



Sixth Session, 40th Parliament

OFFICIAL REPORT OF
**DEBATES OF THE
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**
(HANSARD)

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Morning Sitting

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THE HONOURABLE LINDA REID, SPEAKER

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PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
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LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR
Her Honour the Honourable Judith Guichon, OBC

SIXTH SESSION, 40TH PARLIAMENT

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Honourable Linda Reid

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CONTENTS

Thursday, March 16, 2017
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Page

Routine Business

Personal Statements	14415
Apology for comments made in the House D. Eby	
Introductions by Members.....	14415
Tributes	14415
Service to Legislature by MLAs Hon. C. Clark	
Introductions by Members.....	14415
Statements	14416
Message of appreciation Hon. B. Bennett	
Introductions by Members.....	14416
Tributes	14417
Bill Routley D. Routley	
Introductions by Members.....	14417
Statements (Standing Order 25B)	14418
Transit services in Victoria area G. Holman	
Battle of Vimy Ridge E. Foster	
Internment of Japanese Canadian residents from Sunshine Coast N. Simons	
Service as MLA and message of appreciation D. McRae	
Bonsor Centre for 55-Plus K. Corrigan	
Service of Legislature staff and message of appreciation D. Ashton	
Oral Questions.....	14421
Election campaign financing and donations to political parties J. Horgan Hon. C. Clark	
Financing arrangements for housing projects in Vancouver D. Eby Hon. R. Coleman S. Simpson	
Tulsequah Chief mine A. Weaver Hon. B. Bennett	
Report on shared services in capital regional district A. Weaver Hon. P. Fassbender	

Oral Questions (*continued*)

- Manufactured home parks
 - H. Bains
 - Hon. R. Coleman
 - G. Holman
- Health electronic records system
 - J. Darcy
 - Hon. T. Lake
- Records of government court case with teachers
 - R. Fleming
 - Hon. M. Bernier
- Auditor General report on public accounts
 - M. Farnworth
 - B. Ralston

Reports from Committees..... 14427
Special Committee to Appoint an Information and Privacy Commissioner, report, March 2017
S. Sullivan

Petitions 14427
G. Holman

Tabling Documents 14427
Report on multiculturalism, 2015-16

Petitions 14427
D. Eby
C. Trevena
A. Dix
D. Routley

Orders of the Day

Throne Speech Debate (*continued*) 14427
Hon. T. Lake
S. Hammell
J. Shin

Royal Assent to Bills..... 14431
Bill 2 — Adoption Amendment Act, 2017
Bill 3 — Discriminatory Provisions (Historical Wrongs) Repeal Act
Bill 5 — Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations Statutes Amendment Act, 2017
Bill 6 — Information Management (Documenting Government Decisions) Amendment Act, 2017
Bill 7 — Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Amendment Act, 2017
Bill 9 — Finance Statutes Amendment Act, 2017
Bill 11 — Supply Act (No. 1), 2017

THURSDAY, MARCH 16, 2017

The House met at 10:05 a.m.

[Madame Speaker in the chair.]

Routine Business

Prayers.

Personal Statements

APOLOGY FOR COMMENTS MADE IN THE HOUSE

D. Eby: On Tuesday, you issued a directive in relation to question period, and I opened question period in a way that clearly violated that directive. I'd like to take this opportunity to apologize to this House for disrespecting you.

Madame Speaker: Thank you very much, hon. Member. I appreciate that.

Introductions by Members

Hon. T. Lake: All of us in this House depend on our capable staff to guide us through the day and to prepare us for the work we do each and every day. We're really honoured to have young people come up through the House and work with us. We see them develop and become tremendous human beings.

Three of my staff members are in the gallery today. I just want to acknowledge them and have the House welcome them. Kellie O'Brien is my chief of staff. Marissa Chan-Kent is my ministerial assistant. Derek Robertson, who is my executive assistant, is also in the gallery today. I have been blessed to have such a great team around me and want to have the House acknowledge these three wonderful people in the House today.

Tributes

SERVICE TO LEGISLATURE BY MLAS

Hon. C. Clark: I would like to join the Leader of the Opposition who, a couple of days ago, took the opportunity to thank retiring MLAs on all sides of the House.

This is not an easy job. Being in opposition or in government — each has its own different challenges. But all of the challenges, nonetheless, are the same size no matter where you sit. In particular, those challenges are hard for our families, our kids, our spouses and everybody who loves us and hates to read the newspapers because of what they see.

I would like to say to everyone who is retiring: on my own behalf, thank you for the work that you've done on

behalf of the people of British Columbia and, passionately, on behalf of your constituents, for standing up for the things that you believe in.

I wish everybody who is retiring — the members for Kootenay East, Surrey–White Rock, Comox Valley, Kamloops–North Thompson, Peace River North, Vancouver–Langara, Delta South, Burnaby–Lougheed, Burnaby–Deer Lake, Cowichan Valley, Columbia River–Revelstoke, Skeena, Esquimalt–Royal Roads and Surrey–Green Timbers — every one of you, a very happy retirement. I know that you'll miss this place in lots of ways, but I know that each one of you will find a very fulfilling life after the Legislature.

Thank you, on my own behalf and on behalf of all British Columbians, for your service to the people of our province.

[1010]

Introductions by Members

J. Thornthwaite: I have a very special guest here today, my Member of Parliament, the Hon. Terry Beech. Not only is Terry my MP for Burnaby North–Seymour, he was first elected here on the Island when he was 18 years old as a councillor in Nanaimo.

He's continued on and won many, many awards. Most recently, he was named a World Economic Forum Young Global Leader. That's a program that recognizes young leaders from across 40 different countries who are making positive changes in their communities, and he's certainly doing a positive change in ours. Would the House please make him welcome.

D. Eby: I notice up in the gallery there are a couple of constituents of mine from beautiful Vancouver–Point Grey. Floyd Mann and Felix Mann are here, together with Dorota Mann.

You will see the Mann family at every single event in the University Neighbourhoods Association. They volunteer for everything. They're huge contributors to our community, and I'd like the House to please make them feel very welcome.

Hon. S. Cadieux: In the gallery today we have three MCFD staff people here. Grace Campbell is a law co-op student, Tom Fesnoux is a legal support analyst and Danielle Kavadas is a legislative assistant. They all worked on the Adoption Act amendments and are here to see royal assent given to that later today — a big moment for them. If the House would please make them welcome.

R. Fleming: I would like to welcome a few members of the University of Victoria New Democrat Club who are here with us today, I see, up in the gallery. That Astra Blue, Greg Schindler and Zac de Vries are here with us this morning. I'd like the House to make these three

young people most welcome here in the chamber on our final day of parliament.

Hon. M. Polak: Joining us in the gallery today, first, are two ladies who keep our office in the Ministry of Environment functioning and joyful and funny. They make sure that my calendar tells me where to go and that phones are answered and all the things that we depend on in our offices to function — Corinne Brosz and Rhiannon Martin. Also joining them is my executive assistant, Alex Shiff.

On this last day, I want to acknowledge two other people who are holding down the fort while they're here. That would be my ministerial assistant, Mark Knudsen, and my chief of staff, Martina Kapac de Frias.

We all depend on amazing people in this House. It keeps our ministries running, keeps our legislative offices running, and I hope the House would make them very welcome.

J. Rice: I have a constituent in the House today. Nick Adey is from Prince Rupert. Nick Adey is a recently retired public school teacher, and anyone in Prince Rupert that has grown up through the years that has any knowledge of politics has likely been taught by Mr. Adey. Would the House please make him feel welcome.

Statements

MESSAGE OF APPRECIATION

Hon. B. Bennett: I'm not coming back to this place, so I wanted to take a quick minute to thank the people, first of all, in the Clerk's office. I've enjoyed the 16 years that I've spent working with them. I've been on many, many committees when I was an MLA, and we travelled all over the province and played jokes on Jenny Kwan a few times. She was a good sport about it.

The Clerks are people that sometimes seem like they're the only rational people in the place. So thank you very much. I'm sorry that Craig's not here right now, but thank you very much for what you do for us and for everybody here in the House.

Also, the staff of the Sergeant-at-Arms office. I've gotten to know many of you over the years, and some of you are not here anymore, actually. I had a really good buddy that I used to look forward to seeing every time I left the House here. He's retired, and I'm headed out as well.

I want to thank all of those people who help us in this place. You're always there, and you're always looking out for us, and you're always so respectful of us. So thank you for that.

I wanted to thank, finally, the people who work in my office, my political staff, as the Health Minister said, I think, a few minutes ago — young people who are here, very idealistic people, and they work on both sides of the House. It's

so refreshing and energizing to work with people like that. I've got some really good people there now, and I've had good people all the way through my career.

[1015]

I want to thank, especially.... There is a woman who works in my office, and her name is Sarina Costa. She's received.... Thirty-five years of service to the B.C. government. She started working with the Socreds. She served when the NDP were in government. She has served for 16 years with the B.C. Liberals.

She's up there right now, and she's absolutely wonderful. I've enjoyed.... I've worked with her so many different times, and she has always watched out for me. There have been some occasions when I've come back to the office and had to pack up quickly. She has fought back the tears in that particular situation and helped me to pack my stuff up and send me home. She always looks after Beth when she comes down here.

