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LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR
His Honour the Honourable Steven L. Point, OBC

THIRD SESSION, 38TH PARLIAMENT

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CONTENTS

Thursday, November 22, 2007
Morning Sitting

Routine Proceedings

	Page
Introductions by Members	9395
Introduction and First Reading of Bills.....	9395
First Nations Education Act (Bill 46)	
Hon. S. Bond	
Second Reading of Bills.....	9396
Greenhouse Gas Reduction Targets Act (Bill 44) (<i>continued</i>)	
C. Puchmayr	
C. James	
D. Cubberley	
J. Rustad	
C. Trevena	
M. Karagianis	
G. Gentner	
Hon. B. Penner	

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 2007

**Introduction and
First Reading of Bills**

The House met at 10:03 a.m.

[Mr. Speaker in the chair.]

Prayers.

Introductions by Members

Hon. S. Bond: I am delighted to have a number of guests in the gallery today. We are joined by several representatives from the First Nations Education Steering Committee. I'd love it if you'd help me welcome Chief Negotiator Nathan Matthew; FNEESC President Tyrone McNeil; interim Executive Director Marie Matthew; legal counsel Nancy Morgan; Executive Services Manager Jan Haugen; and Kathi Dickie, representative for the Chalo School of Fort Nelson and the Fort Nelson First Nation.

We are also joined by the B.C. Assembly of First Nations Regional Chief Shawn Atleo; Grand Chief Edward John and Chief Judith Sayers of the First Nations Summit; Penny Tees, the president of the B.C. School Trustees Association; Trish Rosborough, our Ministry of Education's director of aboriginal education enhancements; and also Anne Bowers, who is the manager of our aboriginal education enhancements department.

They are all here, Mr. Speaker, on this historic day for first nations education in British Columbia. I know all of the members would want to make them welcome to the precinct.

Hon. W. Oppal: I would like to introduce five members of our staff from the Ministry of Attorney General, legislative counsel branch, who are sitting in the gallery this morning to observe the proceedings. They are Carol Dohan, Gayle Moore, Lisa Lange, Erin Arkesteyn-Vogler and Catherine Alexander.

[1005]

These people do a fantastic job. On occasion they've even made me look good. That's how good they are. I know how difficult that is. So let's make them feel welcome.

Hon. B. Penner: This morning I had a chance to have a meeting with the hon. Minister Salvatori, the Minister of Research and Innovation for the province of Trento in Italy. He's accompanied by a delegation of officials who are helping him. They're in the gallery today. We talked about our mutual concern around climate change and policies to mitigate the impacts of climate change to our natural forests, our water systems and the environment around us. I ask that the House please make them welcome.

FIRST NATIONS EDUCATION ACT

Hon. S. Bond presented a message from His Honour the Administrator: a bill intituled First Nations Education Act.

Hon. S. Bond: I move that the bill be introduced and read a first time now, Mr. Speaker.

Motion approved.

Hon. S. Bond: I am pleased to introduce Bill 46, the First Nations Education Act. This is a historic moment for first nations across British Columbia and an important milestone in our province's education system. Today British Columbia is recognizing the rights of first nations to govern the education of their children on first nations land.

We are completing years of work between this government, our partners at the First Nations Education Steering Committee and the government of Canada. The act fulfils this government's commitments set out in the July 2006 first nations education jurisdiction agreement with the First Nations Education Steering Committee and Canada and the B.C. first nations education agreement with the First Nations Education Steering Committee. It is our government's response to Canada's Bill C-34, and it is part of this government's commitment to meet the social, cultural and educational needs of aboriginal students.

Today's legislation is more than just recognition. It is the basis for a stronger, more effective cooperation with first nations as we work to give the children who learn on first nations land the best education we can.

This legislation also enables on-reserve first nations schools to have their own system of kindergarten-to-grade-12 education based on provincial curriculum learning outcomes for core courses leading to graduation. It enables participating first nations who have granted their own graduation certificates to apply to have students receive the provincial graduation certificate called the Dogwood certificate.

It also establishes the first nations education authority as a regulatory body for teacher certification, school certification and curriculum and exam standards. It guarantees that the Ministry of Education will consult with the first nations education authority as part of a general consultation on education policy, legislation and standards changes that affect first nations education.

We believe that education plays a crucial role in developing the tools to succeed in life — tools that every child deserves, no matter where they live. Together we will become the best-educated, most literate jurisdiction in North America.

Hon. Speaker, I move that the bill be placed on the orders of the day for the second reading at the next sitting of the House after today.

Bill 46, First Nations Education Act, introduced, read a first time and ordered to be placed on orders of the day for second reading at the next sitting of the House after today.

Orders of the Day

Hon. B. Penner: I call continued debate on Bill 44.

Second Reading of Bills

GREENHOUSE GAS REDUCTION TARGETS ACT (continued)

C. Puchmayr: As I ran out of time yesterday because of the bewitching hour, I will continue on where I left off.

[1010]

Yesterday I finished my comments with concerns about this bill and concerns about how Bill 44 — this six pages that are going to change the environment in British Columbia and the world — contradicts not only many of the bills and the legislation that this government has introduced but also agreements that this government has introduced. One of the agreements is the TILMA agreement — the trade, investment and labour mobility agreement.

[H. Bloy in the chair.]

The legal counsel for environmental groups, as well as legal counsel for the Union of B.C. Municipalities, have made comments with respect to the concerns on the ambiguities and the legal concerns and legal challenges that could be exposed in the TILMA legislation. I shouldn't even call it legislation, because it really isn't coming to the House, as opposed to possibly an enabling act that may be introduced at some time.

The real concern — and it has been highlighted by legal counsel in the environmental field — is that some of the implications of the trade, investment and labour mobility agreement could circumvent, affect and expose legal challenges to environmental initiatives that this province will be bringing forward or should be bringing forward.

With those concerns being very real and those concerns meaning litigation and bringing the matter before the courts for a period of time that could be many, many years, especially when you have challenges that may go as far as the Supreme Court of Canada.... The delays in implementing environmental legislation by virtue of agreements that this government is engaging in without debate could very well have very detrimental effects on this very thin bill here of six pages.

I just want to back up a little bit about this blue-ribbon panel. I think the Environment Minister said that they were volunteers, and the Premier said they were handpicked. I know of people that volunteered to be on that panel. Organized labour volunteered to be on the panel, and they were not given a position on that panel. Yet more than half of this province is working people. Not all are in unions, but they're working people, and they do not have a direct voice in this legislation.

My experience on the worksite has been that most of the efficiencies that have come to benefit some of the larger corporations and industries in British Columbia

have come from the working people, from the shop floor. To have that component not represented in this bill, on this blue-ribbon panel is to me unacceptable.

Who's on the panel? One of the members on the panel is the CEO of British Petroleum of Calgary. What interest does the CEO of British Petroleum in Calgary have in reducing the use of fossil fuel, when fossil fuel is the very essence or the very component that makes profits for British Petroleum?

We met the day before yesterday with interests in offshore oil and gas. There currently is a federal moratorium on offshore oil and gas, and there are incredible pressures for us in this province to develop offshore oil and gas. Offshore gas and oil will certainly create and add to the concerns of greenhouse gas.

There are some pressures and some inconsistencies, and there are certainly people that are supporters of the Liberal government today that would like to see those moratoriums lifted. There are supporters of the Conservative government in Canada that would like to see the national moratoriums lifted.

Again, that is certainly in conflict with the six pages of this bill that's supposed to save the planet. I should submit that this bill is probably thinner than the ozone layer over the Arctic right now. It's merely a skeleton.

My comments yesterday were that I'm supporting this because we propose that we can make this bill better. When enabling legislation, which is being recommended or floated to us right now, comes forward in the spring, we will work to make sure that the legislation that comes forward will actually have some meaning and will have an effect on this bill that will be positive and that will actually get the results that are necessary to save this planet for our children and our grandchildren.

[1015]

Bill 43, which was the last bill, is 70 pages of legislation that takes away the democratic right of a municipality, the democratic rights in the southern B.C. region to manage transportation. It takes away any environmental lens. It takes away the lens of the transit user. It takes away the lens of cyclists. It gives all of that power, including taxing powers, over to corporate interests that may not necessarily have the same environmental lens that we should have now as a province in British Columbia.

You have, you know, 70 pages taking away democratic rights and taking away public accountability on something that is probably more polluting than anything — that's single-occupancy vehicles — and replacing it with six pages of a skeleton of a bill that sounds good, but really, there isn't anything there. This side will certainly work to promote, to ensure that this bill is going to be effective and that we put some meat on the bones so that we actually have a piece of legislation that we can be satisfied will go forward in doing exactly what we need to do.

I know that the only targets in here that I actually see.... I mean, there are targets for 2020 and 2050, and I submit to this House that 2020 and 2050 are too late. In parts of the world ten years ago was too late.

The effects of global warming are out of control now, and even the scientists that at one time tried to debunk global warming as just being a natural cycle are now

coming on board and saying: "We were wrong. Global warming is serious. It is having incredible impacts on this planet, impacts that may already today be irreversible." And we're talking about targets for 2020 and 2050. Certainly, we on this side will work towards getting those targets to become realistic targets.

