LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
of BRITISH COLUMBIA

First Session, 43rd Parliament

OFFICIAL REPORT OF DEBATES

(HANSARD)

Thursday, October 23, 2025
Morning Sitting
Issue No. 87

THE HONOURABLE RAJ CHOUHAN, SPEAKER

ISSN 1499-2175

PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

(Entered Confederation July 20, 1871)

LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR

Her Honour the Honourable Wendy Cocchia, CM, OBC

First Session, 43rd Parliament

SPEAKER OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Honourable Raj Chouhan

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BC NDP

Anderson, Hon. Brittny ..... Kootenay Central
Anderson, George ..... Nanaimo-Lantzville
Arora, Rohini ..... Burnaby East
Bailey, Hon. Brenda ..... Vancouver–South Granville
Beare, Hon. Lisa ..... Maple Ridge–Pitt Meadows
Begg, Garry ..... Surrey-Guildford
Blatherwick, Jennifer ..... Coquitlam-Maillardville
Boyle, Hon. Christine ..... Vancouver–Little Mountain
Brar, Hon. Jagrup ..... Surrey-Fleetwood
Chandra Herbert, Hon. Spencer ..... Vancouver–West End
Chant, Susie ..... North Vancouver–Seymour
Choi, Paul ..... Burnaby South–Metrotown
Chouhan, Hon. Raj ..... Burnaby–New Westminster
Chow, George ..... Vancouver-Fraserview
Davidson, Hon. Tamara / Laanas ..... North Coast–Haida Gwaii
Dhir, Sunita ..... Vancouver-Langara
Dix, Hon. Adrian ..... Vancouver-Renfrew
Eby, Hon. David, KC ..... Vancouver–Point Grey
Elmore, Mable ..... Vancouver-Kensington
Farnworth, Hon. Mike ..... Port Coquitlam
Gibson, Hon. Diana ..... Oak Bay–Gordon Head
Glumac, Hon. Rick ..... Port Moody–Burquitlam
Greene, Hon. Kelly ..... Richmond-Steveston
Higginson, Stephanie ..... Ladysmith-Oceanside
Kahlon, Hon. Ravi ..... Delta North
Kang, Hon. Anne ..... Burnaby Centre
Krieger, Hon. Nina ..... Victoria–Swan Lake
Lajeunesse, Dana ..... Juan de Fuca–Malahat
Lore, Hon. Grace ..... Victoria–Beacon Hill
Ma, Hon. Bowinn ..... North Vancouver–Lonsdale
Malcolmson, Hon. Sheila ..... Nanaimo–Gabriola Island
Morissette, Steve ..... Kootenay Monashee
Neill, Hon. Randene ..... Powell River–Sunshine Coast
Osborne, Hon. Josie ..... Mid Island–Pacifc Rim
Parmar, Hon. Ravi ..... Langford-Highlands
Phillip, Joan / Amshen ..... Vancouver-Strathcona
Popham, Hon. Lana ..... Saanich South
Rotchford, Darlene ..... Esquimalt-Colwood
Routledge, Janet ..... Burnaby North
Sandhu, Harwinder ..... Vernon-Lumby
Shah, Amna ..... Surrey City Centre
Sharma, Hon. Niki, KC ..... Vancouver-Hastings
Sunner, Hon. Jessie ..... Surrey-Newton
Toporowski, Debra / Qwulti'stunaat ..... Cowichan Valley
Whiteside, Hon. Jennifer ..... New Westminster–Coquitlam
Wickens, Hon. Jodie ..... Coquitlam–Burke Mountain
Yung, Hon. Terry ..... Vancouver-Yaletown

CONSERVATIVE PARTY OF BC

Banman, Bruce ..... Abbotsford South
Bhangu, Harman ..... Langley-Abbotsford
Bird, Rosalyn ..... Prince George–Valemount
Block, Lynne ..... West Vancouver–Capilano
Chan, Hon ..... Richmond Centre
Chapman, Brent ..... Surrey South
Clare, Sheldon ..... Prince George–North Cariboo
Davis, Pete ..... Kootenay Rockies
Day, Brennan ..... Courtenay-Comox
Dew, Gavin ..... Kelowna-Mission
Dhaliwal, Mandeep ..... Surrey North
Doerkson, Lorne ..... Cariboo-Chilcotin
Gasper, Reann ..... Abbotsford-Mission
Giddens, Kiel ..... Prince George–Mackenzie
Halford, Trevor ..... Surrey–White Rock
Hartwell, Sharon ..... Bulkley Valley–Stikine
Hepner, Linda ..... Surrey–Serpentine River
Kindy, Anna ..... North Island
Kooner, Steve ..... Richmond-Queensborough
Loewen, Kristina ..... Kelowna Centre
Luck, Tony ..... Fraser-Nicola
Maahs, Heather ..... Chilliwack North
McCall, Macklin ..... West Kelowna–Peachland
McInnis, Scott ..... Columbia River–Revelstoke
Milobar, Peter ..... Kamloops Centre
Mok, Lawrence ..... Maple Ridge East
Neufeld, Korky ..... Abbotsford West
Neufeld, Larry ..... Peace River South
Paton, Ian ..... Delta South
Rattée, Claire ..... Skeena
Rustad, John ..... Nechako Lakes
Stamer, Ward ..... Kamloops–North Thompson
Tepper, Bryan ..... Surrey-Panorama
Toor, Jody ..... Langley-Willowbrook
Van Popta, Misty ..... Langley–Walnut Grove
Warbus, Á'a:líya ..... Chilliwack–Cultus Lake
Wat, Teresa ..... Richmond-Bridgeport
Williams, David ..... Salmon Arm–Shuswap
Wilson, Donegal ..... Boundary-Similkameen

BC GREEN PARTY

Botterell, Rob ..... Saanich North and the Islands
Valeriote, Jeremy ..... West Vancouver–Sea to Sky

ONEBC

Armstrong, Tara ..... Kelowna–Lake Country–Coldstream
Brodie, Dallas ..... Vancouver-Quilchena

INDEPENDENT

Boultbee, Amelia ..... Penticton-Summerland
Kealy, Jordan ..... Peace River North
Sturko, Elenore ..... Surrey-Cloverdale

PARTY STANDINGS

Total seats – 93

BC NDP – 47 | Conservative Party of BC – 39 | BC Green Party – 2 | OneBC – 2 | Independent – 3

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF RIDINGS

A

Abbotsford-Mission ..... Reann Gasper
Abbotsford South ..... Bruce Banman
Abbotsford West ..... Korky Neufeld

B

Boundary-Similkameen ..... Donegal Wilson
Bulkley Valley–Stikine ..... Sharon Hartwell
Burnaby Centre ..... Hon. Anne Kang
Burnaby East ..... Rohini Arora
Burnaby–New Westminster ..... Hon. Raj Chouhan
Burnaby North ..... Janet Routledge
Burnaby South–Metrotown ..... Paul Choi

C

Cariboo-Chilcotin ..... Lorne Doerkson
Chilliwack–Cultus Lake ..... Á'a:líya Warbus
Chilliwack North ..... Heather Maahs
Columbia River–Revelstoke ..... Scott McInnis
Coquitlam–Burke Mountain ..... Hon. Jodie Wickens
Coquitlam-Maillardville ..... Jennifer Blatherwick
Courtenay-Comox ..... Brennan Day
Cowichan Valley ..... Debra Toporowski / Qwulti'stunaat

D

Delta North ..... Hon. Ravi Kahlon
Delta South ..... Ian Paton

E

Esquimalt-Colwood ..... Darlene Rotchford

F

Fraser-Nicola ..... Tony Luck

J

Juan de Fuca–Malahat ..... Dana Lajeunesse

K

Kamloops Centre ..... Peter Milobar
Kamloops–North Thompson ..... Ward Stamer
Kelowna Centre ..... Kristina Loewen
Kelowna–Lake Country–Coldstream ..... Tara Armstrong
Kelowna-Mission ..... Gavin Dew
Kootenay Central ..... Hon. Brittny Anderson
Kootenay Monashee ..... Steve Morissette
Kootenay Rockies ..... Pete Davis

L

Ladysmith-Oceanside ..... Stephanie Higginson
Langford-Highlands ..... Hon. Ravi Parmar
Langley-Abbotsford ..... Harman Bhangu
Langley–Walnut Grove ..... Misty Van Popta
Langley-Willowbrook ..... Jody Toor

M

Maple Ridge East ..... Lawrence Mok
Maple Ridge–Pitt Meadows ..... Hon. Lisa Beare
Mid Island–Pacific Rim ..... Hon. Josie Osborne

N

Nanaimo–Gabriola Island ..... Hon. Sheila Malcolmson
Nanaimo-Lantzville ..... George Anderson
Nechako Lakes ..... John Rustad
New Westminster–Coquitlam ..... Hon. Jennifer Whiteside
North Coast–Haida Gwaii ..... Hon. Laanas / Tamara Davidson
North Island ..... Anna Kindy
North Vancouver–Lonsdale ..... Hon. Bowinn Ma
North Vancouver–Seymour ..... Susie Chant

O

Oak Bay–Gordon Head ..... Hon. Diana Gibson

P

Peace River North ..... Jordan Kealy
Peace River South ..... Larry Neufeld
Penticton-Summerland ..... Amelia Boultbee
Port Coquitlam ..... Hon. Mike Farnworth
Port Moody–Burquitlam ..... Hon. Rick Glumac
Powell River–Sunshine Coast ..... Hon. Randene Neill
Prince George–Mackenzie ..... Kiel Giddens
Prince George–North Cariboo ..... Sheldon Clare
Prince George–Valemount ..... Rosalyn Bird

R

Richmond-Bridgeport ..... Teresa Wat
Richmond Centre ..... Hon Chan
Richmond-Queensborough ..... Steve Kooner
Richmond-Steveston ..... Hon. Kelly Greene

