

No. 57

ORDERS OF THE DAY

OF THE

Legislative Assembly of British Columbia

First Session of the Forty-third Parliament

Thursday, May 8, 2025

10 A.M.

ROUTINE BUSINESS

PRAYERS AND REFLECTIONS

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

STATEMENTS (STANDING ORDER 25B)

(Afternoon sittings: Monday and Wednesday)

(Morning sittings: Tuesday and Thursday)

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

(30 minutes, afternoon sittings: Monday and Wednesday)

(30 minutes, morning sittings: Tuesday and Thursday)

PRESENTING PETITIONS

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

PRESENTING REPORTS

MOTIONS ON NOTICE

(See Schedule A—Government Motions)

(See Schedule D—Private Members' Motions)

WRITTEN QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

(See Schedule B)

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS ON NOTICE

5 The Hon. Brenda Bailey to move, in Committee of the Whole on Bill (No. 5) intituled *Budget Measures Implementation Act, 2025*, to amend as follows:

CLAUSE 25, by deleting the text shown as struck out and adding the underlined text as shown:

25 *Section 131 (1) is amended by adding the following paragraphs:*

(a) in subsection (1), by adding the following paragraphs:

- (j) prescribing as an eligible apprenticeship program an apprenticeship program designed to certify or license an individual in a trade prescribed in respect of British Columbia for the purposes of the definition of “eligible apprentice” in section 127 (9) of the federal Act;
- (k) for the purposes of section 120, establishing requirements for an eligible apprenticeship program as level 1 apprenticeship requirements;
- (l) for the purposes of section 120, establishing requirements for an eligible apprenticeship program as level 2 apprenticeship requirements. and

(b) by repealing subsection (2) and substituting the following:

- (2) In making regulations under subsection (1) (d) to (g), (k) and (l), the Commissioner of Income Tax may do one or more of the following:
 - (a) establish different requirements for different
 - (i) eligible recognized programs,
 - (ii) eligible training programs, and
 - (iii) eligible apprenticeship programs;
 - (b) define classes of eligible recognized programs, eligible training programs and eligible apprenticeship programs and make different regulations for different classes of those programs;
 - (c) adopt a level of requirements established by SkilledTradesBC for an eligible recognized program, eligible training program or eligible apprenticeship program
 - (i) in whole, in part or with any changes considered appropriate, and
 - (ii) as it stands at a specific date, as it stands at the time of adoption or as amended from time to time.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

(Hon Chan adjourned the debate.)

BUDGET DEBATE (INCLUDING COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY)

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Estimates.

Report of Resolutions passed in Committee of Supply

SECTION A: March 31, April 2, 3, 7, 8, 9, 10, 14, 29, 30, May 5, 6.

SECTION B: April 1, 10, May 1, 6.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' TIME

(Monday morning only)

(See Schedule D)

PUBLIC BILLS AND ORDERS AND GOVERNMENT MOTIONS ON NOTICE**REPORT**

Report—

Bill (No. 7) intituled *Economic Stabilization (Tariff Response) Act*, NOT REPRINTED.
Hon. Attorney General and Deputy Premier.

COMMITTEE

Committee—

Bill (No. 5) intituled *Budget Measures Implementation Act, 2025*, PRINTED. Hon. Minister of Finance. (Clause 2.)

Committee—

Bill (No. 11) intituled *Employment Standards Amendment Act, 2025*, PRINTED. Hon. Minister of Labour.

Committee—

Bill (No. 13) intituled *Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, 2025*, PRINTED. Hon. Attorney General and Deputy Premier.

ADJOURNED DEBATE ON SECOND READING

Adjourned Debate on Second Reading—

Bill (No. 14) intituled *Renewable Energy Projects (Streamlined Permitting) Act*, PRINTED.
Hon. Minister of Energy and Climate Solutions. (*Trevor Halford* adjourned the debate.)

SECOND READING

Second Reading—

Bill (No. 1) intituled *An Act to Ensure the Supremacy of Parliament*, PRINTED. Hon. Attorney General and Deputy Premier.

Second Reading—

Bill (No. 9) intituled *Health Care Costs Recovery Amendment Act, 2025*, PRINTED. Hon. Minister of Health.

Second Reading—

Bill (No. 10) intituled *Attorney General Statutes Amendment Act, 2025*, PRINTED. Hon. Attorney General and Deputy Premier.

Second Reading—

Bill (No. 12) intituled *Motor Vehicle Amendment Act, 2025*, PRINTED. Hon. Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General.

Second Reading—

Bill (No. 15) intituled *Infrastructure Projects Act*, PRINTED. Hon. Minister of Infrastructure.

PRIVATE BILLS

PUBLIC BILLS IN THE HANDS OF PRIVATE MEMBERS

(See Schedule D)

ADJOURNED DEBATE ON OTHER MOTIONS

KATE RYAN-LLOYD

Clerk of the Legislative Assembly

SCHEDULE A

MOTIONS ON NOTICE

23 The Hon. *Mike Farnworth* to move—

That, notwithstanding Standing Orders 2 (1) and 2 (2) (b), the House sit during the week of Victoria Day, beginning on Monday, May 19, 2025, including Friday, May 23, 2025.

24 The Hon. *Mike Farnworth* to move—

That, notwithstanding Standing Orders 2 (1) and 2 (2) (b), the House sit during the week of Victoria Day, beginning on Tuesday, May 20, 2025, including Friday, May 23, 2025.

25 The Hon. *Mike Farnworth* to move—

That, notwithstanding Standing Orders 2 (1) and 2 (2) (b), the House sit during the week of Victoria Day, beginning on Tuesday, May 20, 2025.