The reduction, or making government energy-neutral.... You may have a direct effect — making them energy-neutral and not adding more greenhouse gases to the government component — but the legislation that this government has already introduced will have effects that will exceed the savings that are targeted in this bill. They will absolutely exceed those savings.

You will have more greenhouse gas by virtue of different legislation, and yet you will make it sound like you are making the government responsible and making it energy-neutral or carbon-neutral. We certainly need to address the direction we go with this, and we need to do so in a way that meets some real targets and that has some real effects.

The other legislation that was introduced that contradicts this bill — and it sounds great — is the independent power production. Sounds great. You know, who can't support independent green power? We need green power, but the problem with green power, with the way the bill is introduced.... First of all, it has bypassed the communities.

Green power companies are going in and taking the easiest run of the rivers. They're taking some of the most pristine lands in this province without any community input. They're given a guaranteed purchase price of that power that exceeds what's being paid on the open market right now.

Those contracts are only contracts for 30 to 40 years. So 30 and 40 years from now, when my granddaughter is 40 or 50, suddenly our children and our grandchildren are going to realize that this power can now be sold on the open market. They're no longer obligated to sell it in British Columbia. Suddenly there could be an incredible need to develop short-term power projects that could very well be environmentally unsound.

[1020]

In the guise of this great, green power phenomenon, all we're doing is delaying a hit. In 30 and 40 years, when these contracts expire and those independent power producers have made a lot of money off this province, they can sell their power anywhere without us having an ability, other than the open market. Now we pay them more than the open market for 30 years, and then we're at their mercy at the end of 30 years.

Again, here is some legislation that really conflicts when we talk about sustainable, long-term, green energy in British Columbia. This is short-term, and it's easy run of the river. All the simple projects are being purchased now. All the close-in projects — close to transmission systems — are the ones that are being developed now. In 30 or 40 years we're going to be held hostage by those very power producers that have reaped such a huge benefit from us. Again, that conflicts with this bill.

The issue affecting our forests. We see what's happening with pine beetle, but the other thing that's affecting our

forests now is that we have a forest industry that is going for quick solutions, quick fixes. I know that in the past we had forest industries.... If you tracked the value of forestry and forest products over the last hundred years, you will see that it spikes up and down. It's very cyclical.

At times forest companies, when the price of lumber was extremely high and there were a lot of stockpiles, would stop and retool their plants. They would sell off the stockpiles while they put money into their plants and upgraded them, made them more efficient.

Some of the plants were a hundred years old. The property was a hundred years old, or the plant was a hundred years old on the property. Those plants were actually high-efficiency, highly profitable modern plants.

One that recently closed in New Westminster was very profitable. The very company that closed it couldn't get fibre supply, as we're exporting five million cubic metres of logs a year into the United States. They can't get fibre supply, so they closed a profitable plant.

Another plant, Canadian Forest Products on Canfor Avenue in New Westminster, is closing in early January or early February, putting 130 people out of work. This is a plant that takes wood waste from waste techs — takes particle, takes pallet boards — and crushes them up and makes veneers. It's a plant that's been producing since 1938. They used to make products for airplanes. Now they make high-tech veneers. It's a market.

The margins are small now because of the dollar, but it's still profitable to run. This company is sitting on massive real estate. They say it's not their core business. Their shareholders want a good return. That's the motivation. That's common business sense now.

It's not long term. It's: "Let's get maximum return today, and don't worry about what's left behind in the community."

Here we have forestry companies that are being given large tracts of our land to develop and to actually create more urban sprawl, such as what the Jordan River project could do. We have environmentally sound mills that are taking wood that would normally end up as waste in a landfill or that would normally end up being burned in the hothouse industry being produced into environmental products such as stream protection products that are sprayed on.

We have those mills closing down because of policies of this government, and we have jobs leaving the province because of policies of this government. We have logs leaving the province. The equipment in these mills is going to go across the border, all in the guise of environmentally sound. So everything is linked.

You bring in six pages of legislation, but all you have to do is look at the reams and reams of other legislation that absolutely counteract and contradict what this bill really is. That is a real concern. That's certainly a concern in my community, and it should be a concern everywhere in British Columbia.

[1025]

Just the pollutants that are going to be created if you put single-occupancy vehicles in the Fraser Valley, as opposed to an automated transit system or more lanes for busing.... Just clogging the roadways again

with multi-billion dollars of investment doesn't serve a purpose. It creates pollutants. It creates a toxic airshed in the Fraser Valley, and it contributes to global warming all over the world. So I'm really pleased that there is an attempt at some legislation, because I look at these six pages as really a double-edged sword.

I'm pleased that the government is trying to look green, because now we will be able to hold them accountable. We will be able to make true amendments to this legislation and to any enabling legislation that comes along, and we'll be able to force this government into putting its money where its mouth is.

I look forward to seeing other legislation come forward. Certainly, if you look at all this other legislation, there's a net loss. Even the goals, even the short-term targets, are going to be eaten up. There's going to be a net loss of even the short-term targets because of the other legislation that's brought in. It's not just trying to sound green. There has to be something concrete and forthright.

I'll close my argument by saying that I'll support this, and I will work very hard to make it better. You know, even a chameleon is green when embracing a frog, but once you disengage, all you're left with are warts.

C. James: I rise to discuss and debate second reading of Bill 44. As other speakers have said before me, as we all know, global warming is the fundamental challenge of today's generation. There is no greater threat to our way of life, to the lives of our children, to the lives of our grandchildren, to the lives of future generations.

I've listened to members of this House speak passionately about the challenges of global warming, and I'm honoured and pleased that we're having this debate and discussion in the Legislature. It's critical that we're all a part of a global movement to take action. This year, as many know, was the tipping point on climate change.

Many British Columbians saw or heard former Vice-President Al Gore speak in Vancouver or Victoria about the challenges we face — an incredibly powerful presentation. He reminded all of us that scientists have been warning us about this reckoning for over 20 years.

Now, among those scientists, seven of them are B.C. scientists who were recently recognized by the Nobel Foundation for their work on the intergovernmental panel — extraordinary expertise right here in British Columbia. It took a long time, but their work is finally coming to fruition.

While scientists help us understand the challenges of global warming, what's really bringing home their message is seeing the effects of climate change with your own eyes. Every year — winter, spring and summer — my husband and I drive up to Burns Lake, which is his home territory — of the Carrier-Sekani. Every year as we head north, we're greeted by swaths of red, dead trees — the pine beetle epidemic.

Global warming means that the beetles aren't dying, but the trees are. In less than 20 years more than 80 percent of B.C.'s pine stands will be destroyed — 80 percent.

I've talked with families in the communities that are going to be most affected. They dread what's going to

happen to their towns, to their work, to their northern way of life.

I've listened to some of the elders from Carrier-Sekani talk to me about the changes that they personally see. "Two years ago," they said, "there wasn't any snow on the ground" — the first time in their memory that they've ever seen that.

[1030]

They're asking themselves what it means for their traditional way of life — for hunting and gathering, for their families, for their traditions, for the way of life that has sustained their people for centuries. These personal experiences have certainly strengthened my resolve to be part of the solution. Last week I had the pleasure of attending the Take the Lead B.C. conference. It was a conference where the environmental community, first nations, business and labour came together to work on our response to global warming.

No more debates about whether global warming actually exists. No more argument about whether humans are actually to blame. Instead, this amazing group of people came together to focus on actually finding solutions to the problems, to talk about the actions that we must take to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. They've come to the realization that we don't have another 20 years of debate about what kind of change is required, and we certainly don't have another 20 years for government to come to the table.

Make no mistake. While ordinary citizens are essential to the solution, global warming is not a problem that is simply going to be solved by individual action. It's not a problem where the solution is volunteerism on any part of the sector. It's a fundamental challenge that is going to require real leadership from government.

It's with regret that I stand here today and say that I don't believe that the government is doing enough in the fight against climate change. To use the words of the Premier, the legislation that's before us today is a framework, a promise to take some action decades ahead. Frankly, the public expected more from this government. They expected that climate change would be treated as an urgent matter.

We all heard the Premier stand up.... We all heard the throne speech last year, and we heard this was the most urgent priority, yet here we are almost a year later with simply a plan to do something in the future. People expected clear solutions in this legislation. They expected that we would see immediate action to reduce greenhouse gases today.

The government didn't deliver. Instead, we have targets without emission caps, targets that don't make B.C. a leader in the fight against climate change. B.C.'s long-term reduction targets don't even come close to those that have been set by California, New Mexico and Oregon. They've pledged aggressive targets: 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050. The Premier has pledged only 50 percent below 1990 levels — a very big difference.

Perhaps one of the reasons why the Premier hesitates to match these aggressive targets is that he's not really sure how he's going to get there. He hasn't explained

how we're going to reach these targets. The legislation doesn't explain how we're going to reach these targets. It puts all of that on to the climate action team. The Premier has given them a monumental task to provide the vision and the action that this government refused to provide to British Columbians.

This team has their work cut out for them. A recent report that came out from the Pembina Institute concluded that the details announced in the Premier's proposals will only reduce British Columbia's emissions by about five million tonnes — 31 million tonnes less than needed to meet the goal.

