

Select Special Citizen Initiative Proposal Review Committee

Report on the Review of the Alberta Forever Canada Citizen Initiative Policy Proposal

Thirty-First Legislature
Second Session
May 2026



Select Special Citizen Initiative Proposal Review Committee
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Select Special Citizen Initiative Proposal Review Committee

May 2026

**To the Honourable Ric McIver
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
of the Province of Alberta**

The Select Special Citizen Initiative Proposal Review Committee has the honour to submit its report regarding its review of the Alberta Forever Canada citizen initiative policy proposal, which was tabled by you in the Assembly on December 2, 2025 (Sessional Paper 241/2025).

Sincerely,

(original signed by)

Brandon G. Lundy, MLA
Chair, Select Special Citizen Initiative Proposal Review Committee

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**MEMBERS OF THE SELECT SPECIAL CITIZEN INITIATIVE PROPOSAL REVIEW
COMMITTEE**

Chair:

Brandon G. Lundy, MLA
Leduc-Beaumont (UC)

Deputy Chair:

Hon. Rajan Sawhney, MLA
Calgary-North West (UC)

Members:

Court Ellingson, MLA
Calgary-Foothills (NDP)

Hon. Jason Nixon, MLA
Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House-Sundre (UC)

Rakhi Pancholi, MLA
Edmonton-Whitemud (NDP)

Hon. Tara Sawyer, MLA
Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills (UC)

Substitutions pursuant to Standing Order 56(2.1-2.4):

Hon. Nate Glubish, MLA*
Strathcona-Sherwood Park (UC)

Also in attendance:

Mr. David Shepherd, MLA†
Edmonton-City Centre (NDP)

Hon. Christina Gray, MLA‡
Edmonton-Mill Woods (NDP)

Mr. Garth Rowswell, MLA§
Vermilion-Lloydminster-Wainwright (UC)

Hon. Joseph Schow, MLA**
Cardston-Siksika (UC)

* Substitute for Hon. Rajan Sawhney on May 20, 2026.

† Attended the Committee's meeting on April 21, 2026.

‡ Attended the Committee's meetings on May 11, 20, and 21, 2026.

§ Attended the Committee's meeting on May 21, 2026.

** Attended the Committee's meeting on May 21, 2026.

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During its deliberations on May 21, 2026, the Select Special Citizen Initiative Proposal Review Committee (the “Committee”) made the following recommendation pertaining to the Alberta Forever Canada citizen initiative policy proposal:

That the Select Special Citizen Initiative Proposal Review Committee recommend the following:

- a) that the Alberta Forever Canada citizen initiative policy proposal, tabled by the Speaker in the Legislative Assembly on December 2, 2025 (Sessional Paper 241/2025), and the Committee’s report be referred to the Lieutenant Governor in Council for the purpose of a referendum in accordance with the *Referendum Act*;
- b) that the Alberta Forever Canada citizen initiative policy proposal be appended to the Committee’s report;
- c) that the question to be put to the electors in the referendum include an option for Albertans to vote for Alberta to remain in Canada;
- d) that the referendum be held in conjunction with the referendum ordered to be held on October 19, 2026.

2.0 COMMITTEE MANDATE

Government Motion 34

On March 10, 2026, the Legislative Assembly passed Government Motion 34, which appointed the Select Special Citizen Initiative Proposal Review Committee to review the Alberta Forever Canada citizen initiative policy proposal, which was tabled in the Assembly by the Speaker on December 2, 2025, and is attached as Appendix A.

The scope of the Committee’s review of a policy proposal is provided for in section 15 of the *Citizen Initiative Act* (the “Act”). As further explained in section 3.0, below, section 15 of the Act as it read on June 5, 2025, applies to the Alberta Forever Canada citizen initiative policy proposal:

Duties re policy proposal

15(1) On receiving a copy of a policy proposal in accordance with section 12(1)(a),

(a) the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly shall lay the proposal before the Legislative Assembly if it is then sitting, or if it is not then sitting, within 15 days after the commencement of the next sitting, and

(b) within 10 sitting days after the proposal is tabled under clause (a), the Government shall bring forward a motion to have the proposal referred to a committee of the Legislative Assembly.

