



Province of Alberta

The 29th Legislature
Third Session

Alberta Hansard

Thursday afternoon, April 13, 2017

Day 21

The Honourable Robert E. Wanner, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of Alberta
The 29th Legislature

Third Session

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Party standings:

New Democrat: 55 Wildrose: 22 Progressive Conservative: 8 Alberta Liberal: 1 Alberta Party: 1

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Legislative Assembly of Alberta

1:30 p.m.

Thursday, April 13, 2017

[The Speaker in the chair]

Prayers

The Speaker: Good afternoon.

Let us reflect or pray, each in our own way. Hon. members, many Albertans of the Jewish faith are celebrating Passover, and the large Christian community this weekend will be celebrating Easter. Let us in this House respect and appreciate those persons of faith, who make this province so rich and diverse.

Please be seated.

Introduction of Guests

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Vermilion-Lloydminster.

Dr. Starke: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's indeed my very great privilege today to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly 30 students from Lakeland Country School, which is a very small school north of the community of Dewberry. Dewberry is not a really big place, but it's a very exciting place. I spent my last two Friday nights there, and we can talk about that later. These fine folks are from a Mennonite community. I visited their school. They open every day with a cappella singing, that is very much part of the Mennonite tradition, and they asked me not to sing and join them. That's also one more way to make it nicer. They are here with their teachers Brenda Koehn and Nola Toews and a number of chaperones that have very Mennonite-sounding names like Toews and Warkentin and Penner and that sort of thing. I would invite them to rise and enjoy and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

The Speaker: Welcome.

Hon. member, it speaks to the education of our children in this province that they would be wise enough to not ask you to sing that.

The hon. Minister of Children's Services.

Ms Larivee: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to introduce to you and through you the many students of High Prairie elementary who were able to join us here today. They are accompanied by a number of teachers – Ms Joanne Murphy, Miss Andrea Pollock, and Mrs. Melissa Isaac – along with a number of chaperones to assist them today as well: Brad Cunningham, Mathew Robinson, Cody Quevillon, Becki Cardinal, Rachel Roberts, Judy Willier, Christine Bradley, Richard Romick, Michael Strebchuk, Mitch Hammond, Jamie Bilyk, Clancey Neill, Dennis McNabb, Martha Rosychuk, Janelle Pratt, and Verna Isaac. A big thank you to Colleen for showing them around today. I would ask the students and all of their chaperones and teachers to rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

The Speaker: Welcome.

The hon. Member for Stony Plain.

Ms Babcock: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to introduce to you and through you 17 students from Duffield school in the fabulous riding of Stony Plain. They'll be joining us shortly with their teachers, Mr. John MacDonald and Ms Ann Marie Gillie, and their chaperone, Mrs. Michelle Kaiser. I would appreciate it if all members could join me in welcoming them in anticipation of their arrival.

The Speaker: Hon. members, are there any other school groups today?

Seeing and hearing none, the Minister of Health.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise today and introduce to you and through you to all members of our Assembly our Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms Paul Link's family. They are seated in the Speaker's gallery, and they include Paul's wife, Hamdee Fythe; mother, Mercedes Link, who is visiting us from Gibsons, B.C.; cousin John Zubkowski, who is a resident of the Sherwood Park community; and family friend Val Oczkowski. They gave me this because I'm Ukrainian, and I tripped on your names. I'm so sorry. [Remarks in Ukrainian.] Would Paul and his guests please rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of our Assembly.

The Speaker: Welcome. It's a privilege to have you here.

The hon. Member for Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville.

Mrs. Littlewood: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, it's my privilege to rise and introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly two councillors and the mayor from the town of Vegreville. Please stand as I say your name. Mayor Myron Hayduk, councillors Taneen Rudyk, Tim MacPhee, and I see that Marielle Brodziak has had the opportunity to join us. They had the opportunity to meet with the Minister of Labour and I this morning. These are small-business owners, volunteers, and people that are committed to raising their families in rural Alberta, in Vegreville. This is why we fight together to keep the immigration case processing centre in Vegreville. Please join me in extending the traditional warm welcome of this Assembly.

The Speaker: Welcome.

Members' Statements

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

The Hangar Flight Museum in Calgary

Ms McPherson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. "To inspire dreams of flight," this is the vision of The Hangar Flight Museum in Calgary. Alberta has an ongoing history in flight that our province can be very proud of. It's been an important contributor to the oil and gas industry, northern exploration, the development of passenger airlines, and providing assistance to northern communities.

Calgary's first commercial airport was established in 1914 and was named after Captain Fred McCall, a World War I ace. The first aviation museum in Calgary, the Air Museum of Canada, was founded in 1960 and was largely a collection of privately owned aircraft. Disbanded in 1971, the museum's aircraft and assets were turned over to the city of Calgary and housed at the city's planetarium.

In 1975 the Aero Space Museum Association of Calgary was registered as a nonprofit and took over the care and upkeep of these artifacts. Aircraft include the Avro Lancaster bomber, the *Lady Orchid*, a DC-3, and restored Anson and Harvard trainers that were used by the British Commonwealth air training plan in WW II to train Commonwealth pilots, and a Sopwith triplane similar to those flown over the fields of Vimy and Passchendaele.

In 1985 the aerospace museum of Calgary moved to its current location at the south end of the Calgary International Airport, and they changed their name to The Hangar Flight Museum last year. Over 36,000 people visited the museum last year, including 5,000 Alberta students who took part in curriculum-related school

programming. There are hands-on programs to participate in, and the museum is open seven days a week and operates with a small core of staff and over a hundred very dedicated volunteers.

I was honoured to attend the RCAF Mess Dinner last month at the museum, where those in attendance dined among the planes and aeronautic memorabilia, and I'd like to encourage all members and those listening to take time to visit the museum and learn about our flying history.

Thank you.

The Speaker: Thank you.

Passover

Mr. MacIntyre: Throughout the ages the Jewish people have commemorated the Exodus in remembrance of how the God of Abraham with a mighty hand and outstretched arm delivered the children of Israel from slavery to the Promised Land. This celebration is known as the Passover. The patriarch Abraham and his wife, Sarah, went to the land of Canaan, where he became founder of a great nation. From the book of Genesis we learn that God told Abraham: know this for certain; your descendants will be strangers in a strange land, be enslaved and oppressed, but know that in the end I shall bring judgment on the oppressors.

During a time of famine Abraham's descendants sought refuge in Egypt, where the Hebrew people lived and prospered until a new pharaoh arose. Fear of their numbers led to the oppression of the Hebrew people, culminating in an order to drown all Hebrew boys in the Nile River, but the mother of a little boy refused, and this boy would be named Moses. God would remember his covenant and call to Moses. As a man Moses obeyed the instructions of God and demanded of the pharaoh: set my people free. Nine times the pharaoh refused, and each time God sent a plague. After the ninth plague Moses told the Hebrew slaves to mark their doorposts and lintels with the blood of a lamb, telling them: none of you shall go out for God will pass through to smite the first-born of the Egyptians, and when he sees the blood, God will pass over your doors. Finally, when God brought down the 10th plague, the pharaoh broke, allowing Moses to take his people and deliver them to a new land.

It is my hope that during this feast of unleavened bread Jewish families are brought together and that God will bless the children of Abraham around the world with freedom and prosperity.

1:40

Provincial Budget

Mr. Clark: Budgets are about choices. They tell us what your values and priorities are, and they show us whether you think long term or short term. This government's budget shows they care more about their chances in the next election than they do about the long-term well-being of our province. Their budget shows that they don't even want to try to find savings, even if it is absolutely possible to do so without impacting front-line service delivery. They've said, in essence, that they're not worried about paying back debt because they'll deal with that problem when it comes. Yes, there are choices.

Unfortunately, we don't know what the right-wing parties would do to address Alberta's budget challenges. They poke holes in the government's plans, but they are totally unwilling to level with Albertans about how they would balance the budget and what impact that would have on the public services Albertans rely on.

Choices. The Alberta Party's shadow budget shows Albertans in great detail what choices we would make, how we would address the problems facing Alberta, how we would put our province back

on a pathway to prosperity. It's a matter of finding just 1 per cent savings across government each year for four years. Yes, it is possible to find 1 per cent in a \$53 billion budget without impacting front-line services. You can do it. You just have to try.

We would ensure that core services receive funding increases to match population growth. This ensures class sizes stay small, health care wait times are reasonable, and our vulnerable neighbours are looked after. We would continue making big investments in infrastructure to ensure that we don't turn a financial deficit into a human and infrastructure deficit as the right-wing parties would do. We would cap the amount of nonrenewable resource revenue we use for operations and put any surplus into capital spending, debt repayment, and then into the heritage fund. This ensures that Alberta's debt-servicing costs don't spiral out of control as they will do under the NDP's plan. We would make Alberta's carbon tax revenue neutral through cuts to personal and corporate taxes and through innovation credits to ensure that Alberta is a leader in the next economy, just like we are in the current economy.

These are the choices the Alberta Party would make. Our choices are balanced . . .

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. member. Thank you.

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark.

Affordable Child Care

Mr. Carson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very proud to be part of a government that stands up every day for Albertans and makes life better in important areas like health, education, and child care; to be part of a government that is willing to protect the citizens of this province from the worst recession we have seen in decades; a government that is finding cost savings without compromising care, doing so with improved planning and innovation.

Mr. Speaker, I know how hard it is for Albertans to find quality, affordable child care. In Edmonton-Meadowlark several of the daycares have waiting lists and can cost families upwards of \$1,000 a month for caring for one child. There is also a lack of flexibility in operating hours for these spaces. Most of them are open only for the daytime, which does not give adequate support for families who work evening shifts.

That is why our government is innovating child care in this province by increasing access to quality, affordable child care. The recent announcement about the creation of 22 early learning and child care centres in communities across our province is a good start towards making \$25-a-day child care available on a wider basis. These centres will ensure that children have the best possibilities for the start of their life by offering almost 1,300 child care spaces, and they will make life better for all Albertans by creating new jobs for child care practitioners and offering flexible and extended hours to support parents working part-time or attending school. This will provide extra support for vulnerable families in these tough economic times.

Mr. Speaker, we have seen recently that choosing cuts over families can lead to the loss of child care opportunities like preschool programming, delivering a further blow to struggling families. Albertans chose a party that protects services and is willing to invest in our families, and I will continue to be a tireless advocate for the residents of Edmonton-Meadowlark within a government that supports the values that I was elected to represent.

Thank you.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Red Deer-South.

Red Deer Regional Hospital Obstetrics Expansion

Ms Miller: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I'm speaking not only to thank the government for an essential investment in my community but also to offer congratulations. Congratulations to the Clark family and their new baby daughter, Ilandra, the first baby born at the Red Deer regional hospital's new expanded labour and delivery unit. The \$9.7 million investment into the Red Deer regional hospital will help with the growing needs in Red Deer and central Alberta while putting expectant mothers at ease knowing they have access to a state-of-the-art facility.

The project that created two new obstetrical surgery rooms creates a better quality of life for central Albertans hoping to create a family. Not only is this a win for mothers and infants, but it will make life better for all other hospital users as well. The new obstetrical operating rooms will free up space in general operating rooms in the Red Deer hospital, allowing for 330 more general surgeries per year. The addition of two dedicated obstetrical operating rooms also offers greater privacy to mothers requiring an emergency delivery, who were previously transported to a general operating room in a separate wing. This is also going to create jobs on top of the ones created during construction. Nurses, clinical staff, and nonclinical staff will all be added to the strong network of employees that AHS employs in our region.

A sincere thank you goes out to the Red Deer Regional Health Foundation for their donation of \$1.2 million for equipment and to all of those who worked to advocate on this expansion.

Mr. Speaker, this government is showing that it is committed to improving the health care provided to central Albertans and Red Deer residents. We know health care is a vital issue in central Alberta, and this government will continue working to improve things that make a difference in the lives of Albertans, like the quality of care my constituents and those in surrounding areas receive.

Thank you.

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

Vaisakhi

Mr. Panda: [Remarks in Punjabi] Greetings. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to mark the East Indian festival of Vaisakhi. Vaisakhi commemorates the formalization of Sikh religion practices 318 years ago. Guru Gobind Singh then formed the Khalsa and gave the Sikh faith Amrit Sanchar. Vaisakhi also marks the traditional harvest festival season for Punjabis and the Sikh new year, the Hindu solar new year, and features parades, fairs, flag raisings, and Amrit Sanchar, also known as baptisms.

Guru Gobind Singh gave all Sikhs the opportunity to live lives of courage, sacrifice, and equality. In Canada the Sikh community very much enjoys these values, including freedom of speech, equality of life, and justice. In Canada Sikhs have made their mark in all walks of life, whether it's public service, charity, sports, culture, or entrepreneurship. They contributed to the economic and social success of Alberta and Canada.

In India, although Sikhs are less than 2 per cent of the nation's population, Sikh community members have held the highest offices like President, Prime Minister, Chief Justice, chief of armed forces, and, most importantly, captains of India's cricket team and field hockey team.

Vaisakhi is a unifying holiday in India. This time of year trains are full of holiday travellers heading home to celebrate Vaisakhi with their loved ones. In celebrating Vaisakhi, Albertans, both Sikhs and non-Sikhs alike, are brought together in a spirit of

friendship and unity. I look forward to celebrating the Vaisakhi on Saturday in Calgary. [Remarks in Punjabi] Wonderful Lord's Khalsa, victory is to the wonderful Lord. [As submitted]

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Also, on behalf of our Wildrose caucus, to all of the Christian brothers and sisters celebrating this weekend, Happy Easter.

