



## AB Today – Daily Report June 28, 2019

### Quotation of the day

“I wore a blue suit so I could fit in.”

*B.C. Premier **John Horgan** jokes about being the only NDP premier at the table of the Western Premiers’ Conference in Edmonton.*

### Today in AB

#### On the schedule

The House is taking Monday off for the Canada Day holiday and is scheduled to reconvene at 1:30 p.m. on Tuesday.

#### Thursday’s votes and proceedings

After a week of long nights, MLAs sat for only three hours Thursday afternoon.

Two bills were debated at committee of the whole stage: **Bill 2**, An Act to Make Alberta Open for Business, and **Bill 12**, Royalty Guarantee Act.

This was the fifth day of committee debate on **Bill 2**, which the NDP has stalled by introducing amendments.

**Bill 13**, Alberta Senate Election Act, was debated at second reading.

Calgary—West UCP MLA **Mike Ellis** presented the Standing Committee on Private Bills and Private Members' Public Bills' recommendation that NDP MLA **Richard Feehan's Bill 203**, An Act to Protect Public Health Care, not go forward.

### **In the Legislature**

Former PC cabinet minister **Lyle Oberg**, as well as federal Conservative MPs **Arnold Viersen** and **Garnett Genuis**, sat in the Speaker's gallery.

Other guests included representatives from the Edmonton Heritage Festival Association, the Edmonton Intercultural Centre, the Somali Canadian Cultural Society of Edmonton, the Alberta Somali Cultural Community Centre, the Downtown Islamic Centre, and the Al Rashid mosque.

## **Despite tensions between Alberta and B.C., Western Premiers' Conference lacked major battles**

Despite months of heated rhetoric and policy fights between the region's two largest provinces, Alberta Premier **Jason Kenney** hosted his fellow western premiers and territorial leaders in Government House in Edmonton on Thursday in what was a tame affair.

"I came here with considerable referee experience in my life and I didn't have to use any of it," said Manitoba Premier **Brian Pallister** of the cooperation amongst the leaders.

Kenney, and his predecessor **Rachel Notley**, have traded barbs with British Columbia Premier **John Horgan**, whose government has sought to block efforts to expedite the movement of Alberta oil to tidewater.

But rather than these familiar fights, the leaders talked about mental health and addictions, Arctic sovereignty, permafrost and forest fires, and labour mobility and inter-provincial trade.

In addition to Horgan, Pallister and Kenney, the meeting included Premiers **Scott Moe** of Saskatchewan, **Bob McLeod** of the Northwest Territories, **Joe Savikataaq** of Nunavut, and **Sandy Silver** of Yukon.

"Our new government has one goal today, which is to make our western provinces and territories the source of Canada's strength, economic growth and opportunity for western and northern Canadians," Kenney said to the assembled group at the start of their gathering. "I'm hoping to count on each of you as partners in delivering what we know is a vision that we share."

Kenney said, following the meeting, the leaders will take a signed communique that recognizes professional credentials between provinces and territories to the Council of the Federation next month.

At the behest of Pallister, the premiers also discussed denouncing Québec's **Bill 21**, which bans public servants from wearing religious symbols at work, but no motion was forward.

Horgan played down the tensions between the neighbouring provinces, characterizing B.C.'s legal challenges relating to the Trans Mountain pipeline as attempts to clarify the province's powers.

"It's not been about British Columbia and Alberta — I've been steadfast on that for the past two years," he said. "It's been about the federal government asserting jurisdiction that I believe is at a minimum shared if not, in some instances, exclusively provincial."

"I have no quarrel with the people of Alberta," Horgan added.

Alberta's Court of Queen's Bench is set to begin hearing B.C.'s challenge to Alberta's "turn-off-the-taps" law today.

## **Today's events**

### **June 28 at noon (EST) – Ontario**

The Ontario Court of Appeal is scheduled to release its decision on the constitutionality of the federal price on pollution.

### **June 28 at 10:15 a.m. – Drumheller**

Minister of Culture, Multiculturalism and Status of Women **Leela Aheer**, Infrastructure Minister **Prasad Panda**, and UCP Drumheller—Stettler MLA **Nate Horner** will officially open the Royal Tyrrell Museum of Palaeontology's expansion.

### **June 28 at 10:45 a.m. – Red Deer**

Education Minister **Adriana LaGrange** will speak at the St. Joseph High School graduation ceremony.

### **June 28 at 2 p.m. – Canmore**

Economic Development, Trade and Tourism Minister **Tanya Fir** will speak at a Tourism Canmore Kananaskis event at the Canmore Nordic Centre Day Lodge.