26 The Hon. *Mike Farnworth* to move—

That, notwithstanding Standing Order 2 (2) (b), the House sit during the week of Victoria Day, beginning on Monday, May 19, 2025.

27 The Hon. *Mike Farnworth* to move—

That, effective May 5, 2025,

1. Standing Order 2 (1) be amended to provide for

- a. the Thursday afternoon sitting to be from 1 p.m. to 7 p.m.; and,
- b. a Friday sitting from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., with a recess from 12 noon to 1 p.m.

2. Standing Order 3 be amended by striking the indicated text and adding the underlined text:

If at the hour of 9:00 p.m. on any Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, ~~or 5:30~~ 7:00 p.m. on Thursday ~~or 5:00 p.m. on Friday~~, the business of the day is not concluded and no other hour has been agreed on for the next sitting, the Speaker shall leave the Chair:

On Monday	until 10 a.m. Tuesday
On Tuesday	until 1:30 p.m. Wednesday
On Wednesday	until 10 a.m. Thursday
On Thursday	until 10 <u>9</u> a.m. Monday <u>Friday</u>
<u>On Friday</u>	<u>until 10 a.m. Monday</u>

subject to the provisions of Standing Order 2 (2) (b).

And that this order expire on May 29, 2025.

28 The Hon. *Mike Farnworth* to move—

That Motion 10, adopted by the House on March 12, 2025, amending Standing Orders 2 (1) and 3, be discharged.

That Standing Order 2 (1) be amended to provide for the Monday afternoon sitting, Tuesday afternoon sitting and Wednesday afternoon sitting to be from 1.30 p.m. to 11.59 p.m., with a recess from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m.

That Standing Order 3 be amended by striking the words “6:30 p.m. on any Monday and Tuesday, 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday” and replacing them with “11:59 p.m. on any Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday”.

And that this order expire on May 29, 2025.

SCHEDULE B

WRITTEN QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

2 *Macklin McCall* to ask the Hon. Minister of Forests the following questions:—

Wildfire Preparedness and Response

1. Given that wildfires since 2016 have burned an area larger than Vancouver Island, devastating timber supplies and ecosystems, why does Budget 2025 allocate only a modest \$8 million increase for wildfire management? What is the Ministry's plan to bridge this gap given the record-breaking costs of wildfires (over \$1 billion spent in 2023)?

2. How will the Ministry ensure robust wildfire pre-season planning when Budget 2025 funds focus predominantly on reactive firefighting measures? Specifically, what proactive strategies (e.g., fire breaks, equipment, training) are being funded to prevent megafires rather than merely respond to them?

3. With B.C. having spent a record \$1.1 billion on fire management in 2023 (exceeding the budget by \$401 million), what safeguards does the Ministry propose to avoid such under-budgeting in 2025? Does the Ministry anticipate relying on the \$10-billion contingency fund for wildfire costs, or will core budgets be adjusted to reflect true firefighting expenditures?

4. Budget 2025 shows the Forests Ministry's spending falling from \$1.4 billion to \$891 million, partly due to lower forecast wildfire expenses. How can the Ministry justify this reduction after 2023's worst wildfire season, and what risk assessments support the assumption of significantly lower firefighting costs in 2025–26?

5. In light of year-round wildfire threats, how is BC Wildfire Service's staffing and training being enhanced? Specifically, given record recruitment interest (1,700 applicants for ~200 crew jobs in 2025), will Budget 2025 accommodate more full-time positions or training programs to leverage this surge and improve wildfire response capacity?

Controlled Burns and Wildfire Mitigation

6. Experts note B.C. must "revolutionize forest practices" by reinstating preventive burns and forest thinning. What dedicated funding in Budget 2025 (beyond the \$20 million/year noted for prevention) is earmarked for controlled burns, fuel management, and cultural burning initiatives, especially near high-risk communities?

7. *The Tyee* highlighted that New Jersey, with <1% of B.C.'s area, conducts more preventive burns than B.C. How does the Ministry intend to "up its fire mitigation game" in 2025? Are there new targets or inter-jurisdictional partnerships planned to scale up prescribed burns and firebreak projects to match best practices in regions like Australia and the U.S.?

8. Given that each \$1 invested in wildfire mitigation can yield \$7 in benefits (especially by protecting watersheds and communities), why does Budget 2025 continue under-investing in prevention relative to suppression? How will the Ministry measure the cost-effectiveness of any FireSmart and Crown Land Wildfire Risk Reduction (CLWRR) projects funded this year?

9. After the catastrophic 2023 fire season, many communities have millions of dollars in unmet wildfire prevention needs. How is the Ministry addressing the funding shortfall, for local mitigation projects (e.g., fuel removal, prescribed burns)? Will Budget 2025 increase Community Resiliency Investment grants, given one fire chief's comment that current funding covers only "one-fifth" of needed work?

10. Cultural burns are a proven tool to reduce wildfire risk and involve Indigenous expertise. What progress will Budget 2025 enable for the Cultural and Prescribed Fire Program, and how many hectares are expected to be treated through cultural burns in 2025? Are any First Nations partnerships or training programs expanding to integrate these traditional practices more broadly?

Timber Loss and Supply

11. As major wildfires sterilize soils and increase erosion, reforestation becomes more urgent and complex. What earmarked funding or programs in Budget 2025 will tackle post-wildfire replanting, land

rehabilitation, and erosion control in severely burned areas? Please detail any specific allocations (or the lack thereof) for such recovery work in response to the 2023 wildfires in places like the Okanagan (Westside complex).

