



Legislative Assembly of Alberta

The 29th Legislature
Second Session

Standing Committee
on
Alberta's Economic Future

Thursday, October 20, 2016
9 a.m.

Transcript No. 29-2-11

**Legislative Assembly of Alberta
The 29th Legislature
Second Session**

Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future

Sucha, Graham, Calgary-Shaw (ND), Chair
Schneider, David A., Little Bow (W), Deputy Chair

Anderson, Shaye, Leduc-Beaumont (ND)
Carson, Jonathon, Edmonton-Meadowlark (ND)
Connolly, Michael R.D., Calgary-Hawkwood (ND)
Coolahan, Craig, Calgary-Klein (ND)
Dach, Lorne, Edmonton-McClung (ND)
Fitzpatrick, Maria M., Lethbridge-East (ND)
Gottfried, Richard, Calgary-Fish Creek (PC)
Hunter, Grant R., Cardston-Taber-Warner (W)
Jansen, Sandra, Calgary-North West (PC)
Panda, Prasad, Calgary-Foothills (W)
Piquette, Colin, Athabasca-Sturgeon-Redwater (ND)
Schreiner, Kim, Red Deer-North (ND)
Taylor, Wes, Battle River-Wainwright (W)

Support Staff

Robert H. Reynolds, QC	Clerk
Shannon Dean	Law Clerk and Director of House Services
Trafton Koenig	Parliamentary Counsel
Stephanie LeBlanc	Parliamentary Counsel
Philip Massolin	Manager of Research and Committee Services
Sarah Amato	Research Officer
Nancy Robert	Research Officer
Corinne Dacyshyn	Committee Clerk
Jody Rempel	Committee Clerk
Aaron Roth	Committee Clerk
Karen Sawchuk	Committee Clerk
Rhonda Sorensen	Manager of Corporate Communications and Broadcast Services
Jeanette Dotimas	Communications Consultant
Tracey Sales	Communications Consultant
Janet Schwegel	Managing Editor of <i>Alberta Hansard</i>

9 a.m.

Thursday, October 20, 2016

[Mr. Sucha in the chair]

The Chair: Good morning, everyone. I'd like to call this meeting to order. Welcome to all the members, staff, and guests in attendance for this meeting of the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future. My name is Graham Sucha. I'm the MLA for Calgary-Shaw and the committee chair.

In light of the recent passing of Premier Prentice and the three others involved in that crash last week, I would ask that the committee members please take a moment of silence for reflection on the life and the dedication of Mr. Prentice. Thank you, all, very much.

I would ask that members and those joining the committee at the table introduce themselves for the record, and then I will call on those on teleconference to introduce themselves as well. I will start with the member to my right.

Mr. Schneider: Good morning. Dave Schneider, MLA for Little Bow.

Mr. Carson: Jon Carson, MLA for Edmonton-Meadowlark.

Mr. Coolahan: Craig Coolahan, MLA, Calgary-Klein.

Mr. S. Anderson: Shaye Anderson, MLA, Leduc-Beaumont.

Mr. Dach: Lorne Dach, MLA, Edmonton-McClung.

Ms Fitzpatrick: Maria Fitzpatrick, Lethbridge-East.

Mrs. Schreiner: Kim Schreiner, MLA, Red Deer-North.

Dr. Amato: Sarah Amato, research officer.

Dr. Massolin: Good morning. Philip Massolin, manager of research and committee services.

Mr. Koenig: I'm Trafton Koenig, a lawyer with the Parliamentary Counsel office.

Mr. Roth: Aaron Roth, committee clerk.

The Chair: All right. A few housekeeping items to address before we turn to the business at hand. The microphone consoles are operated by *Hansard* staff, so there's no need for members to touch them. Please keep cellphones, BlackBerrys, iPhones off the table as they may interfere with the audiofeed. Audio of the committee proceedings is streamed live on the Internet and recorded by *Hansard*. Audio access and meeting transcripts are obtained via the Legislative Assembly website.

Approval of the agenda.

Mr. Hunter: Mr. Chair, were you not going to have . . .

The Chair: Oh, my apologies. Sorry. I totally missed the individuals on the phone. For those individuals on the phone, if you'd like to introduce yourselves for the record.

Mr. Hunter: Grant Hunter, MLA, Cardston-Taber-Warner.

Mr. Taylor: Good morning. It's Wes Taylor, MLA, Battle River-Wainwright.

Mr. Piquette: Good morning. Colin Piquette, MLA for Athabasca-Sturgeon-Redwater.

The Chair: Excellent.

Mr. Panda, if you'd like to introduce yourself for the record as well.

Mr. Panda: Yeah. Good morning. Prasad Panda, MLA, Calgary-Foothills.

The Chair: And are there any other members on the phone? All right. My apologies for that again.

Up next is the approval of the agenda. Would a member like to move approval of this? Moved by Ms Fitzpatrick that the agenda for the October 20, 2016, meeting of the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future be adopted as circulated. All those in favour, please say aye. All those opposed, please say no. And on the phones? That motion is carried.

Next we have the minutes from our last meeting. Are there any errors or omissions to note? If not, would a member like to move adoption of the minutes, please? Moved by Mr. Dach that the minutes for the October 6, 2016, meeting of the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future be adopted as circulated. All those in favour, please say aye. All those opposed? And on the phones? Excellent. That motion is carried.

Now we move on to the next item of business, the inquiry into Alberta's economic situation. Before we begin, I would like to just go over Standing Order 52.07. Hon. members, at the October 6, 2016, meeting the committee passed a motion to review Alberta's economic situation following the completion of its review of the Personal Information Protection Act. That report has now been deposited with the office of the Clerk as an intersessional deposit, officially concluding the committee's review of that legislation.

At this time I would like to review the process for undertaking an inquiry in a legislative policy committee. Standing Order 52.07 governs the general policy of such an inquiry. Suborder (2) provides for a legislative policy committee to undertake an inquiry on its own initiative. It states:

A Legislative Policy Committee may on its own initiative, or at the request of a Minister, inquire into any matter concerned with the structure, organization, operation, efficiency or service delivery of any sector of [our] public policy within its mandate.

To refresh all of our memories, Standing Order 52.01(1)(b) states that the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future's mandate relates

to the areas of Agriculture and Forestry, Advanced Education, Infrastructure, Economic Development and Trade, Culture and Tourism and Labour.

I would also like to draw members' attention to Standing Order 52.07(4), which defines the length of inquiries conducted by the legislative policy committee. It states that

all inquiries must be concluded and a substantive report presented to the Assembly no later than 6 months after the commencement of the inquiry.

I'd also as a refresher point out that we may run into a situation where the six-month timeline and estimates start to kind of coincide, so that should be something that we need to be cognizant of as well.

Additionally, members, I would like to draw attention to Standing Order 52.03, that states:

A Legislative Policy Committee may on its own initiative, or at the request of a Minister, review any regulation, amendment to a regulation or prospective regulation within its mandate.

Also, Standing Order 52.08:

(1) A Legislative Policy Committee may hold public meetings on any matter within its mandate.

(2) A Legislative Policy Committee may recommend to the Assembly on the need for legislation in any area within the Committee's mandate.

Are there any questions regarding the standing orders process of initiatives or conducting an inquiry? Mr. Anderson, did you have a question?

Mr. S. Anderson: No.

The Chair: Okay. If there are no questions on the matter, we will now move into motions defining terms of reference for committee inquiries. At this time I would encourage members to bring forward any specific topics they would like the committee to inquire on.

Mr. Panda: I'd like some clarification on the six-month period you talked about.

The Chair: It's cited within our standing orders that we have a six-month timeline for any reviews that we wish to conduct.

Mr. Panda: If we have an emergency situation, is there any recourse for this committee to take up any other motion or work?

The Chair: Are you meaning to extend that timeline?

Mr. Panda: Yeah.

The Chair: I'll defer to research services if they have any feedback in relation to the standing orders in relation to timelines.

Dr. Massolin: Thank you, Mr. Chair. If you're asking about an extension of the timeline of six months, you would have to make a request to the Assembly in order for that to happen because that would deal with an issue that is stated in the standing orders.

Thank you.

The Chair: Any other follow-ups?

Mr. Panda: No. Thank you.

The Chair: Okay. Now we're moving on to motions on defined terms. Mr. Anderson.

Mr. S. Anderson: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Excited to be here this morning and to get to some more exciting work on our committee. What I'd like to do is actually introduce a motion if you wouldn't mind here. I know you wouldn't mind because you're the chair, and that's what you're waiting with bated breath for me to introduce. I'll try to speak slowly so you can catch this from me.

What I propose is that

in the interest of strengthening and diversifying Alberta's economy, the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future undertake a study of how to grow and diversify the agrifood and agribusiness sectors in the province and that the scope of the study be focused on value-added production, small-business opportunities, and local food production and promotion.

9:10

The Chair: For those on the phone, we're just doing some wordsmithing, and then we will proceed.

Mr. Hunter: Mr. Chair, can I get some clarity, please?

The Chair: Yeah. We'll have it reread for those on the phone, and then I'll allow Mr. Anderson to proceed if he has any other comments in relation to that.

Mr. Roth: Moved by Mr. S. Anderson that in the interest of strengthening and diversifying Alberta's economy, the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future undertake a study of how to grow and diversify the agrifood and agribusiness sectors in the

province and that the scope of the study be focused on value-added production, small-business opportunities, and local food production and promotion.

The Chair: The committee clerk will e-mail that to those on the phone while Mr. Anderson proceeds. Go ahead.