Notices of Motions

The Speaker: The Leader of the Official Opposition.

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

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to work collaboratively with the Law Society of Alberta and the Provincial Court Judges' Association of Alberta to ensure that anyone being considered for appointment as a judge of the Provincial Court of Alberta has successfully completed a comprehensive education on the current state of the law with regard to any crime of a sexual nature and that continuing education plans for judges and lawyers involved with victims of sexual offences are adequate in respect of matters related to crimes of a sexual nature, including instruction in evidentiary prohibitions, principles of consent, and the conduct of sexual offence proceedings as well as education regarding myths and stereotypes associated with sexual offence complainants.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

1:50

Oral Question Period

The Speaker: The Leader of the Official Opposition.

Energy Policies

Mr. Jean: Reuters is reporting this morning that Chevron is getting ready to wave goodbye to all of its assets in the oil sands. It's just another day in the NDP's Alberta. Shell, ConocoPhillips, and now Chevron: just add it to the growing list of multinationals fleeing Alberta under this NDP government's watch. Carbon taxes, breaking power contracts, labour reviews, shutting down our coal industry, instability at its best: this is the Premier's record. How many more oil companies can we expect to see flee Alberta under your government's watch, Premier?

The Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Ms Notley: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. You know, the member opposite is just so negative. We know that the last two years have been tough on our oil and gas industry and on the economy, but every step of the way our government has made a commitment to stand shoulder to shoulder with Albertans. There's more work ahead to do, but we're making progress: 20,000 jobs just last month, more than the rest of the country combined; exports up 37 per cent; housing starts up 35,000. Here's what the president of CNRL says: this is a very exciting time; we're moving back to more stable times. Albertans are looking forward with confidence. It's about time that the member opposite joined them.

The Speaker: Thank you.

Mr. Jean: Well, it's very clear that what this government is doing is not working. The policies aren't working. Their work is not working. Mr. Speaker, oil and gas workers in Alberta continue to suffer, and families are being picked bone dry by this government through their brand new carbon tax. Now we find out today that despite the NDP saying that it would stop, grieving widows are still

being asked by the NDP government through CRA to pay back the government's carbon tax rebates. How ridiculous. It's just another reason why no one in Alberta trusts this government to keep their word. How can the Premier keep letting this happen?

The Speaker: The hon. Premier.

Ms Notley: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As the member opposite knows, the Minister of Finance has already said very clearly that this is not to happen and that we have said very clearly that people who receive these notices in error will not have to pay that money back because we have already determined with the Canada Revenue Agency that we are not going to ask for that money back. We are now in the process of ensuring that. We know that this is a stressful time for people who are receiving those notices, and we have said very clearly that we have no expectation that they pay that money back, and we apologize for the confusion that's been created.

Mr. Jean: Well, maybe, just maybe, Mr. Speaker, she should pick up the phone and tell CRA because they haven't gotten the memo.

This whole carbon tax scheme is ridiculous. Alberta will soon have the highest carbon tax in North America. It's making life more expensive for every single family, and for what? To have an Ecofitt agent come into their home to install light bulbs and act as a PR rep for this government? To have the taxman bullying grieving widows? NDP policies are putting us at a massive disadvantage with the United States. Our competitive advantage is gone. Is the Premier going to do anything to respond to the devastating effects of her carbon tax and what it's doing to normal, everyday Albertans?

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

The hon. Premier.

Ms Notley: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. You know, the real threat to investment in this province is the opposition trying to scare away investment for cheap political points, promising to repeal the very plan that got us not one but two pipelines. You know what else is going on? Job growth in eight of the last nine months, manufacturing sales up 16 per cent. John Rogers from MEG Energy says that the industry is re-emerging stronger and more powerful than it has in the past. There is more to do. We know that. Alberta families want their government to have their back, and we do.

The Speaker: Second main question.

Information and Privacy Commissioner Report

Mr. Jean: Mr. Speaker, the Privacy Commissioner is being stonewalled by this NDP government on a continuous basis. Yesterday the Premier pinned all the blame on this previous government. The Privacy Commissioner is clear, however. The NDP own this file. Don't take my word for it. The Privacy Commissioner just told the *Edmonton Journal*: "A part of me thought it would change when the government changed. It didn't. There was no change." Why won't the Premier take responsibility for all the bad practices of her current NDP government?

Ms Notley: Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned and as I explained yesterday, the Privacy Commissioner's report looks at behaviour that occurred between 2009 and 2014. I don't need to give the members opposite a history lesson, but we weren't part of that. After March 13 the dispute between the government of Alberta and the Privacy Commissioner was before the courts, so we determined that we would wait for the courts to make their decision, which they did in November 2016, at

which point we waited for the Privacy Commissioner to give us her recommendations. She did two days ago, and we are looking forward to working with her on how to improve the system . . .

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. Premier.

Mr. Jean: Well, Mr. Speaker, let's be clear. Let's tell the truth here. This is happening today under the nose of this Premier and her cabinet. They're hiding something, or they're wilfully politicizing the FOIP process. The Privacy Commissioner says that she's "speechless," that she's "frustrated," and that she's "angry" about what is happening under this NDP government, not some other government in the past. Yesterday the Premier said that she was committed to improving the transparency of the system, but will she demonstrate this commitment by providing the Privacy Commissioner the unredacted documents that she's asked for? Yes or no?

Ms Notley: Mr. Speaker, as the member opposite knows, that matter was adjudicated by the Supreme Court of Canada, and the position of the government was supported by the Supreme Court of Canada. Meanwhile our Minister of Justice has been very clear that, going forward, we want to limit the scope of the application of the solicitor-client privilege exception because we do believe in enhancing transparency. There is a great deal of other work going on to go forward with that, and we look forward to reporting on that as we achieve it.

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. Premier.

Mr. Jean: Here's what else the Privacy Commissioner had to say. The bad ministers of the past are all gone, but "the deputies are still there." Some of these deputies oversaw and covered up and continue to cover up government scandals. Now they're helping this NDP government to keep these sneaky secret practices as well. It's a culture of secrecy and crookedness that Albertans are, frankly, sick of and kicked out in the last election. Why doesn't the Premier or anyone in this government stand up, have the stomach to clean this up?

Ms Notley: Well, you know, Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that the member opposite might want to be a little bit careful because the scandals he claims that people are trying to cover up are the scandals that were undertaken by their new slow-dance partners over there. [interjections]

The Speaker: Quiet, please.

Ms Notley: I think they really might want to think about whether those are the folks that they want to be going into the next election holding hands with, Mr. Speaker.

But that being said, our ministers are working tirelessly to improve transparency, to improve response times, to improve the scope of response. I know we're putting more resources into it, and we will continue that work, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: The third main question.

Judge and Lawyer Training on Sexual Offences

Mr. Jean:

It is, indeed, very rare in the House for leaders of political parties to support each other's private member's bills, but when the issue is how our judicial system handles cases of sexual assault, we all have to come together and say that we believe survivors.

It is with sincere respect for the Leader of the Opposition that I move the following motion.

Now, those were the words of Tom Mulcair supporting Conservative leader Rona Ambrose's private member's bill just a little while ago. Can we expect the same sort of support from the Premier later today on my private motion? [interjections]

The Speaker: Quiet, please.

Ms Notley: Well, Mr. Speaker, let me begin by saying that our government has been working very hard to support survivors of sexual and domestic abuse. We increased funding for FCSS. We increased funding for women's shelters by 40 per cent. We introduced tenant protection for people fleeing violence. We introduced legislation to expand the limitation period for people to claim compensation. Of course we will support the member's motion.

2:00

Mr. Jean: Appropriate training for judges and lawyers on the laws relating to crimes of a sexual nature should be above partisanship, and I'm glad to see that it is. The same goes with ensuring that those in the judicial system understand the myths and the stereotypes associated with sexual assault. The government supporting my motion is a goodwill gesture to show that while our Legislature respects the independence of the judiciary, we need to remove the stigma associated with sexual assault. I'm hoping as well that she will direct her caucus, all of them, to support my motion. That would make our judicial system a better place for sexual assault survivors.

Ms Notley: Well, Mr. Speaker, as we've indicated, that's likely going to happen. But it would also be very helpful if the members opposite would support our government's work to support victims and survivors of sexual and domestic assault throughout our community. It would also be helpful if they would support our efforts to support prevention of sexual and domestic violence and assault throughout our community. A lot of that work involves supporting our antipoverty efforts, supporting community-based groups, supporting FCSS, and supporting the provisions and the spending on that. Asking the government to cut \$2 billion out of operating is not a way to address those issues.

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.
Second supplemental.

Mr. Jean: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Ignoring the out-of-touch understanding of sexual assault in our judicial system won't make it go away. I want to assure the Premier that Wildrose will always support common-sense policies that will help the most vulnerable. But Alberta has seen stark examples of sexual assault cases being mishandled by our justice system. Albertans do deserve better, and I'm glad to see her support my motion. Sexual assault victims deserve better, and as legislators we need to continuously, every day, send a strong signal that training in the law needs to be better. Even Alberta's Chief Justice supports this type of training. Will the Premier assure this House and all Albertans that we'll continue to have the resources necessary . . .

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

Ms Notley: Well, Mr. Speaker, there is no stronger advocate for putting appropriate resources into our justice system than our Minister of Justice right now. And let me tell you that that's a hard thing to do when the folks over there are constantly calling on us to

cut billions and billions of dollars out of our annual operating. It's kind of hard to have both. Nonetheless, we are striking the right balance. We are standing up for survivors of domestic and sexual assault, and we will continue to do that.

The Speaker: Now for the leader of the third party.

Minister of Justice

Mr. McIver: Mr. Speaker, during question period yesterday the Minister of Justice, Alberta's top justice official, in response to the Member for Airdrie, who asked about judges' training, said: "But in addition to education, this is a larger problem. It speaks to the quality of appointments being made to the bench." The Law Society under its code of conduct, section 5.6-1, says, "A lawyer must encourage public respect for and try to improve the administration of justice." To the Premier: do you agree with your minister, who has characterized judges as a larger problem?

Ms Notley: Well, you know, Mr. Speaker, it's interesting because the judge who triggered this discussion as a result of some of the outrageous statements he made during a trial was a judge who was appointed first to the Provincial Court by the third party when they were in government and then to the Federal Court by the Conservative government that the leader of that party was a part of. That judge himself said: when I was appointed, I wasn't qualified. That was one of his very direct statements.

We also have a job to do to make sure that we work collaboratively to . . .

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

Mr. McIver: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The issue here is that the minister is clearly offside with the rules of the Law Society. The standard-of-conduct rule 7.4-1 for lawyers in public office states that "a lawyer who holds public office must, in the discharge of official duties, adhere to standards of conduct as high as those required of a lawyer engaged in the practice of law." To the Premier: are you confident that this minister is living up to this code of conduct sufficiently when she's criticizing judges who hold this important post? [interjections]

The Speaker: Quiet.

Ms Notley: Mr. Speaker, the minister has not criticized any judges, and it is an outrageous reach for the member opposite to suggest that the minister has done that. We have respect for our judiciary. We need to work collaboratively with them with respect to the process of appointing judges and, quite frankly, to respect the work that they do to keep themselves educated, knowing that they work very hard. And that's exactly what they do.

The Speaker: Second supplemental.

Mr. McIver: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Premier has ignored that her Justice minister yesterday clearly cast aspersions on the ability of every judge appointed before her appointment to cabinet. The minister has fallen short of both sections 5.6 and 7.4 of the Law Society rules. To the Premier. As Premier and as a lawyer yourself you know this is wrong. Will you do the right thing today and demand that the minister apologize to Alberta judges and then fire that minister?

Ms Notley: Mr. Speaker, the member opposite completely mischaracterizes everything that has been said and also mischaracterizes the meaning of it and also mischaracterizes the application of the sections that he's quoting. Of course I would not do that because we have a good working, respectful, distant relationship with the judiciary, just as we need to have. We look forward to working with them in the ways that are appropriate to make sure that we can all strengthen our justice system for the people who matter most, which are Albertans.

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

Vegreville Immigration Centre

Mrs. Littlewood: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last October the federal government announced its intentions to close Vegreville's immigration case processing centre. According to a Nichols impact study commissioned by the town of Vegreville, this would mean a loss of 130 students from local schools, a 30 per cent drop in housing prices, and \$11.6 million lost in labour income. To the Minister of Labour: what action has this government taken to urge the federal Liberal government to reverse such an ill-judged decision?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms Gray: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I remain deeply disappointed in the federal government's decision to close this centre with no regard to the impact on the committed staff and town. I want to commend the Member for Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville for her ongoing advocacy. Since the day this was announced, we have been urging the federal government to reconsider. Today I met with the mayor and councillors from Vegreville and had a very productive discussion. I thank these representatives for meeting with me today and sharing their ideas on how to ensure that the federal government understands the negative impacts of their decision.

The Speaker: First supplemental.

Mrs. Littlewood: Thank you. Given the critical work that this centre does processing the claims of immigrants and refugees and the top quality of work that they do, to the Minister of Labour: how else can the province support mortgage-paying jobs that create critical rural economic development in Alberta and in Vegreville?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms Gray: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank Vegreville for the town hall meetings held in November and February. The town continues to discuss ideas on how to keep the centre in Vegreville and increase its value in the eyes of the federal government. To everyone in Vegreville, Alberta, and across Canada that's concerned about this, I encourage you all to continue calling, writing, and voicing your concerns to the federal Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship.

The Speaker: Second supplemental.