(2) The committee to which a policy proposal is tabled shall within 90 days of the proposal being referred to it if the Legislative Assembly is then sitting or, if it is not then sitting, within 15

days after the commencement of the next sitting, either

(a) table a report with respect to the policy proposal at the earliest practicable opportunity, or

(b) table a report recommending that the policy proposal and report be referred to the Lieutenant Governor in Council for the purpose of a referendum in accordance with the *Referendum Act*.

(3) Except as provided in this section, the *Referendum Act* applies to a referendum held in accordance with this section.

3.0 BACKGROUND

The Act provides a process for electors to apply to the Chief Electoral Officer to initiate a petition concerning a legislative or policy proposal, or a constitutional referendum proposal. The Act sets out the processes to be followed if an initiative petition is successful. The process with respect to a successful initiative for a policy proposal is outlined in section 2.0, above. The Act received Royal Assent on June 17, 2021, and was proclaimed in force on April 7, 2022. The Act has since been amended.

Section 71.1(4) of the current Act provides that “except as otherwise provided in this section, this Act as it read when an application for the issuance of an initiative petition was submitted shall apply in respect of that application and any resulting initiative petition.” The version of the Act that applies to the Alberta Forever Canada citizen initiative is the version that was in force on June 5, 2025, the date that the application for the issuance of the Alberta Forever Canada initiative petition was submitted.

The Act is administered by the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer.

4.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Committee appreciates the expert support provided by the Ministry of Justice and the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer as well as the support from the staff of the Legislative Assembly Office.

5.0 CONSULTATION AND REVIEW PROCESS

The Committee’s review of the Alberta Forever Canada citizen initiative policy proposal involved a series of meetings that were open to the public, broadcast on Alberta Assembly TV, and video- and audio-streamed live on the Legislative Assembly website. These meetings took place on April 21, May 11, May 20, and May 21, 2026.

At the orientation meeting held on April 21 the Committee agreed to a motion to invite officials from the Ministry of Justice and the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer to provide technical

briefings on the *Citizen Initiative Act* and to attend meetings and provide technical assistance to the Committee when requested.

On May 11 the Committee received technical briefings on the *Citizen Initiative Act* from:

- Hon. Russell Brown, Senior Counsel, Hunter Litigation Chambers on behalf of the Ministry of Justice; and
- Gordon McClure, Chief Electoral Officer; Dallas Stoesz, Deputy Chief Electoral Officer; and Jennifer Maskoske, Director of Operations.

At its meeting on May 20 the Committee invited the proponent of the Alberta Forever Canada citizen initiative policy proposal, Hon. Thomas Lukaszuk, ECA, to address the Committee. Hon. Mr. Lukaszuk made a presentation to the Committee and responded to questions from committee members.

The Committee held its final meeting on May 21. The Committee agreed to one recommendation at this meeting and directed the Legislative Assembly Office to prepare this final report. This report is thus the result of the Committee's deliberations and contains its recommendation in relation to the Alberta Forever Canada citizen initiative policy proposal.

6.0 COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee made the following recommendation pertaining to the Alberta Forever Canada citizen initiative policy proposal:

That the Select Special Citizen Initiative Proposal Review Committee recommend the following:

- a) that the Alberta Forever Canada citizen initiative policy proposal, tabled by the Speaker in the Legislative Assembly on December 2, 2025 (Sessional Paper 241/2025), and the Committee's report be referred to the Lieutenant Governor in Council for the purpose of a referendum in accordance with the *Referendum Act*;
- b) that the Alberta Forever Canada citizen initiative policy proposal be appended to the Committee's report;
- c) that the question to be put to the electors in the referendum include an option for Albertans to vote for Alberta to remain in Canada;
- d) that the referendum be held in conjunction with the referendum ordered to be held on October 19, 2026.

APPENDIX A: ALBERTA FOREVER CANADA CITIZEN INITIATIVE (SESSIONAL PAPER 241/2025)

December 1, 2025

Honourable Ric McIver
 Speaker
 Alberta legislature - Office of the Speaker
 325 Legislature Building
 10800 97 Avenue NW
 Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

Sent Via: Email and Registered Mail

Sessional Paper 241/2025
 2nd Session, 31st Legislature

Email: ric.mciver@assembly.ab.ca

Subject: "Alberta Forever Canada" Citizen Initiative Verification Completion

The "Alberta Forever Canada" petition was issued on June 30, 2025, after the requirements, as set out in the *Citizen Initiative Act* as of June 30, 2025, had been determined to have been met. The legislation at that time allowed 90 days for the collection of the requisite number of signatures. On October 28, 2025, the proponent submitted all the completed signature sheets to my Office and the verification process commenced.

