



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
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Third Session, 41st Parliament

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THE HONOURABLE DARRYL PLECAS, SPEAKER

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LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR

Her Honour the Honourable Janet Austin, OBC

THIRD SESSION, 41ST PARLIAMENT

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Honourable Darryl Plecas

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Morning Sitting

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TUESDAY, MAY 15, 2018

The House met at 10:04 a.m.

[Mr. Speaker in the chair.]

### Routine Business

Prayers.

[10:05 a.m.]

### Introductions by Members

**L. Reid:** I have two introductions today. Denise Tambellini is the manager of intergovernmental relations for the city of Richmond. Jason Kita is manager of enterprise services, city of Richmond. These two individuals make the city better each day. It's a city I love. Please make them welcome.

**Hon. C. Trevena:** I'm actually going to be introducing a guest who was a long-serving employee for the Ministry of Transportation. He's here as a guest of the member for Kelowna West, but it would be very remiss of me not to mention that Norm Parkes and his wife, Gwen, are in the gallery.

Norm, as I think everybody in the House who has worked on any Transportation file will know, was a loyal, dedicated public servant who retired earlier this year. I know that he's been invited as a special guest for the member for Kelowna West, and I thank him for that invitation. I hope the House will make Norm and his wife very welcome.

**Hon. H. Bains:** It is my pleasure to introduce to the House today a visiting delegation of United Food and Commercial Workers 1518 members. There are about a couple dozen of them. They're here to meet with all MLAs to discuss poverty reduction strategies and the aim of creating better and caring communities.

I know they deeply care about improvements to employment standards and health and safety at workplaces. I just want to remind everybody that it's advocates like these who are the reason that we continue to improve working conditions and health and safety of all working people in this province.

Please help me welcome them and say: "Thank you very much, and welcome to this House."

**E. Ross:** I've got one of my fellow band members here today. Her name is Dani Stohl. She's from the Woods family from my own community. I'm very good friends with her parents and her grandparents. She's here to advocate for worker safety as well. So would the House please make welcome Dani Stohl.

**S. Bond:** I know that all of us are grateful and have a significant understanding of the impact that this job has on our family's lives. Especially when you live a long way away, you

don't often get to welcome your loved ones to the chamber. So I'm delighted to welcome today someone who has been a partner in my job for more than 17 years. As I commute to work every week, he's at home keeping the home fires burning, being a fantastic grandpa and doing all of those things. I want to welcome Bill to the Legislature today and ask my colleagues to do that as well.

**Hon. D. Eby:** Up in the gallery today, Josh Patterson and Meghan McDermott from the B.C. Civil Liberties Association. I wonder if the House would make them feel welcome and also thank them, by their applause, for all the work they do defending rights and freedoms in British Columbia.

**N. Letnick:** We had the privilege today.... The members of the opposition had breakfast with people from the B.C. Cancer Foundation, in particular Sarah Roth, the president and CEO; Andrew Sweeney, the board chair of the B.C. Cancer Foundation; Dr. Kim Chi; Dr. Dan Renouf; Dr. François Bénard; and several other board members and colleagues with the Cancer Foundation who help people with cancer throughout British Columbia.

In particular, we had a moving discussion with Michael Izen. The Minister of Health yesterday discussed Michael's story — a very sad story but a very positive one, for what medical advances have been in cancer health. I look forward to the work that the B.C. Cancer Foundation does.

Would the House please make them feel very welcome.

**S. Sullivan:** I have three special guests today: Tom Gautreau, and Stan and Jonathan Sipos. All three of them are business people, very committed to the well-being of all British Columbians. And of course, my amazing wife, Lynn, who makes it all possible for me to be here. Please welcome them to this House.

[10:10 a.m.]

**L. Krog:** I have two sets of introductions this morning. Firstly, here from UFCW, a group of women I had a chance to meet with this morning: Sarah Hannah, Jenny Anderson, Samantha Weisbroad, Ashley Campbell, Lindsay Pridge and, as introduced by the member for Skeena and not the least of them, Danni Stole. I'd ask the House to make them welcome, please.

Finally, she snuck into the gallery, I believe, with her spouse — a former member of this chamber who may be retired but was never retiring while she was here, much loved and respected. Would the House make Joan McIntyre and her spouse welcome, please.

