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Alberta Scan

Issue 1093

week ending 8 March 2019

...gone

Throughout this week United Conservative Party leader **Jason Kenney** outlined a detailed platform positions on deregulation and personal income taxes. Some excerpts from his comments:

On regulatory changes (see page four).

"This is not about reducing or lowering standards. It's about applying them in a smarter way. And I would just say, I think one of the problems here is that individual regulations are brought in I think almost always with very good intentions and there's always some kind of policy rationale that's defensible behind them. The problem is it's a constant accretion as more and more gets layered on, the 30, 40, 60 year old regs don't get repealed. If this was about lowering standards, environmental, consumer, or health and safety, we would have seen negative consequences in British Columbia [where a similar program was implemented by the provincial Liberals when they were in power]. But interestingly, the new NDP government there is doing nothing to reverse the progress made on red tape reduction. They've created a new consensus that is across the political spectrum in BC on a lighter regulatory touch. So I think that's the final proof point."

Q. On the carbon tax, then, you've said that you're continuing to fund major LRT, that type of thing, because that's larger projects, but what about Energy Efficiency Alberta, the programs they have for retrofitting your window's insulation?

"Gone."

"There was infrastructure funded in Alberta before the carbon tax. There will be infrastructure funded after we scrap the carbon tax. I funded \$1.5 billion from the federal government for the Green Line LRT in Calgary without a federal carbon tax and \$600 million for the Calgary West Ring Road without a carbon tax. So this is to say that we will continue to invest in a priority infrastructure based on an objective ranking of the needs, rather than the political interference. And having said that, some of the inefficient or wasteful spending that the NDP brought in as part of their so-called climate leadership plan, like sending bureaucrats into your house to change light bulbs and low-flow shower heads, we will eliminate that because the province is broke..."

"We are going to give Albertans a tax cut by scrapping the NDP carbon tax. It will be the largest tax cut in Alberta history. We will also deliver the job creation tax cut which top economists project will create at least 55,000 new jobs. There will also be some other reductions that we will be talking about in the days to come, but because of the NDP's fiscal train wreck, we do not have the fiscal room to reduce personal income tax rates at this time. So we would be delaying that until the budget is balanced. We would then appoint a panel to advise the government on tax reform to get the most bang for the buck for jobs and growth through tax policy." □

Government Scan...

The following announcements were made this week by the provincial government. The title of the announcement, as written by the government, is in bold. Cabinet

decisions, called Orders in Council, are marked with the abbreviation “OC” and the number of the decision. Copies of the full text of the OCs mentioned below are available online [here](#).

Alberta Health Services (AHS)

6 March 2019

AHS Reaches Three-year Agreement with Alberta Midwives

AHS and the Alberta Association of Midwives have reached a three-year agreement that will continue to increase access to midwifery services for Albertans.

The renewed agreement, which will be in effect until March 31, 2022, aims to increase both the number of midwifery-assisted births and the number of midwives in the province.

It also includes a program to assist midwives providing services to Indigenous and under served populations, and in rural and remote communities.

Details are [here](#).

Economic Development

1 March 2019

Alberta Accelerates High-tech Support

Economic development minister **Deron Bilous** reannounced that Alberta Innovates will provide a tech accelerator program to help high-tech entrepreneurs turn ideas into market-ready products and applications.

Some \$31 million allocated to Alberta Innovates is earmarked for the tech accelerator and three other initiatives – applied research and development, industry solutions, and establishing a stronger global market presence for Alberta.

Details are [here](#).

Education

1 March 2019

Alberta Bans Seclusion Rooms

Education minister **David Eggen** issued a ministerial order to ban seclusion rooms in schools.

The order will come into effect for the upcoming 2019-20 school year on Sept. 1.

As a first step, local boards will be asked to submit a list of schools with a seclusion room. They will then require a declaration that these rooms be decommissioned by Aug. 30, 2019. Alberta Education will be performing on-site inspections and monitoring to ensure compliance.

A seclusion room is a room, structure or enclosure in a school operated by a school authority where students can be locked up.

Details are [here](#).

Health

1 March 2018

Government, Pharmacists Extend Funding Agreement

A framework for funding pharmacists was extended for two years.

The framework, announced last year between the Alberta government and the Alberta Pharmacists' Association, was set to expire March 31, 2020, but will now be extended to March 31, 2022.

Pharmacy compensation growth will be kept to 5.3 per cent over the two-year extension to accommodate population and volume growth.