S

Saanich North and the Islands ..... Rob Botterell
Saanich South ..... Hon. Lana Popham
Salmon Arm–Shuswap ..... David Williams
Skeena ..... Claire Rattée
Surrey City Centre ..... Amna Shah
Surrey-Cloverdale ..... Elenore Sturko
Surrey-Fleetwood ..... Hon. Jagrup Brar
Surrey-Guildford ..... Garry Begg
Surrey-Newton ..... Hon. Jessie Sunner
Surrey North ..... Mandeep Dhaliwal
Surrey-Panorama ..... Bryan Tepper
Surrey–Serpentine River ..... Linda Hepner
Surrey South ..... Brent Chapman
Surrey–White Rock ..... Trevor Halford

V

Vancouver-Fraserview ..... George Chow
Vancouver-Hastings ..... Hon. Niki Sharma, KC
Vancouver-Kensington ..... Mable Elmore
Vancouver-Langara ..... Sunita Dhir
Vancouver–Little Mountain ..... Hon. Christine Boyle
Vancouver–Point Grey ..... Hon. David Eby, KC
Vancouver-Quilchena ..... Dallas Brodie
Vancouver-Renfrew ..... Hon. Adrian Dix
Vancouver–South Granville ..... Hon. Brenda Bailey
Vancouver-Strathcona ..... Amshen / Joan Phillip
Vancouver–West End ..... Hon. Spencer Chandra Herbert
Vancouver-Yaletown ..... Hon. Terry Yung
Vernon-Lumby ..... Harwinder Sandhu
Victoria–Beacon Hill ..... Hon. Grace Lore
Victoria–Swan Lake ..... Hon. Nina Krieger

W

West Kelowna–Peachland ..... Macklin McCall
West Vancouver–Capilano ..... Lynne Block
West Vancouver–Sea to Sky ..... Jeremy Valeriote

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THURSDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2025

The House met at 10:03 a.m.

[The Speaker in the chair.]

Routine Business

Prayers and reflections: Hon. Kelly Greene.

Statements

TORONTO BLUE JAYS AND WORLD SERIES

Korky Neufeld: Well, the Blue Jays called me to make sure that I would announce their next series in the House, because as we know, athletes are very superstitious. They wanted to make sure I announced them because they believe by announcing it in this House, it propelled them to victory over the Mariners.

Without further ado, the best-of-seven-games World Series starts tomorrow night. It's the Los Angeles Dodgers versus the Toronto Blue Jays.

[10:05 a.m.]

The history of Los Angeles is that they've been in the league 135 years. They have 39 post-season appearances. They've won 27 pennants and eight world championships. Their payroll is over $350 million annually.

The young Blue Jays have been 49 years in the league and have had 11 playoff appearances, three pennants and two world championships but $100 million less in their payroll annually.

This is David versus Goliath. All we need is one smooth stone, and we can knock Goliath out.

Go, Blue Jays, go!

Introductions by Members

Hon. Lana Popham: I've got some guests visiting today in the chamber.

Two of them I absolutely adore. My dad, Henry, and my mom, Lee-Ann, are visiting from Mayne Island, and they've brought a friend with them. They've brought Ryan Palmer. He's from Sacramento, California. This is his first time visiting our lovely country.

I'd just like to say thank you for being a friend to Canada. We appreciate your visit.

Dallas Brodie: Today I'm honoured to introduce an esteemed guest into our provincial Legislature. He was fired from his position as a high school teacher for telling the truth. He was fired for refusing to lie to his students. His name is Jim McMurty, and he refused to repeat the worst lie in Canadian history, that a genocide took place at the Kamloops Residential School.

Let me be clear. Canadians have never committed a genocide. Zero bodies were found at Kamloops. Yet Canadians continue to be guilted into giving up their country based on this lie.

The Speaker: Member.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Member, shhh.

Dallas Brodie: For that, Jim McMurty was silenced, cast aside and shamed.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Members. Members.

Member, just make the introduction, not a two-minute statement, please. Thank you.

Dallas Brodie: Okay.

He has a PhD in educational theory from the University of Toronto. He has been committed to a life of service at schools as a coach, club supervisor, mentor and organizer of events for students with disabilities.

Jim is a Canadian hero, and in the name of the truth and in the name of British Columbia's glorious history and its exceptional British founders, we honour Jim McMurty today in this House.

Thank you, Jim.

Hon. Laanas / Tamara Davidson: Once again my daughter is here visiting in the precinct — a strong Indigenous young woman.

I hope that everyone here will make her feel welcomed and stand up.

I also have the honour of introducing Michelle Brown, the executive director of the North Island Marine Mammal Stewardship Association. This association does the unique and important work of supporting marine mammals, the economy and the marine environment off of northern Vancouver Island.

Please join me in welcoming Michelle.

Larry Neufeld: I know that my esteemed colleagues in this chamber on both sides of the aisle have heard me introduce and speak of my family in the past, and we all appreciate how incredibly important those folks are.

I've also been reminded by my family that we are joined this morning by my first grandchild, and I neglected to mention his name last time I introduced him. So I'd like to welcome Elijah Piper and his father, my son-in-law, Burl Piper.

Please make them feel welcome.

Hon. Spencer Chandra Herbert: Well, when people rise with hate, when they try to spread hate, we get organized. I

want to acknowledge a group that has joined us here today who stand against hate against LGBTQ people sometimes spread by other people. They have joined us here, the Dogwood Monarchist Society, and I've got to say that I'm a proud Dogwood Monarchist.

[10:10 a.m.]

They are a group established in 1972 to fundraise, to friend-raise and to have a heck of a lot of fun dancing on Davie Street, dining on Denman Street, winning the West End and, indeed, all across this province and across our country.

I would ask the House to please help me honour and welcome their most imperial sovereign majesties, emperor and empress Zach and Alter; and their imperial crown princess, Glimmer Rouge; and of course, the rest of their esteemed delegation who are joining us today.

Go DMS. Go Dogwood monarchists. Stand against hate. Stand up for love.

Welcome.

Peter Milobar: We're joined here today by two great younger Port Coquitlam–proud residents who do a lot of great things within their community and are very proud to be from Port Coquitlam, Keenan Adams and his wife, Florence.

Some members might recognize Keenan's name. He was a candidate for us in the last election, and we have no doubt on this side that he will one day continue on the tradition of Port Coquitlam of putting someone here for 30 years.

Hon. Christine Boyle: I know we have a number of representatives from Neighbourhood Houses in the chambers and in the building today, and I'm glad to welcome them all.

I just want to specifically recognize and welcome three members from the Little Mountain Neighbourhood House Society in my own riding. Diane Wilmann is the director of settlement and older adults, Andrea Canales is the director of children and youth programs, and Joel Bronstein is the executive director.

Like all Neighbourhood Houses, Little Mountain Neighbourhood House provides incredible programs and services that help ensure that our community is welcoming and safe and supportive for all members across the community. I had the opportunity, with other colleagues, to visit the Little Mountain Neighbourhood Society's food hub recently, where they distribute food that's grown locally to members of the community.

Incredible work. I'm so grateful for them and all of the Neighbourhood Houses for what they do.

Jeremy Valeriote: I am fully energized to introduce our new B.C. Green Party leader, Emily Lowan.

Emily grew up right here in Victoria and is a renter, organizer and passionate advocate for climate justice and Indigenous solidarity. Emily has led federal policy coalitions that represent over 1.5 million Canadians as a strategist at Climate Action Network Canada, has worked at the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, published critical research and successfully led a major fossil fuel divestment campaign.

I note that Ms. Lowan is in very good company in this House. She's also been targeted by the Alberta Premier for her work. I look forward to Emily joining us here on the floor of the chamber in good time.

Please join me in welcoming Emily Lowan.

Kristina Loewen: This morning I just want to give a shout-out to my youngest daughter. It is her birthday.

She is not here, but in my 25 years of raising my children, this is the first birthday I'm missing. So it's a little bit of a sad day for me, but I'm also just so overwhelmingly proud of Mykyla. She turns 17 today, and she passed her road test on Monday, first try.

Join me in wishing her a happy birthday.

Hon. Brenda Bailey: Although I'm not there in the House today and working from home, I do know that Kits Neighbourhood House is in the House today. This is a wonderful organization that provides such integral services to folks in my riding, services for seniors, child care services, everything in between.

I was recently there for Diwali. I go there for Nowruz. They do a wonderful job of welcoming everyone into their community. They showed *Sugarcane* on Indigenous Peoples Day, really brought together our community to talk about, really, issues of great importance.

They're truth-tellers. They're valued members of our community. They do fantastic work.

Please join me in welcoming them to the House today.

Hon. Jennifer Whiteside: I'd like to provide a warm welcome today to Mary Trentadue, who is here with the Neighbourhood House group that is visiting the precinct today.

[10:15 a.m.]

Mary is a former city councillor. She is a New West community booster and advocate. She is somebody who brings community together, and she is part of a team that is working on a beautiful project of building a Neighbourhood House in New Westminster.

Would the House please join me in making her feel very welcome today.

Kiel Giddens: I know we always talk about our loved ones at home when we're here doing this work, and I couldn't do this job without my lovely wife, Elyse Giddens.

It's her birthday on Saturday, so in the spirit of wishing our family members a happy birthday, I want to wish my

lovely wife a very happy birthday. Right now, as we're here today, my wife and my two kids are on a flight to Halifax. My wife will be receiving her convocation for her MBA program, and I am so proud of her.

Congratulations, honey.

Hon. Grace Lore: I am also not there, but I know members of my community are. Victoria–Beacon Hill is absolutely blessed to have three Neighbourhood Houses: the James Bay Community Project, the Fairfield-Gonzalez neighbourhood association and the Fernwood resource group.

They are absolutely essential. They provide $10-a-day child care, food, services to seniors and newcomers in our community. They support new housing that is going in all around Victoria–Beacon Hill. They are absolutely essential to robust, connected communities.

I'm incredibly grateful for the work that they do and hope everyone will join me in welcoming them to the House.

Hon. Anne Kang: On behalf of all the Burnaby MLAs that are here today, I want to recognize that in the gallery today we have a very dear friend, Antonia Beck, who is the CEO of Burnaby Neighbourhood House.

Antonia founded the Burnaby Neighbourhood House in 1996. She was first executive director, and she is now CEO. Since then, we've seen two Neighbourhood Houses in Burnaby, one in the south and one in the north. I want to thank her for her very close to 40 years of service to the community of Burnaby, and I look forward to celebrating her retirement.

