



Province of Alberta

The 29th Legislature
Third Session

Alberta Hansard

Monday afternoon, October 30, 2017

Day 45

The Honourable Robert E. Wanner, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of Alberta The 29th Legislature

Third Session

Wanner, Hon. Robert E., Medicine Hat (NDP), Speaker
Jabbour, Deborah C., Peace River (NDP), Deputy Speaker and Chair of Committees
Sweet, Heather, Edmonton-Manning (NDP), Deputy Chair of Committees

Aheer, Leela Sharon, Chestermere-Rocky View (UCP),
Deputy Leader of the Official Opposition
Anderson, Hon. Shaye, Leduc-Beaumont (NDP)
Anderson, Wayne, Highwood (UCP)
Babcock, Erin D., Stony Plain (NDP)
Barnes, Drew, Cypress-Medicine Hat (UCP)
Bilous, Hon. Deron, Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview (NDP),
Deputy Government House Leader
Carlier, Hon. Oneil, Whitecourt-St. Anne (NDP),
Deputy Government House Leader
Carson, Jonathon, Edmonton-Meadowlark (NDP)
Ceci, Hon. Joe, Calgary-Fort (NDP)
Clark, Greg, Calgary-Elbow (AP)
Connolly, Michael R.D., Calgary-Hawthood (NDP)
Coolahan, Craig, Calgary-Klein (NDP)
Cooper, Nathan, Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills (UCP)
Cortes-Vargas, Estefania, Strathcona-Sherwood Park (NDP),
Government Whip
Cyr, Scott J., Bonnyville-Cold Lake (UCP)
Dach, Lorne, Edmonton-McClung (NDP)
Dang, Thomas, Edmonton-South West (NDP)
Drever, Deborah, Calgary-Bow (NDP)
Drysdale, Wayne, Grande Prairie-Wapiti (UCP)
Eggen, Hon. David, Edmonton-Calder (NDP)
Ellis, Mike, Calgary-West (UCP)
Feehan, Hon. Richard, Edmonton-Rutherford (NDP)
Fildebrandt, Derek Gerhard, Strathmore-Brooks (Ind)
Fitzpatrick, Maria M., Lethbridge-East (NDP)
Fraser, Rick, Calgary-South East (Ind)
Ganley, Hon. Kathleen T., Calgary-Buffalo (NDP)
Gill, Prab, Calgary-Greenway (UCP),
Official Opposition Deputy Whip
Goehring, Nicole, Edmonton-Castle Downs (NDP)
Gotfried, Richard, Calgary-Fish Creek (UCP)
Gray, Hon. Christina, Edmonton-Mill Woods (NDP)
Hanson, David B., Lac La Biche-St. Paul-Two Hills (UCP)
Hinkley, Bruce, Wetaskiwin-Camrose (NDP)
Hoffman, Hon. Sarah, Edmonton-Glenora (NDP)
Horne, Trevor A.R., Spruce Grove-St. Albert (NDP)
Hunter, Grant R., Cardston-Taber-Warner (UCP)
Jansen, Hon. Sandra, Calgary-North West (NDP)
Jean, Brian Michael, QC, Fort McMurray-Conklin (UCP)
Kazim, Anam, Calgary-Glenmore (NDP)
Kleinstuber, Jamie, Calgary-Northern Hills (NDP)
Larivee, Hon. Danielle, Lesser Slave Lake (NDP)
Littlewood, Jessica, Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville (NDP)
Loewen, Todd, Grande Prairie-Smoky (UCP)
Loyola, Rod, Edmonton-Ellerslie (NDP)

Luff, Robyn, Calgary-East (NDP)
MacIntyre, Donald, Innisfail-Sylvan Lake (UCP)
Malkinson, Brian, Calgary-Currie (NDP)
Mason, Hon. Brian, Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood (NDP),
Government House Leader
McCuaig-Boyd, Hon. Margaret,
Dunvegan-Central Peace-Notley (NDP)
McIver, Ric, Calgary-Hays (UCP),
Official Opposition Whip
McKittrick, Annie, Sherwood Park (NDP)
McLean, Hon. Stephanie V., Calgary-Varsity (NDP)
McPherson, Karen M., Calgary-Mackay-Nose Hill (AP)
Miller, Barb, Red Deer-South (NDP)
Miranda, Hon. Ricardo, Calgary-Cross (NDP)
Nielsen, Christian E., Edmonton-Decore (NDP)
Nixon, Jason, Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House-Sundre (UCP),
Leader of the Official Opposition,
Official Opposition House Leader
Notley, Hon. Rachel, Edmonton-Strathcona (NDP),
Premier
Orr, Ronald, Lacombe-Ponoka (UCP)
Panda, Prasad, Calgary-Foothills (UCP)
Payne, Hon. Brandy, Calgary-Acadia (NDP)
Phillips, Hon. Shannon, Lethbridge-West (NDP)
Piquette, Colin, Athabasca-Sturgeon-Redwater (NDP)
Pitt, Angela D., Airdrie (UCP),
Official Opposition Deputy House Leader
Renaud, Marie F., St. Albert (NDP)
Rodney, Dave, Calgary-Lougheed (UCP)
Rosendahl, Eric, West Yellowhead (NDP)
Sabir, Hon. Irfan, Calgary-McCall (NDP)
Schmidt, Hon. Marlin, Edmonton-Gold Bar (NDP)
Schneider, David A., Little Bow (UCP)
Schreiner, Kim, Red Deer-North (NDP)
Shepherd, David, Edmonton-Centre (NDP)
Sigurdson, Hon. Lori, Edmonton-Riverview (NDP)
Smith, Mark W., Drayton Valley-Devon (UCP)
Starke, Dr. Richard, Vermilion-Lloydminster (PC)
Stier, Pat, Livingstone-Macleod (UCP)
Strankman, Rick, Drumheller-Stettler (UCP)
Sucha, Graham, Calgary-Shaw (NDP)
Swann, Dr. David, Calgary-Mountain View (AL)
Taylor, Wes, Battle River-Wainwright (UCP)
Turner, Dr. A. Robert, Edmonton-Whitemud (NDP)
van Dijken, Glenn, Barrhead-Morinville-Westlock (UCP)
Westhead, Cameron, Banff-Cochrane (NDP),
Deputy Government Whip
Woollard, Denise, Edmonton-Mill Creek (NDP)
Yao, Tany, Fort McMurray-Wood Buffalo (UCP)

Party standings:

New Democratic: 54 United Conservative: 27 Alberta Party: 2 Alberta Liberal: 1 Progressive Conservative: 1 Independent: 2

Officers and Officials of the Legislative Assembly

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Shannon Dean, Law Clerk and Director of
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Trafton Koenig, Parliamentary Counsel
Stephanie LeBlanc, Parliamentary Counsel

Philip Massolin, Manager of Research and
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Nancy Robert, Research Officer
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Paul Link, Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms
Gareth Scott, Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms

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Rachel Notley	Premier, President of Executive Council
Sarah Hoffman	Deputy Premier, Minister of Health
Shaye Anderson	Minister of Municipal Affairs
Deron Bilous	Minister of Economic Development and Trade
Oneil Carlier	Minister of Agriculture and Forestry
Joe Ceci	President of Treasury Board and Minister of Finance
David Eggen	Minister of Education
Richard Feehan	Minister of Indigenous Relations
Kathleen T. Ganley	Minister of Justice and Solicitor General
Christina Gray	Minister of Labour, Minister Responsible for Democratic Renewal
Sandra Jansen	Minister of Infrastructure
Danielle Larivee	Minister of Children's Services
Brian Mason	Minister of Transportation
Margaret McCuaig-Boyd	Minister of Energy
Stephanie V. McLean	Minister of Service Alberta, Minister of Status of Women
Ricardo Miranda	Minister of Culture and Tourism
Brandy Payne	Associate Minister of Health
Shannon Phillips	Minister of Environment and Parks, Minister Responsible for the Climate Change Office
Irfan Sabir	Minister of Community and Social Services
Marlin Schmidt	Minister of Advanced Education
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Parliamentary Secretaries

Jessica Littlewood	Economic Development and Trade for Small Business
Annie McKittrick	Education

STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Standing Committee on the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund

Chair: Mr. Coolahan
Deputy Chair: Mrs. Schreiner

Cyr	McKitrick
Dang	Taylor
Ellis	Turner
Horne	

Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future

Chair: Mr. Sucha
Deputy Chair: Mr. van Dijken

Carson	McPherson
Connolly	Panda
Coolahan	Piquette
Dach	Schneider
Fitzpatrick	Schreiner
Gill	Taylor
Gotfried	

Select Special Auditor General Search Committee

Chair: Mr. Shepherd
Deputy Chair: Mr. Malkinson

Cyr	Littlewood
Gill	van Dijken
Horne	Woollard
Kleinsteinuber	

Standing Committee on Families and Communities

Chair: Ms Goehring
Deputy Chair: Mr. Smith

Aheer	Miller
Drever	Orr
Hinkley	Rodney
Horne	Shepherd
Jansen	Swann
Luff	Yao
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Standing Committee on Legislative Offices

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Gill	Pitt
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Special Standing Committee on Members' Services

Chair: Mr. Wanner
Deputy Chair: Cortes-Vargas

Cooper	Nixon
Dang	Orr
Jabbour	Piquette
Luff	Schreiner
McIver	

Standing Committee on Private Bills

Chair: Ms McPherson
Deputy Chair: Connolly

Anderson, W.	Kleinsteinuber
Babcock	McKitrick
Drever	Rosendahl
Drysdale	Stier
Fraser	Strankman
Hinkley	Sucha
Kazim	

Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections, Standing Orders and Printing

Chair: Ms Fitzpatrick
Deputy Chair: Ms Babcock

Carson	Loyola
Coolahan	McPherson
Cooper	Nielsen
Ellis	Schneider
Goehring	Starke
Hanson	van Dijken
Kazim	

Standing Committee on Public Accounts

Chair: Mr. Cyr
Deputy Chair: Mr. Dach

Barnes	Malkinson
Fildebrandt	Miller
Fraser	Panda
Goehring	Renaud
Gotfried	Turner
Littlewood	Westhead
Luff	

Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship

Chair: Loyola
Deputy Chair: Mr. Hunter

Babcock	Loewen
Clark	MacIntyre
Dang	Malkinson
Drysdale	Nielsen
Hanson	Rosendahl
Kazim	Woollard
Kleinsteinuber	

Legislative Assembly of Alberta

1:30 p.m.

Monday, October 30, 2017

[The Speaker in the chair]

Prayers

The Speaker: Good afternoon. Welcome back, members.

Let us reflect or pray, each in our own way. As we once again come together and continue proceedings in this Assembly, let us reflect on the time we were blessed to be able to spend with our constituents, our families, and loved ones over the past months. May we strive to be respectful, constructive, and principled in the manner in which we represent our constituencies throughout this incredible province. May we draw strength from those who support us and find inspiration from them to have the humility and fortitude to work together. Peace be with each of us.

Hon. members, as is our custom, we pay tribute on our first day to members and former members of this Assembly who have passed away since we last met.

Mr. Edwin LeRoy Fjordbotten
November 4, 1938, to June 8, 2017

The Speaker: Mr. LeRoy Fjordbotten served four terms as the Progressive Conservative Member for Macleod. He was first elected to this Assembly on March 14, 1979, and served until June 14, 1993. He was a lifetime farmer and rancher. He was a member of the Flying Farmers of Alberta, which combined his love for the land and his skills as a pilot. Mr. Fjordbotten was keen to represent rural Albertans and wanted to contribute to the development of the public policies that impacted agricultural marketing and small business. One of his enduring contributions was in 1981, when he introduced a bill to regulate the dairy industry in Alberta. During his 14 years of service Mr. Fjordbotten held the portfolios of minister of agriculture from 1982 until 1986, minister of tourism from 1986 to 1987, and minister of forestry, lands, and wildlife from 1987 to 1992. Mr. Fjordbotten passed away on June 8, 2017.

Mr. Leonard Clarence Bracko
December 2, 1943, to August 19, 2017

The Speaker: Mr. Len Bracko served one term in the Legislative Assembly of Alberta as the Liberal Member for St. Albert from 1993 to 1997. During that time he served as critic for Municipal Affairs and critic for economic development. Mr. Bracko was a teacher by profession, teaching in junior and senior high schools beginning in 1967. He served on the St. Albert city council from 1989 to 1992 and from 2001 to 2013. Mr. Bracko passed away on August 19, 2017.

Mr. Bruce John Collingwood
May 16, 1953, to August 28, 2017

The Speaker: Mr. Bruce Collingwood served as the Liberal Member for Sherwood Park from 1993 to 1997. Mr. Collingwood began his career with a bachelor of science degree in zoology before becoming a teacher. After a decade of teaching he obtained his law degree and specialized in corporate finance and commercial law. After his election in 1993 he served as the critic for environmental protection and then became whip from 1996 to 1997. Mr. Collingwood passed away on August 28, 2017.

In a moment of silent reflection I ask you to remember those who have gone before us and their families.

Hon. members, ladies and gentlemen, we will now be led in the singing of our national anthem by Jinting Zhao, and I will invite all to participate in the language of their choice.

Hon. Members:

O Canada, our home and native land!
True patriot love in all thy sons command.
Car ton bras sait porter l'épée,
Il sait porter la croix!
Ton histoire est une épopée
Des plus brillants exploits.
God keep our land glorious and free!
O Canada, we stand on guard for thee.
O Canada, we stand on guard for thee.

The Speaker: Please be seated.

Statement by the Speaker

Leader of the Official Opposition

The Speaker: Hon. members, today I received correspondence from the Member for Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills advising that he would be resigning his position as the Leader of the Official Opposition and requesting that the Member for Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House-Sundre now be recognized as the Leader of the Official Opposition. My best to the Member for Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills. Excuse me. The wonderful community of Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills.

An Hon. Member: Outstanding.

The Speaker: Fantastic.

I will therefore today recognize the Member for Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House-Sundre as the Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition. Welcome to your new role.

Well, the climate may have changed, but I still get notes on a continuous basis, so that seems to be the constant that we have.

Introduction of Visitors

The Speaker: Hon. members, with our admiration and respect there is gratitude to the members of families who shared the burdens of public office and public service. Today I would like to welcome members of the Fjordbotten, Bracko, and Collingwood families who are present in the Speaker's gallery. Please rise as I call your name and remain standing, if you would, until all have been introduced.

First of all, from the Fjordbotten family: Kelly Fjordbotten; Larry and Karen Fjordbotten; Kim Fjordbotten and Phil Bentson; Chelsea Fjordbotten; Janet and Glen Jeske; and Renee, Tim, and Presley Elford.

1:40

From the Bracko family: Barb Bracko, spouse of Mr. Bracko; Robert Bracko, brother of Mr. Bracko; Theresa Bracko, sister-in-law of Mr. Bracko; Marlene Bracko Herbert and Colleen McDougall, sisters of Mr. Bracko; Gordon Beatty, brother-in-law of Mr. Bracko; Katrina Beatty, niece of Mr. Bracko; Colleen Soetaert, good friend and legislative colleague of Mr. Bracko. My apologies for the dropping of the names.

From the Collingwood family: Janis Collingwood; and Evan Collingwood, Taylor Collingwood, Josh McGregor, and Matt McGregor, Mr. Collingwood's four sons.

Would we all extend a warm welcome and appreciation.
[Standing ovation]

The Speaker: I would like to acknowledge the Member for Calgary-Lougheed.

Mr. Rodney: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Hope is on the horizon. As the former head of the Alberta and Canadian taxpayers federations and the former federal minister of immigration, employment, National Defence, and multiculturalism Jason Kenney brings a wealth of experience to bringing common sense back to Alberta. He will stand up for Alberta jobs, Alberta families, and the Alberta economy. He will restore the Alberta advantage and get our province back on track. Sixteen months ago he set out to unite the conservative family here in Alberta, and he accomplished what many thought was impossible. He has united our party; he will unite our province. I am humbled and honoured to introduce our dear friend the newly elected leader of the United Conservative Party, the Hon. Jason Kenney. Would he please stand to receive the warm ovation of this House?

Introduction of Guests

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Manning.

Ms Sweet: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you and through you some amazing students from McLeod elementary school. Along with them today are their chaperones, Ms Fataba Mboma and Curtis Thompson, as well as their teacher, Mrs. Kercelyn Pasternak. If I could ask them all to please stand and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to introduce to you and through you a couple of guests from the Alberta Council on Aging, which is a nonprofit in the constituency of Edmonton-Glenora, which I'm very proud to represent. It's my pleasure to introduce their executive director, Donna Durand, and treasurer Gail Hiller. They work every day to create an Alberta free of ageism and promote inclusion for older persons in Alberta communities. I ask that that Donna and Gail please rise and receive the warm welcome of our Assembly.

The Speaker: Welcome.

The hon. Minister of Education.

Mr. Eggen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly Greg Jeffery. Greg was elected as the president of the Alberta Teachers' Association on March 20, 2017. I would like to congratulate Greg on his win and his position. Teachers play a vital role in building positive futures for students and families across Alberta. Thank you for your strong commitment to education. I would ask him to rise and please accept the warm reception of the Assembly.

I'd also like, Mr. Speaker, to introduce to you and through you to all the members of the Assembly Mary Martin. Mary has been with the Alberta School Boards Association since 2015 and was elected president in February 2017. She was recently re-elected as well for a fourth term in the Calgary Catholic school district, representing wards 13 and 14. I would like to thank Mary for her dedication to education, for the work that she does to help make young Albertans have a bright and optimistic future, and for all of the great advice she gives to me all of the time.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-Glenmore.

Ms Kazim: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is a privilege to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly Rabbi Shaul Osadchey and his wife, Roberta Osadchey. Rabbi Osadchey is a senior rabbi at the Beth Tzedec congregation of Calgary. He is also the co-chair of the Calgary Interfaith Council, which is the voice and advocate of the interfaith community in Calgary and southern Alberta. The council builds bridges of respect and understanding amongst various faith communities. I will speak more about the good work of the council and Rabbi Osadchey later today when I introduce my motion on United Nations World Interfaith Harmony Week. I invite the Osadcheyes to now rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Labour and minister responsible for democratic renewal.

Ms Gray: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm honoured to introduce to you and through you to the members of this Assembly the family of Ki Yun Jo from Thorsby. I'm pleased to introduce Meyoung Hee Han, Jo's wife; Sung Hyun Jo, his son; Ka Yung Jo, his daughter. Ki Yun Jo, or Jo as he was called by his friends and neighbours, was a loving father and husband and a beloved member of his community. He bought a gas station in Thorsby shortly after moving to Canada from Korea in order to provide for his family. Earlier this month Jo was taken away from his family and away from his community in a brazen gas-and-dash incident. As Albertans were heartbroken when we heard what happened to Jo, we cannot let this happen to another worker. I'm very pleased that his family is able to join us today for the introduction of Bill 19. I would ask them to please rise and receive the warm welcome of our Assembly. [Standing ovation]

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville.

Mrs. Littlewood: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm honoured to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly representatives from Husky Energy Inc. who have joined us for the introduction of Bill 19 today. I'm pleased to welcome Lawrence Richler, VP, Canadian products marketing; Joel Skulsky, director, programs and retail fuel; Adam Sparkes, director, government relations; district managers Ken Kyle, Hugh Armstrong, and Allan Blair; and Edmonton Husky retailer Mian Ahmad.

We are honoured also to be joined today by the family of Surinder Pal Singh, who died after trying to prevent a theft at an Edmonton Husky station in 2015. I want to welcome Sandhya Singh, Surinder's wife; Mandeep Singh, his eldest son; and Jasbeer Singh, his brother. Surinder was a cheerful man and a tireless worker, loved by everyone who knew him. Mr. Speaker, Husky Energy has moved to mandatory prepayment of fuel across Canada, in part due to what happened to Surinder. I thank them all for being here, and I ask them to rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly. [Standing ovation]

The Speaker: With the number of guests and visitors, Government House Leader, did I see you prepared to move unanimous consent to go past the time for Oral Question Period?

Mr. Mason: I so move, Mr. Speaker.

[Unanimous consent granted]

The Speaker: The Member for Calgary-Mountain View.

1:50

Dr. Swann: Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. An honour and a pleasure to introduce to you and through you to the House the leader of the Alberta Liberal Party, an indigenous rights lawyer, and the next Premier of Alberta. David Khan is here today to get dark money out of politics. He and I both will be trying to improve our democracy in this province, and I will be bringing forth a bill during this session to regulate political action committees. He is seated in the public gallery. Let's give him the warm welcome of the Legislature.

The Speaker: Welcome.

The Minister of Justice and Solicitor General.