Mr. S. Anderson: Sure. Yeah. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I know that maybe the scope is a little bit big at the moment, but in kind of the three areas in the motion that we can focus on, I know I've had a lot of people come up to me, for example at AUMA last week, to discuss different opportunities or different ideas that they had. In my area we do have agrifood, the Agrivalue Processing Business Incubator, that is doing phenomenal work. Like I said, I've talked to other people from around the province, whether it be mayors or reeves or councillors, that are excited to have opportunities like that or, you know, opportunities to grow different sectors. I know that our rural areas and our agriculture are a massive part of this province, and it's extremely important to me personally to grow that industry and to show the value we have here.

I know, for me, having the Edmonton International Airport and, for example, Air China Cargo coming in and wanting more of our goods and more of our livestock and agriculture – they are just clamouring for it, and that's just one example. So I think it's a really good place for us to focus on.

Yeah, I'm just really excited about it, and I think it's something where, to be honest, we have a competitive advantage over a lot of people. I know that in the last little while, with the head of cattle, there have been lots of people asking for it: China, Mexico, a lot of people just even in that respect. I think we have an incredible opportunity to grow small businesses and a lot of opportunity there.

Anyway, I'm just really looking forward to a good discussion on it. It's something that I think is really important to Alberta.

Mr. Panda: Mr. Chair, I was just finishing my tour in northwest Alberta. I was in the riding of Peace River and in Dunvegan and in other ridings, rural ridings. I mean, the purpose of this meeting, when I requested this meeting specifically, was to talk about major topics that have impacts on the economic situation of Alberta now. I'm glad we are here to talk about that, but I have a slightly different opinion from what Mr. Anderson says. Rural Alberta is very important and the diversification is really, really important because most of my caucus colleagues represent rural ridings, too.

With the fact of the job loss, the purpose of this meeting, if I am right – the motion we passed in the last meeting was to get Alberta back on track and discuss ideas on how to create jobs. What Mr. Anderson says is a good idea – I'm not disputing that – but at the same time the major job losses, as we see in the cities of Calgary and Fort McMurray, Grande Prairie, and everywhere, are in the energy sector. To my surprise, what I heard in the rural ridings in my recent tour is that the carbon tax is impacting the economy, so I'd like to make another motion on that subject.

The Chair: Right now, unfortunately, because there is a main motion on the floor, the discussion is zeroed in on that one, so at this time you can move amendments to the motion or discuss the motion that's on the floor at this moment.

Mr. Panda: Okay. I'll wait for my turn. Thank you.

Mr. Hunter: Mr. Chair, can I get on the speakers list, please?

The Chair: Yup. Absolutely. Please go ahead, Mr. Hunter.

Mr. Hunter: Okay. I just wanted to say that in your preamble, Mr. Chair, you said that this was an opportunity for us to discuss ideas

about what we can do to be able to help get Albertans back to work. Now, if this motion goes forward, this would be the mandate for our committee. What I would like to ask Mr. Anderson is whether or not he would be willing to submit this not as a motion but as an idea, and we could present the different ideas that the different committee members have so that we can at least hear all of the different ideas and be able to go forward from there.

The Chair: Just because of the procedural precedent that is set, the discussion does have to be zeroed in on the motion on the floor. The motion would either have to be adjourned or withdrawn for us to move on to a different topic.

Mr. Hunter: Yeah. That's why I was talking specifically to Mr. Anderson, as he was the person who brought forward the motion. If we all have an opportunity to be able to present our ideas, the committee can take a look at those ideas, and then after that point we could start bringing forward motions.

Mr. S. Anderson: Well, I think, to be honest, I've done a lot of work beforehand on this, and the way that these committees normally work is that you bring forward your motions with what you've done research on and what you thought was going to be a good focus of inquiry, what you thought was going to be, I guess, a good topic for us to focus on, like I say.

I've been hearing a lot. I mean, I live out in a rural area. I understand Mr. Panda's point. I understand Mr. Hunter's point. We are doing a lot, I would say, in this province on other topics. There are a lot of things going on in the government right now with the Alberta jobs plan and a lot of things going on with Economic Development and Trade and all these things with the oil and gas and energy sectors in general. This was something that was identified to me by a lot of constituents, by a lot of people that I talked to, like I said, at AUMA, so it was something that I feel and I have felt strongly about for a long time, that I thought we could all get on board with because I think rural Alberta is important.

I'm not discounting the energy industry by any stretch of any imagination. I have a lot of it in my area, and it's extremely important, and I've been working on a lot of things out there for that industry to try to get guys back to work. We've done some pretty successful things, but this is, you know, I think a big part of what we're doing. Agriculture is a massive part of what our province is and how it started. I just feel really strongly about this, to be honest, and I've had a lot of people express that to me in my constituency and from other constituencies that aren't from our caucus. So that's why I brought it forward.

I think that this committee is here to focus on particular topics, and it was just something I felt really strongly to bring up. That's why I did make a motion on it, and that's why I want to go forward with it, to be honest with you. No disrespect to anybody else. This is something that I've heard from a lot of people. You know, I really respect my constituents' opinions and others, so I would really like to focus on it.

Mr. Hunter: Can I respond to that, Mr. Chair?

The Chair: Please go ahead.

9:20

Mr. Hunter: Mr. Anderson, everything you said makes a lot of sense. I guess what I'm trying to say is that in the event that this is passed, all of the other ideas that we have or that any other member of this committee has will not be heard. So I'm not saying that this is a bad idea. I'm just saying that in terms of timelines, wouldn't it be a better idea for us to be able to present all of the ideas first?

You've presented your motion, but you've also presented an idea. So if you present this as an idea rather than a motion, everybody can have an opportunity to be able to present their ideas here. This allows us the opportunity to have an open and frank discussion and be able to hear the ideas of each member of this committee. This is all I'm presenting to you. If you present this as a motion, then nobody else on this committee will have the opportunity to present their ideas.

The Chair: Ms Fitzpatrick.

Ms Fitzpatrick: Okay. I want to wade in on this because my constituency is completely surrounded by rural Alberta – in fact, there are farms in my riding – and certainly we have seen in Lethbridge a much greater balance in our economy because of agrifoods. We're already big in it, but there's so much potential to grow. If you look at Alberta and the amount of agricultural land throughout the province – north, south, central – to me this is probably the most focused place that we could go if we want to diversify and grow our economy. So I love that Shaye brought this forward, and I totally support it.

Thank you.

The Chair: I'll start with Mr. Taylor and then proceed to Mr. Hunter.

Mr. Taylor: Yeah. I have to echo what Mr. Hunter has been saying. It seems to me that the first person to the buzzer gets to have the motion that we're going to have to debate for the next six months. It would seem to be more wise and more prudent and, I guess, fair for optics for all Albertans if we put all the different options on the table, looked at them – and that won't take long to do – and said: okay; we choose to go with this one. It could very well be that it will just stay where it is, with Mr. Anderson. But it would be fair, I think, for all Albertans to be able to see the options that we could be speaking to if we go and lay them on the table first and then have that ability to speak to them and then move on from there. He does have a good idea, but there are lots of good ideas, and a lot of people have put a lot of work in behind the scenes.

With that in mind, I just think that we need to take a breath and try to let everybody have an opportunity, to have a chance to have an idea, not necessarily a motion, you know, but one of their ideas on the floor.

The Chair: Mr. Hunter.

Mr. Hunter: Yeah. I just wanted to say, Mr. Chair, that I'm not discounting the merit of Mr. Anderson's motion and his idea. I've heard Ms Fitzpatrick say, you know, that she's very much in favour of it. I'm in rural Alberta as well, and I do like what Mr. Anderson is saying. All I'm saying is that I think the timing on this is unfortunate. Because of this motion, it will stop all other ideas coming forward to this committee. Again, I think that it doesn't show the rest of Alberta that we're going to clearly articulate what these points are that are concerning to Albertans and debate them. Again I reiterate that I'm not questioning the merit of what Mr. Anderson is saying here. I'm just saying: let's take a look at all of the ideas that are going to come forward first, and then we can start presenting motions.

The Chair: Mr. Gotfried.

Mr. Gotfried: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just wanted to comment. Again, I don't disagree with the spirit of the motion here. However, I am concerned that, again, we're not embarking on a

little bit more of a blue-sky discussion here with respect to what's best for Albertans. I'd like to think that we're all here focused on how we can attract investments, create jobs, and get Albertans back to work.

You know, we've heard that the agricultural and rural communities are important. But what we also hear from the rural communities, what I'm hearing, is that many of them have symbiotic employment relationships with various other sectors that are operational in their communities. When it's not harvest time, sometimes some of them will work within the petrochemical or the petroleum industry sectors near them or in support of those sectors, so it's a very symbiotic thing. I think we need to look at this from a broader perspective if we actually are going to really be focusing on the economic futures.

I'm just going to be working on a possible amendment here, so I'll pass it back to you, and I may send that through the clerk as well.

Thank you.

The Chair: Okay. Thank you.

Mr. Panda: Mr. Chair, I came with an open mind. I thought we would all get a chance to present all our ideas and then choose which has the most effect on bringing Alberta back on track and bringing Albertans back to work. That's why although I got the first opportunity to present – I was hoping that the process is to discuss all the options available to all of us. Now I'm concerned that if we just pick up one idea and vote on that, just because one party has a majority representation on the committee, then they get to choose one idea and then ignore all other ideas. That means we're not helping those Albertans that we are all elected to look after. That's my concern. That's why I didn't present the idea I had. I was waiting for you to give the opportunity to everyone here to present their ideas. That's the reason I didn't present my idea when I got the first opportunity.