Details are [here](#).

Infrastructure

6 March 2019

Building a More Flood-resilient Calgary

Finance minister **Joe Ceci** announced

new Alberta Community Resilience Program grants totalling \$15 million for two flood resilience projects in Calgary.

In Calgary, a permanent flood barrier will be built to protect the downtown area and a storm water separation project will protect the community of Sunnyside-Hillhurst.

Details are [here](#).

Premier

6 March 2018

China Canola Ban: Statement from Premier Notley

After the Chinese government barred a significant number of canola shipments, premier **Rachel Notley** issued a statement calling on the federal government to “stop its navel-gazing about its internal controversies and fight back.”

Notley said Alberta farmers and Alberta workers stand to lose hundreds of millions of dollars and up to 3,000 jobs if this is not resolved.

Her full statement is [here](#).

Transportation

7 March 2018

Investing in 33 New Transit Projects

Transportation minister **Brian Mason** announced millions of dollars to be allocated over the next three years from the Alberta Community Transit Fund and financed by the NDP's carbon tax.

Some \$215 million will be awarded to:

► Calgary Metropolitan Region, \$101.8 million.

► Edmonton Metropolitan Region, \$95.4 million.

► other communities, \$17.8 million.

In the first three years, the grants will be funded with \$141.4 million from the Climate Leadership Plan.

Details are [here](#).

6 March 2019

New Rest Stops on Major Alberta Highways

Transportation minister **Brian Mason**

...continued next page

...government

announced the province is building one new safety rest stop on the QEII between Calgary and Edmonton and two more along the Yellowhead Highway, west of Edmonton.

The province is also supporting development of a new private-sector rest stop near Bowden.

Details of the projects are [here](#).

5 March 2019

West Calgary Ring Road Construction to Start

Transportation minister **Brian Mason** and Calgary-Bow NDP MLA **Deborah Drever** announce contracts are in place to begin West Calgary Ring Road construction.

The 11-kilometre project, to be completed by 2022, is divided into three segments: the south one that connects with the Southwest Calgary Ring Road, the north one that meets the Trans-Canada Highway and a new bridge across the Bow River.

Mason said shovels will be in the ground on the project this spring.

Details are [here](#). □

Recent Consultant Lobbyist Registrations

The following lobbyists recently registered to represent the clients below with Alberta's lobby registry.

Consultant Lobbyists (in order of registration)

Registered	Client	Lobby Firm	Lobbyists	Target Departments/Organizations
07-Mar-2019	Civeo Corporation	Hill+Knowlton Strategies	Sheila Wisniewski, Natalie Sigalet	Alberta Legislative Assembly
Program or Policy: Municipal bylaws. The Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo is exploring several development bylaws which would impact workforce lodges that service the energy sector. We will be briefing the MLAs for the impacted region on the potential bylaws and the impacts for the region.				
06-Mar-2019	Viking Air Ltd.	Counsel Public Affairs Inc.	Philip Dewan, Brad Lavigne	Executive Council, Alberta Economic Development and Trade, Premier's Office
Financial Benefit or Grant: Seeking funding support for the establishment, maintenance, and operation of the recently acquired Bombardier Amphibious Aircraft Division. Arranging meetings to discuss the possibility of securing funding for the establishment, maintenance, and operation of the recently acquired Bombardier Amphibious Aircraft Division.				
06-Mar-2019	ALIGN Association of Community Services	Alberta Counsel	Jonathon Wescott, Jenelle Saskiw, Shayne Saskiw, Pascal Ryffel, Bronte Valk, Zack Ziolkowski, Cam MacKay	Alberta Labour, Alberta Children's Services, Alberta Health, Alberta Legislative Assembly, Premier's Office
Program or Policy: Procurement of Community Services contracts. A review of the procurement process. Recommendations from the 'Safer, Stronger Tomorrow' report are welcomed but are adding more complexities to the work child and community services organizations are carrying out. These include cultural components to care, increasing kinship care, specialized group care for traumatized children, as well as increases in early intervention and prevention work. Despite this broadening of scope and services, there have not been any corresponding increases in contracts, adding strain to service providers that are becoming harder to bear.				
Existing Legislation: Occupational Health and Safety Act and Regulations. Our sector has high rates of incidents and claims to WCB, and providing a safe and healthy workplace is paramount for our organization. We aim to continue working with the provincial government to reduce incidents and continue improving safety and healthful working environments for our staff. We continue to require the resources and training to ensure healthy workers.				
04-Mar-2019	Foundations for the Future Charter Academy	New West Public Affairs	Michael Solberg, Sonia Kont, Monte Solberg, Sarah Painchaud	Alberta Education
Financial Benefit or Grant: Foundations for the Future Charter Academy School Replacement Project. Foundations for the Future Charter Academy School Replacement Project (FFCA) is seeking phase 3 funding from the government of Alberta to ensure that the FFCA High School replacement project can continue.				
04-Mar-2019	West Coast Reduction Ltd.	Timber Wolf Investments	Douglas Horner, Monica Barclay	Alberta Environment and Parks, Alberta Agriculture and Forestry, Alberta Treasury Board and Finance, Alberta Innovates
Financial Benefit or Grant: To discuss with appropriate officials about new technology and process around waste water treatment prior to discharge. Looking to partnership with municipalities for P3 potential activities.				
Guideline or Directive: Capital Region Waste Water Commission. New waste water treatment trials.				
Program or Policy: To discuss with appropriate officials about new technology and process around waste water treatment prior to discharge. To create partnerships for new treatment for waste water prior to discharge.				