Ms Ganley: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure to rise and introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly several dedicated employees from the Ministry of Justice and Solicitor General. These 16 individuals work hard in various areas, and I'd like to thank them for their commitment and professionalism. I would like them to rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of the House.

The Speaker: Welcome.

The hon. Member for Grande Prairie-Smoky.

Mr. Loewen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to introduce to you and through you to all members of this Assembly Jennele Giong. I had the pleasure of meeting and working with Jennele in Calgary, where she resides. Jennele has a bachelor of arts in law and business and presently works as a research assistant at the U of C. She is also Miss Asia Canada 2017. Jennele, please accept the traditional warm welcome of this Assembly.

The Speaker: Thank you.

Are there any other guests for introductions today? The Member for Calgary-Hays.

Mr. McIver: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour and privilege to introduce to you and through you to all members of this Assembly a friend of the House and a friend of mine, David Dorward. David, a chartered accountant, was first elected in 2012 representing Edmonton-Gold Bar. Amongst his other accomplishments he served as the associate minister of aboriginal affairs under Mr. Prentice's cabinet. I see he has risen, and I would ask the House to give him the traditional warm welcome.

The Speaker: Welcome.

Ministerial Statements

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Transportation and Government House Leader.

Mr. Mason: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to give oral notice of . . . [interjections] Is this notices of . . .

An Hon. Member: Ministerial Statements.

Mr. Mason: My ministerial statement. Okay.

Member for Calgary-Lougheed

Mr. Mason: Mr. Speaker and members of the Assembly, today I'm rising to speak to the news that my esteemed colleague the hon. Member for Calgary-Lougheed will be leaving the Chamber and resigning his seat in the next few days. I must say that I was surprised when I heard the news, being one of just three of us in this

Chamber who were elected prior to or during the provincial election in 2004. It is fitting that some tributes are paid today to the hon. member.

Many will know of this hon. member's ability to scale great heights, and there's no greater height to be scaled than Mount Everest, Mr. Speaker. Most people don't know this, but the hon. member accomplished that feat not just once but twice. It was, therefore, not surprising that upon his arrival at the Legislature after being elected, the Member for Calgary-Lougheed was one of the first government MLAs to call for a province-wide ban on smoking in public places. The member was years ahead of many colleagues at the time, and it took a few more years and plenty of political wrangling across the province before the member's ideas to protect children and nonsmokers from the effects of second-hand smoke were adopted, passed, and proclaimed as law in Alberta.

The member has regularly advocated for all of us in this province to lead healthier lives, be it through nutrition or exercise. I know the member is very proud of his work as associate minister of wellness as well as parliamentary assistant for health and wellness and parliamentary assistant for sustainable resource development. Most recently he served as House leader, and I certainly enjoyed debating points of order and matters of privilege with him. The member is also well known as a motivational speaker, and he often brought those skills to this Chamber during debates.

The member has made an honourable decision to step aside at this time and is doing what he feels right for the party that he represents.

I hesitate to add too much more about the member's list of accomplishments during his time as MLA. The reason for this is that I noted with interest that he indicated he may at some point in the future seek a return to this House in a future election. So at the risk of saying something that might end up in his campaign brochure, allow me to simply wish him well on behalf of all members of this House and to wish him the very best in his future endeavours.

The Speaker: The Member for Calgary-Lougheed.

Mr. Rodney: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, Minister, for your kind, kind words. I am truly humbled.

I'd like to begin by expressing my deepest appreciation for my mom and dad, who in the beginning hoped I might become a doctor or a lawyer or a minister of the cloth, but in the end they were not disappointed with my work as a lawmaker instead and as associate minister of wellness instead. I thank my wonderful wife, Jennifer, who has been my inspiration since the day that I met her. I thank our beautiful boys, Dawson and Evan, who are the most amazing teachers I will ever meet. Our family has made countless sacrifices over the years just so that I could attempt to help to make Alberta just a little bit better, and I love them more than words can say.

I thank the Lougheed family for the rare and distinct honour of serving the constituency that bears their name. I will never forget their guidance and their friendship. I thank the constituents of Calgary-Lougheed for entrusting me to be their representative during four elections, nine leaders, over 13 years. It's true. Together we built no fewer than four schools and the Calgary South Health Campus. We achieved the historic agreement with our friends the Tsuut'ina – [Remarks in Sarcee] to them – in building the southwest Calgary ring road. It's under construction now, and we happened to pass more private members' business than any other member in our time.

I want to thank all of the legislative assistants that I've been pleased to work with, and I really want to thank Darlynn Linn. She's the most amazing constituency manager I could have ever hoped

for. You know, we've survived and thrived on all sorts of peaks and valleys, and I will forever hold dear our time working together.

Thank you to all who have ever assisted with the Calgary-Lougheed board. That's a very long list, Mr. Speaker, but I'd like to make special mention just of Keith, Janice, Bob, Debbie, Joey, Barb, Brian, and Tasha, whose straightforward advice, unconditional friendship, and boundless diligence for serving Albertans is nothing short of awe inspiring.

Thank you to all Premiers and MLAs I've worked with. I have learned so much while I was honoured to serve on what happened to be dozens of committees from local to international – I guess that happens over time – and, yes, as House leader and deputy caucus chair and also as chair of Calgary caucus and the Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission and certainly as associate minister of wellness. I'm especially proud of our wellness team, Mr. Speaker, as together we initiated healthy eating and active living programs and policies for all Albertans that were positive and proactive and preventative, that helped keep people happy, healthy, and out of the hospital as much as possible, and that have been emulated in many regions around the world.

I would like to thank MLAs from all parties who supported dozens of wellness projects in the past, including the Smoke-free Places Act and the tobacco reduction act, my first private member's bill and my last government bill; the provincial wellness strategy, health for all, wellness for life; and the Alberta Get Outdoors Weekend Act, or GO Weekend Act. And there's a lot more.

Fellow Albertans, after all of this and with so much more to do, part of me finds it very difficult to step aside for now, but I'm confident that now, well, starting November 1, is exactly the time to do that because Alberta did change in a big, wonderful way yesterday. [A timer sounded] I thank you for another 30 seconds, Mr. Speaker.

2:00

Our province gained the most amazing leader it could hope for during these trying times, and he deserves a shot at a place in this Legislature to share his vision with Albertans. You know, before my time as an MLA I enjoyed careers in national and international business and education and humanitarian work. I can tell you unequivocally that I've never met a harder working person than Jason Kenney.

Mr. Speaker, I will dearly miss working in Calgary-Lougheed and in this Chamber for all Albertans, and I truly wish every single one of you nothing but the best as together we strive to build the strongest and most compassionate province possible.

Thank you, all, and God bless Alberta. [Standing ovation]

The Speaker: Hon. Government House Leader, I know you're having difficulty shifting gears in this new routine again, but would you desire to make a motion?

Mr. Mason: Mr. Speaker, I would request unanimous consent of the House to permit an additional member from the UCP caucus and the Alberta Party caucus to participate in a response.

[Unanimous consent granted]

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-Hays.

Mr. McIver: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, members of the Assembly, for providing this opportunity to wish the best to my colleague from Calgary-Lougheed.

Born and raised in Saskatchewan, as so many people that have responsible roles in Alberta were, the hon. Member for Calgary-Lougheed is one of the most upbeat, positive, professional, friendly

people that I have ever met. I've even heard him described as a stone cold fox. I'm sure he doesn't want to hear that today, but it's too late, hon. member. Mr. Speaker, the hon. member has been a teacher. He has a bachelor of arts, a bachelor of education, a master's degree in religious education. He is a keynote speaker. For those listening, get your bookings in now; I think he'll be busy.

I have to say that he's done a lot of things, but I remember him being the most proud of the things that he did here as associate minister of wellness and his general efforts towards wellness, to keep Albertans healthy before they get in the health care system, to keep them out of the health care system. I think the hon. Member for Calgary-Lougheed hasn't just talked the talk; he has walked the walk. You'll probably never see in this House a more active person who lives out wellness along with his wife, Jennifer, and his two sons, Dawson and Evan, who, I might say, Mr. Speaker, are two of the most polite young people that I've ever seen, which I think speaks highly of the hon. member and his wife, Jennifer, and the way they've raised those two fine children.

He served here in a number of roles, as a House leader not very long ago. He was very supportive, as was mentioned, during the negotiations for the Tsuut'ina Trail part of the ring road. As was mentioned – and I just learned this today – he has climbed Mount Everest twice. He hasn't yet, Mr. Speaker, revealed to me whether he went the second time because he left his wallet up there the first time or because he forgot his camera the first time. Nonetheless, the hon. member is a person that when he puts his mind to do what almost no one else in the world can do, can do it twice. He was the first Canadian to perform that feat twice in one lifetime.

Many members of our caucus have expressed sadness at the prospect of the member leaving and not sitting among us anymore. I share that sentiment. For those that need to stay awake during the long nights here, Mr. Speaker, slip into the back room where there is a survival kit named after the hon. Member for Calgary-Lougheed, full of coffee and sugar and hot chocolate and a whole bunch of other things to horse you up when we're here till 2 in the morning. I don't know whether he's leaving that recipe behind or not, but if he is, I'm sure it will be well used.

Hon. member, it's been an honour to serve with you. I wish you all the best. I know that everyone in this House will miss the smiling face that I'm looking at right now.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-Elbow.

Mr. Clark: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I guess the cat is out of the bag that the hon. Member for Calgary-Lougheed has summited Everest two times. [interjections] You know, we know this is all in good fun because he has been known to strike a lighthearted tone here in this House. He's succumbed to my goading to read interesting and possibly unparliamentary things into *Hansard*. I have always very much admired that great sense of humour and his ability to make us smile and to keep things light here in the House.

At the same time, over his long tenure in the House he has shown his ability to tackle important issues and debate them seriously and with great insight. Most recently he's championed issues related to postsecondary education and indigenous relations, and he leads by example through tireless volunteer efforts here in Canada and beyond.

Of course, his lifelong commitment to wellness has made a tremendous difference in the lives of Albertans. Among his many successes here in the House include passing the Smoke-free Places Act, the Alberta Personal Income Tax (Physical Activity Credit) Amendment Act in 2008, and of course his service as associate minister of wellness. Whether he's leading debate in the Assembly

or planning fun events like hockey games and team-building events for his party and community, the Member for Calgary-Lougheed has shown leadership through his high spirits and never faltering energy.

On behalf of the newly expanded Alberta Party caucus thank you for your many years of service to the people of Alberta. Good luck in the future. I hope you finally get the chance to spend more time with your family, and keep climbing those mountains.

Thank you.

The Speaker: My personal wishes to you, Member for Calgary-Lougheed, on the new chapter in your new life.

Statements by the Speaker

Rotation of Questions and Members' Statements

The Speaker: Hon. members, before we proceed to the next item of business in the daily Routine, I would like to make some remarks on the rotation of oral questions and members' statements.

As noted in the memorandum that I sent to all members last Friday, the Speaker's office received two documents signed by the House leaders on October 25, 2017, confirming their agreement on the Oral Question Period and Members' Statements rotations. I will be tabling my memorandum at the appropriate time later today. Copies of both rotations were attached to the memorandum, but members can find copies on their desks of the rotations along with the projected sitting days calendar, which outlines the Members' Statements rotation.

After sending my memorandum to members, I received notification from the Member for Calgary-Mackay-Nose Hill that she will now be recognized as a member of the Alberta Party caucus alongside the Member for Calgary-Elbow. The Member for Calgary-Mackay-Nose Hill and the Member for Calgary-Elbow will be seated together, as you see, in the Assembly as the two-member Alberta Party caucus.

I would note that the number of independent members in the Assembly at present is unprecedented. Therefore, it is my request that the House leaders consult with the Alberta Party as well as those who are identifying as Progressive Conservative, Liberal, and independent members to review the question period rotation given the events which took place over the weekend. I would appreciate receiving a House leaders' report on the review by Wednesday if possible. We will follow the rotations in the October 25 House leaders' agreement until further notice.

2:10

The Oral Question Period rotation is based on an eight-day, 16 questions per day format. As noted in my memorandum, the Assembly will begin on day 4 of the Oral Question Period rotation. I'd also like to take this opportunity to remind members that questions and responses should be up to 35 seconds in length and that preambles to the supplementary questions are only allowed for the first four sets of questions each day, excluding question 4 on days 4 and 8.

With respect to the Members' Statements rotation the House leaders' agreement provides for a three-week rotation. As with the Oral Question Period rotation, changes may be required as a result of the new caucus affiliation of the Member for Calgary-Mackay-Nose Hill. I encourage the House leaders to look at the Members' Statements rotation at the same time as they review the Oral Question Period rotation.

Parliamentary Secretaries

The Speaker: Before I conclude, I would like to comment on the new positions that the government recently created. The members fulfilling these roles, which have been called parliamentary secretaries, continue to function as private members for the purposes of the Assembly.

This has a number of implications. First, the two parliamentary secretaries, the Member for Sherwood Park and the Member for Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville, as private members may ask questions, but they may not respond to questions.

Second, in posing questions it would be inappropriate for the questions to be directed to the minister with whom the parliamentary secretary is affiliated. As Speaker Kowalski, in dealing with a very similar situation, stated on April 16, 2008, "If a parliamentary assistant were to ask questions of the minister with whom he or she works, there might be an expression of discomfort by the chair and undoubtedly from members throughout." Those remarks can be found on page 13 of the *Alberta Hansard* for that day.

Last, parliamentary secretaries, as with other private members, are not able to sponsor what are commonly called money bills. As Standing Order 83 sets out, a minister only, not a private member, may introduce a vote, resolution, address, or bill to which the royal recommendation is attached.

Reusable Cups in the Chamber

The Speaker: On a final note, you will notice some reusable cups on each of your desks. The purpose of these containers is to reduce the waste and the costs associated with purchasing disposable cups. To be able to meet that purpose, these reusable containers are to remain within the Legislature precinct, and I would ask that they not be removed.

Oral Question Period

The Speaker: The Leader of the Official Opposition.

Pipeline Approval

Mr. Nixon: Mr. Speaker, on August 23 the NDP announced that they would for the first time assess upstream and downstream emissions in a pipeline review. A short while later, Energy East was dead. The inclusion of emissions in a pipeline assessment clearly violates Alberta's jurisdiction regarding oil and gas developments, rights that Premier Lougheed fought hard for. This Premier was in Ottawa at an October 3 meeting with the Prime Minister of Canada. Common sense would be to raise this critical matter at that time. To the Premier: did you personally raise this violation of Alberta's jurisdiction when you met with the Prime Minister? Yes or no?

The Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Ms Notley: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. In fact, both our Minister of Energy and I have spoken with our federal colleagues about the concerns we have with respect to assessing downstream emissions, and we will continue to do that. But I need to say that it's a bit rich for the UCP to play politics with pipelines. I guess we shouldn't be entirely surprised. It's all they've ever done, played politics with pipelines, and we know what's happened as a result of that, no pipelines approved. We've gotten two pipelines approved. That's what's going to help Alberta's energy industry, and we're not going to stop until we get the job done.

Mr. Nixon: Mr. Speaker, this Premier has had more pipelines cancelled than approved so far. She's one to talk.

Following the scuttling of Energy East, the government merely issued a bland written statement and then went dark on the matter. The Premier was nowhere to be found. The \$16 billion Energy East pipeline was a critical project for this country and for this province, expanding market access for Alberta while securing energy independence for Canada. Can the Premier tell us if she has since raised the matter with her close ally Prime Minister Justin Trudeau?

The Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Ms Notley: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I believe I've in fact just answered that question. But here's another question. Where was the UCP's brand new leader when Albertans needed him? Fun fact: 20 years in the House of Commons allegedly representing the people of Alberta, and not once did he get up to speak in favour of Energy East. Yet somehow the folks over there try to put this on us. Our government is making progress. We are getting very close to breaking the deadlock, and it's because of the work that we've done. We're proud of it, and we are going to help Alberta's energy industry move forward. [interjections]

The Speaker: Keep the noise down, folks.

Mr. Nixon: Mr. Speaker, this government has been missing in action on this critical file. The Trudeau Liberals are attacking Alberta, and this NDP government is doing little to nothing to defend our province. We know that the Alberta NDP are Trudeau's close allies. Will the Premier commit today to immediately demand that the government of Canada implement clear legislation prohibiting the National Energy Board from considering upstream and downstream emissions in pipeline approvals?

Ms Notley: Well, Mr. Speaker, unlike the members over there, we are not actually in the business of denying climate change. As a result, we believe it is important for all Canadians to consider the matter of upstream emissions, and that's why our government has taken action in partnership with Alberta's energy industry to do just that. It's because of that that we got the pipeline to the B.C. coast approved, because that's the right thing to do. We are not going to turn the clock backwards; we're going to continue making progress on behalf of all Albertans.

The Speaker: Second main question.

Carbon Levy and Pipeline Approvals

Mr. Nixon: Mr. Speaker, the NDP claim that forcing Albertans to pay a carbon tax would win so-called social licence for pipelines. How has that worked out? Quebec politicians worked tirelessly to sink Energy East, and they succeeded. The NDP government in B.C. has sworn to stop the approved Trans Mountain pipeline. Yet despite all this, the NDP is going to hike its carbon tax by 50 per cent in just two months. We'd obviously welcome a full repeal of that carbon tax, and that day will come, but since this government is unlikely to oblige, will they commit to an immediate freeze to the carbon tax until Albertans start to be treated with respect?

The Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Ms Notley: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I know that our friends over there love to make predictions. They love to make predictions against Alberta's interest. They love to hope desperately for bad news. But the fact of the matter is that this government – this government – has gotten two pipelines approved. None by the

former Conservative government, two by this government, and the reason for that is because we are acting responsibly on the matters of climate change, and as a result of that, we are going to succeed on this file. We are going to address climate change issues, and we are also going to grow our energy industry sustainably, responsibly as we move Alberta forward, not backwards.

Mr. Nixon: Mr. Speaker, this NDP government did not campaign on a carbon tax. They didn't even mention it, actually, but one day they just told us that we'd have a \$30-per-tonne carbon tax. Then Justin Trudeau demanded that Alberta hike that tax to \$50 per tonne, and the Premier happily obliged. All this was done before a single pipeline was physically completed, let alone started. Common sense would make payment dependent on delivery. We're being taken for suckers. When will this government start standing up to the Ottawa Liberals instead of acting like a doormat to their Trudeau allies?

Ms Notley: Well, actually, Mr. Speaker, one of the pipelines started in August. I know: facts, very inconvenient. Nonetheless, the other thing is that if we were to go ahead with what those folks want to do and move away from our carbon levy, we would then give all the authority over to the federal government, who would then make their own rules about how to impose a carbon levy. In fact, because we took action, we've developed a made-in-Alberta plan that was put together in concert with industry in order to ensure that our economy can continue to grow. We are not handing responsibility for that back to the federal government like those folks over there want to do.

2:20

Mr. Nixon: Mr. Speaker, it's quite clear that the carbon tax was nothing more than the largest tax grab in Alberta's history. Market access was used for a cover story by this NDP government. Can the Premier tell us: if the Trans Mountain pipeline is blocked, would she support a repeal of her carbon tax given the failure of social licence?

Ms Notley: Well, Mr. Speaker, what I can tell the members opposite is that (a) they really, really should stop cheering against Alberta and that (b) – you know what? – when the construction on that pipeline begins, not only will Albertans celebrate, but we're going to even invite the naysayers over there on the other side of this building to the party. I hope they celebrate with Albertans because the rest of us will be doing it.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-Lougheed.

Trans Mountain Pipeline Construction

Mr. Rodney: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The NDP has touted the paper approval of the Trans Mountain pipeline as a historic victory, and we all want to see the pipeline built, but plenty are working to stop it, as I understand it, some within the Premier's own party. The Premier talks a good game on pipelines at home but then seems to go noticeably silent when outside our borders. Can the Premier please tell us: what communication have you had with fellow NDP Premier John Horgan since he was sworn in as Premier of B.C.?

The Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Ms Notley: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As the member opposite would probably know, I did have an opportunity to meet with Premier Horgan and to continue to make the case not only for the energy industry but, frankly, for all Albertans and for all Canadians because we know that getting that pipeline to

tidewater is not only in the best interests of Alberta workers; it's in the best interests of about 40,000 B.C. workers. It's in the best interests of workers throughout this country, and that's why we won't stop pushing for it until that pipeline is complete. [interjections]

The Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Rodney: Thank you, Premier.

The city of Burnaby, B.C., is currently dragging its feet on issuing municipal permits for the construction of the Trans Mountain pipeline, clearly overstepping their jurisdiction. Kinder Morgan has asked that the National Energy Board intervene. Will the Premier join this chorus and demand that the federal regulator intervene to ensure the construction of the pipeline?

The Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Ms Notley: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. We will continue to work closely with Kinder Morgan to determine what it is that we can do and what we have the authority and the jurisdiction to do legally, but we will also continue to make the point to B.C.-ers why it is that this pipeline is good for them. Our minister of environment was out there just very recently making that case to a number of different British Columbians, and I'll be doing more of that this fall. At the end of the day, the key thing to remember is that the decision has been made. I know it makes the guys over there really unhappy, but the reality is that it has been approved. It's been approved because we've struck the right balance, and we are very proud of that.

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

Mr. Rodney: As a follow-up to the Premier's promise in her last answer, fighting for Alberta's market access does not stop with paper regulatory approval. Words need to be backed up with action. Will the Premier visit British Columbia to make the case for the Trans Mountain pipeline before the new year?

The Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Ms Notley: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Of course, I've been to B.C. throughout this process a number of times to make the case, but it's coincidental that the member raises that because, in fact, I do also have another trip planned for B.C.. So indeed I'll have an opportunity to continue to make the same case that this government has been making since we first got elected, and that case is that when we strike the right balance, we build not only Alberta's economy but B.C.'s economy and Ontario's economy and the Atlantic provinces' economy because it's good for all Canadians, and we will not stop making that case, not ever.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-Shaw.

Official Opposition Health Care Finance Policies

Mr. Sucha: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to offer my congratulations to the UCP on the election of their new leader. In the interests of promoting a more multipartisan atmosphere in this House, I thought I would help Mr. Kenney get some straight answers and hard numbers for the platform that he tried so hard to keep secret. To the Minister of Health. Mr. Kenney stated a desire to cut 20 per cent from each department and each budget. What would the impacts of 20 per cent cuts to health care be on Albertans that rely on it most?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Jason Kenney's 20 per cent proposed cut to my ministry would mean cutting \$4.3 billion from the health care system. It could mean shutting down 53 acute-care hospitals like the one in Sundre. It could mean closing 88 operating rooms and cancelling 144,000 surgeries while Albertans wait in pain, closing 600 emergency rooms, and that is not even enough to hit \$4.3 billion. [interjections]

The Speaker: Keep it down.
First supplemental.

Mr. Sucha: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again to the Minister of Health: can the minister tell the House whether having 20 per cent cut out of our health care system would have a positive or negative impact on our front-line services that save lives every single day?

Ms Hoffman: Jason Kenney's 20 per cent cut to health care is reckless, extremist, and would put lives at risk. In addition to closing hospitals, \$4.3 billion could also mean taking 412 ambulances and the paramedics that staff those ambulances off the streets, 23,000 cancer patients being denied public funding for their life-saving drugs, and 13 million essential prescriptions for seniors would be defunded, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Second supplemental.

Mr. Sucha: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again to the Minister of Health: given the enormity of the cuts proposed by Mr. Kenney and given that he clearly has no issues terminating employees, can you share with the House in human terms how many nurses, doctors will have to be fired as a result of 20 per cent, or \$4.3 billion, in cuts to the Health ministry alone?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and to the member for the question. A \$4.3 billion cut would mean no nurses at the bedside of Albertans when they need them most. If Jason Kenney's proposed cuts were to move forward, 28,400 nurses and nearly 5,000 doctors in this province could be fired. Jason Kenney's proposed cuts are super reckless, super extremist, and super cruel. While we're working to make life better for Albertans, Jason Kenney would make life far worse.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Chestermere-Rocky View.

Federal Small-business Tax

Mrs. Aheer: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The NDP's federal Liberal allies launched an unprecedented attack on the beating heart of Canada's economy, our small-business men and women. We should not be surprised. The Prime Minister previously accused our entrepreneurs of being tax cheats. To the minister: now, I know these decisions are being made in Ottawa, but could this government please tell us if it used its relationships with the Trudeau Liberals to lobby against these disastrous changes?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Finance.

Mr. Ceci: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Let me first say that, of course, small businesses are the engine of Alberta's economy. They are working directly with Albertans all across the province. They create jobs all across the province. The federal government has a responsibility for tax fairness in this at their level, and they

are bringing forward changes. I understand that the federal Minister of Finance has listened to Canadians from across the country, including Albertans, and he is bringing forward changes.

The Speaker: First supplemental.

Mrs. Aheer: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, I'm one of those small-business owners and a job creator. Since the current NDP government has a very close working relationship with the Ottawa Liberals, will the minister immediately and vocally speak out against these changes, given the major negative effects on Alberta's economy, and actually stand up for Albertans and small-business owners?

2:30

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Ceci: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Of course, the . . . [interjections]

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Finance.

Mr. Ceci: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Of course, the federal Finance minister would have to make sure that no unintended consequences occur that negatively affect small-business people in this country. [interjections] This government has cut small-business taxes by 33 per cent. That side would threaten small business by rolling back the climate leadership plan, which was a source of the tax cut for small business on this side. We have invested \$10 million to expand small-business incubators here in Alberta. That side cheers on . . .

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

Now, hon. members, I know that over the summer you were saving up all that energy and were just waiting to get into this place, but remember the energy you're going to need in the long term as well.

Second supplemental.

Mrs. Aheer: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

So you're defending the Trudeau Liberals and their decisions about the tax grabs that they're doing here.

Given that Albertans have been waiting for this government to stand up for them and given the government's de facto silence on these very important matters, can we assume that the government of Alberta supports the Trudeau Liberals' tax changes for small business? To the minister: please answer with a simple yes or no.

Thank you.

Mr. Ceci: It's simply not true, Mr. Speaker. What we are doing is standing up for Alberta small businesses by cutting their taxes 33 per cent. The owner of Transcend Coffee said that the small-business tax cut will "help small businesses move forward and put them in a position to grow" and create jobs in this province. That's what we're doing. We're helping small businesses. The climate leadership plan is doing that. They would put all that at risk.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Grande Prairie-Wapiti.

Federal Small-business Tax on Farm Operations

Mr. Drysdale: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Alberta's family farms are deeply worried about the pending tax changes coming from Ottawa. Farmers spending countless hours harvesting in the past months have not taken too kindly to the smear of their farms being called tax shelters. Has this government raised Alberta's farmers' concerns with their federal counterpart?

Mr. Ceci: Mr. Speaker, I think I've made it clear that Alberta supports small businesses, whether they're family farms or Transcend Coffee or any other kind of business. We are supporting them with a tax cut in this province. The federal government's responsibility is to ensure there is fairness. They are looking at the unintended consequences and changing their plan as a result.

The Speaker: First supplemental.

Mr. Drysdale: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that this is not a time for the government to sit on its hands and given that farms that have been in families for generations are now at risk across Alberta, will the government today vocally denounce the proposed changes coming from Ottawa?

Mr. Ceci: Mr. Speaker, what I denounce is the recklessness coming from that side. They would put it all at risk by cancelling the climate leadership plan. We have brought \$185 million to the table for small businesses in this province. We brought another \$10 million to the table so that incubators could get up and running. That is helping small businesses, whether they're farms or other sorts of things, because of the actions of this side, not that.

The Speaker: Second supplemental.

Mr. Drysdale: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that I cannot understand why the government is so unwilling to speak up on this issue and given that the NDP has such a strong relationship with the current federal government, will they not speak up given what's at stake, or is the friendly relationship with the Trudeau Liberals more important than fighting for Alberta farmers? [interjections]

The Speaker: Keep it down, folks.

Mr. Ceci: Mr. Speaker, if we want to talk about speaking up, let's talk about pipelines. That side couldn't get anywhere with pipelines. We spoke up for pipelines. Jobs are up in this province, wages are up in this province, and growth is up in this province because of this side, not that side. [interjections]

The Speaker: Folks, we're not getting very far down this list today.

Educational Curriculum Redesign

Mrs. Pitt: Mr. Speaker, Albertans are gravely concerned about the NDP's pending changes to the education curriculum. One individual involved has said that the goal is to turn students, our children, into, I quote, effective agents of change. At the same time the government refuses to provide any details on who is actually writing the curriculum. Will this government cease the obstruction and let Albertans know who is writing our children's curriculum?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Education.

Mr. Eggen: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Certainly, we are engaged in probably the biggest curriculum rewrite in the history of the province of Alberta and the most transparent as well. We have more than 35,000 people who are participating in the curriculum, including energy companies. We have 4-H clubs. We have banks and so forth. You know, it's part of a process by which we are building actual evidence-based curriculum and not just using it for political propaganda like Jason Kenney and the UCP do.

Mrs. Pitt: Mr. Speaker, given that our children shouldn't be used as tools to push the NDP world view and given that a draft document for the social studies curriculum shows a noticeable

absence in the teaching of important history, I ask again: will the NDP tell us who specifically is writing our curriculum?

Mr. Eggen: Well, you know, I guess, Mr. Speaker, if you're going to spread around mistruths, then you might as well tell whoppers, and that is clearly the case. We literally have thousands of people working on the curriculum in the most transparent way possible. What the UCP and Jason Kenney are doing is trying to demean the work that is being done on that curriculum. Albertans don't believe it; the only people who do are the conspiracy theorists over there. [interjections]

The Speaker: Order.

Mrs. Pitt: Mr. Speaker, I just don't understand why this government is so against transparency. If there is nothing to fear, then surely they should have no issue with letting us know who is writing the curriculum. Why is this government so insistent on obstructing, on keeping their plans secret, very secret, from Albertans?

Mr. Eggen: Well, Mr. Speaker, part of my job is to make sure that I protect teachers and professors from attacks by Jason Kenney's attack dogs on Twitter and so forth, demeaning the character of those people. I mean, I will follow the law in terms of privacy and so forth, you know, but I certainly will make sure that I protect children first, I protect teachers first and not give in to conspiracy theorists such as this. They want to out kids who are gay, and they want to out the teachers who are writing the curriculum. [interjections]

The Speaker: Come on, folks. Calm it down.

The hon. Member for Calgary-Mackay-Nose Hill.

Cannabis Distribution

Ms McPherson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Over the past weeks Albertans have heard some stakeholders say that only a government-regulated agency can ensure the appropriate controls for the imminent distribution of cannabis. Done properly, the legalization of cannabis presents a remarkable opportunity to create jobs without sacrificing safety. To the Minister of Justice: given that the AGLC reports 98 per cent compliance for private liquor retailers, what evidence is there that private distribution of regulated substances such as cannabis is better managed by government?

2:40

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you very much. I'm happy to take the first one. I'm sure the Minister of Justice can reply in detail to the remainder. Albertans have a very clear choice. We are giving them an opportunity to provide that feedback, Mr. Speaker, and we welcome the voices of all. I'd love to know where all members in this House stand on these issues, and they certainly have an opportunity to give that feedback clearly to the public. We are taking the information that all Albertans are providing to us as the Minister of Justice prepares to unroll the plan just prior, we hope, to delivering her new baby.

The Speaker: First supplemental.

Ms McPherson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given the strong history of entrepreneurship and small-business growth in Alberta, opportunities for the development of small and medium enterprises have been few and far between during the most recent slump in the

economy. To the Minister of Economic Development and Trade: have you consulted with entrepreneurs in Alberta who are willing, able, and anxious to tap into the economic opportunity of legally distributing cannabis as mandated by the federal government?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Justice and Solicitor General.

Ms Ganley: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. We've had the opportunity to speak to a wide variety of people, small businesses amongst them, entrepreneurs amongst them, security experts as well. We just had the most successful consultation in Alberta history to hear from Albertans. We've recently published our framework, going back to Albertans to make sure that we heard what they said, and we've had a very successful second round of consultations. We hope to have more to say about that in the very near future.

Thanks very much.

Ms McPherson: Mr. Speaker, given that the Alberta Party caucus estimates show that the start-up costs alone for government-run cannabis distribution would be at least \$168 million and given that the government of Alberta reaps hundreds of millions of dollars from the private distribution of controlled substances such as tobacco and alcohol, does the Minister of Finance have an estimate of the economic impact both in the cost to government of the setting up of brand new infrastructure for retail sale of cannabis and the anticipated revenue? If not, when can the members in this House expect an update?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Justice.

Ms Ganley: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. We spent a lot of time doing an enormous amount of modelling. Of course, this is a brand new market, so it's impossible for anyone to predict with absolute accuracy what the outcome is going to be. Certainly, it is the case that those estimates were creative. As we move forward, we will be assessing that, but we're not in a position to predict with certainty because at this point they are just predictions. But we will absolutely be guided by Albertans on this matter.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-Hays.

Catholic School Sex Education Curriculum

Mr. McIver: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Premier of this great province has outrageously maligned an entire faith community by alleging that Catholics condone marital rape. It is possible the Premier was misinformed when she made her damaging comments. To the Premier: will you immediately and unreservedly apologize to Alberta's Catholic community?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Education.

Mr. Eggen: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Certainly, the document in question that was submitted as possible parallel wellness here in the province of Alberta was entirely unacceptable. Reflective of the feedback that we had received from tens of thousands of Albertans on this important curriculum work, I can assure Albertans that under our government any curriculum changes will be inclusive of all students, no matter what their sexual orientation is or their gender identity as well. Certainly, our job one, two, three, and four is to protect the mental and physical well-being of our children in schools.

Mr. McIver: Well, Mr. Speaker, it's outrageous. Given that the document in question is abundantly clear in stating, quote, consent

is always necessary and given that I can't understand how the government could possibly let this smear of hundreds of thousands of good Albertans stand – the Premier clearly made a mistake in her statements – I again ask: will the Premier apologize to Alberta's Catholics, whom you have accused of condoning marital rape? Are there any other groups that the Premier wishes to accuse, or will this be it?

Mr. Eggen: Well, you know, Mr. Speaker, it's very important that we build coherent curriculum that is in keeping with best practices, with science, and to ensure the safety and the security of children and the general public as well. So I would suggest that if the UCP and Jason Kenney are interested in doing so, they help us to constructively build curriculum that actually is evidence based, not just using side shots to somehow make some political points.

Mr. McIver: The minister is dodging the question, Mr. Speaker.

Given that, I would like to know: are there any other groups of Albertans that the Premier would like smear by accusing them of condoning marital rape? The Premier accused not only Alberta Catholic teachers, parents, essentially those people that voted for them, and all the school board people that sent in the curriculum that makes it clear that consent is needed. To the Premier: will you apologize for accusing Alberta's Catholic community of condoning rape?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Education.

Mr. Eggen: Well, thank you very much. Mr. Speaker, I want to make it clear that consent is the law here in the province of Alberta and in Canada, and we teach the law in public schools. You know, the same thing in regard to practicing safe sex. I mean, clearly this is a health and safety issue, and clearly we need to build an Alberta health and wellness curriculum that's in keeping with best practices and with science and the law to ensure that we are protecting our children.

Thank you very much.

Oil Sands Advisory Group Membership

Mr. Panda: Mr. Speaker, the NDP's carbon tax has done nothing to gain this so-called social licence. Just this past weekend protesters in kayaks staged a protest against the Trans Mountain expansion in Vancouver, kayaks made of petroleum products, of course. Who was one of the organizers of that protest? Karen Mahon, who was part of the government's oil sands advisory group. Does the government regret appointing Karen Mahon to such an important body?

The Speaker: The Minister of Environment and Parks.

Ms Phillips: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Of course, Jason Kenney's conservatives: I'm surprised they weren't in kayaks behind those protesters cheering them on because they have been cheering on Alberta's demise since the very beginning on this matter of pipeline approvals. They have proven time and again that they want to see Alberta fail on this matter of market access. We, on the other hand, have put forward a careful plan in conjunction with industry to ensure that our industry remains competitive while we get that pipeline to tidewater.

Mr. Panda: Mr. Speaker, since the government won't answer on Ms Mahon, let's try another one. Given that the Energy East pipeline was cancelled and former NDP oil sands advisory group co-chair Ms Tzeporah Berman posted, "I am glad Energy East was

cancelled and I will stand in front of the bulldozers [if I have to] and take a stand against Kinder Morgan," given this and other statements, will the NDP admit that appointing Ms Berman to the oil sands advisory panel was a mistake?

The Speaker: The hon. minister of environment.

Ms Phillips: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to update the House that the oil sands advisory group has in fact delivered their deliberations on that matter of implementing the regulations governing the 100-megatonne cap. We'll have more to say about that in the coming weeks.

You know, it's no surprise that folks on the other side of the House would prefer a plan imposed on us by Ottawa given the size of Jason Kenney's pension coming from Ottawa, Mr. Speaker. It's no surprise that they like things from that end of the country.

Mr. Panda: Mr. Speaker, I don't understand why this is so hard. Governments do make mistakes.

Given the actions of two of their favourite former appointees, why won't the government simply admit their error of judgment and denounce the outrageous statements and actions of Ms Berman and Ms Mahon? Will you?

The Speaker: The hon. minister of environment.

Ms Phillips: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Of course, Jason Kenney's conservatives like to ignore the contributions of indigenous peoples to the oil sands advisory group, which have been many. There have been representatives from Mikisew Cree, from various Métis organizations, from Treaty 8, and from Treaty 6. The results of the oil sands advisory group were described, in one industry leader's estimation, as unprecedented collaboration. That's how you get pipelines approved. That's how you move this province forward. That's how you engage in unprecedented new levels of drilling and activity and so on as we get this province back on its feet while we . . .

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-Currie.

2:50

Official Opposition Postsecondary Educational Finance Policies

Mr. Malkinson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Unity was on full display this weekend as the United Conservative Party elected their first leader, and what a joyous occasion it was. They now have an opportunity to come clean about what exactly they will slash and burn to achieve the \$11 billion in cuts that Kenney has promised. But in the event that the UCP will seek to deny the impact and pain that the reckless cuts will have on Albertans, I ask the Minister of Advanced Education: what would Jason Kenney's plan for an \$11 billion cut in postsecondary institutions mean?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Advanced Education.

Mr. Schmidt: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. As you know, you can always rely on me to tell the truth when others may not be so reliable, because Mr. Kenney's proposed cuts would make life worse for Alberta students and their families, plain and simple. His cuts would mean that mental health supports for students wouldn't be available when students are suffering from anxiety or depression. His cuts would mean that the foundational learning for English for new language learners wouldn't be available. Education would be much more expensive for those who would be able to go given the closures of the programs as a result of his cuts. Our government is

investing in postsecondary education, making sure that every Albertan has an opportunity . . .

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.
First supplemental.

Mr. Malkinson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that the Member for Strathmore-Brooks promised that if the UCP was elected, there will be pain and given that he has also told Albertans that conservatives are not to be trusted when they say that their cuts will not impact services, I ask again to the Minister of Advanced Education: can the minister tell us exactly what programs, projects, grants, bursaries, or courses would be scrapped by the UCP's gleeful desire to make our students in postsecondary feel the pain?

The Speaker: The Minister of Advanced Education.

Mr. Schmidt: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I said before, of course, everybody in this House can rely on me to give it to them straight when talking about the UCP's plans for higher education. While our government is focused on making life better, Jason Kenney's proposed cuts would mean that 81,000 students wouldn't be able to get student loans to go to university or college. That still wouldn't be enough for him. He also wants to cut 21,000 Alberta students' foundational educational supports. Our government's investments mean that students will be able to get an education that they can afford at institutions that will keep their doors open.

Speaker's Ruling Restrictions on Oral Questions Oral Question Period Practices

The Speaker: I'd just like to caution the House that question period is supposed to be related to the policy area, and there seems to be some suggestion . . . [interjections] Hon. minister, please.

To this side of the House, particularly the Member for Calgary-Hays: Calgary-Hays, your voice is too loud. Please keep your volume down when you're answering the questions. Your volume is in excess, so please take that under advisement.

Thank you.

The Member for Calgary-West.

Some Hon. Members: No.

The Speaker: No? Okay. I'm sure it'll be related to policy, right?

Mr. Malkinson: Absolutely.

The Speaker: Yeah? Good.

Official Opposition Postsecondary Educational Finance Policies (continued)

Mr. Malkinson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given Mr. Kenney's belief that students who make up postsecondary institutions lack an understanding of economics, money, politics, and history, I was hoping we could clear up something for him and the UCP opposition, so I ask the Minister of Advanced Education: can the minister advise the House and the opposition what happened last time conservatives took an axe to postsecondary funding?

The Speaker: We're going to have to look at this matter – I will, anyway – in terms of what is really related to provincial policy. But I'll turn it over.

The Minister of Advanced Education.

Mr. Schmidt: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity to talk about our government's policy of reversing the time-honoured tradition of conservative cuts to higher education. Our government has increased investments in students, increased investments in our universities and colleges so that every Alberta student has the opportunity to receive an affordable education right here at home, and we will continue to do that on behalf of the people of Alberta.

An Hon. Member: Point of order.

The Speaker: Point of order.
Calgary-West.

