

# Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills

## Final Report ***Bill 203, An Act to Protect Public Health Care***

Thirtieth Legislature  
First Session  
June 2019



Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills

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**STANDING COMMITTEE ON PRIVATE BILLS AND PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS**

June 2019

**To the Honourable Nathan Cooper  
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly  
of the Province of Alberta**

I have the honour of submitting, on behalf of the Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills, its final report containing recommendations on Bill 203, *An Act to Protect Public Health Care*, for consideration by the Legislative Assembly of Alberta.

Sincerely,

*[original signed]*

Mike Ellis, MLA  
Chair, Standing Committee  
on Private Bills and  
Private Members' Public Bills



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**MEMBERS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON PRIVATE BILLS AND PRIVATE  
MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS**

**30th Legislature, First Session**

Mike Ellis, MLA  
Chair  
Calgary-West (UCP)

Joseph Schow, MLA  
Deputy Chair  
Cardston-Siksika (UCP)

Richard Gottfried, MLA  
Calgary-Fish Creek (UCP)

Chris Nielsen, MLA  
Edmonton-Decore (NDP)

Nate Horner, MLA  
Drumheller-Stettler (UCP)

Jeremy Nixon, MLA  
Calgary-Klein (UCP)

Janis Irwin, MLA  
Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood (NDP)

Rakhi Pancholi, MLA  
Edmonton-Whitemud (NDP)

Nathan Neudorf, MLA  
Lethbridge-East (UCP)

Lori Sigurdson, MLA  
Edmonton-Riverview (NDP)

R.J. Sigurdson, MLA  
Highwood (UCP)

**Substitutions Pursuant to Standing Order 56(2.1-2.4)**

Whitney Issik, MLA\*  
Calgary-Glenmore (UCP)

**Members also in Attendance on June 19, 2019:**

Richard Feehan, MLA  
Edmonton-Rutherford (NDP)

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\* Substitute for Nate Horner on June 19, 2019.

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Bill 203, *An Act to Protect Public Health Care*, was introduced and received first reading on June 13, 2019.

## 2.0 ORDER OF REFERENCE

Pursuant to Standing Order 74.11:

- (1) After a public Bill other than a Government Bill has been read a first time, the Bill stands referred to the Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills Committee.
- (2) The Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills Committee shall report back to the Assembly within 8 sitting days of the day on which the Bill was referred to the Committee.

## 3.0 COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

As part of the Committee's review of Bill 203, Committee meetings were held on June 19 and June 25, 2019. The sponsor of Bill 203, Richard Feehan, Member for Edmonton-Rutherford, gave a presentation on the Bill to the Committee on June 19, 2019. At that meeting the Committee also received a technical briefing from the Ministry of Health on Bill 203. The Committee received two written submissions from stakeholders. Two stakeholders made oral presentations to the Committee on June 25, 2019.

## 4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Pursuant to Standing Order 74.2, the Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills recommends

**that Bill 203, *An Act to Protect Public Health Care*, not proceed.**

## APPENDIX A: MINORITY REPORT

To the Chair of the Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills,

At the June 25<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills, government members voted to have *Bill 203: An Act to Protect Public Health Care* not proceed. Despite hearing from stakeholder presentations that block billing is an issue, government members did not see the need to address this pressing problem.

As members of the NDP Caucus, we believe that public health care is a right for all Albertans, and allowing our health care to be privatized is an affront to the public health care system. The committee heard loud and clear that Bill 203 would be a step in the right direction, yet government members refused to acknowledge that fact. For these reasons, we believe the bill deserves to be debated to the most fulsome degree.

As the Official Opposition, we also find it deeply concerning that this review process was effectively shut down with little debate on the actual merits of the Bill. Of the three bills which this committee has considered to date, only the bill which was put forward by an opposition member was voted to not proceed. The remaining two bills sponsored by government members proceeded speedily back to the house. We hope that this is not a concerted effort by government members to stifle debate on legislation before it ever reaches the house floor.

Albertans deserve to have all of their elected officials deliberate and debate on issues that are as fundamentally important as fair and equal access to health care.

Thank you,

Chris Nielsen, MLA Edmonton-Decore

Rakhi Pancholi, MLA Edmonton-Whitemud

Janis Irwin, MLA Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood

Lori Sigurdson, MLA Edmonton-Riverview



## APPENDIX B: WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS FROM STAKEHOLDERS

Organization	Name
Alberta Medical Association	Alison M. Clarke, President
College of Physicians & Surgeons of Alberta	Scott A. McLeod, Registrar

## APPENDIX C: LIST OF ORAL PRESENTERS

Organization	Name	Notes
Ministry of Health	Mr. David Skene, Barrister and Solicitor, Director, Health Law	
Friends of Medicare	Ms Sandra Azocar, Executive Director	
Parkland Institute	Mr. Ricardo Acuña, Executive Director	The Parkland Institute submitted the following report for reference: <i>Blurred Lines: Private Membership Clinics and Public Health Care</i> by Rebecca Graff-McRae



