

Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills

Final Report Bill 215, *Seniors Advocate Act*

Thirtieth Legislature
Second Session
April 2021



Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON PRIVATE BILLS AND PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS

April 2021

**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, the Committee's final report containing recommendations on Bill 215, *Seniors Advocate Act*, 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, Second Session

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Chair
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Christian E. Nielsen, MLA
Edmonton-Decore (NDP)

Thomas Dang, MLA
Edmonton-South (NDP)

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Shane C. Getson, MLA
Lac Ste. Anne-Parkland (UC)

Lori Sigurdson, MLA
Edmonton-Riverview (NDP)

Michaela L. Glasgow, MLA
Brooks-Medicine Hat (UC)

R.J. Sigurdson, MLA
Highwood (UC)

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

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

Lorne Dach, MLA*
Edmonton-McClung (NDP)

* Substitute for Lori Sigurdson on April 20, 2021

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Bill 215, *Seniors Advocate Act*, was introduced and received first reading on April 15, 2021.

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 215 a Committee meeting was held on April 20, 2021. At that meeting the sponsor of Bill 215, Lori Sigurdson, Member for Edmonton-Riverview, made a presentation on the Bill to the Committee, and the Committee received a technical briefing from the Ministry of Health and from the Ministry of Seniors and Housing. The Committee then completed deliberations on Bill 215.

4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

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

that Bill 215, *Seniors Advocate Act*, proceed.

APPENDIX A: MINORITY REPORT

The NDP Caucus Members of the Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills (the "Committee") agree with the Committee's recommendation that Bill 215: *Seniors Advocate Act* proceed, but disagrees with the UCP's decision not to invite stakeholders. If passed, Bill 215 would create an independent seniors' advocate to champion the interests of seniors to the government. Therefore, the most important voices to hear from are seniors themselves. Inviting stakeholders would have provided seniors an opportunity to share why or why not they find this bill necessary.

Given the position of Bill 215 on the order paper and the government's intention to prorogue after this session, it is unlikely this bill will be debated in the Legislature. And given the hostility of UCP members to the bill sponsor during the committee meeting, we are doubtful that they are genuinely interested in the contents of this bill. Having seniors express their experiences navigating seniors' services and the impact of the last year during this pandemic would have provided important insight for us to do our jobs as legislators. This committee provides the opportunity to meet with stakeholders and the committee should have made use of that ability for this bill. Seniors have been hit by the COVID-19 pandemic the hardest and deserve to be heard.

Thomas Dang, MLA

Janis Irwin, MLA

Chris Nielsen, MLA

Lori Sigurdson, MLA