Pipeline Approval and Construction

Mr. Ellis: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Alberta is under unprecedented attack from multiple directions. The Trudeau Liberals are now using the National Energy Board to kill off important energy projects. It is quite clear what is happening here. To the Premier: why won't this government denounce the changes to the NEB and demand that their federal allies cease this behaviour?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Energy.

Ms McCuaig-Boyd: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, in reference to the Energy East decision, we were extremely disappointed by that, but we had spent a lot of time before that talking to the NEB and the minister about the forward thinking of the modernization. As recently as October 2 I wrote a letter talking about the historic overreach that the NEB was planning for Alberta.

The Speaker: First supplemental.

Mr. Ellis: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given recent events the double standards are shocking. Given that Quebec politicians worked to block the Energy East pipeline and succeeded and given that they were also subsidizing a massive new cement factory, a factory with massive carbon emissions, and given that the Trudeau Liberals wouldn't dare slap punitive regulations on that factory, Premier, when will this government demand fair treatment for Alberta's industries?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Energy.

Ms McCuaig-Boyd: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, it was our climate leadership plan that got the securement of two pipelines, and it was cited for those pipelines. In our talks to the minister about the NEB modernization we have acknowledged that that climate leadership plan is addressing upstream emissions. We disagree with the downstream because it is taking care of the upstream. We worked very hard this summer to work on those pipelines while you folks over there were politicking and taking care of making Alberta better for your friends.

The Speaker: Hon. members, it appears that we may go past 3 o'clock. Is there a motion for unanimous consent to work past 3?

Mr. Mason: Mr. Speaker, thank you for that. I would move that we request unanimous consent to continue until the completion of Routine.

[Unanimous consent granted]

The Speaker: Second supplemental.

Mr. Ellis: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given this government's unwillingness to denounce the changes from Ottawa that killed

Energy East, Premier, what assurance do we Albertans have that your government will stand up and fight against the B.C. NDP and their allies, your allies, in the upcoming battles over Kinder Morgan?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Energy.

Ms McCuaig-Boyd: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I mentioned, we have fought very hard for pipelines and in particular Trans Mountain. But, you know, other things that we're fighting for: in our royalty framework and in our climate leadership plan we fought for our energy industry. I'm pleased to say that drilling activity is up, wages are up for oil fields, production is up, jobs are up. We have confidence in the Alberta energy industry, and we're fighting every day to make that energy industry better, unlike these folks, who cheer constantly against our energy industry. They work for their friends, not for Albertans.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Lac La Biche-St. Paul-Two Hills.

First Nations Development Fund Grant Oversight

Mr. Hanson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Auditor General's report from October included a review of the government's financial statements. I was very surprised to note that the Auditor General was compelled to repeat two specific recommendations for a third time. It is shocking to know that complex grant applications are being accepted without sufficient information to support a funding decision and that there is no consistent oversight to ensure compliance with the grant agreements. Does the Minister of Indigenous Relations share the Auditor General's concerns?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Indigenous Relations.

3:00

Mr. Feehan: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. We are very concerned about this and have worked very closely with the Auditor General to resolve this. In fact, this particular process has been put in place during this year and has been completed, so we're very much looking forward to the new report from the Auditor General in future.

The Speaker: First supplemental.

Mr. Hanson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that the development fund grant guideline specifically restricts the use of funds to approved projects and prohibits any spending for certain purposes such as operating a casino or providing a security interest in the grant monies and given that the Auditor General's recommendations have been collecting dust on the minister's desk since 2015, can the minister identify exactly how much money has been improperly granted or spent outside the terms of grant agreements?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Feehan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very happy to say that there is nothing that I need to report to the House that is of concern. I can see that the opposition is trying to find something to complain about, and since they haven't found something to complain about, they're trying to fabricate that someone else is complaining.

Thank you.

Mr. Hanson: Mr. Speaker, that was a wonderful answer.

Given that the significant funds are provided through the ministry's grant process and that Albertans expect their government

to be accountable and responsible in determining funding recipients and providing ongoing compliance with funding agreements, can the minister comment right now on implementing the Auditor General's recommendations immediately, or is he working on an excuse for delaying implementation?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Feehan: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. We have been enjoying a very good relationship with the Auditor General and have complied with all of the requests that he has made of us and made important changes. And I'm very happy to know that the opposition has finally found indigenous people in this province and are likely to begin, hopefully, to look at some of the programs we have put forward, such as the many solar panels that have been put up all across this province, which they want to take away from indigenous people. I'm just told, for example, that in Maskwacis they're saving \$10,000 a month because of the solar panels. That's money you want to take from them. I'm very disappointed that you want to do that not only for that community but all the indigenous communities.

Electricity Power Purchase Arrangement Lawsuit

Mr. MacIntyre: Mr. Speaker, this government launched a frivolous and unnecessary lawsuit against Calgary's own Enmax. A recent decision from the courts has made it clear that this government has failed to make their case because, frankly, they have no case. Will the Minister of Energy tell Albertans just how much money has been wasted on this very unnecessary litigation?

The Speaker: Hon. member, I would look for some advice. There's a matter in the courts, as I understand it, as we speak, and the Minister of Justice may wish to comment as to whether this is sub judice.

The hon. minister.

Ms McCuaig-Boyd: Okay. As you mentioned, Mr. Speaker, that matter is before the courts, but I'm pleased to update on what we have been doing. As you know, we inherited a system that . . .

The Speaker: Is it your view that this question is sub judice?

Ms McCuaig-Boyd: No, sir, because it's a matter of the courts right now for that specific question.

The Speaker: Then I think you need to reframe your question so that it does not make reference to the matters currently before the courts.

Mr. MacIntyre: What I'm asking for is no details on that but, rather, the cost. I'm asking about legal costs, sir. [interjections]

The Speaker: Quiet.

Mr. MacIntyre: I'm not talking about the outcome of the case, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: I'd like to seek counsel.

Hon. minister, are you prepared to answer the question as it was first asked?

Ms McCuaig-Boyd: I'm happy to respond about the situation, Mr. Speaker, but I do not have the amounts at this time. It's in the courts.

The Speaker: Then first supplemental.

Mr. MacIntyre: Thank you. Given that until this lawsuit is settled, the Balancing Pool is unable to wrap up all remaining PPA terminations, to the minister again: just how much more money is this delay costing Albertans each month that the Balancing Pool is held up?

Ms McCuaig-Boyd: First of all, Mr. Speaker, I make no apologies for standing up for Albertans against unfair electricity prices. Those prices were the result of bad deals made many years ago, and we are looking at fixing that problem. The Balancing Pool's job is to look out for the market and make decisions on PPAs. Our job is to stand up for Albertans.

Mr. MacIntyre: Mr. Speaker, given that this government went so far as to bring in a lawyer from outside Alberta to do its dirty work rather than use government lawyers already on the payroll... [interjection]

The Speaker: This is his second supplemental. Second supplemental.

Mr. MacIntyre: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, given that this government went so far as to bring in a lawyer from outside Alberta to do its dirty work rather than use government lawyers already on a payroll, will the minister tell Albertans how much of their money this government has wasted paying that lawyer to go after one of Alberta's best-managed job creators, Enmax?

An Hon. Member: How much, Minister?

The Speaker: Hon. member, I spoke to a peer of yours about the volume. The way you pounded that desk today in my view is not acceptable, and I'd ask that you no longer do it.

Hon. minister.

Ms McCuaig-Boyd: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, I make no apologies for standing up for Albertans, and if that means bringing in the best lawyer for our case, that's what we do. We took action to protect Albertans while these folks would recklessly keep the same system that takes care of their friends. We negotiated with companies giving the Balancing Pool a loan, and they continue to defend the backroom deals. We stood up for Albertans. We're fighting for families. They're fighting for a system that was broken and doesn't stand up for Albertans, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker's Ruling

Sub Judice Rule

Oral Question Period Practices

The Speaker: Hon. members, we all knew that this was going to be a new phase in the life of this Assembly. First, to the sub judice – and my comments will make this clear – I certainly will but also the member and possibly the House leader of the Official Opposition might want to take a reread of the sub judice principle 23(g)(ii), on civil matters, whether or not the question you were asked was inappropriate or not.

In addition, I would like to suggest that I'd like to have a meeting with the House leaders sometime at my request so that maybe the issue of the roster will be in place, but I'd also like to discuss a couple of other matters. Those are largely with respect to the volume of noise that comes when a question is answered. I would hope that that tones down as we move forward. I think in the past I've been fairly fair in the application of this, but we're on the first day, and this is going to be five, six weeks of difficult times. I think we need to move the benchmark a little differently than we have today.

3:10

Members' Statements

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-South West.

High School in Edmonton-South West

Mr. Dang: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Schools are bursting at the seams in Edmonton-South West. Years of neglect and lack of funding by the former government led to what some parents in my constituency called a crisis. I'm glad our government recognized this and took action. Our government took action, Mr. Speaker, by fully funding hundreds of schools across this province, and eight of those schools have now been opened in my constituency. I sincerely want to thank the government for that.

Those schools, Mr. Speaker, are now full of students. They're full of students between kindergarten and grade 9. Those students need somewhere to go, and those students need somewhere to go that's a high school. Over the last two years I have been asking this government, including in this very House and in question period, to build a high school in Edmonton-South West because our students deserve the best facilities that they can have. Our students deserve a world-class education.

To achieve that, to ensure that they aren't forced to travel across town and lumped into crowded classrooms around the city, my constituency needs infrastructure, and it needs that high school, Mr. Speaker. The government and minister need to commit to supporting the students in my community. They need to commit to supporting our families. High schools prepare our students for the future and ensure that we have a well-educated workforce right here in Alberta.

I know that our government believes in a caring and inclusive education system. I know that our government believes in a steady, predictable future for our children and our educators. Mr. Speaker, I urge the government to build a high school right in my constituency, right here in Edmonton, to prove it.

Thank you.

United Conservative Party

Mr. Cooper: Today is a great day for small "c" conservatives across our great province. For the first time in this Legislature let me proudly say: the United Conservative Party caucus is here to serve. After a very long road to Saturday night we have a new leader ready to offer Albertans a positive vision and alternative to this high-taxing, high-spending NDP government.

[The Deputy Speaker in the chair]

To my friend Doug Schweitzer and the member for Fort McMurray-Conklin: I want to thank you for your efforts in the leadership race. Each of you brought great ideas and great energy to our party. We thank you. We thank your families for all the time and hard work that you've given in helping to build a strong foundation for our party.

To our new leader, Jason Kenney, let me say how proud I am to work with you as we offer a fresh and positive approach for Albertans.

To moms and dads who have felt the pinch of this government, content to raise your taxes, let me tell you: you have a place in our party. To small-business owners let me say: you have a place in our party. To the rig worker who has seen this NDP government turn a blind eye as our province is beaten up by the B.C. NDP, the Trudeau Liberals, and the mayor of Montreal as they oppose pipeline projects, let me say: you have a place in our party. To the farmers and ranchers who are sick and tired of a government that legislates

without understanding the rural way of life, let me tell you: you have a place in our party.

To the hundreds and thousands of Albertans from every corner of our province we say thank you. You have helped us create a single, unified, compassionate conservative party, and we will continue to work tirelessly to earn your trust as we form government.

Madam Speaker, we all know that the NDP will resort to divisive politics and name calling because that's the only tool that they have against us, but Albertans are resilient. They are strong. They're looking for common-sense leadership, and that's exactly what the United Conservative Party caucus will offer them.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon Member for Calgary-Klein.

Supervised Opioid Consumption Sites

Mr. Coolahan: Well, thank you, Madam Speaker. I am proud to rise today as a member of this government and as a Calgarian. Many of us, I know, have met with constituents who have lost a loved one to an accidental opioid overdose. In almost every one of their stories their loved one was alone when they died.

On Friday the Associate Minister of Health was joined by a member of our city council, our deputy chief of police, and many others to announce federal approval for supervised consumption services at the Sheldon Chumir health centre.

The evidence is clear, Madam Speaker. Supervised consumption saves lives. Calgarians who use substances will have a safe space, clean equipment, and professional medical supervision. This will reduce the spread of disease. It will mean less public substance use and fewer needles discarded in our parks, our alleys, and our public washrooms. Supervised consumption also provides an accessible on-ramp for Albertans to seek treatment when they are ready and to be in contact with health care professionals they have grown to trust. Above all, it will save lives.

I'm very pleased that supervised consumption will also be available soon here in Edmonton and Lethbridge. In fact, the Royal Alexandra hospital will be the first in North America to offer this service to its patients. This sends a clear message to Albertans who use substances and to their families that their lives are important to us and that they are not alone. Whether or not they are ready to stop using substances, our public health care system is ready to help them, without judgment and without stigma.

[The Speaker in the chair]

The opposition remains utterly silent on this issue. Mr. Kenney was part of the federal government that spent years in court trying to prevent Canadians from accessing these life-saving services. On this side of the House, Mr. Speaker, we are proud to support evidence-based policies that save lives.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Livingstone-Macleod.

United Conservative Party

Mr. Stier: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise today as a member of the new United Conservative Party of Alberta. Over the weekend tens of thousands of Albertans exercised their franchise as UCP party members and elected Jason Kenney as our new leader. This leadership election was a culmination of a 16-month process that saw the legacy Wildrose and PC parties put aside their differences and agree to move forward together as a single, principled conservative party.

It's been a long road, but as we take our seats in this Assembly for the first time as a team, I can tell you that we are stronger and

more united than ever. For the first time in more than two years Albertans can see hope on the horizon, hope that they now have a credible, common-sense alternative to this NDP government, an alternative that puts people ahead of ideology, an alternative that will stand up for them against the disastrous economic policies of the NDP here at home and the Trudeau Liberals in Ottawa. Together these two governments have conspired to drain opportunity and prosperity from our once great province, leaving tens of thousands of hard-working Albertans without a job, billions in lost investment, and destruction of the Alberta advantage.

Mr. Speaker, Albertans are sick and tired of these attacks on their quality of life and their ability to support their families. That's why they signed up by the thousands to participate in the United Conservative first-ever leadership process. It was inspiring to see so many people come together to support our movement, and that was only the beginning. Today we begin a new chapter in Alberta, one that finally puts Albertans first. I'm incredibly proud to be part of this team and ready to get to work holding this NDP government to account for choices that are hurting Alberta.

Thank you.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-Glenmore.

Diversity and Inclusivity in Alberta

Ms Kazim: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm proud to rise today and speak about a subject that is close to my heart. Diversity and inclusivity are two terms with simple meanings. Diversity, according to the Collins dictionary online, means "the state or quality of being different or varied." Inclusivity, according to the Oxford dictionary online, means "an intention or policy of including people who might otherwise be excluded or marginalized, such as those who are handicapped or learning-disabled, or racial or sexual minorities."

We know that Alberta is a diverse society. Since the election of our government in 2015 this Chamber reflects that diversity more than it ever did. Inclusivity is a powerful tool for change. When we accept and support members of minorities and marginalized groups, we all grow. Society as a whole benefits from diverse viewpoints, religions, and outlooks. We also know, Mr. Speaker, what happens when inclusivity is not practised. We know how easily hatred and violence can spread. We see it on the news every day.

This summer I have been to many events which celebrate inclusivity: the Calgary Pride Parade, where we celebrated the LGBTQ-plus community; a Tsuut'ina Nation powwow marking the rich heritage of our indigenous community; and many others besides. I attended the Filipino Fiesta; a sugar shack at Heritage Park, where the francophone community shared their culture; Rosh Hashanah, a Jewish New Year celebration; a Japanese tea-tasting event; a Chinese dragon boat race; and Muslim Iftar events during Ramadan. I also took part in a round-table on housing and homelessness issues for vulnerable Albertans, including those with disabilities.

3:20

Mr. Speaker, our government has made a strong commitment to inclusivity. I trust and hope that every member of this Assembly will do the same and make Alberta a great place to live for everyone. I look forward to attending upcoming Hanukkah and Christmas celebrations.

Thank you.

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

The hon. Member for Lacombe-Ponoka.

United Conservative Party

Mr. Orr: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A year and a bit ago two great conservative Albertans started on a journey. Our recent leader and our new leader began a dance. They invited Alberta conservatives to look to the future, to believe in the greatness of Alberta, to put aside their differences and come together. On July 22 conservatives voted overwhelmingly in support of unity, renewing the Alberta advantage, supporting the creative spirit of business, jobs, prosperity for Albertans, and hope for families. We have made history. We have forever altered the course of Alberta's future for the better. We chose unity over division and common cause over conflict.

Unity is not a milestone but a process of nurturing relationships. This is just the beginning. We will continue to practise unity because Albertans want a stable, mainstream, courteous, and compassionate government. While many Albertans are thankful for the quality of our health care, we can and will make it better, and we will carefully trim unnecessary costs without reducing front-line services so that Albertans have the best health care possible for the dollar we spend.

Albertans used to have the best educational system in the world, and we will help our students and parents achieve that once again.

Alberta has the highest petroleum industry standards and the cleanest oil in the world. We have vast reserves of oil and gas that can put our province back to work again, improve our quality of life, and pay for the services that a civil society depends on. We will support high-tech innovation, the agriculture and forestry sectors, business and financial services, culture and tourism, manufacturing and construction industries so that people can get back to work and look after themselves with dignity.

Today is the beginning of a brighter future for the people of Alberta. The United Conservative Party is a party where all people of common sense and optimistic spirit will find a welcome for their ideas and their concerns for a smaller and nonobtrusive government. Alberta's best days are yet to come.

Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Ellerslie.

Loyola: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In accordance with section 5(5) of the Property Rights Advocate Act it is my honour as the chair of the Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship to table five copies of the committee's report on the 2016 annual report of the Alberta Property Rights Advocate Act.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-Shaw.

Mr. Sucha: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As chair of the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future I'm pleased to inform the Assembly that the committee report on Bill 203, Alberta Standard Time Act, sponsored by the hon. Member for Edmonton-South West, was deposited intersessionally on October 2, 2017, as sessional paper 445/2017. This bill was referred to the committee on April 3, 2017, and the committee was required to report back to the Assembly by October 4, 2017.

I would like to acknowledge the support provided by staff of the Legislative Assembly Office. Sincere appreciation is also extended to the thousands of organizations and individuals who contributed with written submissions and made oral presentations as part of our review. I would also like to thank my fellow committee members, who worked thoroughly together to ensure this review was completed on time.

Mr. Speaker, the committee report recommends that Bill 203, Alberta Standard Time Act, not proceed. The report also includes and makes recommendations to the government. I request concurrence of the Assembly with respect to the report on Bill 203, Alberta Standard Time Act.

Thank you.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-South West.

Mr. Dang: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Pursuant to Standing Order 18(1)(b) I wish to speak to concurrence on the motion regarding Bill 203.

Speaker's Ruling Debate on Committee Reports

The Speaker: Hon. members, the Assembly has a rare circumstance before us on which I'd like to elaborate. As members have just heard, the chair of the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future has presented the committee's final report on Bill 203, Alberta Standard Time Act. He also moved a motion that the Assembly concur in the report. Typically motions for concurrence in committee reports are not debated. However, such motions are debatable as provided by Standing Order 18(1)(b). Today Edmonton-South West, who is also the sponsor of Bill 203, rose to debate the concurrence motion, as you did. At this point the Assembly is still in daily Routine, which is not the usual time to debate such a motion.

When this situation arose on October 28, 2013, Speaker Zwodzesky determined that a more appropriate time to debate a motion for concurrence in a private member's bill was during Public Bills and Orders Other than Government Bills and Orders, which will be called this afternoon after Orders of the Day.

In keeping with the time limits for private members' business, as set out in Standing Order 29(3), members with the exception of the Premier and the Leader of the Official Opposition will "be limited to 10 minutes' speaking time," and the mover of the motion is entitled to "5 minutes to close debate." You are going to get an opportunity to do that. It's the sequence of events.

Presenting Petitions

The Speaker: Hon. Member for Cardston-Taber-Warner, do you have a petition?

Mr. Hunter: Mr. Speaker, I rise to present a petition from 821 residents representing 28 communities in Alberta who have petitioned for highway 845 to be paved through the town of Raymond, from highway 52 north 1.3 kilometres to where it is already paved. There are over 2,000 vehicles a day on that highway, and the threshold is 200 to 400 vehicles a day. I'd like to present these petitions, please.

Notices of Motions

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Transportation and Government House Leader.

Mr. Mason: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would like to give oral notice of a bill for tomorrow's Order Paper, that bill being Bill 22, Resident and Family Councils Act, which will be sponsored by the hon. Minister of Health.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: The Leader of the Opposition.

National Energy Board Act

Mr. Nixon:

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to immediately demand that the government of Canada introduce amendments to the National Energy Board Act that would prohibit the board from considering upstream and downstream emissions in pipeline approval assessments.

Mr. Nixon: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At the appropriate time I intend to move the motion pursuant to Standing Order 42.