Would everyone join me in thanking Antonia for the work that she does and in making her feel very welcome in the House today.

Anna Kindy: I want to welcome Dr. Kaitlin Stockton, a very strong advocate for health care, for accountability and transparency.

I want to thank the Minister of Health for meeting her today.

Dana Lajeunesse: I want to introduce a local resident of mine, Kelly Walker, from the Sooke Family Resource Society, also an advocate for Neighbourhood House.

Hon. Jessie Sunner: I'm pleased today to welcome the B.C. Federation of Students, who are visiting the Legislature today as a part of their fall advocacy days.

They're led by chairperson Debi Herrera Lira and secretary-treasurer Cole Reinbold and joined by representatives and members at large from their organization that represents 14 universities and colleges across our province. They are passionate student leaders, and they're here to share their voices and the priorities for 170,000 students across our province.

I would really like to thank them for their advocacy and ask the House to join me in wishing them a warm welcome to the House.

Amshen / Joan Phillip: I would like to welcome all the Neighbourhood Houses that are here in the House.

I also invite the MLAs, all of us, to have a meet-and-greet with them from noon to one in the Hall of Honour, a little luncheon.

Thank you for coming.

[10:20 a.m.]

Harwinder Sandhu: As a proud B.C. Nurses Union member myself and on behalf of the MLA for North Vancouver–Seymour and our entire B.C. NDP caucus, I am thrilled to welcome B.C. Nurses Union delegates here.

They're here at the precinct, and we had a wonderful meeting — president Adriane Gear, vice-president Tristan Newby, their executive team and their lobby coordinators from all over B.C., all regions representing, fierce advocates for health care, stronger public health care, and I had the honour to work with many of them.

I just want to say we had a wonderful meeting. They appreciated the efforts of our government, making B.C. one of the only jurisdictions implementing nurse-patient ratios and bringing relational security officers, as well as mental health supports. We shared our challenges and our collective commitment to continue to work together to strengthen our health care system.

Would the House please join me to welcome this incredible group of people and thank them for everything they do every day.

Hon. Lisa Beare: In the gallery today, we have Christian Cowley from Maple Ridge, who runs the Neighbourhood House in Maple Ridge — CEED Centre, as it's known; which offers fantastic programs and services to our community.

I hope the whole House will make Christian feel very welcome.

Just on a personal note as well, I want to give my heartfelt appreciation to the member from Prince George and the member from Kelowna. All of us who have kids in this House have missed events or families and spouses, and it's difficult for every single one of us.

We feel you. We see you. We know how important it is to your families that you be here and do your work, but it's also important for your families that you're home for them. So take the leave. Go home. Spend time with your families. We feel you.

Hon. Sheila Malcolmson: Today joining us in the House from Nanaimo, we have two leaders in education.

Dan Parker, who is a grade 10 and 9 teacher from Nanaimo District Secondary School, NDSS, is part of the B.C. Teachers Institute on Parliamentary Democracy.

Reminder to members that from noon to one at Ned DeBeck, you can meet with some of these teachers.

Dan Parker brought his class here to the Legislature in March. It was great to meet them.

Also, from Vancouver Island University Students Union, Cole Reinbold.

Both of these leaders are making a big impact in my riding of Nanaimo–Gabriola Island.

Will the House please join me in welcoming them.

Darlene Rotchford: I would be amiss not to thank…. I see Mary from Esquimalt Neighbourhood House up in the gallery. Esquimalt Neighbourhood House does amazing work in not just my community of Esquimalt but across my riding.

Would the House make her feel extra welcome today.

Sunita Dhir: Today I welcome members from South Van Neighbourhood House in the gallery. They do commendable work for communities, seniors, families and newcomers, and we are very fortunate to have them serve the South Vancouver communities.

Let's make them feel welcome in the House.

Speaker's Statement

GUIDELINES FOR VIRTUAL PARTICIPATION BY MEMBERS

The Speaker: Members, I will remind all members that the updated virtual participation guidelines include a prohibition on the use of blurred backgrounds.

While the Chair recognizes the Minister of Finance, I thank the minister for rectifying her background right away. Thank you so much.

Introduction and First Reading of Bills

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT PROHIBITION ACT

Dallas Brodie presented a bill intituled Land Acknowledgement Prohibition Act.

Dallas Brodie: I move that a bill intituled the Land Acknowledgement Prohibition Act, of which notice has been given in my name on the order paper, be introduced and read a first time now.

I rise today to introduce the Land Acknowledgement Prohibition Act. Land acknowledgements are the anthem of a suicidal nation. They're recited in classrooms, boardrooms and before virtually every public event.

[10:25 a.m.]

They're repeated ritualistically to instil the belief that our country is illegitimate, that Canada has no right to exist, that our ancestors are evil and our history must be abrogated. They tell our children that we stand on stolen land.

This bill will make it unlawful for publicly funded institutions and their employees, such as teachers, to make or to compel others to make land acknowledgements that deny the sovereignty of the Crown over the lands of British Columbia or that attribute collective guilt based on race, ancestry or the historical actions of Canadian figures. Our bill expressly protects statements that are historically accurate and includes provisions to guarantee academic freedom.

British Columbia has a glorious history. Our British founders entered this land in the 18th century as the untamed wilderness that it was. They built roads, railroads, mines, homes, and established laws. They created a civilization, a civilization we call home and enjoy today.

Our ancestors were not evil. The truth is they did not steal Canada. They built Canada, and we're not ashamed of that. We're proud of their legacy and of our history and culture, a magnanimous and glorious one. We'll no longer shame ourselves in the daily course of public life.

The Land Acknowledgement Prohibition Act declares that this land belongs to all British Columbians, without apology and without surrender. We should end all forms of discrimination between citizens based on race or ancestry.

I urge every member of this House to affirm their commitment to the equal rights and equal dignity of every Canadian by supporting this bill.

The Speaker: Members, the question is first reading of the bill.

Division has been called.

[10:30 a.m. - 10:35 a.m.]

Members, the question is the first reading of the bill introduced by the member for Vancouver-Quilchena intituled Land Acknowledgement Prohibition Act.

[10:40 a.m.]

Motion negatived on the following division:

YEAS — 5		
Brodie	Armstrong	Bhangu
Maahs		Kealy
NAYS — 85		
Lore	G. Anderson	Blatherwick
Routledge	Chant	Toporowski
B. Anderson	Neill	Osborne
Brar	Krieger	Davidson
Parmar	Sunner	Beare
Chandra Herbert	Wickens	Kang
Sandhu	Begg	Higginson
Phillip	Lajeunesse	Choi
Rotchford	Elmore	Morissette
Popham	Dix	Sharma
Farnworth	Eby	Bailey
Kahlon	Greene	Whiteside
Boyle	Ma	Yung
Malcolmson	Gibson	Glumac
Arora	Shah	Chow
Dhir	Wilson	Kindy
Milobar	Warbus	Rustad
Banman	Wat	Kooner
Halford	Hartwell	L. Neufeld
Van Popta	Dew	Clare
K. Neufeld	Valeriote	Botterell
Paton	Gasper	Chan
Toor	Hepner	Giddens
Davis	McInnis	Bird
McCall	Stamer	Day
Tepper	Mok	Sturko
Boultbee	Williams	Loewen
Dhaliwal	Doerkson	Luck
	Block	

BILL M217 — DASHBOARD CAMERAS IN COMMERCIAL VEHICLES ACT

Ward Stamer presented a bill intituled Dashboard Cameras in Commercial Vehicles Act.

Ward Stamer: I move that a bill, Dashboard Cameras in Commercial Vehicles Act, of which notice has been given in my name on the order paper, be introduced and read a first time now.

All members of this chamber have witnessed firsthand unsafe and dangerous drivers among us. In today's fast-paced world, safety and accountability on our roads have never been more important. That's why implementing mandatory dashboard cams in commercial vehicles is a smart, forward-thinking step that benefits everyone — drivers, companies and the public alike.

Dashcams provide clear, objective evidence in the event of accidents or disputes. Instead of relying on conflicting reports, investigators and insurance companies can see exactly what happened. This protects professional drivers from false claims and helps ensure that those truly at fault are held accountable.

Beyond evidence, dashcams promote safer driving habits. Knowing they are being recorded encourages drivers to remain focused, follow traffic laws and drive responsibly. Over time, this leads to fewer collisions, less downtime and reduced insurance costs for companies and ICBC.

For the public, mandatory commercial dashcams means greater transparency on our highways. That can help identify reckless drivers and unsafe driving conditions or even capture evidence in criminal investigations.

In short, they make our roads safer for everyone. In an industry built on responsibility and trust, dashcams are not about surveillance. They're about professionalism, protection and peace of mind. By mandating dashcams in all commercial vehicles, we're investing in safety, accountability and the future of transportation.

The Speaker: Members, the question is first reading of the bill.

Motion approved.

Ward Stamer: I move that the bill be placed on the orders of the day for second reading at the next sitting of the House after today.

Motion approved.

Members' Statements

CHARLES HELM AND HEALTH CARE IN TUMBLER RIDGE

Larry Neufeld: It warms my heart and allows me to sleep well in the evening knowing that all of my colleagues here can't wait to view my social media feed before they go to sleep in the evening.

And I want to thank you for that.

As you have all diligently followed my social media feeds, you will recognize the trauma that the beautiful community of Tumbler Ridge has gone through with respect to losing their emergency response room.

Today I want to recognize an extraordinary British Columbian who has been instrumental in heading the fight to bring back that incredibly important part of the community. That individual is Dr. Charles Helm of Tumbler Ridge.

For decades, Dr. Helm has been a cornerstone of health care, science and community leadership in the South Peace. As a family physician, he has served with compassion and dedication, providing care to residents in some of our province's most remote and rural communities.

[10:45 a.m.]

Dr. Helm's commitment to accessible health care has

been unwavering. He has been working very closely, as I've already stated, with local officials, colleagues and health authorities to ensure that residents once again have access to their vital emergency health care.