I think the right thing to do is to go around the table and ask everyone what different ideas they have, and then we can choose the one that has the most impact to bring Albertans back to work and create jobs.

The Chair: Are there any other members who are wishing to speak at this moment to the motion on the table?

Mr. Gotfried: Mr. Chairman, I would like to bring forth a possible amendment here. I'd like to do so if I possibly could. I can send that to the clerk here immediately if that is the most expedient manner.

The Chair: It would probably be quicker if you read it out, and we can kind of wordsmith it as it's going along, or you can send it if that's more efficient for you.

Mr. Gotfried: Moved by Mr. S. Anderson: "in the interest of strengthening and diversifying Alberta's economy." Then add in there: "with a focus on getting Albertans back to work." That would be the addition. Then it said: "the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future." Then the amendment, again, would be: "undertake a study on the most expedient and timely measures of how best to attract investment, create employment opportunities, and get Albertans back to work." That has also been sent to Mr. Roth.

The Chair: Yeah. We just received it. I can have Mr. Roth read it for the record. I'm going to have to rule on this as being out of order because it does change the intent of the main motion. I'll allow Mr. Roth just to read it out so everyone has the context of why.

Mr. Roth: Moved by Mr. Gotfried that

the motion be amended by striking out all the words after "Alberta's economy" and replacing it with "with a focus on getting Albertans back to work, the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future undertake a study on the most expedient and timely measures of how best to attract investment, create employment opportunities, and get Albertans back to work."

9:30

The Chair: Just to provide context for committee members and for those members on the phone as well, an amendment cannot change the primary intent of the motion.

Mr. Gotfried: I think the primary intent, if I'm not mistaken, is in the interest of strengthening and diversifying Alberta's economy. I'm assuming that is the focus here and, I'm assuming, again, the subject of much of the discussion that we've undertaken thus far. I'll leave that to the chair and legal counsel to rule upon, but I think that this might be an opportunity for us to put partisanship aside here and actually focus on some of the interests that are broadly shared by the committee. That's with due respect to Mr. Anderson, with the focus on some of the priorities within his own constituency, but this is actually about all of us collaborating, working together for the benefit of all Albertans.

Thank you.

The Chair: After having another discussion with Parliamentary Counsel about the issue at hand, specifically when it comes to our committees, that we are supposed to have a mandate to report on a specific ministry and that we have to typically zero in on a specific topic, the amendment that is on the floor changes the primary intent of that specific topic that Mr. Anderson is bringing forward to the committee, so I will rule it out of order.

Mr. Anderson.

Mr. S. Anderson: Thank you, Chair. I understand what people are saying here, but what I don't appreciate is saying that I'm trying to be partisan or saying that it's just about my area. I brought up an example in my area. That's why I did that. I wasn't saying that this is only going to benefit my area. Hopefully, people don't think that, because that's not why I did that.

In this committee we always bring up ideas and motions, and we bring them forward, and other members have done so. I'm a private member. It's something that, obviously, you can tell that I feel passionately about. I brought it forward to people. People liked it. They were encouraged by it. They thought it had a good focus to it. The whole point is to have a discussion on this. This was my idea. When other people bring them up, you know, we have debates on them as well. I mean, that's the whole point of this committee.

I'm not trying to do it to railroad or be partisan or whatever words people are going to want to use. Honestly, you can say "with all due respect" all you want, but I don't appreciate that, you know. This is something that, as I said, I had a lot of people from different constituencies speaking to me about. It's not just my constituents. That's the reason why I thought it was a good thing to bring up and the only reason. I just wanted to make sure that that was clear for people. That's why.

The Chair: Mr. Gotfried.

Mr. Gotfried: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Sorry; it was a bit garbled there.

The Chair: Yeah. It's you, Mr. Gotfried. That will be followed by Mr. Hunter.

Mr. Gotfried: All right. Mr. Chairman, I wanted to ensure that Mr. Anderson is not taking offence to this. This is not meant in any way to undermine the motion that's in front of us here. However, I'm going to say at this point in time that a lot of the issues I think we're facing here are because of our lack of having a working group in this committee. I've said it strongly before, and I'll say it again: we could avoid some of these issues if we had an opportunity for representatives of the government and the opposition and the third party to sit down before we got to these committee meetings and actually have a bit of an opportunity to put some things on the table. I think it's contributing to, in my mind, the misalignment of this committee and some of the wasted time in this committee. I'd like to see that that is addressed as we go forward because otherwise we're going to keep spinning our wheels here on coming to the table and having misaligned conversations and discussions over things that could have been addressed at the working group level.

Thank you.

The Chair: Mr. Hunter.

Mr. Hunter: Yes, Mr. Chair. Again, back to Mr. Anderson. I just want to point out to the committee that, once again, Mr. Anderson, if your motion goes through, then in reality it is railroading things through because no other ideas will be able to be presented. Now, I have no doubt, because the NDP have a majority on this committee, that this motion will go through, and I have no problems with that. I think it's actually something that will benefit my riding as well and many ridings in Alberta. What I do have concern about is the fact that if we do say yes to this motion and we don't hear any other ideas, once again Albertans will be left with the perception that the NDP are not listening and debating all issues. So it allows us, Mr. Anderson, to be able to say: "You know what? We did hear all the ideas. We debated them fully, and this is the idea that we thought would be best for Albertans based upon the majority of the people voting."

I don't see why it would be any problem with being able to withdraw the motion, bring forward all the ideas, debate them fully, and then bring forward your motion at a later time so we can vote on it. I don't think it hurts anybody. It doesn't hurt the process at all. All it does is that it shows that we're open and transparent and willing to listen to all ideas.

The Chair: Ms Fitzpatrick.

Ms Fitzpatrick: Okay. I actually want to respond to Mr. Gotfried's comments. I go back to the first and second meetings of this committee, when a working group was proposed, and I said at the time and I will say it again: I was elected to represent the constituency of Lethbridge-East and, in fact, as part of the government, all of this province. I intend to be a part of the conversation, which is what we're doing right now. We are having the discussion. So I don't want to – I think talking about a working group, which is what you were referring to, is a moot point because I am going to be part of this discussion, because that's why I was elected.

Thank you.

Mr. Panda: With all due respect to MLA Fitzpatrick, we are all elected to do the same thing. All we are saying here is to give the opportunity for every member to bring ideas and then talk about which idea has the most impact to bring Albertans back to work. It's all we are saying. The purpose of this motion we passed in the last meeting was to debate those ideas first and then choose the one that we all could agree on. You are blocking other ideas by saying: we'll pass this motion, and we only have six months' time to do this

work, so that's why we're going to take that work and we don't do anything about other ideas which may be better. Other ideas may come from your own colleagues, not necessarily from the opposition, and we have to give an opportunity to everyone to present ideas.

If your intention was to just push through your own idea, then why did you not mention that when we brought up that motion in the last meeting? You agreed in principle to debate the ideas based on the last motion we passed in the previous meeting, and now you are saying: it is my idea; just let's take that, and if the opposition don't want to discuss about that, they have no other option because we have the majority. That's the message you are giving here. I don't think that's what your constituents want you to do.

The Chair: I'll remind all hon. members to go through the chair during discussions.

Mr. Dach.

Mr. Dach: Thank you, Chair. I'd like to express my support of MLA Fitzpatrick's concept that the committee itself decide what issues are brought forward for deliberation. I appreciate the fact that members wish to broaden the scope, but we do have limited time within which to complete our discussions on any particular topic, and I think it's really, really high time in this province that we did give a full accounting of how we would like to see economic diversification and job creation be promoted within our agricultural sector. It's something that we haven't had a large discussion on, and I'd like to see our agricultural sector brought to the forefront in this discussion because it is a huge sector of our economy. Globally we have opportunities that present themselves because of the increase in global population, and our agricultural sector has to be poised to take advantage of that.

9:40

It's a discussion that it is incumbent upon us to have. It's an important discussion, and it's not one that is to take away from any of the other economic sectors in the province, but I think it's one that we should focus on now so that agriculture is brought alongside the energy sector as a major player in the move towards economic diversification and job creation, which is the focus of our government.

Thank you.

The Chair: Ms Jansen, if you'd like to introduce yourself for the record as well.

Ms Jansen: Sandra Jansen, the MLA for Calgary-North West.

The Chair: Thank you.

Are there any other members wishing to speak to the motion? Go ahead, Mr. Hunter.

Mr. Hunter: Yeah. Mr. Dach spoke again to the merit of this motion coming forward, which, again, is not something that I was talking about. I think the merit of it is good. What I'm talking about is whether or not we could bring forward all the ideas first and then maybe vote on the motion. At this point it's backwards; the process is backwards. I would be very, very happy to have at least one MLA from the NDP caucus tell me why we cannot bring forward the ideas and then vote on Mr. Anderson's motion. They have not spoken to this issue once.

Mr. Schneider: I think Grant pretty much said it, but on Mr. Dach's point, I've been involved in agriculture my entire life, and I certainly understand the stresses that go on and the policies that are changed and the reasons that big outfits like Western Feedlots take

a dive. Don't get me wrong; agriculture is my life. I'm more than interested in talking about how we can improve agriculture. Agriculture was number one in this province until shortly after Leduc No. 1. Mr. Anderson, was hit. That became an industry that this province has been very successful with.

I guess the point here is that I think we probably – I'm going to look at that motion, just for fun. I think the motion kind of stated that

the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future reconvene and discuss the present economic situation and how we can get Albertans back to work following the deposit of the committee's final report regarding the Personal Information Protection Act.