Water Quality in Wildfire Zones

12. Experts warn that burned watersheds lead to debris torrents and sediment in drinking water. In Budget 2025, what resources are allocated to protect water quality after wildfires? Is there funding for catchment rehabilitation (e.g., reseeding ground cover, installing silt traps) in areas like the Shuswap or Cariboo where community water systems were affected by 2023 fires?

13. Given that smaller communities and First Nations without big filtration plants are “starting to see boil water advisories” post-fires, how will the Ministry work with Emergency Management and Health to address these risks? Are there inter-ministerial funds or programs in 2025 to assist in upgrading water infrastructure or providing interim clean water supplies in wildfire-affected areas?

14. The Forests Ministry’s mandate includes land-based recovery. Does Budget 2025 fund any wildfire land-based recovery program pilots aimed at maintaining or restoring water quality (for instance, replanting stream buffers, stabilizing slopes to prevent ash runoff)? If yes, please detail; if not, why was this critical aspect overlooked despite known wildfire impacts on fisheries and drinking water?

15. In 2024, a one-time recovery uplift of \$100,000 was offered to six local governments for post-wildfire debris clearing and rebuilding. Will this Recovery Uplift Program continue or expand in 2025, and will its scope include measures to specifically safeguard water sources (like removing charred debris around reservoirs or repairing damaged water intakes)?

Staffing, Permitting and Bureaucracy

16. With extensive staff demands from wildfire seasons (hundreds of BC Wildfire Service personnel and support staff in emergency operations) and simultaneous needs to advance policy (old-growth deferrals, landscape planning), is the Ministry properly resourced in terms of staffing levels? Did Budget 2025 authorize any increase in full-time equivalents (FTEs) for the Ministry of Forests or the BC Wildfire Service to manage these dual pressures? If not, how will the Ministry avoid burnout and ensure both emergency response and strategic planning mandates are met?

17. In summary, does the Minister believe the 2025 NDP Budget failed the forestry portfolio? Please address how this budget “shortchanges” the Ministry’s ability to prepare for climate impacts (wildfires, floods) and to support an industry in crisis. What commitments can the Ministry of Forests make to British Columbians that, despite the limited new funding, it will innovatively leverage every tool available to protect communities, sustain our forests, and preserve jobs in the year ahead?

3 *Korky Neufeld* to ask the Hon. Minister of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills the following questions: —

1. Is there a loan forgiveness program for physicians from rural British Columbia studying at UNBC that decide to remain to serve in that community?

2. Does a nurse who is studying at the College of New Caledonia, the University of Northern British Columbia or the North Cariboo Community Campus receive loan forgiveness?

3. Would the medical students from a smaller interior community that are studying at these local institutions receive loan forgiveness?

4. In light of the federal international student policy changes, what impacts does the Minister believe they will have on B.C. institutions?

5. How many institutions will file a deficit with the government in 2025?

6. What is the approximate dollar amount of the total shortfall?

7. What controls does the Minister have over the Federation of Post-Secondary Educators of B.C.?

8. Does the Minister know how many programs will no longer be offered to students across this province?

9. Will the Minister give assurances that programs and degrees that are employment-ready will not be dropped?

10. Is the Ministry tracking the negative impact of the federal government's international student policy changes on B.C. institutions?
11. Back in 2021, the Minister mentioned that the government was working on the "International Education Framework," has that Framework been completed?
12. If so, has that Framework been made public?
13. Can the Minister give an update on how the Framework will support institutions today?
14. What was the total amount collected by institutions from international student tuition in the school year 2023–2024?
15. Now that many institutions will have financial shortfalls, how will this government assure British Columbians that our post-secondary institutions will remain fiscally viable (specially the smaller, interior institutions)?
16. How many institutions have submitted debt mitigation letters through treasury?
17. How many of those institutions have submitted letters through treasury three years in a row?
18. Has this Minister looked at what all these layoffs will do to institutions' FTE targets?
19. Does the Minister have a plan about the direction she is providing to post-secondary institutions?
20. How is the Minister tracking the total negative impact across the province?
21. How will we meet the job market targets set by this government when our institutions are not fiscally viable?
22. Regarding Don Wright's "Funding Formula Review," has this report been released to the participants and the public by this government?
23. In your understanding, what are the factors why post-secondary education costs for students have become less affordable in the past eight years?
24. What is the Minister doing to work with the federal government for additional student support for B.C. students?
25. Students are being used for translation work in many of our institutions without any compensation. Can the Minister work with B.C. institutions to guarantee students are receiving applicable compensation for their work?
26. How much funding for student service programs is in this year's budget?
27. B.C. students have been calling for increased action by this government to address sexualized violence at post-secondary institutions. How much money in this year's budget is going to be allocated towards ending sexualized violence on post-secondary campuses?
28. What is this government doing to address the threats of sexualized violence, harassment and misogyny directed at individuals at our post-secondary campuses via electronic means?
29. Why would a woman or individual want to step forward and put themselves in a position when they are going to receive the level of absolute disregard that some of our young women have been subjected to in our post-secondary institutions?
30. B.C.'s *Sexual Violence and Misconduct Policy Act* requires that all public secondary institutions establish sexual violence and misconduct policies and procedures with a focus on prevention and response. Can the Minister confirm this work has been completed?
31. What has the Minister done to ensure that the guidelines are being properly implemented?
32. Mental well-being for students and staff is crucial; what can the Minister share about any programs that this government funds?
33. What measurements, if any, can the Minister share of their positive impact on students and staff?
34. Where does the government stand on racism, bullying and harassment?
35. Is there funding in this year's budget to support institutions to help address antisemitism on our B.C. campuses?
36. What specific interventions have been put in place for Jewish students on our B.C. campuses?