Beyond medicine, Dr. Helm's passion for the outdoors and community well-being has left a lasting mark. He helped develop and promote local hiking trails across the region and founded the Emperor's Challenge mountain run, an annual event that attracts participants from across the province and celebrates the natural beauty of northern British Columbia.

Dr. Helm is also recognized internationally for his pioneering work in paleontology. His leadership in discovering and preserving the Tumbler Ridge dinosaur trackways led to the area's designation as a UNESCO global geopark.

On behalf of this House, I extend our heartfelt appreciation to Dr. Charles Helm for his outstanding contributions to health care, recreation and the scientific heritage of this province.

CYCLING WITHOUT AGE

Susie Chant: Thank you for the opportunity to bring recognition to a small yet mighty new initiative that provides great joy to the seniors and elders on the North Shore.

I will, of course, start by acknowledging with gratitude that I'm speaking on the lands of the lək̓ʷəŋən-speaking people, specifically the Songhees and the Esquimalt.

And when I'm at home, I'm in the riding of North Vancouver–Seymour, and I'm on the lands of the Sḵwx̱wú7-mesh and the səlilwətaɬ.

I speak these names with honour and pride.

Today I rise to celebrate a movement that brings dignity, joy and connection to our elders and mobility-challenged citizens, Cycling Without Age. Founded on the simple yet profound idea that everybody deserves the wind in their hair, Cycling Without Age has grown to over 3,500 chapters in 41 countries. Here in British Columbia, we are proud to host 23 chapters, each powered by volunteers who give their time, compassion and pedal power to those who can no longer ride on their own.

I want to highlight the remarkable work of the North Shore Vancouver chapter. In 2025 alone, they partnered with 20 care organizations and 40 pilots, providing over 1,000 rides to residents using a fleet of five two-seater trishaws and two specially designed wheelchair-carrying trishaws.

Cycling Without Age reminds us that accessibility is not just about infrastructure; it's about inclusion. It's about ensuring that no one is left behind, regardless of age or ability. It's not just about older people receiving rides. It's also about the volunteers, who are known as pilots. Cycling Without Age is less about volunteering in the traditional sense of the word and more about active citizenship that's driven by a desire to get involved and to make a real difference for somebody. It's about creating relationships between people.

Let us continue to support and expand this inspiring initiative across our province because when we invest in compassion, we build a stronger, more connected British Columbia.

CHINESE CALLIGRAPHY

Hon Chan: I would like to take this moment to recognize the Western Canada Chinese Calligraphy Association for their recent exhibition and their ongoing contribution to our community. I had the privilege of attending the opening of both their current and past exhibitions, which beautifully showcase the richness of Chinese culture and artistic heritage.

One of the masters shared that practicing calligraphy helps bring calmness, balance and reflection to our lives. I was especially inspired to learn that Master Lau, at 85 years old, continues to teach and share his passion, a true symbol of lifelong dedication and community spirit. Chinese calligraphy represents more than artistic beauty. It carries deep wisdom and philosophy.

My mother Susanna, a former Chinese teacher and principal, also practices calligraphy and painting. She now serves as the president of Kingsland calligraphy, a group that meets weekly at the Minoru Centre For Active Living in my riding of Richmond Centre.

When I was first elected as an MLA last year, she wrote for me the phrase 上善若水, which, with the Speaker's approval, I have here with me today. It means "the highest goodness is like water." To my English-speaking colleagues, this saying teaches that water nourishes all things without competing for credit. It symbolizes harmony and fairness.

My mother reminded me, and all of us as elected officials, that we're not above others. We're here to serve with a good heart. Like water, we should serve and nourish every corner of our society without ego or desire for fame.

[10:50 a.m.]

As we celebrate the first Korean Heritage Month here in British Columbia, let us continue to celebrate the many cultures that shape our province and work together to build a community rooted in respect, empathy and shared pride.

The Speaker: The member and I will talk later.

DON NUTINI AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO TRAIL

Steve Morissette: Today, as I am often inclined to do, I rise to celebrate an incredible rural leader, Don Nutini.

Recently I had the pleasure of joining the community at the Trail airport, to dedicate their terminal in Don's honour, now officially the Don Nutini Terminal. It's a fit-

ting tribute to someone who has been instrumental in developing that airport and the terminal building itself.

Now, I say this with great respect for my colleagues — mayors, councillors, regional directors and MLAs. We come and go. But Don — he is ever-present, doing good work for the community, and at 94 years young, he has no plans to slow down any time soon.

I met Don decades ago. From the first moment, he impressed me as calm, reasonable, funny and, above all, a man of action, not words. He's the kind of person who doesn't seek the spotlight but is always there in the background, quietly moving projects and people forward.

Don's fingerprints are all over the Trail area, from the Colombo Lodge piazza to the heliport at Kootenay Boundary Regional Hospital to Trail Communities in Bloom and, of course, the Trail airport.

Few people have given as much to their community as Don Nutini. At 94, he continues to inspire all of us with his energy, humility and lifelong commitment to service.

Thank you, Don, for everything you've done and continue to do. You are a shining example of selfless volunteerism, community spirit and the Italo-Canadian community in Trail.

Congratulations, Don. You are truly an inspiration.

WHISTLER NATURALISTS SOCIETY

Jeremy Valeriote: I am proud to stand and celebrate the work of the Whistler Naturalists Society. I know what you might be thinking. Despite Whistler's colourful counterculture history, I am not talking about a nudist club.

The Whistler Naturalists emerged from founder Bob Brett's and others' desire to better understand and appreciate our natural environment. They diverged from the Association of Whistler Area Residents for the Environment because they chose a path focused on exploration and education instead of advocacy. For over 25 years, this volunteer-driven organization has been a cornerstone of nature education in Whistler, offering monthly bird walks, glacier monitoring, bioblitzes, dendrochronology and school outreach programs.

One of the Naturalists' most remarkable contributions is the October festival to celebrate mushrooms, called Fungus Among Us. I'm going to say it a few times because I like saying it. Fungus Among Us brings together schoolchildren, amateur mycologists, scientists, Indigenous Knowledge Keepers, chefs and nature lovers to explore the fascinating world of fungi.

On a foraging walk and talk with enthusiastic expert Erin Feldman last Saturday, my daughters and I learned that mushrooms are just the tip of the iceberg, the fruiting body of a vast underground mycelial network. Also, the MycoMap Network will map the genetic sequence of every species of fungi in British Columbia and beyond, because fungi are more than just fascinating; they're foundational.

From penicillin to statins, fungi have revolutionized modern medicine. They've given us life-saving antibiotics, immunosuppressants for organ transplants and are now being studied for their potential in mental health therapy. Psilocybin from fungi is showing promise for treatment-resistant depression and post-traumatic stress disorder. Fungus's role in science is as profound as its role in our forests.

Through events like Fungus Among Us, the Whistler Naturalists remind us that nature is not just something we visit. It's something that is part of us, and we are part of it. The Naturalists' dedication to fostering curiosity, stewardship and community connection is a gift to Whistler and beyond.

[10:55 a.m.]

WEEK WITHOUT VIOLENCE INITIATIVE AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Rohini Arora: This week, from October 20 to 24, I proudly stand in solidarity with YWCA Canada, the World YWCA and communities in dozens of countries to mark the Week Without Violence, a time to recommit to ending all forms of violence, especially violence against women and girls.

Around the world, more than 123 million people have been affected by conflict and persecution. In the Middle East, including Gaza; Sudan; Ukraine; and the Democratic Republic of Congo, women and children, who do not start wars, are too often the ones that suffer most. These realities remind us that peace and safety are not abstract ideals. They are human rights that must be protected, built and shared.

Here at home in Canada and in British Columbia, we know the struggle is not distant. Every two days a woman or a girl in Canada is killed because of gender-based violence. Indigenous women and girls continue to face disproportionately high rates of violence, rooted in systemic inequities. We cannot accept this as normal.

Our government is committed to creating a future where safety, dignity and justice are not just privileges for some but guarantees for all. That means sustained investment in prevention, affordable housing, trauma-informed supports and survivor-centred action. It means amplifying the leadership of communities and organizations like the YWCAs across the province and around the world, who continuously show us what true courage and care in action truly look like.

But this work cannot be done by one government or one organization alone. All levels of government — local, provincial, territorial and federal — must unite with communities, Indigenous partners and global allies to end gender-based violence once and for all.

As we rise for peace this week, I am reminded of the

words of Malala Yousafzai, who said: "We cannot all succeed when half of us are held back."

The truth should guide us in every policy, every partnership and every act of solidarity until every woman and girl can live free from fear.

Oral Questions

SCHOOL INFRASTRUCTURE CONDITIONS AND REPLACEMENT FACILITIES

Misty Van Popta: Families are losing faith that their kids will ever have safe, reliable schools under this government.

In Kitimat, Mount Elizabeth, the only middle school, was promised to be replaced ten years ago. Twenty percent of that school building has been condemned and is closed. Even Rio Tinto and LNG have staffing issues because of the state of that school.

When will the minister deliver on that promise and treat rural students with respect?

Hon. Bowinn Ma: As the member has noted, families need good schools in their communities so that they can give their children the best chance that they have to succeed and thrive. It's not only good for our children, but it's also good for our economy. When communities don't have enough access to safe schools for their children, they can have difficulty recruiting workers into their communities.

This and all so many other reasons are why our government has been building and expanding K-to-12 schools at a record pace since we came into government in 2017. We've invested over $6 billion in schools so far. There's much more on the way.

I'm happy to connect with the member opposite on the specific school that she has raised, but suffice to say, we have been doing a lot, and we will continue to do a lot.

The Speaker: Member, supplemental.

Misty Van Popta: Cedar Elementary was promised a replacement in 2017 and again in 2024. The minister blamed the delay on a fire at another school, but that's covered by school replacement program.

The school's breakfast and lunch program is run out of a gym change room, and the only accessible bathroom in the entire school is behind a plastic accordion door in a storage closet.

When will this government finally give Cedar students a safe, inclusive school?

[11:00 a.m.]

Hon. Bowinn Ma: It was devastating to communities across the province when we lost schools to fire. We lost three schools to fire in the last few years alone.

