves. These people who either confide in their families or who are outed in any capacity are often met with neglect, abuse [and] abandonment; just for being who they are.

In a province where many individuals still hold onto their . . . narrow perspectives of anything that varies from the "norm" we need to protect the large population of vulnerable individuals . . . who do not fit into these . . . boxes.

It's crucial that all LGBTQ2S+ students in Alberta be given safe and healthy environments [and] anonymity and privacy that School GSAs provide for them so they can receive support [when they need it], because if their families do not support them the outcome could be catastrophic.

As a parent with a . . . mindset [of a] decent human being who believes in equity and fair treatment for all, I fully back the NDP's proposed legislation of protecting our children by making it illegal to notify parents if their child [is attending] a gay straight alliance.

Madam Chair, he signs:

Sincerely and extremely hopeful.

I know that the many parents I have met with that have a child, that are part of GSAs are just that. They are very sincere and extremely helpful. They might not know what it looks like to be a parent of that child, but they're willing to learn, and they're willing to talk to other parents as well. I think what disheartens me most about some of the rhetoric that happens here is that there is an amplification of these ideas of what GSAs are that is fundamentally untrue, and that causes harm to the people that are just trying to create a supportive environment, that are trying to support their children.

I believe that in having this conversation, it forces people to actually reiterate their positions. I think that's important, Madam Chair, because in this world of politics, people can say all the nice things, but their policy doesn't have to look that way.

I think that in many ways Bill 10 needed to be fixed, and that's what we're doing here today. It's something that is important because I have seen that if a GSA isn't done in a timely manner – you're talking about children – if they don't receive a GSA within that school year, they might be going to another school next time, and by the time they get a GSA there, it will be another process. I think that the whole point of this is to make sure that kids have a supportive, safe space, and I can't emphasize that enough. I can tell you that, from high school students to parents that have kids in GSAs at younger ages, all of them at some point get involved, or if not, it's because the student doesn't feel comfortable and needs some extra support. Where do they find that? In the GSAs. I think there's absolutely nothing wrong with that, and in fact it doesn't cause any harm.

I completely disagree with the opposition's narrative that they are not in agreement with that very principle but can agree with this bill. I think that's completely disingenuous, Madam Chair. I think the opposition really does need to come clean as to the reasons they oppose these bills. I think it's part of having healthy debate to actually be able to debate the positions you stand on.

I think that when we're unable to produce those reasons, we muddy the waters with concepts that are untrue. Some of the things that have been thrown out there like that the GSAs have a curriculum embedded in them, a curriculum that is student led, a curriculum that is talking about the things that are hard to talk about in every other room – it's not a world view being embedded in there. It's a safe space, and I think the opposition causes harm when they put things like that into the public sphere and doesn't clarify those points.

3:30

I'm so, so proud of the many Albertans that have come out and explained why this is so important. From reporters to parents to concerned citizens they have all taken time to explain again and again that GSAs can be as simple as throwing a bake sale. It can be as simple as meeting in a classroom and talking about what it's like to be you. It doesn't have to be these complicated things that they're making it out to be.

Furthermore, I think this is the place that they go to also get that support that they need in order to come out to their parents. I think it's one of the things that you don't talk about in normal society, how to come out. You know, I never knew the words of how to do that, and many other people that go through that process don't know. Where do we talk about it? So being able to have a space where you're able to hear the stories of other people that have done that gives you the words that you might need to articulate it, and I think that's what we do in other classes, because we need role models to see how to express ourselves, how to explain something that we've never known how to express.

I didn't know to use the word "gay" for these things, and many other students feel that way. That's what a GSA provides, and it's a really powerful thing. All they're really asking for in these situations are role models that understand their process, that can provide guidance, that can provide language to tie to the experience that they have, and that empowers them to reach out to their parents. That empowers them and emboldens them to do that work that we want to see, to engage the parents in this conversation.

I've met with many constituents that have asked me questions about this very fact. I completely reject that parents are not involved in this process. I think that they're an incredibly important part of this process, and nothing can take away from that. GSAs are a supportive role, and they will continue to be. They're an incredibly important one, one that I will never stop fighting for because I know that kids are also our future right now, and they're defining this role. I know that the next generation that's coming forward is not going to accept these kinds of backward-facing ideologies to govern our policies. That's the reality that the opposition has to look at, that they're trying to turn back the clock on progress that we've made on human rights in this province. They're trying to turn it back because that's what it would take to take this away, because it would be challenged, and it should be challenged that you are not recognizing that under human rights we have the ability to express ourselves, our sexual orientation and gender expression, and not to face discrimination on that basis. These are the concepts that we look at when we have a Bill 24, when we have these discussions in this House.

It's incredibly powerful to hear the number of parents that will say: what they're saying is completely untrue. It's something that needs to be said. The amendment that was brought forward was brought forward under reasons that were based on their own rhetoric. They built that platform and then presented the amendment. It wasn't based on the experience of the people that are going through this process, which is interesting to me because in every other thing they would say to the government: did you consult

the people that are impacted? In this setting I would say: did they consult before they put that amendment forward to the people that would be impacted? If you do not clarify the role of the schools' ability to not notify parents in the case of a GSA and QSA – who did you notify? I would love to know that. If you had talked to those folks, they would tell you that it's because we are making sure that privacy is of top concern.

I think that's where we need to continue this discussion, and I look forward to talking to other folks about the importance of supporting this bill. We've heard support across the province, and we must continue this conversation. I believe that we can do so in such a way that is constructive. I believe that we need to do it in such a way that it is moving this issue forward and that we're moving into a generation that will not accept those kinds of backwards ideals, where discrimination is something that we accept in our society.

Madam Chair, thank you very much.

The Chair: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Mill Creek.