**B. Stewart:** It gives me great honour to follow up on the Minister of Transportation's introduction of Norm Parkes and his wife, Gwen, who are here in the gallery today. They reside in Victoria. I had the opportunity to serve with Norm some years ago as a member of the regional transportation advisory committee. He was living in Kamloops at that time.

Norm is here because he's recently retired from the Ministry of Transportation and is dealing with a personal health issue. I have to say that some of the things that I found about working with Norm, who was probably my first interaction with working with government employees, was one of great passion, commitment and, I think, looking out for what's in the best interest. I remember projects like the Park Bridge, Hoffman's Bluff, the Bennett Bridge, and many others.

Would the House please make Gwen and Norm welcome, and their son, Kevin, who couldn't be here today. I know that he's looking forward to getting a tour of the buildings later today.

**B. Ma:** We all know that we don't do the work here without the incredible support of our friends, family and supporters back home, so it is my delight to be able to introduce four members of the UFCW team that are particularly important to me. Would the House please join me in welcoming Patrick Johnson, Abby Leung, Kate Milberry and Keith Murdoch.

I'd like to say a few words about Keith as well. I was a bridesmaid at Keith's wedding. He and his wife have been by me through thick and thin. I really don't think there's anybody better than Keith and his wife, Kristin, for somebody to have by their side through this.

Before I close off the introductions, I'd also like to wish a very happy birthday to our two good colleagues in this House today, the member for Delta North and his identical twin, the member for Vancouver–West End — who, I'm told, is wearing his birthday suit today, which he bought earlier this weekend.

Would the House please join me in making them all welcome.

**A. Olsen:** Mr. Speaker, that's a finely tailored suit. [Laughter.]

I'd like to take this opportunity.... Somewhere in this beautiful building is a group of students from Gulf Islands Secondary School on Saltspring Island. Mr. Dean Crouse — I had the opportunity to attend one of his classes teaching political science. I had the opportunity to spend some time with his students. Very well informed, extremely well informed about B.C. politics, all the members of the House should know. So with great vigour, I hope that we can please welcome them to this place today as they're visiting us in the precinct.

**L. Throness:** This morning I had the pleasure of greeting 20 grade 10 students from Timothy Christian School in my riding. They'll soon be in the House to join us. Accompanying them are Jody Terpstra and Daniel Van Brugge. They certainly couldn't have picked a nicer day to come. Would the House please welcome them as well.

**B. D'Eith:** I wanted to welcome to the House a former MLA and an inspiration to me who represented Coquit-

lam–Burke Mountain. Jodie Wickens is joining us today for question period. I just wanted to welcome her to the House.

**R. Singh:** In the House today, I have a wonderful supporter, Val Spahija, also with the UFCW delegation. Would the House please make her very welcome.

**R. Leonard:** I'd like to also welcome a UFCW member who's very dedicated to making the lives of seniors in their homes better. Welcome, please, Brenda Somerville from the Comox Valley.

[10:15 a.m.]

### Introduction and First Reading of Bills

#### BILL 32 — PROTECTION OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ACT

Hon. D. Eby presented a message from Her Honour the Lieutenant-Governor: a bill intituled Protection of Public Participation Act.

**Hon. D. Eby:** I move the bill be introduced and read a first time now.

I am pleased to introduce the Protection of Public Participation Act. The purpose of this act is to enhance public participation by protecting expression on matters of public interest from litigation that unduly limits such expression. Lawsuits that are improperly motivated by the intent to silence expression are often referred to as strategic lawsuits against public participation, or by the acronym SLAPPs.

The act would not, however, require the difficult assessment of a plaintiff's motive. Rather, the act would provide for a legal basis and expedited process by which, at an early stage in the proceedings, a court would be able to determine whether a lawsuit arises out of expression on a matter of public interest and, if so, to weigh whether the likely harm to a plaintiff is serious enough that the public interest, in allowing the lawsuit to continue, would outweigh the public interest in protecting the expression that gave rise to the lawsuit. In so doing, the act would improve access to justice and would balance the protection of freedom of expression with the protection of reputation and economic interests.

The act is based on the Uniform Protection of Public Participation Act adopted by the Uniform Law Conference of Canada in 2017, which, in turn, is based on the 2015 Ontario act of the same name.