Validation for the "Alberta Forever Canada" citizen initiative petition is now complete, and all prescribed reports have been submitted. Under Section 10 of the *Citizen Initiative Act*, the requirements of section 6 have now been met and the financial reports, required under Part 3, have also been received and are complete.

The validated results are outlined below:

Total number of signatures required for a successful petition <i>(10% of 2,939,762 electors on the post-election day List of Electors from 2023 Provincial General Election)</i>	293,976
Estimated number of electors in the province <i>(registered electors as of May 2025)</i>	2,966,192
Total number of valid signatures counted <i>(as described in Citizen initiative Act s.6(4))</i>	438,568
Total number of verified signatures after random statistical sampling method applied with a 95% confidence level <i>(Citizen initiative Act s.6(4))</i>	404,293
Estimated percentage of electors in the province who signed the signature sheets (verified signatures)	13.6%

Based on these results I am writing to you, as required under section 12(1)(a), to report that the "Alberta Forever Canada" petition has successfully met the requirements of the Act and to provide you with a copy of the policy proposal.

I would be happy to provide any additional information that you may require in relation to this matter.

Sincerely,

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of Gordon McClure.

Gordon McClure
Chief Electoral Officer
Elections Alberta

GM/dj

Attachment: Alberta Forever Canada Citizen Initiative Policy Proposal



Application for Citizen Initiative

C-22-1401
Citizen Initiative Act
Section 2

APPLICANT INFORMATION

NAME AND CONTACT INFORMATION		
Surname/Last Name LUKASZUK	Given/First Name THOMAS	Middle Name (optional) [REDACTED]
Telephone Number [REDACTED]	Email Address [REDACTED]	
ADDRESS INFORMATION		
Physical Address [REDACTED]		
Municipality (i.e., city/town) [REDACTED]	Postal Code [REDACTED]	
Mailing Address (if different from above) [REDACTED]		
Municipality (i.e. city/town)	Postal Code	

PETITION INFORMATION

TYPE OF PETITION (choose one)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Legislative or policy proposal (requires signature from 10% of electors on the post-election day list) <input type="checkbox"/> Constitutional referendum proposal (requires signatures from 20% of electors on the post-election day list, with the 20% threshold met in 2/3 of electoral divisions)
SUBJECT MATTER OF PETITION
Subject Area of Petition (i.e., title): Alberta Forever Canada
Description of proposal (attach additional pages if necessary)
<p>The applicant is motivated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The fact that Alberta's separation from Canada is being actively discussed. Since a referendum appears to be imminent anyway, it should be objective and not directed by special interest groups. Separation will threaten the Canadian as well as the Alberta economy, the personal wealth of Albertan's, the Canadian citizenship rights of Alberta residents, the treaty rights of our First Nations, and have many other serious and negative consequences. We believe the majority of Alberta's residents are loyal Canadians opposed to any form of separation. <p>Therefore, we as represented by the signatory and applicant below propose a referendum on the following question:</p> <p>Do you agree that Alberta should remain in Canada ?</p>

Received
JUN 05 2025
Chief Electoral Office

- This application must be accompanied by the following:
- Application fee of \$500 paid by cash, certified cheque and/or a bank or postal money order made payable to "Government of Alberta".
 - A copy of the applicant's identification containing both name and physical address.

I, the undersigned, declare that I am an elector, that is a Canadian Citizen, at least 18 years off age or older and resident in Alberta, and I am not disqualified under the *Citizen Initiative Act* from submitting this application.

Applicant, sign and date below.

	06/05/2025
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A person who makes a false statement in any document filed with the Chief Electoral Officer commits an offence and is liable to a fine of not more than \$50,000.