37. Has the Minister visited and discussed antisemitism concerns with the Hillel House on the UBC campus?

38. Does the Minister believe it is okay for a university staff member to publicly condemn and harass Jewish students by leading anti-Jewish rallies on B.C. campuses?

39. Has the Minister met with Canada's Special Envoy on Preserving Holocaust Remembrance and Combatting Antisemitism, Deborah Lyons, to address antisemitism on B.C. post-secondary campuses?

40. Is there money in this year's budget to address the significant concerns students have for their safety on B.C. campuses?

41. Will the Minister follow up with the Premier and the Minister of Finance regarding the student unions' egregious concerns at both Kwantlen Polytechnic University and Langara College and advocate for the recommendations below?

[Recommendations available from the Office of the Clerk.]

4 *Lynne Block* to ask the Hon. Minister of Education and Child Care the following questions: —

1. Transfers: Could you please provide a written breakdown of the \$63,527 million in transfers, specifying each partner organization and the initiatives or services they are funding?

2. B.C. training and education savings program special account: Regarding the \$30,001,000 allocated to the B.C. training and education savings program special account, can you please provide a detailed breakdown of what this funding covers and how it impacts training and education?

3. *Teachers Act* special account: Could you please confirm the accurate net amount for the *Teachers Act* special account and clarify the reason for the difference between the figures presented on page 63 and the financial overview?

4. EAs for K to 3: Of the \$370 million allocated to support K-to-12 education, could you specify the amount earmarked for the commitment of an education assistant in every kindergarten-to-grade-3 classroom, and can you please provide a projected timeline for full implementation across the province?

5. Early intervention and literacy screening: Could you please provide data on the number of children screened to date under the \$30 million early intervention program, the number still awaiting screening, and details regarding the government's commitment to ongoing funding for this program beyond the initial three years? What metrics will be used to evaluate the program's success over the three-year period to inform decisions about future funding?

6. SOGI resources age-appropriateness: Could you please provide specific details regarding the criteria being developed within the provincial framework to ensure SOGI resources in schools are age-appropriate and focused solely on anti-bullying, and what is the anticipated timeline for the implementation of this SOGI-specific guidance? What will be the consultation process involved in developing this framework and which stakeholders will be involved?

7. The allocation of the \$9 billion between Education and Child Care: Could you please provide specific breakdowns of the \$9 billion (both for operating expenses and ministry operations) between the Education and Child Care branches in the current budget? How "fluid" is this allocation process and what is the specific criteria used to determine the amounts for different categories?

8. School districts' budget cuts: As the Minister stated that the budget remained the same, please outline projected impacts the Education Ministry anticipates with the removal of the carbon tax revenue and school districts' future financial stability.

9. Shift away from letter grades: Has the Ministry collected any data or feedback from parents, teachers, and/or students regarding their understanding and perception of the proficiency scale compared to traditional letter grades? Are there any plans to re-evaluate the effectiveness of the current grading policy?

10. PISA and FSA results: The PISA and FSA results show dips in numeracy and literacy. As the Minister acknowledged these concerns, is the Ministry looking at any specific strategies or interventions that the Ministry may plan to implement to address these declining scores, beyond the existing literacy and numeracy funding?

11. Mental health of children and youth: As the government has committed to a counsellor in every school, please provide a more concrete timeline or targets for achieving this goal. How will the Ministry measure the impact of increased mental health supports on student well-being?

12. Mental health of teachers: Could the Ministry provide specific data regarding teacher burnout and retention, and how the effectiveness of any initiatives in addressing these issues, will be evaluated?

13. MyEdBC: Does the Ministry have any plans for upgrades or improvements to the system to address the ongoing frustrations reported by teachers?

14. Select Standing Committee on Education: Will the Minister support the reinstatement of the standing education committee, which has not met since 2006? If so, what steps would need to be taken to make this happen?

5 *Rosalyn Bird* to ask the Hon. Minister of Citizens' Services the following questions: —
Connectivity

1. Can the Minister confirm that the Ministry of Citizens' Services increased its contract with Starlink, a company owned by Elon Musk, from \$1.25 million to \$5.25 million, including a \$1 million amendment dated December 15, 2024?

2. Was the Premier aware of this expanded contract with Elon Musk's Starlink when he publicly stated that British Columbians "would want to throw up" if taxpayer money went to Elon Musk?

3. How does the Minister reconcile the Premier's rhetoric about refusing to subsidize Elon Musk's companies with this Minister quietly awarding him millions more in public funds?

4. Does this government have a clear policy on contracting with Elon Musk's companies; does it change based on which of his companies they're dealing with and the Premier's mood that day?

5. If it's inappropriate to give Elon Musk a \$350 rebate through BC Hydro for a Tesla charger, why is it appropriate to send him over \$5 million through a government contract for satellite internet?

6. Can the Minister provide a detailed explanation of what services British Columbians received in exchange for the most recent \$1 million Starlink contract amendment? How was that value determined?

7. Was any part of the Starlink contract sole-sourced?

8. Were other Canadian or non-U.S. providers considered before awarding millions more to a U.S. billionaire?

9. Has the Minister issued any guidance or directives to limit procurement for the U.S. firms as part of the Premier's push to "preference of Canadian goods"?

10. Is the Minister aware of any other contracts the B.C. government holds with Elon Musk-affiliated companies?

11. Highway cell service is an ongoing challenge across areas of the province, more so for the northern part of the province. I know on various highway sections in my riding the service is non-existent or unstable. For cellular coverage on B.C.'s primary and secondary highways, can the Minister provide a list of which remaining highway projects have been initiated, are in progress and scheduled to complete this fiscal year?