Introduction of Bills

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Labour and minister responsible for democratic renewal.

Bill 19

An Act to Protect Gas and Convenience Store Workers

Ms Gray: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise to table Bill 19, An Act to Protect Gas and Convenience Store Workers for first reading.

As Albertans our hearts break every time someone is injured or killed in a gas-and-dash or convenience store robbery. Our hearts go out to all Alberta families impacted by violence in these workplaces, and I'd like to say thank you to the families and stakeholders who have joined us here today.

Bill 19 is thoughtful legislation built on discussions with businesses, workers, law enforcement agencies, and families. Bill 19 would make prepayment for fuel mandatory in Alberta, and it also makes violence prevention plans mandatory in retail, fuel, and convenience stores and outlines requirements for those programs.

Mr. Speaker, we said that we would take action to protect gas and convenience store workers. Bill 19 is that action.

Thank you.

[Motion carried; Bill 19 read a first time]

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Environment and Parks and minister responsible for the climate change office.

3:30

Bill 20

Beaver River Basin Water Authorization Act

Ms Phillips: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to introduce Bill 20, the Beaver River Basin Water Authorization Act.

Mr. Speaker, this is a special act of the Legislature to improve two interbasin transfers to address drinking water challenges in both Mallaig in the county of St. Paul and the Whitefish Lake First Nation. This bill will allow an interbasin transfer to make good on our commitments to indigenous peoples under the UN declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples and bring drinking water to that reserve. We are tremendously proud to be undertaking this work, and that's what this bill represents.

Thank you.

[Motion carried; Bill 20 read a first time]

Tabling Returns and Reports

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-South West.

Mr. Dang: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have three tablings for you today. The first is an article titled Can We Fix Daylight-Saving Time for Good?, which shows 24 states are moving to abolish daylight saving time; the second being 'End It': Finland Urges EU to Stop Daylight Savings Time Because Change Makes People Sick; and the final one saying If You Want to Get Rid of Daylight Saving Time in BC, Premier Says Email Him.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-Foothills.

Mr. Panda: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to table two documents. The first document is a press release from the BNP Paribas bank, stating that it will no longer invest in companies involved in the oil sands or shale gas industry.

The second is a joint study by numerous universities in Canada, including the U of A, entitled Fusion 2030: Roadmap for Canada.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-Lougheed.

Mr. Rodney: It's actually a tabling to the Clerk if I may, sir. It's a document from all resident owners of Sierras of Evergreen condominium. They hereby ask the Legislative Assembly of Alberta to consider allowing an exemption for age restrictions on condominiums and specifically an exemption for 15 Everstone Drive SW, Calgary. It's a designated 40-plus residence as this was a lifestyle choice those of us living at Sierras of Evergreen have specifically made. I trust the minister will take the time to read it. It is signed by every single one of them. It's a very important issue, and I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Mason: I have another tabling.

The Speaker: Yes. Go ahead.

Mr. Mason: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I have three tablings today, all on behalf of the Minister of Energy. The first one is a letter that she sent to the Hon. James Carr, Minister of Natural Resources of the government of Canada, on June 15, outlining our concerns with the National Energy Board's modernization expert panel's report in which she indicates to him that

it is Alberta's view that Canada's regulatory framework should facilitate, not frustrate projects. Decisions on projects should be made on their own economic and environmental merits through a credible, public, balanced process designed to hear, test, and assess the facts.

That's that one.

The second tabling, Mr. Speaker, is a letter from the Minister of Environment and Parks to the Hon. Catherine McKenna, Minister of Environment and Climate Change Canada, in which she states that "we believe public confidence in the regulatory review . . . is crucial to ensuring projects move forward in a timely manner."

Mr. McIver: Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Point of order noted.

I was about to comment, hon. House leader. Pick up the pace insofar as what you've got.

Mr. Mason: Okay. Mr. Speaker, it is normal that a few lines from these can be read. I'm keeping it to one or two lines in each case.

The third letter is dated October 2 from the office of the Minister of Energy to the Minister of Natural Resources Canada in which

she states that “the inclusion of downstream uses in the scope of the Energy East review is an historic over-reach. In our view, this is simply not an appropriate issue to include in the review.”

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. member. Are there any other tablings that you have?

Mr. Mason: Mr. Speaker, I think this puts to rest whether this government has been active in lobbying for . . .

Mr. McIver: Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Any other tablings?

Hon. members, I have two tablings. The first is that I'd like to table five copies of the 2016-17 Electoral Boundaries Commission final report, titled Proposed Electoral Division Areas, Boundaries, and Names for Alberta, which was received in my office on October 19, 2017.

The second is five copies of my October 27, 2017, memo and attachments to all members regarding Oral Question Period and Members' Statements rotations.

The Speaker: I believe we now have at least three, maybe four points of order, noting the last comment that was made. I believe the first one was made by the Leader of the Official Opposition. Is that correct? Please proceed.

Point of Order Parliamentary Language

Mr. Nixon: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I hate to actually rise on the first day to talk about it, but it was just so obvious that I think we have to set the appropriate tone as we go through this session. So I rise on 23(h), (i), and (j), particularly (j). At the time that I rose on that point of order, the hon. Member for Airdrie was asking a question of the Minister of Education. In response to the hon. member, the Minister of Education – I don't have the advantage of the Blues, of course, but the gist of it was that the Minister of Education told the hon. Member for Airdrie that the member was telling an untruth. In fact, a “whopper” I believe was another word that was used at that time.

Mr. Speaker, clearly, we have a long-standing tradition in this Assembly of not calling members liars or using language that in any way would imply that a member was not telling the truth. Certainly, saying they weren't telling the truth does that. I would also argue that the word “whopper” implies that, saying that the member was saying a whopper. But even before that, very, very clearly saying, “You're not telling truth,” is telling the member that they're not telling the truth.

Mr. Speaker, I think the fastest way to deal with this would be to have the member withdraw those comments and let us move on with the day.

The Speaker: The Government House Leader.

Mr. Mason: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The rules around this are fairly clear and well canvassed. It's one of the most often argued points of order in this Assembly and, I have no doubt, in others as well. Of course, it's very clear that one of the things you simply cannot do in this House is call another member a liar or suggest that they have told a lie. However, there has been a great deal of latitude afforded to members for making statements that may indicate that the statement itself may not be true but it was not with intent or a deliberate attempt to mislead the House.

I just have some interesting things here. *Hansard*, May 2, 2017, the then leader of the Wildrose opposition in the House started out talking about the provincial credit rating with the words: “Speaking of whoppers, Mr. Speaker, the Finance minister delivered a few more whoppers yesterday on the state of Alberta's finances.” There was no point of order with respect to that one, Mr. Speaker.

Unfortunately, *Hansard* has names, and I forget. What's your constituency?

Mr. Loewen: Grande Prairie-Smoky.

Mr. Mason: Thank you. Back on March 7, 2017, the hon. Member for Grande Prairie-Smoky said, “Well, I'll tell you that somebody better call Burger King because I just found their Whopper.”

Moving on, Mr. Speaker. There are several cases where the hon. member for Calgary – it used to be your . . .

3:40

Mr. McIver: I can't help you anymore today. That's all the help you get.

Mr. Mason: Okay. That's it, eh? They're not going to help me.

That guy that sits there now, Mr. Speaker, talked about, “I do want to address quite a few things that I have heard, some mistruths,” and so on. There was no point of order in that respect as well.

The Speaker: Excuse me. Hon. member, could you just say that last part again, please? You referenced somebody.

Mr. Mason: It was Calgary-West.

The Speaker: What was said?

Mr. Mason: “Mistruths.” Let me see. Yes. “I . . . want to address quite a few things that I have heard, some mistruths.” He was referring to debate on the government side with respect to Bill 9 at that time, Mr. Speaker.

In none of these cases was a point of order made or upheld, Mr. Speaker, so I would submit that the use of “whopper” has been well established and used often by members on the other side. It's hardly reasonable, then, for them to now stand in their places and to make a point of order with respect to the government's use of the very same word in the very same fashion. I would submit that there is, in fact, no point of order.

The Speaker: Are there any other members who would like to speak to this? Calgary-Hays.

Mr. McIver: Yes. Thank you. The hon. Government House Leader just gave a few examples of when a point of order wasn't called, which, unfortunately, makes his arguments irrelevant because his arguments weren't whether it's in order or not. He just gave examples of when an order wasn't called.

Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. Government House Leader might even agree that we would never get any business done here if somebody called a point of order every single time that someone said something offside. What is at issue here is what actually was said today, and I would ask you to rule it out of order.

The Speaker: Any other members?

Well, in this particular situation, again, context. I read the Blues, which say, “I guess, Mr. Speaker, if you're going to spread around mistruths, then you might as well tell whoppers.” That's what was said today. For the record I'm not sure about the word “whopper,” but I can tell you, though, that on a go-forward basis I urge all the

members – and I would be asking that your minister withdraw the comments about mistruths.

Mr. Mason: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. In that case, on behalf of the Minister of Education I withdraw the comment about mistruths but apparently not the whopper.

The Speaker: I think we have another point of order.
Calgary-Elbow.

Point of Order

Oral Questions

Mr. Clark: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. So long as the Whopper is Alberta beef, I guess it's probably okay, right?

I rise, Mr. Speaker, in my ongoing and continued battle against the puffball question. You yourself, when the Member for Calgary-Currie was on his trajectory earlier today, quite rightly raised a note of caution with the hon. member for the line of questioning. I will make several citations here today.

From *Beauchesne's*, when referencing the role of Oral Question Period, section 408(1) reads:

Such questions should:

- (a) be asked only in respect of matters of sufficient urgency and importance as to require an immediate answer.

Subsection (1)(b) is no longer in use, inquiring whether statements made in a newspaper are correct.

But 408(2), I think, is very instructive here. It says:

Answers to questions should be as brief as possible [and] should deal with the matter raised, and most importantly, Mr. Speaker, should not provoke debate.

I think if we were to unpack the questions asked by the hon. member and previous questions by the government private members today, I think it's very clear that those questions were argumentative, were designed to do nothing more than to provoke debate.

I also want to reference, Mr. Speaker, *Beauchesne's* 410, which notes, most importantly:

- (3) Time is scarce.

I think we would all agree.

- (5) The primary purpose of the Question Period is the seeking of information and calling the Government to account.

Not the opposition but calling the government to account. That, I think, is an important one.

Finally, and my last:

- (12) Questions should not be hypothetical.

Now, I would suggest that from the very little we have heard from the new UCP leader, given that he's not in this House and not running in an election campaign, one could argue that any statements there are hypothetical.

Mr. Speaker, I want to just reference a ruling by Speaker Zwodzesky which I have referenced previously. It references Oral Question Period on December 6, 2012. Now, what's most relevant about this time period is that it was immediately after a provincial election, and there were many new members of the House. We've now been at this for about two and a half years, and I would suggest that none of us can count ourselves as new members of the House. At the time Speaker Zwodzesky was referring to the then Member for Barrhead-Morinville-Westlock, who asked a question. In response, before the minister answered her question, Speaker Zwodzesky on page 1344 of *Hansard* from December 6, 2012, said, "Hon. members, as you all know, the purpose of question period is to seek information and to hold the government to account." That, again, I think speaks specifically to what we're talking about here.

I won't go on in much greater detail, respecting that time is scarce here, Mr. Speaker, but again I would agree with your caution that we, all members of this House, in particular government private members, need to use question period for the legitimate purpose of holding the government to account, standing up for the interests and best wishes of their constituents and all Albertans.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: The Government House Leader.

Mr. Mason: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, I appreciate the perseverance of the hon. Member for Calgary-Elbow. By my count this is at least the third time and maybe the fourth time that he's made a similar point of order. You have ruled in each case, and I'll read your ruling on December 8.

I note to all members that the ability for private members of the government caucus to ask questions of the government is a long-standing practice and tradition in this House, and it certainly has been in the period of time that I have been in this chair. In other words, all private members have the opportunity to hold the government to account. All private members have the opportunity to seek information. I would conclude by saying that all private members should continue to do exactly that. I find that there was no point of order.

Mr. Speaker, the questions raised at that time specifically had to do with the funding of postsecondary education. The questions today had to do with what would be the case if the government made significant reductions in their funding for several areas. In this particular case it was directed to the Minister of Advanced Education.

I would submit, Mr. Speaker, that in fact there is no point of order here.

The Speaker: Any other members? The Leader of the Official Opposition.

Mr. Nixon: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I won't belabour this too much because I think that we have a lot of important work to do this afternoon and this evening, and we already are behind schedule. With that said, I think the leader of the third party – I don't know what he is. I think I'll just stick with the independent Member for Calgary-Elbow. He did a good job, though, of discussing the responsibility of the opposition with questions to hold the government to account. I have to say, Mr. Speaker, that you already raised during question period, and I thought rightly, some concerns about whether or not the questions that were going through had anything to do with government policy – I heard you bring that up a couple of times; I would be interested to hear more of your input on that – and I was alarmed about that as well.

3:50

Now, I do appreciate the excitement of the government caucus on the election of Jason Kenney as the leader of the United Conservative Party. I do appreciate that they want to continue to raise his name in every sentence of their question. I'm excited about it, too. I'm happy to say the name "Jason Kenney" over and over and over. But the fact is that the now leader of the United Conservative Party, Jason Kenney, is not the Premier of Alberta yet, Mr. Speaker. When he is, then the NDP, who will be presumably – presumably – in opposition, can ask the member, Jason Kenney, the Premier of Alberta, questions about his government policy, but in the meantime I think we should stick with the rules of the House.

The Speaker: Any other members who would like to speak to this matter?

Mr. Cooper: Just the soon-to-be Member for Calgary-Lougheed.

The Speaker: You've just a little less volume than when you were in the front row, hon. member, but I still can hear you.

This is what I think the point of order was raised on. In fact, I have some other notes here that it may have been suggested that the subject matter was referenced at other times in the last Oral Question Period.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given Mr. Kenney's belief that students who make up postsecondary institutions lack an understanding of economics, money, politics, and history, I was hoping we could clear up something for him and the UCP opposition, so I ask the Minister of Advanced Education: can the minister advise the House and the opposition what happened last time conservatives took an axe to postsecondary funding?

I struggle to find the part of that question which addresses government policy, and I think that in this instance, Mr. House Leader, I ask that you refine your questions during Oral Question Period to focus on government policy.

Please note that there is one more, that I think was made, again, by the Opposition House Leader at the end of Oral Question Period. Is that correct?

Mr. Nixon: I think, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member would be happy to withdraw it. I believe he actually dealt with that point of order as he was raising it if I recall. We'll withdraw it.

Motions under Standing Order 42

The Speaker: Leader of the Official Opposition, I think I neglected your Standing Order 42.

Pipeline Approval Assessments

Mr. Nixon:

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to immediately demand that the government of Canada introduce amendments to the National Energy Board Act that would prohibit the board from considering upstream and downstream emissions in pipeline approval assessments.

Mr. Nixon: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Pursuant to Standing Order 42 I'd like to ask for unanimous consent to move the motion.

Mr. Speaker, like many Albertans, I was devastated and I know many of my constituents were devastated to see what happened with Energy East, to see the cancellation of a pipeline project that would have brought thousands of jobs and billions of dollars to our economy, not only in this province but across this great country.

I was also, I would say, shocked, just like the people of Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House-Sundre as they were looking on, at the silence of this government and particularly the Premier of Alberta, who went completely silent after that, missing in action, and who gave a very simple and bland statement that really did not speak to the issue at all and certainly did not do an adequate job of standing up for Alberta, standing up for our largest industry, and recognizing that what the National Energy Board was doing was wrong, Mr. Speaker. It was disappointing to see that. I know many people that I have talked to across the province have brought that up with me and agree with that.

But what's interesting to me, Mr. Speaker, is that despite that muted response, despite the fact that, as I pointed out in question period today, the Premier has inadequately brought this up with her friend Justin Trudeau, the Prime Minister of Canada, despite the fact that she has met with him since this has happened and has not raised that issue in any adequate way for the people of Alberta, it

interests me that the NDP still claim that they are opposed to the National Energy Board changes.

My intent today with this motion is to give the NDP an opportunity to be able to vote to show that they are in agreement with the majority of Albertans and with the opposition about the concerns with what has taken place on this issue.

You know, Mr. Speaker, this is important. It's important because the changes that the National Energy Board have put in place are now responsible for scuttling a \$16 billion project that would have brought energy independence to Canada and market access for Alberta. One of the most important issues that we have talked about in this Chamber over the last couple of years is getting market access. The NDP repeatedly rise in this Chamber and say that that's important to them, but when the time comes to be able to stand up for Alberta on that very issue, they remain silent. It's extremely troubling.

It becomes even more troubling when you recognize that counting upstream and downstream emissions makes no sense. Pipelines don't make emissions. They don't make emissions. They deliver the product. So counting them is just unreasonable, particularly when you consider the fact that the federal government does not account for emissions when giving cheques to Bombardier for planes that burn the oil that is in the pipeline nor for money to the auto manufacturing plants in Ontario. Why, Mr. Speaker . . .

The Speaker: Hon. member, I want to urge you to get to the rationale for the urgency.

Mr. Nixon: I'm getting there. The urgency, Mr. Speaker, in my mind, is: why is this government not standing up to the hypocrisy that is coming from the National Energy Board when it comes to Alberta and our largest industry, when it comes to pipelines trying to get to the market?

Mr. Mason: Point of order.

The Speaker: The point of order is what?

Point of Order Standing Order 42 Motion

Mr. Mason: Mr. Speaker, it's clear that the hon. Leader of the Official Opposition is merely attempting to debate the item, to make his attacks on government policy. If he wants to know what the government has done, I tabled three letters today that will help enlighten him. But in the meantime the question here is on the urgency, and he has not made a case for the urgency of this matter at all.

The Speaker: Hon. member, as you've heard, I said: get to the urgency question.

Mr. Nixon: Well, Mr. Speaker, the hon. Government House Leader may not think that the loss of thousands of jobs in this province and the loss of billions of dollars for this province is urgent, but I can tell you that I think it's urgent, and my constituents think it's urgent.

I will get to the point, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Yeah. Please do.

Debate Continued

Mr. Nixon: Surely, if the NDP oppose the changes, as they say, they'll have no problem supporting this motion and making a request to their friends in Ottawa. I will call . . .

The Speaker: So what's the urgency, hon. member?

Mr. Nixon: Again, Mr. Speaker: loss of jobs, loss of billions of dollars to our economy. This government says that this is something that's important to them, and they're not standing up for it . . .

The Speaker: Thank you.

There's been a motion under Standing Order 42 for debate, an urgent debate on a matter. There is no debate on this matter, so is there unanimous support for the motion as proposed by the Leader of the Official Opposition to proceed with debate?

[Unanimous consent denied]

Orders of the Day

Public Bills and Orders Other than Government Bills and Orders

Motion to Concur in the Report from the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future

Bill 203

Alberta Standard Time Act

[The Deputy Speaker in the chair]

The Deputy Speaker: The Member for Calgary-South West.

4:00

Mr. Dang: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I think it's Edmonton-South West.

An Hon. Member: It's a promotion.

Mr. Dang: I think my colleagues on this side might disagree.

It's my pleasure today to rise and speak to the concurrence motion on the Alberta's Economic Future recommendation on Bill 203. I do want to begin by thanking the committee members for all the incredible work that they did, the nearly 14,000 Albertans that they connected with and the report that they were able to generate to give to this Assembly for us to be able to be here today.

I believe that the work and the recommendation that they made were hard work, for sure, Madam Speaker, and it was also the right recommendation at the time. However, I believe that new information since that report was compiled and deposited fundamentally changes the context in which we must view that recommendation.

The committee recognized that 75 per cent of Albertans supported having one unified time year-round. This was because of the various health effects, physical effects, and mental well-being effects that it has on people across the province, and it also was because of how it adversely affects productivity and safety across the province.

Madam Speaker, the committee also recommended that the government not proceed with this bill pending engagement with other jurisdictions in Canada and the United States. Now, I believe that Canada should take a lead and be torchbearers in that conversation because just weeks ago mayors from the Union of British Columbia Municipalities voted 62 per cent in favour of abolishing daylight saving time in British Columbia. Premier Horgan has indicated that he would be open to discussing and consulting British Columbians on how B.C. abolishes daylight saving time.

The time to act and be a part of how Canada moves away from the time change is now. We know that at the state level in the United States of America two dozen states currently have bills pending to

abolish daylight saving time. That's nearly half of all American jurisdictions. The government of Finland has just received a 70,000-person petition to abolish daylight saving time, and a parliamentary committee in their Parliament, Madam Speaker, is advising the government to raise the issue with the European Union's Parliament.