To Sarina Costa, a very special thank you.

Introductions by Members

Hon. A. Virk: I have three guests in the audience here today. The first is my newly minted CA, Fanny Huang. Interesting story. Fanny went from China to Japan, learned Japanese, came to Canada, learned English, finished a degree in criminology and then went to Australia and just earned a law degree. In the fall, she will be interning somewhere in this province. In the interim, she's working in my office as a CA. With Fanny are her two sons: in grade 11 is Andy Huang, and in grade 4 is George Huang. Would the House please make my guests feel welcome.

G. Holman: Myself and the member for Nanaimo-North Cowichan have a number of guests in the gallery today — parents, families, children affected by type 1 diabetes. They are requesting a meeting with the Minister of Health today, who graciously.... Despite the late notice, which I apologize for, my understanding is the minister will make best attempts to meet with them.

I want to introduce to the House Cathy Berndt, David Berndt, Barret Berndt, Lyndey Berndt, Dani Poole, Hannah Poole, Olivia Poole, Leah Hooker, Jordan Hooker, Cameron Hooker and Lincoln Hooker. We'll be presenting a petition on their behalf later today. But would the House please make our guests feel welcome.

Hon. M. Bernier: It's my pleasure to welcome to the House my former chief of staff Corrie Delisle, who's here today. She's actually joined by her brother David Allick. David is joining us from Sault Ste. Marie, coming here all the way to Victoria for a visit. I hope that the whole House would please make them welcome here today.

R. Chouhan: I have a couple of thanks to make. Thank you to my sister MLA for Burnaby-Deer Lake for her

service to the public for the last eight years, and not only for eight years as an MLA but also before. She served as a school trustee and chair of the school board. She and I also worked in the same office for a couple of years together.

She's also, I know, very excited to be retiring. But at the same time, she's very, very excited to spend time with her grandkids. And we are very excited that she will have more time to help us on the campaign trail.

I just want to say thank you, Kathy — I hope I can name her today — for your good work standing up for people. It is wonderful to know you. Thank you so much.

My second thank-you is to my younger sister MLA for Burnaby-Lougheed. You know, even though she was here only for four years, in the last four years she has done such a marvelous job to reach out to the community — ethnic communities, namely; thousands of people — who she brought over to our capital here in Victoria to introduce them to this House.

Thank you so much for your hard work.

She'll be the dean of student development, going back to her teaching job.

[1020]

We're going to miss you. Thank you so much for doing all of the hard work you did for all of us.

Hon. J. Rustad: I think it's been said by many in the House that we have such great staff that work for all of us. In my office a lady has joined us just recently who is up in the gallery — Cassidy Paxton is my administrative assistant — as well as somebody who's been working with me for a couple of years now, Ed Sem. He's a great individual, works very passionately on many issues and tries to make sure that he really makes a difference. He's my executive assistant. I'd ask the House to please make them welcome.

D. Routley: Along with the member for Saanich North and the Islands, I also welcome parents and children who are here advocating for the funding of constant, continuous glucose monitoring for their children. This situation of type 1 diabetic children having something that can monitor their blood sugar at night decreases health risks, decreases the burden on struggling families and increases quality of life, and it also reduces costs.

They're here to, hopefully, meet with the Minister of Health. I'd like to introduce Trisha Cunliffe, Lucas Cunliffe, Kaillie Burkitt, Alexa Burkitt, Courtney Battie, Olivia Fulton, Eva Radowicz, Aiden Radowicz, Aaron Radowicz and Reese McLeod. Can the House please help me make them welcome.

Tributes

BILL ROUTLEY

D. Routley: I'll continue along with a similar theme, to talk about another member who's retiring, my colleague

from Cowichan Valley. We share a last name, and we've been associated for a very long time. But when people would come to me and say, "Hey, are you related to Bill?" I had a joke. I would say: "Well, how do you feel about Bill?" It was a joke, because I love Bill, and I so admire his service to our community as a school trustee and representing workers' safety.

Sometimes funny dynamics happen. I can tell you a story where my friend from Cowichan Valley, as a representative of workers, fought for a certain very toxic chemical to be removed from a wood-preserving process in a sawmill, and the company fought against it for a long time. He finally won that struggle, and later the company foreman came and said: "You know what? Our new system is a lot cheaper. We're not polluting. You were right."

I think Bill is owed a great deal of respect for his history serving the people of our community. Yes, I am related to Bill. Six or seven generations back, we are related. But we're related much closer through misadventure and purposeful effort to make people's lives better.

I fully admire him and his pointing out all the...

Some Hon. Members: Jiggery-pokery.

D. Routley: ...jiggery-pokery that goes on. So, Bill. [Applause.]

Introductions by Members

Hon. N. Yamamoto: Joining us in the gallery today is Tom Brown. Tom Brown is the executive adviser in the office of my deputy minister in emergency management. Prior to coming over to emergency management, he was a director in CSED, and he had a life before that. He was a ministerial assistant for several ministers, including Health and Attorney General. I want to thank Tom for his advice and counsel. He's been a great addition to emergency management. He may be a silver fox, but he can still deliver a mean forecheck. Would the House please make Tom Brown feel very welcome.

S. Fraser: Joining us today in the gallery is Mrs. Currie's grade 5 social studies class from St. Patrick's here in Victoria. I know it's strange for me to introduce a school from Victoria, and I'm unclear if it's Victoria-Beacon Hill or Oak Bay-Gordon Head. I'm kind of scooping it because I strolled in with them this morning in the back entrance.

[1025]

Escorting them as a chaperone was Phil Vanbourgondien, my good friend. We got together in Tofino, and he now lives in Victoria. Will the House please join me in making them feel very, very welcome — Mrs. Currie's grade 5 class.

L. Reimer: At 11:07 this morning 29 years ago, my eldest son, Gord, was born. He's a wonderful young man,

and in June he will be married to the love of his life, Keira Johnson. At 8:30 a.m. 27 years ago Sunday, my youngest son, Bill, was born — also a wonderful young man. Both sons have been a tremendous support to me in my role as MLA. Would the House please join me in wishing them a very happy birthday.

A. Weaver: I have two introductions I'd like to make. First, I'd like to join my friend and colleague from Alberni–Pacific Rim, soon to be called Mid Island–Pacific Rim, in welcoming St. Patrick's Elementary School grade 5 class, which is presently in the riding of Victoria–Beacon Hill but will be in the riding of Oak Bay–Gordon Head come April 11. It's a very confusing time for those constituents along that little corridor — as my friend from Victoria–Beacon Hill will attest, from the number of phone calls we've got.

Secondly, I'd like to introduce Andy MacKinnon, who's here in the gallery. Andy MacKinnon is a Metchosin councillor, a longtime biologist and forest ecologist, and shares a passion for the environment. Would the House please make them both feel very welcome.

Hon. S. Anton: There is one staff member who has been in the office the four years that I've been here, and many, many years before that she started serving Attorneys General — starting, I think, with Attorney General Brian Smith and many others in between — and that's our administrative assistant, Candice Hughes. Candice holds our office together. She manages the correspondence.

What her particular strength is and the one thing that keeps people in total awe of her... I know this will shock the House to know this, but we occasionally get challenging phone calls into the Ministry of Justice. Candice handles them brilliantly, and the world around her is in awe of her talents and ability to keep our office held together beautifully every single day.

So I'd like to acknowledge Candice Hughes and the others who help me in the office right now: Nicole Duncan and Brittany Allison, and the others who were here yesterday.

M. Elmore: I'd like to welcome two folks who are here with us today from the Take a Hike Foundation, the CEO Gordon Matchett and the manager of fund development Deb Abma. I ask everyone to please make them welcome.

G. Hogg: Hon. Speaker, I know that you will be pleased to note that I found the notes that I couldn't find yesterday, when you allowed me to go ten minutes longer than I should have gone. I quickly would like to extend my thanks to Suneil, Melissa, Lorne, David, Steven and Simran, and especially to one of my wonderful constituency assistants, Kathy Paterson, who provides great ballast and balance to our office. Could we please make them feel most welcome wherever they may be.

G. Heyman: Joining us today in the precinct, although I don't think they're in the gallery yet, are two groups of students from the Vancouver Talmud Torah school in Vancouver-Fairview. I hope the House will join me in making them welcome and having a great visit to the people's House.

J. Thornthwaite: In my excitement to introduce my MP, I forgot to introduce his assistant. Could we please welcome Ryan Budd.

S. Fraser: I've been doing this job for 12 years, and I think back to 2005 when I first got elected and I had no idea what I was doing in my constituency or in this place. But I have been so fortunate. I had a legislative assistant and a constituency assistant who have been with me for the whole 12 years.

Both Anne Paxton, here in the Legislature, and Brenda McLean, in my constituency, are retiring after 12 years. I will miss them dearly, but I want to acknowledge and thank them so much for helping me do this job. We all need our staff, but they've been with me for 12 years, and I'm so appreciative of what they've done. Would the House please recognize that.