12. I may have missed it, but I have not seen any connectivity projects for Highway 5. This highway was most unfortunately named the "highway of death" last summer due to the very high number of vehicle accident fatalities. This highway was never intended to have the amount of traffic it currently does. It needs a significant safety upgrade including reliable connectivity. The inability to report incidents is contributing to long waiting times for emergency responses, putting lives at risk. Is the Minister aware of any scheduled improvements on Highway 5 between Valemound and Kamloops?

13. Has the Minister considered and priced alternative options for expensive fibre and infrastructure projects? Program funds available to communities for connection submissions to high-speed internet do not include satellite alternatives. Satellite alternatives may prove to be significantly less expensive, easier to install, less maintenance and additionally offer portability compared to hard wire/cable projects. Does the Minister expect this to change in the immediate future?

14. Does the Minister know what the Premier's stance is on Starlink today considering our strained relations with the U.S.?

15. My understanding is that Rogers has a contract with Starlink; how does that impact considerations for rural and remote communities still having poor or no access?

16. My understanding is the BC Ferries have Starlink onboard. Why is it only available for BC Ferries employees and not passengers? Can passengers expect to see that change soon to offer better opportunities to complete work and school tasks during travel?

17. The Connected Coast project is now slated for completion in 2025. Concerns have been raised regarding the success of this project. A subsea fibre has been laid along the ocean floor to key landing sites on land with the intention of connecting 139 rural, remote and coastal communities. However, there have been multiple incidents of cable damage. Can the Minister confirm that the fibre is in fact encased? What materials were used for the casing, and is the Minister aware of further issues resulting from cable shifts, ocean movement and sea traffic interference?

18. To the Minister, what safeguards have been implemented to prevent cable damage and prevent network disruptions?

19. City West applied to the federal government for a secondary fibre cable to serve as backup for Haida Gwaii. Was a secondary cable approved, and who will be paying for the additional cable?

20. What is the current expenditure on this project year-to-date, expected final cost and does the Minister have a contingency plan if the fibre fails due to oceanic factors?

21. How many of the 139 communities have last-mile infrastructure and are connected?

22. This project is scheduled to be completed sometime this year. Can the Minister confirm that is still the case?

23. Connected Coast is one of the largest projects of its kind in the world and the first in Canada. The project required substantial capital fund investment and physical infrastructure. Would it not have been prudent for the government to complete consultations and guarantee a funding commitment to ensure all 139 communities will have stable and reliable connectivity prior to commencing a project of this magnitude?

24. For this project, why are communities required to complete the additional step of completing the funding application when a letter of support from the local government (and/or a Council Resolution from the First Nation) is required?

25. In a rural area such as Falkland, where Shaw and Telus internet services the town, what is the plan for folks that still don't have access, and the service providers refuse to install them as they indicate it is cost prohibitive?

26. What is the relationship between the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission, B.C. service providers and Citizens' Services Ministry, and how does it impact the goals of the B.C. government in providing stable and efficient high-speed internet to all B.C. households when the province is not able to direct service providers as to where and when to expand their networks?

27. A constituent was told by Telus that the monthly rate for landlines is government regulated. Are these prices in fact government mandated? If so, why would the government be charging rural and remote communities \$75 compared to the \$35 an urban customer pays for a landline? How often and who reviews/determines government-mandated rates?

28. Connecting B.C. offers funding opportunities through an application process to expand internet service. Is the intent of this program to eventually replace all other funding programs?

29. How are applications prioritized? If a community applies and it is not selected for implementation, does the community have to reapply under a new application intake announcement?

30. Once the application is submitted, how does the Ministry communicate the various stages of the assessment, negotiation and construction to the applicant? Do applications submitted under a previous intake take priority as a new intake process opens?

31. Is this funding envelope going to remain in place to maintain and upgrade the infrastructure as needed moving forward?

Properties Management and Real Estate Services — Real Property Division

32. The Minister's mandate letter includes directions to review the intended versus the actual use of government real estate assets; how does the Ministry intend to carry out this analysis?

33. The Minister was further directed to work with the Ministries of Housing and Municipal Affairs, Transportation and Transit, Finance, and Infrastructure, to ensure the highest and best use of all government real estate assets. What real estate assets would this include: government buildings such as court houses, jails and hospitals?

34. Are properties purchased or rented with tax dollars, no matter the ministry, then not considered part of the provincial real estate portfolio? More specifically, if a building of any kind is purchased or rented by any ministry — an office building, a medical clinic, an apartment building, a hotel/motel — who is the oversight ministry for all real estate assets?

35. If there is no oversight ministry for all real estate assets, how can an asset be reliably determined as being effective, surplus or redundant?

36. What formula is used to determine the way a real estate asset is managed or service delivered promotes the cost effectiveness of the administration of government services and the interests of British Columbians?

37. What formula is used to determine the assessment of anticipated capital cost expenditures for existing assets?

38. How is an asset determined to be surplus to requirements? What is the process once that determination has been made?

Office of the Chief Information Officer

39. There are growing concerns that the B.C. government is continuing to store data in the U.S. Can the Minister tell us if B.C. data is being stored in the U.S., what type of data is being stored there and what steps are being taken to ensure that data is secure?

40. Is there a plan to transfer that data back to B.C. — are these plans being discussed or explored currently?

41. Has the First Nations data governance centre been established? If so, where is it located and is it operational?

42. What was the cost of the project, who currently funds the centre and how many staff are employed for the operation? Who is currently the governing body of the centre: the Ministry of Citizens' Services or Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation?

43. Where is the data being stored and is it being shared across ministries? Will there be different protocols to access this specific data? When the centre commences gathering its own data, will it be shared with other ministries? Will the data collected and stored by the centre be subject to FOI requests in accordance with current legislation?