Mrs. Littlewood: Thank you. Given the letters sent from Alberta ministers, MLAs, and the support of PSAC on the Respect Vegreville campaign, which I have a button for, to the Minister of Labour: how else can our members and the town advocate for Vegreville so as to reverse this decision and finally get the federal Liberal minister of immigration to take responsibility?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms Gray: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Along with continuing to support Vegreville, I would like to say that we are continuing to support making life better for Albertans in Vegreville by creating good jobs in a diversified economy. Our government operates an InnoTech Alberta site in Vegreville, focused on the growth, development, and commercialization of new technologies. Vegreville also has the Business Development Centre incubator that supports small and start-up businesses looking for assistance, networking, and shared services. These are just a few of the works we are doing. Our government will be there for Vegreville no matter what Ottawa decides.

2:10

Provincial Fiscal Policies

Mr. Fildebrandt: Two thousand and seventeen marks the tragic 100-year anniversary of the income tax. Promised as a temporary, short-term measure for the war effort, most Canadians accepted it as a necessary evil, but there's nothing so permanent as a temporary government program. Overbooked taxpayers have come to be reaccommodated to this, but since coming to power, the NDP has introduced or raised 63 different taxes. Can the Minister of Finance tell us if any of these taxes are temporary?

The Speaker: The Deputy Premier.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you so much, Mr. Speaker. I'm very proud of the fact that we put forward a budget that protects Alberta families and makes sure that we have the services that they require to make sure that they have good, successful communities, families, and social supports. We did bring forward a budget. Every year budgets are reviewed. We stand by the importance of setting a path that protects families instead of pushing rash, erratic, deep cuts. We're proud of the budget we've brought forward for Albertans.

Mr. Fildebrandt: Mr. Speaker, not only did the minister not answer the question; the wrong minister gave the wrong non answer.

Given that the NDP did not run on a carbon tax during the election but that when they introduced one anyway, it was supposed to be \$3 billion and given that it was just temporary as a few months later they raised it to \$5 billion but that NDP allies demand that it be even higher for it to actually reduce greenhouse gases, just how temporary is the \$5 billion target for the carbon tax?

Ms Hoffman: Mr. Speaker, when you set a budget, you have a choice. You have a choice between pushing forward with a rash ideology that's going to make life more difficult during an economic downturn. You have a choice to stand up for families. [interjections]

The Speaker: Quiet, please.

Ms Hoffman: As I said, you have a choice between moving forward with your rash, deep cuts that are driven by your ideology or protecting Alberta families and making sure that they have the class sizes they deserve, that nurses and teachers have jobs, and that front lines are supported. Mr. Speaker, I'm proud that we brought forward a budget that's putting food on the table, literally, for children in schools who are hungry. I'm glad that the Leader of the Official Opposition is finally onboard.

Mr. Fildebrandt: One thing that we all agree will be temporary is the NDP.

Mr. Speaker, given that when Trudeau the second said that he would run a deficit, he said that it would be temporary but that under current projections they will remain in deficit for 34 years and given that Alberta's temporary deficit is in its ninth year and that the Finance minister can't provide a shred of evidence that it will be anything but permanent, will the Minister of Finance, not the Deputy Premier, stand up and tell us if this temporary deficit will be as permanent as the income tax?

Ms Hoffman: The member opposite talks about nine years of deficits. Let's talk about one of those years, when a person who was sitting in the House of Commons in Ottawa said, "Short-term deficit-financed spending is necessary to jolt the country's economy and replace lost jobs." [interjections]

The Speaker: Quiet.

Ms Hoffman: "We are taking a hit today to invest in tomorrow . . . It's better to pay on a mortgage than it is to rent a house and [you] think this is no different in this particular case." Mr. Speaker, that was in the *Calgary Herald* in 2009, and that person giving that quote was the member opposite's leader.

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

Interprovincial and International Trade

Mr. Drysdale: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last week the Minister of Economic Development and Trade signed the new Canadian free trade agreement. The government promises that the CFTA will make it easier for Alberta businesses to get their goods and services to Canadian markets. However, many issues remain unsolved in this new deal, including food labelling, trucking regulations, and movement of professionals and tradespeople. To the minister of economic development: what is your plan to work with other provinces to solve the gaps in this new CFTA?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Economic Development and Trade.

Mr. Bilous: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and I'll thank the member for the question. This new free trade agreement, the Canadian free trade agreement, was about two and a half years' worth of negotiations. Alberta for decades has been disadvantaged compared to market access in other provinces and other jurisdictions. What the previous government did was to negotiate an agreement that opened up Alberta's borders and markets so other provinces' businesses could compete in Alberta, yet it wasn't reciprocated. Our businesses didn't have the same opportunity. This new free trade agreement levels that playing field.

The Speaker: First supplemental.

Mr. Drysdale: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that Alberta's exports to the rest of Canada totaled \$63 billion in 2015 but given that trucking regulations across the country remain unharmonized, which hampers movement of goods across the country, and given that the newly signed CFTA offers no new mechanisms enabling businesses to operate in multiple Canadian jurisdictions, to the Minister of Transportation: when will we see synchronized trucking regulations with the rest of Canada?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Economic Development and Trade.

Mr. Bilous: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll thank the member for the question. This is one of those issues, again, that that table, the provincial-territorial trade ministers, were trying to work through. There are a number of outstanding issues that we weren't able to resolve in that round of negotiations. There are a number of tables that will be followed up on. Our work is not done. I recognize that the issue that the member raised is a challenge for companies, so we are committed to continuing to work with our partners across this country to resolve as many issues as we can if not all of them.

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

Mr. Drysdale: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that the trucking industry in Canada and the U.S. is a vital component of the multimodal transportation sector and given that the regulatory differences between Canada and the U.S. prevent the trucking industry from operating at peak performance, to the Minister of Transportation: what's left to improve compatibility with the U.S., and how are you working with the federal minister to fix it?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Bilous: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll thank the member again for his very, very good questions. There are a number of things that we are doing, not only working with the federal government but, again, working with our other counterparts provincially across this country. We recognize that, obviously, Alberta is an export province. We need to get our goods to market, so we are looking at all the different modes of transport and how we can make it easier to be more competitive, to get our goods and services to the coast, whether it's via trucks or elsewhere. There are a number of outlets that we have . . .

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.
The hon. Member for Grande Prairie-Smoky.

Public Consultation

Mr. Loewen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This government has a horrible track record on consultation. We need only look at Bill 6 to see how poorly this government even understands the word "consultation." The sad part is that they don't seem to be learning. Whether it is the Castle park management plan or the invite-only budget consultation, they just don't get it. Now this government is reviewing labour legislation. A similar review in Ontario is taking two years, but our government insists that they can consult in only 35 days. Why won't this government just tell Albertans the truth? You've already made your decisions, and your consultations are just a sham.

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms Gray: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. We have not taken a serious look at our employment or labour legislation since the Christmas classic *Die Hard* was first in theatres. It is important that we make sure that the government has workplace legislation that works for employees and employers, and we are confident that our consultation process will allow both employers and employees to be heard. We've held four round-tables to ask whether leaves like protected sick leave make sense for Alberta. Those round-tables were attended by nearly 50 employers and employer groups, including the Alberta chambers . . .

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

2:20

Mr. Loewen: Given that on July 1, 2016, Environment and Parks sent out a memorandum titled Notice of Changes Affecting Alberta Trappers and given that two of these changes include submitting fur sales receipts and not allowing conditional relinquishments, which allow trappers to sell their traplines to whomever they choose, to the minister: why was there absolutely no consultation with trappers before these changes were implemented? Furthermore, what problems were these changes attempting to solve?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Environment and Parks.

Ms Phillips: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. It remains a mystery how trapping regulations are related to labour law, but let me do my best. We continue to work with the Alberta Trappers Association and others. There are a number of stakeholders in this. Wildlife regulations and other regulations governing these sorts of activities are updated on an annual basis. I'm pleased to provide the member with more information on these matters as a follow-up and to update the House as well.

Thank you.

Mr. Loewen: Given that this government seems to be mystified by the word "consultation" – even the minister doesn't seem to understand – and given that the government has produced a caribou draft plan and has insisted that it is consulting on the plan with the communities and industries affected and given that the government has admitted that it has already started to implement several parts of this draft plan before a final plan has been produced, to the minister: how can this government continue to mislead this House and, in fact, all Albertans when they say they are consulting when they obviously have their decisions predetermined?

The Speaker: Again I want to caution all of the members on words that have an inflammatory value in this room. I want to caution you all to be careful how you answer those, ask those.

The hon. minister.

Ms Phillips: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, on the topic of consultation, of course, many months ago we released a draft plan. As a result of that we've had many, many meetings with various stakeholders on this matter, whether it's municipalities, workers, sawmills, and others. I just spoke with the town of Grande Cache even this morning on the matter. Yes, we have committed some resources to range restoration in terms of seismic restoration. That creates good jobs. I'm not surprised that the members opposite are opposed to that measure because, of course, that makes life better for folks in northwest Alberta. We'll continue to work with the federal government, as we said we would, and we continue to do so.

Thank you.

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

The hon. Member for Drumheller-Stettler.

Renewable Energy Land Leases

Mr. Strankman: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister of the environment has repeatedly stated that renewable projects are arrangements between the private landowners and the companies. This simplistic view of the situation is far from complete. Many landowners are telling us that some companies are buying up surface rights for renewable development for the sole purpose of flipping them to larger companies when the time is right. To the Minister of Energy: in the rush to jam through the renewable

agenda, what safeguards are there to protect landowners and surface lease holders from unscrupulous companies?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Environment and Parks.

Ms Phillips: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Of course, on this side of the House we are interested in job creation. We are interested in economic diversification. [interjections] We're interested in investment coming into this province, and that's why we have created the largest renewable energy opportunity in the country . . .

The Speaker: Quiet.

Ms Phillips: . . . ushering in \$11 billion at a minimum of new private-sector investment and creating thousands of jobs. We welcome that kind of economic activity on this side of the House. We are an energy province: oil and gas, yes; renewables, also yes. It is unfortunate that the folks opposite want to slam the door on those kinds of jobs.

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

Mr. Strankman: I'll rephrase, Mr. Speaker. Given that the oil and gas sector needs to use a licensed land agent and given that no such regulation exists for an equivalent for renewable contracts, to the minister: what protections is this government going to put in place to ensure that both renewable companies and landowners are protected from predatory speculation in the wind and solar contract market?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Energy.

Ms McCuaig-Boyd: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We know that, in fact, many landowners and farmers are very excited about the opportunities in solar power. To provide them, we've just launched the first competition for 400 megawatts of renewable power. That's going to bring 7,000 jobs, \$10 billion of investment. But we also have resources under the Farmers' Advocate and under the AUC that landowners can avail themselves of should they wish to enter contracts with those providers.

Mr. Strankman: From another angle, Mr. Speaker. Given that when oil and gas industry company agents are taking an interest in land, they fall under specific land agent regulations that must be abided by, again to the minister: why are similar agents representing renewables not regulated and licensed in the same manner as land agents are in the oil and gas industry?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Energy.

Ms McCuaig-Boyd: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To be clear, there are resources available through the AUC, the Alberta Utilities Commission . . . [interjections]

The Speaker: Quiet.

Ms McCuaig-Boyd: . . . and the Farmers' Advocate for landowners. There are different arrangements under surface rights. [interjections]

The Speaker: Quiet.

Ms McCuaig-Boyd: Oil and gas projects have a different set of rules. To be clear, landowners and farmers do not need to go into these agreements should they wish not to. There is no way to compel them . . . [interjections]

The Speaker: Quiet.

Ms McCuaig-Boyd: . . . but should they wish to do that, they can consult the Farmers' Advocate or the AUC for help with those resources.

Municipal Minimum Property Tax

Dr. Starke: Mr. Speaker, the one consistent thing about this NDP government is its inconsistency. The Health and Labour ministers lecture us about bringing Alberta in line with other provinces, but other ministers disagree. The Minister of Municipal Affairs refused to eliminate the punitive and unfair minimum tax provision found only in Alberta. The Doing Things Differently Gang failed once again. But now we have a new minister, so there's hope. Minister, you've already introduced amendments to the newly passed MGA. We're the only province that allows minimum tax. Will you bring Alberta in line and eliminate it? [interjections]

The Speaker: Hold it.

The hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs. [interjections]

Mr. S. Anderson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Quiet.

Mr. S. Anderson: I appreciate standing up. You know, I'd like to follow up after with the opposition member on some specifics for him if he'd like. I am very proud of the work we're doing in this government, especially with the MGA, as the president of the Chambers of Commerce calls it, the gold standard of consultation. [interjections] You're welcome. When it comes to issues, especially out in rural areas, I have been speaking directly with municipal officials . . .

The Speaker: Quiet.

Mr. S. Anderson: . . . and my staff has been speaking with municipal officials constantly. We are involved day by day with consultation, and I am proud of Bill 8.

Dr. Starke: Well, Mr. Speaker, gold for the MGA, lead for the labour code.

Given that some municipalities are now facing expensive litigation in determining the legality of minimum tax and given that this litigation can result in small villages spending tens of thousands of taxpayer dollars paying lawyers rather than providing essential services and given that the new minister could be a hero to these small municipalities if he ordered a judicial review into this issue rather than having protracted litigation, to the minister. Municipalities need clarity. Will you instigate a judicial review into the issue of minimum tax? [interjections]

The Speaker: Hon. members.

The hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs.

Mr. S. Anderson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What I'd like to say is that this government has consulted vigorously, obviously on this act. We are there to support municipalities. We always have been, and we always will be. We are making lives better for Albertans out there. That's our job, and that's what I commit to do.

The Speaker: Second supplemental.