[1030]

R. Lee: I, too, would like to welcome my MP, Terry Beech, Burnaby North–Seymour. I would like to join my colleague from North Vancouver–Seymour to welcome him. Please give him a very warm welcome.

G. Holman: I just wanted to quickly acknowledge my staff who have worked in my office in the past years, in rough order of appearance: Leah Squance; Deb Hartung, who passed away about a year ago; Chris McLaren; Ryan Painter; Marina Holding; Greg Atkinson; and Rob Hill, my LA. Would the House please express their appreciation, reflecting mine, for all of the work they've done for me over the last four years.

Statements (Standing Order 25B)

TRANSIT SERVICES IN VICTORIA AREA

G. Holman: The good news is that public transit in the greater Victoria area is heavily used and ridership is growing, keeping pace with population growth at about 1 percent per year. The bad news is that service hours have only been increased a total of 1 percent from 2010 until today, so wait times are increasing much faster than ridership at 3 percent per year. There is inadequate service for students and late-night users. HandyDART demand from some of our most vulnerable citizens is not being met.

On the Saanich peninsula, there are large gaps in transit service. There is no direct service for the thousands of

workers commuting to the Sidney industrial area every day. There is no direct service to the Victoria Airport, spotty service for four First Nations, and in the John Dean area, hundreds of households have no transit at all.

The environmental, social and business case for improved public transit could not be stronger. Improved transit is essential if we're going to meet our climate action goals. It also addresses affordability challenges for families, allowing them to reduce costly automobile use and even give up their cars altogether.

Let's not forget the jobs, Madame Speaker. Public transit in greater Victoria alone, including handyDART, provides almost 1,000 well-paid jobs.

The social benefits of transit are often overlooked. For many citizens who either cannot afford or cannot operate vehicles, public transit is the only way for them to get to work or to access services. The benefits of public transit are well established. There is clear evidence of unmet demand.

So the question is, Madame Speaker, given the compelling environmental, social and economic benefits to public transit, why have service levels in the greater Victoria area essentially been frozen for seven years?

BATTLE OF VIMY RIDGE

E. Foster: Madame Speaker, 100 ago, four Canadian divisions and a British division led the charge in the Battle of Arras, the capture and control of an eight-kilometre escarpment. For the first time in our nation's history, every division of the Canadian Expeditionary Force from across our country fought together as a cohesive unit. What they did together was nothing short of incredible.

Canadian technical and tactical innovation coupled with extensive planning and preparation triumphed. These valiant young men from British Columbia to Newfoundland seized their objective, won the day and, in doing so, entered the annals of history. To this day all Canadians know the name of this eight-kilometre escarpment in France: Vimy Ridge.

Madame Speaker, the House will not be in session next month when we commemorate the 100th anniversary of Vimy Ridge on April 9, so today I rise to acknowledge the centennial and to thank the Vimy Foundation for their tireless work in preserving our nation's First World War legacy.

Established eight years ago, the Vimy Foundation has increased awareness of April 9 as Vimy Ridge Day and educated thousands of Canadians, young and old, on our country's military history. This year the foundation, in partnership with the Canadian government, will unveil the new visitor education centre at the Vimy Memorial in France.

I would be remiss if I did not also take this opportunity to highlight the contribution of British Columbians during the First World War. From a population of just

400,000 at the time, 55,570 enlisted, as well as over 70 nursing sisters. Of those brave volunteers, eight were awarded the Victoria Cross. But Madame Speaker, over 6,000 would never return home to British Columbia.

We will never forget their sacrifice. We will remember them.

[1035]

INTERNMENT OF JAPANESE CANADIAN RESIDENTS FROM SUNSHINE COAST

N. Simons: I stand today to recognize a sad chapter in our history: 75 years ago today, 129 fellow Sunshine Coast residents of Japanese descent were loaded onto a Union steamship and sent off to the Hastings Park Exhibition grounds, later to be dispersed further east. Fifty-one were from the Powell River region, six were from Egmont, ten were from Pender Harbour, eight from Sechelt, 44 from Wilson Creek, nine from Gibsons and one from Port Mellon.

As Kimiko Hawkes, the former curator of the Sunshine Coast Museum and Archives, whose grandparents and mother were interned, wrote: "Aside from a few passing mentions in the local history books and oral history interviews, very little exists in the official records that tells their stories." But we have snippets. We know that they had 24 hours to pack. Adults were allowed 150 pounds of belongings, and children were allowed 75.

A Pender Harbour resident, Lewella Duncan, recounted the scene from March 16, 1942: "The harbour loved the Ikedas. Everybody in the harbour went over to the steamboat when they took the Ikedas away, and everyone was crying. It was terrible."

Historian Helen Dawe wrote:

"People were confronted with the heartbreaking problem of hurriedly saying goodbye to almost every article they cherished. Some of the women sat down and wept as they chose what to pack. The Konishi family had run a flourishing farm which sold meat and vegetables to the local community in Sechelt.

"Nancy Moote recounted the sad story of their departure. 'The widow Hanna Konishi and her grown children received the same 24 hours' notice to leave their home and possessions. A chaplain who visited them at the exhibition grounds reported Hanna cried constantly. They were later moved to the Interior, and the Porpoise Bay farm that they had tended for 30 years was confiscated, sold, and let go to ruin.'"

There are many casualties in colonialism and war, including our freedom and comfort. I hope we respect those casualties and work for equality and peace.

SERVICE AS MLA AND MESSAGE OF APPRECIATION

D. McRae: It was almost eight years ago that I first entered this chamber. Like many of us, it was not my plan, as a young person, of becoming a provincial politician. I was just a community leader who, after the death of Stan Hagen, my former MLA, wanted to help bring a new hos-

pital to the Comox Valley. Now, like all of us, neither did I arrive here nor did I get to work on behalf of the citizens of the Comox Valley and British Columbia without the help of many, and I'd like to thank them now in my two-minute statement.

I'd like to thank the residents of the Comox Valley, who worked hard on my provincial election campaigns and, by way of their vote, gave me the honour of sitting in this chamber. I'd like to recognize my constituency office staff, both past and present, specifically Starr Winchester, Rosanne Gerritsen, Linda Grant and, of course, Diane Lineker, who's been my constituency assistant rock for the past eight years.

I would be remiss to not recognize the civil service, the men and women from the most senior deputy minister to the newest emergency support worker on the Downtown Eastside, who work so hard to support residents of British Columbia. They are incredibly passionate, and we would not get to do our jobs without their great efforts.

I'd like to thank the building staff, who allow me and allow all of us to work hard for our constituents — legislative assistants, assistant legislative assistants, caucus support staff, research and communication staff. Through ministries, we have administrative assistants, administrative coordinators, executive assistants, sometimes ministerial assistants and chiefs of staff. They help run this place.

I'd like to thank the official opposition and the independents for fulfilling their duties with such passion. You hold government to account, you contribute to policy evolution, and I hope to see you back on that side of the House after the election.

I would also like to thank the dining room staff for keeping us fed while we are sequestered in the building. Your french fries are phenomenal, and as a result, there is more of me for my family to love.

I would like to express my appreciation to the cleaning, maintenance and grounds staff, who maintain this 119-year-old building so very well. It is a building all British Columbians can be proud of because of your efforts.

Security. Thank you for being so professional and available for the occasional tour. You protect those who work here and those who visit the precincts. You even remind the occasional MLA when he — me — forgot to put my insurance sticker on my licence plate.

Legislature staff from the Clerk to the sessional officers. You support us well, you ensure we are prepared to speak, you run our committees with amazing professionalism and your poker faces during question period are impressive.

I would like to thank my caucus colleagues, who have been great friends and supporters of my various causes and have assisted me in my advocacy for the residents of the Comox Valley.

Lastly I want to thank my family. I want to thank my in-laws, Ron and Lorraine Webber; my parents, Doug

and Beth McRae; my daughters, Gracie and Chloe; and of course, my lovely wife, Deanne. Thank you for your patience, your sacrifices and your tolerance these past eight years. Madame Speaker, my friends and colleagues on both sides of the House, it is now time for me to return home. Thank you and farewell. [Applause.]

[1040]

BONSOR CENTRE FOR 55-PLUS

K. Corrigan: The Bonsor 55-Plus Society is a wonderful organization in my community with over 2,000 members, led by tireless president Mary Horton and a dynamic board, which includes many long-time leaders in Burnaby. It has been so successful that several years ago the city of Burnaby worked with the society to move from Bonsor Community Centre to its own 8,400-square-foot building constructed on the same site.

The society provides a huge variety of programs for its members. There's the craft club, bakers group, bingo, the book club, bridge club, chess club, computers, cribbage, ESL and a social investment group. There's badminton, bus trips and carpet bowling, and Asian, ballroom, social and line dancing. Not only does the society provide great activities that keep members engaged and active in the community, but it also assists members as they get older with, for example, housing and financial issues. Where needed, they take seniors under their wing.

The Burnaby Partners in Wellness program offers blood pressure monitoring, massages, chair exercises, height and weight monitoring and health-related presentations on a drop-in basis, helping to keep seniors healthy and active.

Finally, not only does Bonsor 55-Plus serve seniors, but it also works hard in our community. As an example, it provides volunteers to Maywood Community School and sends kids from that school to camp every year.