Ms Woollard: Thank you. I'm really pleased to be able to speak in support of Bill 24. I'd like to start off with a little event I just read about that I hadn't even remembered till now. November 9, 1938, was the occasion when Jewish-owned stores, buildings, and synagogues were targeted in Germany and Austria. They were under attack, and authorities stood by and did nothing. This event was called Kristallnacht, night of broken glass, referring to the pieces of broken glass that covered the streets and a reminder of how lives can be shattered by such atrocities. Of course, as we know now, the events of that night were just a hint of greater harm to come.

The point of writing about it, the point of speaking about it is that they were saying that all of us know or should know that we have a responsibility to respond promptly and loudly when any group is attacked for their religious or political beliefs, ethnicity, or sexual orientation. When we all stand together, that is the strongest message we can send, whether it's something as horrific as that or something, like you said, like standing for people for their sexual orientation and making sure that they have the right to be able to be themselves.

As a parent and a teacher and a psychologist I think I've thought a lot about this, child development. One of the things we learn: not everyone is perfect at it. But we do know that as the child grows and they become more of an individual and less just an offshoot of the family, they have things where not every part of their life is shared with everyone. They begin to have different thoughts, ideas, beliefs as they become an adult. One of the things we learn to do is to trust them to tell us what's important, to communicate as they're ready and when they see the need.

As a teacher we try to encourage – definitely, we encourage – children and students to talk to their parents about important things and try to help them, as the previous speaker was saying, to prepare to share important information. But to do it on behalf of a person is very disrespectful. This is their personal issue, their personal decision to make, and for someone else to make it is invasive. It's a violation of trust. We have to help them make themselves known to others around them.

Giving people a GSA gives them a place where they can have unquestioning support. They can be free to speak about who they are. A lot of times things like that will give them the confidence they need to be able to express themselves in other situations such as to their parents if they're feeling a little uncertain about telling their parents what's going on with them.

One more story that was going through my head a lot as I was thinking about the various things that people were saying was about

a young man who I had taught. This was in a small rural community where I taught. He was the youngest of three children. He committed suicide at about age 19. Nobody had any idea what was going on with him. There was no obvious outside cause. The family was stable. His brother and sister were flourishing. He was intelligent. He had friends. He had capabilities. It always made me wonder: was there something that he wasn't able to share, and he just couldn't live with not telling people who he was? We'll never know, of course. But, you know, the devastation in the community from that death was really terrible to see.

Really, the whole idea of GSAs is in support of students. The more we can do to help them learn confidence in themselves, learn to speak up for themselves, learn to be secure in who they are, the better off they will be and the better off everyone will be.

Thank you.

3:40

The Chair: Any other members wishing to speak? The hon. Member for Athabasca-Sturgeon-Redwater.

Mr. Piquette: Thank you, Madam Chair. It's my great honour and privilege to rise today in the House to put myself on the record as being strongly in support of Bill 24, An Act to Support Gay-Straight Alliances. I hesitate to lend my voice to that of my colleagues in the sense that I don't think I could possibly match the level of eloquence, the level of sagacity that we've all had the privilege of hearing. However, particularly with my own roles as a rural person, as someone who grew up in a small rural community, as someone who's been involved in this issue since the mid-80s, and as a teacher of law and ethics in education, I think that maybe those roles might have maybe a bit of relevance to this discussion. It's in that spirit that I present my remarks.

Just to echo comments of other members that talked about what it's like in our smaller communities, where I grew up, the only discussion about these types of issues was as a way to discipline groups. It was a way to set the boundaries of what you belonged to. I mean, if you were gay, you were outside the group. You weren't worthy of any sort of recognition, and all of us lived in terror of being branded that way, you know? Whether there were gay or lesbian or questioning classmates that I grew up with – in fact, there were. I didn't find out about this until many years afterwards, and I know that I had a couple of classmates that never gave a hint. Years later they came out. How many years did they lose because of that? I mean, I suppose they were fortunate in that they had that opportunity. As the hon. member who just spoke, Edmonton-Mill Creek, we also, unfortunately, had out-of-the-blue suicides in our community that later on could be traced to just this total lack of communication and acceptance.

I could say that I'm proud to be part of a government that is putting this bill forward. You know, it's a sign of progress, but it's also a sign of how much progress we still need to make, that something like this is necessary. I do want to take a bit of issue with the comments that the Member for Calgary-Mountain View made when talking about us politicizing this issue. This is not something that you can divorce from politics, and this is because the opposition to this bill is motivated by a political agenda. I think that it's really important that we do understand that, and I think the hon. members across the aisle do understand that. I think there's probably a growing discomfort in, you know, the Faustian pact that they've made.

The talking points that came out in opposition to Bill 24, the statement that was released by Mr. Kenney, are word for word from Parents for Choice in Education, which has a particular agenda, and also very similar to the types of information put out by the Association for Reformed Political Action. When you understand

those connections is when you understand just how disingenuous the line is that we don't want to out gay children in opposing this bill. The reason I say that is that if you look to the information that these groups put out, they do not accept any other form of sexuality besides that between a man and a woman for the purposes of procreation. That's where they're at. The reason that there's opposition to this – this is not an issue of parental rights so much as a very particular right that they're claiming, and that would be a right to be able to determine for their child what their sexuality is and how they express it.

As a former instructor in law and ethics in education I've had the opportunity to look at the evolving role of the understanding of parental rights over history, and you have to go back a long way to find similar types of claims to that level of parental authority. Really, you don't go within religious traditions. You have to go into Roman legal tradition and Roman political tradition, and that would be the concept of *paterfamilias*.

Paterfamilias was an old Roman concept that the father basically owned his family. He owned his wife, he owned his children, and he owned his grandchildren. He had the power of life and death over them. He had the power to sell them into slavery if he so chose. There were some reforms later on where he only had that right three times, but that's where that came from. It was radical past the early republic, and in fact, you know, into the later Roman Empire you had that moderated. Why is that? Because with the growing understanding of what it means to be ethical, there was an understanding that you cannot claim your child. You cannot claim your spouse. You cannot claim your grandchildren. You cannot claim another human being, period, as your property to be able to decide to do with what you will.