Alberta Scan

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Photocopying

Please do not photocopy this publication. Every photocopy makes it more difficult to gather useful information on your behalf.

Research

Thanks to staff at the Legislature Library for their ongoing help with researching items in this newsletter.

Political Monitor

Word of Mouth Communications provides *Alberta Political Monitor*, a service about ongoing policy developments. Call or email for further information.

Seminars on Alberta Politics

Word of Mouth Communications offers presentations of varying lengths about how the Alberta government decides and how the Cabinet Policy Committee process works. Call or email for further information.

Feedback

If you have suggestions to improve *Alberta Scan*, please contact:

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Opposition Scan...

The following items represent issues the opposition parties in the Legislature deemed important

enough to warrant a press release and usually a new conference. They result in news only sometimes.

Deregulation

6 March 2019

UCP to Cut Red Tape by One Third as Part of Job Creation Plan

United Conservative Party leader **Jason Kenney** announced details of his deregulation plan, promising if elected his government will reduce red tape by a third in its first term “to create jobs and spur economic growth”.

His plan includes:

- ▶ the *Red Tape Reduction Act* modelled on laws in other provinces to measure, report and reduce the regulatory burden imposed by the Alberta Government, and to reduce the time required for regulatory decisions to be made. The act would be passed within weeks of the next election, and following consultations would be amended to include legislated time lines for regulatory approvals, the goal of which will be the fastest approval process in North American.
- ▶ a dedicated associate minister for red tape reduction who will lead the Action Plan with clear backing from the premier to challenge all ministers, departments and agencies to meet the one third reduction target, and accelerated time lines for regulatory approval.
- ▶ industry panels to inform red tape reduction for every major sector of the economy by providing ongoing input to the associate minister for red tape reduction, and other relevant ministers and officials, on where regulatory savings can be found.
- ▶ One In / One Out Rule requiring agencies or ministries proposing new regulations to identify at least one offsetting regulation for elimination.
- ▶ **Red Tape Challenge Website** to replicate the United Kingdom’s successful Red Tape Challenge by crowd sourcing

input from businesses, organizations and the public on which regulations should be improved, kept or scrapped.

▶ outcome based regulatory approach. All departments and agencies will be directed to replicate the best regulatory practices in other jurisdictions by moving from a process to a performance-based regulatory model, wherever feasible.

▶ public sector red tape reduction to benchmark and reduce internal government rules and regulations. This would include working with municipalities, schools, universities, hospitals and other public sector organizations to identify and rationalize the administrative mandates imposed by the government of Alberta.

▶ end barriers to interprovincial free trade:

- work with other provinces to accelerate the work of the Regulatory Reconciliation and Cooperation Table (RCT), under the Canadian Free Trade Agreement (CFTA).
- call for a full review of the CFTA at Council of Federation meetings to further eliminate barriers to trade, investment and labour mobility, and expand the CFTA.
- modernize the New West Partnership to achieve complete elimination of barriers to trade, full reciprocal recognition of occupational certification, and apprenticeship harmonization between Alberta and participating provinces.
- join the Memorandum of Understanding between the governments of Ontario and Saskatchewan to reduce interprovincial trade barriers.
- unilaterally eliminate current and future “carve-out” exemptions in the CFTA as they apply to Alberta.

Details are [here](#). □