The impact on our community of Burnaby of Bonsor 55-Plus is significant. It really improves the lives of thousands of seniors, and it helps make Burnaby a more complete community.

SERVICE OF LEGISLATURE STAFF AND MESSAGE OF APPRECIATION

D. Ashton: We're at the end of another session of this Legislative Assembly, and indeed, at the end of the 40th parliament of British Columbia. I'm exceptionally proud of what we've accomplished together over the last four years, but I'm also incredibly honoured to have worked alongside the staff here, without whom this place would not function.

This includes the facilities staff — the carpenters, the electricians, the maintenance workers, the cleaners. This building is not just a workplace. It's a symbol of the vibrant democracy we have here in B.C., and the

pride these individuals take in the work that they do reflects that.

That sentiment is exemplified by the people like Jennifer Ives and Nicolas Rodger, who, in concert with the parliamentary education office and the rest of the tour staff, do so much to convey the significance of this institution to the public.

In the library, we have individuals like Jennifer Kitching, who demonstrate an almost supernatural ability to locate even the most obscure documents and publications with ease.

What happens here in Victoria, in this small corner of Victoria, matters to British Columbians everywhere. Without the diligence of the folks at Hansard, British Columbians would not be able to access the proceedings of this Legislature.

For those of us who do find ourselves in the precinct, we have the gracious staff of the dining room to thank. People like Paul, Kristen and Christine keep us fed and let us all focus on the tasks at hand.

Speaking of water, I'm wanting to also extend a very special thanks to the sessional officers. Many are here today amongst us. They keep things running smooth here in the chamber, along with the incredible staff of the Clerk's office. Say what you want about the decorum, Madame Speaker; people like Brandon, Debbie, Peter, Kate, Susan and Craig are consummate professionals in this building.

In fact, I want to extend my thanks to the entire Sergeant-at-Arms staff, especially all the constables and supervisors, like Peter, Phillipa and Ron, who keep us all safe here. And I cannot forget Gary Lenz.

Finally, to my colleagues here on the floor who are moving on to your next chapters in life, I want to thank you and congratulate you on the work that you've done here, especially for the work that you've done for the citizens that you represent at home. I wish you boundless satisfaction and incredible success in your future.

For the rest of my peers, I hope we all return here, but with the same seat ratios.

Oral Questions

ELECTION CAMPAIGN FINANCING AND DONATIONS TO POLITICAL PARTIES

J. Horgan: Yesterday I asked a series of questions to the Attorney General with respect to the influence of big money on politics here in British Columbia, and she was reluctant to give straightforward answers. I reminded her of her position a few years ago. She felt then, as a city councillor, that big money distorted the politics of her council. But she doesn't seem to feel that way today, so I'd like to direct my questions now to the Premier with respect to big money.

We do know, as I said yesterday, that the company that's been given \$4 million to do self-promotional ads for the B.C. Liberal Party is also organizing the last great fundraiser before this parliament is dissolved.

I want to put the question to the Premier. Does she not see, as most British Columbians do, that a government that gets money from a company and then gives money to a company is somehow not quite right and that instead of working for people, you're working for your donors?

Hon. C. Clark: Well, here we have a Leader of the Opposition that says no one should take donations from corporations, and then he takes donations from corporations — having dinners he charges \$3,000 a table for. Secret follow-up phone calls saying: "But for \$10,000, you can get a secret access meeting to me at a VIP reception." It falls into the category of all of those things where this leader says one thing and does another.

Political fundraising, a flip-flop. Kinder Morgan, a flip-flop.

Interjections.

Madame Speaker: Members.

Hon. C. Clark: LNG, a flip-flop. Of course, you know, that falls into the category of all of the policies that the Leader of the Opposition can't decide where he stands.

Then there's that category of policies where the Leader of the Opposition has decided where he stands. He hates plans to lower taxes. He hates plans to support ride-sharing in British Columbia. He hates the plan to renew the George Massey bridge and put thousands of people to work. He wants to scrap the HOME program.

Of course, there are the programs they don't like, there are the programs they can't make a decision about, and then there are the programs like Site C, where they have a policy but they want to keep it secret from the people till after the next election.

Madame Speaker: Recognizing the Leader of the Official Opposition on a supplemental.

J. Horgan: I'm glad that the Premier brought her envelope in so we can see what she writes the plans on for the government of British Columbia.

Here I thought that on the last day of this parliament, the Premier and I could have a civil discussion about the issues that matter to British Columbians. But it's all politics, all the time.

Interjections.

Madame Speaker: Members. Members on both sides.

J. Horgan: Members on both sides? What are you talking about? They're braying like donkeys, and we're quiet. What are you talking about?

Interjections.

Madame Speaker: This House will proceed in a civil fashion.

Please continue.

J. Horgan: As I said, I was hopeful that the Premier would....

Interjections.

J. Horgan: The Premier will know that she received \$700,000 from Peter Redekop, \$650,000 from the Walls, \$1.2 million from the Iliches — all developers in British Columbia who were doing very, very well, while people were struggling to find homes in British Columbia. It will not be a surprise to the Premier when people see a connection between those that are paying for the government and those who are seeking services from the government.

Will the Premier agree with me that it appears to the people of British Columbia that she's working for her wealthy and well-connected donors and not for them?

Hon. C. Clark: It would be wonderful if we could see even a paper the size of an envelope that the NDP would commit some policy to. This leader, this party, this caucus is so weak, so fractured and so indecisive that they couldn't even fill up a paper that size.

This member says he wants to talk about the things that British Columbians care about, yet not once in this Legislature have I heard him get up and talk about the need to create jobs. While, on the one hand, our government is creating jobs, they're trying to stop jobs from being created.

[1050]

Not once have I heard this member talk about how important it is that we improve economic growth in our province. We're No. 1 in Canada. We want to stay No. 1. That's what British Columbians are concerned about.

We have the lowest unemployment rate in Canada right now. That unemployment rate is continuing to drop. We should be very proud of how many British Columbians are working — 2.4 million British Columbians, more than ever in the history of British Columbia.

Those are the issues that British Columbians care about. The Leader of the Opposition hasn't gotten up to speak about them — never once in this last session. The reason he hasn't is because the NDP has no plan to protect working people. They have no plan to make sure we are creating jobs. On this side of the House, a strong economy that's No. 1 in Canada with the lowest unemployment rate. We want the chance, in the next election, to go to British Columbians and ask them to keep that job up.

Madame Speaker: The Leader of the Official Opposition on a final supplemental.

J. Horgan: The Pace Group got \$23 million in contracts from the B.C. Liberal Party. They're now organizing the last great fundraiser for the last days of this Premier's government. Developers did very, very well, while people in British Columbia were struggling to find homes that were affordable for them. The restaurant sector was not without their benefits as well. After millions of dollars in donations to the B.C. Liberals, they got a server wage, lower than the lowest wage possible to be paid in British Columbia. Ad companies get ad contracts, developers get runaway housing prices, and restaurateurs get lower than the lowest minimum wage.

Can the Premier explain to British Columbians why it is that the people that come and have dinner with her get breaks and the rest of us have to pay for it?

Hon. C. Clark: I think, over the next several weeks, British Columbians are going to want some answers from the Leader of the Opposition as well. They're going to want to know why he has shown so little interest in growing the economy. They're going to want to know why he and his caucus have worked so hard to say no to every idea for economic growth in British Columbia — why they have said no to the George Massey Tunnel being built, why they have said no to almost every hospital construction that's been proposed and undertaken by our government, why they have said no to every policy that will create jobs in our province.

Here we are in British Columbia — No. 1 in Canada in economic growth, the lowest unemployment rate in Canada, the lowest unemployment rate compared to the rest of Canada since 1961, 222,000 jobs created since the jobs plan was introduced, over 65,000 Canadians coming from the rest of the country to join us here in British Columbia, a \$1 billion tax cut.

We want to talk about the economy. We want to talk about jobs. We want to put people to work in British Columbia. The Leader of the Opposition clearly isn't very interested in any of that, but I am willing to bet that British Columbians very much are.

FINANCING ARRANGEMENTS FOR HOUSING PROJECTS IN VANCOUVER

D. Eby: Now, we've been asking this Housing Minister why B.C. Housing made the decision to loan \$39 million to a luxury condo housing development in downtown Vancouver where prices start at \$1.6 million. It's not exactly housing for the homeless. We've been asking why this decision was made when the Premier's fundraiser-in-chief was on the board of B.C. Housing, and he just happens to be the same guy that's marketing these luxury condos.

The minister, for his part, says we should trust him. This \$39 million loan was needed to ensure that “we put 162 new units of supportive and social housing in downtown Vancouver.” He called it his “special deal.” Well, some of those 162 units are now up for rent on Craigslist. You can see them yourself. Just search “Jubilee House.” The rent rate for the minister’s social and supportive housing? It’s \$1,500 to \$1,700 a month for a 640-square-foot one bedroom.

[1055]

I know this minister has a loose grip on affordability, but that’s not a special deal for people on minimum wage or who are on disability or living on welfare. This isn’t a special deal for someone earning \$36,000 a year.