I think the motion is fairly clear. It was pretty loosey-goosey, but the intent, I think, was that we would discuss all the ideas around the table. I have a problem with a motion being made and the majority carrying the day, but if that's how it's going to be, let's get on with it.

The Chair: Are there any other speakers who wish to speak to the motion on the floor? Go ahead, Mr. Taylor.

Mr. Taylor: I would like to see, Mr. Chair, in the future, though, that we work with a working group if this is going to happen this way. If it's going to be the first hand that gets up and the first motion that kind of gets brought up, that's not completely fair to all Albertans. So I think that we can move on with it, but we have to look at a different system going forward because I don't think this is workable for any of our constituents or Albertans.

Ms Jansen: I'm just coming up to date on this, but as I look at this, the motion – and I apologize for being late – is how to grow and diversify the agrifood and agribusiness sectors. I'm wondering. There are a number of sectors we're interested in looking at, and I think this is a great sector to study. I'm sure someone has probably brought this argument forward. I would love to be able to see a bit of a list of the things that we can talk about. I mean, we certainly have an opportunity in this committee to have a fulsome discussion about areas where we could grow the sector. So it would be very helpful to me and certainly to my constituents.

I'll tell you what. When I finish these committee meetings and I go back to my community, there are people who keep track of these things, if only by social media, and they say to me: well, what about this sector and this sector and this sector? So I'm wondering, because I know that's what I'm going to hear about when I go back to my communities, if we're able to produce a list of the different areas that we can specifically study, if we can do that first. It seems like we're being a bit overly prescriptive here when we have an opportunity to look at, perhaps, the bigger picture and then pick some areas that might produce the biggest bang for our buck.

The Chair: Any other members wishing to speak?

Okay. Seeing none, I will call the question. Mr. Roth, if you can read it for the record.

Mr. Roth: Moved by Mr. S. Anderson that in the interest of strengthening and diversifying Alberta's economy, the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future undertake a study of how to grow and diversify the agrifood and agribusiness sectors in the province and that the scope of the study be focused on value-added production, small-business opportunities, and local food production and promotion.

The Chair: All those in favour, please say aye. All those opposed, please say no. On the phones? That motion is carried.

Now that the committee has defined a scope of the inquiry, we should move on to discussions of how the committee members would like to proceed. In other reviews and inquiries committees have often sought resources provided by the Legislative Assembly Office research services and from time to time briefings from the government. Further, many committees, including those that have conducted similar inquiries, have consulted stakeholders, experts, and also the public. These types of consultations have taken the form of seeking written submissions, oral presentations, and public hearings. I would like to ask Dr. Massolin to provide further information on these types of resources and information that the committees have sought.

Dr. Massolin: Yes. Thank you. I can tell the committee, reinforce what you've said, that in terms of research services, we could produce some background briefing material, if the committee would like, in terms of this topic to perhaps scope it out a little bit further, you know, an issues-oriented type of summary. But also, of course, as you mentioned, Mr. Chair, the committee could seek advice and submissions and information from those sources that you mentioned – from government, from experts, from stakeholders, from the public as well – and any others within those parameters that you can think of. We're at the committee's disposal for information.

Thank you.

The Chair: I'll now open it up for questions, if there are any, to Dr. Massolin, Parliamentary Counsel, research services, or the clerk. Mr. Coolahan.

Mr. Coolahan: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I appreciate the motion that Mr. Anderson put forward, but as he did acknowledge, it is rather broad. In the interest of trying to really drill down on this, I think we need to organize the preparation of the motion that Dr. Massolin spoke about with some specifics, specifically a technical briefing from Agriculture and Forestry and Economic Development and Trade. I'd also be interested in seeing if we could compile a stakeholders list, and I think, similar to our last review, a communications plan is needed to ensure that we reach out to Albertans in the most cost-effective way. With that said, I believe that that would require a motion. Is that correct?

The Chair: That is correct.

Mr. Coolahan: Okay. I would be open to further wordsmithing of a motion on that, something to the effect of: that the standing committee . . .

9:50

The Chair: My apologies, Mr. Coolahan. For the requests that have been made, we're going to draft them as separate motions here. So, like, the technical briefings, stakeholders list all have to come through separate motions. Can we just clarify the ministries that you're seeking the technical briefings on?

Mr. Coolahan: Agriculture and Forestry and Economic Development and Trade.

The Chair: Are there any topics that you want to zero in on with that, or just within the overall scope?

Mr. Coolahan: Well, you've got the two ministries, correct?

The Chair: Yeah.

Mr. Coolahan: Okay. In addition, see if we can compile a stakeholders list. Are you talking about underneath the ministries?

The Chair: Yeah. With the technical briefings, if there are any specific topics that you're seeking, or if it's . . .

Mr. Coolahan: Well, it would be related to the motion that just passed.

The Chair: Okay. All right.

So I'm just going to read out a motion that should suffice, and please correct me if I'm missing any intent here. Moved by Mr. Coolahan that

the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future request that the ministries of Agriculture and Forestry and Economic Development and Trade provide a technical briefing to the committee at a future meeting of the committee.

Mr. Coolahan: Yes.

The Chair: Okay. I'll open that motion up for discussion.

Seeing that there's none, I'll ask Mr. Roth to read it in for the record and for those on the phone before we proceed with the vote.

Mr. Roth: Moved by Mr. Coolahan that the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future request that the ministries of Agriculture and Forestry and Economic Development and Trade provide a technical briefing to the committee at a future meeting of the committee.

The Chair: I will call the question. All those in favour, please say aye. All those opposed, please say no. On the phones? All right. That motion is carried.

Then the next one you're asking for was the stakeholders list. Is that correct?

Mr. Coolahan: A stakeholders list that would be compiled by . . .

Dr. Massolin: Research services.

Mr. Coolahan: . . . yes, research services – thank you – and be added to by the rest of the committee.

The Chair: Just to allow for clarification, because I know that there are some newer members on the committee who may not have seen a stakeholders list, if research services can just talk about the procedures around a stakeholders list as well.

Dr. Massolin: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'd be pleased to do that. What we could do is prepare a draft stakeholders list based on the motion that was passed. I think, as the suggestion was made by Mr. Coolahan, that the committee members, of course, would also be able to submit suggestions, as it is their list, perhaps through the committee clerk, and we could just incorporate those suggestions into the list and then present that draft list to the committee at the next meeting for adoption or approval.

Thank you.

The Chair: I have a draft motion by research services in relation to this, so I'll read it out for you, Mr. Coolahan, and if it matches your intent, please let me know. Moved by Mr. Coolahan that

the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future direct research services to prepare a draft stakeholders list related to its inquiry for consideration at the next meeting of the committee, with any additional stakeholder names being provided by members to the committee clerk by October 25, 2016, and that the committee authorize the chair and deputy chair to approve the

list of stakeholders received, with a deadline for submissions of November 30, 2016.

Because that is pretty thorough and there are quite a few members on the phone, I'll allow that to be e-mailed before we vote on that.

Mr. Coolahan: Sure.

The Chair: With that being said, I will open that up for discussion as well.

The motion has just been sent off. If I can just get confirmation from a member on the phone when they have received that as well.

An Hon. Member: Received.

The Chair: Thank you.

I'll allow any members on the phone who may wish to speak to this motion.

All right. Seeing that there are no other speakers, I will call the question. I will ask Mr. Roth to read it for the record.

Mr. Roth: Moved by Mr. Coolahan that the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future direct research services to prepare a draft stakeholders list related to its inquiry for consideration at the next meeting of the committee, with any additional stakeholder names being provided by members to the committee clerk by October 25, 2016, and that the committee authorize the chair and deputy chair to approve the list of stakeholders received, with a deadline for submissions of November 30, 2016.

The Chair: I will call the question. All those in favour, please say aye. All those opposed, please say no. On the phones? That motion is carried.

With that, are there any other comments or directions that we – sorry. Mr. Coolahan, you had a communications plan if I'm correct, right?

Mr. Coolahan: I didn't realize this required three motions, but yeah. I would like to move that we have a communications plan to reach out to Albertans in the most cost-effective way for their input on Mr. Anderson's larger motion. Please word that better.

The Chair: Sure. Just bear with us, Mr. Coolahan.

Mr. Roth: Just for members, the communications plan provides sort of a menu of options that the committee can look at, and it generally provides the cost. So it's up to the committee's discretion, you know, as to what elements of that they would like to go forward with. The communications plan really is information for members so that they can decide what they wish or what they may not wish to proceed with.

Mr. Coolahan: Do we want a draft communications plan, perhaps, with the costs associated for each?

Mr. Roth: I think that's usually included, yeah, so that would be part of the draft communications plan that would be prepared.

Mr. Coolahan: Thank you.

The Chair: Excellent. So the draft motion that we have is – and, Mr. Coolahan, if there's anything to add, please let me know – moved by Mr. Coolahan that

the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future direct Legislative Assembly Office communications to draft a communications plan in regard to its inquiry into the motion and

that the chair and deputy chair be authorized to approve the draft communications plan.

I will open up the floor for discussion.

10:00

Mr. Coolahan: Mr. Chair, would it be too much to ask to hear that one more time?

The Chair: Moved by Mr. Coolahan that the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future direct Legislative Assembly Office communications to draft a communications plan in regard to its inquiry and that the chair and deputy chair be authorized to approve this draft communications plan.

Mr. Coolahan: Thank you.

The Chair: Mr. Roth is just sending that off to members on the phone as well. It has just been sent off, so if members can confirm when they've received it.