2:30

Dr. Starke: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Time is of the essence, and given that the minister's beard has had a longer tenure than

some of his predecessors in this ministry and given that the minimum tax robs from the poor to subsidize the rich and given that this reverse Robin Hood policy surely runs contrary to the NDP world view, to the minister. You have the chance to bring Alberta in line with other provinces. You have the chance to end minimum tax and be the real Robin Hood. Minister, what's it going to be? Robin Hood or evil Prince John?

The Speaker: I hope no one gets lost going through the park when they're on their way home.

The Minister of Municipal Affairs.

Mr. S. Anderson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll say it again. We will continue to consult with municipalities, as we have since day one. We are always listening to what the issues are out there. I am proud that we're giving 26 cents of every capital dollar to municipalities because we know how important they are, and they support towns and villages and big cities all across this province. Everything they do touches everyday Albertans' lives. So I am proud to stand here and represent those values, and I will support them going forward.

Affordable Housing

Ms McKittrick: Mr. Speaker, this is a good-news question. My community was delighted with the recent capital announcement of funding to rebuild the Clover Bar Lodge in Strathcona county. I have had the pleasure of visiting with residents of this lodge, and I know how important this funding is to their safety and quality of life. To the Minister of Seniors and Housing: how will these funds be used to rebuild the Clover Bar Lodge?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Seniors and Housing.

Ms Sigurdson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Under Budget 2017 we will be investing in new housing units and renovating existing ones to make life better for Albertans. For Sherwood Park a new and larger Clover Bar Lodge is one of the projects that will proceed under our capital plan. Funding has been provided to Heartland Housing Foundation for planning and design of the lodge and the site. I look forward to joining Heartland Housing Foundation and Strathcona county to officially announce the project in the coming weeks.

The Speaker: First supplemental.

Ms McKittrick: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the minister for that good news. Given that Strathcona county residents only have access to the direct rent supplement program through an Edmonton-based agency, to the same minister: is this government going to increase rent supplements for the residents of Strathcona county and Fort Saskatchewan?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms Sigurdson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The direct rent supplement program is one way this government helps low-income Albertans find a safe and affordable place to call home. Last year we increased overall funding support for the rent supplement program by approximately \$1.3 million. Capital Region Housing Corporation administers the program for tenants across the capital region, and they have seen an increase for the rent supplement program. This means more residents of Strathcona county, Fort Saskatchewan will move off wait-lists and into their own homes.

The Speaker: Second supplemental.

Ms McKittrick: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that some of the residents in my constituency are living in a housing co-operative called Brittany Lane, to the same minister: how will the province work with the federal government's affordable housing strategy to maintain subsidies for low-income tenants in housing co-operatives?

Ms Sigurdson: Housing co-operatives are an important option for affordable housing in Alberta communities. We have provided rent supplement subsidies for low-income co-op housing tenants. We process monthly rent subsidy claims that are submitted from the housing co-ops throughout the province, including Strathcona county. We will continue to work with the federal government to ensure that Albertans have a safe and affordable place to call home. I myself lived in co-op housing when I was a young single mom and a student, and it's a wonderful way to support people of low income.

Thank you.

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.
The Member for Battle River-Wainwright.

Carbon Levy in Border Communities

Mr. Taylor: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier this year the government announced a grant program to help fuel retailers on the Alberta side of Lloydminster. The grant is to help offset inequities that retailers close to the Alberta-Saskatchewan border experience due to the carbon tax. The carbon tax is affecting retailers in Provost and Lloydminster, towns that are close to the border, and that's a competitive disadvantage. Is the NDP government going to recognize the retailers in towns located a short distance from the border whose sales have been negatively affected by the carbon tax?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Environment and Parks.

Ms Phillips: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the hon. member for raising this issue. Of course, we worked with the city of Lloydminster, and we'll continue to work with other communities on some of these pieces, as the national carbon tax has not been phased in yet, and on some of the differences between the Saskatchewan PST and the lack of a PST on the Alberta side. We'll continue to work on that. Certainly, I'm happy to follow up with the community of Provost, or the Finance minister will do so.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Taylor: Given that the town of Provost is located mere minutes from the Saskatchewan border and from the town of Macklin in Saskatchewan and given that I've heard that the sales for fuel in Provost have gone down inversely to sales in Saskatchewan – that's carbon leakage, my friends – will the government commit to implementing the same grant that applies to Lloydminster in other communities that are in close proximity to the border so that the retailers can be compensated for the loss due to the carbon tax?

The Speaker: The Deputy Premier.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. We, of course, are working to make life more affordable for Albertans and Alberta families, and we recognize the unique challenges of fuel dealers . . . [interjections]

The Speaker: Quiet.

Ms Hoffman: . . . many of whom are families, that own these fuel stations in the border town of Lloydminster. In terms of that

community, we were pleased to work with them to ensure that our fuel taxes were properly aligned, and we are continuing to do that in the city of Lloydminster. Offsetting the levy for fuel dealers continues to be the practice.

Mr. Taylor: Given that the carbon tax is affecting communities and competitiveness across Alberta and given that businesses are leaving rural Alberta at an alarming rate and given that prior to the carbon tax Saskatchewan had a program so that the fuel cost would be the same on both sides of the border, again to the minister: will the NDP commit to bringing in the same grant that applies to Lloydminster to other communities so that those who sell fuel, groceries, and products won't lose business as a result of where they live?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms Phillips: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Of course, we will continue to engage with communities in terms of ways that we can best support reinvestment of carbon levy revenues, in particular for the commitment made to municipalities, some several billion in municipal infrastructure investments. But I will point out that this province has an \$8.7 billion tax advantage over Saskatchewan given that Saskatchewan has extended the PST to things like children's clothing and construction. That tax advantage in Alberta has only increased since the introduction of the Saskatchewan budget.

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

Employment and Labour Code Consultations

Mr. Gill: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This government's hasty workplace legislation consultation includes changes to the Employment Standards Code and the Labour Relations Code. The Employment Standards Code has the greatest impact on small and medium-sized businesses, and they are understandably concerned with the NDP's unwillingness to engage them in a meaningful consultation. To the minister: will you please regroup and initiate a more robust consultation process to ensure that you're listening to Alberta's business owners, who are the actual job creators in this province?

The Speaker: The Minister of Seniors and Housing.

Ms Sigurdson: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. We are confident that our consultation process will allow both employers and employees to be heard. We've met with the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce, the Calgary Chamber, the Alberta Chambers of Commerce, and the Canadian Federation of Independent Business. We've had 700 Albertans who've identified themselves as employers respond to our online survey. We're meeting with many business partners, and certainly we're listening very well.

Thank you.

Mr. Gill: I was hoping for the Labour minister to answer.

Given that the invitation-only consultation involved few, if any, actual business owners and given that the only direct opportunity for a business to participate is through a public online survey that does not validate that business owners are even responding and given that on Tuesday the minister said, "We have publicly communicated April 18 for the online portion, but I think we intend to have conversations continuing past that," Minister: considering

this statement, will you commit to consulting on the findings of the Sims report before enacting changes to the existing legislation?

2:40

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.
The hon. minister.

Ms Sigurdson: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Of course, I am going to say it again. These are representatives of the business community: the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce, the Calgary Chamber, the Alberta Chambers of Commerce, and the Canadian Federation of Independent Business. Certainly, Andy Sims has been consulting with employers. As I said, 700 Alberta employers have submitted responses to our survey, so we're having a robust consultation process and hearing from businesses in Alberta.

Mr. Gill: I'd still like to hear from the Labour minister.

Given that Ontario's two-year labour consultation puts Alberta's six-week process to absolute shame and given that part of Ontario's process includes direct engagement with business owners and business representatives, frequent meetings with the minister, and the tabling of a 300-page interim report and given that Alberta is circumventing all of those processes in an apparent rush to introduce legislation, to the same minister: is this government planning to introduce amendments to the Labour Relations Code and the Employment Standards Code this session?

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.
The hon. minister.

Ms Sigurdson: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Alberta hasn't reviewed the labour laws since 1988, and a lot has changed in that time. For example, in Alberta, if you lose your job and you're sick, you can't access employment insurance. Every other jurisdiction in Canada has that provision. That's just not fair. This is the type of legislation to support workers in Alberta, and we want to make it more fair, so we're very proud to be reviewing the legislation at this time.

Thank you.

Tabling Returns and Reports

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

Mr. McIver: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have four tablings. I'll try not to waste time with them. The first tabling is five copies of the relevant sections of the Law Society codes that I referred to in my earlier question to the Premier.

The second tabling, Mr. Speaker, is five copies of a letter to the Minister of Labour and the Minister of Energy and the Minister of Economic Development and Trade from the Calgary engineers and designers forum, talking about engineering jobs in Alberta and asking for help.

The next tabling is five copies of a letter from the president of APEGA and from the Calgary engineers and designers forum again asking for government help for engineering work that is done online in other countries instead of here.

For my last tabling, Mr. Speaker – I hope I'm going fast enough for you – I'm pleased to table copies of a letter to the CEO of Engineers Canada from the Calgary engineers and designers forum still looking for government help for engineering jobs that are being done online instead of here.

The Speaker: The hon. Health minister.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to table the requisite number of copies of the quotes that I referred to today where at the time, in 2009, the current Leader of the Official Opposition defended five straight deficit budgets. Five.

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

Ms McPherson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to table four documents today. The first is an article from the University of Calgary Faculty of Law: *When Judicial Decisions Go from Wrong to Wrongful – How Should the Legal System Respond?* This is from November 3, 2015, by Alice Woolley. There are five copies.

The second is an article from the *Globe and Mail*, April 5, 2017: *Rona Ambrose Played Role in Robin Camp Appointment, Former Justice Minister Says*. There are five copies.

A letter from the Minister of Justice and Solicitor General of Alberta dated December 22, 2015, to the hon. chairperson of the Canadian Judicial Council questioning the conduct of Justice Camp. There are five copies.

And the report and recommendation from the Canadian Judicial Council dated November 29, 2016, in the matter of an inquiry pursuant to section 63(1) of the Judges Act regarding the hon. Justice Camp.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House-Sundre.

Mr. Nixon: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to table an article from the *Edmonton Journal* of April 12, 2017, by Paula Simons titled *Why Is Alberta's Information and Privacy Commissioner Being Kept in the Dark?* It clearly shows that despite the government's protests they are responsible for the current FOIP mess.

Motions under Standing Order 42

The Speaker: The Leader of the Official Opposition.

Judge and Lawyer Training on Sexual Offences

Mr. Jean: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to speak to Standing Order 42. The standing order reads as follows:

A motion may, in case of urgent and pressing necessity previously explained by the mover, be made by unanimous consent of the Assembly without notice having been given under Standing Order 39.

I thank the Premier today, Mr. Speaker, for saying that she would support this motion, and I'm hoping that her entire caucus will and, of course, all members of this House. I'm requesting, of course, unanimous consent from the members of this Assembly to support my motion.

Mr. Speaker, this is a matter of urgent necessity as the issue is right now before many Legislative Assemblies and, of course, the Parliament in Ottawa and is being widely discussed not just in the media but in other Houses and, of course, in the federal regime. Many members of the legal community also are seized with this. There has been discussion by judges' groups, by judges and professionals right across the country. Lawmakers, victims, and members of the public have said that there is a fundamental problem with a lack of understanding around the current state of the law when it comes to crimes of a sexual nature.

Mr. Speaker, as somebody that practised law for some period of time, I can tell you for certain that the law changes. It's constantly moving, and we need to make sure that all professionals – judges, lawyers, Crown prosecutors – continue to be kept to the highest

possible standard, as they should be in Alberta. I would say, as somebody that practised in Alberta for 10 years, that I believe that the Alberta Bar Association and the Law Society of Alberta keep our particular bar – the Crown prosecutors, the legal profession, defence lawyers – as one of the highest in all of Canada and, I would suggest, one of the highest in all the world as far as expectation on education. They even require, as has been pointed out in the past, that an education program and an education plan be put forward.

I do believe that the Alberta government has required one of the best educational programs, and of course LESA, the Legal Education Society of Alberta, and the Law Society of Alberta have required one of the best educations for our lawyers that is possible. I do believe that because of the nature of sexual offences and sexual assaults and the vulnerability of the particular complainants, the victims, usually, of these crimes, it's absolutely necessary.

As a result of that, Mr. Speaker, I would urge that all members of the Assembly support this motion today, and I would appreciate that as I do believe that also the victims of crime would recognize this. I have received a lot of correspondence on this particular motion in support of it, sometimes even from victims that have gone through the court system and think this is absolutely essential. I would appreciate the support of all members on this motion.

Thank you.

[Unanimous consent granted]

Mr. Jean moved:

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to work collaboratively with the Law Society of Alberta and the Provincial Court Judges' Association of Alberta to ensure that anyone being considered for appointment as a judge of the Provincial Court of Alberta has successfully completed a comprehensive education on the current state of the law with regard to any crime of a sexual nature and that continuing education plans for judges and lawyers involved with victims of sexual offences are adequate in respect of matters related to crimes of a sexual nature, including instruction in evidentiary prohibitions, principles of consent, and the conduct of sexual offence proceedings as well as education regarding myths and stereotypes associated with sexual offence complainants.

2:50

The Speaker: The Leader of the Official Opposition.

Mr. Jean: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm so pleased to see this today as we have in the past co-operated with the NDP on some particular bills, taking, of course, corporate money out of politics, and on some other good laws that we have passed. I appreciate the fact that today they're standing up for victims across Alberta and making sure that we have the opportunity to have as good a training as possible for our legal teams, no matter whether they speak for the accused or the Crown.