We've been working with school districts that have been affected by these fires. It was understood that the schools that were affected by these fires needed to be prioritized in our capital plan, and that's what we've prioritized.

I assure the member that we understand that more needs to be done. As a government, we have demonstrated our commitment, year over year, to building and expanding schools across the province. We'll continue to do that work.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROJECT IN MISSION

Reann Gasper: In Mission, a 92-unit affordable housing complex is finished and sitting empty.

Families can't afford to buy, can't afford to rent and now can't even move into homes that are already built.

Can this minister stand and give us a specific date when the doors will be open for this building? What is the date?

Hon. Christine Boyle: Thank you for the question.

I'm happy to follow up on the specifics of that building. I don't have them in front of me.

I can tell you that across this province we've been working on delivering more housing for seniors, more housing for families, more supportive housing.

In Mission specifically, we've delivered 73 units through the community housing fund for low-income families. We've delivered 179 units across three separate projects for community members with special needs, 19 units, 50 units of supportive housing and 54 shelter beds.

More is needed, and I'm happy to work with the member opposite to better understand the specific project she's speaking to.

The Speaker: Member, supplemental.

GOVERNMENT POLICIES AND RELATIONS WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Reann Gasper: Local mayors are saying relations with the NDP are "at a historic low." They are hiding behind NDAs and shutting out communities with a one-size-fits-all approach that fits nobody.

View Royal mayor Sid Tobias called this government's and this Premier's actions dangerous.

Why doesn't this Premier trust B.C. mayors and councils?

Hon. Christine Boyle: We have very good relationships with the vast majority of local governments across this province.

I know how hard it is to be working at the local government table, and I am so glad to be working alongside hard-working and dedicated mayors and councillors across this province. I had excellent meetings throughout the Union

of B.C. Municipalities conference just recently. I'm on the phone with mayors regularly, talking about how we can work together on challenges.

We are, it's true, a government that has been very ambitious, appropriately so, on building more housing options so young families can stay in their communities, so seniors can age in their communities. We're working alongside local governments to reduce barriers, reduce red tape and ensure that homes get delivered for people in every community of this province, and we'll continue to do that work.

GOVERNMENT ACTION ON SOCIAL INEQUALITY AND BUDGET PRIORITIES

Rob Botterell: Yesterday I spoke to the previous member for Saanich North and the Islands, who encountered a bear while fishing in the Goldstream River, a precious ecosystem that's under threat from a completely unnecessary, ecosystem-killing highway expansion proposal. Adam Olsen said he and the bear happily coexisted without conflict because there is enough salmon in the river for both of them.

Our province is a bit like that river, but food isn't being shared with everyone. That inequality is rupturing our social cohesion. British Columbia has the worst inequality in Canada, with the poorest 20 percent of households totalling only 3 percent of disposable income. This isn't only unfair; it's dangerous.

According to a United Nations report released today, there's a direct link between inequality, an insufficient social security system…

The Speaker: Question, Member.

Rob Botterell: …and the rise of far-right extremism.

My question is to the Premier. Inequality is driving an us-against-them mentality. Is he the least bit worried that his failure to address inequality is rupturing the social cohesion of this province?

[11:05 a.m.]

Hon. Sheila Malcolmson: The world does feel very uncertain right now, and we recognize the pressure that people are under across the globe because of inflation impacts.

Our government has made poverty reduction a priority since our very first year in government. British Columbia was the last place in the country to have a poverty reduction strategy. We brought in one in 2018. We brought in another one last year. It has informed across government the annual increases to minimum wage, the highest minimum wage in the country other than Prince Edward Island.

Historic investments in food growing and food distribution to help people tackle the incredibly increased cost of groceries. Improved employment planning so that people that need a little bit of an extra lift up can get employment supports so that they can participate more fully in community and economy. That's good for everybody. As we discussed yesterday, historic increases in income assistance and PWD support.

There's more for us to do. We're continuing to do the work, because we know everybody does better when they get a little bit of extra help.

The Speaker: Member, supplemental.

Rob Botterell: We have heard it over and over. The government's coffers are empty, and everybody's got to tighten their belts. Let's start by cutting corporate subsidies and handouts to fossil fuel companies. Next we can look to B.C.'s wealthiest 1 percent, who aren't paying their fair share. That would start to balance the scales and make life more livable for the working class.

Three in ten British Columbians are eating less every month to make ends meet. Meanwhile, the province finds another $200 million to fund fossil fuel infrastructure. So when we're looking for ways to balance B.C.'s budget, we should start at the top.

My question is to the Premier. Why is his government cutting social services and giving massive handouts to corporations and billionaires when he should be doing the opposite?

Hon. Sheila Malcolmson: Let me speak to the approach that our government has been bringing in, in contrast to when the opposition was in power. Income assistance frozen for a decade under the opposition when they were in power, a 73 percent increase….

Interjections.

The Speaker: Shhh, Members. Members.
Minister, please complete.

Hon. Sheila Malcolmson: Thank you.

They brought in mean-spirited barriers to people that needed help the most — cancelling the disability bus pass, for example. We brought it back. The opposition….

Interjections.

The Speaker: Members. Members.
Order, Members. Members, take it easy.
Please conclude.

Hon. Sheila Malcolmson: We're proud of the investments that we have made in people that need extra help, that need a lift up. We're going to continue to do that work,

guided by our poverty reduction strategy. It's a record we'll continue to build on.

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE IN DYING

Tara Armstrong: Canada now has the fastest-growing assisted suicide program in the world, and here in British Columbia, one in 20 deaths is now by government-assisted suicide. That's one in 20.

This program was supposed to be a last resort, reserved for those suffering unbearable physical pain and facing imminent death, but a recent Cardus report has exposed something truly horrifying. Forty-two percent of all MAiD deaths involved people living with disabilities — people who needed support, not a lethal injection. One in five of those deaths involved people who were suffering from isolation and loneliness.

[11:10 a.m.]

My question for the Premier is this. Why is this government facilitating the death of people who aren't dying when it should be providing them with the support and dignity they need to keep living?

Hon. Josie Osborne: The choice of an individual in a situation in which they are facing the most extreme, the most dire consequences is something to take incredibly seriously. That's why we have followed the framework that has been set out by the federal government in respecting the rights of individuals to make these decisions and using a system of accountabilities to ensure that these decisions are made with integrity, with support and with compassion.

We're going to continue in the vein of that work and, at the same time, continue to provide the supports for people and their families as they experience the bereavement, the suffering and the loss from any number of reasons why a person may choose to take this course.

That's an incredibly serious topic and one that we will continue to listen to experts in various fields as we guide this path forward.

The Speaker: Member, supplemental.

Tara Armstrong: One in 20. When this program began, every Canadian was told that it would only apply in the most extreme cases, people in agonizing pain with no hope of recovery. No one, and I'm sure not a single person in this chamber, believed that we would ever come to this — that in our beautiful province, people with disabilities, people struggling to survive, people battling loneliness would be encouraged to die.

The Premier has the power to stop this, to stop it now, to legislate, to use the notwithstanding clause if needed. Let's put aside for a moment the issue of those with terminal illnesses.

Will the Premier at least introduce legislation to stop the government from killing people who aren't actually dying?

Interjections.

The Speaker: Shhh.

Hon. Josie Osborne: I will simply repeat a few of the things I said.

These are very personal decisions that are taken by individuals together with their families, with their care providers, under a strong system of accountability to ensure that these decisions are taken with compassion and made with integrity.

Those decisions lie with those people, and I know that everyone in this House wishes nothing but the very best for a person and their family who is facing the issue of a terminal disease or another reason for which they would choose this path.

We will continue to follow the guidance of medical experts and human rights experts and listen to that guidance as we move forward.

POLICE STAFFING ISSUES AND POLICE SERVICES FOR FIFA WORLD CUP

Elenore Sturko: The government's mismanagement of law enforcement in our province has destabilized policing like we've never seen before, creating recruiting, retention and training crises. A lack of comprehensive HR strategy and years of underinvestment in the Justice Institute has forced agencies to compete for new recruits and resort to poaching each other's experienced officers, luring them with taxpayer-funded signing bonuses.

The shortage has gotten so bad that VPD and others are considering pulling back their officers from critical integrated teams like CFSEU. This government has created a competitive policing environment when they should have created and nurtured a cooperative one.

FIFA is only nine months away. With the shortage of police in the region reaching a breaking point, police overtime costs skyrocketing and taxpayers footing the bill, how does this Premier intend to provide policing for FIFA, and how much is it going to cost the taxpayer?

[11:15 a.m.]

Hon. Nina Krieger: Thank you to the member opposite for the question.

Police departments, municipal as well as RCMP across B.C. and across Canada, are facing challenges and staffing pressures. That's why we recently announced the expansion of training seats at the Justice Institute of British Columbia by 50 percent to ensure that high-quality recruits can get into communities faster.

Centralized training is essential to ensure that stan-

dards are consistent throughout the province. We have also invited municipal police to submit proposals for local training opportunities that are satellite and tethered to the Justice Institute.

We all have the same goals of ensuring that there are sufficient police resources in our communities.

We will continue to work with police, with levels of government and with all partners to ensure that we have adequate policing resources, especially around major events like FIFA 2026.

The Speaker: Member, supplemental.

ENFORCEMENT OF LAWS ON ILLICIT DRUG USE IN PUBLIC SPACES

Elenore Sturko: It's unfortunate that this investment comes more than six years late and won't be sufficient to meet the needs of police across this province.

In September, I joined MLAs in Prince George to tour the impacts of the NDP's failed drug and soft-on-crime policies. It was a working tour with business leaders, and we walked in front of a downtown business where a man openly consumed drugs through an uncapped, used hypodermic needle in our direction. It was a stark example of what community members in Prince George and in communities across this province face every single day.

In July, a New Westminster police officer told *Global News*: "The provincial government has made it very clear. Charges for simple possession will not be entertained. Those will not be approved." Despite claiming to have recriminalized public drug use last year, this government has continued its failed experiment by refusing to prosecute drug possession.