Okay. I'll open it up for members on the phone or in the committee room if there's anyone who would like to comment or discuss the motion on the floor.

Mr. Coolahan: I do have a question.

The Chair: Yes, Mr. Coolahan. Go ahead.

Mr. Coolahan: Do we get statistics on the communications plans, on how effective they were, which avenues were best: social media, newspaper, radio, whatever you do?

The Chair: Dr. Massolin.

Dr. Massolin: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Coolahan, I imagine that you're talking about the PIPA review and just to see how successful – yeah, I'm sure that communications services would be pleased to report on the effectiveness of that campaign and how, you know, information was received and so forth at the next meeting.

Mr. Coolahan: Thank you.

The Chair: I will open that up for discussion on the motion. Seeing none, I will call the question.

Mr. Roth: Moved by Mr. Coolahan that the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future direct Legislative Assembly Office communications to draft a communications plan in regard to its inquiry and that the chair and deputy chair be authorized to approve this draft communications plan.

The Chair: All those in favour, please say aye. All those opposed, please say no. On the phones? That motion is carried.

I will open it up for any further discussion or for any motions to direct research services.

Ms Jansen: In other areas?

The Chair: In other areas, yeah.

Ms Jansen: I just want to bring up a concern I have. I think I referred to it a little bit when I sat down. I hear a lot from my constituents, who are really excited about the idea of me sitting on Economic Future and talking about economic futures. I'm hearing from them that they want to talk about some of the things that they think most impact the economy in this province, and one of those things is the carbon tax. When I've had conversations with people in my constituency, they say: well, look, there are a lot of potentially

unintended consequences because of the implementation of the carbon tax. I'm listening.

We've got a lot of bright people sitting around the table. We have research services, which does a bang-up job, and I'm wondering if there might be some way to perhaps get research services to sort of put together a list, with our help, of folks who might be impacted by, say, the carbon tax and its implications. You know, we've got six months to discuss agrifood and agribusiness, which is fantastic, but I think we can all walk and chew gum at the same time. I think that perhaps we could take one meeting, four hours, and have a conversation about stakeholders who are affected by the carbon tax and its implications. I don't know exactly how we do it, but I throw that out there because this is what I'm hearing from my constituents. They would love for us to have a conversation about it.

Is there any way that we could be slightly less prescriptive in our direction for the next six months and add one more topic, even for a brief period of time, to the agenda? We're talking maybe one day, two days. We can at least bring forward some concerns from Albertans who would love to be able to find that structured within Economic Future because it deals directly with our economic future. I just throw that out there.

The Chair: Dr. Massolin.

Dr. Massolin: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think, you know, it's up to the committee how it organizes its business, but I would suggest that now that you have a new inquiry before you, you might want to sort of prioritize that, to line up the work plan. I mean, it's something that you can consider going forward. That is what I would suggest. But you've got six months within which to do this current review.

Thank you.

The Chair: Ms Jansen, do you have any follow-ups?

Ms Jansen: Yeah, just one follow-up. With all due respect, while I agree with the idea of prioritizing the agrifood and agribusiness, I think that prioritizing doesn't mean we have to leave something else off the list. Absolutely, prioritize the first order of business, but I would just throw out the idea that, you know, at some point four or five months from now, if research services has the ability to know that this is coming up, then there's a lot of opportunity to put together a list of stakeholders and that sort of thing. At the end we could quite efficiently slide in a conversation for a day or half a day on this particular issue with very little fanfare and very little cost.

The Chair: Mr. Coolahan, did you wish to speak?

Mr. Coolahan: I was just going to ask, Chair, if that conversation actually falls within the mandate of this committee.

The Chair: I'm going to allow research services to comment on this just because in relation to Alberta's Economic Future, as was discussed earlier in the meeting, we have to make sure that whatever we zero in on falls within our mandate of the seven ministries that we oversee. So I'll allow research services to comment.

Mr. Koenig: All right. This is Trafton Koenig, actually, with Parliamentary Counsel. I can provide a few comments, Mr. Chair, for the benefit of the committee. As long as the question or the issue is framed in a way that touches on the mandate of this committee, so within the ministries, it would be appropriate for review by the committee. I would emphasize, however, that committees typically don't deal with multiple matters at the same time. There's a sequencing. The committee has just decided that the priority for

inquiry at the moment will be the motion that was passed earlier this morning. The committee can look into other things after that inquiry has been completed, but the scope for the inquiry has been defined right now for what the committee will work on at present. Just to be clear, that doesn't preclude other issues or topics coming forward later, after that inquiry is completed.

Dr. Massolin: Just to supplement that, Mr. Chair, you know, if you look at the standing orders, specifically 52.01(1)(c), you see that the Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship has Environment and Parks under it. I think it's all about framing the issue, as Mr. Koenig said, but that ministry is under a different legislative policy committee.

Thank you.

The Chair: And even to supplement specifically with specific taxation measures falls under Treasury if I'm correct – right? – which would be Resource Stewardship as well.

10:10

Mr. Panda: What the Member for Calgary-North West is saying is to get the research group to identify the stakeholder list within the scope of the work proposed by MLA Anderson, which is the impacts of the carbon tax on the agricultural sector and the food processing sector and other sectors. She and I were asking about the economic impacts of that carbon tax, which falls within economic development and employment. They are part of this committee, so I think it's perfectly in order. It's not too much to ask the research group to work with the committee and develop the stakeholder list and look at the overall impacts of the carbon tax on the agricultural sector and the agricultural food processing sector. I think it's perfectly in order, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Yeah, if you were zoning it into that specifically.

Mr. Panda: Right.

The Chair: It's talking in relation to the broader sense, because if you're specific in relation to a policy, the policy itself, some of it falls within Environment and Parks, and some of it falls within Treasury. However, if you are looking at a specific ministry per se, similar to what you discussed, that would be in order for the committee.

Mr. Panda: I talked to hundreds of farmers recently, and they're concerned about the impacts of the carbon tax on them. MLA Anderson mentioned the importance of farmers and rural ridings and what not. What the Member for Calgary-North West asked for falls within that scope of work.

The Chair: Mr. Anderson.

Mr. S. Anderson: Thank you, Chair. I think that I understand where people are coming from, but as has been explained already, the carbon levy isn't in the scope of what we're doing with this right now. It's already been discussed ad nauseam in the House, debated, and voted on. In particular, it's been studied over and over. I've got, to be honest, about six different reports just right here of my own because this is something that I am obviously very aware of and concerned with and trying to educate myself on.

Yeah, it's already been discussed, and I think that it's already been debated and voted on. I don't understand why, after it's been said that it's out of scope here, we are continuing to go down this path. I understand the issues that people are bringing up, not to say that I don't, but, yeah, I think it's already been said that it's out of

the scope. That's where I stand on it. I mean, it's been voted on in the House.

Anyway, that's just my two cents on that part.

The Chair: I have Ms Jansen on the list, and then we'll move to you, Mr. Hunter.

Ms Jansen: I do feel the need to respond to that, with all due respect to my colleague. The idea that this has been debated ad nauseam I find a bit of a shocking and unpleasant analogy. First of all, for those of us who remember the debate in the House, those of us in opposition brought forward some pretty reasoned amendments, and we debated to a very small group on the other side of the aisle. So the debate took place amongst us. It did not take place in a fulsome sense, with a mostly empty bench on the other side of the aisle. So when you say that the debate happened ad nauseam, I would say that there are a lot of Albertans who are extremely concerned about the impact. We've done nothing ad nauseam but have meetings with concerned people who are feeling the effects of this carbon tax.

Now, I understand that we want to carefully consider the scope of what this committee does. I would suggest that we have an opportunity here to frame the conversation in a way that fits in the scope of this committee and put it in the hopper and line it up to have the conversation afterwards because even though some folks may be tired of the conversation, Albertans aren't. In fact, they're being impacted by the effects of this every day. We're talking about school boards. We're talking about nonprofit organizations. We're talking about farming communities. We're talking about businesses. In fact, they don't feel a sense of nausea when they think about this issue other than the sense that it's going to affect them deeply. They would happily continue this conversation. I think we as MLAs have a duty to continue to have this conversation on their behalf because it doesn't bore us. It's part of our job, and we're quite happy to be here having that conversation.

The Chair: I'll allow Mr. Anderson to respond.

I want to caution members – and this was ruled on in the House previously on a different discussion – that we cannot be discussing the attendance of members within session or committee.

Ms Jansen: That's in the House.

Mr. S. Anderson: Thank you, Chair. I appreciate the member's comments. I don't appreciate her making light of it or saying that we haven't discussed this enough or that it bores us because it doesn't bore me. As I said, I look at this every day, and I talk to people every day about this, and I know that a lot of members do.

You know, I understand where she's coming from, but my whole point was just to say that at the moment this is out of scope. It's been debated in the House regardless of who you say was there or wasn't there. If she wants, she can look in *Hansard*. That's fine. It's no difference to me. It was debated in the House. That was my simple point. I'm following procedure. That's my job. But to say that it's boring to me is far outside of what I would say. This is something that I am interested in and read about every single day. Yeah, I understand her point. I get it. I'm just trying to stick within procedure. That is, I think, what I'm doing and what we're trying to do. It's simply that. That's all.

You know, I'm not looking for my recognition out there, for my name to get out. I don't need any of that. That's not the point of this. I'm just trying to say that this is an important discussion, without a doubt, but we have a mandate set before us – that's all – and it's just following procedure. That's all I'm getting at. I don't want to make light of any of this, and I never would. Some people talk about politics being a game, and it's not a game to me. It never

has been, and that's the reason why I got involved with it. For anybody to maybe, possibly, even remotely think that, I wouldn't like that because that's not who I am.