It's that evolving concept that's also influenced what the role is of the parent in education, and it's not an unlimited role. Even the United Nations declaration of, you know, parental choice in education that the opposition is referring to is not unlimited. It's justified based on ethical principles, and, basically, when that parental authority exceeds the ethical backing of that principle, it's no longer valid. I think that parents – and there are only a few of them out there. I mean, the vast majority of parents, I think, are okay with legislation, and I think that this is true in rural areas as well.

I mean, we've evolved a lot since the Delwin Vriend case back in the mid-90s, I think 1998 to be precise, when that came through. We've evolved a lot since when I was on campus back in the late '80s, when we would have blue jeans day to try to raise awareness of gay rights. Then we were talking about the right for gay people not to be fired for their sexual orientation, not to be evicted for their sexual orientation, where you had basically the entire business faculty make a point of not showing up in jeans. What I'm making a point of is that it hasn't been too many years ago that it was totally socially acceptable to totally deny these rights.

But we've evolved. The majority of us have evolved, but unfortunately there is still a minority that needs further education, and I think that it's really unfortunate that you have people out there that are spreading misinformation and, you know, just crazy notions about what this means. I mean, I've been looking at blog postings, some by prominent former publishers, saying that these GSAs are, in fact, sex clubs and that we have to oppose them because they're going to be spreading venereal diseases. They're talking about that this is what's going to happen to 10- and 11-year-olds. That's really going quite a few steps back in the past, and it's unacceptable.

The thing is that I know that the members across the House – there are people that do have some real principles, and I just don't understand how they can feel comfortable in supporting this type of a tactic. We do need to speak to what's underlying this. We need to

speak to the politics of it, and it's because of this that we need to have legislation like this.

That said, I think that this is a good bill. Teachers support it. I think that the majority is on our side. I think that we have this moral obligation to put this through. There have been far too many children and youth that have suffered horribly and unnecessarily because – why? Actually, it's a good question. Because of what exactly? Something that has been erroneous from the start.

With that, I'd like to rest my remarks, and I do hope that, in the end, we can get unanimous support for this bill. Thank you.

3:50

The Chair: Any other members wishing to speak? Edmonton-Whitemud.

Dr. Turner: Well, thank you, Madam Chair. Indeed, like my colleague that just spoke, I'm very pleased to rise and actually register my firm support for this legislation. Indeed, about three years ago today I was outside this Legislature demonstrating against Bill 10. There was a multiparty demonstration that included the Alberta Liberal Party and the Alberta New Democrats as well as a whole raft of other supporters that decried what was going on with Bill 10. That was an important event in my political learnings.

I'm pleased to see that this bill is actually going to finish the work that was started by the then MLA for Edmonton-Centre, which our government has proceeded with and is now going to make sure that students, whether they're gay or straight or whatever, can join a club, just like the chess club or a United Nations club, and actually find support and encouragement in participating in that without concerns about being outed to their parents.

I find that to be a reprehensible position by the opposition, that there would be a forced outing of children because there was some concern about their sexual orientation. That's an abomination – I'm sorry; I have to use very strong language in this – and I entirely reject that assertion. I find the new leader of the United Conservative Party and his position to be equally reprehensible, and I'm hoping that all Albertans recognize this and act upon it in the next election.

I do want to bring up a few other points. As all members of this Legislature know, I've spent 40 years in the practice of medicine in the province of Alberta, and I over that time have learned a lot. There's a lot to learn about consent and ethics and professionalism that isn't being demonstrated by the other side on this particular issue.

I was particularly impressed with the presentation yesterday by the Member for Calgary-South East, who is a professional first responder and who has personal experience in this field. I also have been in conversation with and I was impressed with the presentation by the MLA for Vermilion-Lloydminster. We actually had a discussion about how in our work as a physician or a first responder or a veterinarian on a daily basis, if you're in full-time practice, you would gain the knowledge of personal situations that literally cannot be divulged, and if they were divulged, in fact, I would be in threat of losing my licence. If I learned of a sexual orientation concern or a mental health concern or – I think the worst thing I could learn is that a young person actually thought that they might vote Conservative when they got to be of age. In fact, that's the one that I might want to divulge to their parents because I think that that child might actually need some education. But if I were to divulge something that was given to me in confidence by a child – and that includes to the parents – then I would be in threat of losing my licence. I should lose my licence for that.

Now, these guys over there want to force teachers into that invidious situation of being told that they have to divulge to the parents something that the student certainly would have told them in confidence. In fact, the teachers are supposed to make some judgment about whether or not the parents are capable of actually taking this information in and acting on it or not and whether the acting on it might be detrimental. How silly, how deranged almost in its logic. This just blows my mind.

I can tell you that the Alberta Teachers' Association agrees with me. Just this week 40,000 teachers came out and said: "This is impossible. Please don't do this to us." I can tell you that those 40,000 teachers are going to be voting for the New Democrats in the next election because of this.

I guess that's really where I want to leave this. Basically, what the UCP is asking us to do is something that is unethical, it puts a tremendous stress on teachers, and we should stop it.

Thank you.

The Chair: The hon. Deputy Government House Leader.

Mr. Bilous: Thank you, Madam Chair. I move that we rise and report progress.

[The voice vote indicated that the motion that the committee rise and report progress carried]

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 3:56 p.m.]

[Fifteen minutes having elapsed, the committee divided]

[Ms Jabbour in the chair]

For the motion:

Babcock	Hoffman	Miranda
Bilous	Horne	Payne
Carlier	Kleinstauber	Piquette
Carson	Larivee	Rosendahl
Connolly	Littlewood	Sabir
Cortes-Vargas	Loyola	Schreiner
Dach	Luff	Shepherd
Eggen	Malkinson	Sucha
Fitzpatrick	McCuaig-Boyd	Turner
Goehring	McKitrick	Westhead
Gray	Miller	Woollard

Against the motion:

Cyr	McIver	Strankman
Ellis	Smith	Yao
MacIntyre		

Totals:	For – 33	Against – 7
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[Motion that the committee rise and report progress carried]

The Chair: The committee will now rise and report progress.