We on this side of the House understand that there isn't one solution to climate change. B.C.'s emissions come from a variety of sources: oil and gas production, industry, land use, housing and, yes, transportation. The choices that we make must cross over all sectors, but British Columbians expected that this government would at least start somewhere, that they would at least begin with something specific. It's time that the government stepped up to the plate.

Just as we've seen the debate change on climate change, I also believe that the nature of our work is changing. We're moving from making the case about global warming and climate change to actually making a case for changing the way that we live on this fragile planet.

[1035]

As we make that case for change, we as leaders must bring citizens with us. We must listen closely to people in our communities, to their needs, as the change occurs. We must listen to them and take seriously their concerns about the policies that we must develop to be effective on this critical issue.

Concerns that I've heard are around equity, community impact and, frankly, change itself. We need to do that so that we can actually move together and move ahead to repair our planet. We don't see that happening in British Columbia. People in communities are being cut out of the discussion on climate change.

I said earlier that we'd reached the tipping point on the issue of climate change. Our citizens are engaged. They know it's the problem of our time. Poll after poll shows that citizens recognize the problem. They're demanding action, but frankly, this government is risking that support. British Columbians have been engaged on the problem, but I fear they're being left out of the solution.

To date we've seen the Premier keep his plans on climate change a secret, behind closed doors in the Premier's office, exempt even from FOI. Consultation with communities and the public is nonexistent. On an issue that is of such critical importance, no one knows what's coming, no one knows what's being contemplated, and most importantly, people have no idea of the impact that they may be asked to bear.

Let's be clear. If we're going to be successful, there will be impacts. That's a reality, but unless those impacts are understood and accepted, the constituency that is now ready for action on climate change could actually come apart.

The Premier, unfortunately, has taken the same approach to climate change as he has to governing. It's a one-sided monologue that leaves people out.

Since I was elected leader of the New Democratic Party, I've talked about the need to deal people in, and this is particularly true about climate change. If we're going to be successful, we need buy-in from everyone because the changes that we're all talking about are big enough that we all have to be part of the solution. It's time — it's over time — that this government recognize that. If B.C. is going to be a leader in the fight against climate change, then we need to take action today.

New Democrats have proposed alternatives that would actually do that. We've proposed an immediate cap on emissions, tough new rules for oil and gas emissions, an aggressive investment in transit today, not in the future, and a clear rejection of coal-fired energy. These actions plus adaptation measures would put B.C. on a path to reducing emissions now.

I challenge the Premier to implement any of the New Democrat initiatives. As I said before, I welcome government to go ahead and steal the opposition's ideas. Perhaps we could actually get something done on climate change if we saw the government move in that direction.

The generations that follow don't care whose idea it was. They just want someone to do something, and sadly, they're not seeing any details and specifics that give them that kind of hope in this legislation. The generations now and in the future will hold us accountable for taking advantage of this moment. It is critical that we don't let them down.

[1040]

D. Cubberley: It's a pleasure to have an opportunity to comment on Bill 44. As the House knows, we are going to be supporting this bill, and we're certainly very supportive of the setting of a binding target on the province as one step in moving us towards change that reduces greenhouse gas emissions.

As many members have suggested and the Premier is increasingly acknowledging, beginning with the throne speech, this is an issue that threatens the future of humanity, which probably means that it has to be at the top of everybody's agenda. While at the level of language we see the issue moving up the agenda, at the level of commitments to real and tangible change, we see far less happening.

Now, this bill makes an important step in the direction of confirming the societal objective for British Columbia, and we're fully supportive of that. What we're concerned about is the lack of concrete actions to date that actually move us in the direction of change. There's been a lot of talk, of course, about all kinds of things. But there's a lack of concrete and tangible actions and a lack, really, of beginning to do the obvious things that can be done to lessen our impacts beginning today. I want to address my remarks in that vein.

I want to deal a little bit with the part of the bill that plans to make the provincial government carbon-neutral. Carbon-neutral is a particularly enticing term in the

world of spin. It's one of those terms that we see showing up increasingly.

I notice that municipalities have begun to use that to frame some relatively modest initiatives to try and lower some of the emissions that are created through the operation of buildings or in some cases the operation of a fleet of vehicles and the like. They use those small steps in the direction of change to frame a message to the public that they're going carbon-neutral. The provincial government has framed a set of actions, or at least a commitment to make itself carbon-neutral, and it's talked about doing some things which are good as far as they go but which don't, in fact, go very far.

So carbon neutrality for the government is going to look at, you know, the light that's used in buildings, the heat that's used in buildings, the kind of travel that civil servants might do in the course of their jobs and the like. All those things are good, but one of the most glaring and obvious missing pieces in carbon neutrality, and the one with which it actually couldn't make the claim of carbon neutrality, would be if you incorporated travel that involves travel to and from work by the provincial workforce.

The provincial workforce, of course, is significant. I'm sure there are arguments about this, but let's say, for the sake of discussion, it's 30,000 people every day across the province engaged in highly patterned behaviour travelling to and from their workplaces. Now, that is probably the single largest component of government's carbon footprint, and that's missing entirely from the commitment to go carbon-neutral.

Of course, there are some real concerns with this, because it's part of the pattern that we see emerging overall, which is that in all the discussion of greenhouse gas reduction and the growth in greenhouse gases, the one thing that is never talked about by government or by the climate change secretariat or by anybody else commenting on this is transportation. This is very significant in a province where the single largest contributor to greenhouse gas emissions is mobile sources.

We know that overall for British Columbia 40 percent of total greenhouse gas emissions are from mobile sources. That means, principally, cars and trucks in their daily operation on our roads and highway networks. The largest single source within that sector is peak-hour travel to and from work. So it's interesting.

[1045]

Part of the pattern of not engaging in a conversation with the public about what we're going to do with transportation involves deciding around the carbon neutrality of government not to improve the carbon contribution of the workforce travelling to and from work. This is obviously not acceptable.

It's curious, as well, given the government's interest in patterning itself on some of the innovation that's taken place in California. Personally, I have been strongly influenced by the directions California has taken over the years. They have been innovators, out of necessity, because of the level of pollution, principally in the Los Angeles basin, to engage in reductions — and to force those reductions on sectors producing automobiles and

trucks, in particular — of all forms of pollutants coming from mobile sources. Of course, that, in turn, does capture greenhouse gases.

The government was very quick to jump on California tailpipe standards, despite the fact they weren't too interested in that in opposition in the '90s when the Clark government and its predecessor, the Harcourt government, were very interested in improving standards from tailpipe emissions and were looking to California. Those days we weren't looking so much to California but looking away. Now we're definitely looking towards California, but we're only engaged in selective seeing of what is being done in California.

How about a little more California on carbon neutrality? One of the things that California did early on in its attempt to reduce impacts was to focus responsibility upon employers for the travel impacts of their workforce. Through the California Air Resources Board, they developed a concept, which is now integral to all transportation planning and the management of demand for transportation services, called transportation demand management.

They placed a responsibility upon employers with a workforce of over a hundred people to develop TDM plans. They're a requirement of law, and those plans require employers to invest in infrastructure and promotional programs that shift rides away from single-occupant vehicles and move those rides into transit, van pooling, walking and cycling.

Now, the experience with that has not been entirely happy in California in the sense of making the kind of large shifts that they had hoped for. The principal reason for that, of course, is that they weren't accompanied by parallel investments in low-carbon infrastructures that enabled the choice.

The one area where there has been success, not surprisingly, is in relation to public transportation, shifting of rides away from cars into buses and other forms of public transit, because where that infrastructure exists, it's possible to do it through a combination of carrots and sticks. Incentivizing that kind of change is much easier when you are supplying the infrastructure to support the choice.

Anyway, this isn't part of the government's plan at present, and it's something that we need to change the government's mind on. We need the government — this government, in particular, as the major employer in the province with a workforce of 30,000 — to assume responsibility for the carbon footprint of its employees, including travel to and from work, to develop itself as a model employer and to shift trips from single-occupant vehicles to more carbon-neutral forms of transport.

In doing that, in shouldering that responsibility, it both serves as a champion for change, an example of leadership. In order to accomplish the change, it would force itself to make investments in low-carbon infrastructures that would enable all employers in all urban regions to meet their necessary commitment to greenhouse gas reductions.

It's significant. You know, in the capital region, because of the nature of the region, the share of greenhouse gas

emissions coming from mobile sources, principally cars and trucks, is over 50 percent of the total greenhouse gas emissions. That is probably true of a great number of communities on the Island, communities outside the lower mainland and in suburban areas outside Vancouver — over 50 percent.

One of the conclusions we can draw from that is that no change will occur that can meet these targets until there's a focus on the transportation sector.

Now, it's curious to me that the government continues to stress commitment to targets while neglecting the most obvious things that it needs to focus on — the principal source, the primary emitters: cars and trucks, travel to and from work.

[1050]

To claim carbon neutrality for government, you have to include employee travel. You need to set reduction and offset targets, and you must invest in low-carbon infrastructures that support the behavioral change that's going to be required.

I hear a lot of talk about technology. There were a couple of speeches recently in the House from the other side about how technology is going to be a significant factor in meeting our greenhouse gas reduction targets. I think you need to look a little more closely at the research and talk a little more closely to people who are experts.

