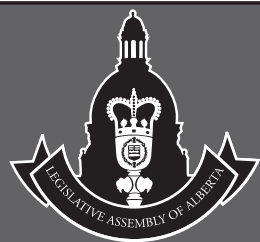


## Standing Committee on Families and Communities

### Review of Bill 204, *Irlen Syndrome Testing Act*

Twenty-Eighth Legislature  
First Session  
October 2013



**COMMITTEES**  
OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

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**STANDING COMMITTEE ON FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES**

October 2013

**To the Honourable Gene Zwozdesky  
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly  
of the Province of Alberta**

I have the honour of submitting, on behalf of the Standing Committee on Families and Communities, its final report containing recommendations on Bill 204, *Irlen Syndrome Testing Act* for consideration by the Legislative Assembly of Alberta.

Sincerely,

[Original signed by Chair]

Dave Quest, MLA  
Chair, Standing Committee  
on Families and Communities

c. Dr. David McNeil  
Clerk of the Legislative Assembly

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## MEMBERS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

### 28<sup>th</sup> Legislature, First Session

David Quest, MLA  
Chair  
Strathcona-Sherwood Park (PC)

Heather Forsyth, MLA  
Deputy Chair  
Calgary-Fish Creek (W)

Dr. Neil Brown, QC, MLA  
Calgary-Mackay-Nose Hill (PC)

Matt Jeneroux, MLA  
Edmonton-South West (PC)

Christine Cusanelli, MLA  
Calgary-Currie (PC)

Genia Leskiw, MLA  
Bonnyville-Cold Lake (PC)

Alana DeLong, MLA  
Calgary-Bow (PC)

Rachel Notley, MLA  
Edmonton-Strathcona (ND)

Hon. Rick Fraser, MLA  
Calgary-South East (PC)

Blake Pedersen, MLA  
Medicine Hat (W)

Yvonne Fritz, MLA  
Calgary-Cross (PC)

Dr. David Swann, MLA  
Calgary-Mountain View (AL)

Hector Goudreau, MLA  
Dunvegan-Central Peace-Notley (PC)

Kerry Towle, MLA  
Innisfail-Sylvan Lake (W)

Mary Anne Jablonski, MLA  
Red Deer-North (PC)

Jeff Wilson, MLA  
Calgary-Shaw (W)

Hon. Sandra Jansen, MLA  
Calgary-North West (PC)

Steve Young, MLA  
Edmonton-Riverview (PC)

### Substitutions Pursuant to Standing Order 56 (2.1 – 2.4):

Stephen Khan, MLA\*  
St. Albert (PC)

Maureen Kubinec, MLA\*\*  
Barrhead-Morinville-Westlock (PC)

Jason Luan, MLA\*\*\*  
Calgary-Hawkwood (PC)

David Eggen, MLA\*\*\*\*  
Edmonton-Calder (ND)

\*Substitution for Neil Brown on September 25, 2013

\*\*Substitution for Matt Jeneroux on September 25, 2013

\*\*\*Substitution for Steve Young on September 25, 2013

\*\*\*\*Substitution for Rachel Notley on July 22, 2013

## 1.0 Introduction

Bill 204, *Irlen Syndrome Testing Act*, was introduced and received first reading on November 22, 2012. On April 22, 2013, the Bill was referred to the Standing Committee on Families and Communities for review.

## 2.0 Order of Reference

Excerpt from the *Votes and Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta*, Monday, April 22, 2013:

On motion by Mrs. Jablonski, Hon. Member for Red Deer-North, the following Bill was referred to the Standing Committee on Families and Communities, pursuant to Standing Order 74.1(1):

Bill 204 Irlen Syndrome Testing Act — Mrs. Jablonski

## 3.0 Committee Activities

As part of the Committee's review of Bill 204, Committee meetings were held on May 13, July 22, September 25, and on October 10 and 24, 2013. Bill 204's sponsor, Mrs. Jablonski, gave a presentation to the Committee on the Bill on July 22, 2013. Written submissions were solicited from identified stakeholders and members of the public, and public hearings were held on September 25, 2013, in Edmonton. The Committee received 75 written submissions, and six invited parties made oral presentations before the Committee. Far more people would have given oral presentations if time had permitted them to do so. Approximately 50 interested private citizens were in attendance in Committee rooms A and B during the public hearings on September 25, 2013.

## 4.0 Recommendations

Pursuant to Standing Order 74.2(1)

when a Bill is referred to a Legislative Policy Committee after first reading, the committee may conduct public hearings on the subject matter of the Bill and report its observations, opinions and recommendations with respect to the Bill to the Assembly.

The Standing Committee on Families and Communities recommends to the Assembly that the Bill not proceed.

The Committee further recommends that by November 1, 2014, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education collaborate to prepare a report for public release, outlining best practices to ensure the greatest quality of visual assessment in Alberta schools, with specific reference to:

1. Consistency among school boards with respect to practice and policy;
2. The effectiveness of different models of publicly supported in-school visual assessment programs; and
3. The nature of visual conditions that require testing, including but not limited to visual stress, including Irlen Syndrome.