I understand, Madam Speaker, the very legitimate concerns that businesses in our committee brought forward in dealing with other jurisdictions and how this could bring us out of step with other provinces here in Alberta, but I believe that these recent developments fundamentally change that information. These recent developments change how we must view that recommendation. They change the context in which that recommendation was made, and I think that's information that the committee would have found valuable during their work.

The committee heard loud and clear, as did I during my consultation, from many Albertans, for many reasons, that one time year-round was the way to go, but we did stop and consider some of the larger effects around what the interjurisdictional play and issues may be. Now, I believe that if we were to reject the committee's recommendation, if we were to vote no here today in this House, we could solve those problems that were raised. Other jurisdictions have already passed and are moving forward with this type of legislation. Let us be leaders in the nation. Let us be somebody who says, "We will not wait and follow, but we will drive that horse forward," Madam Speaker.

If this House were to reject the recommendation of the committee and allow the bill to continue through second reading and into Committee of the Whole, I believe strongly that the issues that were identified, specifically those issues with how our businesses interact with other jurisdictions, could be remedied during Committee of the Whole. In fact, I would say so far that I would be willing to move amendments myself that would address the concerns about us being out of step with other jurisdictions.

The debate should not end here today, Madam Speaker. Today we should decide to be leaders in the conversation and be prepared to guide the rest of the country based on Alberta's framework and Alberta's leadership. I believe that I could move amendments that would satisfy the concern that Alberta would be out of step with other provinces and states, but those amendments could only be considered in Committee of the Whole. That's why today I think it's so important that we reject this recommendation and that we allow ourselves the opportunity to continue debate. I believe we should give ourselves the opportunity to have conversation and see what we can do to fix our legislation.

What I'm asking here today, Madam Speaker, is very simple. I'm asking all hon. members in this House to continue having that conversation with me in this House because over 70 per cent of Albertans want one time year-round. We saw that time and time again, not just in my survey but in the one that the committee did as well. We have the opportunity to continue that conversation for them. We have the opportunity to listen to those constituents and those Albertans while addressing the very real business concerns and implications across the province, across the country, and across North America.

I believe we can fulfill in spirit the recommendations that the committee brought forward. We can fulfill those things in spirit and principle, but I believe that in order to continue to be national and international leaders in the conversation, we must vote to allow debate to continue in this House. We must be permitted to continue talking about this issue in this very Legislature, Madam Speaker, and I would commit to making the amendments that would ensure that Alberta would move forward with a co-ordinated approach with the other jurisdictions so Alberta would not fall out of step

with the rest of the country or the rest of North America. I do want to urge all my colleagues to consider today that our constituents and Albertans have told us that they want one time year-round. I believe we can do that for them. I believe that we can find a fair middle ground acknowledging the concerns of our business partners and our interests.

I believe that if we vote together today, if we vote to reject the committee's recommendation, we can bring a common-sense bill forward that will make Alberta a strong national leader in that conversation. I do urge all of my colleagues to vote against the concurrence motion here today. We can make a good bill together. We can tell Albertans that we heard them. We can tell Albertans that we know how to work together to make common-sense change that reflects their wishes. So let's continue that conversation.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. Member for Edmonton-South West. I apologize for temporarily moving you to Calgary.

Any other members wishing to speak? The hon. Member for Barrhead-Morinville-Westlock.

Mr. van Dijken: Good. Thank you, Madam Speaker. Thank you for the opportunity to rise and speak to Bill 203. It was a pleasure to be working with the Economic Future Committee on this consultation process through the summer and talking to Albertans on what their wishes are and seeing what Albertans had to say about how we could best move forward. I believe the committee did some great work on the discovery of trying to understand the best way to move forward. I do believe that the recommendation that came forward from the committee is to consider one time year-round going forward but then to also do that not as if we're on an island unto ourselves but to consider that in consultation with other jurisdictions that we are intertwined with not only in our trading practices, but also socially we're intertwined with them.

We sought feedback from stakeholders and held public meetings in several cities. I was able to participate in public meetings in Grande Prairie and Edmonton, and other members were able to participate in other jurisdictions in the province. I want to thank all of the people that came forward to participate in those meetings. It was helpful for myself and I believe it was helpful for other members on the committee to understand the wishes of Albertans from one end of the province to the other. I did find it very interesting that we were able to see that depending on where you are at in the province, the choice to go with Central Time or the choice to go with Mountain Standard Time was probably the biggest consideration for those that wanted to stop changing the clocks.

What we did learn in Grande Prairie: the Chamber of Commerce in Grande Prairie, Madam Speaker, did a survey amongst their members. I found it very interesting that it was a survey that was split pretty much three ways. A third of their members were saying, "Let's just continue on the way we are," and then another third of the members of the chamber were interested in, "Let's stop changing the clocks, but let's have Mountain Standard Time," and then another third were in favour of Central Time. One thing we did learn also is that when you're that far west in our province, to go to Central Time through the winter would mean that they would be dark until very late in the morning.

That was a big concern for Grande Prairie relative to the concerns in, say, a place farther to the east. Lloydminster would have fewer concerns about being on Central Time because they are right next to Saskatchewan, which is on Central Time. So it was less of a concern as we travelled east that way.

4:10

Before we make a decision as Albertans to stop changing clocks and, not only that, to switch time zones, to go from Mountain Standard Time, which we are currently in, and to essentially become part of the central time zone, which would put us in the same time as places such as Chicago and Nashville, Mexico City, you know, places that are quite a bit further east of us – it became quite evident that we needed to have a conversation with other jurisdictions, our trading partners, and other parts of the world that would also be affected by the decision that is made here.

In my opinion, the committee's consultation ended up with the committee making the right decision, which is that Bill 203 should not proceed and that the motion that came forward would essentially put us where we would then, in consultation with other jurisdictions, decide on the best path forward.

I would like to read from the report the motion that came forward. I'm just trying to find it here, Madam Speaker. I thought I had it. The motion that came forward essentially is recommending that we do not proceed at this time with Bill 203.

The one thing that did concern us in the final report of the committee was the motion that was put forward at committee. The NDP majority passed the motion. My colleagues and I from the UCP Official Opposition that were a part of the committee effort felt it important that we point out that the majority, the NDP majority, passed a motion that we were not able to concur with and that we actually voted against being put forward in the report. The motion was to this effect, that

the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future direct research services to include in its report regarding the committee's review of Bill 203, Alberta Standard Time Act, that approximately 75 per cent of the submissions en masse to the committee were in support of abolishing the observance of daylight saving time and identified that it has a negative effect on [but not limited to] their physical and mental well-being, their children, families, productivity at home, at work, at school, and safety on roads.

Madam Speaker, I was not in favour of that motion because, in my opinion, it was not an accurate reflection of the information that we had received as a committee. I believe that we need to be clear with Albertans on the information that came forward. You know, while the committee received approximately 13,562 written submissions, it doesn't necessarily accurately represent a province of over 4 million people, especially considering that these submissions were on a voluntary basis. Voluntary surveys, although helpful, can be very often skewed and have a response bias that would not necessarily be the opinion of the population as opposed to conducting scientific polling, that would be probably more accurate on what the general population's opinion is with regard to the issue at hand.

Furthermore, the motion exaggerated the findings of these supportive submissions by saying that in them people identified that daylight saving time "has a negative effect on . . . their physical and mental well-being." Not all supportive submissions listed any of these things. In fact, the greatest proportion of submissions in favour of abolishing daylight saving had no rationale attached to them at all. They just simply said that there is no benefit to the time change and they would prefer to stick with one time.

Because of these things, we expressed our opposition to this particular motion being included in the final report. It's important that the final report represent clearly and accurately the submissions that came forward.

With that, Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the Member for Edmonton-South West for doing the work on the bill. I would like to thank the committee for also doing the work on the bill. I believe

that the committee has come to a conclusion that the Members of this Legislative Assembly should respect and understand that the committee, I believe, has heard from Albertans in a way that we can move forward on this item with other jurisdictions and be ready to . . .

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-Currie.

Mr. Malkinson: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. It's a pleasure to stand up and talk about the concurrence motion. I am in agreement with my colleague from Edmonton-South West that indeed the time is now – I'm sure there's a pun in there somewhere – and disagree with the results of the report from the committee. Just sort of great notes from our friend in Barrhead-Morinville-Westlock about the work of the committee. I think that the circumstances have changed since that report came forward. I respectfully disagree with that report and say that we be bold when it comes to daylight saving time.

The report at its core recommends that we engage with other jurisdictions to make sure that we do not have any problems when it comes to interjurisdictional business with other provinces and other parts of the United States. However, I have heard loudly from my constituents that they are overwhelmingly in favour of stopping the switch twice yearly and that we stay on daylight saving time year-round. I have had more responses to my office on this particular topic than on any other topic that people have written in to me about.

In particular, I have had several individuals come into my office and sit down with me to give specific examples of why this twice-yearly switch is bad for them. I believe our colleague from Barrhead-Morinville-Westlock talked about how some of the submissions didn't have a specific reason. Well, as many people in this House know, I do a lot of work with persons with disabilities. I had several of them come and sit down with me in my office and talk to me about this bill. For many who have disabilities, the importance of routine in their daily lives is very important to helping them manage their disability, whether it be physical or, in particular, mental. Having even that one-hour time-difference switch: for some of us who are, you know, perhaps a bit younger, getting used to the change perhaps only takes a day or two. Well, for these individuals it could take weeks. That dramatically affects their quality of life, their ability to go out and interact and be meaningful members of society as much as they can.

Recently, on Friday, I had a constituency open house, the one I have at the beginning of every session. I had about 30 people come out. I asked the question to them. I have to admit that I prefaced it with the best arguments I've heard both for and against daylight saving time, and they were, in fact, in the report. In that open house people were, again, overwhelmingly in support of stopping the twice-yearly change. Overwhelmingly in support.

4:20

In fact, even from the survey that the hon. Member for Edmonton-South West did, there were 166 individuals from my riding of Calgary-Currie who responded to his survey who strongly agree with his bill. There were another 22 that agreed with his bill. However, there were only 39 who either responded that they didn't know or that they disagreed with the bill. That is an overwhelming majority of my constituents who want this bill to continue moving forward in the Legislature. In listening to them, again, I'm going to have to respectfully disagree with the committee's report. To that, I say to all members of this House that we should be bold. We should lead on this particular topic because that is what my constituents are telling me, that we should lead on that. Be bold.

In the report there seem to be two particular points. Many businesses presented to the committee, and I had a chance to talk to some of my colleagues to get their feedback on how, if this bill was to go forward, it might hurt small businesses. We heard from various hockey teams, businesses, and, of course, from our local airports. I think the airports, you know, made a very interesting case on why this might be a problem, particularly as it relates to connecting flights. That was actually the example I used when I talked to my constituents in my office and said, "Hey; this is by far the strongest case I've heard for why we shouldn't go forward." The response I got from my constituents is: "You know, yeah. That makes sense. However, it seems like something that could, after a bit of a transition, be managed." That was what my constituents were telling me in my office. I tend to agree with them on that particular point.

The other part was related to, you know, the importance of matching up with other jurisdictions. As the hon. Member for Edmonton-South West mentioned, there are several other constituencies who are working on this. In fact, in B.C., as he mentioned, there is a 62 per cent vote in favour of B.C. moving off the twice-yearly switch, which means that that conversation in B.C. is already starting, and it seems like perhaps they're about a year behind us.

If we vote with the report of the committee, then we will end this conversation. I think the hon. Member for Edmonton-South West made some very great points about how he would be able to address some of the concerns in the report. On the topic of, you know, other jurisdictions this is a little bit of a chicken-and-egg problem. If we wait for other jurisdictions and then other jurisdictions wait for those other jurisdictions – I think that we should be bold. We should take the first step and vote no to concurrence so that we can continue this debate.

With that, I ask you, all my colleagues: let us be bold and lead into the future and continue the debate in this House. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-Elbow.

Mr. Clark: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. You know, I have some real concerns with the arguments coming from the other side. There's a committee that very thoughtfully debated and discussed this bill that was referred to it. Just some of the dismissiveness, I think, of the work that had gone on in the committee is really troubling to me and some of the very, very thin rationale that's being used to perhaps suggest that we reject the recommendations of this committee: that the B.C. Premier, quote, is discussing the idea that perhaps we would do this, that B.C.'s equivalent to the AUMA has passed a resolution suggesting that perhaps the government of British Columbia should consider this. These are very preliminary steps that the government is taking, and it's nowhere near enough, in my opinion, to override a unanimous motion of a committee of the Legislative Assembly.

I will say, Madam Speaker, that I find it curious that when that committee, an all-party committee, unanimously voted to not proceed with this bill and once that news came out, the Premier herself was then scrummed shortly thereafter and expressed her personal opinion that actually maybe this issue isn't dead.

Well, there are a couple of things that really concern me with that. One, it's a committee of the Legislative Assembly that's passed a unanimous motion, including, of course, members of her own party. But this, Madam Speaker, is a private member's bill. Now, again, we have the government very clearly cracking the whip on their backbench on an issue that perhaps the Premier herself has a strong opinion on, so it makes me wonder what the purpose of this entire process is if, really, the Premier just will do whatever it is she wants.

I will say this. I am perfectly fine with the idea of ending daylight saving time. However, if we're going to do that, we need to ensure that we are co-ordinating with not just our neighbours to the east and west in Alberta and in Canada but with our largest trading partner south of the border. Now, I understand that perhaps as many as half the states in the U.S. are thinking about eliminating daylight saving time, and that's a great idea. Let's do that. If we're going to do that, let's do it as a co-ordinated North America wide effort. I think it would be very damaging to Alberta's fragile economy for us to be out of step with our largest trading partner. Frankly, it makes no sense at all.

Now, I was very encouraged and curious – and I know there's no 29(2)(a) in private members' business – when the Member for Edmonton-South West said that he also would want us to make sure we don't fall out of step with our neighbours and the rest of North America. That's important. It'd be very, very damaging, I think, for Alberta to move forward unilaterally.

I look forward to seeing the amendments that he will propose, but again what I don't understand, Madam Speaker, is what isn't addressed by accepting this motion. Why do we need to not accept the motion? I'll read the motion, and that is that

the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future recommend that Bill 203, Alberta Standard Time Act, not proceed and that the government of Alberta engage other jurisdictions in Canada and the United States to develop a co-ordinated approach to eliminating the practice of observing daylight saving time.

That's a good idea. That's what we should be doing.

I agree. I agree with the majority of Albertans that daylight saving time is an antiquated practice that probably does more harm than good. However, we've lived with it for decades, and if we get out of step with our trading partners, we're in trouble. My question is: why would we reinvigorate this debate? Is there going to be a scenario where we're out of step with our largest trading partner? I certainly hope not.

I believe that the motion as passed unanimously by the committee addresses the concerns that have been raised by the Member for Edmonton-South West.

One final and, I think, perhaps the most important point of all: continuing the debate on daylight saving time sends exactly the wrong message to all of those stakeholders who came to that committee. They provided their thoughtful input.

What this does is it adds more uncertainty to an already very uncertain business climate. And if there is one thing this government could do to help entrepreneurs, to help the economy of this province, it is to end the uncertainty. By passing that motion unanimously, there was a collective sigh of relief from airlines, from companies that do business all over North America, who export throughout the world. But now, all of a sudden, these companies go: "Wait a minute; I thought we'd settled this thing, and now we're back on it. We have to debate this thing again?" The uncertainty that this bill brings – I recognize it's a private member's bill, but it's a private member's bill of the government side – the uncertainty created in Alberta's economy by this government, is just killing jobs. It's killing investment. This is the reason that companies are unwilling right now to invest in Alberta. It's this incredible uncertainty.

I would strongly encourage the Assembly, all of my colleagues in the government, to accept this recommendation because it achieves what I have heard the other side wants to achieve, and that is to continue to co-ordinate with other jurisdictions as they move forward. That's what we should be doing. But we should allow this bill to die and make sure that we bring at least a modicum of certainty to Alberta's business climate.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-McClung, followed by Calgary-Greenway.

4:30

Mr. Dach: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. It gives me great pleasure to rise on this first day of the session to speak to Bill 203, and I rise to concur with the motion and recommendation put forward by the committee that Bill 203 not proceed. I believe that this committee sat in many, many meetings, listened to submissions, that were probably one of the largest numbers of submissions ever received by a committee of this Legislature, and they came up with the correct conclusion, that it's not really a question of if but when we stop changing our clocks and decide upon which time zone to adopt year-round.

I speak in support of the recommendation, and I encourage all members to do the same thing because I think that in its wisdom the committee, in adding a further recommendation that the government of Alberta engage other jurisdictions, as mentioned by the Member for Calgary-Elbow just recently, sought to address any concerns that individuals might have that we weren't going to move in lockstep with other jurisdictions, which the committee heard was very, very important to do if and when we decide to go ahead and not change our clocks any longer and would decide upon a time zone to adopt year-round. I think the committee rightfully makes this recommendation knowing that the large majority of Albertans wish to stop changing their clocks and that they wish to do so in conjunction with neighbouring jurisdictions, in particular British Columbia, and perhaps other jurisdictions in the United States.

I'd urge all members of the House to follow my lead and choose to accept the recommendation of the Alberta's Economic Future Committee that Bill 203 not proceed.

Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-Greenway.

Mr. Gill: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise today to support the motion not to proceed with Bill 203, Alberta Standard Time Act. I am a member of the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future, and the proposal of this bill to eliminate daylight saving time did involve potential impact on Alberta's economic future. We heard from various stakeholders. We heard from our business community that any move to eliminate daylight saving time at this juncture would put us out of sync with the rest of North America. That could be damaging to our businesses.

Particularly compelling was the feedback from Calgary and Edmonton airport authorities. Bill 203's proposal to move Alberta two time zones from B.C. during winter was particularly concerning. Should that have come to pass, WestJet indicated that its connecting flight system would have meant that customers in British Columbia would have had to catch their flights at 5 a.m., which means they have to be at the airport for international flights, like, as early as the middle of the night. The concern from the airline was that the B.C. travellers might simply choose alternate routes that bypass Alberta rather than face those departure times. As the Calgary Airport Authority noted, Calgary's economic engine generates more than \$8 billion in GDP through a carefully balanced system that depends on negotiated schedules with various partners around the world. That is basically, of course, the crux of the issue.

Yes, jurisdictions in Canada and the United States are reconsidering the value of daylight saving time right now, but the movement is just beginning. Just last week states in the New England region began pondering the advisability of eliminating daylight saving time. A bill was even brought forward in Maine. Its experience was interesting because even though the bill passed both

chambers in the state Legislature, the Senate added a provision that Maine voters must approve it through a referendum and that a vote could only be triggered by neighbouring Massachusetts and New Hampshire also changing their time zones. That speaks to two important issues, that it is important not to move out of sync with your region when it comes to time zones and that referendums are the tools for these kinds of decisions.

Time after time in the consultation period with Albertans on Bill 203 they requested the same allowance. Since daylight saving time was brought in by a referendum decades ago, should Alberta's Legislature be considering a similar move, they should send it to a province-wide vote. That has been the consistent position of our UCP caucus on the matter. Yes, I understand there is a cost to this referendum. However, if it is partnered with the provincial election, then the cost is manageable and justifiable when Albertans are the ones asking for it. We can manage effectively if we're willing to do so.

Albertans were also asking for another thing when they provided submissions to the committee or attended to address us in person. They asked us to deal with the very real problem that Alberta is facing today, and that is, as we all know, the economy. The economy is top of mind for them, Madam Speaker. When so many Albertans are out of work, when our economy has taken a dive from which it has yet to recover, when we're posting \$10 billion deficits over and over again with no plan to pay it back, when Alberta's debt load is escalating to the point that Canada's parliamentary budget office, our AG, and respected economists are warning us to get our fiscal house in order, why would we spend so much time on this issue? That's just my question.

Alberta is desperate for common sense from their government these days, and time and money spent deliberating over this bill when other challenging issues were just pushed through the House with almost no consultation – labour legislation comes to mind. Bill 6 comes to mind. Carbon tax comes to mind. They wanted us to get down to work on the issues that will set our province on an economic course that will allow them and their family members and their friends and their neighbours to get back to work. I for one and all my colleagues in the Official Opposition are more than willing to do this. We don't need distractions like these bills the NDP keeps bringing forward. We're here to better the lives of Albertans, and we intend to do that, so let's focus on the issues that matter the most to Albertans.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I want to begin by saying that I believe that the idea of getting rid of daylight savings time is a good idea, and I believe it's widely supported by Albertans. I also want to say that I understand the concern as it relates to being out of sync with other jurisdictions. I appreciate the good work of the committee and particularly of the sponsor of the bill that we are here to discuss today. It definitely reflects the hundreds of families that reached out to me in particular and others. I had about 300 people from Edmonton-Glenora contact me with feedback, and I believe it was nine that said that they wanted to keep daylight savings. I think that this is more complex, though, obviously, than the information that most individuals have at their hands. I respect what's being said about being out of sync with other jurisdictions, and obviously we don't want to do anything that could jeopardize our economic recovery.