44. Does this or any ministry have, or are they working on, a data catalogue/base that reflects the type of equipment (backup generators, emergency lighting, medical supplies, etc.) and its location throughout the province should an emergent need be deemed during provincial emergency incidents?

45. With a growing increase and severity of cybersecurity and personal information breaches in combination with the rapid advancement of computer hardware, software and programing across all industries, various levels of governments and countries around the world, what improvements or implementations have been made or are being considered to protect and ensure the integrity of sensitive government, financial and personal information/data?

46. Does the Minister know how much the B.C. government has invested in cloud storage solutions?

47. My understanding is that ministries access the cloud on a case-by-case basis and are engaging with a variety of cloud vendors. Are Canadian tech companies and institutions such as UBC given additional points through the social impact purchasing guidelines and procurement process?

48. One service, Sprint With Us, offers companies opportunities to bid on contracts of up to \$5 million. These procurements take as little as 17 days from start to finish. I find this astonishing considering that most often I can't even get an inquiry response from most ministries within two weeks. Will the Minister please explain how a \$5 million dollar procurement contract can be awarded this quickly, but FOI requests can't be completed in the 30-day legislated timeframe?

BC Registries and Online Services; Service BC Contact Centre

49. The Service BC provincial emergency line has made improvements and now offers support in 220 languages. This is fantastic; however, there remains a problem in that it is only staffed 7:30–5:00 p.m. Why is this service not available 24 hours during times of emergency?

50. Budget 2024 contained new funding to broaden support for evacuees by funding specifically trained Service BC call centre agents who provide virtual navigation to access information regarding emergency services. Last year, the fire in Jasper marked the loss of one of Canada's most spectacular tourist destinations. This may be the first massive evacuation of Alberta residents to B.C. but likely won't be the last. With the Village of Valemount taking in more than 20,000 people from Alberta, are there lessons learned or post-mortem planning around bringing ministries from both provinces together to help assist neighbouring evacuees better?

51. The deaf/blind institute in Prince George has expressed frustration and concern and feels that most people don't stop to consider how individuals with challenges—mobility, physical (lack of, or no sight, sound or dialogue) and/or a combination—experience a significantly higher level of stress during emergencies. They would like to see changes and/or improvements regarding the lack of access to resources, dissemination of information and alerts for emergency situations (e.g., fires and evacuation orders). Are there any current projects to help determine better access to general and emergency management information for these individuals?

52. BC OnLine provides access to government information products, filings and registrations for private and public sector business customers. When a new registry is formed and there is an annual requirement to register, does Citizens' Services have any involvement?

53. More specifically, the new Short Term Rental Registry; at what point do concerns/complaints regarding service received, questions not answered, unclear communication, notification and administrative processes not understood become the purview of this Ministry—or do they?

54. Where do the lines cross or intersect between all ministries regarding services received through any government office or online service? The registry is one; however, if multiple complaints are made regarding service from a B.C. government office, who is ultimately responsible for that service—good, bad or other?

Government Procurement

55. Procurement and project management failures have contributed to these huge overruns the past five years; what is being done to prevent similar budget explosions on current and future projects?

56. If construction costs are climbing generally, has the Minister looked at adjusting its procurement approach—for instance, using fixed-price contracts or including higher-contingency allowances—to avoid these shortfalls?

57. What accountability measures are in place for the planners or contractors who underestimated costs or contributed to these overruns?

58. What penalties or incentives are in the contract to keep the builder on schedule, and have any been used?

59. Are there contract amendments made regarding the necessity for revised project deadlines?

60. How many contracts or purchases across all ministries were sole-sourced in the last fiscal year, and do all these direct awards strictly comply with the B.C. government's Core Policy and Procedures Manual (CPPM) for procurement?

61. Is the Minister able to provide a list of any contracts above the competitive bidding threshold that were awarded without an open tender? For each, explain why a sole source was deemed necessary and what justification was documented.

62. If any were awarded due to “urgent” needs or specialty suppliers, did the Ministry post the required Notice of Intent to direct award, and how did it ensure a fair price in the absence of competition?

63. The public is concerned that sole-sourcing may be happening outside of truly exceptional circumstances; how is the Minister monitoring this and ensuring adherence to procurement best practices on all projects?

64. During the pandemic, the government procured large quantities of personal protective equipment (PPE). It was later revealed that about \$16 million worth of PPE had to be disposed of due to quality issues and a further \$13 million worth expired unused. What went wrong in the procurement and quality control vetting process that allowed tens of millions of dollars spent on PPE that did not meet quality specifications?

65. Were the applicable due diligence, quality control and vendor qualification processes or safeguards waived in the rush to buy PPE, and have any vendors been held accountable or blacklisted for supplying faulty goods?

66. Going forward, how will the Ministry improve supply contracts to include quality guarantees or claw-back provisions so that taxpayers aren’t left footing the bill for unusable products?

67. Multiple industry representatives have raised concerns that the government’s use of Community Benefits Agreements on public projects is driving up costs and reducing efficiency. Under the CBA framework, bids are restricted to companies who agree to certain union hiring conditions through BC Infrastructure Benefits, effectively disqualifying many open-shop contractors and potentially reducing the pool of bidders. Does the Minister acknowledge that the CBA policy may be contributing to higher bid prices or fewer competitive bids on projects like the Pattullo Bridge and Surrey-Langley SkyTrain?

68. How does the government justify the CBA approach considering these cost escalations—has any analysis been done on how much extra the CBAs are costing taxpayers?