Elections Alberta Use Only:

Petition #: 2025-CIP-04	Status of petition application: ACCEPTED <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> REJECTED <input type="checkbox"/>	Date: June 30, 2025
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APPENDIX B: MINORITY REPORT

To the Chair of the Select Special Citizen Initiative Proposal Review Committee:

As members of Alberta's New Democrat Caucus appointed to the Committee, we have serious concerns about the process and conclusions of the Select Special Citizen Initiative Proposal Review Committee. We do not support the decision of the majority UCP members of the Committee to recommend the Alberta Forever Canada petition to Cabinet for a referendum.

More than 438,000 Albertans signed this petition, supported by 10,000 volunteers, to oppose a referendum on separation and affirm Alberta's place in Canada. We reject the government's claim that these signatories support a referendum. The petition's proponent, Honourable Mr. Lukaszuk, confirmed to the Committee on behalf of the signatories that the purpose of the petition was to prevent a referendum in support of separatism.

As the Official Opposition, we proposed an amendment to the UCP's recommendation on May 21, 2026, requiring consultation with First Nations before any referendum is ordered. Every UCP member on the Committee voted against this amendment to consult with First Nations. This ignores the clear constitutional obligations under section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*, and the recent May 13, 2026, Alberta Court of King's Bench decision affirming the duty to consult.

The Committee also faced unacceptable delays in meeting to do its work. Although the petition was tabled in the Legislature on December 2, 2025, the government caucus waited until March 2026 to set up the Committee and then met for the first time on day 42 of the 90-day timeline, failing to act on the clear will of Albertans who signed the petition to remain in Canada. Action on this petition only accelerated after the May 13, 2026 Court of King's Bench decision which blocked the Stay Free Alberta separation referendum effort, at which point the Committee was urgently convened. The UCP members of the Committee were making every attempt possible to delay the work of the Committee up until that point. Thus, it was clear that the UCP members' newfound interest in the Forever Canada petition, and the Albertans who signed it, was driven by a political need to find a justification for the UCP's government already-made decision to call a referendum on separatism.

The Official Opposition members made it clear that our position in the review was to recommend referral of the question of the petition to a vote in the Legislative Assembly, allowing elected members to take a clear public stance. Unfortunately, the majority UCP members did not appear willing to publicly answer the question posed by the petition, which read, "Do you agree that Alberta should remain in Canada?" This approach would have respected the Albertans who signed the petition and would have avoided unnecessary risk to our province's economy and investment climate caused by a referendum.

Expert briefings at the Committee from the Chief Electoral Officer and Justice Russell S. Brown confirmed the petition was submitted as a policy proposal as per section 15 of the *Citizen Initiative Act*. This petition was not one that required a referendum. The decision to hold a referendum was not the decision of the petition proponent nor its signatories, but one solely made by the UCP government as a result of a recommendation by the UCP members of the Committee.

Finally, we raise the serious matter of the lack of integrity to the Committee's process and apparent pre-determined outcome of its work. During debate on a motion on May 20, 2026, the Official Opposition called a point of privilege against the Chair of the Committee because the UCP caucus sent out a news release during debate which predetermined the outcome of a motion on the floor using direct quotes from the Chair. This is a gross disdain for our democracy. It demonstrates that the majority UCP members and the Chair failed to engage in the Committee's democratic processes in good faith.

Before members even concluded debate on a motion, the Chair predetermined the outcome of the vote. The Official Opposition immediately requested that the Chair recuse himself in the face of this inherent breach of impartiality. He denied this request with the support of the UCP members on the Committee. Furthermore, despite acknowledging in the meeting that this situation was a point of privilege, members of the UCP majority on the Committee still chose to vote against the referring of the point of privilege to the Speaker of the Assembly for determination.

Democracy is not served when the outcomes are predetermined. The misrepresentation by the UCP members of the intent of Albertans who signed the Alberta Forever Canadian petition is disappointing to say the least. The decision to hold a constitutional referendum is solely one of the UCP government and Cabinet, not with the petition proponent, nor with the Albertans who signed the Alberta Forever Canadian petition.

At a time when public trust and national unity must be strengthened, this approach reflects a troubling departure from the principles of accountability and good-faith democratic decision-making.

We thank Elections Alberta, Justice Brown and Mr. Lukaszuk for their contributions, and we commend the hundreds of thousands of Albertans who used this process to clearly express their support for remaining in Canada.

Submitted by:

Rakhi Pancholi, Edmonton-Whitemud
Court Ellingson, Calgary-Foothills