We are set – by the way, Madam Speaker, I plan on saying this a lot in this Chamber, so this is my first shot – to see the strongest growth of any jurisdiction in Canada this year under this NDP

government. I'm very, very proud of that. It is absolutely the right place and the right time for people to be investing in Alberta.

I agree that we shouldn't be moving forward without other jurisdictions being ready to follow suit with us because of that fragile position of our economy. Therefore, I'm of the opinion that the committee should find a way to give this another shot. The committee should find another way to engage with the New West Partnership. The committee should find another way to engage with the Western Governors' Association. We are part of so many different organizations that are engaged with other governors across this country as well as across North America, and I really am hopeful that Alberta will be in a position to lead those conversations.

4:40

Of course, I want to stay in step. Of course, I want to support those investments in continuing to come to Alberta, and I'm a little disappointed that the only recommendation is that we just don't do this work. I think it's important that we be leaders on this file, and I want to again thank the Member for Edmonton-South West for being a leader on this file. I understand what some of the precarity is, but I really do wish that the committee give it another shot and find a way to move forward with Albertans, who are definitely making a lot of their opinions very clear, as well as protect the economy and the investments. Doing that in a way that's in partnership with engaging, as I mentioned, the New West Partnership as well as the Western Governors' Association would be a reasonable way to do that, in my opinion.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member for Lac La Biche-St. Paul-Two Hills.

Mr. Hanson: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. The member that brought forward this bill says that we need to be in step and that there are a bunch of states that are actually looking at this bill. I've got a sheet here in front of me that shows a lot of that that is going on. Colorado Bill 1226, to make daylight saving time year-round standard time, failed.

Mr. Gill: What?

Mr. Hanson: Yeah. Bill 1226 failed.

There's a whole raft of them here: Illinois, referred to committee; Iowa, referred to committee; Maine, died in the House; Mississippi, failed in committee; Mississippi, again failed in committee. It's been tried. Numerous attempts have been made, and some of these fall in the same time zone as us. Again, New Hampshire failed to adopt standard time. You know, it goes on and on and on. I really think that if we're going to take this step, we have to be – if we're going to be out of step with the rest of the jurisdictions south of us, east of us, and west of us, especially British Columbia, I think it's just a bit insane.

The time spent on committee – you know, there are a lot of us that don't live in Edmonton that do a lot of travelling when it comes to committee. People from Calgary drive up, or, you know, we phone in and sit on the line for hours and try to take part in these important discussions.

I think this is an important discussion. It was given a fair bit of time in the committee. A lot of people came and submitted. I mean, if we ignore the submission by the Calgary Airport Authority, where they say, "The YYC economic engine generates \$8.28 billion in GDP" – this just seems like another attack on another industry in Alberta, and I think that in the last two years we've seen enough damage done.

The frustrating part is that while a lot of this was taking place – and I look at the money that was spent on consultation. I'm all for consultation, but the important issues of the day that were ignored while this was going on – the \$10 billion debt, the projected \$90 billion in deficit and debt coming forward – are the things that we should have been spending our time on.

While the money was being spent on this, a little program in the town of St. Paul – you know, we talk about not affecting front-line workers and front-line patients – called the STRIDES program was cancelled this summer. A lady came into my office crying with a letter saying that basically they were being thrown out in the street, and this program was dropped. When I started looking into it, it's like: man, this must be some huge money-saving program for this government. This affected people with brain injuries, gave them something to do every day, gave them something to get up for in the morning. You know what this thing was worth? Twenty-four thousand dollars. Cancelled by Alberta Health Services.

Ms Hoffman: You know how many of those you're going to have to cancel to find 20 per cent?

Mr. Hanson: Shameful. Shameful that you would even say that.

You know what? Dealing with some of this stuff in committees where we would get into a robust discussion and when the other committee members – I'll remind you that this committee decision was made by a majority of government committee members that voted unanimously for this. But I find it very frustrating a lot of times. It's like peeling balloons, right? It's just poof, and it's gone.

Where did I get that from? Well, when I was in high school, I read a book by Kurt Vonnegut called *Cat's Cradle*. In this book they talk about an island in the south Pacific where they had their own society called volcanism, and they had their own language. One of the words in that language was the word "granfalloon," and I think it describes this government in the way they handle committees perfectly. Basically, if you want to look it up on Wikipedia, it could help you out there. It says that one of the definitions is that it's a proud and meaningless collection of human beings. It is a group of people who effect a shared identity of purpose but whose mutual association is totally meaningless.

If we go and make decisions in committees and have unanimous decisions and somebody does a flip-flop and changes their mind on it, it basically is a waste of taxpayers' time and money. It's a waste of committee time. How are people supposed to be engaged? Who is going to come and present to our next committee when we open it up for the public to come in and submit? People take a lot of time. They put these proposals together. They take time out of their own businesses to come and present and to basically be – oh, well; we've changed our minds again – you know, left out in the cold.

We find it very frustrating that we would take this committee decision, again, that was voted on by a majority of the government committee members, all-party committee members that were there – the people that came and submitted really good submissions, talking about how \$8.2 billion is nothing to sneeze at. That's down in Calgary. What are the people down in Calgary going to say when they see that, or even the Edmonton airport authority, that basically submitted the same type of proposal, that this is going to cost a lot of money? You know, those airports are constantly fighting to bring international flights into our area, and something like this just makes all their efforts look like a joke.

I would submit that we need to support the committee's recommendation on this, vote for this motion, and kill this bill. Until we can get a collaboration of all of the jurisdictions that we work with on a daily basis in this province, we don't need to put another nail in the coffin of Alberta and the economy of Alberta. We need

to support the Alberta economy, airports, tourism, everything that goes with it.

That's about all I've got to say. I just hope everybody realizes that this decision was made, and we have to support our committees. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-Fish Creek.

Mr. Gottfried: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I'm privileged and honoured, of course, to be a member of the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future, which was charged with addressing this Bill 203. You know, in my committee and subsequent public consultation roles in the subcommittee, which I was honoured to serve on as well, I was able to review and consider the various written and verbal submissions received from engaged and, in many cases, concerned Albertans and stakeholder groups.

One thing that struck me throughout the entire process was the lack of a clear mandate for change, in fact, the contrary, with much confusion, dissension, reasoned economic and logistical concerns being raised, and, yes, yes, a good number who also suggested that our clocks should never be changed again. In fact, it became clear and we must recognize that there are many factors at play in this issue, in fact too many for us to lead blindly into the unknown, possibly at great costs with respect to jobs and the economy, which must be first and foremost in our minds during these difficult times.

Yes, again, many of the written submissions received by the committee indicated a desire to abolish daylight saving time. However, even these submissions were split on what permanent time we should adopt. Do we make a permanent leap forward, do we take a risky step back or just maintain the status quo, or do we want to be bold and act as a global outlier with great risks attached to it?

During the live in-person consultation process, where we invited key stakeholders to present to the committee, the majority, in fact, were opposed to Bill 203. I kept my own record of that in Calgary and Edmonton specifically. As someone who has spent almost two decades in the airline industry myself with Hong Kong based Cathay Pacific Airways, it was no surprise to me to see such important transportation stakeholders as WestJet, Edmonton International Airport, Calgary airport, and Fort McMurray all opposing Bill 203 for strategic reasons, good reasons that could ultimately affect investment, employment, our global connectivity, and the building of strong passenger and cargo hubs that support Alberta trade, commerce, tourism, cultural exchanges, and prosperity.

4:50

Bill 203 would put Alberta two time zones away from B.C. during the winter months. WestJet specifically cited this as a serious, in fact a potentially critical concern in their plans for a regionally, continentally, and globally connected Alberta. Their representatives indicated that guests departing B.C. on a given morning through a Calgary or Edmonton hub that they worked so hard to establish would now have to depart at a highly inconvenient, perhaps traffic-killing 5 a.m. instead of 6 a.m. They expressed concern that this change would be unappealing enough to many of their customers, who may then choose alternate routings that bypass Alberta, possibly sending business to competitors south of the border, weakening our ability to focus on strategic growth in what I can assure you after 20 years is a highly competitive industry.

They went on to state:

This connecting traffic is [foundational] to the growth of WestJet's...

Yes, that proud Alberta company.

... hub in Calgary and continued expansion in Edmonton.

It also has a positive downstream impact on the strength of our services in Fort McMurray and Grande Prairie.

Bill 203 puts this growth at risk. Members, is that a risk that this Assembly is willing to take? I don't think so.

As you can see, one of Alberta's major employers and a global leader in civil aviation has a very real concern with this bill. I do not think it is wise to cast aside such concerns when the potential for negative impact is clear but the depth of that impact is absolutely unknown and perhaps unpredictable were we to take such an unjustifiable leap of faith. Or should I call it a flight of fancy?

All of the input from the thousands of written submissions, in-person stakeholder presentations, and public consultations were transparently available to all members of this committee and, in fact, all members of this Legislature, with attendant rationale, arguments, and emotional pleas when we as a committee made a unanimous recommendation not to proceed with Bill 203, which brings me to my next point. The Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future was tasked by this Legislature with reviewing Bill 203, the Alberta Standard Time Act, and returning to the Assembly with a clear recommendation. We have done this work, and, again, we unanimously passed a motion which indicated that Bill 203 should not proceed.

All parties and members were of course welcome and able to attend any of the committee meetings and offer their insights and input. We have now heard from many Albertans, Madam Speaker, and the only logical decision is clearly not to proceed given the uncertainty of costs versus benefits in any leap forward on this bill.

I think we all need to say our final piece, Madam Speaker, as Albertans. We need to respect the committee. We need to respect the members of that committee, the majority being from that side, and all of the people that worked hard on this and support the recommendation to now put aside Bill 203.

Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: Any other members wishing to speak to the bill? The hon. Member for Lethbridge-East.

Ms Fitzpatrick: Thank you, Madam Speaker. First of all, I'm going to say that I'm on the Economic Future Committee. I was on the subcommittee for this bill, and I listened to every single presenter at the meetings.

Now, I listened. I was part of the unanimous decision that this bill not proceed further, but there was a second recommendation from that committee, and that recommendation was that the government of Alberta engage other jurisdictions in Canada and the United States to discuss a co-ordinated approach to eliminating the practice of observing daylight saving time. I put that forward, and I put it forward because I listened to Susan Schneider when she came to the mike and she said that she hadn't even planned on coming to the mike to speak but she had to. She was somebody who had MS. She said that every time the clock changes, her body reacts both physically and psychologically because she has to adjust her medication. She said that it is a month of hell after she has to change that clock. Because of her I put that motion forward; this bill may die right now, but the issue cannot. It has to move forward because we represent Albertans, the Albertans like Susan. We have to consider every single part of this argument, and, let me tell you, I listened to every single submission.

I also listened to the people that came to my office. I did a little survey with my church choir. Of the 39 people in that choir 38 said to stop changing the clock. Of course the issue is: are we going to mountain or central? That is an issue that has to be discussed. It has to engage conversation with our neighbours, and it has to because we need to do it simultaneously. So I support the motion that the

committee put forward for this bill not to proceed, but I also support the second recommendation, which is to engage our neighbours.

Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: Any other members wishing to speak?

Seeing none, the hon. Member for Calgary-Shaw to close debate.

Mr. Sucha: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I'll be very brief on this. I do want to thank all the committee members. This was a very thorough review that commenced. As we move forward, it is important, as it was recommended, that we engage the jurisdictions moving forward with this process. I specifically can commit to the Legislative Assembly that I will be bringing this forth, amongst other items, including fighting for pipelines, when we are in PNWER this weekend. It will be one of the many focuses and dialogues that are happening. So the conversation will continue.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: The Chair of the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future has requested concurrence in the report on Bill 203. Does the Assembly concur in this report? Say aye.

Hon. Members: Aye.

The Deputy Speaker: Opposed, say no. That motion is carried.

[The voice vote indicated that the committee report was concurred in]

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 4:58 p.m.]

[Fifteen minutes having elapsed, the Assembly divided]

[The Deputy Speaker in the chair]

For:

Aheer	Gotfried	Nielsen
Anderson, S.	Hanson	Orr
Anderson, W.	Horne	Phillips
Babcock	Hunter	Piquette
Carson	Jansen	Rosendahl
Ceci	Kazim	Sabir
Clark	Kleinstauber	Schreiner
Coolahan	Larivee	Shepherd
Cooper	Littlewood	Starke
Cortes-Vargas	McCuaig-Boyd	Stier
Dach	McIver	Sucha
Drever	McKittrick	Sweet
Drysdale	McPherson	van Dijken
Fitzpatrick	Miller	Westhead
Ganley	Miranda	Woollard
Gill		

Against:

Dang	Hoffman	Malkinson
Eggen	Loyola	Turner
Totals:	For – 46	Against – 6

[The committee report was concurred in]

Motions Other than Government Motions

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-Glenmore.

World Interfaith Harmony Week

508. Ms Kazim moved:

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly urge the

government to recognize the first week of February as World Interfaith Harmony Week in support of the United Nations General Assembly resolution 65/5.

Ms Kazim: Thank you, Madam Speaker. This motion has the objective of declaring the first week of February beginning in 2018 to be the annual United Nations World Interfaith Harmony Week. World Interfaith Harmony Week was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly on October 20, 2010. The resolution highlights that mutual understanding and interreligious dialogue constitute important dimensions of a culture of peace and establishes World Interfaith Harmony Week as a way to promote harmony between all people regardless of their faith. World Interfaith Harmony Week aims to enhance mutual understanding, harmony, and co-operation among people, and the United Nations encourages all countries to support this valuable work.

I find it most appropriate in a time where misconceptions and misunderstanding lead to fear and hate crimes that we encourage harmony and understanding in Alberta when it comes to diversity, especially diversity in faith. Alberta, as the rest of Canada, has a diverse community. Here in Alberta we celebrate and share our diversity throughout the year. Here in Alberta we are proud of our diversity. In fact, here in Alberta our diversity is our strength. I'm very proud to be part of a government that supports communities and initiatives that promote interfaith and cultural harmony. We on this side of the House and, I hope, across the aisle, too, value diversity in our communities and in our province. That is why our government supports and encourages the mutual understanding, harmony, and co-operation among people through multiple initiatives.

In July the Premier tasked the Minister of Education with gathering input on ways the government can fight racism, foster acceptance, and promote an inclusive society. The minister, the Premier, and government MLAs have met with over a hundred community organizations to hear directly from them on what they are seeing and experiencing. After hearing their concerns about the challenges faced in their communities, the Minister of Education will report back on his findings and possible recommendations this fall.

Another way that we celebrate diversity in this province is through Alberta Culture Days, a three-day provincial celebration that raises awareness, accessibility, participation, and engagement of all Albertans in the arts and cultural life of their communities. The 10th anniversary of Alberta Culture Days happened last month, and our government provided grants to assist nonprofit organizations in becoming celebration sites to provide cultural programming.

The declaration of April 2017 as Sikh Heritage Month celebrates the contributions of Alberta's Sikh community to Alberta's cultural diversity and the richness of thoughts and ideas that Sikh Albertans contribute to our province.

This year Alberta became the fourth province in Canada to proclaim February as Black History Month. This month-long celebration recognizes the contributions of people of African and Caribbean descent and gives all Albertans the opportunity to learn more about the black experience in Alberta and hear amazing stories of struggle, of hope, and of triumph.

The Ministry of Culture and Tourism also provided \$2 million in funding to commemorate the 150th year of the Confederation of Canada, Canada 150. This supported projects by nonprofit organizations that tied into the Canada 150 themes. Two of the four themes are: diversity, inclusion, and the building of common interests and relationships; and supporting efforts toward reconciliation of indigenous and nonindigenous Canadians. Adding

such opportunities for Albertans from different faiths and backgrounds to come together strengthens the cohesion that exists in this province, but we know that there is still work to do. That is why we have been reaching out to communities across Alberta to gather their input on racism in Alberta and on the practical steps our government can take to fight racism, foster acceptance, and promote inclusion and diversity today, tomorrow, and for generations to come.

5:20

Our government is committed to listening to Albertans who are experiencing racism and hearing from them on how we can best work together on ways to fight it. I'm proud that our government is taking steps to combat racism, and I feel that interfaith harmony week will contribute towards the education and relationship building needed in combatting racism and intolerance.

This motion will keep building on the many supports that this government has shown and given to Albertans. It will provide the time and space to celebrate and help to create understanding of the many faiths that are practised in Alberta. It will celebrate Alberta's diverse ethnic, cultural, and religious communities. It will encourage dialogue and respect the equal rights and privileges of all.

This motion will celebrate diversity in our communities, enhance mutual understanding, promote harmony and co-operation, and inspire Albertans to practise one's religion, convictions, or beliefs without fear. Albertans will have a designated time to celebrate their faith and come together in a sharing and communing spirit.

I know how important this need is, having heard directly from the Calgary Interfaith Council on how participation in the UN World Interfaith Harmony Week builds bridges of respect and understanding amongst faith communities. In fact, the Calgary Interfaith Council launched its newly amalgamated organization in February 2017 with its participation in the UN World Interfaith Harmony Week. Earlier this year the Calgary Interfaith Council program was even awarded a prestigious gold medal interfaith harmony prize in Amman, Jordan, because of their work encouraging interfaith co-operation.

By declaring the UN World Interfaith Harmony Week, Alberta will join various communities across the globe and right here in Canada such as Nova Scotia and the cities of Halifax and Calgary, that already celebrate interfaith week. The province of Alberta will join millions across the world to celebrate what unites people in faith, love, and good actions.

I ask the members of this House to support my motion that urges the government to declare the first week of February, beginning in 2018, to be the annual United Nations World Interfaith Harmony Week. Let's build an opportunity for Albertans to come together and celebrate their faith. Together we will continue to build a successful province and make life better for Albertans regardless of their skin colour, immigration status, or faith.

Thank you very much.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member for Lacombe-Ponoka.

Mr. Orr: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise today to thank the member opposite for bringing this motion before us and also to speak in support of recognizing World Interfaith Harmony Week in our great province.

Albertans in many respects have been collaborating across faiths for decades in things like food banks and disaster relief, community building, elder care, things like that. But there are still challenges, and it's important for us to think about this and talk about it and recognize the intent of this motion. Having a formal day of

recognition may bring more people to the table and inspire future collaborations, which would be a good thing.

I think it's important to say that Alberta has seen very little, relatively speaking to other places in the world, interfaith conflict, which really is the concern of an interfaith harmony week. In Alberta we've had relative interfaith peace, respect, and collaboration, but, tragically, it isn't always the case, and it hasn't been in the past, nor, I suspect, will it be in the future. I think we do need to emphasize the importance of always reminding ourselves about these things. The reality is that sometimes faith has been the point of conflict. Sometimes faith just gets blamed for economic and social conflict. Sometimes faith is twisted and used corruptly to create conflict. That's tragic because all faiths, in their true forms, seek peace, goodness, and kindness toward family and foreigner. Hence, support for World Interfaith Harmony Week to remind all people of faith to stay true to the virtues and the graces of their teaching is a worthwhile effort.

Just last week, Wednesday, I was at the Red Deer College 12th annual interfaith conference. The theme of this year's conference is particularly relevant to this motion today. It was Global Conflicts and the Need for Justice. Speakers were a visiting Jewish Israeli, a Roman Catholic from Edmonton, an imam from Ahmadiya Muslim Jama'at from Calgary, and two native elders from Maskwacis, all presenting very informative and positive ideas.

Alberta is actually, as has been referred to already, blessed with adherents of approximately 100 different religions or denominations or spiritual traditions, all of which, I believe, strengthen our province and continue to bring people to our province. Stats Canada data released in October shows that Alberta is becoming increasingly attractive as a place for newcomers to exercise both their personal and their religious freedoms. To quote Stats Canada:

Over the past 15 years, the share of recent immigrants in the Prairie provinces has more than doubled. The percentage of new immigrants living in Alberta rose from 6.9% in 2001 to 17.1% in 2016, a higher share [even] than in British Columbia.

Stats Canada goes on to say that

moreover, many new immigrants chose to settle in areas with an established community from their [own] home country.

What Stats Canada may be overlooking there is that there are often forerunner folks who settle in communities alone where there may not be a large community of people from their home countries. For some of them it is actually often shared-faith communities that provide the support and the friendship and the connection from which to start out in the middle of a prairie province even when the common bonds of language and home country are not there.