Of course, judges are also encouraged – it is, I think, absolutely essential – that all members that are on the bar that have the opportunity and the necessity to work with these victims have the full education possible on the current state of the law. The fewer mistakes that are made, obviously, the better the chance that real justice will be seen by not just the victims but by the accused themselves.

[Ms Sweet in the chair]

The fact is that the conviction rate for sexual assault cases remains far lower than any other cases, Madam Speaker, and I would point particularly to the fact that for sexual cases in Canada the conviction rate is 45 per cent. That means that ultimately very

few people are actually charged with these types of offences relative to other cases. Indeed, other sexual offences besides sexual assault have a conviction rate of 57 per cent. About half of the trials or even less than half of the trials actually lead to some form of conviction. This means that complainants – and often that person is obviously the victim of a sexual assault or a sexual misconduct or is, in fact, a minor – are put under extreme scrutiny by the judicial community as well as by both the Crown and the accused. I would suggest that they need to be on the same page to make sure that these people are treated with respect and are given the best opportunity to have justice.

Now, 44 per cent of sexual assault cases and only 34 per cent of other sexual offence cases are actually stayed or withdrawn. That means that even though you may receive a charge of a sexual nature or a sexual assault under the Criminal Code, 44 per cent of those sexual assault cases are actually dropped by the Crown for a variety of reasons, either as a result of a stay or a withdrawal, even before they get to trial. Of the ones that do get to trial, only 50 per cent of them get convicted. Now, I would suggest that it's very important not just to have convictions but to actually have justice. We need to make sure that justice is real and that the complainant, the accused as well as the entire system are kept honest and in the best interest of the justice system without forgetting the actual victim.

We should all in the House be well familiar with the comments that we've heard from judges that, I believe, are totally out of touch with reality in our current system and are unacceptable. Our courtrooms have actually, as a result of these comments, aggravated the situation, and I believe that as a result of that, Albertans and Canadians as a whole are less willing to come forward and make complaints against particular people because they feel that they will sometimes not be able to lead to a conviction, that they will not be listened to, or, in fact, that they will be treated with disrespect.

We know that the case of a Calgary courtroom where a victim was told to "keep your knees together" in a sexual assault trial is completely unacceptable. Frankly, Madam Speaker, I noticed your reaction to that, and I would agree with you. It's completely unacceptable.

Last April another example was that a lower court judge here in Alberta actually issued an acquittal because a 15-year-old girl, a young girl, a young woman, appeared complacent even though she said no twice. Now, Madam Speaker, that type of behaviour by our court system obviously brings the disrepute of justice into real question. It has, I think, a stigma to drive people away from seeking justice. Justice is not just about the current person that is the victim but to also avoid future victims, to make sure that these people are kept off the streets and are actually punished for what they've done.

Recently, as a result of a lack of resources that are put into our justice system, Madam Speaker, we've seen 200 cases that were dismissed just in a few short months earlier this year, 200 cases as a result of not enough resources put forward by this government. Now, we've asked a number of times for this government to take it more seriously. We know that they spend one of the highest amounts on justice per capita of any jurisdiction in Canada. Yet 200 cases – 200 cases – with one person accused of murder, were thrown out as a result of lack of resources, lack of judges, and lack of Crown prosecutors. That's not acceptable. Two sexual assault cases were thrown out in the same group of 200 and over a dozen impaired operation offences. People that were actually caught red-handed and accused of careless driving or impaired driving are back on the street without any punishment whatsoever.

Another Alberta judge recently was rebuked for relying on "discredited myths and stereotypes." It's important, Madam Speaker, although I feel emotion for this, because I know how important it is that we have actual justice. We know that during the

trials themselves we have to be absolutely certain that not only the people involved – the judges, the Crown prosecutors, and the defence lawyers – know the current state of the law, but we also know that they have to understand what’s happened to those people, as in that particular case where the Alberta judge was rebuked recently for relying on “discredited myths and stereotypes.”

I saw this in the law, Madam Speaker. I saw this when I practised law in Alberta in the '90s, that there are a lot of myths and stereotypes, and people don't understand why they can't be brought up in court. That's why it's so important that judges and lawyers don't allow that to happen because there can be the case of mistrials, stays, and it can help the accused. Frankly, if the accused is guilty of the crime, it can often, as the result of a mistrial, cause serious ramifications for the trial itself.

In that case, Madam Speaker, the judge actually questioned why two young girls didn't tell anyone earlier about abuse at the hands of their stepfather. Now, that's unacceptable. You know that time has no relevance in relation to these types of charges, and when complainants bring them forward, we need to believe these people. It's absolutely essential that the people of Alberta know that they will receive justice. In that case, even though it was against the accused's two stepdaughters, that man had also been accused of sexually abusing his own daughter. Now, this type of situation is absolutely unbelievable and unacceptable, but they do happen in our court system, and that's why we need to make sure that when the complainants come forward, they are believed and that they have the opportunity to have due process and justice.

The federal and other provincial governments are discussing right now how training and education should take place to address these problems, and it's critically important that the Alberta government participate in this conversation. I was very thankful to see the Premier stand up today and accept our motion, to move forward with this motion. Of course, the real issue is in the details, and we're hoping the government will work with other jurisdictions, including the federal government, to come up with a good law to support victims and our justice system.

Victims of sexual assault in and across Alberta have seen their trust in our justice system shaken as a result of these stories that come forward, as a result of 200 cases not being prosecuted and dismissed, where the training may have been available and wasn't taken. That is also very disturbing because, of course, the Alberta government puts a lot of resources into this, as does the Law Society of Alberta, and we need to encourage all lawyers and judges to take this training on an ongoing basis.

We cannot infringe on judges' independence, and that is very clear with this particular motion. What we've said in this motion is that not during the judges' tenure but before the judges are actually appointed, they should take up-to-date education on the current state of the law. We believe also that the judges – and the Chief Justice should encourage them – should take ongoing legal training to make sure that they continue to provide to Albertans real justice and that people recognize that in Alberta we have one of the best justice systems in the world. That's what we need clarity of in the public. They need to know that when they go and make a complaint to the RCMP or the city police, they are able to be believed and go forward with that charge and hold the accused accountable if indeed they're guilty of the crime.

Myths do exist, myths like: women will struggle and use all their force to try to avoid an assault. Oftentimes these are situations where somebody is in a power position, where somebody is familiar to them, and often young people and people that are vulnerable will not respond in a way that most people would think is normal. Or even that a woman can't be assaulted by someone she knows: it's absolutely not the case. In fact, more times than not that's what

happens. That lifestyle choices in particular discredit a woman's testimony: that's absolutely unacceptable. Or that if a woman is assaulted, she will go to the police right away: that never should be perpetuated by the courts, Madam Speaker. These myths just discredit our entire justice system.

3:00

Judges know how to react to this if they're properly trained. Crown prosecutors know how to treat the complainants if they're properly trained. With all three of the main people in this particular situation being educated properly and being at a consistent level of high education, I believe we'll actually see better trials, more justice seen, and, as a result, victims being treated in a way that they actually feel they're not being revictimized, which I hear time and time again.

Of course, Madam Speaker, I'm glad to hear this isn't a partisanship issue, that we've put partisanship to the side. I know that the Justice minister was for a period of time hesitant in coming out to support this motion even this week and earlier. I sincerely hope that she along with the rest of her caucus, as the Premier has stated, will stand up and support the motion.

She has stated that she wouldn't want to interfere in the justice system, with the judges. We heard that clearly and loudly, and we looked at and analyzed the state of the law across Canada. That's why we came forward with a different type of model than what was brought forward at the federal level. Many people don't know this, but most of the cases that deal with sexual assault and sexual misconduct are actually at the provincial court level, and those judges are actually appointed by the provincial government here, by the NDP Premier. That's why it's so important. Those are the judges that are actually seized with most of these sexual misconduct cases, and we know that if they're trained early on, we'll have fewer problems as time goes.

The wording of the motion actually respects the independence of the judiciary and of all the respective bodies, including the Law Society of Alberta and the judges' association. In a private member's bill before the federal House of Commons right now being driven by my former colleague and Leader of the Opposition Rona Ambrose – the chief justices, including the Chief Justice here in Alberta and many other lawyers and judges, have come out to support this idea, support the idea of ongoing education. I can't think of anything more important than training and education for judges and lawyers on the state of the law, making sure it's up to date, because laws do change every day. The work must be supported by lawyers, by Crown prosecutors.

This work will continue to go on for some period of time, and that's why I hope that we don't just see this motion shovelled under the carpet, and somebody accepts it. The Premier has grabbed it, and the NDP government has grabbed it, but I want to see them move forward with it. That's why I'm hoping to see some real plans. We'll continue to ask about these questions in this House because, of course, this work is supported by a lot of lawyers.

But let's look past lawyers because what's important is the victims and their advocates. They want change. They know that this is a situation that has gone on for years and years, and there is a delicate balance. We can't interfere with the judiciary, but what we can do is to support victims when they come forward, to make sure that they're treated right, with respect.

It also has the full support of federal opposition, including, I might add, the NDP Party federally. We were glad to see that crosspartisan exchange. Here's another quote from NDP leader Thomas Mulcair: “When the issue is how our judicial system handles cases of sexual assault, we all have to come together and say that we believe survivors.” Right now the House of Commons

Committee on the Status of Women is considering a private member's bill by Rona Ambrose.

The information from those testifying is important for us, too. I quote from a CBC article from April 12 on the president of the Association of Justice Counsel, Ursula Hendel, which represents 2,600 federal lawyers and prosecutors.

She supports more education for judges but says they're not the only ones who need it.

I continue with the quote.

The truth of the matter is that no training of any kind is actually mandatory for Crown prosecutors.

That's what she told MPs at that committee meeting. She went on to say, Madam Speaker:

I'd like to see training made mandatory for prosecutors, and particularly for prosecutors who conduct sexual assault cases – and early in their career. I didn't get training until I was at least five years in and by then it was a little late.

I think she indicated in the article that she'd actually tried 500 cases by that time. That's one case a week. I would suggest that that's a lot of cases that she was involved in as a Crown prosecutor, and without adequate and up-to-date training it's a little bit shocking.

Federal Crowns get most of their training from the Public Prosecution Service of Canada's prosecutors' school. Now, in that prosecutors' school they go to school once every year for a five-day course that's offered for them. I would suggest that here in Alberta since – actually, my understanding is that currently the Law Society expects a legal education plan from each lawyer, to submit that plan, and to follow through with that plan.

The Legal Education Society of Alberta, which provides a lot of the training for the Law Society of Alberta, actually has a lot of great courses. I know and I believe and would submit to you that they would be able to pull this idea across the country and listen to all of the evidence presented here today and, of course, in the committee hearing in Ottawa and other places in other jurisdictions, including Ontario, and put forward good ideas that will implement a better justice system for all of us.

The goal of this motion is simple: for the government to work together with the Law Society, with the Provincial Court Judges' Association to ensure that anybody considered for an appointment is duly educated on it and continues, hopefully, to receive education if indeed the Chief Justice would impose that upon the judges. I believe, based upon their comments, that they will do that. I think it's very important that the minister work with the Law Society, with judges, with the Crown prosecutors' association, with the trial lawyers associations, and with other people. We've seen consultation by this government before such as the labour review in 36 days or Bill 6 in just a very short period of time, and I really think that this is so important that we need to make sure that victims are heard, victims' voices.

Sheldon Kennedy, for instance, is somebody that's a huge advocate for young people and for those that are the most vulnerable in our society. I had an opportunity to meet with him just weeks ago, and I can tell you that he continues with his struggle and his plan to make sure that he does as much as he can for victims and survivors. I would suggest that that would be a good place to start for this government, to listen to not just lawyers but also those people that have been on the other side of the situation and have been in court and have suffered as a result of what I would consider to be not adequate education for the judges and some of the other people involved in the cases.

As to the first part of the motion, it is the minister that decides whether someone is appointed as a judge here, and we know that those people, before they apply, might have not even practised criminal law. Can you imagine going into a court system, and all

your life you do family law, and then you're appointed as a Provincial Court judge? Now, I don't know if you're aware, Madam Speaker, but Provincial Court judges deal with most trials, most criminal trials, especially. In fact, I would suggest that just about every matter goes through Provincial Court as far as applications go, as far as an opportunity to hear, before a Queen's Bench trial, a preliminary inquiry in Provincial Court.

All of these Provincial Court judges are absolutely essential. It's absolutely essential for them to be trained because when these people do come in from especially rural communities, I think, where sometimes the training is not provided – I would suggest that that's the place that we need to make sure that all the judges are at the same level, all the lawyers are at the same level, the best level possible to serve and to make sure that justice is served. The first part of the motion, of course, will ensure that no new appointees to the bench are unprepared, and I think that is also important.

Madam Speaker, I'm so happy to see today this House and all opposition parties and the government itself stand up and support victims and stand up and support this Wildrose motion.

Thank you very much.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

Are there any other members wishing to speak? The hon. Member for Calgary-Mackay-Nose Hill.

Ms McPherson: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to preface my comments by saying that many people who have endured sexual assault prefer to be referred to as survivors rather than victims, and I am definitely speaking for myself.

Our government believes that survivors of sexual assault in Alberta should be treated with respect and dignity in the justice system. We also believe that it's vital for Alberta to have qualified, compassionate judges. Judges should know and should properly apply our sexual assault laws in our court system. There's no room for sexual myths and stereotypes in our justice system. That's why in 2015 our Minister of Justice asked for a formal inquiry into Justice Camp's conduct, which recommended his removal from the bench, and why this government introduced Bill 2, An Act to Remove Barriers for Survivors of Sexual and Domestic Violence. Our government believes it's vital for sexual assault survivors to hear that these sorts of actions, comments, and conduct are not accepted in our society and most certainly not accepted in our courtrooms.