I know there are some members on your side who believe very strongly that the technocrats can help us with this. One thing we should do is look at their analysis of what contribution technology can make in the mobile sources sector.

Some good work has been done on it already. You know what the result of that work is? Check with the climate change secretariat on this. A maximum of 10 percent of the reduction, using everything from the hydrogen highway, which isn't going to happen, to plug-in cars and hybrid vehicles to biofuels and alternatives — a maximum of 10 percent of what you need to get from mobile sources as a reduction — is going to come from new technology.

So 90 percent is going to come from behavioural change. It's inevitable. You have to focus on it. I really would encourage government members to ask themselves why this bill is not focused on that.

The 90 percent that remains — how are we going to get it? I have to say that what I see going on — it's very interesting at a larger level, here — reminds me a little bit of the Sacred era. If you remember the Sacred era, when there was this massive....

Interjections.

D. Cubberley: The member opposite remembers. Oh, several members opposite remember the Sacred era — fondly.

They were very smart. They had this social problem with clearcut logging of old growth forest. They had massive public opposition to it. They needed to keep that forest industry going, for reasons we don't have to go into.

They engaged in a very smart process. "Talk and log" is what the environmentalists called it. Talk and log. They

set up talking shops. They had the old-growth protection strategy. They had various tables where environmentalists could meet with representatives of the Ministry of Forests. They talked about targets. They talked about protecting species. They talked about biodiversity. They talked and they talked and they talked, and they logged and they logged and they logged. Nothing happened, but the public felt that something was going to happen.

I see a parallel here with that. The public is being encouraged to think that something is going to happen, but there's a lot more talk than there is walk. So it's talk and emit. We need to shift that focus. We need to shift it because this is a real issue. Where the focus needs to be, in my view, is on the transportation sector, because it's the primary sector, and in this case, on affecting how government employees commute to work and to move them in the direction of low-carbon options.

I think there's a lot of unwarranted pessimism on that side of the House about this. It's undisclosed. They don't talk about it in public. I think there's also the problem of the primary contradiction that their whole agenda on transportation is towards higher emissions. We can't look at that. We can't look at the fact that the Gateway project, the 25-year-old project which has not been redesigned for the climate change era, is going to drive towards higher emissions. We can't look at the fact that a lot of the growth that's planned, to the extent that it's planned in the sectors where it's being boosted, is going to raise emissions and not lower them.

No one on that side.... I haven't heard anybody, not a single person on that side, ever talk with any passion or conviction about public transit and investing in public transit. No one ever talks about cycling and walking as transportation.

This is a province, as rich as it is, that puts a grand total of \$1.7 million per year into bike lanes. Bike lanes happen to be magnets that draw people out of their cars — exactly what you have to do to meet our targets in the mobile sector. But in the blink of an eye, this government, and without telling the public, can find \$25 million a year to give to private liquor distribution every year. Ka-ching. Ka-ching.

Oh yes, Member. You look at me quizzically, but those are the real priorities, or how unaligned the priorities are, in British Columbia.

On the one hand, you have a mode of transportation that, if invested in, can carry as many rides per day as public transit, which gets a grand total of \$1.7 million a year. On the other hand, you have an industry, which as regards to climate change.... I can't imagine the connection between drinking more at lower prices — or higher profitability for liquor distributors, which is what it's really about — and bringing down greenhouse gas emissions.

[1055]

Maybe people are being driven to drink because the government is doing so little about bringing down greenhouse gas emissions that they have to deal with their.... It's the narcotizing impact that we're subsidizing here: "Don't worry; be happy. Go to sleep, and if you can't, well, buy a bottle."

Anyway, one wonders at times if all of the members opposite are so entirely car-dependent in their own lives, so completely automobile-dependent that they can't think outside that paradigm, that they can't think about modal shifting. I've never heard anybody mention modal shift. There will be enormous modal shifts required, of an order unprecedented in North America, in order to achieve the government's objectives by 2020. In order to do that, you need to be investing now, and the fact is you could be investing now.

Let's contextualize this a little bit. Look at the capital region a little more closely, to grasp both the magnitude of the challenge and the opportunities for modal shifting amongst government employees and amongst all employees, who this legislation, again, should treat as a possible model for the changes that have to occur.

They would welcome it, by the way. I have some experience in this area with government employees, which I won't go into in detail, but I can tell you that they're more prepared than most workforces to make the kind of changes that need to be made. They would welcome government investing in the infrastructures that would allow them to make those changes.

I just want to give a snapshot of regional weekday travel for automobiles and passengers — all modes of transportation in this region as measured in the past year. For the whole region, 78 percent of all trips are automobiles and passengers. This is in a region with very high levels of cycling and walking, as you will see, but of all the trips occurring, 78 percent are automobiles and passengers, and most of those are single-occupant vehicles. That is your challenge. It's our challenge, but you're the only ones who get to say, so it's your challenge.

Transit, which is supported in the order of \$75 million worth of investment in operating and capital cost per year in the region, carries 6.4 percent of trips currently. That 6.4 percent is not small, and when we look at the peak-hour market, we will see it's much more significant. But compare that with 78 percent, and you have a measure of the distance that we have to travel. You have to probably achieve in this region a tripling of transit ridership to meet your greenhouse gas targets, and that will take sustained investment in rapid transit — investment of an order that you are not currently making, that you are loath to make and are not talking about.

Walking in this region comprises 10 percent of all travel. That 10 percent is more than transit, and if you think about it, the money it takes to sponsor that 10 percent of walking — to operate the infrastructure, to make new capital investments in it to replace it — is far lower than what it takes to get that 6.4 percent of trips on transit. They're different trips. That's one of the reasons. But think about the potential to grow that mode with sustained investment.

Bikes in our region carry 3.2 percent of all trips. That sounds relatively small, but it's over three times the rate in most urban regions in North America. The automobile is clearly dominant.

[K. Whittred in the chair.]

Transit — if we look at it over five years, which is what these figures are measuring against — is holding its own despite not having adequate investment and no new investment for climate change. It's not gaining, however.

Walking remains respectable regionwide and shows great potential. One of the tragedies is that as a vehicle for getting to and from work, it has fallen in the past five years. The reason it has fallen is principally the consolidation and closing of schools. That is the principal reason people are walking less in Greater Victoria — because fewer people can now walk to and from school. That's identified through very careful analysis.

Cycling, regionwide, is up by 0.75 of a percent. That may not sound like much, but I can tell you: for transportation planners to achieve a 1-percent modal shift is enormous. And that has been done with relatively small investments of funding into low-carbon infrastructures, principally bike lanes and some bike trails. Each of them has to grow in this region by three times what they currently carry to meet the targets.

[1100]

Each of them can do exactly that. Each of them can do exactly that if they receive sustained investments in supportive infrastructure, which government is not talking about. They are talking, I can see, but not about that.

That can begin tomorrow. There's no need to wait for the climate change secretariat. We don't need them to tell us to do it. We don't need the panel of experts to tell us. We know we have to go to that sector.

The growth strategy plans in place in the major urban regions tell you what the next steps are in order to get to rapid transit in the region. They tell you what the next steps are for walking and cycling. All you need to do — you who take an enormous share of the 92 cents of every dollar collected in tax, the 92 cents of every dollar flowing to provincial and federal governments — is take a share of that and begin to invest it in low-carbon infrastructures directed at behavioral change in the travel market.

Let's look at the peak-hour markets, because that's the bread-and-butter market for transportation — prime travel times when the commuting government employees are travelling to and from work. That's the market that principally needs to be changed to really reduce government's carbon footprint, the footprint this bill neglects while calling itself carbon-neutral.

Transit numbers. Transit gets 12.12 percent of that market, which is nearly double its share of total trips. It's a very focused market, and transit can perform in that market to take people to and from work. That's why we need rapid transit. That could as easily be 25 percent as what it is today, but it requires sustained investment in order to get there.

We'd like rapid transit in this region, but we can't get there with the money this government puts into transit. We need many times that amount. We need a share of the fuel tax revenues. We need a regional

transportation authority. Every major urban region in this province needs a regional transportation authority.

By the way, you promised it in 2001. You promised to give regional transportation authorities in 2001, and nothing has happened. What you're really doing is undermining the sole transportation authority we have, TransLink in Vancouver, and that's a shame.

If you look at the bike share in the peak-hour market, it more than doubles. It's carrying 7.7 percent of trips regionwide in this region. That's one in five in the core, because in the core, where it's more concentrated, it would easily be 20 percent. It might even be that a quarter of all trips are being made on bicycles in the peak-hour market.

That's up, over five years, by 1.6 percent. That is probably the most significant modal shift, outside of a transit system bringing on a new rapid transit component, that's been effected anywhere in the history of the country in a five-year period — in the direction of positive change.

Is it of interest to the government how that happened? I would say no. Certainly, no one has ever looked into it. No one has ever approached me and asked: "How did that happen? Maybe we could apply it somewhere else."

One would think that a government that professes concern for the future of mankind and sees an imminent threat would be interested in how something like that could be accomplished, how it could be multiplied and spread. Why is it happening in Greater Victoria? Principally because this region has done more to accommodate cycling to work, chiefly by building bike lanes and other specialized infrastructures like commuter trails that connect to destinations like work and home and school, and that make cycling a feasible transportation choice.