### **June 28 at 3:50 p.m. – Red Deer**

Education Minister **Adriana LaGrange** will speak at a graduation ceremony for Gateway Christian School at New Life Fellowship Christian Reformed Church.

### **June 28 at 7:25 a.m. – Red Deer**

Education Minister **Adriana LaGrange** will speak at a graduation ceremony for École Secondaire Notre Dame High School.

## Topics of conversation

- After signing an agreement with the federal government Thursday, the Métis Nation of Alberta will have the [right to self-government](#).
- The province is easing its ongoing oil production curtailment in August. As of August, the industry can produce 3.74 million barrels per day, an increase of 25,000 barrels per day from June/July levels.
- Finance Minister **Travis Toews** said he already tabled the province's year-end financials with the clerk and expects the report to be publicly released next week.
  - "We haven't finalized how we're going to present [the fiscal numbers], but we're certainly going to post them and I'm happy to take questions," Toews told reporters.
- Most provinces saw revenues from cannabis sales increase in April, but the amount of dried cannabis sitting in Canadian production and retail warehouses also went up — to 31,880 kilograms, a 3.5 per cent increase over March. When unfinished cannabis inventory is included, that figure rises to 215, 665 kilograms, [according to BNN Bloomberg News](#). That's more than 24 times the volume of cannabis sold across the country in April.
  - Cannabis analysts from BMO Capital Markets have already warned that much of Canada's current cannabis inventory [could wind up worthless](#) and result in write-downs by the industry.

## News briefs — Governmental

### Government 'divesting' from crude-by-rail contracts

Energy Minister **Sonya Savage** says the Alberta Petroleum Marketing Commission is working with CIBC Capital Markets to shift the former government's crude-by-rail program to the private sector.

"This process involves highly confidential commercial negotiations and we anticipate divestment from the previous government's program will be completed this fall," Savage said.

"As a government, we are accountable to the taxpayer. We will leave crude-by-rail in the hands of the private sector while making decisions that ensure the best outcomes for Albertans and our energy sector."

The government would not provide reports with the cost of divesting from the contracts, but confirmed taxpayers will still be on the hook for pre-existing signed contracts related to rail tolls and railcar acquisitions.

The previous NDP government signed a \$3.7-billion lease for 4,000 railcars in order to add 120,000 barrels per day in shipping capacity.

Savage refutes NDP Leader **Rachel Notley**'s claim that the massive investment would lead to \$5.9 billion in revenues, instead saying that sticking with the contracts would have cost Albertans \$1.5 billion.

Savage said the NDP's numbers are artificially high because they include potential increases in royalty revenue, commercial benefits and provincial tax revenues.

The NDP's crude-by-rail program was scheduled to begin in July.

### **Suite of condo regulations on 'pause' for 'red tape review'**

The government hit the pause button on NDP-era regulations designed to increase the transparency of condo boards that were set to take effect on July 1.

Service Alberta Minister **Nate Glubish** said a six-month delay on the condominium regulations will allow the new government to meet with additional stakeholders.

"Since becoming minister, I have been approached by stakeholders who felt overlooked by the previous government around their concerns that the proposed changes would add administrative burdens on boards and managers," Glubish said in a news release. "We take these concerns seriously and we are not afraid to take bold and decisive action in the interests of Albertans."

The NDP passed the regulations in December 2018, four years after the corresponding legislation, *Condominium Property Amendment Act*, passed. The act was the [first major change](#) to condo board laws in 18 years.

The planned regulations would have required condo boards to provide owners with minutes from board meetings, as well as budget documents and information on reserve funds, at no additional cost.

"These regulations, such as the changes around voting rights, represent additional burdens on boards and management companies, which end up increasing the costs for owners," said Core Real Estate Group representative **Don Brown**. "We are happy to see the government hit pause to address this."

NDP MLA **Jon Caron** told *AB Today* the regulations were created to increase transparency and protect condo owners from costs such as special assessment fees.

“Through our consultations we saw several families being bankrupted because of these special assessment fees and that’s why we took action to cap skyrocketing fees, we took action to bring more transparency to condo owners who are looking to gather more documents in that process,” Carson said.

## News briefs — Non-governmental

### NDP says by voting against immediacy clause for GSAs, UCP show true intent

An NDP amendment to **Bill 8**, Education Amendment Act, that would have required a gay-straight alliance to be established immediately was defeated, with 32 UCP MLAs voting against it.

The amendment would have added the “immediacy” clause from the NDP’s *School Act* into **Bill 8**. The New Democrats added the clause after some school principals were “ragging the puck” when students asked for GSAs to be established.