If drugs have truly been recriminalized in public, can the Premier tell us how much drug possession charge approvals have increased since last year, or will he finally admit that this government has no intention of enforcing the law?

Hon. Nina Krieger: Thank you to the member for the follow-up question.

Let me be clear that public drug use is illegal in British Columbia. Where there is public drug use, police have the power to seize drugs and move people along. We know the police are doing this work.

Interjection.

The Speaker: Shhh.

Hon. Nina Krieger: Possession seizures have more than doubled since the Premier made a change to the decriminalization policy. In the last two years, we have also opened over 400 new treatment and recovery beds to help more people who are struggling with addiction.

We will keep working with police, keep working with community partners and across government to ensure that we save lives and keep communities safe.

SAFETY OF HEALTH CARE WORKERS AND WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION

Anna Kindy: In British Columbia today, nurses are being punched, strangled, threatened with weapons and even sexually assaulted. The B.C. Nurses Union president said health care facilities are like pressure cookers right now, while nurses say they've never seen it so bad.

Our hospitals are short-staffed, overloaded, unsafe and out of control. Our front-line workers, nurses and doctors are often bullied, reprimanded and fired for trying to speak out about the violence they endure.

To the Premier: do you commit to get rid of censorship of health care workers, yes or no?

Hon. Josie Osborne: Thank you to the member for the question and bringing up the incredibly important topic of safety in health care workplaces.

A number of us had the privilege of meeting with the B.C. Nurses Union this morning to discuss this very topic. I will emphasize and will agree with the member and every member in this House who says that hospitals are a place where people go to get well. It is not a place where people go to experience any form of violence, whether you're a patient or a nurse or any other health care worker in that setting.

Preventing violence in the workplace is absolutely critical to creating the safe, supportive workplaces where people can do what they were trained to do and that is to deliver health care. That is why we have continued to focus on a number of different approaches to reducing violence in the workplace.

That includes listening to nurses, front-line nurses like the ones that we met this morning, like the ones that I have met across the province over this past year, hearing from them terrible stories, heartbreaking stories, very difficult circumstances that affect not only those individuals but their entire unit and the workers and other nurses with them.

[11:20 a.m.]

That's why we're going to continue to invest in the relational security initiative. That's why we're continuing to work with the Nurses Union to hear about other ways that we can create safer, more supportive workplaces, including minimum nurse-to-patient ratios. We're going to stay focused on this work because violence in any health care workplace is completely unacceptable.

FUNDING FOR RESIDENTIAL CARE FACILITIES

Brennan Day: Heartbreaking. Speaker, 850 seniors across this province are at risk of being thrown into hospital hallways and the streets due to this government's reckless cuts to long-term-care funding.

Will this minister reverse course and extend the funding deadline immediately, yes or no?

Hon. Josie Osborne: Thank you to the member for the question and for the letter that he has recently written me.

Again, I want to start out by just saying thank you to all of the workers in long-term-care facilities and assisted-living facilities across this province for what they do to deliver exceptional, dedicated care to seniors and their families.

The program that the member is referring to, I know, as he understands, was a temporary measure brought in during extraordinary circumstances, during the COVID-19 pandemic…

Interjections.

The Speaker: Shhh.

Hon. Josie Osborne: …at a time when we had to take extraordinary action because of the state that long-term care was left in when we formed government in 2017.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Members.

Hon. Josie Osborne: We are addressing the root issues around building out our long-term-care system, hiring more workers into our long-term-care system and raising the standards of care because of the way it was left when we formed government and the work that we have had to do to fill those gaps.

We're going to continue to work with the B.C. Care Providers Association. Health authorities are working with operators as they move through this transition.

We are and will remain incredibly dedicated to continuing to invest in building and hiring so seniors get the care they deserve.

ACCESS TO EMERGENCY HEALTH CARE FACILITIES AND TEMPORARY CLOSINGS

Larry Neufeld: This past week Tumbler Ridge ER, closed; 100 Mile district's ER, closed. Tomorrow Burns Lake ER, closed. Three communities and zero life-saving support.

Will the minister guarantee the reopening of the Tumbler Ridge ER and no further ER closures in this province?

Hon. Josie Osborne: Thank you to the member for the question around the incredibly important subject of rural and also, as we've seen, urban emergency rooms and the challenges that we are facing across the province when it comes to workforce and being able to fully staff emergency rooms with doctors, with nurses and with the health care professionals that need to be there.

When an emergency room goes on a temporary diversion, it is incredibly unsettling for people. It is difficult not only for communities but for the health care workers themselves.

Again, I want to say thank you to those workers for doing everything they can, because I know it's incredibly hard on them when emergency rooms are temporarily closed as well.

That's why we are going to continue to focus on doing everything we can with health authorities to fill those gaps. Health authorities work often up to just hours before an emergency room might be temporarily closed, trying to fill those gaps.

The answer is recruiting and training more health care professionals. It is incorporating new technologies. As we've seen, Interior Health is moving forward to help sustain physicians in smaller ERs with virtual service as well. This is supporting the emergency rooms. It's supporting communities.

We are going to continue to do this work because we know just how unacceptable it is for communities to face this kind of stress.

FUNDING FOR RESIDENTIAL CARE FACILITIES

Peter Milobar: Well, there was a very serious question asked on behalf of 850 seniors that face eviction, essentially, from where they are living a week from now. That was whether or not the minister would restore funding for a critical program and critical services that those seniors rely on to make sure they have safe and secure housing.

Can we get a clear answer from the minister? Not deflection, not "much work to do," not blaming governments from 1942. Can we get an answer from the minister on behalf of and, most importantly, for those 850 seniors.

Will they have funding extended by this government, yes or no?

Hon. Josie Osborne: Again, we know that this was a temporary measure that was brought in at a time when it was very much needed. But what we need…

Interjections.

The Speaker: Shhh, Members.

Hon. Josie Osborne: …is a sustainable, long-term model of care for seniors.

Interjections.

[11:25 a.m.]

The Speaker: Members.

Hon. Josie Osborne: That is exactly what we are focused on, and that means hearing from operators as they go through this transition, as they are speaking up. As we are working with the B.C. Care Providers, they are monitoring and talking to their members as well.

We know that this funding has been used in a variety of different ways by different operators, and we are going to continue to work with them. At the same time, we have to address the root cause, and the root cause is adding more health care workers into that system, providing the supports that seniors need when they're living in these facilities.

That is adding more training seats. That is making the health care…. That is making the program where people can earn and learn and become a health care assistant more accessible in more communities around this province.

We are deeply committed to that work. We're going to continue to do it.

The Speaker: Member, supplemental.

GOVERNMENT ACTION ON INFRASTRUCTURE AND SOCIAL ISSUES AND FUNDING FOR RESIDENTIAL CARE FACILITIES

Peter Milobar: Once again no timeline, no firm commitment from this government on anything today. "Much work to do." "We have to continue the hard work." "We are aware of the hard work." That's what we hear.

That doesn't get schools built. That doesn't get schools that have been under the threat of being demolished, being decrepit or burned down, and a minister that's unaware of which schools we are even talking about in this province. Yet Bill 15 was supposed to expediate those schools being rebuilt.

I come from a district that had a school burn down. It took five instructional years for this government to replace a school at a site that a school used to exist on. That's the track record of this government — not previous governments, this government.

In the middle of a housing crisis, in the middle of an affordability crisis, we asked the minister questions around a 92-unit housing project that still hasn't opened its doors. He doesn't even know what units we're talking about, let alone a date for when those units might be open for people to live in.

Again, I come from a city that has 42 units that were supposed to be open 2½ years ago. We still can't get a date for those units either. That's this track record.

We have a government trying to lecture us about poverty reduction, yet they forget that they had a campaign promise that seniors were going to get bus passes.

Where are those seniors bus passes, Minister? Where is the $1,000 grocery rebate?

The list goes on and on, of broken promises from this government, no one else. Much work to do…

The Speaker: Question, Member.

Peter Milobar: …on nurses' safety. They acknowledge that nurses continue to see an escalation of violence in the workplace. They acknowledge it's not acceptable, yet they don't provide…

The Speaker: Question, Member.

Peter Milobar: …any answer in terms of a timeline or a deliverable that we can count on, other than that they're going to continue to work on security guards that are not allowed to engage or touch any perpetrator that's actually inflicting violence on those nurses in their workplace.

The Speaker: Question, Member.

Peter Milobar: It's not good enough. And all of those are much larger systemic issues that this government can't answer for.

I'm going to ask, for a third time today, on behalf of the 850 seniors that are terrified of what's going to happen over the next week…. They can't wait for nurses to go through training. They need funding to stay in place so their existing housing needs are being met.

Will this government extend the funding for those 850 seniors across this province, or should they expect eviction notices over the next week?

Interjections.

The Speaker: Members.
Member, shhh.
Members.

Hon. Mike Farnworth: The member keeps saying: "Just say yes. Just say yes." Is that what goes on in their caucus when the question comes up: "Do you support our leader?"

Interjections.

The Speaker: Members. Members.
Members, come to order.

Hon. Mike Farnworth: There is no question on this side of the House as to whether or not we support our leader.

[11:30 a.m.]

The real question is on that side of the House, because the only systemic problem they seem to have is getting themselves organized and deciding what side of an issue they stand on and which leader they support, either now or in the future.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Shhh, Members.

Hon. Mike Farnworth: This side of the House is focused on building this province. We are building….

Interjections.

The Speaker: Members.

Hon. Mike Farnworth: We are doing our job. We are doing our job building schools like Hazel Trembath.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Shhh. Shhh.

Hon. Mike Farnworth: We are doing our job by building hospitals in ridings like Fort St. James, which we are opening. We are doing our job by strengthening the rights of workers.

We are doing our job, on this side of the House, by building an economy that will lift people up, by opening up the northwest of British Columbia, by spending more than $195 million in the northwest. We're getting the roads in place to open the mines that are going to build this province, create the good-paying jobs and train young people in this province so that they get a future here, addressing issues of homelessness.

That's what this side of the House is doing. They can complain all they want. All they need to do is support their leader.

For that, can you say yes?

The Speaker: Phew. All right. It's over.

[End of question period.]