Just to say that this is a very serious issue for me and for all of us and for the province. We realize that, and it's something that we work with every day.

Thank you.

The Chair: Mr. Hunter.

Mr. Hunter: Yeah. I'd like to echo the comments of Ms Jansen that what this offers us, Mr. Chair, is an opportunity to be able to hear from stakeholders in the agriculture business and the sector to help us understand how the carbon levy is going to impact their business and potentially affect further job losses. I think it's completely relevant, and whether we've discussed the merits of the carbon levy in the House or not, this is an opportunity for us to be able to discuss it in the context of how it will affect the agriculture business and sector in Alberta, which I think is very important if we're going to be able to understand how to be able to help this sector grow and develop and diversify. I would echo Ms Jansen's plea to have this happen and to be allowed into the directive.

Mr. Panda: Mr. Chair, I just want to respond to Mr. Anderson. I mean, on one hand he says that he's trying to get educated . . .

Mr. S. Anderson: I am educated.

Mr. Panda: Yeah, but you should be doing that before you vote on any bills.

The Chair: Guys, I'm going to cut this off right now. Mr. Anderson, it is not your time. I will remind hon. members that you must go through the chair in this discussion as well, please.

Mr. Panda: Absolutely. When he made the statement, Mr. Chair, that he's trying to get educated and then he brought in a motion which was forced through this committee, others couldn't get their ideas through. When he talks about the carbon tax, his party or his government didn't run on that in the campaign. It was not campaigned on. Albertans didn't know it was coming. Now they are concerned about the impacts of that, including on the ag sector. That's why, you know, for this committee – all we're saying is about the economic impacts of that carbon tax on farmers, on ag businesses.

MLA Anderson is saying that it's not in the scope of this committee. I don't get that. I don't understand. On one hand, he's saying that he's elected to do the job, and he's saying that he's trying to get educated on the subject he already voted on. He supported the carbon tax. Now he's trying to prevent a discussion in this committee on the carbon tax on farmers and the agricultural sector and the food processing sector. That's trying to block the discussion and using the majority to block other ideas, which I can't appreciate.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

10:20

The Chair: Mr. Gotfried.

Mr. Gotfried: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I also echo the sentiments of many of the members here that I believe that this committee, as dealing with economic futures, should be in a position to call the appropriate stakeholders to find out their comments on the impact of various legislation and regulation on their businesses, particularly if we're dealing with the economic future of this province and in particular, given the passing of this motion, with a

particular sector. I think that the scope of Alberta's Economic Future Committee, as echoed by many other members here, is such that we need to be able to discuss the economic futures of Albertans, not only in the agriculture sector but also in those related sectors and in the rural communities, which are most deeply affected not only by the impact on their sector, a core sector, but also in the support that they receive from the energy industry and other complementary industries that we know exist and also supplement the incomes of many rural and agricultural industries.

You know, I think that we need to take the blinders off here and be prepared to roll up our sleeves and do the hard work on behalf of Albertans during this time of economic crisis. I'd like to see us move towards that. I don't want to see us waste any more time. I myself am deeply disappointed that after 15 months we're going to go forward with one recommendation on the PIPA legislation to find a better definition of one thing. I'd hate to see us waste another 15 months without actually doing our diligence on behalf of Albertans.

Thank you.

The Chair: All right. I'm going to go back to the initial comments from Ms Jansen. I hear the feedback in relation to addressing something additional to what is here or what the main motion is. What I am going to recommend – and I'm going to move this topic on to other business because the motion that we're still discussing was if there was any additional research to Mr. Anderson's initial motion, that had passed, and if we wanted to put anything in there. So I'm going to open up the floor back to that discussion, and then if the committee wishes to do so, we can continue to proceed on to this discussion following that as well.

Is there any other feedback in relation to the original motion of Mr. Anderson, that was carried, in relation to any additional research that we would like to have done on that motion?

Mr. Schneider: I just want to make sure that I'm staying within the scope of the committee. My riding has one of the largest cattle-feeding areas in the country. There are at any given time 2.3 million cattle living in my riding. That takes people that run feedlots. Those are agriculture people.

For this committee, some of its purview is agriculture, and that's exactly what we're talking about here, agriculture. I just want to make sure that what I'm saying – and you can knock me away if you'd like. I spoke about this in the House, and it does relate to the carbon tax. People that run on a margin, which are feedlots, have that margin disappear every time something surprising comes along that increases their expenses. I hear from them. You know, we understand that probably power is going to go up. Now, I don't know if power runs inside this . . .

The Chair: Sorry to cut you off, Mr. Schneider. Is this in relation to Mr. Anderson's motion, or is this talking about the item that came up from Ms Jansen?

Mr. Schneider: Probably the item that came up with Ms Jansen. I'll be honest.

The Chair: Okay. Well, I'll have us get back to this as soon as we move on to other business.

Mr. Dach: I just wanted to clarify, Mr. Chair, what exactly we have on the floor right now. Was there an actual motion that we are having under consideration?

The Chair: Yeah. We were still under discussion of what we'd like to direct to research services under Mr. Anderson's carried motion.

I just want to clarify that there's nothing else that the committee members wish to . . .

Mr. Taylor: Mr. Chair?

The Chair: Yes.

Mr. Taylor: With due respect, you know, when you read this motion, it says, "To grow and diversify," so to grow the agribusiness sectors. If you want to grow and if you've got a tax that's going to apply to it, I think it is very pertinent to what Mr. Schneider was talking about because it does have an economic impact on that part of the sector when you do have an additional tax. It limits the ability to grow and diversify the agribusiness if there is a carbon tax placed on it. I, frankly, think there needs to be an economic impact study – that could have been done – that would apply to this sector specifically.

The Chair: Okay. With that being said, what I'll say is: are there any other directives or motions that we would like to direct research services on in relation to Mr. Anderson's motion? Then, after, I can move us straight onto other business if the committee members wish for us to do so.

Go ahead, Mr. Schneider.

Mr. Schneider: Based on the discussion that's gone on here, I'd like to suggest a motion that

research services be directed to research the economic impact of the carbon levy on agrifood and agribusiness sectors in the province of Alberta.

The Chair: The challenge to this one is that it doesn't necessarily relate to the research request in relation to Mr. Anderson's initial motion, so I would rule that out of order. We could come back to this during other business.

Mr. Panda: Mr. Chair, how is that out of order? Mr. Schneider asked for research help. Sorry, guys on the phone. I'm just waiting for the chair's attention.

The Chair: Looking at the initial motion, it defines at the end that "the scope of the study be focused on value-added production, small-business opportunities, and local food production and promotion." The scope is quite specific within these key elements, so this economic study would not be within the scope of the final wording within that motion.

Mr. Panda: Can you read that again? Sorry. I didn't get that.

The Chair: For the indulgence of those who are on the phone, I'll have Mr. Roth read out the whole motion again for everyone.

Mr. Roth: Moved by Mr. S. Anderson that in the interest of strengthening and diversifying Alberta's economy, the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future undertake a study of how to grow and diversify the agrifood and agribusiness sectors in the province and that the scope of the study be focused on value-added production, small-business opportunities, and local food production and promotion.

Mr. Panda: Mr. Chair, Mr. Schneider's amendment to the motion is exactly within the same scope.

The Chair: No. It wasn't an amendment. It was a direction to research services.

Mr. Schneider: I guess I'll need some clarification again. If the study is to be focused on value-added production, small-business

opportunities, and local food production, if there is something that's put in place that makes that more difficult, can that be part of this discussion?

The Chair: It can be determined if research services would like to provide feedback. It can be determined within deliberations.

10:30

Mr. Koenig: Mr. Chair, if I might just provide a suggestion for the benefit of the committee. It is entirely possible to – I mean, it depends on how the motion is framed. Because the discussion of the committee right now is on the motion that was passed, any direction to research services needs to be within those parameters. Now, if you craft a motion in terms of research that is within that context, that would be part of what we're discussing now. If that motion for research couldn't be within that context, then you may wish, again, to bring it up under other business, but that isn't to say that it can't be. As long as the direction to research services relates back to the scope of what was defined in the motion, then it would likely be in order.

Mr. Schneider: Okay. I'll throw another curveball and see how this goes. Agrifood business and agribusiness: family farms are exempt on fuel tax, but agribusiness, et cetera, is not. The carbon levy – and I have to say the words – will impact agribusiness and agrifood; it cannot help but. When you look at McCain down in my riding, they burn natural gas by the tonne. With the amount of money that it takes, if they had another person, another organization that wanted to come in that was similar in creating agrifood, would they place their decision in a place where they did not have this kind of a burden, where that's the first thing weighed on them regarding the use of fuel for their business, for agribusiness? I just need an answer, I guess.

The Chair: Dr. Massolin.

Dr. Massolin: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just need clarification on the question.

Mr. Schneider: That's not hard to believe.

Dr. Massolin: I think you're asking for a research task, and you're trying to scope out, you know, within the parameters of this motion, what you're looking for. I think you're trying to tie it in, but would you be able to indicate again what the tie-in is?

Mr. Schneider: Well, the motion talks about the study being focused on value-added production, small-business opportunities, and local food production. This is all tied in with Alberta's economy regarding agrifood and agribusiness. Agrifood and agribusiness cannot help but be tied to fuel, mainly natural gas, in the big scheme.

Maybe it would make more sense to make an amendment to the motion, would it? Is it too late for that?