Many British Columbians and a large number of civil society groups in B.C., including the B.C. Civil Liberties Association, have called for legislation to protect public participation. In 2017, the Union of B.C. Municipalities adopted a resolution endorsing such legislation, and in February of this year, 15 eminent legal figures signed an open letter calling for legislation based on the model of the Ontario act.

Members will note that although the act is being introduced in the spring, it will not proceed to third reading until



the fall session. Because this act is proposed to apply to existing litigation, this will give parties and their counsel time to assess the implications of this on their litigation.

The ability of citizens to participate freely in discussion and debate on matters of public interest without fear of undue legal threat is vital to a vibrant democratic society. The Protection of Public Participation Act will be of great importance in protecting that fundamental democratic value.

**Mr. Speaker:** The question is first reading of the bill.

Motion approved.

**Hon. D. Eby:** I move the bill be placed on the orders of the day for second reading at the next sitting of the House after today.

Bill 32, Protection of Public Participation 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.

**Hon. M. Farnworth:** With the introduction of that bill, I just want to inform the House I've already had discussions with both the official opposition House Leader and the opposition House Leader for the Third Party that while this bill has been introduced, it's not the government's intention to call the bill in this session. Rather, it will be called in the fall session.

All legislation that we intend to be dealing with this session was introduced by the seventh of May. I know my colleague across the way is aware of that, and I just wanted the House to understand that as well.

BILL Pr401 — CANADIAN CHINESE  
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY  
VANCOUVER ACT

T. Wat presented a bill intitled Canadian Chinese School of Theology Vancouver Act.

**T. Wat:** I move that a bill entitled Canadian Chinese School of Theology Vancouver Act standing in my name on the order paper be introduced and now read a first time.

This private bill is being introduced to continue the Canadian Chinese School of Theology Vancouver Society, previously incorporated under the Societies Act as the Canadian Chinese School of Theology, and to allow it to grant degrees, diplomas and certificates in theology, including honorary degrees in theology, within the province of British Columbia.

**Mr. Speaker:** The question is first reading of the bill.

Motion approved.

**T. Wat:** Pursuant to Standing Order 105 relating to private bills, I move that the bill be referred to the Select Standing Committee on Parliamentary Reform, Ethical Conduct, Standing Orders and Private Bills.

Bill Pr401, Canadian Chinese School of Theology Vancouver Act, introduced, read a first time and referred to the Select Standing Committee on Parliamentary Reform, Ethical Conduct, Standing Orders and Private Bills.

[10:20 a.m.]

**Statements (Standing Order 25B)**

ANNIVERSARY OF B.C. GOVERNMENT  
APOLOGY TO CHINESE CANADIANS

**T. Wat:** Four years ago today then Premier Christy Clark took a historic and important step to issue a formal apology on behalf of the entire B.C. Legislature to Chinese Canadians for historical wrongs. On May 15, 2014, all sides of the Legislature came together to express their deepest sorrow and regret to members of the Chinese community for the discriminatory legislation enacted by past provincial governments.

This apology has helped to heal the pain caused during the dark chapter in British Columbia from 1871 to 1947, when people of Chinese descent were denied the right to vote, to own property or to hold public office. As a former Minister Responsible for Multiculturalism, I was proud to lead an extensive three-month consultation process preceding the apology motion.

As part of that apology, our previous government provided funding of \$1 million to support legacy projects, established the Legacy Initiatives Advisory Council to ensure the successful implementation of these projects, fulfilled an important commitment with the new curriculum supplement for grade 5 and grade 10 students, placed commemorative plaques at various locations around the province to provide recognition of the contributions made by Chinese Canadians and repealed the remaining 19 historical acts containing discriminatory provisions.

I was so pleased to see last Friday that the advisory council finally released a celebration book.

The Chinese community has made overwhelming contributions to B.C.'s culture, history and economic prosperity. A true reconciliation takes time and effort. We need to continue to ensure that discrimination will never happen again, because our multicultural society is what makes our province strong and prosperous.

URBAN TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

**B. Ma:** Amidst rising costs of living and long commutes and never-ending congestion, building transit-centric communities is becoming more and more important to keeping the Lower Mainland livable.

Not too long ago transportation engineering and planning primarily focused on moving more cars around. But as our cities have changed, we have realized that the way we plan for the future must change as well. Now urban transportation planning is far more nuanced and complex.