3:10

We're happy to agree with this motion in principle. We all have a role to play in ensuring that not only do we provide compassion to survivors of sexual violence but that we work to reduce sexual violence in the first place. We all have a role to play in education related to sexual violence throughout society, including how prevalent it is. Education alone is not enough. We must ensure that our society does not reward another Justice Camp. Despite the benefit of education he continued to hold archaic, sexist beliefs.

One of the biggest keys to combating sexual violence is making sure that powerful positions in society like the bench are held by people with reasoned views of sexual violence and equality. I understand there may be some challenges related to the constitutionality of legislating training for justices, so government needs to be careful not to be mandating what the judiciary learns, to avoid influencing the decisions of another branch of government. This is a foundational principle of our democracy, but government definitely has a significant role to play in supporting the education of judges.

By and large, our judiciary is comprised of committed Albertans that have given service to the law and committed to their communities, and this is vital. Perhaps government's most critical role is ensuring that appointments to the bench are people who are learned in the law and have the compassion and empathy to consider the context of the matters in front of them. Clearly, there's a need to ensure that people appointed to the Provincial Court have empathy towards sexual assault survivors as well as a background in the area of the law they preside over prior to hearing a case related to sexual violence. I'm happy to see that this government's appointments have respected that, including the appointment of a number of Crown prosecutors and defence counsel to the criminal court that are well versed in the laws around sexual assault as well as individuals who have volunteered with survivors of sexual and domestic violence.

This issue is also being considered by the federal government, and it will be useful to see what steps they take. I understand as well that our Minister of Justice and Solicitor General has raised the need to further remove barriers for victims of sexual assault across the justice system with her federal and provincial colleagues.

We're happy to accept this motion in principle and look forward to continuing to work with the Provincial Court and the Law Society to make sure that the resources appropriate for training are available to lawyers and judges.

This is an extremely important issue. We took action on this issue in 2015 when we asked for a formal review of Justice Camp's conduct. Where was the opposition then? After all, it was their former Conservative government in Ottawa that gave him a promotion after his inappropriate conduct in the 2014 sexual assault case.

On this side of the House we believe judges should have a wide variety of expertise and appointments should be merit based. Many of the appointments the Justice minister has made include professionals who have backgrounds working with sexual assault and domestic violence organizations like the Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton, the Zebra Child Protection Centre, the Sheldon Kennedy centre, and the YWCA battered women support group.

I'm proud that Alberta's appointments have been focused on bringing more women to the bench and bringing in indigenous Albertans and members of the LGBTQ community, traditionally underrepresented amongst our judiciary. It's vital that Albertans entering courtrooms see themselves reflected in the judge before them. We will continue to work to ensure that our appointments are diverse, reflect Albertans, and have expertise in the area of law over which they preside.

The report and recommendation of the Inquiry Committee of the Canadian Judicial Council in the matter of Justice Camp states:

It is difficult to understand how Justice Camp could conclude – particularly after his intensive sessions with Justice McCawley, Dr. Haskell and Professor Cossman – that his acknowledgement of misconduct did not involve sexism and gender bias, and that it did not implicate profound issues of equality. His evidence leaves the Committee doubtful about whether he is fully engaged in the necessary ongoing process of constant self-reflection about which Dr. Haskell testified and which the public has a right to expect of members of the judiciary.

Judges need more than just one training course; they need to be committed to continual learning, as we all do, respecting the law and applying it fairly, and to not be stuck in old-fashioned thinking when society and the law have obviously moved beyond that. That's why we strongly encourage judges to take a wide range of training courses, including sexual assault, tailored to the nature of their own knowledge and the area where they will be practising.

In fact, currently there is more training and mentorship available to judges in Alberta than ever before. We provide almost \$200,000 in grants toward training support for judges in Alberta. Training for judges in Alberta is provided by the Alberta Provincial Judges' Association, the National Judicial Institute, the Canadian Association of Provincial Court Judges, and through the office of the chief judge education committee. All new members of the judiciary are required to attend new training upon being appointed to the bench. This initial training is provided by the Canadian Association of Provincial Court Judges. The Alberta Provincial Judges' Association organizes two education conferences per year. The APJA conference last year focused on sexual assault and indigenous issues.

In 2015 the Provincial Court formalized a mentoring program for all newly appointed judges. All new judges shadow more experienced judges after their appointment. Continuing legal education for Provincial Court judges covers a range of areas, including sexual assault law, and involves ongoing mentoring from more judges. The work that our Provincial Court has done in recent years under the leadership of Chief Judge Matchett is impressive and should be applauded. In addition, the National Judicial Institute, whose executive director is Alberta Court of Queen's Bench Justice Adele Kent, has committed to expanding the availability of online learning opportunities for judges regarding sexual assault. This is an important step as National Judicial Institute materials are available to provincially and federally appointed judges thanks in part to the provincial government's grant to the institute.

But there is an individual responsibility on judges and lawyers as well. They have to believe that they are appropriately versed in the law prior to hearing a case or remain open to hearing arguments from counsel and further researching areas that are novel to them. That is what good judges do, and it's critical that we appoint people that will make a lifelong commitment to be a student of the law.

Thank you.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

The hon. Member for Airdrie.

Mrs. Pitt: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise today to speak on this very important motion, which I was hoping would be nonpartisan, the motion that takes aim at reforming the judicial system to ensure that judges and lawyers dealing with sexual assault cases are properly educated on the myths and stereotypes of sexual violence.

When a victim decides to come forward to the authorities with their story, it can be one of the most difficult times in their life. The pain, the emotional trauma, and the fear of not being believed are all too real, and I, for one, want to know that when a victim comes forward, the system is supporting him or her through these difficult times with respect and empathy. Justice Robin Camp's absolutely deplorable comments regarding a rape victim's account have quite rightly drawn the ire of Albertans, Canadians, and the entire international community. In this case the now former judge stated to the victim in court that "sex and pain sometimes go together." I can't imagine how he thought that would be appropriate. He questioned why she wouldn't sink her bottom into the base of a sink so the assailant couldn't penetrate her. And then, of course, the keep the knees together comment.

3:20

These statements encompass the fundamental ignorance that perpetuates myths and stereotypes and deters victims from coming forward in the first place. Rape and sexual misconduct often go unreported because of instances like this. Why would a victim ever

come forward and tell the most haunting and personal story only to be ridiculed by an officer of the court?

I'd like to highlight three common myths, which the Leader of the Official Opposition touched on as well, that are readily apparent in these statements made by Justice Camp. The first myth: a woman will always try to fight back to avoid being sexually assaulted; that is, she will always fight back, struggle, and she will use force to stop her attacker. We know that this isn't true. Everyone reacts in a different manner to various situations, and this is especially so with something as serious as sexual assault. Further, there's absolutely no surety that struggling will stop the attack. In fact, some may argue that it may result in further harm to the victim. These attacks are about control almost every single time and have very little to do with the sexual nature of what's going on.

The second myth contained in these statements: woman should not be believed if they are on social assistance, have mental health challenges, dress provocatively, drink, or use drugs. This myth is crazy, and it's probably one of the most common and in some aspects actually suggests that the victim somehow is asking for it. Reputation, clothing, lifestyle choices, and other superficial circumstances do not somehow invalidate the claim that a sexual assault or rape has occurred.

The third myth contained here is the idea that a woman is either a saint or a sinning whore. Justice Camp in his comment of "keep your knees together" fell directly into this category by failing to consider this instance as an isolated event. According to the law each and every sexual incident requires consent. Reputation does not play a role in determining whether or not a sexual assault has occurred. Let me repeat: reputation should not play a role in determining whether or not a crime has happened.

Sadly, no, this is not the only instance in which a victim has been ridiculed by a member of the judiciary. Recently four judges – not one; there are four – have been rebuked for their serious errors in judgment, which adds further evidence that it is unacceptable to continue to allow our judges to operate without any knowledge or training in this area.

In a recently overturned case it was found that Judge Michael Savaryn had used seriously erroneous logic to find a 15-year-old boy not guilty of sexually assaulting a 15-year-old girl, this despite video evidence and despite that she had told him "no" and fended him off with a water bottle. Judge Savaryn concluded: "The complainant tried so hard to laugh it all off, that I do not believe she was successful in communicating her discomfort . . . and even at the end, I am not convinced she clearly expressed her objections." In Justice Juliana Topolniski's decision to overturn the acquittal she wrote, "The word 'No' coupled with fending off an attacker with a water bottle does not mean 'Yes.' There is nothing ambiguous about it."

Saying that these judges need an education is an understatement.

What we are all asking here today is very simple. We want accountable judges who have been educated on the laws that are expected to be enforced. This is something that many judges are in favour of. Alberta's Chief Justice has publicly stated that training in this area of law is something that is sorely needed and, contrary to dissenting opinion, this does not infringe on judicial independence.

The other aspect to this motion revolves around the lawyers and ensuring that they, too, are properly educated on the facts around sexual assault. Some attorneys say that this erodes their independence as well, but I quite frankly do not see how providing an education on sexual assault would do that. It's about holding our courts and the officers to a higher standard, as we would expect, to ensure that erroneous and harmful positions are not used which could ultimately revictimize the person. Lawyers that are wishing to become judges should be looking for opportunities to expand

their understanding of the law, and this does just that. This motion does that.

At the end of the day, what we are talking about here is the need to ensure our system is finding justice for individuals and not adding to the problem. This is a nonpartisan issue. I will treat this as a nonpartisan issue, and I do want to thank my colleagues for supporting our motion on this side of the House, on the other side of the House. This is a very important topic. I know that at the federal level this is a nonpartisan issue as well, with the NDP and the Conservatives working together, and I hope that we will see this Chamber work together moving forward. Together as legislators we can show that I believe you with real reforms to educate the courts on sexual assault.

Thank you very much.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

The hon. Member for Calgary-Elbow.

Mr. Clark: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I want to pick up on where the Member for Airdrie left off and on the partisan or nonpartisan nature of this debate. I'm really glad to see that the temperature is turned down in the House now as we got a couple of speakers in, but frankly as I sat here and watched what happened with the first couple of speakers, we had partisan bombs being chucked across the aisle at one another. Enough of that. Shame on all of you for doing that. This is not . . . [interjections] Hang on. Listen to me. [interjections] Listen. Honestly, this issue . . .

The Acting Speaker: Member, if you could speak through me, please.

Mr. Clark: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I will do that.

It frustrates me, Madam Speaker. It frustrates me very much that issues that are as important as preventing sexual assault, ensuring that judges get the training they need – and I'm speaking in favour of this motion, undeniably. But things get bogged down so much here. You know, the Member for Airdrie, I think, struck exactly the right tone, and I think there's an opportunity here for us to ensure that both sides are focusing on the issue.

We're here to ensure that survivors of sexual assault, victims of sexual assault, whatever people who have had sexual assault perpetrated against them would like to be called – that isn't the issue that we're debating. The issue we're debating is: how do we prevent that? How do we ensure that people who perpetrate sexual assault are held accountable and that, overall, the rates of sexual violence drop in our province? That's what we should be focusing on.

That's what I hope this motion can achieve, which is, again, why I support that. We know that Alberta has some of the highest rates of sexual offences in the country. My data show that we have the third-highest level of sexual offences in this country. A motion like this and training for judges can ensure that we change those statistics. I'd like to see an increased focus from our government and from society as a whole to ensure that we do in fact change that.

Really, this motion, I think, is one of the things that we can do to take real steps towards reducing the prevalence of sexual violence in all its forms. It's certainly in no way the only thing that we should be doing as a province, but it is an important motion.

It's important that professional development continues within the judiciary, that it happens with Crown prosecutors and in all aspects of our justice system, including police, that it is gender and culturally sensitive. We need to ensure that judges, police officers, Crown prosecutors, and court employees have comprehensive understanding of the impact of sexual trauma on individuals, how it happens, how it manifests itself, and whether those people who are part of our judicial system have their ability to participate in

these investigations or prosecutions clouded by their biases, whether they know about those biases or not. That's where training comes in.

3:30

I recognize that there are some jurisdictional issues or some limitations. The judiciary clearly must be independent from the legislative branch; therefore it's limited, what we can do. But, again, this motion has addressed that particular concern. This motion is future-focused and focused on training, and I think that is absolutely right.

But back to bias. I think we need to always remember that myths and stereotypes about sexual assault and about sexuality persist within our system, as do racial and other biases. Those persist in society, and they exist also within our judicial system. There have been many examples here, that we've heard today, that play that out, of course.

I would like to see that a term of employment for Crown prosecutors is proper sexual assault training. I think that should be mandatory.

We should ensure that training procedures are in place for police officers. All police, I think, should ensure that they have a standard operating procedure that is common across the province so they understand and are on the same page when it comes to handling investigations of sexual assault cases.

Now, I know that some police forces, perhaps all, have dedicated resources to sexual assault. I'd like to ensure that those staff have the resources they need to ensure that those who come forward with sexual assault complaints are taken seriously, that they are believed, that those prosecutions move forward, and that the people who are bringing those charges forward are supported throughout the process.

It should be said that the judicial system and judges are just one part of the problem, one part of the system. We need to ensure, again, that hospitals, of course – and I know there are dedicated resources in hospitals – have the resources that they need.

I know that governments in this province have done a lot to prevent violence against women and girls. I think that's important work, and it must continue, but more needs to be done in that regard.