To the minister, why won’t he release the numbers on this project, why won’t he release the contracts, and why won’t he release the minutes from B.C. Housing on this deal?

Hon. R. Coleman: The first thing I want to step out with on this particular issue is once again the member opposite has been a little bit loose with the truth with regards to his request for information with regards to these projects.

The fact of the matter is this. The member actually delivered to me, in the House, less than 48 hours ago, a request on the two projects he’s referring to in question period today. He also made a request for five years of every document and every development — every financing thing for B.C. Housing going back five years, which is tens of thousands of documents.

The member, in this House a few days ago, said we refused to provide him the information and we omitted information on the FOI request. Totally untrue. The request was made by the member to request the information for the 2015-2016 fiscal year. So \$15 million of one project was in that, and it was disclosed in that FOI request information.

The other project didn’t start until fiscal year ’16-17, so it wasn’t subject to the request of the member. To stand in this House and say we didn’t provide the information deliberately to the member with regards to a project is completely wrong.

Madame Speaker: The member for Vancouver–Point Grey on a supplemental.

D. Eby: Let me get this straight. One mortgage was in the time period that we requested, but the other mortgage, which the minister tells us was for the exact same project, isn’t in the time period. Is that what we’re to believe?

He says in this House the one thing that we can rely on, which is that he delivered a special deal for marketers of luxury condos. B.C. Housing has confirmed they gave a mortgage, bridge financing, of 1.02 percent for this luxury housing development. Who marketed that?

Who got the special deal? The Premier’s chief fundraiser marketing that project.

To the minister: enough games with freedom of information. Enough games in this House. Release the documents on this deal.

Hon. R. Coleman: When you build 162 units of additional units of housing by taking down an old building, you actually go out and get a construction loan to build the 162 units. Because of the land swap complexities with the city of Vancouver, we took a charge on a property across the street to secure their construction findings during construction. At no time were taxpayer dollars ever used to fund the private development.

I’d like you to go out and say that. I notice you never do go out and say what you accuse me of in the House, because you know what’s going to happen.

Madame Speaker: Minister, through the Chair.

Hon. R. Coleman: The reality is this. The construction finance was backed up by another piece of property. As soon as it was built, that was removed, because all the money had been paid back. We’ve built the units. The units are there. We replaced an old project with a new project, with more units for rental in the city of Vancouver.

I know you don’t like that, hon. Member. You don’t like the fact that we’re only 50 applications away from having 1,000 people in British Columbia applying to the HOME program to buy their first house, and 142 of those that are approved are in the city of Vancouver.

S. Simpson: The minister has long, meandering answers to everything but the questions he’s been asked: will he release the minutes for B.C. Housing? Will he release the contracts with these B.C. Liberal donors and fundraisers affiliated with developers? Will he release the numbers on these special deals? Will he or won’t he? That’s the question. Will he tell us what happened to that \$80 million of public money?

You’ve received a letter asking for these documents and this information.

Madame Speaker: Through the Chair.

S. Simpson: Will the minister release the information he’s been requested to release in the letter, yes or no?
[1100]

Hon. R. Coleman: I guess the members just don’t do research or listen to scrums. I already said to the media in one scrum the other day, with a couple of them, when they asked me that question, that I’ve instructed B.C. Housing to do the work to release that information, which they’ve started to do, subsequent to the letter from the member. Actually, I had asked them to start it before the member.

They will get all the information out, and we expect that they should be able to do it within a week or so. Then it will be released. You'll get the information, and you can have a look at it. What you're going to find is that nobody from B.C. Housing or the government of British Columbia funded a private luxury condo development for anybody and that the money was used to build 162 units of affordable housing in the city of Vancouver.

I know you guys.... I don't understand why you're opposed to us actually making a deal that's good for the public and gives product to the people in Vancouver so they can live and work in the city of Vancouver with affordable rental housing.

TULSEQUAH CHIEF MINE

A. Weaver: The Tulsequah Chief mine, located on the best salmon-producing watershed in the B.C.-Alaska transboundary region, has been the host to a series of unfortunate events. Acid mine drainage has been entering the prime salmon spawning ground for 60 years. It has bankrupted two companies in the last seven years.

It's an issue of profound concern for Alaska's elected officials and is officially being opposed by the Taku River Tlingit First Nation. It's environmentally irresponsible, fiscally reckless and offensive to the Taku River Tlingit First Nation and Alaska for the B.C. government to allow the sordid Tulsequah Chief story to continue as is.

My question is to the Minister of Energy and Mines, who has repeatedly committed to fixing the problems that this mine has created. Will B.C. keep its word and address the Tulsequah problem with a long overdue proper cleanup, or will it allow yet another mining company to pick up where Chieftain Metals left off and let Tulsequah Chief's controversy waste and its environmental black eye to B.C. continue?

Hon. B. Bennett: I'd like to thank the member for the question. I think all of us on this side of the House and, certainly, on the other side of the House share the concern about any situation in the province, whether it's mining or any other activity, that has the potential to harm the environment and also has the potential to harm the reputation of the province. I take the member's question very seriously, and we take the situation very seriously on this side of the House.

The state of Alaska and the province of British Columbia have done three studies of the Tulsequah River and the Taku River to determine whether there are contaminants going into the river, and those studies so far have shown that there isn't significant environmental harm being done. Nonetheless, the member is correct that B.C. has an obligation to manage that situation very carefully.

I can tell the member that we are committed to doing more work on that site. We did some work in the fall, up

to freeze-up. We have regular communication with the state of Alaska to make sure that they know what we're doing up there. After breakup this spring, I know that we have crews going back into the site to do some more work.

REPORT ON SHARED SERVICES IN CAPITAL REGIONAL DISTRICT

A. Weaver: The government commissioned a study on municipal shared services in the capital region in 2016. That report has been ready since October of last year.

Could the Minister of Community, Sport and Cultural Development please explain why this report has not been released and when he is planning to do so?

Hon. P. Fassbender: Indeed, the report is being finalized. It is being reviewed. I have communicated with the mayors in the region that that report will be brought forward when that final review is done, and then it will be shared publicly as well.

[1105]

MANUFACTURED HOME PARKS

H. Bains: For years, this Liberal government has refused to protect the manufactured home people. They know that when their park owner decides to redevelop or close the park, they have little or no protection.

In my own community, Surrey, we have hundreds, if not thousands who are worried right now that if they are evicted, they will be made homeless. These are our seniors, many on disability and on fixed incomes, and they have no place to go when they are evicted. We, on this side, have introduced bills numerous times in this House. This government, each and every time, has refused them.

My question to the Minister for Housing is this: why do you continue to refuse to protect manufactured home owners?

Madame Speaker: Through the Chair.

Hon. R. Coleman: The province has a Manufactured Home Park Tenancy Act which is for tenants and for owners with regards to manufactured parks. There are some rules with regards to closing a park within that piece of legislation.

In addition to that, the ministry has worked with a lot of municipalities around the province to find solutions locally when there's somebody who wants to close down a park to redevelop the property. We've worked with municipalities across the Lower Mainland and across British Columbia, with a number of recommendations we've made to them on how they could actually save this form of housing within their community.

I'll just give a couple of examples. For instance, in Surrey, the value of land is very high. If the city were to

decide to allow for a bare land strata so that people could sell their units and put a mortgage on them instead of paying rent, that could take place if they would work with the developer to make sure that the DCCs and whatever are fair so that costs can actually flow through to the person that wants to stay on the property.

Other communities, in their zoning processes, have included additional dollars that are required when you close a park, for the people in the park, in addition to what's covered under the act. That's a relationship we've been building with municipalities. On the one side, they have the power of zoning. We have an act relative to the tenancy itself, and we try and mesh the two with government and local government to see if we can make it work.

G. Holman: The rules that the minister refers to provide park owners with cents on the dollar in terms of the value of their assets. And local government shouldn't have to hold the bag for a provincial responsibility. It's the minister's job.

It's not just Surrey where people are worried about eviction from their manufactured home parks. People on Saltspring, in my riding, have faced significant increases in their pad rent. They're concerned that if their rent keeps going up, they won't be able to afford it, and they're worried that if the site owner sells, they won't have anywhere to go. The current rules, set by this B.C. Liberal government, don't provide fair compensation for tenants.

My question, again for the Minister for Housing. You've had years to fix this situation, and despite repeated requests, you've ignored manufactured home owners. Can the minister please do his job and step in and support these 155,000 homeowners in British Columbia?

Hon. R. Coleman: These tenancies are covered by the same types of rent controls as apartments are in British Columbia. You can't raise a tenancy cost in a manufactured home park, on an annual basis, any differently than you can under the Residential Tenancy Act. There are rent controls in place. So the people on Saltspring that are worried about their annual rent increases need to know that if they go above that, they should be going to the Residential Tenancy Act. It can't be done. You can't go above that legally, with regards to the rent controls in manufactured home parks.

In addition to that, if a landowner decides he wants to close a park, for whatever reason, he has to give 12 months' notice to the tenants and another 12 months of compensation, one year's rent.