It's not rocket science. It's investment in low-carbon infrastructures. Investing in a sustained way in low-carbon transport infrastructures is the principal building block for transportation modal shifts that will allow us to meet greenhouse gas reduction targets.

That's what we need government to be doing — not refusing to give Victoria a regional transportation authority, as the "minister of cars and trucks" has done, saying, "No, no. We need the congestion that comes with half a million people before we'll consider that. We don't want you to jump the curb, despite the fact mankind is threatened by climate change. We don't need that"; and not refusing Victoria access to fuel tax revenues and the borrowing and planning powers required to create rapid transit, bring light rail transit here. The plan is already in place. We know how to do it and could begin doing it tomorrow.

It will take seven years to get it done — six if you really rush. Where does that put us on your time lines for reduction by a third?

[1105]

We need to start today, and we know we need to do it. We don't need a climate change secretariat to tell us that. We need political will on the other side of the House. That's what's missing. Not by refusing, turning

down every year projects to build bike lanes on roads and to build dedicated overpass structures for trails because there's a measly \$1.7 million available in the province of British Columbia for dedicated cycling infrastructures, when megamillions are being spent precisely on those modes that create greenhouse gases and that are growing the problem we have....

We're going to have 700,000 additional people moving into British Columbia in the time frame that we're talking about — by 2020.

Interjection.

D. Cubberley: It's wonderful, Member. It is a wonderful thing to bring more people here, but that will more than offset any of the changes that you were talking about yesterday from technology. Those 700,000 people will more than offset any change that's achievable by substituting a lower carbon technology within the automobile frame.

I think government needs to step up its game a little bit on this stuff. The problem is as big as the Premier says it is, but you need a plan which is up to the scale of the problem, not a plan which is scaled down to the lack of conviction that we see on the other side. We do need government to become carbon-neutral, and we need it to become truly carbon-neutral. We need it to do that by managing the demand that its 30,000-member workforce creates for travel choices. We need to move them away from high carbon towards low carbon.

That's going to take commitment, and principally, it's going to take investment. That means overcoming a degree of ignorance about transportation and overcoming a degree of reluctance and pessimism on the other side of the House about transportation and our ability to shift people to lower-carbon rides. It's going to take learning from experience in jurisdictions that have already done that.

Victoria is a jurisdiction which has done a considerable amount of it. The city of Vancouver has done a considerable amount of it. Look at the walk share in the city of Vancouver. Look at the cycling share in the city of Vancouver. Not as impressive as Victoria's, but a much bigger city, coming to it much later in the day, much more difficult to accomplish. It has done remarkably well.

Could members on the opposite side of the House learn something from local government? Ask the Minister of Transportation. He seems to have his mind set against learning anything from anybody about anything.

You know, Victoria could be a model, and the government workforce could be a model if you looked at it, because it's the government workforce that we have most managed to shift to cycling and walking to work and to transit use. They're already a model, and if you cared to look at how that's being done, you could elaborate that lesson for the province as a whole. You could focus your attention on shifting the rides to work. It isn't recreation, though.

An Hon. Member: ActNow.

D. Cubberley: Yeah, well, I'd like you guys to act now. What I see is "act later." You should change the slogan. It's "talk now." Let's act now. I agree with the member opposite.

But I'll tell you, Member. Rather than, as the Premier did on the weekend, lecture British Columbians about how we're energy gluttons — that's what happened on the weekend: "British Columbians are energy gluttons" — why not work with us to provide the low-carbon infrastructures we need to change our lives?

How does behavioral change occur? Is that an individual consumer choice? We're all capable of doing something differently, irrespective of the environment, the context in which choice occurs. That's too much the implication of ActNow B.C. What we need is to change the context to facilitate behaviour change.

That's the prevention intervention I was talking about in the health field the other day, which again government seems very reluctant to engage in, preferring to try to induce individuals to take moral responsibility for change, but without enabling the change to occur.

An Hon. Member: How about some "lead now"?

D. Cubberley: Yeah, how about "lead now B.C."? Oh, don't. They'll start a new brand, and there will be an ad on TV, and nothing will change.

What we really want is the employer — government in this case — to champion change by showing leadership and to begin to manage the transportation carbon footprint down by helping employees make carbon-neutral travel choices. It's simple really. You know, show us the beef. Don't lecture British Columbians about being energy gluttons. Don't invoke doom on how everything is going to fall apart if we don't change, and then don't change your spending and investment patterns to enable change to occur on the part of society.

[1110]

And please, please, don't bring spin into the House and suggest that the government is going carbon-neutral with the fluff that's in this bill.

B. Lekstrom: And you're voting for it?

D. Cubberley: I'll tell you what I'm voting for, Member, and we'll see if members on the other side are voting for it. I'm voting for amendments, and we'll see if you vote for amendments that put some teeth into this legislation and actually get something done in this province.

J. Rustad: I'm very pleased today to have an opportunity to rise to speak to Bill 44. When you think about trying to set goals, when you think about trying to do things in this province and move this province forward, you have to develop a plan. That's exactly what this bill is part of. It's part of a plan that's going to move us forward to a 33-percent reduction in carbon dioxide and greenhouse gas emissions by the year 2020. Those are real, set, hard numbers that are now going to be in legislation.

I heard the members opposite, and they've been debating this now for a number of hours, both today and yesterday. They say we need to be doing all kinds of other things in this plan. There needs to be money in this plan. There need to be other types of.... Quite frankly, I'm not sure exactly what it is they're calling for.

What they seem to be calling for is recklessly approaching something that is very, very serious. I wanted to remind the members opposite that their reckless approach to things like solving ferries with fast ferries or solving the forest industry with Skeena Cellulose led this province to an unbelievably bad situation where we flatlined and actually had economic decline through the '90s.

In order to be able to actually make progress, in order to be able to do things right, you need to take the time and make sure you put things in place. We came out last budget speech. We said very boldly that we are going to move forward on greenhouse gas emissions; we are going to move forward on our environmental plan.

Eight months later we've now brought it into the House. We've brought it in as part of legislation setting out those targets. We've announced the climate action team. We are moving in the right direction on this bill.

When you're talking about greenhouse gases, when you're talking about the environment, you have to think about.... At least, I have to think about issues that are going on in my riding, issues that are happening in my end of the woods. When you look at the mountain pine beetle epidemic and look at the challenges around that, environmental changes have had a significant impact on that epidemic.

I mean, there was the lack of action coming from that side of the House, the NDP, during the 1990s which, quite frankly, could have helped to minimize some of the impact. But besides that point, there is no question that we did not have the cold winters we needed to be able to see the epidemic abated. Why did that happen? Well, there are questions as to whether that was a natural process or whether that was part of a man-made process, but clearly there has been an impact.

This year the community of Vanderhoof had 198 homes on flood evacuation alert for more than two months because of changes in weather patterns. That sort of thing has been unheard of in the last 50 years. Now, maybe this is a one-in-200-year event, but there are some analysts saying that this may become a much more frequent event.

The evidence is that our climate is changing. I'm not a scientist, but the evidence is that our levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere are increasing and have been for the last hundred years — increasing significantly.

The largest source of those greenhouse gases going into the atmosphere come from our industry, come from actions that we undertake. It's incumbent upon us to take steps to leave the world a better place for our children, for our nieces, for our nephews, for our grandchildren, because they need to be able to have the same kind of opportunities we have to be able to build a bright future in this province.

The opposition — quite frankly, sometimes it's hard to keep up with some of the places they decide to try to

go — is talking about only a \$1.7 million investment in cycling. That, of course, being leveraged will create a tremendous amount of benefits in cycling, creating more than 100 kilometres of new cycling opportunities.

[1115]

Why is that important? It's important because we need to be changing the way people think about how they interact with this world. We need to be changing the way people think about the carbon footprint that they have.

Then, through the Gateway program, there will be an additional \$50 million going towards cycling infrastructure throughout the lower mainland. That's a huge investment that is planned for this province, unparalleled by anything any government has done in the past.

The members opposite, when we're talking about Bill 44 and setting targets, talk about transit and the fact that we need to be encouraging more people to get in buses. They seem to think that somehow you could just tell people to get on buses, and it will happen.

That's not the way it works. There need to be effective ways for transit to be able to move so that when people look at it, they're not going to be thinking that they're going to have to spend extra hours taking a bus, but that it will in fact actually save them time. That's how you encourage people to change their habits.

For example, with some of the things we're doing with the Gateway and the rapid bus service plan, it's estimated that it will reduce more than 10,000 to 15,000 tonnes of greenhouse gases per year, which is, of course, a huge component towards meeting our targets in transit. It will increase transportation choices.

For the first time since 1990, transit will be available across the Port Mann Bridge. You can't put buses on the Port Mann Bridge today. You need to be able to build the infrastructure to be able to do that. Clearly, the opposition doesn't quite seem to understand that, as they seem to be opposed to having a new bridge and having those opportunities.

HOV lanes are so that you could have those high-occupancy vehicles, you can have people in them, and you can encourage that through allowing them to be able to move faster. It's a huge part of being able to change the way we look at our world and our carbon footprint, but you can't do that unless you have infrastructure investment in terms of transportation.