[The Deputy Speaker in the chair]

Mr. Piquette: Madam Speaker, the Committee of the Whole has had under consideration a certain bill. The committee reports progress on Bill 24.

The Deputy Speaker: Does the Assembly concur in the report?

Hon. Members: Aye.

The Deputy Speaker: Opposed? So ordered.

Government Bills and Orders

Second Reading

Bill 27

Conflicts of Interest Amendment Act, 2017

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Ellerslie.

Loyola: Thank you, Madam Speaker. On behalf of the President of Treasury Board and Minister of Finance I am pleased to rise today to move second reading of Bill 27, the Conflicts of Interest Amendment Act, 2017.

Madam Speaker, today we are fulfilling a commitment we made in 2015. At the time we said that we would strengthen Alberta's Conflicts of Interest Act and expand it to apply to senior staff of our province's agencies, boards, and commissions. That's what we are proposing to do with this particular legislation.

Alberta's public agencies play a pivotal role in regulating, managing, and delivering important programs and services to Albertans on behalf of government as well as providing oversight and advice on provincial issues. Public agencies are a significant part of Alberta's public sector, and together they account for about half of the government's total yearly budget. Quite rightly, then, Albertans have high expectations that public agencies are relevant, effective, transparent, well governed, and accountable to both government and to them.

Bringing in a consistent set of rules for conflicts of interest is critical in increasing the accountability of public agencies, protecting Albertans' tax dollars, and ensuring that public agencies are governed transparently. With the changes proposed in Bill 27, Albertans can be confident that clear rules and expectations will be put in place to ensure that public agency staff and board members are acting in the public interest.

Our public agencies provide valuable services that make life better for Albertans such as higher education, protecting vulnerable people, and delivering health services. It's vitally important that our public agencies are held to the same high standards that we expect of our elected officials and senior public servants. Bill 27 addresses several key provisions, which I would like to outline at this time.

The bill proposes that public agencies that are already subject to APAGA, the Alberta Public Agencies Governance Act, would also be subject to the Conflicts of Interest Act. Currently, as of November 1, there are 136 such agencies. Also included in this list would be the three Alberta Health Services subsidiaries and Covenant Health.

Bill 27 proposes a number of prescribed elements that would apply to employees and board members of all applicable public agencies. Changes to the Conflicts of Interest Act would require all public agencies to have codes of conduct including these prescribed elements: a requirement to conduct themselves impartially; restrictions on acting in self-interest or furthering private interest by virtue of one's position; disclosure of real and apparent conflicts of interest; restrictions on gifts, including monetary limits; limitations on concurrent employment and holding other offices, including processes of seeking approval.

All APAGA agencies would be required to submit updated codes of conduct reflecting these prescribed elements to the Ethics Commissioner within four months of the act being proclaimed. The Ethics Commissioner will review all revised codes to ensure that they meet the requirements of the act and sign off by March 31, 2019. Agencies would then have to publish their new codes of conduct no later than April 30, 2019.

The legislation also proposes a set of core statutory requirements for CEOs and board chairs. For all agency board members and

employees the core requirement would be a baseline standard enforced through codes of conduct that public agencies would be required to implement. Public agencies could have additional restrictions, but these are the ones that all agencies would be required to implement.

The legislation also proposes a set of core statutory requirements for CEOs and board chairs. These requirements include restrictions on private interest, restrictions on using influence, restrictions on using insider information, and disclosure of real and apparent conflicts of interest. There is an additional core statutory requirement that would apply to CEOs and equivalents, restrictions on concurrent employment and holding other offices. This additional core statutory requirement would take effect immediately for new hires, upon reappointment, or following a two-year notice period.

CEOs and equivalents of significant agencies would also be subject to additional statutory requirements upon designation, including restrictions on holding stocks and other public securities; disclosure to the Ethics Commissioner, including financial disclosure; postemployment restrictions, specifically a 12-month cooling-off period following employment with a public agency. These additional statutory requirements would be set out in the act, where the position would be designated in a separate order in council and come into effect on contract renewals and new appointments.

Where concurrent contracts are longer term, a two-year transition period would apply so that within two years all CEOs and board chairs would be subject to these enhanced requirements. Through order in council cabinet would have the ability to add or to exempt agencies and positions from any of the conflict-of-interest requirements. We propose a statutory requirement for all public agencies to have codes of conduct within the required elements.

To enhance oversight and enforcement, we also propose applying restrictions on furthering private interests using influence and using insider information as statutory requirements within the Conflicts of Interest Act. These restrictions would be carried out through order in council and would apply to board chairs and CEOs of public agencies on contract renewals and new appointments.

There would be a two-year transition period to ensure that CEOs with longer term contracts would also come under the new requirements within the two-year time frame rather than on expiration of their contract.

I would also like to note that in Bill 27 it is proposed that cabinet would have the ability to add or exempt agencies and positions from any conflict-of-interest requirement.

4:20

The Ethics Commissioner would have the authority to receive and review disclosures from designated CEOs and their equivalents; reduce requirements for restrictions on public securities and restrictions on postemployment; investigate alleged breaches of the act by board chairs, CEOs, and other designated senior positions; issue reports and make recommendations to the responsible minister and/or board; review public agency codes of conduct to ensure that they meet the statutory requirements set out in this particular bill. As well, disclosure information submitted to the Ethics Commissioner will remain confidential.

Today I'm proud to say that our government has been doing great work to maximize the value of agencies, boards, and commissions. We have seen numerous important changes to increase transparency, fiscal accountability, and diversity and significant progress government-wide in several different areas, including fair and appropriate executive compensation; effective use of public dollars; transparency and accountability, including salary disclosure;

revitalization of board appointment diversity and a diligent appointment process; a compensation framework for 23 designated ABCs, cutting salaries and eliminating bonuses for the highest paid top executives of agencies, boards, and commissions; more transparency for Albertans with the launch of the ABC recruitment website for recruitment of board members, appointments, and to ensure that all Albertans have the opportunity to apply on vacancies; and the public agency sunshine list, with public agencies required to publicly post employment and severance contracts of high-level executives and all board members.