I'll note just in conclusion that I understand that there was a 2013 document called Best Practices for Investigating and Prosecuting Sexual Assault. I'd be interested to know whether that does include mandatory training and, if it does not, to ensure that it is updated.

I will certainly stand in support of this motion and look forward to continuing the debate, and I sincerely hope that my colleagues on all sides of the House do support it.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

The hon. Member for Lethbridge-East.

Ms Fitzpatrick: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I'll begin my comments by saying that I accept this motion in principle. The Leader of the Official Opposition mentioned that a fairly high number of cases were withdrawn or stayed. I know personally how difficult it is to lay that charge. It took me nine years to lay the first charge. It wasn't because I hadn't been physically or sexually assaulted previously. It was because of the fear of the threats of injury and death from my ex-husband. I know that those kinds of threats that one receives between the laying of the charge and going to court are so scary that one can be paralyzed with fear. Many women withdraw because it is too much to handle.

Now, I believe that everyone who comes before a court should be treated with respect and with dignity, whether that is a plaintiff

or a defendant. I also believe that every judge who sits on a bench is there because they have been educated. They've received a law degree, they've passed the bar, and they've had some experience practising law. I expect that anyone who sits in the position of a judge to be completely impartial. He or she would look at the facts of a case, hear testimony, weigh those facts against any mitigating circumstances, and make a decision based on the law. I would expect that the judge should be compassionate and understand the vulnerabilities of the plaintiff in a sexual assault or domestic violence case just given the nature of that case.

In my own experience I believe the judge did make the correct decision in finding my ex-husband guilty based on the evidence of the case and the law. However, he did not treat me with dignity, respect, or actually offer me any protection. His comments to me, telling me that it was a marital problem and to get a divorce and leave, were disrespectful at the very least. Suspending the sentence and allowing my ex to leave the court a free man put me and my children at immediate risk. He didn't even give me a chance to get a divorce and leave. His failure to take any further action when my ex threatened to kill me as he was walking out of the courtroom exacerbated that risk and should never have happened.

In Alberta I believe by and large that judges do an excellent job of assessing the evidence, weighing the facts, and making good decisions based on the law. By and large I believe the judges to be compassionate and treat both plaintiffs and defendants with respect and dignity within the justice system. I also know that that is not always the case, and that is why I was pleased when the Minister of Justice asked for the formal inquiry into Judge Camp's conduct, which recommended his removal from the bench.

Our government has taken action. Additional action was taken with Bill 2, and I look forward to further action in the future on the issue of sexual assault and domestic violence.

The motion has called to ensure that anyone being considered for an appointment actually be educated further. I don't disagree that further education is a good thing. As I said, I believe that to become a judge, one first has to graduate from law school. They have to pass the bar exam, and they have to have experience as a lawyer. I think that all of those things are part of the education piece. However, one can't be taught to be compassionate. You have that inside you, and I think those are things that you learn as you're growing up. It's reinforced by the acceptance of your peers of the behaviour that you portray, and when you portray bad behaviour and your peers give you kudos for that, it exacerbates bad behaviour.

I believe that – well, I need to back up. Given my statement in November 2015 about my personal experience of domestic violence I was subjected to behaviour reminiscent of that which my ex-husband exhibited. Despite the fact that I gave my statement publicly right here in this Legislature, I was subjected to that behaviour.

I believe what is most important to change are the attitudes and beliefs that one holds in one's mind and soul, so I find it, as the Premier might say, rich that the opposition is putting this motion forward. When the media first reported on Judge Camp's comments and behaviour, the opposition said nothing. In fact, as my colleague had said, the government in Ottawa at the time gave Judge Camp a promotion after his inappropriate behaviour in that sexual assault case in 2014, and the new leader of the third party, Mr. Kenney, was involved in appointing Mr. Camp to the Federal Court. Now, isn't he the one who's the new best friend of the Leader of the Official Opposition?

This is an extremely important issue to me, and it should be for everyone in this House and everyone outside. I've said over and over again that this kind of behaviour will change when we as

women do not accept being treated disrespectfully, demeaned, and devalued. We all have a role to play to stop this.

As I stated at the beginning, in principle I support this motion. However, I would suggest that if the members opposite really want to fix this, the heightened rhetoric heaved at the female members of our cabinet should change. The man-something-explaining to ministers would cease, and the collaboration with the government, that is working to make life better for Albertans, would actually begin.

Thank you.

3:40

The Acting Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

The hon. Member for Calgary-Hays.

Mr. McIver: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I'm going to be brief and contain my remarks to the basics, but let me just say that I am going to support this motion because I think it's a sincere attempt to make it better for survivors or victims of sexual assault to get the treatment and the dignity as human beings that they deserve. I think – I hope – this is the type of issue that does bring the House together.

On that note, I'm going to take a couple of minutes here and just compliment the government. Yes. There's no: yeah, but. There's nothing. I want to compliment the government on Bill 2. Nice work. Real nice work, which I support.

I heard lots of speeches and talk from members of this House, very personal, in some cases painful, tough stories about their experiences, and I thank all the members of this House for that. I just want to say that this is an issue there – we have so many things to fight about. Let's not fight about this one. Let's work together on it.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

The hon. Member for Chestermere-Rocky View.

Mrs. Aheer: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I'd like to preface my speech by saying that if I use words that aren't necessarily accepted by the government, it's just because those words resonate more with myself. Please understand that I will endeavour to make sure that the language I use is respectful to all people and their various spaces and where they're at in various places with regard to their particular trauma. Please understand that it's not an insult to anybody in this House.

I also wanted to mention with regard to the last hon. member who spoke that, unfortunately, sometimes within the opposition the things that we say and how we react are not taken into the media. There were many of us who spoke out against those particular things, but our local media and our little rural newspapers don't get pushed out into the regular media. So please understand that that is also a huge misnomer, and I would really appreciate that if statements like that are made, you do a little bit more research before you cast aspersions on this side of the House.

Secondly, I'd also like to say that it's a huge honour to rise today and speak to this very important motion. I think that the most important thing is that it takes aim at ensuring that our courts are safe spaces for victims who have survived violent sexual assault. The believe her campaigns and the I Believe You campaigns are absolutely imperative to making sure that the language and the dialogue change.

According to the Canadian Women's Foundation and Statistics Canada, women self-reported 553,000 sexual assaults in 2014. Those are only the reported ones. We don't even know how many were not reported as a result. On average, women were 10 times more likely than men to be the victim of violent sexual assault and

account for almost 92 per cent of those who have been victimized and have fallen victim to sexual assault.

The crime is so heinous, so vile, and so fundamentally evil that it's hard for people who have not been victimized or even those who are really close to people who have been to realize the trauma that is associated with sexual violence and rape. The humiliation, the violation, the stigma are endless. All are reasons why, too often, women and men who suffer this atrocity rarely come forward. Another reason is the perception that those who have been victimized will be revictimized by the system.

One of the things that I wanted to mention about what the hon. member had said before – I believe she was saying in her speech that judges that are there have already gone through becoming lawyers, have gone through all of that instance and everything – is that as much as I agree with that, I think there's a process that needs to happen earlier on to make sure that these folks that are applying to become judges have this kind of training so that judges like Justice Camp are well aware of what their responsibilities are and that those horrible and horrific things that those people say never see the light of day. This is exactly why we must ensure that when they do come forward, these people, these survivors, are treated with the dignity and respect that they deserve.

Over the last year we have watched as judges and other court officials have directly contributed to the sentiment behind why the believe-her movement is important. Instead of endeavouring to find the truth, these people in these positions have contributed to the negative myths and stereotypes about sexual assault that revictimize and also pose an affront to principles of justice such as fair and equitable treatment under the law.

Justice Camp – I mean, I'm going to repeat what's been said before, but I believe that with the absolutely disgusting behaviour that has been seen here by this man, it's worth saying again – who is now a former and disgraced member of the court, has eroded public confidence in the system, and now here we are. His infamous comments when he asked the 19-year-old alleged assault victim, "Why couldn't you just keep your knees together?" highlights the appalling misunderstandings, and I use "misunderstandings" loosely here. I don't think that appropriately describes that behaviour. But it still exists, and it's ridiculously prevalent in the court of law. This is a problem that's happening right across the country.

I would like to take a moment to comment also on a Nova Scotia judge and his ruling that someone so intoxicated that they had passed out in the back of a taxi and urinated on themselves could somehow consent. This topic of consent is of utmost concern to me. We need to have confidence in our judiciary, that they are trained, that they are respectful, and that they truly understand the complex nuances of this issue of consent.

Just to provide another perspective, too, I think of a situation of a person who has special needs, a child or an adult who may be on the autism spectrum and may have some sort of developmental disability, who may not even fully understand the social aspects of personal space. In this hypothetical suppose that this individual grabbed someone and hugged them at a rather inappropriate time or without their consent. I would expect – in fact, I would demand it – that the judges are informed about what constitutes malicious assault versus a misunderstanding in the circumstances and that it matches with the appropriate punishment.

Clearly, judges need to be allowed to use their discretion, but sometimes they also need a base from which to form their knowledge, and this is something that the minister absolutely has the power to change at the point where she appoints a judge, which this motion reaffirms.

I would like to take a moment to thank the Minister of Justice for her advocacy in dealing with Justice Camp. It took tremendous courage for her to do that, and we're extremely, extremely honoured and grateful that she pushed that forward, so thank you to the government for that.

We must all work together to educate our judges, to ensure that no more persons who have been victimized by sexual assault are blamed and that the perpetuating myths of these stereotypes stop.

Thank you.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

The hon. Member for Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville.

3:50

Mrs. Littlewood: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Our government believes and I believe that sexual assault cases in Alberta should be treated with respect and dignity in the justice system. We believe that it's vital for Alberta to have qualified, compassionate judges. Judges should know and should properly apply our sexual assault laws in our court system.

There is no room for sexual myths and stereotypes in our justice system, and that's why in 2015 our Minister of Justice asked for a formal inquiry into Justice Camp's conduct, which recommended his removal from the bench. It's why this government introduced Bill 2, which would remove barriers for survivors of sexual and domestic violence. Our government believes that it's vital for sexual assault survivors to hear that these sorts of actions, comments, and conduct are not accepted in our society, most certainly, and not accepted in our courtrooms.

This is, Madam Speaker, an extremely important issue. I am proud that our government took action on this back in 2015 and asked for a review. It was the right thing to do, and I wish that we would have heard from more members of this Assembly at the time that it happened. I was particularly proud of the Member for Lethbridge-East when she shared her story back in 2015. It was a groundbreaking thing to happen in this Chamber.

I think that sometimes when we have comments that come around this Chamber it does – you know, we model. When we speak in this Chamber, we model for everyone that is in Alberta and anyone that engages with our social media from across the world, which we can see from issues like GSAs being reflected at us from across the pond. I find it unfortunate that it's taken until now to actually have this kind of motion put forward.

It was the former Conservative government in Ottawa that gave Justice Camp a promotion after his inappropriate conduct in a 2014 sexual assault case, and it was Peter MacKay, former Minister of Justice and cabinet colleague of Mr. Jason Kenney, who said that regional ministers like Jason Kenney and Rona Ambrose signed off on those appointments. Mr. Kenney hasn't seemed to be around in the last couple of weeks; however, I understand that he has been speaking a lot to the Leader of the Official Opposition lately. I encourage members opposite to ask about Justice Robin Camp, who, thankfully, is no longer a justice, about that appointment the next time they see him.

On reviewing the court transcript, our Justice minister felt it was important that victims know that this was not an acceptable way to be treated by the justice system. It's important to know that they will be treated with respect and dignity, not subjected to sexual myths and stereotypes. It's vital for sexual assault victims to hear that this sort of conduct and these comments are not acceptable in our society. It's why the minister wrote and requested an inquiry. The minister's complaint states:

In my respectful opinion, the conduct of Justice Camp throughout the proceedings . . . was so manifestly and profoundly destructive

of the concept of the impartiality, integrity, and independence of the judicial role that public confidence has been sufficiently undermined to render Justice Camp incapable of executing his judicial office.

She then goes on to question the myths and stereotypes reflected in the trial judge's comments, comments like calling the survivor in that case the accused. He called this person, who, let us not forget, was homeless at the time, the accused.

That speaks to the fact that this is not just an issue where we have one thing that we can do to address this. This is a complex institutionalized problem that needs to be addressed from multiple aspects of people that do not have access to services, people that don't have access to the ladder you can move up with employment. There are many different issues at work here.

Also, there is emerging research that shows that this isn't just about power. It is about power in part, but lots of times this is happening because someone just doesn't think that it's wrong. When I had the opportunity to share my experience in December, after it was recommended by the inquiry that Justice Robin Camp be removed, I was talking about my own story, and I have to tell you that I don't love talking about it. I'm happy to share it because I think it's important and I think creating a dialogue is important and that to speak for people that are not ready to is important. But I don't love talking about it.

That being said, in my experience I was on a date. I was at someone's home, and I thought I was in a safe place. You know, without going into details, we ended up in bed together, and what was happening had thus far been consensual. Then I ended up pinned underneath someone much larger than me and very quickly realized that I had no strength or power that could match what was happening. One of those myths, you know, is that women have to fight back and have to scrap, as if it takes that to mean no. A person can just say no, but when you're in that moment, you are concerned about your survival. It, thankfully, ended quickly, but when I spoke to that person the next day and he wondered why I didn't want to go on another date, I told him: well, it's because you raped me. He said: well, that's what you all say.

It was so scary. It reinforced to me all I needed to know about why I didn't want to go to the police and why I didn't want to try that case because I didn't have any good reason that anyone would believe me. Because of the case that at the time I couldn't prove a struggle, I couldn't prove signs of trauma, it would have just been my word against his.