## Appendix: List of Oral Presentations and Written Submissions

### Oral Presentations

Name	Title/Organization
Dr. Gordon Hensel and Dr. Margaret Penny	Alberta College of Optometrists
Dr. Raphael Sharon, Dr. James Lewis, Dr. Ian MacDonald, and Dr. Lyle Mittelsteadt	Alberta Medical Association
Jacquie Hansen, Grace Cooke, and Colleen McClure	Alberta School Boards Association
Nola Stigings and Judy Pool	Canadian Association of Irlen Professionals
Helen Irlen and Dr. Sandra Tosta	Irlen Institute International Headquarters
Dr. Sharon Vaselenak	Private citizen and physician

### Written Submissions

Name	Title/Organization
Bettylyn Baker	Private citizen
Elizabeth Bell	Private citizen
Amy-Lynn Bienert	Private citizen
Dr. Keith Bienert	Private citizen
Shelley Blair	Private citizen
Andrew Boucher	Private citizen
Nora Buxton	Private citizen
Carolyn Cheetham	Private citizen
Luana-Ann Fink	Private citizen
Dani Harris	Private citizen
Cindy and Brent Heidecker	Private citizens
Heidi Hoehne	Private citizen
Lindsay Knox	Private citizen
Elizabeth Long	Private citizen
Michelle Middleton	Private citizen

Gillian O'Connor	Private citizen
Dina Quandt	Private citizen
Elise Rocque	Private citizen
Sarah Verbeek	Private citizen
Mary Wacker	Private citizen
Tina Cutler	Private citizen and Irlen Screener
Leslie Dobkins	Private citizen and Irlen screener
Ron Hagel	Private citizen and Irlen Screener
Dr. William E. Hendrick	Private citizen and Irlen Screener
Jeannie Lundgard	Private citizen, registered psychologist, and Irlen Screener
Karen Monet	Private citizen and Director, Opticalm Visual Stress Solutions, Ottawa, Ontario
Dr. Elizabeth Turner	Private citizen and physician
Dr. Sharon Vaselenak	Private citizen and physician
David Anderson	Alberta School Boards Association
Dr. Doris Ang	Irlen Diagnostician and Regional Clinic Director, Irlen Dyslexia Clinic, Singapore
Lilyane Bienert	Educational therapist and Irlen Screener
Dr. Charles Boulet	Developmental and family optometrist
Dr. Cherilyn Cibelli	Clinical psychologist, Cibelli Health Services, San Bernardino, California
James Cole	Educational psychologist and Irlen Screener, Brandman University, Walnut Creek, California
Mary Cubie	Irlen Diagnostician and Clinic Director, Irlen Diagnostic Clinic, Rotorua, New Zealand
Dr. Sergio Della Sala	Professor of Psychology, University of Edinburgh
Dr. Dawn Dunford	Optometrist
Craig Foley	College of Alberta School Superintendents
Dr. R. Michael Giuffre	Alberta Medical Association
Lisa Goodwin	Irlen Screener
Drs. Marcia Reis Guimaraes and Ricardo Guimaraes	Ophthalmologists, Hospital de Olhos, Belo Horizonte, Brazil
Dr. Jeff Guthrie	Optometrist



Elaine Gutowitz	Irlen Screener
Joanne Heckbert	Reading specialist and Irlen Screener
Dr. Gordon Hensel	Alberta College of Optometrists
Dr. Ronald Hopping	American Optometric Association
Helen Irlen	Executive Director, Irlen Institute
Hon. Jeff Johnson	Minister of Education
Dr. Patricia Johnson	Clinical neuropsychologist and Irlen Screener
Dr. Richard Kruk	Associate Professor, School Psychology Program, University of Manitoba
Dr. Susan Leat	Professor, School of Optometry and Vision Science, University of Waterloo
Lucie Lemire	Irlen Screener and Director, Eyegate International Inc.
Dr. James Lewis	Pediatric ophthalmologist and Associate Clinical Professor, Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences, University of Alberta
Dr. Lillian Linton	Canadian Association of Optometrists
John McDonald	Canadian National Institute for the Blind, AB-NWT Division
Dr. Rob McIntosh	Head of Psychology, University of Edinburgh
Judy Palapala	Irlen Diagnostician, Irlen Clinic of the Twin Cities, Minneapolis, Minnesota
Dr. Aaron Patel	Alberta Association of Optometrists
Dr. Rich Petke	Physician, Jordan Developmental Pediatrics, Phoenix, Arizona
Judy Pool	Reading specialist, Reading and Writing Consultants Inc.; Irlen Diagnostician and Director, Irlen Centre Alberta
Dr. Patrick Quaid	Optometrist and Adjunct Clinical Professor, University of Waterloo
Stuart Ritchie	PhD candidate, Psychology Department, University of Edinburgh
Dr. Peter Rozanec	Optometrist
Dr. Darren Sass	Behavioural optometrist
Susan Shepherd	Irlen Diagnostician and Clinical Director, Irlen Ontario
Professors Trefford Simpson and Daphne McCulloch	School of Optometry and Vision Science, University of Waterloo
Nola Stigings	Irlen Diagnostician and Clinical Director, 3Rs Irlen Centre Inc., Innisfail, Alberta
Dr. Trevor Theman	College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta

Kathy Toope	Irlen Screener
Rita Vandenbrink	Irlen Screener
Russell Work	Irlen Screener
Susan Youngman	School psychologist and Irlen Screener
Dr. Carol Zuccone	Psychologist and Director, Irlen Clinics, Houston/Central Texas
Drs. Michael Lee Zwiers, R. Coranne Johnston, and David Piercey	Psychologists Association of Alberta