The reason I mention municipal governments is because these are usually being closed so that somebody can take this piece of land and change its use, which requires local zoning. It's the same thing when municipalities we work with, with regards to housing get a situation where somebody wants to renovate or tear down a particular housing project. If they go and say, "If you want to tear

that down and put highrises in there, do a one-for-one trade with regards to replacing those rentals with rentals and B.C. Housing can come in and make a deal on it, then do it."

We work with municipalities. We'll work with owners that want to actually.... If they ever want to just save it and sell it to their tenants, we're happy to do that, and we have done that in some places in the past.

[1110]

IHEALTH ELECTRONIC RECORDS SYSTEM

J. Darcy: For almost a year, Nanaimo doctors and nurses have said that the Island Health computer system is "fundamentally flawed" and that it is putting patient safety at risk. A month ago the Minister of Health finally said that the health authority was "setting aside this \$174 million system" — except it hasn't been set aside. It hasn't been suspended. It's still being used.

Doctors tell us — and doctors have told the minister — that they enter information into the system but what appears on the screen later is often completely different. So the medical treatment that the doctors have ordered is not the treatment that the patients receive.

Why is this government continuing to use a computer system that is putting patients at risk on Vancouver Island?

Hon. T. Lake: The IHealth system at Nanaimo Regional General Hospital has had some challenges; there's no question. We have listened to the physicians, and the member should know we've listened to nurses and other members of the health care team. We've worked with Island Health. I've met with the board. I've met on site with the physicians. We had Dr. Doug Cochrane do a review, and he made recommendations.

The physicians need to be confident in the system, and we are working with Island Health and with the physicians to make sure that they do have confidence in the system. But the member should talk to the nursing staff at Nanaimo Regional General Hospital, because we actually have heard from many members of the nursing staff — both there and at the long-term care home, Dufferin Place — that in fact they do not want to see the system taken down.

We are working carefully with all members of the health care team to make sure this system works the way it should.

RECORDS OF GOVERNMENT COURT CASE WITH TEACHERS

R. Fleming: Earlier this month I asked the Minister of Education to release court documents from his government's long legal battle with teachers. The minister refused to do so at that time. He said: "We need to respect

the process with the BCTF? Well, the Supreme Court order has been complied with, and the language stripped out of the contracts in 2002 has been restored.

Like us, like the media, the B.C. Teachers Federation supports the public's right to see these documents, and they support their immediate release.

My question again today is for the Minister of Education. Will he publicly release these documents today?

Hon. M. Bernier: First, it's really exciting that the members opposite acknowledged the great work this side of the House has done in making sure we have a long-term agreement with the BCTF. Specific to the question....

Interjection.

Hon. M. Bernier: If the member would like to listen to the answer, the important part here is we have a court-imposed preserved situation, where they asked for confidentiality on certain documents. Everything that was allowed to be in the public domain is in the public domain. Everything that was discussed in the public domain is accessible in the public domain.

The court understood and respected confidentiality in some of the reports. The BCTF also acknowledged and respected confidentiality in some of those reports, and the court actually mandated that for some of the court documents, the confidentiality be acknowledged.

AUDITOR GENERAL REPORT ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

M. Farnworth: Well, once again, we've seen that question period is clearly not answer period, and that's unfortunate. That is really unfortunate, because there are so many issues that we've asked questions on that we have failed to get answers from this government.

Interjections.

M. Farnworth: Oh, hang on; hang on. I hear the Minister of Mines asking....

Interjections.

Madame Speaker: Members. Members.

[1115]

M. Farnworth: Thank you, hon. Speaker, because my question, in fact, does deal with many issues related to the economy, along with many others.

Last month the Auditor General transmitted to the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia *The 2015-2016 Public Accounts and the Auditor General's Findings*. My question is to someone who will provide an answer.

My question is to the Chair of the Public Accounts Committee. Can he offer his comments on some of the significant aspects of the reports that have been presented?

Interjections.

Madame Speaker: Members. Members.

B. Ralston: Waiting for the Speaker.

Madame Speaker: Please proceed.

B. Ralston: Thank you, Madame Speaker. I was wondering whether I'd get a question this session.

There are some very intriguing comments by the Auditor General in this report, which the committee will consider in due course, I'm sure. For example, the dollar value of contractual obligations — legally binding obligations of the Crown to pay into the future — is \$102 billion, more than any other province in the country. And one single agency — one Crown agency, B.C. Hydro — has contracted \$58 billion of obligations to pay independent power producers into the future, more than all the contractual obligations owed by the province of Ontario.

The Auditor General also comments that there are sales contemplated for non-profit housing societies and land. There will be revenue to the province, but what the Auditor General says is that the Crown will be obliged to support those mortgage payments, and that amount will be double the revenue that the province receives.

So in many ways.... I could go on. [Applause.]

B. Ralston: Well, with that encouragement, perhaps I'll continue.

The Auditor General also comments on the consolidated revenue fund and what's called the prosperity fund. She says that the current dollar value in the prosperity fund is similar to moving cash from your chequing account to your savings account.

What the members fail to recognize...

Interjections.

Madame Speaker: Members. This House will come to order.

The member will wrap his remarks.

B. Ralston: ...is that there is no new dollar value in that account. That really sums up this term of government by the B.C. Liberals — a promise of a prosperity fund, and at the end, nothing in it.

[End of question period.]

Interjections.

Madame Speaker: Member.
Hon. Members.

Reports from Committees

S. Sullivan: I have the honour to present the report of the Special Committee to Appoint an Information and Privacy Commissioner.

[1120]

I move that the report be taken as read and received.

Motion approved.

Petitions

G. Holman: I rise to present a petition. Some British Columbians, many of them children, suffer from type 1 diabetes and require constant monitoring of blood glucose. Monitoring is a matter of life and death and a continuous glucose monitor will alarm whether you are having high or low blood sugar. The cost related to using a CGM runs in the thousands of dollars annually and is not covered by PharmaCare. Those who cannot afford this equipment are faced with health risks that often result in increased future medical costs.

The petitioners respectfully request that this honourable House investigate what action can be taken to alleviate this situation.

Hon. T. Wat: I seek leave to table a report.

Madame Speaker: Please proceed.

Tabling Documents

Hon. T. Wat: I have the honour of tabling the *2015-16 Report on Multiculturalism*.

Petitions

D. Eby: I rise to present a petition from my constituents to the Housing Minister to fix the housing crisis. They've written postcards with lots of good ideas for the Housing Minister on action he can take to fix the housing crisis.

C. Trevena: I rise to present a petition with more than 1,100 names from people in Langley who are opposed to the 216th interchange, which will turn a quiet neighbourhood into a truck route, increasing traffic from 3,000 vehicles a day to 15,000 vehicles a day. The petitioners also have many suggestions for alternative routes.

A. Dix: I have a petition by six Windermere students — Selina Shu, June Lam, Jessica Sun, Calla Pickett, Ryan Leung and Sahali Sang — who collected more than 500 petitions over the last few months to the federal and

provincial governments, calling for action about Nestlé taking water from Hope, B.C., and paying only \$2.25 per million litres.

D. Routley: I present a petition with hundreds of signatures of citizens of British Columbia. These British Columbians, many of them children, suffer from type 1 diabetes and require constant monitoring of blood glucose. Monitoring is a matter of life and death and a continuous glucose monitor will alarm whether you are having a high or low blood sugar. The cost related to using a constant glucose monitor runs into the thousands of dollars annually and is not covered by PharmaCare.

Orders of the Day

Hon. M. de Jong: I call throne speech. I can inform the House, by agreement, that we are anticipating hearing, in the time before the arrival of Her Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, from the Minister of Health, the member for Surrey–Green Timbers and, if time permits, Burnaby–Lougheed. I think it's fair for me to say that that is by agreement of the House.

Throne Speech Debate

(continued)

Hon. T. Lake: It's a great privilege to rise in this House and give my remarks in a response to the Speech from the Throne, knowing that the Speaker will indulge me in perhaps straying from the Speech from the Throne a little bit as I express my gratitude to people and pass some comments on my eight years in this House.

Obviously, we need to recognize the people that have helped us through this journey. I know that my wife, Lisa, is sitting on the couch.... I just thought about my dog, Pal, next to her, which is why I got so emotional. I'm going to be in big trouble for that. Lisa and Pal are at home watching, and I hope they'll forgive me for being a bit blubbery.

My three daughters — Shannon, Steph and Gemma — have grown up with their dad in public life. It's not always easy, but they've been there to support me and wish me well, despite having to take the criticism, which someone else talked about earlier, when we're in the news.

So many people to thank, and the list is long, so I hope people will forgive me. But I think it's important that I recognize the people that have helped me in Kamloops in my constituency office.

[1125]

My constituency assistant, Kirsty Morris, with whom I've worked for ten years in the mayor's office and now in the constituency office, is just one of the most amazing people I know. She has solved 95 percent of the problems that come through our door, helping really vulnerable people in Kamloops–North Thompson, particularly in North Kamloops.

Linda Friesen, Paula Kully, Gill Yaron, Rob Scherf, Lynda MacKenzie and Zach Millward have all played roles in my constituency office, and I'm deeply indebted to them for their help.

Ministry office. First of all, as a private member, the many assistant legislative assistants and legislative assistants that have been there for me. Then in the Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Health. It's a very long list.

