



AB Today – Daily Report July 5, 2019

Publisher's note:

AB Today is on pause for a week for staff holidays. We will be back in your inbox on Monday, July 15.

Quotation of the day

“I love sitting. I'm happy to sit.”

*Government House Leader **Jason Nixon** signals more bills are to come now that the summer session will continue past Stampede week.*

Today in AB

On the schedule

With three government bills still on the order paper, Alberta's summer session will continue following next week's constituency break.

NDP filibuster techniques stalled the passage of **Bill 2**, An Act to Make Alberta Open for Business, and **Bill 8**, Education Amendment Act, which remain at third reading and committee stage, respectively.

NDP Leader **Rachel Notley** said her party has been “very clear” it intends to “spend quite a bit of time debating” **Bill 8**, calling it an “incredibly hurtful piece of legislation.”

Government House Leader **Jason Nixon** has not been introducing time allocation motions on **Bill 2** and **Bill 8**, like he did on **Bill 9**, Public Sector Wage Arbitration Deferral Act, because they

do not involve time-sensitive deadlines. (**Bill 2**'s youth minimum wage cut has already been implemented via regulation.)

Nixon told reporters Thursday evening it would be a waste of taxpayer dollars to recall the House after the break just to pass three bills. Instead, he said the UCP will likely introduced another round of new legislation and sit for the rest of the summer.

The less contentious **Bill 13**, Alberta Senate Election Act, which was only introduced last week, is also yet to pass.

The parliamentary calendar has sitting days scheduled until August 1.

Thursday's debates and proceedings

MLAs continued their overnight debate on **Bill 8**, Education Amendment Act, without pause on Thursday — surpassing 24 hours of uninterrupted debate. This was the second 24-hour debate session since Premier **Jason Kenney** recalled the House post-election.

A series of NDP amendments were voted down during debate on **Bill 2**, including a motion that would require employers to pay holiday pay to all workers for Christmas Day, even if they were never scheduled to work on that day.

The government motions declaring MLAs right to vote freely on matters of conscious and banning floor crossing passed; the NDP voted against both.

Thanks to the overnight sitting, it technically remained Wednesday on the legislative calendar. Therefore no Thursday question period was held.

In the Legislature

Former premier **Ed Stelmach** was spotted in the legislature on Thursday.

Many government staffers had already begun travelling down to Calgary for the Stampede by Thursday — leaving the filibustered legislature nearly empty.

Premier Watch

While MLAs debated legislation back in Edmonton, Premier **Jason Kenney** made the traditional “first flip” of a pancake to unofficially kick off the Calgary Stampede. He plans to ride a horse in today's Stampede Parade.

Government launches public inquiry into ‘foreign meddling’ against the oilsands

The government of Alberta will launch a public inquiry into foreign funding of initiatives that oppose the province's energy sector, as part of a \$30-million "war room" established by the UCP government to support the oil and gas sector.

Premier **Jason Kenney**, Energy Minister **Sonya Savage** and Justice Minister **Doug Schweitzer** made the announcement in Calgary Thursday, calling it a "fight back" strategy and laying out plans to build off controversial researcher **Vivian Krause's** work tracing the origins of money used by Canadian environmental groups.

To that end, the government [hired](#) chartered professional accountant **Steve Allen** to conduct a two-phase \$2.5-million public inquiry into "anti-Alberta" campaigns. A report on his findings will be due July 2, 2020.

The first phase will involve reviewing information, interviewing witnesses and conducting additional research. If necessary, he will hold a public hearing.

Kenney has long blamed foreign-funded special interest groups for damaging the Alberta oilsands' reputation and thus limiting economic prosperity.

"Our government is standing up for Alberta's interests by fighting the well-funded foreign campaign targeting our energy industry," Kenney said.

"This misinformation has been allowed to defame Alberta for far too long. It has seen foreign special interests secretly spending tens of millions of dollars to thwart Alberta's economic development by landlocking our energy. But it stops now."

Opposition House Leader **Deron Bilous** called the year-long public inquiry a "glorified Google search" and a "fool's errand."

"What the premier's trying to do is change the channel on his abysmal record thus far on job creation," Bilous told reporters Thursday afternoon.

Tzaporah Berman, the international program director with Stand.Earth who has been a frequent target of the UCP, said it is disturbing Kenney continues to use the power of the state against citizens who disagree with his agenda.

"This is a witch hunt similar to [former U.S. President **Richard**] **Nixon's** efforts during the civil rights protests to silence dissent and free speech," Berman [tweeted](#) Thursday. "It weakens our democracy and attempts to scare citizens from engaging in the debate on issues critical to our economy and a safe climate."

Allen received the Alberta Order of Excellence in 2017 for being a “tireless volunteer and community leader who advocates for economic development, poverty reduction, sports and the arts.”