Yet that side of the House seems to be opposed to it. I can't quite understand why, but for some reason they seem to be opposed to it. Maybe they want to go back to their record in the '90s when they saw a 24-percent increase in greenhouse gases from 1991 to 2001. That's their track record.

Let's maybe have a look and see what our track record is. Between 2000 and 2004 the B.C. government emissions of carbon dioxide equivalent, or CO₂, from sources were reduced by 23.9 percent — reduced; not increased, such as in the 1990s. According to data from Environment Canada, greenhouse gas emissions in B.C. for 2005 decreased by 2.4 percent.

I think I'd be happy, quite frankly, to be able to match our record versus their record on actions on climate change and where we're going. When you look at the

targets that are written in Bill 44, when you look through that kind of action, it's clear that we do have a plan in place. They are firm numbers, they are going to be aggressive, and they may be difficult to reach. But by putting them in legislation, it's the commitment that says: "We're going to do that."

It's the same kind of commitment we made when we said that we're going to have a balanced budget, and we're going to have balanced-budget legislation. Now we have done that, and that side of the House was unable to do it for decades.

The member for Vancouver-Hastings talked about the targets that we had set and threw out some numbers there — that our targets would only be a 58-percent reduction relative to 1990 levels. It's interesting. It seems to be just more NDP math like their fudge-it budgets.

The reality is that when you take into consideration 2007 levels to 1990 levels and that decrease we're proposing, it will actually represent a 74-percent reduction relative to 1990 levels. That's phenomenal.

When I look at this bill and think about what we need to do with this.... There are some people in my riding who say: "Global warming? Sounds like a pretty good idea." When you live in a northern climate, when it's cold and stuff, some people say: "Well, it wouldn't be bad if we had a little bit warmer winters and perhaps some warmer summers."

[1120]

The reality is that that change will not be good for us in our province. It will not be good for us as a country, and it certainly will not be good for us as a planet. The world that we need to leave for our children — I think it's incumbent upon us to make sure we try to leave it a better place.

When you look at these targets and what this does, it's also going to be about our personal responsibilities — taking personal responsibility for being able to meet these targets and taking our own actions. Just simple things, Madam Speaker, like turning off TVs or turning off computer monitors when they're not used, unplugging a charger instead of leaving it plugged into a wall when it's not being used. These things can save incredible amounts for us.

The reason why I'm saying that is, as a province, for generations we were used to exporting energy. We were used to creating more energy than we needed and being able to take advantage of that and sell some of that power. Over time, particularly through the 1990s, there was virtually zero investment in new production of energy despite the fact that we saw an increase in demand for power.

So now we're in a situation where we are actually importing a significant amount of the power that we need in this province; 10 percent to 14 percent of that power is being imported. Every time we have brought forward ideas to generate clean power, such as through run-of-the-river projects, through wind projects, the opposition has actually stood up and opposed that.

By opposing going forward with those kinds of projects, are they really suggesting that they're happy about us importing power from coal generation? Are

they suggesting that is the future that this province should be?

Quite frankly, it's really quite amazing to hear the rhetoric that they have been coming out with over the past couple days in debating this bill compared with their actions and the way they vote and the way they do things around this House.

We're seeing an unparalleled amount of private investment in power generation in this province — commitments going forward to help us meet our energy needs. We're going to be seeing increasing focus, through our targets and through our energy plan, on how we're going to be able to generate and actually be able to meet and hopefully exceed the demand that we have in our province so we can again be proud of being energy self-sufficient. Those are the plans that we brought forward, and this opposition has voted against those initiatives.

I am pleased to see that the opposition will ultimately be supporting Bill 44, will ultimately be voting for it here in second reading. They have said — at least all of them that I've heard who have gotten up to speak — that they plan to support this bill, despite the fact they can't seem to find anything positive about it.

It leaves me to wonder how they can be so negative about a piece of legislation that is so progressive, which is leading in this country. Yet for some reason, they find lots of reasons to be opposed to it. But once again, their actions ultimately won't match what their final results are.

The environment is certainly important to all of us and particularly for the people in my riding. The pine beetle epidemic has left many areas with a question mark about the future of the forest industry. I believe it will create opportunities as well, but there's no question that things will change.

One of the biggest things we need to be looking at is reforesting those areas, because reforesting an area.... Every tree that you plant takes a tonne of carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere over its life. We have a huge opportunity now to be making a real difference in this province towards reducing carbon dioxide. Even though the member for Cariboo North seems to think that scientists are wrong and that putting trees in the ground is not necessarily a benefit for carbon reduction, scientists have proven that is the case. It is something that is so very important for us to be able to see moving forward, particularly for the future of forest industries, but especially also for the environment.

[1125]

One of our great goals was to lead the world in environmental management. Our throne speech and the concepts that were laid out in the throne speech followed up by this bill, followed up by our targets and our actions, are doing just that.

Interjection.

J. Rustad: As I mentioned before, I really do wonder.... The member opposite is laughing with regards to that. I really do wonder why they seem to be opposing trying

to be world leaders in something that is so important for all of us.

I want to once again go back to the area of personal responsibility, because I also think it's important for all of us individually here to set that example. What I mean by that is we have to be thinking about how we can do business, how we do our jobs, how we live our lives so that we can reduce our carbon impact.

I've taken some steps — and I've been fortunate to have been able to do this — to add insulation, to change out windows. I'm changing out lightbulbs in the house. I'm trying to encourage my family to make sure they turn off lights in and around the house when they're not needed. I've encouraged us to take our thermometer and drop it down just by a degree to reduce our amount of energy needs.

You need to do these things, because ultimately it's us — our demands, our desire for consumption, our desires in our lifestyle — that are having the greatest impact on this planet. If we take personal responsibility through our actions, we can make a real difference.

In order to meet our targets going forward, it's going to take that. Yes, we are going to be working with industry. Yes, we are going to be working with all kinds of groups around the province to try to get everyone on side, rowing in the same direction. But it can't just be left up to others to think about. As individuals, we need to be thinking about this. We need to be taking actions that are going to be able to make a difference.

As I say, I am pleased to stand today supporting Bill 44. I'm pleased because this is groundbreaking. This is leading. I'm also very encouraged that this will soon pass second reading here, despite some of the opposition's comments, and that we will see a bright future for the people in this province not only economically, not just socially, but also environmentally.

Real leadership is about doing just what we have done by bringing this bill forward.

C. Trevena: I am pleased to be standing here today to speak about Bill 44. As my colleagues are, I am in favour of the bill and will be voting in favour of it. But I have a certain number of reservations, some of which have been explored by my colleagues and some which I'd like to pick up on.

Before I go into my concerns, I'd just like to respond to a couple of items that the member for Prince George-Omineca was talking about. He was talking about the opposition being reckless in their opposition to this and what they're saying.

I have to admit that I think the government has to be accused perhaps of being reckless as well, because we have a very serious issue. I think nobody can question the importance of climate change to this generation and to future generations. This has been talked about by all members who have stood up here in the last few hours while we've had this very brief opportunity to debate this.

I think it's reckless for a government to come up with a document, a bill, that is so thin for something that is so important.

Interjection.

C. Trevena: I'm going to vote in favour because we have to have certain steps. We have to make a start. With the years of information that has come down on climate change and with the opportunity we've had, there should be a lot more substance — not just thin targets, distant targets, but a plan. We have no plan, and that is one of my greatest concerns.

[1130]

The member for Prince George–Omineca was talking about the problems of flooding in Vanderhoof. He was talking about the issues of pine beetle. If this government was really prepared to work on climate change, they would be acting on this, and they would be providing the province with a detailed plan of how we can seriously tackle climate change. This document is a step, it is a move, but it is clearly not enough.

I would like very quickly to pick up on two more items from previous speakers before I move on to some of my concerns. I have to admit that I've also been quite concerned about the level of debate on something that's been such a serious issue. Yesterday the House fell into heckling and catcalling, which was really not very helpful when we are dealing with something that is so important for our communities, our province, our country and for the world.

If we don't take this seriously, if we don't all act responsibly on this, we are failing future generations, and we are failing the globe. Heckling is not helpful — and talking in clichés about what previous governments did and didn't do. We keep hearing and have heard many times about what the previous NDP government did or didn't do in the '90s on climate change. I would like to remind the members opposite that climate change actually wasn't a hugely defined issue at that stage.

I'd like to remind the members opposite that their own Premier, their own leader, refused to sign on to Kyoto. He refused to sign on to Kyoto back in 2002, when anybody who was serious about climate change, anybody who cared what was happening to our planet, thought that Kyoto was not strong enough, that Kyoto was a sellout. Here we have a Premier who thought: "Oh, it's going too far."

Now, fair enough, we've had the Pauline conversion. We have a Premier who is aware that climate change is the most important issue for our province. Great. I'm really glad about that. But why, in that case, do we have a bill that is so thin, whose targets are well below other jurisdictions, whose targets are based on a 2007 baseline? Why not go back to the '90s, as other jurisdictions are doing, as the European Union is doing, as states in the United States are doing? We are looking at 33 percent of 2007 levels by 2020 — not 1990. This is not realistic.

I come back to the fact that we are also not seeing many details here. We're not seeing a plan.