69. We want to ensure that well-intentioned labour policies are not resulting in hidden cost premiums or project delays. Will the Minister commit to transparently releasing data on the number of bidders and bid prices for CBA-governed contracts versus non-CBA contracts, so the public can see the impact? If not, why keep that hidden?

70. Although BC Ferries operates at arm’s length, the Ministry has oversight of this vital transportation Crown corporation. In the context of procurement best practices, what steps is the Minister taking to ensure BC Ferries’ contracting decisions are sound?

71. For example, when BC Ferries procures new vessels or major refits, are those contracts tendered internationally, and is the government comfortable with that approach given potential impacts on local shipbuilding jobs?

72. Conversely, if BC Ferries pursues sole-source or limited tenders for specialized work, how is value for money being verified?

73. The recent ferry service disruptions highlight the importance of reliable assets. Were there any procurement or maintenance contract failures that contributed to vessels being out of service, such as a poor choice of supplier for parts or delays in refit work?

74. How is the Minister working with BC Ferries to improve procurement outcomes, ensure open competition where appropriate and avoid costly mistakes that ultimately affect ferry users and taxpayers?

75. In the wake of the forensic audit of BC Housing, which found mismanagement and conflict of interest involving the former CEO and a major housing provider, can the Minister of Housing detail what has been done to clean up procurement practices at BC Housing?

76. An independent investigation into BC Housing made 20 recommendations to improve oversight, conflict-of-interest safeguards and accountability for public funds regarding various procurement processes. Can the Minister confirm that all of the recommendations have been implemented?

77. Specifically, what changes have been made regarding board governance, financial oversight and procurement approval processes at BC Housing since the audit?

78. The 2025 budget includes significant spending on new housing programs—for example, financing for affordable housing construction, acquisitions of properties, modular housing, etc. The public is concerned about recurring patterns where particular companies or non-profits get the lion's share of contracts. For instance, if BC Housing or the new Housing Secretariat is partnering with private developers or contractors to build affordable units, how are those partners selected?

79. Is there a competitive request for proposals for each project, or are certain developers being repeatedly chosen through a less transparent process?

80. Will the Minister publish an annual breakdown of which vendors and partners receive housing-related contracts and funding, to allow scrutiny of whether the distribution is fair or indicative of favouritism?

81. How will the Minister ensure value for money in these rapid housing programs—what cost benchmarks or audits will be used to prevent overspending or gold-plating under the rush to build homes?

82. Site C has become the most expensive public project in B.C. history, with the budget now at \$16 billion, nearly double its original \$8.3 billion price tag and a one-year delay to 2025 for completion. Specifically, was the original project design—that turned out to be flawed—done internally or by an external engineering firm, and has that firm faced any consequences for the costly fixes required?

83. The Premier, when he announced the \$16 billion revised budget, cited “escalating safety issues” as a cause. Were these safety issues something that should have been caught in the initial procurement and planning phase?

84. Taxpayers are footing an extra \$5-plus billion because of these problems; has the government pursued any legal recourse or cost-sharing from consultants or contractors involved in the faulty design, or is the public on the hook for all of it?

85. More broadly, how is the Minister strengthening oversight of BC Hydro's megaproject procurement and risk management so that an error of this magnitude—foundation issues discovered mid-build—never happens again?

86. BC Hydro and its subsidiaries often require specialized services, but we have seen very large sole-sourced contracts that raise questions. One prominent example is the long-term engineering services contract for Site C awarded, without competition, to SNC-Lavalin/AtkinsRéalis and Klohn Crippen Berger—a contract now worth about \$424 million and spanning many years. Why was this contract not tendered, given its enormous value?

87. The explanation given was these firms' historical involvement in Site C's design dating back decades, but does the Minister believe that justifies sidestepping a competitive process for a contract nearly half a billion dollars in value?

88. In hindsight, could bringing in a fresh engineering perspective via competition have helped avoid some of the technical issues that arose?

89. We understand some situations, like Indigenous partnerships or proprietary tech, might warrant direct awards, but the concern is that the practice can be overused. Will the Minister commit to increasing transparency by publishing all direct-award contracts in the energy portfolio and the justifications for each?

90. Specifically, will the Minister assure B.C. residents that future large undertakings—like any new power projects or major infrastructure for BC Hydro—will undergo fully competitive procurement, unless impossible?

91. Does BC Hydro have independent project reviewers or an Auditor General review to catch issues early? For instance, when Site C's troubles first emerged, an independent panel was eventually brought in. Should that perhaps have happened sooner via a built-in audit mechanism?

92. The Auditor General of B.C. conducted a survey last year that found 61 percent of public sector organizations had detected some form of fraud in a recent period, including things like theft of funds, regulatory breaches and internal financial fraud. This is very alarming; while the report did not name specific ministries, it signals that fraud risk—which can include procurement fraud such as kickbacks, bid-rigging and invoice schemes—is not an abstract worry but a real occurrence in government. What actions is the government taking in response to the Auditor General's flags on fraud risk?

93. Will the Minister institute stronger anti-fraud measures tied to procurement, such as random audits of contracts, tighter controls on contract change orders and payments and whistleblower protections for staff who report irregularities?

94. Are ministries now required to have up-to-date fraud risk management policies and assign senior staff to oversee fraud risk as the Auditor General recommended?

95. Is the Minister aware of any specific procurement-related fraud cases that have been uncovered in the past year—for example, any cases of employees steering contracts to relatives or accepting kickbacks from vendors—and if so, what was done?

96. How is the Minister ensuring that an attitude of zero tolerance for fraud and corruption in procurement is maintained, and that any loopholes or weak controls that could be exploited are swiftly tightened?