I look forward to discussion on Bill 27 and would ask that all members of this House support this bill.

The Deputy Speaker: Any other members wishing to speak? The hon. Member for Athabasca-Sturgeon-Redwater.

Mr. Piquette: Thank you, Madam Speaker. It is my privilege to rise in the House today to speak in support of Bill 27, an act to expand conflict-of-interest rules to agencies, boards, and commissions. Agencies play a very important role in making life better for Albertans, and their executive and board members should be held to the same high ethical standards expected of ourselves as MLAs and of senior public servants. Our government is strongly committed to strengthening conflict-of-interest legislation and extending it to senior staff of public agencies, boards, and commissions.

Now, the reason for that is that conflict-of-interest requirements are not consistent across agencies, and a comprehensive, well-elaborated set of rules is simply good governance. Alberta's public agencies are a critical part of how we deliver services. They, in fact, account for about half of government's total budgetary spending. With these changes we can be confident that public agency staff and board members are indeed acting in the public interest.

Now, my hon. colleague from Edmonton-Ellerslie gave some background to the bill. What I'd like to do is just kind of explore some of the questions that this new legislation might bring up in the minds of other hon. members and, of course, the public. The first question would be: why are we changing the Conflicts of Interest Act, and how in particular will those changes benefit Albertans? Of course, as I just mentioned, we are committed to strengthening the conflict-of-interest legislation, and that's what we're proposing to do. While some public agencies indeed do have conflict-of-interest requirements in place through their codes of conduct or their employment contracts, there is not a consistent or comprehensive set of rules being applied to public agencies. This speaks to why we need to do that.

Now, what are the teeth in this? What are the penalties for breaches of the act? Currently there is an administrative penalty for not disclosing to the Ethics Commissioner on time or for failing to fully disclose conflicts as outlined in the Conflicts of Interest Act. This penalty applies to those currently covered under the act, including MLAs and senior ministerial staff, and cannot exceed \$500. It is currently an offence for a designated senior official to violate the postemployment restriction, subject to a fine of up to \$50,000. With amendments to this act, these penalties will become applicable to designated senior officials, and this will put this in alignment with current provisions for ministers and deputy ministers.

Another question, kind of following that, is: has any consideration been given to increasing the penalties for breaching the act? Now, this is not something that we are proposing to do through these amendments.

How will the requirements be enforced? Well, chairs and CEOs and their equivalents would be subject to oversight by the Ethics Commissioner for the statutory requirements that apply to them. In addition, all agency employees, including CEOs and equivalents, and all board members, including chairs, will be subject to conflict-of-interest requirements through a code of conduct which will be required for each public agency. The requirements for codes of conduct align with the approach used for the Alberta public service. Once again, these will, then, align it more closely with those in place for us as elected officials, including ministers, as well as requirements in place for deputy ministers.

Another question people might have in mind is: how do we decide that? How do we decide which agencies should be subject to the additional conflict-of-interest requirements? Now, this is still a work-in-progress, but there are indeed several considerations, including whether the agency is involved in the following activities. One would be performing a regulatory function, a second one would be making autonomous decisions and/or binding decisions, a third one would be managing and allocating substantial amounts of public funding, and finally, extensive interaction with the private sector. I think that with the reasons being stated, you can see that these are situations where a conflict of interest might arise on a more frequent basis and where there might be a greater temptation to end up in such a situation.

Another question that people might ask about this legislation that we're proposing is: why do some requirements apply to CEOs and chairs while others apply to board members and agency staff? Just how was it decided which staff would be affected by the changes? Now, chairs, CEOs, and equivalents will be subject to higher levels of requirements than agency staff and board members due to their heightened responsibilities and accountability, so a fairly obvious connection there. Chairs, CEOs, and equivalents of significant agencies would also be subject to additional statutory requirements as well as codes of conduct and core statutory requirements. Now, since these agencies are providing such an important and significant service and function on behalf of the government, it is indeed highly appropriate that there be more oversight in place for chairs, CEOs, and equivalents.

Now, another question that might be posed is: why will some requirements be in legislation while others will be administered through codes of conduct? There's a good reason for this difference. The use of statutory requirements for board chairs and CEOs and their equivalents creates the ability for the Ethics Commissioner to provide oversight, including the investigation of potential breaches. This approach recognizes the responsibilities and accountabilities associated with these positions. That's why that would have to go through the Ethics Commissioner.

Another question might be: how does this apply to postsecondary institutions? What are the requirements for them? The requirements for postsecondary institutions would be the same, essentially, as those for other public agencies. However, as with other public agencies, the use of codes of conduct will provide postsecondary institutions with some greater flexibility in order to address their unique needs such as those that are unique to postsecondary institutions having to protect academic freedom.

Now, are there additional requirements to this legislation? Like I said previously, they are the same requirements that ministers and deputy ministers are subject to, and they would include the following: the requirement to disclose financial information, information on direct associates; restrictions on holding public securities unless placed in a blind trust or otherwise approved by

the Ethics Commissioner; and a 12-month restriction on taking certain positions after leaving a CEO or other equivalent position.

When would these core statutory requirements take effect? That would be . . .

The Deputy Speaker: I hesitate to interrupt the hon. member, but pursuant to Standing Order 4(2) the House stands adjourned until Tuesday, November 14, at 10 a.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 4:30 p.m.]