The Chair: It's too late. It's passed, yeah.

Mr. Schneider: It's too late for that. Okay.

I don't know how else to say it. If another outfit like McCain was to come and knock on the door of Alberta and say, "Look, I want to do some business here; what does it cost me to set up my shop?" we say: "Well, there's this, this, and this. Plus, we have an extra thing that isn't necessarily over the borders on either side of us. Where do you think you want to set up?"

The Chair: We will take a five-minute recess to work through some of these items.

[The committee adjourned from 10:34 a.m. to 10:48 a.m.]

The Chair: I will call the meeting back to order.

Someone on the line is not on mute, so just ensure that all of those on the line are on mute as well.

We'll move over to Mr. Schneider.

Mr. Schneider: Yes. With some intense deliberation and discussion we have drafted a motion that Parliamentary Counsel may see fit. I'll read that if it's all right, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Please proceed.

Mr. Schneider: That

the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future direct research services to prepare a crossjurisdictional survey examining the economic impact of carbon pricing on local food production and promotion in Canada.

The Chair: Okay. With that, I'll open it up to the floor for debate or discussion. MLA Dach.

Mr. Dach: Thank you, Chair. I'd just like to perhaps get the text of the motion read out once again to clarify exactly what was said.

Mr. Roth: Moved by Mr. Schneider that the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future direct research services to prepare a crossjurisdictional survey examining the economic impact of carbon pricing on local food production and promotion in Canada.

Mr. Dach: Very well. Thank you for that.

Given that motion I'd just like to ask what implications they might see for their research that would be caused by this motion. Is it something that fits in with the other research that is being done already with respect to the main motion, or are there implications on scope that come up with this new motion?

Dr. Massolin: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Through you to Mr. Dach, correct me if I'm wrong, but I think your question is saying: is this motion that's been moved by Mr. Schneider within the scope of the motion that the committee has already passed? The answer is yes if that was the question.

Mr. Dach: All right. Further to that, in that question is basically: are there any other implications for research as far as the crossjurisdictional surveys being asked for? Is it something, within the time frame that you have available to you, that you believe would be possible to perform?

Dr. Massolin: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yeah. It depends on when the committee would want it by. I assume it would take a little bit of time to do, so perhaps not for the next meeting as scheduled but perhaps for a subsequent meeting.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Dach: All right. Well, given the motion on the floor and those responses what I'd like to do for my colleagues, to have ample time to discuss the motion and our reaction to it, is ask the indulgence of the committee for a 10-minute recess so that we might gather our thoughts on this.

The Chair: Okay. I will allow that; however, I will need consent of the committee for us to go over our allotted time.

Mr. Panda: We just had a recess, Mr. Chair, so I'd like to get the business done and go home, back to our constituencies.

The Chair: Sorry. I thought we were scheduled for 11, but we're scheduled till 12. I apologize. We actually do have ample time, so

I'll allow a 10-minute recess for the members to review that motion on the floor.

Mr. Dach: Thank you, Chair.

[The committee adjourned from 10:52 a.m. to 11 a.m.]

The Chair: All right. We'll call the meeting back to order.

Just for the members who are on the phone, I'll have Mr. Roth read out the motion that's on the floor at this moment.

Mr. Roth: Moved by Mr. Schneider that the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future direct research services to prepare a crossjurisdictional survey examining the economic impact of carbon pricing on local food production and promotion in Canada.

The Chair: With that, I'll open up the floor for discussion. Mr. Coolahan.

Mr. Coolahan: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I believe the motion that was put forth by Mr. Anderson is really dealing with the food and agribusiness sectors and the value-added production, small-business opportunities, local food production and promotion in the context of reality, which is that we have a national carbon pricing coming down on the country. I'm very proud of our province in that we are taking the lead on that and that we're not going to be dictated to.

With that said, we will continue to work with industry and stakeholders to analyze the impacts of the national carbon-pricing scheme and work with the agricultural sector to develop energy efficiency programs that would best address their concerns. As such, I believe that this motion, although it may be within scope, is going to hold up the good work of what is actually in the motion.

Thank you.

Mr. Hunter: Mr. Chair, can I speak?

The Chair: Please proceed, Mr. Hunter.

Mr. Hunter: Yeah. I guess what I'd like to do is just maybe give you an example of how this is relevant. In my riding Lantic Inc., better known as Rogers Sugar, brings in sugar beets and processes them. It's just a highly intensive process for natural gas. I talked to the CEO and asked him what the carbon levy was going to cost their business, and he said: over \$5 million added onto their costs. The problem is that because this business has to compete on a global stage, because sugar is a commodity that has global competition, he was concerned that this carbon tax was going to possibly shut down their business in the Taber area and get to the point where, if it's shut down, a lot of people in my area would lose their jobs. I think it's completely relevant that we understand the consequences of a carbon tax on our ag sector. It's not unlike if we were to say: we want to get to the moon, but we refuse to study rocket propulsion.

We need to understand all of the issues that are going to affect the ag sector and understand how it could affect employment. That's what we started out with, from what I understand, to understand how we can help Albertans get back to work, not how we can turn a blind eye and say: well, we're not going to study certain aspects of why people are out of business or out of work.

The Chair: Mr. Dach.

Mr. Dach: Thank you, Chair. I just wanted to maybe think about consequences for a second, as mentioned by the previous member when he spoke. There are consequences, all right, of not having an Alberta-made plan to price carbon, and that's that we'll be subject

to the imposition of a federal carbon-pricing scheme that will be imposed in the absence of an Alberta-made, an Alberta-leading carbon-pricing plan. In an effort to ensure that the plan that is in place in Alberta follows the strengths of our economy and is an Alberta-made plan and is best for our province, we're going to be the leaders in making our own carbon-pricing plan and will follow through and consider and work with the agricultural sector to develop efficiency programs in energy to mitigate the cost of that plan.

Not to do anything in our province and not to lead would have consequences that you don't want to think about. I think we did very well to get ahead of the gun and make our own carbon-pricing plan in the province, and we showed that very clearly when not too long ago the federal government introduced their own intentions to have a carbon-pricing scheme. I think that those consequences were averted by the action that the government has taken.

Ms Jansen: I would just say that I'm listening to this and I'm not sure if I understand the argument for why members of the government don't want to do it. If I'm correct, Member Coolahan's argument is that it's going to take valuable time away from the work we need to do, and Member Dach's argument is that we need carbon pricing, neither of which actually, really – well, first of all, we've got six months to have this discussion. Adding some information that may take, as was pointed out to us, a couple of meetings from now – and we'd have this information – doesn't seem like a huge amount of time, to me, to have to devote to this. I think it's a small price timewise to pay for a discussion we're going to be having over the next six months, so I don't really understand that argument.

To Member Dach's argument about needing a carbon tax: that's like me saying that we can't debate this because I had a flat tire on my car this morning. One has absolutely nothing to do with the other. We're not debating a carbon price here. We're talking about the need to have a conversation about the mitigating factors involved in carbon pricing on agrifood and agribusiness. I think a number of us have made it very clear that we have no problem with carbon pricing. What we want to do is have a conversation about its effect on folks who run businesses in this province. So I would hate for it to be characterized – and I'm sure it was by mistake – that we, in fact, are arguing against a carbon tax here. There are those of us at the table who are quite comfortable with carbon pricing. We just want to have a conversation about the people who are going to be affected in this province and what that looks like.

I would just say that for a couple of days of research this is a conversation where, actually, we will be able to take this information back to folks in our constituency and give them some value-added out of this conversation, and I think that's hugely important.

Mr. Taylor: Mr. Chair, if I may, could I have that motion sent to me?

The Chair: Oh, my apologies, Mr. Taylor. We'll send it to those on the phone while Mr. Panda speaks to the motion.

Mr. Panda: Mr. Chair, Mr. Coolahan and Mr. Dach talked about carbon tax. We all know that it's already going to be implemented from the 1st of January. Mr. Coolahan said that they don't want to be dictated to by the federal government and that they're showing leadership, but the point I'm trying to make here is that the initial rate proposed by the Alberta government is actually higher than the government of Canada's initial rate. The government of Canada is proposing a \$10-per-tonne carbon tax whereas the provincial government is talking about double that amount, \$20 per tonne.

Our concern is that that will have an impact on the agrifood and food processing businesses. That's why we are saying, when we are bringing in stakeholders to talk about that very same subject, that we should also be doing some research and getting some updates on how that impacts those very businesses we are talking about to diversify the economy and grow the economy and bring Albertans back to work. It's totally connected, and it only takes very minimum resources. I think we shouldn't be blindly opposing that. That's my point.

The Chair: Mr. Hunter, you're on the speakers list.

Mr. Hunter: Yeah. Basically, I was going to say that what this motion is asking for is, specifically, to get a perspective from people who are going to have to pay this carbon tax. This doesn't mean that the committee has to take their recommendations or what they learn from these stakeholders, but at least hear from the different stakeholders how this is going to affect them. That's going to help us understand, again, how to be able to diversify, how to be able to understand this direction, and how we should move forward in the future with our ag sector and the production of those ag sectors.

11:10

Mr. Taylor: Can I be on the speaking list, too?

The Chair: Yeah. Go ahead, Mr. Taylor.

Mr. Taylor: Yes. For me and for my riding here, the canola plant we have in our town is of great concern. It's an ag production facility, and it's something where, when I've talked to the head office in the United States, they were having grave concerns about the carbon tax. They didn't tell me what they were planning on doing, but they said that they had grave concerns about it. You know, what happens is that if we put in a carbon tax that's higher than the other provinces' and the rest of the provinces perhaps go with something that the federal government has, we're not competitive anymore because they are being taxed at a lower rate. For the next four years this will be putting businesses out of our province. We're driving businesses out. We're driving a wedge between our province and the next province. We don't want to be doing that. We need to keep ourselves competitive here as Albertans.