97. British Columbians expect their government to spend prudently and fairly. Right now, there are too many stories of over-budget projects and questionable contracting. We need to hear from the Minister how he will ensure that in Budget 2025 and onward, every major expenditure will undergo rigorous scrutiny, follow best practices and deliver value—without exceptions or excuses. Will the government commit to greater transparency in procurement across the board?

98. Specifically, will it resurrect or enhance public disclosure tools so that anyone can see which company won a given contract, for what amount and by what procurement method?

99. Some jurisdictions publish open data on all contracts, or at least all above a threshold. In B.C., while some information can be found through databases or FOI, it's not easily accessible in one place for oversight. The opposition requests that the government publish an annual procurement report summarizing contracting activity by ministry: number of contracts, total spend, percentage by competitive versus direct award and any notable deviations or issues. Is this something the Minister will consider?

100. Will the Minister support empowering an independent commission or the Auditor General to conduct a thorough review of the province's procurement processes and outcomes over the last few years, to identify patterns of inefficiency or favouritism?

SCHEDULE D

PRIVATE MEMBERS' TIME

(Monday morning only)

(D number denotes order of precedence)

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS (STANDING ORDER 25A)

PUBLIC BILLS IN THE HANDS OF PRIVATE MEMBERS

REPORT

[D1] Report—

Bill (No. M 202) intituled *Eligibility to Hold Public Office Act*, PRINTED. Darlene Rotchford.
(Reported complete without amendment.)

COMMITTED TO THE SELECT STANDING COMMITTEE ON PRIVATE BILLS AND PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILLS

[D2] Committee—

Bill (No. M 204) intituled *Perinatal and Postnatal Mental Health Strategy Act*, PRINTED.
Jody Toor. (March 10, 2025.)

[D3] Committee—

Bill (No. M 205) intituled *Mental Health Amendment Act, 2025*, PRINTED. Elenore Sturko.
(April 7, 2025.)

PUBLIC BILLS IN THE HANDS OF PRIVATE MEMBERS AND PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS

ITEMS BELOW NOT LISTED IN ORDER OF PRECEDENCE

(* Denotes Member's intended item of business)

SECOND READING

Second Reading—

Bill (No. M 201) intituled *Low Carbon Fuels Amendment Act, 2025*, PRINTED. Kiel Giddens.

Second Reading—

Bill (No. M 203) intituled *Free Trade and Mobility Within Canada Act*, PRINTED. John Rustad.

Second Reading—

Bill (No. M 206) intituled *Interpretation (Pacific Daylight Time) Amendment Act, 2025*, PRINTED.
John Rustad.

Second Reading—

Bill (No. M 207) intituled *Greenhouse Gas Industrial Reporting and Control Repeal Act*, PRINTED.
Peter Milobar.

* Second Reading—

Bill (No. M 210) intituled *Korean Heritage Month Act*, PRINTED. Paul Choi.

Second Reading—

Bill (No. M 212) intituled *Income Tax (Grocery Rebate Guarantee) Amendment Act, 2025*, PRINTED. *John Rustad*.

Second Reading—

Bill (No. M 213) intituled *Drug Use Prevention Education in Schools Act*, PRINTED. *Steve Kooner*.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS ON NOTICE**12** *Dallas Brodie* to move—

That this House affirms its commitment to defending the sovereignty of Canada, and hereby condemns threats of annexation by the United States, efforts to influence Canadian elections by the Chinese Communist Party, and unilateral assertions of sovereignty by Indigenous bands or other groups within British Columbia.

16 *Paul Choi* to move—

That this House supports the speculation and vacancy tax which is turning empty homes into homes for people.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS ON NOTICE TO PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS**17** *Stephanie Higginson* to move—

That Motion 12 be amended by deleting all the words after “elections” and substituting therefor the following: “by any foreign government, including the Chinese Communist Party.”

LIST OF PRECEDENCE FOR PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

(Last revised on May 5, 2025)

- | | | |
|----------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Paul Choi | 21. Sheldon Clare | 40. Trevor Halford |
| 2. Misty Van Popta | 22. Amna Shah | 41. Ian Paton |
| 3. Mable Elmore | 23. Bryan Tepper | 42. Donegal Wilson |
| 4. Steve Kooner | 24. Heather Maahs | 43. Scott McInnis |
| 5. George Anderson | 25. Qwulti'stunaat / | 44. Bruce Banman |
| 6. Ward Stamer | Debra Toporowski | 45. Lynne Block |
| 7. Anna Kindy | 26. Sunita Dhir | 46. Kristina Loewen |
| 8. Nina Krieger | 27. John Rustad | 47. Claire Rattée |
| 9. Janet Routledge | 28. Susie Chant | 48. Stephanie Higginson |
| 10. Rosalyn Bird | 29. Tara Armstrong | 49. Linda Hepner |
| 11. Teresa Wat | 30. Reann Gasper | 50. Amelia Boulton |
| 12. Sharon Hartwell | 31. Amshen / Joan Phillip | 51. Mandeep Dhaliwal |
| 13. Tony Luck | 32. Harman Bhangu | 52. Brent Chapman |
| 14. Kiel Giddens | 33. Rob Botterell | 53. Peter Milobar |
| 15. David Williams | 34. Jessie Sunner | 54. Pete Davis |
| 16. Gavin Dew | 35. Lorne Doerkson | 55. Á'a:liya Warbus |
| 17. Steve Morissette | 36. Rohini Arora | 56. Larry Neufeld |
| 18. Harwinder Sandhu | 37. Jeremy Valeriote | 57. Lawrence Mok |
| 19. Brennan Day | 38. Dana Lajeunesse | 58. Dallas Brodie |
| 20. Jordan Kealy | 39. Korky Neufeld | |