Upcoming events

July 6 at 9:45 a.m. – Calgary

Seniors and Housing Minister **Josephine Pon** will speak at the Greater Forest Lawn 55+ Society’s Stampede breakfast.

July 7 at 6 p.m. – Edmonton

Service Alberta Minister **Nate Glubish** will speak at the Somali Canadian Cultural Society of Edmonton event at Double Tree West.

Topics of conversation

- The Public Sector Compensation Transparency Act, which governs how the province’s annual sunshine list is released, will face a review under the new United Conservative government. The House passed a motion referring the law to the Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship; it has six months to conduct a probe and prepare recommendations.
 - The sunshine list currently reports the earnings of all public sector workers who bring in more than \$108,784 per year.
- A six-year collaborative project — jointly created by the University of Victoria, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives and the Parkland Institute — called The Corporate Mapping Project tracks the influence of the energy industry over government policy. The *Star Edmonton* [has the details](#).
 - “At a cultural level, the industry has put together a narrative that many people have bought into, and not just in Alberta, that this industry is at the centre of life and we could not live without it,” the project’s co-director **Bill Carroll** told the *Star*. “Meanwhile the climate crisis is getting worse and worse. ... It’s frankly irresponsible for people to be engaging in effect a kind of denialism at this point.”
- It seems the Alberta government’s [\\$1.1-million ad campaign](#) pushing the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion in parts of British Columbia fell flat: of 800 B.C. respondents to a Research Co. [survey](#), less than one-third remember seeing any advertising in favour of Trans Mountain recently. Of those, less than one-third said the ads made them more likely to support the expansion.
 - Less than 40 per cent of British Columbians think building the new pipeline will bring down the price of gas in the province, a key message of the recent

campaign.

- Calgary City Councillor **Evan Woolley** put forward a notice of [motion](#) to pause the Green Line LRT project, in part because “the estimated cost of over \$40 million/year to operate the Green Line remains unfunded.”
 - Under the NDP, provincial funding for the LRT line was scheduled to flow from revenues from the now-repealed carbon tax. The new government has said it remains committed to funding the project.
- Population projections [publicly posted](#) on Wednesday crystal-ball Alberta will gain an additional 2.3 million residents in the next 28 years, growing the province’s population to 6.6 million. Under these projections, 47 per cent of population growth will come from international migration, 20 per cent from interprovincial migration and 34 per cent from a higher birth rate.
- Manitoba Premier **Brian Pallister** says [he’s charging ahead with a legal challenge](#) of the federal carbon backstop despite recent rulings in Ontario and Saskatchewan that upheld it as constitutional.
 - Both cases are headed to the Supreme Court, with Saskatchewan’s set to be heard in December. Manitoba’s case wouldn’t be heard until at least 2020. New Brunswick Premier **Blaine Higgs** has said his government would seek to intervene at the Supreme Court but plans to cancel its own provincial court challenge. The federal government imposed the carbon pricing system on those four provinces because they don’t have their own. (A price on Alberta’s carbon is coming on January 1, 2020.)

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 28, 2019 – July 4, 2019

- **Randy Pettipas, Candice Laws, Jordan Pinkster**, Global Public Affairs
 - **Clients:** Arts Commons
- **Tyler Bjornson, Tyler McCann**, T. Bjornson & Associates Consulting Inc.
 - **Clients:** Rahr Malting Canada Ltd.; Canada Malting Company Ltd.

- **Tyler Bjornson**, T. Bjornson & Associates Consulting Inc.
 - **Clients:** BNSF Railway Company
- **Doug Noble**, Global Public Affairs
 - **Clients:** USD Terminals Canada II ULC
- **Elan Macdonald, Pierre Alvarez, Mike Peters, Danielle Cruz**, Global Public Affairs
 - **Clients:** Greengate Power Corporation
- **Peter Csillag**, Enterprise Canada Inc.
 - **Clients:** Canadian Urban Transit Association
- **Will McMartin**, Composite Public Affairs Inc.
 - **Clients:** Vertex Pharmaceuticals (Canada) Incorporated
- **Greig Sproule**, Sproule Management Consulting Ltd.
 - **Clients:** Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers
- **Shayne Saskiw, Michelle Collins**, Alberta Counsel
 - **Clients:** Metis Nation of Alberta Association Fort McMurray Local Council 1935

Organizations that registered in-house lobbyists from June 28, 2019 – July 4, 2019

- International Brotherhood of Boilermakers, Iron Shipbuilders, Blacksmiths, Forgers and Helpers, Lodge 146
- Canadian Bankers Association
- 3M Canada
- Connect First Credit Union Ltd.
- Fire & Flower Inc.
- Canadian Life and Health Insurance Association Inc.
- Sanofi-Aventis Canada Inc.
- Alberta Association of Midwives
- Canadian Consumer Specialty Products Association (CCSPA)
- Medtronic Canada ULC
- TD Insurance
- Alberta Motor Transport Association