Orders of the Day

Hon. Mike Farnworth: I call Motion 48 on the order paper.

Government Motions on Notice

MOTION 48 — MEMBERSHIP CHANGES TO CHILDREN AND YOUTH COMMITTEE

Hon. Mike Farnworth: I move Motion 48, of which notice has been given in my name on the order paper, which ratifies membership changes to the Select Standing Committee on Children and Youth.

[That the written agreement between the Government House Leader, the Official Opposition House Leader, the Third Party House Leader, and the Fourth Party House Leader, dated September 4, 2025, be ratified, confirming the following membership changes effective September 12, 2025:

That *Darlene Rotchford* and *Dallas Brodie* be added as members of the Select Standing Committee on Children and Youth, for the First Session of the Forty-third Parliament.]

The Speaker: Members, the question is the adoption of Motion 48.

Motion approved.

Hon. Mike Farnworth: I call Motion 67 on the order paper.

MOTION 67 — MEMBERSHIP CHANGES TO CHILDREN AND YOUTH COMMITTEE

Hon. Mike Farnworth: I move Motion 67, of which notice has been given in my name on the order paper, which further amends the membership of the Select Standing Committee on Children and Youth.

[That *Rosalyn Bird* replace *Heather Maahs* as a member of the Select Standing Committee on Children and Youth; and,

That *Kristina Loewen* and *Qwulti'stunaat / Debra Toporowski* be added as members of the Select Standing Committee on Children and Youth.]

The Speaker: The question is the adoption of Motion 67.

Motion approved.

Hon. Mike Farnworth: In this chamber, I call second reading of Bill 31, Energy Statutes Amendment Act.

In Section A, the Douglas Fir Room, I call Committee of the Whole on Bill 17, Intimate Images Protection Statutes Amendment Act.

[Lorne Doerkson in the chair.]

Second Reading of Bills

BILL 31 — ENERGY STATUTES AMENDMENT ACT, 2025

Deputy Speaker: Members, we'll call this chamber back to order, please.

We'll ask you to take your conversations outside.

We are about to hear from the minister on Bill 31, the Energy Statutes Amendment Act, 2025.

Hon. Adrian Dix: I move that Bill 31, Energy Statutes Amendment Act, be read a second time now.

On this occasion, I think, it would be useful and important to acknowledge that I'm speaking from the territory of the lək̓ʷəŋən-speaking people, the Songhees and the Esquimalt First Nations.

This bill, this legislation, which advances British Columbia's economy, is about using and leveraging our clean electricity to drive economic growth and diversification, unlocking the potential of the northwest of our province and supporting the growth of key sectors for the benefit of all British Columbians.

People know the urgency. They know the urgency in terms of economic and trade uncertainty requiring action, and we are acting. They know the urgency in these times where communities across our province and across our world are dealing with issues of climate change.

[11:35 a.m.]

The need is to drive clean electricity in our province, in our world, at a time when clean electricity is becoming more affordable, not less affordable. Our electricity system, our publicly owned utility, B.C. Hydro — created, by the way, under a Social Credit government, then supported under governments of multiple political stripes since — can play the role that it has played, in particular in the 1960s, to drive the next generation of economic growth in B.C.

We believe, the government believes, the Premier believes that B.C. will be the economic driver of growth in Canada and that our clean electricity is a competitive advantage to support the next generation of clean growth and job creation in British Columbia. The North Coast transmission line, which is dealt with in the first section of this legislation, will enable us to unlock the growth potential of our electricity-constrained northwest.

It is of particular importance and concern to the constituencies and the people of the northwest — the people in Prince George–North Cariboo who are on the line, the issue in Prince George–Mackenzie on the line, Prince George–Valemount, where the Wilson substation is located, on the line; and also, of course, and importantly, in Nechako Lakes, Bulkley Valley–Stikine, Skeena and North Coast–Haida Gwaii.

Those communities will get from this action, this building of the North Coast transmission line, better access to electricity for residential, for commercial and for industrial use. It is of particular benefit to communities in the North, but it is competitive to all of us because surely the success of the northwest is the success of all of us in British Columbia.

The North Coast transmission line also allows us a generational opportunity to unlock a golden triangle of mining opportunities; expand our world-leading, cleanest LNG sector with Indigenous-led projects in the northwest, ensuring that we are, consistent with government policy, electrifying our LNG — this is something that the world wants; it is showing its benefits everywhere — and electrify future port expansions to increase and diversify trade, not just in communities such as Prince Rupert, importantly, but also Stewart, also Kitimat.

The North Coast transmission line is a nation-building project that will unlock this potential. At the same time, we must ensure that B.C. Hydro continues to adapt to evolving market conditions, including new sources of electricity demand that can scale quickly and consume vast amounts of energy. This is not new, and jurisdictions across North America and across the world are dealing with this question.

Members of the House will know, just a few years ago, the actions the government took in terms of the crypto mining industry to ensure that the clean electricity we have in B.C. is used in the best possible way — at first, a temporary ban and now into a permanent ban on the allocation of electricity to crypto in British Columbia.

The reason for it was that we have an industry that uses vast amounts of electricity. Before the ban, that was 150 megawatts, which is no small amount of electricity now. It would, in effect, take opportunities away from the ratepayers of British Columbia and from other industries that do create jobs. That decision was taken and supported by the parties in this House. What we're doing today is consistent with that.

Bill 31 will enable a new, unique and innovative approach to enable data and AI centres to proceed in a way that's pragmatic, in a way that supports the projects that provide the greatest benefit to our province in terms of data sovereignty, of job creation and of support for our economy.

We, of course, must continue to support the natural resource sectors that have been drivers of our economy, and you see that reflected in the actions the government has taken, not just on the North Coast transmission line but on the clean energy projects directly connected to that — all of them, as a group, majority-owned by First Nations, but importantly, able to electrify the industries that we need to create wealth in the future. This is what B.C. Hydro does at its best. It builds our province, and this legislation supports it.

[11:40 a.m.]

We have watched, and we've learned from, the missteps of other jurisdictions. Those missteps are everywhere. We are taking, yes, a different approach, one that learns from the challenges that other jurisdictions have faced and that responds to the unprecedented demands from the growth of crypto mining and the expansion of AI and data centre projects in a way that puts British Columbia's interests first.

It's about striking the right balance, driving growth in traditional and in emerging new sectors and enabling the right projects at the right pace that support strategic in-

vestments that align with our economic interests and our interests in data sovereignty, while delivering the greatest benefits to British Columbia.

I'm going to talk specifically.... Members of the House who have reviewed the bill — I look forward to the remarks of my colleague from Peace River South to follow — will know that this is a relatively small bill as these things go. It's five sections of a bill, and I just want to go through those sections — it's not a standalone bill; it's a statutes amendment bill — and how they lay out and support British Columbia ratepayers and people across British Columbia.

As everyone knows, when we talk about the North Coast transmission line, electricity is the backbone of B.C.'s economy. It powers the resource sectors that built this province. These industries don't just rely on electricity. They rely on clean, affordable and reliable power to stay competitive in a global market. In B.C., electricity isn't just an input. It's a strategic advantage and has always been, that fuels jobs, exports and rural economy while making B.C. a leader in addressing questions of climate change.

The North Coast transmission line will enable tens of billions of dollars in development across northern B.C. that need access to electricity to proceed.

Industrial projects connected to the North Coast transmission line are expected to create approximately 9,700 direct full-time jobs per year, contribute $9.85 billion per year to the GDP and approximately $1 billion to public, provincial and municipal revenues on average and avoid two to three million tonnes of carbon emissions per year. Without the NCTL, this private sector investment would not happen, putting these jobs, the economic growth potential and regional development at risk.

Amendments to the Hydro and Power Authority Act contained in the legislation will enable the construction of the NCTL in partnership with First Nations along the line and will unlock a generational opportunity to create new sources of economic growth.

It does so in, I think, a positive way, in partnership. That allows us to advance the project, build the project more quickly in partnership and connect it to local communities where revenues from the line stay in the region where the work is happening — an important value that, certainly, members from the region will understand, and communities will understand.

There's always a lot of talk about how we deal with transformative issues of reconciliation. There are many ways to do that, but one of them surely is to ensure that when there is upside, when you see the possibility for mining growth, you work in the northwest and you work with the Tāłtān. When you see opportunities in LNG, you work with the Haisla. When you see activities in any area — whether it be the Port of Prince Rupert or along the lines, whether it be in mining or other areas — that the opportunities be available for people living in the region, including First Nations.

That is what this section does. B.C. Hydro currently does not have the authority to engage in such a joint venture partnership with First Nations. This law changes that, and this is a critical aspect to what we're doing. It allows us to address issues of reconciliation, which are challenges and important elements of every major project we build in B.C., in a way that shares the upside. Surely, this is what we should be doing as a province together.

[11:45 a.m.]

I am proud of B.C. Hydro, which has worked since 2003 with First Nations to make this happen. I was proud of the day when Wet'suwet'en traditional and elected chiefs joined me to sign term sheets on the second part of the line. It was a great day for me and a great day for our province, a great day for B.C. Hydro.

I'm proud of the work done and the leadership shown by First Nations on these questions. We continue to work to ensure that term sheets are signed so that we can do what we all expect to do, which is to start construction in 2026 on a line that will benefit the North and the northwest of B.C. Let's get it done.

This provision, this law, this change in the law allows us to do that. That's why it has the support, I think, of those First Nations. It also, I hope, will have the support of all members of the House, because this is how we bring change together, by working together and building for the greater benefit of all, and that is precisely what the North Coast transmission line does. It does that for all of the communities in the region.

Members who are from the North will know sometimes that electricity services, residential in particular but also in commercial service, are not always the best. This will make things better in every community on the line. I say, for the first and second phase, all of those communities are in opposition ridings. It will make it better. Doing this in partnership will make it better as well. These are important considerations, and I hope members of the House will support them.

The legislation also ensures that the joint venture partnership continues and the rights and responsibilities of B.C. Hydro continue to be held by the BCUC and other regulators so that we can ensure that the new joint venture partnership is not a way out of regulation but, in fact, ensures that the regulation provided to B.C. Hydro under the Utilities Commission Act of B.C., the Hydro and Power Act, continue to be in place — an important consideration.