Bill Status Report for the 29th Legislature - 3rd Session (2017)

Activity to Thursday, November 9, 2017

The Bill sponsor's name is in brackets following the Bill title. If it is a money Bill, (\$) will appear between the title and the sponsor's name. Numbers following each Reading refer to Hansard pages where the text of debates is found; dates for each Reading are in brackets following the page numbers. Bills numbered 1 to 200 are Government Bills. Bills numbered 201 or higher are Private Members' Public Bills. Bills numbered with a "Pr" prefix are Private Bills.

* An asterisk beside a Bill number indicates an amendment was passed to that Bill; the Committee line shows the precise date of the amendment.

The date a Bill comes into force is indicated in square brackets after the date of Royal Assent. If a Bill comes into force "on proclamation," "with exceptions," or "on various dates," please contact Legislative Counsel, Alberta Justice, for details at 780.427.2217. The chapter number assigned to the Bill is entered immediately following the date the Bill comes into force. SA indicates Statutes of Alberta; this is followed by the year in which it is included in the statutes, and its chapter number. Please note, Private Bills are not assigned chapter number until the conclusion of the Fall Sittings.

Bill 1 — An Act to Reduce School Fees (Eggen)

First Reading — 6 (*Mar. 2, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 105-10 (*Mar. 8, 2017 morn.*), 192-96 (*Mar. 9, 2017 aft.*), 235-42 (*Mar. 14, 2017 morn.*), 269-71 (*Mar. 14, 2017 aft.*), 273-74 (*Mar. 15, 2017 morn., adjourned*), 282-91 (*Mar. 15, 2017 morn., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 424-31 (*Mar. 21, 2017 aft.*), 556-58 (*Apr. 6, 2017 aft., passed*)

Third Reading — 674-78 (*Apr. 19, 2017 aft., passed*)

Royal Assent — 879 (*May 4, 2017 aft.*) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2017 c6]

Bill 2* — An Act to Remove Barriers for Survivors of Sexual and Domestic Violence (Ganley)

First Reading — 67-68 (*Mar. 7, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 110-11 (*Mar. 8, 2017 morn.*), 192 (*Mar. 9, 2017 aft.*), 314-22 (*Mar. 15, 2017 aft.*), 336-39 (*Mar. 16, 2017 morn., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 455-59 (*Mar. 22, 2017 aft., passed with amendments*)

Third Reading — 678-79 (*Apr. 19, 2017 aft., passed*)

Royal Assent — 879 (*May 4, 2017 aft.*) [Comes into force May 4, 2017; SA 2017 c7]

Bill 3* — Voluntary Blood Donations Act (Hoffman)

First Reading — 208 (*Mar. 13, 2017 aft., passed.*)

Second Reading — 323-36 (*Mar. 16, 2017 morn., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 394-400 (*Mar. 21, 2017 morn.*), 421-24 (*Mar. 21, 2017 aft., passed with amendments*)

Third Reading — 472-80 (*Mar. 23, 2017 aft., passed on division*)

Royal Assent — (*Mar. 30, 2017 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force Mar. 30, 2017; SA 2017 cV-5]

Bill 4 — Appropriation (Supplementary Supply) Act, 2017 (\$) (Ceci)

First Reading — 191 (*Mar. 9, 2017 aft, passed*)

Second Reading — 306-07 (*Mar. 15, 2017 aft., adjourned*), 322 (*Mar. 15, 2017 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 389-93 (*Mar. 21, 2017 morn.*)

Third Reading — 449-52 (*Mar. 22, 2017 aft., passed on division*)

Royal Assent — (*Mar. 30, 2017 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force Mar. 30, 2017; SA 2017 c2]

Bill 5 — Appropriation (Interim Supply) Act, 2017 (\$) (Ceci)

First Reading — 266 (*Mar. 14, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 310-14 (*Mar. 15, 2017 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 393-94 (*Mar. 21, 2017 morn.*)

Third Reading — 452-55 (*Mar. 22, 2017 aft., passed on division*)

Royal Assent — (*Mar. 30, 2017 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force Mar. 30, 2017; SA 2017 c1]

Bill 6 — Northland School Division Act (Eggen)

First Reading — 524 (*Apr. 4, 2017 aft., passed*)
Second Reading — 558-61 (*Apr. 6, 2017 aft., passed*)
Committee of the Whole — 671-74 (*Apr. 19, 2017 aft., passed*)
Third Reading — 755-59 (*May 2, 2017 morn., passed*)
Royal Assent — 879 (*May 4, 2017 aft.*) [Comes into force May 4, 2017; SA 2017 cN-5.1]

Bill 7 — An Act to Enhance Post-secondary Academic Bargaining (Schmidt)

First Reading — 552 (*Apr. 6, 2017 aft., passed*)
Second Reading — 679-81 (*Apr. 19, 2017 aft.*)
Committee of the Whole — 810-15 (*May 3, 2017 morn.*), 828-38 (*May 3, 2017 aft., passed*)
Third Reading — 865-66 (*May 4, 2017 morn., passed*)
Royal Assent — 879 (*May 4, 2017 aft.*) [Comes into force May 4, 2017, with exception; SA 2017 c4]

Bill 8* — An Act to Strengthen Municipal Government (S. Anderson)

First Reading — 577 (*Apr. 10, 2017 aft., passed*)
Second Reading — 691-700 (*Apr. 20, 2017 morn.*), 716-22 (*Apr. 20, 2017 aft.*), 780-84 (*May 2, 2017 aft., passed on division*)
Committee of the Whole — 784-95 (*May 2, 2017 aft.*), 838-45 (*May 3, 2017 aft.*), 855-65 (*May 4, 2017 morn., passed with amendments*)
Third Reading — 991-1004 (*May 11, 2017 morn.*), 1101-06 (*May 16, 2017 aft.*), 1107-10 (*May 17, 2017 morn., passed on division*)
Royal Assent — (*Jun. 7, 2017 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force on various dates; SA 2017 c13]

Bill 9 — Marketing of Agricultural Products Amendment Act, 2017 (Carlier)