My current team Health is an amazing team led by Kellie O'Brien, my chief of staff. Kellie has been named the staffer of the year on numerous occasions and led our team to have office of the year on other occasions as well. She's one of the most capable, forceful and fun people I know and has become a dear friend. I want to thank her for all of her help and leadership on our team.

We also have Marissa Chan-Kent, Derek Robertson, Damon Dhanowa, Erika McCormick, Shaina Jukes and Deb Wade. Deb is the mom of our group, looking after everyone, making sure that everyone has chips and dip when she comes in on her three days a week and, more importantly, making sure my expenses get reimbursed in a timely way.

Over the years, I've had great people to work with: Sarah Blonde — she'll kill me if I say "blond"; Kiel Giddens; Katy Merrifield; Taylor Briggs; Martyn Lafrance; Nick Facey; Emile Scheffel; John Manning; Kyle Marsh; Mario Miniaci; Jenn Wright; Jen Przada; Eric Wallace-Deering; Victoria Kline; Rhiannon Martin. My former chief of staff, Sabrina Loiacono, who just is an amazing person and now works in the civil service. She has been a great friend to me and great supporter, and I really thank her for that.

There is a rumour going around that these folks are all getting together to form a Terry Lake survivors club, which they probably should, because they know that this red hair comes with a bit of a temperament attached to it that they recognize as passion. Wanting to do a good job on behalf of your constituents means that you work hard, you expect a lot of yourself, and you expect a lot of others. They have all done that for me. I just so appreciate the relationship that we've had over the years and the ability to work with these great people.

Lots of people in the riding, but Kamloops-North Thompson is an amazing riding. Many of us, obviously, talk about our ridings, but Henry and Vickie Pejril have been great friends. Hoberly and Maureen Hove — other great friends and supporters who helped run my campaigns in 2009 and 2013. Again, it wasn't just about doing something for political purposes. We've become extremely close friends. If you want to find Henry and I, 4 o'clock at the Red Collar on Fridays, that's where we'll be.

All my colleagues in the Legislature, on both sides of the House, we have enjoyed each other's company. We've been competitive. We have fought for things that we believe in, but I think 99.9 percent of the time do so in the utmost respectful way. I know that people represent all of

the parties in the House are genuinely concerned about their constituents. Despite the competitive nature and the somewhat theatrical nature of question period, I am really happy and proud that outside of that theatre, we can have very good discussions and build very positive relationships.

I want to thank every one of them, particularly the retiring members. I'll single out the member for Surrey-Green Timbers, who I know has a very big heart and who cares deeply about vulnerable people. I wish her well in her retirement.

I also want to thank former MLA Kevin Krueger. He taught me how to heckle. I don't have his deep voice, but I hope I have showed a bit of the same tenacity.

My current colleague from Kamloops-South Thompson, the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure, is someone who always literally has my back.

[1130]

I appreciate his friendship and his true talents representing the people of Kamloops-South Thompson and the people of British Columbia.

So many other things I want to talk about, but I know time is short. I do want to thank all of the people that work in this building: the legislative staff, security, the Sergeant-at-Arms staff, the Clerks. It is a truly amazing experience to be in your midst and be part of your team. And a special shout-out to Christine in the dining room, who has put up with me and my antics for the last eight years.

Our friend Lynn Klein is in the audience, as often he is. Lynn is a former paramedic. One of the things I'm most proud of is being named British Columbia's first Honorary Paramedic. I know we don't use props, hon. Speaker, but I am an official honorary paramedic. I want to make sure I get to use that. It gives me special privileges, so I hope I can get away with that.

I want to say thank you to Lynn and all of the paramedics in British Columbia that are on the front lines of the current opioid epidemic that we are facing. They have saved countless lives. They work tirelessly every single day, and I know they are under a lot of strain. I hope that they see me as their advocate and champion and that we will continue to support them in the way we need to, to ensure that they are looked after and that they look after us.

I want to thank our Premier, who is, I think, a remarkable person. When I look at the list of people that have been such a big influence in my life, I realize that most of them are women — the strong, strong women that I have had the privilege to be among. Our Premier is one of those, someone that is, again, competitive and dynamic, allows great debate and allows me to voice my feelings and listen — and be convinced, at times — to my arguments. So I want to thank her for that.

Finally, I want to thank the members of the media. When I was a young 20-year-old, I worked in the media for

a three-year period. I had a short time at the Legislature in Alberta, filling in for our Canadian Press correspondent there. It strikes me that in today's world, we need an objective, well-supported media more than ever.

We see what is happening in other places, and it is a threat to democracy when we don't have a vibrant, well-funded, well-researched, professional media. So despite the fact that they don't always get it right when I speak to them, they are such an important part of democracy. I hope that our society will continue to support that balance, that rigour and that intelligence that the media provide for us as Canadians.

With that, I want to say that it has been a great eight years. I would not trade it for anything, and I'm looking forward to seeing my dog. [Applause.]

S. Hammell: I rise in the House for my last time, and I want to begin by framing my 22 years here with a reply I give when I'm asked about my job as an MLA. I reply, in an unequivocal manner to anyone who asks, that in my opinion, this is the best job going, bar none.

I ran into the Minister for Housing the other morning coming into the building, and he asked me if I had regrets about leaving. I said: "None. I am done." But I do acknowledge that there is a compelling appeal to this job that can, if you are so inclined, be addictive. It could be a lifetime addiction, so be warned.

[R. Lee in the chair.]

This job challenges you intellectually, emotionally, socially and physically, and you learn unequivocally who you are and what you stand for. You become very aware of your strengths and your weaknesses, and with self-awareness, you can learn to grow and learn immensely.

[1135]

Another amazing thing about this job is the incredible talent you're exposed to daily, on both sides of the House. I have often been in awe and, at times, incredibly envious of the skill of others. I have never seen myself as or been comfortable as a performer, and of course, this beautiful chamber is the ultimate stage. I have watched, over the years, many of you think on your feet, respond with wit and good humour and wrap your tongue around words as you articulate your thoughts with accuracy and clarity.

I have watched many of the new members — again, from both sides of the House — learn the skills not only to survive in this amazingly complex forum but to grow and thrive. I think of our two new women. The member for Coquitlam–Burke Mountain was sworn in at 11 and asked her first question at two that afternoon in question period. I think of the member for Vancouver–Mount Pleasant, who has lived many lifetimes and has the wisdom of patience and balance.

Both of those women are amazing, but we all bring value to this place. We are all, every one of us, so fortun-

ate to serve the people of B.C. here in this Legislature. But as you know, no person is an island, and this Legislature is the workplace of many. So to all of you who work here — from the Clerks to the cleaners, from Penelope to the press gallery, and everyone else in this precinct, especially our caucus staff — I thank you for making our worlds possible.

Of course, a very special call-out to the Sergeant-at-Arms for keeping us safe. He left my colleague from Vancouver East and me with the clear understanding, after a briefing on his anti-terrorist plan, that the members in the seats closest to the revolving doors were outside the range of his protection and in the greatest harm of danger in a terror attack on the chamber. I thought of the need-to-know rule at that moment.

Through the years here, I've had the opportunity to work with a number of leaders of the NDP, both as a government member and as a member of the opposition. I have also watched the leaders of the members from across the aisle. I have great admiration for anyone who is willing to take on the role of leader and all the challenges it entails. It is not a position you enter or recover from easily.

However, I could not leave this chamber without acknowledging the great strength and depth of character of the member for Victoria–Beacon Hill, the person who assumed the leadership of our party during the most difficult time in our history and led us back into this chamber as a strong voice for ordinary people. She embodies all I believe in and admire. She believes that everyone in B.C. matters, no matter where you come from or what your life circumstances are. I so agree, for it is for all of us to lift each other up, to give a hand out and up. As we do so, we lift the nation and we lift our province.

I also cannot leave without recognizing the substantial contribution the former leader of our party and member for Vancouver–Kingsway has made to this chamber and will do so in the future. This member has an amazing intellect and an unbelievable capacity to understand the complex nature of government. He is a formidable force and one to count on always.

[Madame Speaker in the chair.]

When I entered this House in 1991, the member for Surrey–Panorama actually had.... I think he fired me. Yeah, he fired me. Yes, I think he fired me in....

Interjections.

S. Hammell: He did. He always claims he was lifting me up.

When I entered the House in 1991, the municipality of Surrey had 250,000 people. As I leave, the city of Surrey has a population of close to 500,000.

[1140]

Although there has been significant change, much has remained the same. I looked over my first speech in the House, and the main issues that we were dealing with at that time were overcrowding in schools, the problems of the emergency ward, violence against women, the issues of racism. Sadly, these are still the issues of today, but we've added crime and safety, as well as transportation.

The services in the city have not kept up with the rapid increase in population. This is a chronic problem not unique to Surrey but found in all growing areas, and it's a continuing challenge for the next government. It has always been a great, difficult issue to redistribute the wealth, whether we are talking about the fair share of services from our own tax dollars to areas of growth or to reducing the growing gap between those who have and those who need more.