The Chair: Mr. Schneider.

Mr. Schneider: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chair. At the end of the day all this motion is asking is for research to provide some information for us. I don't think that's too dangerous a position to take unless there are folks here that are afraid of the results. That would be a different discussion. But I think the information will be valuable to a decision and to the topic of study.

Thank you.

The Chair: Are there any other members wishing to speak? On the phone?

Seeing none, we will call the question. I'll have Mr. Roth read it into the record.

Mr. Roth: Moved by Mr. Schneider that the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future direct research services to prepare a crossjurisdictional survey examining the economic impact of carbon pricing on local food production and promotion in Canada.

The Chair: All those in favour, please say aye. All those opposed, please say no. On the phone? That motion is defeated.

Are there any further research proposals at this time?

Mr. Taylor: Just for clarification, can you tell me what that vote was?

The Chair: Were you wanting a recorded vote?

Mr. Taylor: I would like to know what the count was, yes, because I can't see that from here.

The Chair: Okay. I did it mostly by numbers that I could hear, but we can do a recorded vote if you'd like. I'll start to my right.

Mr. Schneider: In favour of the motion. David Schneider.

Mr. Panda: In favour of the motion. Prasad Panda.

Mr. Carson: Not in favour. Jon Carson.

Mr. Coolahan: Opposed. Craig Coolahan.

Mr. S. Anderson: Opposed. Shaye Anderson.

Mr. Dach: Opposed. MLA Dach.

Ms Fitzpatrick: Opposed. MLA Fitzpatrick.

Mrs. Schreiner: Opposed. MLA Schreiner.

The Chair: All right. On the phones?

Mr. Piquette: Opposed.

Mr. Hunter: In favour.

Mr. Taylor: In favour.

Connolly: Opposed.

Mr. Roth: Mr. Chair, the total in favour of the motion, 4; the total against, 8.

The Chair: The motion is defeated.

We are back to any other topics in relation to Mr. Anderson's motion. Are there any other requests for research at this time?

Seeing none, we will move on to other business. Are there any other issues that we wish to discuss at this time?

Mr. Hunter: Yes, Mr. Chair. Please, may I speak?

The Chair: Yeah. Please proceed, Mr. Hunter.

Mr. Hunter: You know, here was an opportunity, Mr. Chair, for us to be able to discuss ideas right across the different ridings that we have, to discuss the ideas that could help get Albertans back to work or at least mitigate some of the job losses that we're seeing.

What we've seen here today is probably one of the reasons why the NDP is sitting at about 19 per cent in the polls, because rather than listening to the advice of Albertans, they blindly continue to go forward with their agenda without consulting and truly understanding what Albertans are thinking. This is a sad, sad state for Albertans. We know that there are about a hundred thousand people that have lost their jobs, and more people are still going to lose their jobs. As we continue to pile on these kinds of bad policies and bad directives, we're going to see more people lose their jobs. This is deplorable, that the NDP in this committee refuse to address that issue, and I'm very sad to see that. That's all I have to say about that.

The Chair: Okay. Are there any other topics or issues or any other motions that anyone wishes to bring up in other business?

Mr. Panda: I acclaim Mr. Hunter's comments, Mr. Chair. I'm very disappointed. I came today with an open mind, thinking that every member would get to present their ideas and then we'd pick the best one that will be helpful to Albertans. Unfortunately, we lost that opportunity here, but I'm still hoping that in the future meetings government members will be open to listen to good ideas no matter where they come from and debate on them and work in the interest of Albertans.

Thank you.

The Chair: Please appreciate that I allowed a little bit of flexibility on this. When we are speaking to other business, we should be talking about any business that the committee wishes to address moving forward as well.

Mr. Panda: Mr. Chair, that's exactly what I'm saying. At least in future let's not waste the committee's time and, you know, encourage meaningful debate and encourage good ideas no matter where they come from and work in the interest of Albertans.

The Chair: Is there any other business that any members would like to bring up at this time?

Mr. Taylor: If I could. You know, I would just like to, again, talk about a working group so we don't end up with this situation. A working group does address what you were talking about. That way we make sure that we get a chance to have all business that might be of interest to Albertans that has to do with our committee addressed each time. Going forward, I think that we need to have a different plan so we don't end up with this situation again.

Thank you.

The Chair: Are you wishing to make any motions?

Mr. Taylor: I would like to move that for future committee meetings we do have a working group established and used to determine what ideas or plans that we should be going forward with for the committee. That's poorly worded. I know we need to work that a little bit better.

The Chair: We'll do some wordsmithing on our end. We'll then read it for the record.

Mr. Roth, if you can read it for the record.

Mr. Roth: Moved by Mr. Taylor that the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future establish a working group consisting of the chair, the deputy chair, and a committee member from the third party.

The Chair: With that, I'll open it up to discussion.

Ms Fitzpatrick: I will say again that I'm on this committee to participate in the work that's done by this committee, and I would expect that everybody on this committee would be here to do the same thing. If a working group was formed, that would mean that three people would be doing the work, and I'm absolutely opposed to that. I am here. I was elected to do this, and I am here to do the work that needs to be done.

11:20

Mr. Schneider: With all due respect, I wonder if I could have Parliamentary Counsel describe what a working group is.

Mr. Koenig: Mr. Chair, I'm happy to provide some general comments. Truth be told, I have not been involved with a working group before, so if I might, I can defer to Dr. Massolin, who has a bit more experience.

Dr. Massolin: Yes. If I may, Mr. Chair, I can describe what the working group has done for the previous Legislature's committees. Basically, it's a working group, a subset of the committee as described in the motion. Staff also attends to assist. But it's an informal arrangement whereby committee members can discuss items that have been tasked to it by the committee. For instance, committee scheduling would be one item as would be done by a steering committee, or planning. Also, sort of deliberations for a committee's draft report would be another example of what a working group would do. There you have it.

Thank you.

The Chair: Mr. Schneider for follow-up.

Mr. Schneider: I don't need any clarification. I just ask a question, I guess. I'm going to make this fairly broad. Would there be any reason anyone on this committee should be afraid of what would go on with a working group when ideas are brought forward to the three members – the chair, the vice-chair, and the third party – and those whittle away at that and present? I mean, Parliamentary Counsel sits there with us, so it isn't like anybody's trying to get away with anything. This would streamline what goes on in committee. That's what has been done in the past – is that right? – and that might be the problem. Maybe the past is the problem, but you don't have to answer to that.

Dr. Massolin: I don't know that I have to answer to anything. [laughter]

Mr. Schneider: No. That's true enough.

Dr. Massolin: Thank you. Yeah, that's a very interesting question, but I think that's a question for the committee, not for us.

Thank you very much.

The Chair: Are there any other speakers to the motion on the floor?

Mr. Taylor: I would like to speak to this motion on the floor just a little bit more. For MLA Fitzpatrick's kind of question that she wants to be involved: well, in order to be involved, we need to have all the topics. Is she suggesting, then, that we should have everybody – all three parties, four parties, whatever come into the committee – bring their ideas, and then we debate those at this? If that is the case, then the one motion being passed: this shouldn't have happened today. We should still be able to bring forward further motions, further ideas on the table, then present them and then decide on which one we like best going forward. If she wants to be part of that whole process, that would be the other option. That's not what happened today, so I'm very disappointed in that, and a working group would be the best way to expediate this and to allow more ideas to come forward.

Thank you.

Ms Fitzpatrick: I'm here at this committee today to express my opinions. Everybody else at this table was free to express their opinions as well.

Mr. Taylor: Unfortunately, for only one topic, and there were more topics that could have been brought up, but the person who raised their hand first was the person that was able to get that on the table. That doesn't give Albertans all the ideas that would be good ideas, and the working group allows that to happen, and then the best comes out of it. Unfortunately, this is not what happened today.

The Chair: Okay. Are there any other people wishing to speak to the motion on the floor?

Seeing none, I will call the question. Mr. Roth, for the record, please.

Mr. Roth: Mr. Chair, moved by Mr. Taylor that the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future establish a working group consisting of the chair, deputy chair, and a committee member of the third party.

The Chair: I will call the question. All those in favour, please say aye. All those opposed, please say no. On the phones? That motion is defeated.

Is there any other business that the committee members wish to bring up?

Mr. S. Anderson: Sorry. Just real quick, Chair. I just reference something that was said across from an opposition member. I wholeheartedly disagree with saying that agrifood and agribusiness are a waste of time for this committee, and I don't like that that was said. It's not appreciated. I think it's an incredible opportunity for us, so . . .

The Chair: Mr. Anderson, I apologize to cut you off and interrupt. However, it does have to be a matter of business. I apologize for allowing a bit more brevity with this, but it does have to relate to any other business of the committee.

Mr. S. Anderson: Sorry, Chair.

The Chair: It's all right.

Seeing that there's no other business, hon. members, because of research and actions that the committee has asked for today, the current scheduled meeting for October 26 will be too soon for the committee to be provided information that it has requested. Therefore the next committee meeting will be – I will poll for the next meeting from members, and you'll be notified of that following the poll.

I need a motion to adjourn. Moved by Mr. Dach. All those in favour, please say aye. All those opposed, please say no. The meeting stands adjourned.

[The committee adjourned at 11:27 a.m.]