First Reading — 606 (*Apr. 11, 2017 aft., passed*)
Second Reading — 683-87 (*Apr. 20, 2017 morn., passed*)
Committee of the Whole — 687-90 (*Apr. 20, 2017 morn., passed*)
Third Reading — 759-62 (*May 2, 2017 morn., passed*)
Royal Assent — 880 (*May 4, 2017 aft.*) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2017 c5]

Bill 10 — Appropriation Act, 2017 (\$) (Ceci)

First Reading — 670-71 (*Apr. 19, 2017 aft., passed on division*)
Second Reading — 690-91 (*Apr. 20, 2017 morn.*), 700-02 (*Apr. 20, 2017 morn.*), 722-23 (*Apr. 20, 2017 aft., passed*)
Committee of the Whole — 762-67 (*May 2, 2017 morn.*), 795-97 (*May 2, 2017 aft., passed*)
Third Reading — 799-810 (*May 3, 2017 morn.*), 845-47 (*May 3, 2017 aft., passed on division*)
Royal Assent — 880 (*May 4, 2017 aft.*) [Comes into force May 4, 2017; SA 2017 c3]

Bill 11* — Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblower Protection) Amendment Act, 2017 (Gray)

First Reading — 771 (*May 2, 2017 aft., passed*)
Second Reading — 849-55 (*May 4, 2017 morn.*), 924-39 (*May 9, 2017 aft., passed*)
Committee of the Whole — 1072-77 (*May 16, 2017 morn.*), 1092-1101 (*May 16, 2017 aft.*), 1168-69 (*May 18, 2017 morn., passed with amendments*)
Third Reading — 1199-1202 (*May 23, 2017 morn., passed*)
Royal Assent — (*Jun. 7, 2017 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force on proclamation, with exceptions; SA 2017 c11]

Bill 12* — New Home Buyer Protection Amendment Act, 2017 (S. Anderson)

First Reading — 877 (*May 4, 2017 aft., passed*)
Second Reading — 939-44 (*May 9, 2017 aft.*), 945-56 (*May 10, 2017 morn., passed*)
Committee of the Whole — 956-62 (*May 10, 2017 morn.*), 1004-1008 (*May 11, 2017 morn.*), 1008-10 (*May 11, 2017 morn.*), 1111-20 (*May 17, 2017 morn., passed with amendments*)
Third Reading — 1169-71 (*May 18, 2017 morn., passed*)
Royal Assent — (*Jun. 7, 2017 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2017 c10]

Bill 13 — Securities Amendment Act, 2017 (Ceci)

First Reading — 893 (*May 8, 2017 aft., passed*)
Second Reading — 977-90 (*May 10, 2017 aft., passed*)
Committee of the Whole — 1027-31 (*May 11, 2017 aft.*), 1065-72 (*May 16, 2017 morn., passed*)
Third Reading — 1137-44 (*May 17, 2017 aft., passed*)
Royal Assent — (*Jun. 7, 2017 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force June 7, 2017; SA 2017 c12]

Bill 14 — An Act to Support Orphan Well Rehabilitation (McCuaig-Boyd)

First Reading — 1090 (*May 16, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1144-52 (*May 17, 2017 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 1225-30 (*May 23, 2017 aft., passed*)

Third Reading — 1244-46 (*May 24, 2017 morn., passed*)

Royal Assent — (*Jun. 7, 2017 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force June 7, 2017; SA 2017 c14]

Bill 15 — Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2017 (Ceci)

First Reading — 1137 (*May 17, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1184-89 (*May 18, 2017 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 1215-25 (*May 23, 2017 aft., passed*)

Third Reading — 1246-48 (*May 24, 2017 morn., passed*)

Royal Assent — (*Jun. 7, 2017 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force on various dates; SA 2017 c15]

Bill 16 — An Act to Cap Regulated Electricity Rates (\$) (McCuaig-Boyd)

First Reading — 1214 (*May 23, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1262-78 (*May 24, 2017 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 1279-91 (*May 25, 2017 morn.*), 1291-97 (*May 25, 2017 morn.*), 1351-58 (*May 29, 2017 eve.*), 1389-1406 (*May 30, 2017 aft., passed*)

Third Reading — 1514-17 (*Jun. 1, 2017 aft., passed on division*)

Royal Assent — (*Jun. 7, 2017 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force June 7, 2017, with exceptions; SA 2017 cC-2.3]

Bill 17* — Fair and Family-friendly Workplaces Act (Gray)

First Reading — 1260 (*May 24, 2017 aft., passed on division*)

Second Reading — 1311-22 (*May 25, 2017 aft.*), 1359-61 (*May 29, 2017 eve.*), 1363-76 (*May 30, 2017 morn.*), 1407-20 (*May 30, 2017 eve.*), 1421-32 (*May 31, 2017 morn., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 1432-36 (*May 31, 2017 morn.*), 1449-66 (*May 31, 2017 aft.*), 1467-79 (*May 31, 2017 eve.*), 1490-99 (*Jun. 1, 2017 morn.*), 1517-20 (*Jun. 1, 2017 aft.*), 1534-51 (*Jun. 5, 2017 aft.*), 1553-67 (*Jun. 5, 2017 eve., passed with amendments*)

Third Reading — 1589-93 (*Jun. 5, 2017 eve., passed on division*)

Royal Assent — (*Jun. 7, 2017 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force on various dates; SA 2017 c9]

Bill 18* — Child Protection and Accountability Act (Larivee)

First Reading — 1388 (*May 30, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1481-90 (*Jun. 1, 2017 morn., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 1567-79 (*Jun. 5, 2017 eve., passed with amendments*)

Third Reading — 1587-89 (*Jun. 5, 2017 eve., passed*)

Royal Assent — (*Jun. 7, 2017 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2017; c8]

Bill 19 — An Act to Protect Gas and Convenience Store Workers (Gray)

First Reading — 1610 (*Oct. 30, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1648-53 (*Oct. 31, 2017 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 1695-98 (*Nov. 1, 2017 aft., passed*)