We have a climate change team that has been appointed, and I know there are some very good people on that. There are some people who have real concerns about the climate. I don't want to underestimate their hard work that we hope will come. But we have to look at

the government's serious commitment when we have people from British Petroleum, an oil and gas exploiter, there on the team. It is a concern.

I also would like to ask the government how they are planning to make some of these targets, how they are going to be doing this, how they're going to be looking at carbon neutrality, and how they're going to be achieving this when we are seeing continued exploration of oil and natural gas, when we're seeing offshore oil and gas being promoted. Even today the Minister of Energy was talking about how we can have offshore oil and gas — how this is an opportunity for us.

On the one hand, we talk about offshore oil and gas. On the other hand, we talk about climate change. Does this government not see the contradiction? Yes, we can have carbon neutrality in government ministries, in the government offices. Great. Let's turn off those light bulbs. Let's turn off those personal computers. Let's unplug those chargers, as the member for Prince George–Omineca said. We can have the Oil and Gas Commission carbon-neutral. It can happen in its offices. Yet, we are still willing to exploit oil and natural gas.

Personal transportation. My colleague from Saanich South was talking about the need to invest in public transportation, and I agree. Investing in public transportation doesn't necessarily get people out of their cars and into public transportation, but it goes much further than we are seeing in this plan.

[1135]

We need to make sure that there is public transportation. We need to have the plan to get people out of their cars. Some 14 percent of emissions come from personal transportation.

What concerns me about this bill is, as I say, the lack of details. There is no vision on what can be done. There is "Carbon Neutral Public Sector," "BC Greenhouse Gas Emissions Targets," "General Provisions." There's no discussion about.... Possibly, are we going to be looking at carbon taxes? Are we going to be looking at charges for carbon? How are we going to make sure? What stick are we going to use as well as the carrot?

What are we going to do as well as amuse people with B.C. Hydro ads, where you get the cheers and the rah-rahs for people turning off the light bulbs? What are we going to see that will really make a difference?

I say that we have to have a vision, and we have to go a long way in achieving our vision — through the carrot-and-stick approach; through issues such as carbon taxes; through serious caps on carbon emissions, with a plan with details; through carbon charges; through carbon trading.

It isn't just us. It's not just us on the glorious west coast of Canada or on the glorious west coast of North America. This is something that involves the whole world. It involves the world in the way that we look at what we're doing to try to stop climate change, to try to put a halt on it, but also in the impact it's going to have on the whole world.

We have to have a vision that looks at what the gateway really means when we are buying very cheap products from China and shipping them over here,

when we are also talking about trying to deal with climate change. We have to look at what impacts our lack of action.... Our double standards are saying: "Yes, let's go and exploit offshore oil and natural gas while we're going to have nice carbon-neutral office space." What impact is that going to have on the Third World?

The paucity of this document really is unbelievable. It's not just that we have seen Al Gore and the Nobel peace prize. It's not just that we've seen Thomas Homer-Dickson. I know that was referred to by other colleagues — some of his quotes.

This has been going on for some time. If I might quote from Nicholas Stern, former head of the World Bank, who did a very detailed report for the British government. The British government now has a very detailed climate change bill in front of their House, with serious actions, serious targets.

Making climate change an economic issue, building in climate change budgets, is a very serious issue. What Nicholas Stern said is that it is a global issue, and I think we cannot get insular on this. We cannot look at this having an effect just on us. When we are looking at our vision, which is lacking here, we have to look at a global vision.

If I might quote Nicholas Stern. He says: "While all regions will eventually feel the effects of climate change, it will have a disproportionately harmful effect on developing countries and, in particular, poor communities who are already living at or close to the margins of survival."

This isn't just an issue for us. It isn't just an issue for our communities. It is an issue for the globe. If this government was serious about this, they would take that responsibility seriously. They would come with a serious plan, not — and I know it's been said before — a thin piece of hot air.

The opposition has suggested ways forward on climate change, and it would be great if the government would act on them. It would be great if the government would take it further. Sadly, the government isn't taking it further.

The opposition has also committed to principles of a sustainable B.C., which is a visionary document. It would be great if the government would look at this document and see how we can be a sustainable B.C. for the betterment of all people within British Columbia — on our environment, on our economy, on our resource conservation, on our food security, on the vision of the commons.

But sadly, we get a very small bill with very little substance, at a time when we need vision and we need someone who is going to stand up and say: "I will be the leader. I will take B.C. through a very difficult time, and I will look after our communities, our province, work with our colleagues and have the responsibility for the rest of the world."

[1140]

With that, I will pass on to other colleagues, who I know want to speak. But I think that this is a hugely wasted opportunity, and I look forward to seeing a real plan to deal with climate change.

M. Karagianis: I'm happy to stand today to talk to Bill 44. As tempting as it may be to kind of push back on some of the comments and arguments that have been put forward this morning by government members, I would have to say that in fact I view climate change as the crisis of the 21st century.

Somehow to trivialize this as being about turning out the lights seems to me to be treating this disrespectfully. In fact, I think that what is required at this point in time is less of this trivialization of the situation and much more depth and substance. Standing here today and looking at the content of the bill before us, my biggest concern is that I do not see the substance and depth here that is required of a crisis of the 21st century. Instead, I hear members standing up and saying if you unplug your chargers and you turn out the lights, somehow this is going to satisfy a crisis of such monumental proportions.

I don't think that anyone in this House can view the film by Al Gore or read documents by climate change scientists such as Dr. Thomas Homer-Dixon and not feel profoundly compelled at this point to take this issue much more seriously and to try now to move forward with much more substantial application of legislation and the powers of government in order to effect a change in human behaviour.

In fact, what we are clearly hearing from scientists is that what is expected here is such a significant paradigm shift in our behaviour as human beings on the planet that we are looking now for true leadership to be driven by the kind of messaging we're hearing from the scientific world.

What concerns me greatly about Bill 44, as I see it before us today, is that it lacks resources. It lacks any significant, detailed resources. Certainly, I understand we'll hear about these in the spring. But to have a plan in our hands at this point, when the public is demanding it, when the universal consciousness around this issue is growing every single day.... To bring forward a plan that doesn't give us anything substantial till months away.... It makes it very difficult to take this as seriously as we should.

I can understand why government members are trivializing their approach to it because the government document itself trivializes the approach to this. That concerns me a great deal. Since the day I was elected, I've stood in this House and talked about a number of emerging solutions to this paradigm shift that is going to be created.

I have talked to the government here about getting on board with actions like bioheat for all government buildings. I've talked in this House about the government getting on board for things like using biodiesel in the B.C. Ferries fleet. I've seen here in the last couple of days that the government has already stepped out and said that for a major government polluter like B.C. Ferries, rather than engage them in a solution to climate change, we're going to exempt them.

In fact, there's not an exemption necessary at all. There are clearly some other options. They may be bridges to the future, but we could be running ferries

on biodiesel right now and reducing their carbon emissions by 20 percent today if we had the willpower to do it.

I've talked as well about government beginning to build incentives for alternative lifestyle uses like solar power at home, heat pumps and all of those things. What is required at this point is a monumental shift in the lifestyle of human beings upon this planet, and those of us in the most civilized and highly developed and richest countries in the world need to lead the way. British Columbia, for sure at this point, is in the top of the list of categories of affluent lifestyle that should very significantly be able to engage in this multimodal, significant shift in lifestyle.

[1145]

In the anticipation of this bill, I've thought of the many substantial resources that could be identified and many of the substantial legislative changes that could already be indicated and hinted at in this document — certainly, with budget resources to follow. I'm disappointed that I see, again, a very thin document, a thin veneer on what is a very significant and profound issue. From the perspective of the Transportation critic, I would say that what I see here shows that — up to and including today in this House — the government's actions on all fronts are not leading us into any of the climate change solutions that are proposed in this new document.

You know, Dr. Andrew Weaver says that to meet an 80-percent cut of GHGs by 2050 will require the elimination of the transportation sector's use of fossil fuels. We're not even talking about reduction; we're talking about the entire elimination. We are talking, in a very short span of years, of a complete shift away from the fossil-fuel dependency we have right now. That is a huge, huge sea change in the behaviour of human beings here in British Columbia — of commuters, of the transportation sector, of goods and services and of shipping. All of those things need a significant alteration in behaviour to meet the kind of challenges and the kind of goals and targets that we're seeing here.

What I see is that the government, in fact, is not viewing any of their transportation infrastructure planning for the future through a lens of sustainability at all. We are still on the same old track. We are still using old-school, outmoded transportation solutions — 20th-century transportation solutions to a 21st-century crisis. That is not going to get us there.

How do you turn that around when we are currently engaged in such huge, fundamental shifts? The TransLink bill is moving transportation infrastructure management away from public accountability into private sector hands. We are seeing a huge, monumental megaproject of the government like the Gateway project — based strictly on more cars, more vehicles and more dependency on transportation — when we should be weaning ourselves away from that.

Without that kind of substance behind the bill, I see it so completely trivialized that I am shocked that the government is not embarrassed to have put before us such a thin document with so little accountability in it and with so little substance to it. What we need is a real, deep and fundamental commitment here and actions

that move us towards those solutions. If we really are seriously going to fight the crisis of the 21st century, climate change, then we have to stop using the solutions that have brought us to this crisis point, and that is our dependency on automobiles. That is our dependency on old-school, old-world approaches to the solutions here.