This is not a way out of regulation, quite the contrary. It's to ensure that B.C. Hydro's responsibilities to that regulation, to the community and to its obligations under the law are maintained in the joint venture partnership, which is an important consideration for all.

I want to speak briefly about the allocation framework. I think it's important to understand sometimes we think

things are new. In fact, of course, British Columbia has an interconnection policy now. It has, effectively, an allocation policy now. What this policy does is change it.

Under the existing interconnection policy, B.C. Hydro is obligated to provide electricity services to potential customers on a first-come, first-served basis, without consideration of what the end use of the power will be, including how many jobs it will support for B.C. or how it will benefit the economy, how it will affect ratepayers, how it will generate revenue and benefits for British Columbians.

The current approach…. That will continue, because the legislation is specific, and it's this Legislature's job to decide. This legislation is specific about what the allocation framework will apply to and what it doesn't. For most industries — manufacturing, energy, forestry, mining, and so on — the rules will remain the same. They will not be subject to an allocation framework. If we wanted to apply an allocation framework to those industries, then we would have to come back to the House and apply it.

This allocation framework is intended to deal with what jurisdictions across North America are dealing with: the speed of growth in emerging sectors such as data and AI centres and potentially, not right now but potentially, hydrogen production for export. The rapid scalability of these requires government intervention and action. I spoke of the action that we took on the crypto mining industry, which was broadly supported, including by all parties in the House at the time.

We need to ensure the competitive advantage of clean electricity supports industries that deliver the highest benefit to B.C. and Canadians, not just energy-consuming warehouses filled with servers that benefit foreign interests with little or no job creation. This is not good for climate change, this is not good for our economy, and this imposes, potentially, costs on ratepayers that would be unacceptable.

That's the reason we're doing this for these sectors: AI data centres, hydrogen for export and crypto mining. That's why the allocation framework applies here.

[11:50 a.m.]

Industries, as I said, that grow our economy, create well-paying jobs, reduce emissions and strengthen the backbone of B.C.'s economy need access to reliable, clean energy. What we have seen in other jurisdictions, where we've seen a rapid growth of data centres, is that when other opportunities come along, they are effectively blocked, and electricity rates are climbing.

We see this, for example, if people are following, in politics, the governor's race in New Jersey, where 22 percent single-year increases in electricity rates, paid for by ratepayers but caused by the rapid expansion of data centres, are causing significant issues. In our case, we accept and want to have growth in these sectors, but we want to pace it consistent with our ability to provide clean electricity and in the interest of ratepayers.

This is why the bill is enabling in that respect. It will enable B.C. Hydro to launch a competitive call for projects in early 2026 for a two-year period that allocates 300 megawatts for AI and 100 megawatts for data centres. Amounts for hydrogen exports will be set at a later time, and we'll talk about this in a moment, because that industry isn't prepared in any event. It prepares for the day when it might be, and that would be a hopeful time in our province.

We've seen jurisdictions struggle when growth in emerging high-load, fast-scaling industries such as crypto, data centres, artificial intelligence centres and large-scale hydrogen facilities outpace infrastructure. It's important to proactively create a framework to prevent this from happening in B.C. and to allow development but in a means we can do it so that it doesn't negatively affect our people, our ratepayers and our economy. And that's what this framework, enabled by the bill, does. These actions are about protecting our grid, prioritizing local economic value and making sure our power goes where it matters most.

I want to say specifically so that we understand. In Quebec, they passed legislation that allows the minister and the cabinet to decide about projects above five megawatts. That is not what we're doing here.

I would just reflect on how we do deal with calls for power. We did a call for power in 2024. We saw the results in December 2024. I became the minister in November 2024, and I found out the results, the winners in that process, on the day before it was announced. The decisions were made in a process overseen by an ethics officer that ensured that it was a fair and competitive process.

[The Speaker in the chair.]

I think that's an important consideration here for everyone to understand, that this is not a decision where government gets to choose winners or losers. We get to set out criteria. In the case of that call for power, for example, there was a requirement for Indigenous participation. In the first call for power, a requirement of the maximum level of a project…. In that case, the maximum level was 200 megawatts. We changed that in the second round.

Government, as the people's representatives, can set the criteria, but it doesn't make the decisions about who wins and who doesn't. You set the criteria, and the winner is determined by the quality of the bids and the analysis that's made from those bids. And then an announcement is made.

This is not a way for government to make decisions about individual projects. We get to set the criteria on what's important. Jobs are important. Economic value is important.

Climate change is important. Reconciliation is important, and the impact on ratepayers. Those are all important. Impact in the broader economy is important, and, most

specifically, in this day and age, data sovereignty is important.

Those will be considerations that will be laid out in regulation. That's something that we can engage, as well, with the opposition on — what should be the criteria that we put forward. Those are the ones that we see as important in making the decision — value to the economy; support for data sovereignty, which is important for all people in B.C.; and other issues such as impact on the climate and reconciliation of a project. If they may be able to reuse heat, for example, they would get credit for that. And that's something we can discuss.

It's not a question of myself as minister, which happens in other jurisdictions and other laws like this, of making the decision. This is an allocation framework that is a competitive process for access to one of the best resources in the world, B.C.'s clean power, and that is how we are going to engage in it.

The Speaker: Noting the hour, Minister.

Hon. Adrian Dix: With that, I reserve my place and ask for adjournment of the debate.

Hon. Adrian Dix moved adjournment of debate.

Motion approved.

[11:55 a.m.]

Hon. Jennifer Whiteside: I move leave to make an introduction.

Leave granted.

Introductions by Members

Hon. Jennifer Whiteside: I wanted just to draw the chamber's attention to grades 5 and 7 students who are here from the Pacific Christian School in the gallery. They are visiting with their teacher, Hannah Benischek, and they are here to have a look at what happens in the House.

We are so grateful, and I know that Minister Lana Popham is also very grateful to have you here on the precinct today.

Would the House please join me in making them feel very welcome.

George Anderson: Mr. Speaker, Section A reports progress on Bill 17 and asks to leave to sit again.

Leave granted.

Hon. Jennifer Whiteside: I move the House do now adjourn.

Motion approved.

The Speaker: This House stands adjourned until 1 p.m. today.

The House adjourned at 11:56 a.m.

Proceedings in the Douglas Fir Room

The House in Committee, Section A.

The committee met at 11:42 a.m.

[George Anderson in the chair.]

Committee of the Whole

BILL 17 — INTIMATE IMAGES PROTECTION STATUTES AMENDMENT ACT, 2025
(continued)

The Chair: Good afternoon, Members. I call Committee of the Whole on Bill 17, Intimate Images Protection Statutes Amendment Act, 2025, to order.

I'll recognize the member for Langley–Walnut Grove on the amendment.

On clause 7 *(continued)*.

On the amendment.

Misty Van Popta: Going back to yesterday, the intent of the amendment was to make sure that training of tribunal members is legislated and not left to policy or regulation. That was the intent with this particular amendment.

Steve Kooner: Earlier in the debate, throughout this bill, I was talking about the expertise, getting at how it can help people more that are potential victims and victims. A concern I believe I brought forward was: what is the expertise of this particular CRT to deal with these potential victims?

Now, if we're giving it an enhanced way to deal with damages and bigger claims for victims and potential victims, and since these types of cases are very sensitive in nature, involving a lot of emotional issues of the victims going through this — the CRT is geared towards the early stages — there needs to be a mechanism that these arbitrators are skilled, are trained, that whoever is listening to the case or handling the case is trained.

We have moved this amendment for that purpose. It talks about adding: "The chair, vice-chairs and other members of the tribunal must, within six months of appointment, successfully complete a specialized training course on trauma at a prescribed institution in British Columbia." That's the addition there.

[11:45 a.m.]

Hon. Niki Sharma: I really do appreciate the spirit of this amendment, and I think we all share that common goal to make sure that the people that are overseeing these types of hearings have the right training. Unfortunately, as it's written, we can't support the amendment. I'll just go through it so people understand why.

First of all, the purpose of that specialized expertise language in that one provision is primarily about setting a standard for judicial review of CRT decisions. That's a multi-layered, very complicated system that involves a definition in section 1 of the Civil Resolution Tribunal Act, section 116 of the CRTA and section 56.7 of the CRTA. The objective of that particular section is to set the right standard of review for specific types of CRT cases where they are judicially reviewed. We are concerned about changing anything in that particular section having unintended consequences.

Just a couple things also about the wording of the amendment. The way it's worded, it has potential application to all tribunal members rather than only the ones handling IIPA disputes, which is a subset.

In the absence of a transition provision, we don't know what would happen to the current tribunal members that may be in the middle of an application right now, holding an application right now.

There's no definition of "specialized training course" — difficult to define.

I think the six-month timeline is probably too long. They should probably have the training before, which I think is what they do. Before they even hear one of these cases, they have the training beforehand.

Just to give people a little more information of surety, the CRT chair has confirmed that there is trauma training, trauma-informed practice, including, for example, completion of a course from the Justice Institute of B.C. called "Trauma-Informed Practice Foundations." The tribunal members have also attended sessions with the Ministry of Children and Family Development to receive training on the duty to report a child in need under section 14 of Child, Family and Community Service Act.

There are certain things about independent tribunals and what we can clearly say in legislation and what is something to be determined by arm's length from a tribunal that is meant to be different from a political and government body.

Those are the reasons that I can't support the amendment but just to say that I appreciate the spirit of it.

Hon. Chair, I move that the committee rise and report progress and ask leave to sit again.

Motion approved.

The Chair: This committee stands adjourned.

The committee rose at 11:48 a.m.

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Broadcast Operations Technician: Ian Battle, Ryan Spedding, Steve Weisgerber

ENGINEERING

Senior Broadcast Technologist: Robert Froese
Broadcast Technologists: Ismael Ribeiro, Dave Gamble

INFRASTRUCTURE

Broadcast Infrastructure Architect and Team Leader: Roberto Arroyave
Broadcasting Systems and Integration Specialist: David Smith
Broadcasting Systems Co-op: Jenny Wong

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