For instance, in my constituency of Lacombe-Ponoka our community is enriched by the diversity of faiths represented in approximately 50 different cultural and faith communities: again, Stats Canada data. That includes various First Nations and Métis, Inuit, Acadian, various European origins, which I humbly share. We've welcomed Hindus from south Asia and the Caribbean; Muslims from Europe and the Middle East; Catholics from Asia, the Pacific islands, Central America and South America; Buddhists from the Far East; and of course the list goes on, far beyond that.

Lacombe has also been the home for over 100 years to a faith-based educational institution now called Burman University. I recently had the good fortune to join the Minister of Advanced Education there for the installation of a new president of this great institution. This faith academy community has greatly enriched the community of Lacombe and does so with deliberate intent to engage. As an ordained minister one of the greatest joys I've experienced is in seeing folks explore and express their faith, and in return I've received insights and affirmations from Albertans who may pray or believe differently or even not at all, quite frankly.

It's been my goal and, I believe, the goal of many community leaders to consider new ways to showcase the innovative ways in which working across faith brings people together in our communities. Community leaders, for instance, in Calgary, whose World Interfaith Harmony Week celebrations this year took first place among 79 entries world-wide, should be an inspiration to all of us as we work together toward goals of larger faith.

Encouraging and understanding and collaboration is where I believe that we as legislators can have a positive impact. As people with skills in legislation and policy we have opportunities to help nonprofit organizations such as places of worship to identify, reduce, and remove barriers that hinder or prevent them from understanding one another and/or working together in ways that are helpful. Whether those barriers are policies and governments that discourage different groups or governments around the world that in some way try to restrict them or limit them or whatever kinds of ways that hinder people and faith groups from trying to work together, whether it's uninformed stereotypes about other groups held by an unrepresentative few in a community, we need to speak out and help to reduce those kinds of barriers and misunderstandings.

5:30

A good example of collaboration here in the city of Edmonton is the Edmonton Interfaith Centre for Education and Action Society. They hold an annual interfaith exhibition to celebrate faith, again representing many aboriginal, Baha'i, Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jain, Jewish, Muslim, Quaker, Sikh, Unitarian, Zoroastrian, and other faiths.

But there remains much work to do, and we need to recognize that. We need to recognize and reconcile and heal historic rifts of faith around the world as well as here at home. As European colonists, including many of our ancestors, expanded westward in Canada, religious and government leaders sought to eradicate faiths of people indigenous to this land through residential schools and laws prohibiting practices of faith such as the potlatch and the sun dance. In so doing, government and religious officials left behind a legacy of broken communities, families, and individuals who were forced to abandon their culture and their faith.

Those actions taken in the name of religion continue to harm indigenous peoples today through intergenerational trauma; disproportionately high representation in the justice and child intervention systems; reduced opportunity; loss of culture, language, and faith; and diminished quality of life. While I don't think that we can go back and rewrite history or make different choices back then, working to improve understanding across faiths will help to prevent such tragedies and injustices from ever occurring again in the name of faith here or in other countries.

In light of an unfortunate and persistent and possibly growing climate of intolerance, prejudice, and even violence against people who express their faith around the world, the reasons why the UN General Assembly actually initiated the resolution for World Interfaith Harmony Week back in 2010, all of that remains especially relevant even today. As world leaders have said – I think of just a few: David Cameron, Angela Merkel, the Pope – and others have pointed out, the age of religious persecutions and martyrs is not over. Most data points out that Christians are the group most persecuted and killed for their faith in the world today. Muslims are the second most persecuted. But there are others also.

Some have called this the premier human rights challenge of our era, and I think it is a challenge for all of us even here in Alberta. For my caucus colleagues and myself, who are ourselves of diverse faiths and represent constituents of even more faiths, it is right to promote a culture of peace and goodwill with religious and cultural

understanding, harmony, and co-operation of one another's religions and beliefs.

Mr. Stier: Madam Speaker, is there a 29(2)(a) opportunity?

The Deputy Speaker: No, not on this. This is a private member's motion.

The hon. Member for Sherwood Park.

Ms McKittrick: Thank you, Madam Speaker, for the opportunity to rise today and speak to Motion 508. I am so pleased to see the Member for Calgary-Glenmore introduce this motion. I know that the MLA for Calgary-Glenmore has introduced this motion because it is something that she not only believes in but models through her work as an MLA. I want to take the opportunity to thank her for her leadership in this area, as I've witnessed in her work, in the things that she has said in this Assembly, and just how she has modeled the true meaning of intercultural harmony. So thank you.

I share with the MLA for Calgary-Glenmore and with many of my constituents the importance of having one's faith and beliefs respected and recognized. I have been to too many places in the world right after wars that have been caused due to religious intolerance. Knowing that there are so many different faith groups that are active in Alberta really underscores the importance of recognizing the United Nations World Interfaith Harmony Week here in Alberta. I understand that next year in Edmonton we're going to see an international congress around interfaith work, and I'm so pleased that this organization has chosen to come here to Alberta.

The United Nations General Assembly proclaimed World Interfaith Harmony Week seven years ago, and it has proven to be an effective way to recognize different faiths and promote harmony between all people regardless of their faith. It would be very fitting to see this week declared and recognized in Alberta, where we are so proud of our diversity.

I'm very proud of the diversity within our own caucus, where we come from many different ethnic backgrounds, faiths, sexual identities, marriages, young and old. We are really lucky to reflect the diversity of Albertans within our caucus. Like the Member for Calgary-Glenmore, I feel a great sense of pride to be part of a government that supports Alberta's faith and cultural communities and promotes interfaith and cultural harmony. In our efforts to stand up and reject intolerance and racism, it is vitally important that we do everything that we can to encourage harmony and understanding in Alberta when it comes to diversity.

Last week the Baha'i community celebrated the birth of their founder, Baha'ullah. Baha'is may not be well known in Alberta. Many have fled Persia and other countries due to persecution, and others became Baha'is through learning about the tenets of the faith. Baha'is believe in community service and in educating youth on the virtues of volunteerism, peacemaking, and not speaking ill of each other. Baha'ullah calls his followers to good deeds, kind words, upright conduct, service to others, and collaborative action. I can attest to how the Baha'is in my own constituency model these teachings and the legacy this has in our community.

Another example of how Albertans are involved in interfaith harmony is the recently held Christian-Muslim dialogue initiated by A Common World Alberta. On Saturday table discussions took place between Christians and Muslims following some very thought-provoking remarks by leading Muslim and Christian clergy. This event was funded by a diversity of groups with deep roots in interfaith dialogue, including the Mennonite Central Committee, the Intercultural Dialogue Institute of Edmonton, the city of Edmonton, and a number of mosques and churches. The

vision of A Common World Alberta is: "As Christians and Muslims, we strive to create spaces for gatherings where our faith communities can engage each other in order to overcome stereotypes and embrace our differences."

This event was part of a week of meetings in various churches, university campuses, and mosques to promote dialogue and understanding. I know that through this event my colleagues from Edmonton-McClung and Edmonton-Mill Creek, like me, were provided with the opportunity to dialogue with Albertans who have deep faith and who, like this motion calls for, really believe in intercultural harmony.

Like my colleague, I am extremely proud of our government's antiracism initiative, led by the Minister of Education, and I think this initiative is going to have some very far-reaching things not only in our schools but through our community. I really would like to again thank the Premier for initiating this initiative.

Many Albertans, including some of my constituents, have taken the time to visit the government's website and share their perspective on how our government can support efforts to combat racism, foster acceptance, and promote an inclusive society. In Sherwood Park the Strathcona County Diversity Committee, which is a grassroots initiative, has provided leadership in promoting intercultural harmony, including ensuring that a new mosque in our community is welcomed. I look forward to the official opening of the masjid in the park and the welcoming place that this mosque will be in our community.

Creating opportunities for Albertans from different faiths to join together is an important way that we can strengthen the bonds that already exist in our community. Faith communities add vibrancy to our province, and the members of these communities contribute so much to Alberta. I believe that interfaith harmony week will remind us as Albertans that despite our differences, we have a shared proud history of coming together on our common values of the importance of family and devoting ourselves to our communities.

I would urge every MLA to buy the multifaith calendar. If you don't know where you can buy the multifaith calendar, please come and see me, and I'll be happy to give you the information on where you can buy it. This calendar is really key in doing what this week calls for, which is the promotion of intercultural harmony and, especially, learning more about other faiths.

Once again I would like to thank the Member for Calgary-Glenmore for making this motion and for providing a valuable opportunity for all of us to recognize people of different faiths, to learn more about each other's faith, and to see what we have in common.

Thank you very much.

5:40

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member for Chestermere-Rocky View.

Mrs. Aheer: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I first of all want to say thank you to the Member for Calgary-Glenmore. It's a real pleasure to rise and speak to this motion, and I would like to thank the member for bringing it forward. I love this motion.

World Interfaith Harmony Week: I mean, if you think about what that means, it encompasses so many things that are important to so many Albertans. It seems these days that we just can't get through a week without hearing about some horrific attack, some attack destroying the lives of hundreds of people around the world, and our hearts go out to everyone who is impacted. Unfortunately, these situations tend to hide behind the banners of faith and create fear and confusion around the world about what religion actually is, what it means to us, and what it stands for. I really believe that this

motion goes a long, long way to fostering understanding between religions and really creating community and embracing faith and also the teachings of that faith.

I actually feel extremely blessed to have been born to a Hindu father and an Anglican mother. From my very first breath I've had the good fortune of a wealth of spiritual and cultural traditions that surround me. I've had the privilege of growing up with an array of religious beliefs and traditions. My family actually found some really magnificent ways to combine all of those different traditions.

For example, when my dad first arrived in Canada, this lovely woman whose name is Pansy and her husband, George, who became my Grandma Pansy and my Grandpa George, went to the airport – they didn't have children of their own – and took all of these young East Indian men that were just getting off the airplane and embraced them and brought them into Canadian culture and taught them about, you know, their life and Christmas and all of these other things. These young men were away from their family and their comfort and the food that they knew. They were vegetarians. They were coming to a cold country. All of a sudden this cute little woman from the IODE shows up at the airport and embraces 15 of them.

To this day – my dad is close to 80 – they're still friends. That's what community, that's what that interfaith, that exchange of ideas, is: sitting down and having a meal with somebody in a nonjudgmental way. That's what this motion really encapsulates for me, that feeling.

On the flip side, my mother, when she married my father in Edmonton here – she was part of the Centennial Singers; both my mother and father were – embraced the Indian culture and the Hindu traditions, having come from an Anglican background. Everything that I appreciate about my culture actually came from my mother. She taught me how to wear a sari. She cooked the south Indian food. She eats way spicier food than anybody. For being a little Irish woman, she's got a real good flair for spicy food. Those are all things that were a complete blessing, just having the natural coming together of my parents and having the blessing of growing up in that situation.

When I was 15 and a half, the Aryan Guard was really, really taking hold in Caroline, Alberta, and I remember receiving information that I was considered an abomination by the very nature of having been born from a mixed marriage. So it sort of started me down my path to having a political mind and being involved in politics at that time. It just goes to show you how things can be interpreted if we don't have the communities and the understandings of faith around us to be able to appreciate where all of us come from and that background. So I really, really appreciate this motion.

My Indian-Irish family background provided me with these amazing opportunities to explore and understand many faiths and traditions and the practice of those faiths, something that I take very seriously because I personally am a very spiritual person. I don't practise any particular faith, but I'm very respectful and understanding and honour other people's choices and their faith and how they practise. It gives life vibrancy, and for a lot of people it is their reason that they wake up every morning.

Because of my musical career as well, I've had the humungous privilege of singing in pretty much every kind of church you can imagine: at celebrations in my own culture; at Durga Pujas, which is a celebration of women in the Hindu culture; at midnight Masses celebrating the birth of Jesus. You know, with our careers and where we are here, we're also blessed and very, very fortunate to be invited to so many things that many of us would never be able to participate in if we didn't have the blessing of having this job.

I was really happy to be invited to the installation of Calgary's Bishop McGrattan. I've been invited to sweetgrass ceremonies with First Nations and to some of the more serious things: the Holodomor memorials, prayers at the Ismaili khane, pride Shabbat, Hindu temples. I mean, the list goes on and on. Again, I'm just so gratified that we're in a position where we actually get invited to these things and people want to share their faith and their culture with us, which I really think, again, embraces the idea of this particular motion.

I'm thankful to the Member for Calgary-Glenmore. I'm very grateful that you've tabled this motion. If it's passed, like you had said, Alberta will be the first jurisdiction in Canada to recognize the United Nations resolution for a world-wide week of interfaith harmony, that other jurisdictions have honoured since 2011.

There are a lot more reasons also why I'm very, very glad to see this motion coming from government. I have to say that this is very forward thinking on behalf of the Member for Calgary-Glenmore. She's obviously been listening to people and understands the importance of faith in our communities, especially when it feels at every turn that the government wants to undermine the very diverse faith traditions that we have and celebrate here in Alberta. On one hand, we hear the desire for diversity and the desire to incorporate people, and then, abysmally, the track has been that there's been this complete undermining of faith consistently in our society. I'm grateful that this member understood this in order to bring this motion to the floor, so thank you. Thank you so much for that.

It's very difficult coming into a situation like this, where in my lifetime – maybe I was just lucky that way. I didn't see a lot of things that made me question who I was other than the things that I've spoken about, and it's very important to speak up about those. When a government seems to actively be working in a divisive way to separate faith, to take that out and to critique it but, on the same hand, is going to bring a motion forward to honour that, you can understand why I might be a little bit confused. The government chooses to divide Albertans on the basis of religion instead of creating community. How is that possible? A motion is coming forward right now to speak about interfaith unity and harmony, but it seems that every single step of the way, no matter what happens, that divisive nature is the underlying feeling.

I have to say – this is really disappointing, and we brought this up in question period today – that the Premier and the Minister of Education have come out with unacceptable rhetoric, threats against the Catholics, but in the same breath we're having a motion put in front of us to honour faith and to honour harmony. The contradiction is absolutely appalling.

Mr. Gill: It's the height of hypocrisy.

Mrs. Aheer: It is. It's hypocritical.

Most notably, the Premier, you know, accused Catholics of supporting marital rape. The words coming out of my mouth – it's absolutely mind-boggling. I'm very grateful to the member for bringing this forward because, potentially, maybe the government will take this wonderful motion from this member and actually apply it to legislation. What a thought process. It's an excellent motion, but we would really like to see the application of that being brought forward.

The refusal to apologize. I'm not Catholic, but I cannot imagine that language being used in conjunction with a faith. There are bad people everywhere, in every faith, in every background, in everything, and to accuse a religion of having that mentality – I'm very, very glad that the member has brought this motion forward because maybe the Premier can learn a thing or two from the Member for Calgary-Glenmore.

5:50

I would like to know: when having a motion like this, that actually brings forward exactly how we all feel, exactly how we should move forward, how is it that the undermining process of this government is supporting communities and faith? That is actually a part of what was just said in the opening comments from the member. How can, on one hand, the government say that they support faith and then at the same . . .

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Minister of Culture and Tourism.

Miranda: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I want to thank the Member for Calgary-Glenmore for bringing this to the floor of the Assembly for discussion today, and I stand in support of her desire to declare the first week of every February as United Nations World Interfaith Harmony Week in Alberta.

Madam Speaker, we look at this Assembly and see members of many faiths. We look around our constituencies and see churches, mosques, synagogues, temples, and other places of worship that bring people together.

Madam Speaker, I'm proud to be an Albertan. I came to this country as a refugee in 1988 with my family. After arriving, we made our home in the beautiful constituency of Calgary-Cross, where we still live, a riding that is as diverse as they come, a riding that consists of Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Muslims, Jews, Christians, atheists, indigenous traditions, and many, many more. All these great traditions and religions have this in common: they inspire us to meet need with compassion and charity, to give of ourselves in service to others, and to achieve the highest level of personal integrity and conduct. Those shared principles should lead all faiths to live together and in harmony.

In my Ministry of Culture and Tourism Alberta Culture Days is one of our largest celebrations of the arts, heritage, culture, and community. Through Culture Days for the past 10 years more than 800 communities from all over the province have come together to increase awareness, accessibility, participation, and engagement of Canadians to talk about their communities.

Mosques, temples, synagogues, and churches have all played a huge role in shaping this as well, be it the Baitun Nur mosque in Calgary or the community dining kitchens, the langars, in Calgary Sikh temples – I learned about their many charitable activities and their members' commitment to building caring communities of hope and faith – be it the festivals of Diwali by lighting the diyas, the candles, and the fireworks, lighting the candles of the hanukkah, or sharing a meal with friends on Eid and taking time for prayer and renewing our commitment to help each other. Acknowledging and celebrating these moments reaffirms the good done by people of all faiths to build a more equal, welcoming, and inclusive community and province.

Unfortunately, Madam Speaker, we have seen in recent actions around the world and, in fact, in our province and even in my own constituency of Calgary-Cross that hatred, bigotry, and intolerant behaviour still exist. Albertans continue to face anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, racism, homophobia, transphobia, and, in fact, many other forms of discrimination. There are still victims of hate crimes and vandalism simply because of their religion and ethnicity. I'm sad to say that twice in the last year we have seen hate crimes in my own constituency. The last instance saw a swastika etched into a car that was set on fire. This is extremely heartbreaking but does not represent my community at all, and I'm proud to say that.

Madam Speaker, there are people out there who want to divide Albertans, people who want to demonize Albertans from different cultures and faiths, people who fearmonger, pander to the extremes, and try to put Albertans down for being who they are. Well, I will

say that this is not who we are as Albertans or what we believe in. Albertans believe that our diversity makes us stronger. We believe in a caring, inclusive, safe, and equal province for all. Albertans believe in moving forwards, not backwards. Albertans believe that it does not matter if you're Jewish, Christian, Sikh, or Muslim. We are in a province where all faiths and cultures are welcome and can live and work together to promote acceptance, raise our families, and contribute meaningfully to our great province.

I am proud to be part of a government that actively supports and encourages religious and cultural diversity by, for example, declaring Sikh Heritage Month, recognizing Yom ha-Shoah, Holocaust Memorial Day. Our government encourages understanding and acceptance by reaching out to thousands of Albertans about antiracism strategies to help foster acceptance and promote diversity, showcasing Alberta heritage all the way, providing funding to support Canada 150 projects with themes that include diversity, inclusion, and building common interests and relationships.

Madam Speaker, religious acceptance must continue to be a fundamental feature of our multicultural society, and our government is working to make life better for Albertans by supporting a culture of acceptance, inclusion, and harmony. In the spirit of that, I ask the members of this Assembly to support the motion to declare the first week of February 2018 and the very first week of February each year after to be recognized in Alberta as United Nations World Interfaith Harmony Week in treaties 6, 7, and 8.

Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: Any other members wishing to speak? Edmonton-Mill Creek.

Ms Woollard: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I know I don't have long. I'll just say a few things about it. I'm really pleased, as are so many others, to see the Member for Calgary-Glenmore introduce this motion. I've heard from many constituents in my constituency especially. I find that, on consideration, one of the biggest privileges of being elected has been to get to know some of the many diverse religions and cultural groups in my constituency.

As a previous colleague was talking about, there are so many groups coming along to try to encourage connections between the different groups. Their function is to establish what common grounds we have between our various groups, and they're wonderful. This event on Saturday was, I think, the second I've gone to, and I walked in the door and immediately knew so many people from previous years and from so many great groups. It isn't that you walk in and stay with your own particular cultural group. People don't do that. They are actively looking at ways to establish common ground.

Another event I went to recently that made a huge impact was called the Tea Connection. In my constituency it is a very grassroots endeavour to get people from all different organizations and, basically, newcomer groups to come together to support each other. They can practise English, and they can get information on how to use local transportation, so many different things that aren't kind of covered in any of the more formal programs that they get together to do.

What made an impact is that one of the older members of this group was having a birthday, and to celebrate it, her son had come with a cake. The group of people there decided to sing *Happy Birthday*, so *Happy Birthday* was sung in English. Then it was suggested that we sing it in French, and that was done. A third member volunteered to sing it in Hindi, which was beautiful. Finally, our member from the local Edmonton public library sang it in Ukrainian.

It was just a wonderful event, and it really illustrated that there are things happening all the time. This is an endeavour to keep it going, to reinforce it, to encourage that we keep the voice going, that we keep the connections being made.

That's about it. I'm really proud of the antiracism initiative being led by the Minister of Education. Every time there is an antiracism event, I love to hang around because I meet members of my constituency going in or going out, and they talk about how pleased they are, sometimes for the first time since they've been in Canada,

to be involved in an organization, in a group that's talking about some of the challenges that people have in interacting with the kind of broader community and how they can help make . . .

The Deputy Speaker: I hesitate to interrupt, hon. member, but pursuant to Standing Order 4(2) the House stands adjourned until 10 tomorrow morning.

[The Assembly adjourned at 5:59 p.m.]

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