I do want to just quickly mention — and I'm so aware of the time — that I've had some extraordinary staff. I first want to mention Thelma Oliver. She was my first constituency assistant, and I was so lucky — a PhD in political science. I'm a rookie, and I've got this amazing person helping me. Unfortunately, we lost her a number of years ago.

Among the many others over the years, I do want to single out Brett Barden, who was rewarded by the member for Surrey-Whalley with a certificate for the longest-serving CA I had ever had — or who had stayed with me. It was a little sleight of hand by that member for Surrey-Whalley. Brett and I lived by the rules, set high standards and exceeded expectations, and he was constantly exceeding mine.

Raj Shergill, Jason Craik, Stephanie Chang and Param Grewal are a few others of the extraordinary staff I've been blessed with.

I do want to mention my family. My family has been at the centre of my core. Without my daughter and my husband participating and supporting me in this world, it just could not have happened.

My husband was as political as I was and did work for the provincial government during the '90s. He was given the title of czar of patronage, as he was in charge of the unit of government called boards and commissions.

Then he had a vehicle confrontation with a ferry worker one early, rainy Monday morning while we were trying to get a ferry to Victoria. I remember the morning well. He then was known afterwards as the Road Warrior.

The confrontation made the headlines of all media, and my daughter, Sage, learned of the event from the coverage. She was a teenager at the time, and she wouldn't be seen with us for months after.

My husband, my daughter, my two stepsons — the two stepsons I had — the two grandchildren, my sisters, my brother and the extended members of my family have provided me incredible support. I'm deeply indebted to all of them.

In closing, I just want to say to all here: beware of the nectar of your ministry. I was the second Minister of

Women's Equality and have a passionate support for the unutilized talent and voice of women. I think I had it before I went in there, but it didn't help any recovery from that perspective. Because of those combinations, it has become my life's work.

When elected in 1991, we had 33 percent women in our caucus. In 2005, we had about 20. In 2009, we had 31 percent in our caucus. In 2015, we had 43 percent in our caucus. This didn't just happen. There was a very specific plan laid out to do this. In 2016, we added one more woman to our numbers.

[1145]

Fortunately, we have an amazing leader who knows the power of equality. He was raised by strong women and has always surrounded himself with the voices of strong women. With him, we will enter the next election with an amazing, amazing contingent of new, young and old people, of various backgrounds, who'll become, I hope, 50 percent of our next caucus.

I have incredible confidence in the Leader of the Opposition, our member for Juan de Fuca. He is compassionate, focused and clear about his goal. He knows that ordinary people need the representation of a caring, compassionate government, and I know he will deliver on behalf of the people of the province.

I wish him success, and I wish all of you in this House well. It has been a pleasure being with you. [Applause.]

J. Shin: Hon. Speaker, today is the final day and, in fact, the very final minutes of the 40th parliament. Thank you for this opportunity. It's my honour to rise in this House one last time as the Member of the Legislative Assembly representing the good people of Burnaby-Lougheed, to say my goodbye.

Twenty-five years ago my parents chose Canada as the home of our dreams for our family, like seven million others across this nation that made the same choice. As many young parents and immigrant families do, mine brought the kids along to visit the capital city. Little did they know that their timid 11-year-old, who they propped in front of the steps of this Legislative Assembly to get the souvenir picture taken, would take two decades to later have another picture taken — this time, instead, as the elected member to take a seat in this chamber.

That's just it. An ordinary citizen, with no political pedigree, education or affiliation, serving this extraordinary honour of elected office that does not discriminate by gender, race, religion, orientation or age. That's the calibre of democracy that we celebrate in Canada and we continue to make better, just as I was politically conceived in a deliberate effort to bring about gender equality and visible minority representation in politics.

As we all know, the face of British Columbia has drastically changed in the last three decades. We are among the most diverse societies in the world. The community of Burnaby-Lougheed speaks over 120 languages.

We know that B.C. attracts and keeps so many of us because of affordable education, quality universal health care, environmental protection, accessible social services, human rights, equality and justice. These are the benefits that my family, so unknowingly, for many years, were beneficiaries to — the social democratic policies that generations before us, and still to this date, have fought to put in place and continue to fight to not just make better but also to defend.

I know my time is very limited. There's so much more that I wanted to say. I just want to make sure that I send out my final thanks to everybody in the kind of grassroots movements that I saw across all corners of our province that I was able to assist. It's been a privilege to support and witness that as an MLA in and out of Burnaby-Lougheed.

To my teammates, my colleagues, stakeholders and friends, not a day went by in this seat that you trusted me with that I wasn't haunted by everything that I wanted to achieve for you. They say it takes a village to raise a child. The same can be said for a politician. The debt of your support is insurmountable, and I'll carry it with me for life.

To all the members across this House, in the midst of the partisan divide — I sometimes felt like we were more than two sword-lengths away — I found humanity and kindness in each and every one of you, and I believe in the aggregate human attempt that continues to unfold in this House. I have faith in that process now. It was my most extraordinary privilege to serve with you.

Finally, to my mom, dad, Jimmy and Steven, this is the last time you can stalk me live on TV. I love you, and I'm coming home.

Thank you so much, Madame Speaker, for this opportunity. [Applause.]

[1150]

Madame Speaker: Hon. Members, I am advised that the Lieutenant-Governor is in the precinct.

J. Shin moved adjournment of debate.

Motion approved.

Madame Speaker: Hon. Members, please take your seats. The Lieutenant-Governor will be with us.

Her Honour the Lieutenant-Governor requested to attend the House, was admitted to the chamber and took her seat on the throne.

[1155]

Hon. J. Guichon (Lieutenant-Governor): Pray be seated.

Royal Assent to Bills

Deputy Clerk:

Adoption Amendment Act, 2017

Discriminatory Provisions (Historical Wrongs) Repeal Act

Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations Statutes Amendment Act, 2017

Information Management (Documenting Government Decisions) Amendment Act, 2017

Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Amendment Act, 2017

Finance Statutes Amendment Act, 2017

In Her Majesty's name, Her Honour the Lieutenant-Governor doth assent to these acts.

Supply Act (No. 1), 2017

In Her Majesty's name, Her Honour the Lieutenant-Governor doth thank Her Majesty's loyal subjects, accepts their benevolence and assents to this act.

Hon. J. Guichon (Lieutenant-Governor): I know that for some, this is the final day of this part of your journey. I just would like to thank everybody on both sides for all the service that you give this province. Thank you so much. Have a great journey.

Her Honour the Lieutenant-Governor retired from the chamber.

[1200]

[Madame Speaker in the chair.]

Madame Speaker: Hon. Members, my thanks to the people who work here and love this building. Those who care for this building, know it continues to shine.

To Joan Coppin, thank you for looking out for me.

To Randy Spraggett, you are a prince.

To Surjit Dhanota, thank you for your many kindnesses.

My thanks to Angela Larsen and Karen Armstrong with the Speaker's office. I'm ever grateful for your assistance and wisdom.

To my deputies, Burnaby North and Burnaby-Edmonds, thank you. We wouldn't be here without you.

To the Clerks' table and the Clerks' offices, we who wear the other robes are grateful for your guidance.

To parliamentary committees, thank you for your yeoman's service.

Karen Aitken and the A-team, first class.

To all who work here and love this building, thank you for all you do to welcome visitors to the people's building in British Columbia. I admire your service.

To the security staff, under the direction of Sergeant-at-Arms Gary Lenz and Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms Randy Ennis, thank you for the work you do to keep us safe. It is not easy to balance public access with a secure work environment for all, and you have excelled.

To those in the galleries and corridors, you make my day.

It has been my honour to host a variety of people and functions here in the precinct. It simply would not have been possible without the indomitable spirit and class of Dominique Boutin, chef Brian Vickstrom and the wonderful dining room staff. I think we can all join in saying thanks to you.

Special thanks to Peter Gourlay and the library staff. You, along with Rob Sutherland, from Hansard, and his team, are the keepers of the written and spoken word. We could not function without you.

To Graeme Brown, IT services, extraordinaire.

To Hilary Woodward and Ellice Schneider in finance and human resources, you keep us moving forward.

Members, do all you can to uplift citizen participation. Democracy is fragile. Allow no one to diminish the institution of parliament. I believe public service is the rent we pay for our time on this earth.

Thank you, Members, for your service. Safe travels as you return to your families and your ridings. [Applause.]

Hon. M. de Jong: I move that the House, at its rising, do stand adjourned until it appears to the satisfaction of

the Speaker, after consultation with the government, that the public interest requires that the House shall meet or until the Speaker may be advised by the government that it is desired to prorogue the sixth session of the 40th parliament of the province of British Columbia. The Speaker may give notice that she is so satisfied or has been so advised, and thereupon the House shall meet at the time stated in such notice and, as the case may be, may transact its business as if it had been duly adjourned to that time and date. In the event the Speaker being unable to act owing to illness or other cause, the Deputy Speaker shall act in her stead for the purpose of this order.

To those that are leaving by choice, farewell and happy trails.

To those who seek to return, *bonne chance, à la prochaine fois*, until we meet again.

Hon. M. de Jong moved adjournment of the House.

Motion approved.

The House adjourned at 12:03 p.m.

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