This is an ongoing issue, and it is important to have people that are appointed to these benches who reflect us and to ensure that we have ourselves seen, that Albertans see themselves reflected in these benches. This is why it's important to put women in these positions. This is why it's important that the minister appointed the first disabled judge to the bench a couple of months ago. Those things create the faith that we need to have in our justice system. Also, we need to make sure that those judges are qualified.

One of the quotes that confounded me the most when I was looking at all of the coverage that had happened was Justice Camp saying: my colleagues knew my knowledge of Canadian law was very minimal; it was nonexistent. So when we talk about the training that these judges need to go through, I was looking at the report and recommendations, and it stated:

Justice Deborah McCawley has been a judge of the Manitoba Court of Queen's Bench since 1997. She has been at the vanguard of social context education for Canadian judges. Beginning in December 2015, she and Justice Camp met on a number of occasions and had dozens of weekly mentoring calls. They attended together a two-day conference on the conduct of sexual

assault trials and a two-day conference on judicial ethics, both provided by the National Judicial Institute.

The report then goes on to say:

It is difficult to understand how Justice Camp could conclude – particularly after his intensive sessions with Justice McCawley, Dr. Haskell and Professor Cossman – that his acknowledgement of misconduct did not involve sexism and gender bias, and that it did not implicate profound issues of equality. His evidence leaves the Committee doubtful about whether he is fully engaged in the necessary ongoing process of constant self-reflection about which Dr. Haskell testified and which the public has a right to expect of members of the judiciary.

4:00

What I find so shocking about the appointment was that he acknowledged that there was existing law, and then he rejected it. He tried to make a case for returning to the bench by taking on training and still only talked about these views as old-fashioned. It shows that he never understood that this was sexism that was born out of an inequality of genders over the entire span of time. It speaks to the character of the appointment that he was provided those opportunities to learn and apparently didn't see them as necessary, and he actually also spoke of the fact that – in the findings of the inquiry that recommended that he be removed, he mocked the idea of consent.

That's something that we need to work on from a provincial point of view, with things like education revamp and curriculum. There are many ways that you can talk about comprehensive sexual education, and one of the most important things is verbal consent or consent at all. That's one of the things that I'm proud that our government supports.

Our provincial courts in Edmonton and Calgary are divided, based on the matters, into criminal, family and youth, and civil court, and it's important to make sure that these people that are coming into these appointments have a criminal law background. You know, for some reason previous governments did not see this as being a crucial step in the appointments.

I just want to touch on consent and something that is actually easy to remember. It's about FRIES: consent is freely given, consent is reversible, consent is informed, consent must be enthusiastic, and consent must be specific.

We have learned that Jason Kenney plans to be a part of this Legislature. It seems that he played a pivotal role in the political screening process for Justice Camp, approving this promotion, so I would want to hear further as to why he thought that Robin Camp was appropriate to be appointed to the Queen's Bench.

I am very, very happy that we finally have a government that sees things differently, that fundamentally sees things differently, and that when we appoint these people with legal backgrounds on the types of matters that come before them, they have long histories of helping survivors and serving marginalized communities. I'm proud that this government is looking at character over politics when we're looking at these appointments.

Just one other thing that I would like to point out that continues to keep me up at night is that 99 per cent of offenders in sexual assault cases are men, and 90 per cent of the victims are women. This speaks to a fundamental issue of equality when we are talking about sexual violence and how we can find better paths forward.

With that, Madam Speaker, I will conclude my comments. Thank you.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

The hon. Member for Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills.

Mr. Cooper: Thank you, Madam Speaker. It's a pleasure today to rise and speak to the motion. I just want to provide some very brief comments, as I assume it to be wrapping up today, around what is a very important issue. You know, we've seen some toing and froing here in the Chamber this afternoon around the role of individuals who may or may not and who have been involved in judicial appointments. We've seen some choose to engage in much more partisan discussion.

You know, this Chamber is a place where ideas and issues are dealt with passionately, and that is a wonderful thing. Sometimes it is a little bit frustrating when I know that it was the desire of this side of the House to highlight this very important issue, to highlight some of the horrific things that have happened, not to dwell on those horrors but to highlight them so that we can move forward from the challenges that we've seen in the past.

There are occasions when members of the Chamber choose to make accusations or say things on social media about members of this side of the House, the assertions that they might be making, and expressing their disappointment that Wildrose MLAs were saying that most who've been sexually assaulted preferred victim over survivor, and nothing could be further from the truth. Now, it is possible that there are individuals on this side of the House who said "victims," and it is possible, Madam Speaker, that out of a heart of trying to help, they may not have been aware of either the word that they used or perhaps even the appropriate language to use.

I know that every single day in this Chamber and outside of the Chamber I endeavour to do better. I endeavour to learn more. I can tell you there are lots and lots and lots and lots of things that I didn't know 24 months ago, and many of those things I have learned from members of that side of the House. I believe that today I am a better person, I'm a better parliamentarian, I'm a better servant because of some of the things that I've learned from members on that side of the House. They include some of the advocacy work around PDD. They include some of the advocacy work around this very issue. They include some of the work that takes place in our LGBTQ community, things that I didn't know but because of people in this place I now have a better understanding of.

But I can tell you, Madam Speaker, that I have a lot more to learn. So it's so much better when we can help each other in this Chamber instead of making assertions about what an individual did or did not intend to do.

I think that it's a great opportunity today, on this motion, to do just that, to raise the level of awareness around such an important issue, to raise the level of awareness of the requirement for training among our lawyers and judges. Madam Speaker, some of the comments I've heard this afternoon were around lawyers that, you know, may have been trained because they received a law degree. But part of the challenge is that just because you're a lawyer doesn't mean – and you might be a very good lawyer that's appointed to become a judge, but you might be an expert in immigration or environmental law and not in the area of consent, sexual abuse, and other very, very important issues that that individual may hear as a member of the bench.

4:10

This idea of training is so critically important, this idea of ensuring that we are offering our very best to the bench, that we're offering the best to our judicial system, that is going to provide the best outcome so that the survivors of these horrific crimes can be treated in a way with the dignity and respect that they deserve so that on a go-forward basis we can ensure – and the truth of the matter is that even this measure isn't going to fully ensure that that be the case, but it's our role and responsibility to remove those

barriers so that we have the best opportunity for our judicial system to work the best.

It's staggering to think that 1 in 3 women will experience some form of sexual violence or assault in their lifetime. We need to as responsible legislators, as servants of the public, as moms and dads, and as Albertans ensure that we are doing everything possible. That includes helping one another inside this Chamber. It includes, particularly on issues such as this, that we put the needs of those survivors, that we put the needs of those who have been affected by this ahead of all of the other things that often encompass this Chamber.

I commend the government. I know that they've done some good work on this particular file. I know that they've done good work on Bill 2, which the opposition was in support of. I know that members on this side of the House spoke in the form of press releases and public commentary around the disgusting comments that have been made and highlighted this afternoon. I won't go back into those, but I think it's important that we endeavour on a lot of these very, very, very important issues to keep the main things as the main things.

I want to thank the members opposite for their support of this motion. I want to thank all members of the Chamber for providing unanimous consent. We all have a role and a responsibility, whether it's in the training of judges and lawyers in the future or whether

it's speaking out against sexual violence publicly or whether it's working to educate both men and women on the horrific nature of these events or whether it's just speaking out against those that would perpetrate these crimes or if it's in believing those who've disclosed. We all have a very important role, and I thank all members of the Assembly for supporting the motion.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

Are there any other members wishing to speak to the motion?

I will put the question.

[Motion carried]

The Acting Speaker: The hon. Deputy Premier.

Ms Hoffman: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. It has been a heavy afternoon. There is a heavy snowfall warning. I move that the House stand adjourned until Tuesday, April 18, at 1:30 p.m.

The Acting Speaker: You're calling the time 4:30 p.m.?

Ms Hoffman: Yes. I move that the House rise.

[Motion carried; the Assembly adjourned at 4:15 p.m.]

Bill Status Report for the 29th Legislature - 3rd Session (2017)

Activity to Thursday, April 13, 2017

The Bill sponsor's name is in brackets following the Bill title. If it is a money Bill, (\$) will appear between the title and the sponsor's name. Numbers following each Reading refer to Hansard pages where the text of debates is found; dates for each Reading are in brackets following the page numbers. Bills numbered 1 to 200 are Government Bills. Bills numbered 201 or higher are Private Members' Public Bills. Bills numbered with a "Pr" prefix are Private Bills.

* An asterisk beside a Bill number indicates an amendment was passed to that Bill; the Committee line shows the precise date of the amendment.

The date a Bill comes into force is indicated in square brackets after the date of Royal Assent. If a Bill comes into force "on proclamation," "with exceptions," or "on various dates," please contact Legislative Counsel, Alberta Justice, for details at 780.427.2217. The chapter number assigned to the Bill is entered immediately following the date the Bill comes into force. SA indicates Statutes of Alberta; this is followed by the year in which it is included in the statutes, and its chapter number. Please note, Private Bills are not assigned chapter number until the conclusion of the Fall Sittings.

Bill 1 — An Act to Reduce School Fees (Eggen)

First Reading — 6 (*Mar. 2, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 105-10 (*Mar. 8, 2017 morn.*), 192-96 (*Mar. 9, 2017 aft.*), 235-42 (*Mar. 14, 2017 morn.*), 269-71 (*Mar. 14, 2017 aft.*), 273-74 (*Mar. 15, 2017 morn., adjourned*), 282-91 (*Mar. 15, 2017 morn., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 424-31 (*Mar. 21, 2017 aft.*), 556-58 (*Apr. 6, 2017 aft., passed*)

Bill 2* — An Act to Remove Barriers for Survivors of Sexual and Domestic Violence (Ganley)

First Reading — 67-68 (*Mar. 7, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 110-11 (*Mar. 8, 2017 morn.*), 192 (*Mar. 9, 2017 aft.*), 314-22 (*Mar. 15, 2017 aft.*), 336-39 (*Mar. 16, 2017 morn., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 455-59 (*Mar. 22, 2017 aft., passed with amendments*)

Bill 3* — Voluntary Blood Donations Act (Hoffman)

First Reading — 208 (*Mar. 13, 2017 aft., passed.*)

Second Reading — 323-36 (*Mar. 16, 2017 morn., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 394-400 (*Mar. 21, 2017 morn.*), 421-24 (*Mar. 21, 2017 aft., passed with amendments*)

Third Reading — 472-80 (*Mar. 23, 2017 aft., passed on division*)

Royal Assent — (*Mar. 30, 2017 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force Mar. 30, 2017; SA 2017 cV-5]

Bill 4 — Appropriation (Supplementary Supply) Act, 2017 (\$)

First Reading — 191 (*Mar. 9, 2017 aft, passed*)

Second Reading — 306-07 (*Mar. 15, 2017 aft., adjourned*), 322 (*Mar. 15, 2017 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 389-93 (*Mar. 21, 2017 morn.*)

Third Reading — 449-52 (*Mar. 22, 2017 aft., passed on division*)

Royal Assent — (*Mar. 30, 2017 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force Mar. 30, 2017; SA 2017 c2]

Bill 5 — Appropriation (Interim Supply) Act, 2017 (\$) (Ceci)

First Reading — 266 (*Mar. 14, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 310-14 (*Mar. 15, 2017 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 393-94 (*Mar. 21, 2017 morn.*)

Third Reading — 452-55 (*Mar. 22, 2017 aft., passed on division*)

Royal Assent — (*Mar. 30, 2017 outside of House sitting*) [Comes into force Mar. 30, 2017; SA 2017 c1]

Bill 6 — Northland School Division Act (Eggen)

First Reading — 524 (*Apr. 4, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 558-61 (*Apr. 6, 2017 aft., passed*)

Bill 7 — An Act to Enhance Post-secondary Academic Bargaining (Schmidt)

First Reading — 552 (*Apr. 6, 2017 aft., passed*)

Bill 8 — An Act to Strengthen Municipal Government (S. Anderson)

First Reading — 577 (*Apr. 10, 2017 aft., passed*)

Bill 9 — Marketing of Agricultural Products Amendment Act, 2017 (Carrier)

First Reading — 606 (*Apr. 11, 2017 aft., passed*)

Bill 201 — Justice System Accountability Act (Jean)

First Reading — 127 (*Mar. 8, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 208-20 (*Mar. 13, 2017 aft., defeated on division*)

Bill 202* — Protecting Victims of Non-Consensual Distribution of Intimate Images Act (Cyr)

First Reading — 245 (*Mar. 14, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 375-86 (*Mar. 20, 2017 aft., passed*)

Committee of the Whole — 578-86 (*Apr. 10, 2017 aft., passed with amendments*)

Bill 203 — Alberta Standard Time Act (Dang)

First Reading — 253 (*Mar. 14, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 496-503 (*Apr. 3, 2017 aft., referred to the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future*)

Bill 204 — Protection of Property Rights Statutes Amendment Act, 2017 (Stier)

First Reading — 444 (*Mar. 22, 2017 aft., passed*)

Second Reading — 503-07 (*Apr. 3, 2017 aft., adjourned*)

Bill 205 — Advocate for Persons with Disabilities Act (Jansen)

First Reading — 552 (*Apr. 6, 2017 aft., passed*)

Bill Pr1 — Calgary Jewish Centre Amendment Act, 2017 (Kazim)

First Reading — 524 (*Apr. 4, 2017 aft., passed*)

Bill Pr2 — Paula Jean Anderson Adoption Termination Act (MacIntyre)

First Reading — 524 (*Apr. 4, 2017 aft., passed*)

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