“There is no reason to not support the immediacy clause, unless your sole goal is to ensure GSAs that are requested by students are never established,” Children’s Services critic **Rakhi Pancholi** said. “We brought forward a simple amendment that would signal to the LGBTQ2S+ community that this government actually cares. Clearly they don’t and they should be ashamed of themselves.”

When asked by reporters why she voted against the amendment, Education Minister **Adriana LaGrange** repeated talking points that the legislation would have the strongest statutory protections for gay-straight alliance in the country.

## Question period

### NDP lead-off

#### Investigation into UCP leadership race

- NDP Deputy Leader **Sarah Hoffman** repeated calls for the government to name the special prosecutor appointed in the RCMP investigation into the UCP’s 2017 leadership race.
  - Hoffman used a follow-up question to ask Infrastructure Minister **Prasad Panda** what he told the premier about his recent conversation with the RCMP about the investigation.

- Government House Leader **Jason Nixon** accused the NDP of “fear and smear tactics.”
  - “The minister has been very clear inside this chamber that the process is independent from the government, that this government respects this as does the minister,” Nixon said. “He referred the honourable members to the press release and to the appropriate officials within the department if they wanted to seek more information, as well as to the RCMP.”
- Panda gave a brief response: “At the request of the RCMP I met with them briefly on June 23, and they assured me that I’m not the subject of any investigation.”

### Other NDP questions

NDP MLAs also asked about oil-by-rail contracts, the Chicago principles, school nutrition programs, potential changes to the application process for Persons with Developmental Disabilities funding, whether there will be cuts to court clerks, cuts to the youth wage, and whether school portables will be built on time.

### UCP friendly questions

UCP MLAs asked about reviewing of condo board regulations, electing senators, job opportunities for persons with developmental disabilities, when the infrastructure minister will release a public list of priority infrastructure projects, and the cost of seniors housing.

## Lobbyist registrations

If you are looking for further information on any lobbying registry, it is all public and easily searchable [here](#).

### Consultants who registered as lobbyists from June 21, 2019 – June 27, 2019

- **Melissa Caouette, Michael Lohner**, 2139107 Alberta Ltd. (operating as Crestview Strategy (West))
  - **Clients:** EDF Renewables Development Inc.; Motion LP; Canadian Solar Industries Association
- **Hal Danchilla, Melissa Caouette, Michael Lohner**, 2139107 Alberta Ltd. (operating as Crestview Strategy (West))
  - **Clients:** OrganiGram Inc.

- **Melissa Caouette, Hal Danchilla**, 2139107 Alberta Ltd. (operating as Crestview Strategy (West))
  - **Clients:** TransCanada Pipelines Limited
- **Jonathon Wescott, Shayne Saskiw, Pascal Ryffel, Bronte Valk, Zack Ziolkowski, Michelle Collins, Jenelle Saskiw**, Alberta Counsel
  - **Clients:** Alberta Urban Municipalities Association (AUMA)
- **Anna De Paoli**, De Paoli & Associates Inc.
  - **Clients:** Alberta Greenhouse Growers Association
- **Jeremy Bruce, Joanne Dobson**, Summa Strategies
  - **Clients:** Clear Seas Centre for Responsible Marine Shipping
- **Kristin Anderson**, Global Public Affairs
  - **Clients:** Crane Rental Association of Canada; Michelin North America (Canada Inc.)
- **Brookes Merrit, Jordan Pinkster**, Global Public Affairs
  - **Clients:** Calgary Arts Academy
- **Brian Senio, Elan MacDonald**, Global Public Affairs
  - **Clients:** Caregivers Alberta
- **Vivek Prabhu, Natalie Sigalet, Matt Wolf**, Hill+Knowlton Strategies
  - **Clients:** TMX Group Limited
- **Jeff Johnson**, Course Consulting Ltd.
  - **Clients:** Alberta Continuing Care Association
- **Alan Hallman**, Alan Hallman & Associates Inc.
  - **Clients:** Cadotte Lake Metis; Ermineskin Cree Nation
- **Sandra Price**, Sandie Price
  - **Clients:** Alberta Network of Public Housing Agencies

**Organizations that registered in-house lobbyists from June 21, 2019 – June 27, 2019**

- Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers
- AstraZeneca Canada Inc.
- Chevron Canada Limited
- Cisco Systems Canada
- Medicine Hat & District Chamber of Commerce

- Economic Development Lethbridge
- Advantage Cogen Energy Ltd.
- Rio Tinto Canada Management Inc
- CNOOC Petroleum North America ULC
- Nature Conservancy of Canada (Alberta Region)
- Alberta Federation of Regulated Health Professions Society
- Canadian Sphagnum Peat Moss Association
- Alberta Construction Association
- Western Canadian Shippers' Coalition
- Students' Association of MacEwan University