

Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills

Final Report Bill 205, *Genocide Remembrance, Condemnation and Prevention Month Act*

Thirtieth Legislature
Second Session
November 2020



COMMITTEES
OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON PRIVATE BILLS AND PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS

November 2020

**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 205, *Genocide Remembrance, Condemnation and Prevention Month Act*, for consideration by the Legislative Assembly of Alberta.

Sincerely,

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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Jeremy P. Nixon, MLA
Calgary-Klein (UCP)

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

Lori Sigurdson, MLA
Edmonton-Riverview (NDP)

R.J. Sigurdson, MLA
Highwood (UCP)

Members also in attendance on November 3, 2020:

Drew Barnes, MLA
Cypress-Medicine Hat (UCP)

Peter Singh, MLA
Calgary-East (UCP)

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Bill 205, *Genocide Remembrance, Condemnation and Prevention Month Act*, was introduced and received first reading on October 26, 2020.

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 205 a Committee meeting was held on November 3, 2020. At that meeting the sponsor of Bill 205, Peter Singh, Member for Calgary-East, made a presentation on the Bill to the Committee, and the Committee received a technical briefing from the Ministry of Culture, Multiculturalism and Status of Women on the Bill.

4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

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

that Bill 205, *Genocide Remembrance, Condemnation and Prevention Month Act*, proceed.

APPENDIX A: MINORITY REPORT

The NDP Caucus Members of the Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills (the "Committee") agrees with the Committee's recommendation that Bill 205, *Genocide Remembrance, Condemnation and Prevention Month Act*, proceed. As a committee, all members from both caucuses view Bill 205 as an important piece of legislation. We as a caucus put forward recommendations for the Assembly to consider so this bill could be strengthened. Both recommendations were voted down by the UCP majority.

The first recommendation the NDP caucus proposed was:

the Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills recommend that Bill 205, *Genocide Remembrance, Condemnation and Prevention Month Act*, be amended to include and recognize as a genocide the atrocities committed against Indigenous peoples by colonialism and including the ongoing murder and disappearance of Indigenous women and girls.

The mass kidnapping, abuse and murder of Indigenous children in residential schools was genocide. The ongoing murder and disappearance of Indigenous women and girls in Canada is an ongoing genocide. Both of these are the findings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. For these reasons we believe it should be included in Bill 205.

The second recommendation the NDP Caucus proposed was:

The Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills recommend that the Assembly consider Bill 205, *Genocide Remembrance, Condemnation and Prevention Month Act*, and expand the list of genocides included in the bill.

We agree that the seven genocides in the bill should be recognized as genocide. We also believe the Assembly should consider other acts of genocide to be included in the bill. The bill sponsor made clear that he did not consult on this bill. And members of the Assembly should bring forward the thoughts and concerns of constituents who this bill affects.

Not only did UCP members on the committee vote down these recommendations, they also blocked the invitation of stakeholders to speak to the bill. Shortly after forming government, UCP members of the legislature established this committee to provide the opportunity for Albertans to engage on private members' business. However, the UCP are selective and inconsistent on when the opportunity should be granted. Given the important and sensitive contents of Bill 205, we wish the opportunity would have been used as a time to reach out and listen to Albertans; particularly, Indigenous peoples.

Even though our recommendations and motions were rejected by the committee, we still support this bill to proceed to the Assembly and we encourage members of the Assembly to consider our recommendations and comments for when Bill 205 is debated.

Kathleen Ganley, MLA

Janis Irwin, MLA

Chris Nielsen, MLA

Lori Sigurdson, MLA