Third Reading — 1729-31 (*Nov. 2, 2017 aft., passed*)

Bill 20 — Beaver River Basin Water Authorization Act (Phillips)

First Reading — 1610 (*Oct. 30, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1627-35 (*Oct. 31, 2017 morn., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 1655-64 (*Nov. 1, 2017 morn., passed*)

Third Reading — 1728-29 (*Nov. 2, 2017 aft., passed*)

Bill 21 — Agencies, Boards and Commissions Review Statutes Amendment Act, 2017 (Ceci)

First Reading — 1648 (*Oct. 31, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1664-72 (*Nov. 1, 2017 morn., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 1699-1706 (*Nov. 2, 2017 morn., passed*)

Third Reading — 1789-90 (*Nov. 7, 2017 aft., passed*)

Bill 22 — Resident and Family Councils Act (Hoffman)

First Reading — 1648 (*Oct. 31, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1687-94 (*Nov. 1, 2017 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 1706-14 (*Nov. 2, 2017 morn., adjourned*), 1731-32 (*Nov. 2, 2017 aft., passed*)

Third Reading — 1790-94 (*Nov. 7, 2017 aft., passed*)

Bill 23 — Alberta Human Rights Amendment Act, 2017 (Ganley)

First Reading — 1685-86 (*Nov. 1, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1761-69 (*Nov. 7, 2017 morn.*), 1796 (*Nov. 7, 2017 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 1805-15 (*Nov. 8, 2017 morn., passed*)

Bill 24 — An Act to Support Gay-Straight Alliances (Eggen)

First Reading — 1726-27 (*Nov. 2, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1769-74 (*Nov. 7, 2017 morn.*), 1796-1803 (*Nov. 7, 2017 aft.*), 1833-46 (*Nov. 8, 2017 aft., passed on division*)

Committee of the Whole — 1847-55 (*Nov. 9, 2017 morn.*), 1870-75 (*Nov. 9, 2017 aft., adjourned*)

Bill 25 — Regulated Forestry Profession Amendment Act, 2017 (Gray)

First Reading — 1745 (*Nov. 6, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1794-96 (*Nov. 7, 2017 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 1815-19 (*Nov. 8, 2017 morn., passed*)

Bill 27 — Conflicts of Interest Amendment Act, 2017 (Ceci)

First Reading — 1831 (*Nov. 8, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1876-78 (*Nov. 9, 2017 aft., adjourned*)

Bill 201 — Justice System Accountability Act (Jean)

First Reading — 127 (*Mar. 8, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 208-20 (*Mar. 13, 2017 aft., defeated on division*)

Bill 202* — Protecting Victims of Non-Consensual Distribution of Intimate Images Act (Cyr)

First Reading — 245 (*Mar. 14, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 375-86 (*Mar. 20, 2017 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 578-86 (*Apr. 10, 2017 aft., passed with amendments*)

Third Reading — 738-40 (*May 1, 2017 aft., passed on division*)

Royal Assent — 880 (*May 4, 2017 aft.*) [Comes into force 3 months after date of Royal Assent; SA 2017 cP-26.9]

Bill 203 — Alberta Standard Time Act (Dang)

First Reading — 253 (*Mar. 14, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 496-503 (*Apr. 3, 2017 aft.*), 1614-20 (*Oct. 30, 2017 aft., reported to Assembly, not proceeded with*)

Bill 204 — Protection of Property Rights Statutes Amendment Act, 2017 (Stier)

First Reading — 444 (*Mar. 22, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 503-07 (*Apr. 3, 2017 aft.*), 899-905 (*May 8, 2017 aft.*), 1046-50 (*May 15, 2017 aft., reasoned amendment agreed to on division (not proceeded with)*)

Bill 205* — Advocate for Persons with Disabilities Act (Jansen)

First Reading — 552 (*Apr. 6, 2017 aft.*)

Second Reading — 1050-57 (*May 15, 2017 aft.*), 1120-25 (*May 17, 2017 morn., moved to Government Bills and Orders*), 1153-63 (*May 18, 2017 morn., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 1163-68 (*May 18, 2017 morn.*), 1191-99 (*May 23, 2017 morn., passed with amendments*)

Third Reading — 1231-43 (*May 24, 2017 morn., passed on division*)

Royal Assent — (*Jun. 7, 2017 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2017 cA-5.5]

Bill 206* — Child, Youth and Family Enhancement (Adoption Advertising) Amendment Act, 2017 (Aheer)

First Reading — 1024 (*May 11, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1334-45 (*May 29, 2017 aft., passed on division*)

Committee of the Whole — 1747-56 (*Nov. 6, 2017 aft., passed with amendments*)

Bill 207 — Regulatory Burden Reduction Act (Hunter)

First Reading — 1310 (*May 25, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1756-58 (*Nov. 6, 2017 aft., adjourned*)

Bill 208 — Government Organization (Utilities Consumer Advocate) Amendment Act, 2017 (Hinkley)

First Reading — 1512 (*Jun. 1, 2017 aft., passed*)

Bill 210 — Missing Persons (Silver Alert) Amendment Act, 2017 (Smith)

First Reading — 1869 (*Nov. 9, 2017 aft., passed*)

Bill Pr1 — Calgary Jewish Centre Amendment Act, 2017 (Kazim)

First Reading — 524 (*Apr. 4, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1110 (*May 17, 2017 morn., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 1110-11 (*May 17, 2017 morn., passed*)

Third Reading — 1261-62 (*May 24, 2017 aft., passed*)

Royal Assent — (*Jun. 7, 2017 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force June 7, 2017]

Bill Pr2 — Paula Jean Anderson Adoption Termination Act (MacIntyre)

First Reading — 524 (*Apr. 4, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 1027 (*May 11, 2017 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 1027 (*May 11, 2017 aft., passed*)

Third Reading — 1110 (*May 17, 2017 morn., passed*)

Royal Assent — (*Jun. 7, 2017 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force June 7, 2017]

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