We need to be putting a substantially different spin on every action that government takes. If we believe that we are going to find ways to move the public in more efficient, effective and affordable ways, then we have to get away from the dependency on the car and the highway and move into much more advanced public transit options. We need to be looking at every one of our actions through the sustainability lens and reviewing everything that we're doing.

You know what? It might mean that government has to make some changes. It might mean that government has to make some fundamental alterations in its current behaviour. It might mean you have to rethink things like the Gateway. You might have to rethink how transportation infrastructure is built in the future in this province and put the brakes on right now, put a halt to it and say: "We are serious about climate change, and therefore, we will put real actions behind our words."

When I see that, then I will view this document more seriously. Fundamentally, we do believe that we can change. Government will have to stop its own actions, halt them now and rethink them through sustainability and climate change initiative lenses before we move any further.

[1150]

G. Gentner: It's somewhat with reluctance that I stand in support of this Bill 44. I have to begin by suggesting that the NDP years were very progressive years. In fact, it was the Minister of Environment who was leading the way, a guy by the name of Moe Sihota, who brought forward to this province AirCare — very, very progressive legislation. We now have a government that is trying to tear it apart.

[Mr. Speaker in the chair.]

We have an ability here to expand the capability of caring for the atmosphere through provisions to look at truck, diesel, etc., and this government here is finding ways to tear it down. I think it's shameful, absolutely shameful.

We also have the ability, through the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia, which is a monopoly until this government changes it... This is an ability it has to create distance-based insurance to reduce air emissions — another possibility that's going to be lost with this government.

We have some impacts here. Some very big impacts to climate change. The health impacts, of course — the mortality rates relative to infectious diseases, air quality-induced respiratory effects. Agricultural impacts. We're seeing the hypocrisy of this government relative to the demise of the agricultural land reserve. Some 225 acres will be taken out for the South Fraser perimeter road.

That's going to create even greater greenhouse gases in the Fraser Valley.

We're seeing the forest impacts — the impacts of the beetle and the various destruction. It's a huge, billion-dollar industry itself. Water resource impacts — changes in water supply, timing, water quality, increased competition for water, coastal area impacts, erosion of beaches, etc.

In fact, I can tell you, on a personal note, that I have property up the coast, and I have lost six feet in the last five years of my foreshore. I used to have a well that was 20 feet from the foreshore. It is now about 14 to 15 feet from the foreshore.

Residents up and down the coast are worrying about those types of things. Of course, the biggest one we have to worry about, besides ourselves, is the impact to the ecosystems themselves and how it's destroying habitat and coral reefs elsewhere.

You know, I was aware of what was happening here about 20 years ago when I was with the director for the museum here, for B.C. nature, Mr. Hebda. We walked in the Burns Bog. We came across an orchid that was only seen in Costa Rica. His position was: "Obviously, there's a new bird that's flying its way up here."

I also came across, interestingly enough, about ten years ago something called the barred owl. It had had a northern extremity of Oregon, but in just ten years it's now found its way into British Columbia.

There are lots of indicators out there. The mackerel has now invaded the west coast of Vancouver Island. It is eating the herring, and it's causing depletion to the salmon industry. Speaking of the salmon industry, we know that the heating of the rivers, particularly that of the Fraser River, is going to dismally affect and impact spawning capabilities. You know, when this was started, basically, it was also kind of the minimum forces of the B.C. Liberal Party, sort of a predator of its own kind that's certainly taking care of our vulnerable species.

I want to talk briefly about the impacts to infrastructure. The insurance corporations, companies, are well aware of what's happening here, and they themselves would, under their breath, tell you that this legislation being proposed isn't good enough.

On Haida Gwaii a highway along the coast collapsed last year in a storm — severe repair costs of a million dollars. Oyster Bay recently had another depletion of a road on the Island Highway. Hydro costs, major insurance claims are increasing. We saw, in my own community, dikes that are in disrepair. A \$2 million increase in infrastructure costs not only for dikes but for new flood gates. We're seeing Holland realizing that they have to let some of these diked areas go because of the groundwater increase. They can't control what's happening with climate change.

What I'm concerned about is this patchwork attempt here — this very small, inept bill, frankly. It's interesting that it came at a time during the throne speech last year.... Here we are in the dying minutes of the Legislature of this session to put something together that was proposed in February.

What's interesting, though, is the Premier himself — his disparaging concern for the climate. He had this epiphany all of a sudden. It's interesting.

[1155]

The day before the House came back on February 13, 2004.... On February 12 — it was that day that he decided to unload his shares in NOVA Chemicals Corporation, Trinidad Energy Services, Savannah Energy Services, Husky Energy Inc., Imperial Oil limited and TransAlta corporation. Shell Canada was also done on February 12. I mean, such an epiphany here. Nova Chemical Corp. We've got Trinidad Energy Services. On and on it goes. Suncor Energy Inc.

Now, here is a Premier who, you would think, would be on top of the throne speech. It's his throne speech. He knew what was coming out in the throne speech, but it wasn't until the day before it came down that he realized: "Uh oh, I've got to look green. I've got to dispose of these assets."

Talk about hypocrisy — or perhaps it was sort of like an afterthought. Maybe he came back from holidays somewhere in the Pacific and decided: "My God. Reading a book — this is cool. Let's do something wonderful here. Let's call it sort of 'smoke and mirrors.' I'm going to be green all of a sudden. Let's put this in the throne speech." And one of his advisers told him, probably the day before this was all going to happen: "Premier, you have major interests in the hydrocarbon industries."

This man has very little substance. You can just see it when you read what's being proposed here today. When you look at the other bills that are happening in the rest of the world, namely in the U.K.... When you look at the ordinance of the Governor of California, who has real targets — and it's a guy that we brought here to British Columbia, and we paraded around — this is the way we're going to find....

If you look at the baseline that's being produced there, by 2050, it's at least 80 percent lower than the 1990 baseline. Then you look at how shameful — how disgusting — this government baseline is. It's not even comparable, yet they want to parade the Terminator around this province as the means, as something to showcase.

When we look further regarding the budgetary period for carbon, including for 2012, it doesn't even come close to that of California. The budgetary period, including 2020 — you look at California — should be that of 1990 baselines.

This bill is a joke. It is a complete joke.

Interjections.

G. Gentner: You wait and see.

Mr. Speaker: Seeing no further speakers, the Minister of Environment closes debate.

Hon. B. Penner: I'd like to conclude debate with just a few summary comments. First of all, acknowledging that we are the first province in Canada to bring

in legislation to set out greenhouse gas emission reduction targets in legislation....

I also want to acknowledge some of the comments I've just heard from the members opposite. I hope that the NDP members, especially the last person who just spoke from Delta North, has a good chiropractor or physiotherapist because, quite frankly, he's been bending over backwards and twisting himself into a pretzel to try and find a reason to criticize the bill.

His party says they're going to support the bill. Frankly, I think the members opposite are being rather hypocritical if they're trying to be this negative about the bill, and yet they say they're going to support it.

I would like to address a couple of the comments that came forward in debate because I think they're worthy of response. Members have made some comments about the targets that are set out in this legislation. Well, take a look at the NDP's so-called plan from earlier this year. What year is the NDP using as a baseline for where they say they will freeze B.C.'s emissions? The year 2007.

Clearly, they haven't even looked at what their own leader has said or their environment critic. They are talking about a baseline year of 2007, just as we are. I want to acknowledge that Dr. Andrew Weaver is a world-renowned expert on this. Here's what he had to say yesterday about the opposition's criticisms of our targets. He said this on CKNW yesterday with Christy Clark.

"While the MLA for Vancouver-Hastings, who is the environment critic, did a release and argued that B.C. was actually projecting only a 58-percent reduction relative to 1990 levels, I think he actually made a simple arithmetic error in his calculations because that's not correct. The reality is, if you take 80-percent cuts at 2007, that translates to 74-percent cuts relative to 1990.

[1200]

"Frankly, whether it's 70, 80 or 90 percent, the fact is that you've got to push it above the threshold for existing technologies so that they have to be replaced, and either 70, 80 or 90 percent does it. So it's a moot question."

The NDP has expressed incredible hostility to the private sector. Even in the late 1990s their government was lowering water rental rates to encourage IPPs, cutting water rental rates, saying that they're good for the environment. Former Environment Minister Joan Sawicki said that.

Mr. Speaker: Minister, noting the time.

Hon. B. Penner: We are proud of this legislation. We're going to support it. I'm not really sure what the opposition is doing, because they've done nothing but speak against the legislation. Now let's see what they do.

At this point I move second reading.

[1205]

Second reading of Bill 44 approved unanimously on a division. [See *Votes and Proceedings*.]

Hon. B. Penner: I move that the bill be referred to a Committee of the Whole House to be considered at the next sitting of the House after today.

Bill 44, Greenhouse Gas Reduction Targets Act, read a second time and referred to a Committee of the Whole House for consideration at the next sitting of the House after today.

Hon. B. Penner moved adjournment of the House.

Motion approved.

Mr. Speaker: This House stands adjourned until 1:30 this afternoon.

The House adjourned at 12:08 p.m.

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