It is now understood amongst planners and engineers that you can't build your way out of urban congestion with more lanes on a roadway or wider bridges, that demand for space can actually be induced by overinvesting in it. We've also learned that sacrificing land that can otherwise be used for housing in favour of supporting vehicle traffic from commuters who have to travel because there's not enough local housing is actually ironic and sometimes counterproductive.

There is a better way, a new way that promotes creating smarter, complete communities that support people of all sorts and promotes the development of and use of public transit as the go-to mode of transportation. By creating communities that support transit and other transportation modes like walking and cycling, it doesn't mean that everyone else needs to ditch their cars. It simply means that you have created the option of living without a car, if you so choose, as many young people choose to do already today. That number, by the way, is growing.

Smart community development and land-use planning are the most important tools we have when it comes to building livable communities with effective transportation systems, and it allows us to ensure that our roads and transportation systems exist to support our communities, not the other way around. That's the real goal: to build for people. Everyone in our cities — transit users, drivers, cyclists and walkers — will benefit from that.

JOHN PENNER

**T. Redies:** There are some people that come into your life who you have an instant connection to. My constituent, John Penner, was one of those people.

At 92 years young and a resident of South Surrey's Peninsula Retirement Residence, I first met John on May 8, 2017, the day before last year's election. As a hopeful politician, I'd been invited to speak at the Peninsula Retirement Residence and take questions from about 40 seniors — quite a daunting event for a newbie politician.

[10:25 a.m.]

As I was coming into the lobby, an older gentleman rushed up and said: "I'm John Penner. I'd been involved in political campaigns since the 1950s, and you've got big problems. You're not known in this community. Who's your campaign manager? He's mucking it all up, and you should get someone else." This was, to say the least, not what a rookie politician wanted to hear on the eve of the election.

Notwithstanding, after an hour of answering questions, for whatever reason I passed muster with John, and from there a fast friendship developed. We discovered we both had an avid love of horse racing. John had grown up in Alberta on a farm, riding horses from an early age. He told

me fascinating stories about being at Hastings Park in the 1950s and '60s. He'd been a hot walker and done lots of different jobs around the track.

As John had success in insurance and then real estate in Burnaby, he also owned racehorses — which, according to John never made him any money, but he loved them anyways. We shared books on our favourite racehorses and talked about the upcoming races, including the Kentucky Derby.

At 92, John had a crackerjack mind. He was always watching the news, and he would have a lot to say about politics and politicians — none of which was very positive, mind you. But he was honest and forthright, and I valued his perspective.

He was also a talented craftsman and woodworker. He made beautiful wooden bowls, pens and other wooden products that he sold to people, and all the money he gave to the War Amps to help children who lost limbs. At Christmas, you couldn't get away from him. You definitely went home with multiple objects that John had made. Sales, as well as his woodworking skills, was definitely one of John's life skills.

John was the life of the party at the Peninsula Residence. He had a quick wit, and I'm pretty darn sure he was a favourite of all of the ladies. I'm sad to say John Penner passed away last week. It was slightly more than a year that I'd known him, but he made a big impression on my life.

John, as I watch the Preakness this weekend, I'll be thinking of you.

KUSHIRO CUP WINNER BILL CORSON

**A. Kang:** I rise today in the B.C. Legislature to recognize a 2018 Kushiro Cup award winner, Bill Corson.

The Kushiro Cup is a special trophy that was originally brought to the city of Burnaby in 1982 by a representative of Mayor Wanibuchi from Burnaby's sister city in Japan, Kushiro. The cup came without instructions, so Burnaby's mayor at the time, Bill Lewarne, proposed that the cup be awarded annually to a non-elected citizen of Burnaby who had served the community in an outstanding manner. Every year since the Kushiro Cup has been awarded to an exceptional Burnaby citizen.

This year we have the honour of recognizing Bill Corson's contribution to the city of Burnaby. Bill has been a tireless advocate for community safety. As a volunteer with the Burnaby citizen crime watch program, he has devoted countless hours to patrolling the streets of Burnaby. In addition, Bill volunteers regularly for the southwest community police office, and for 18 years, Bill has been a Block Watch captain. In fact, he is my Block Watch captain.

In addition to being recognized as Burnaby's citizen of the year, I'd like to proudly recognize that Bill received the RCMP 20-year Long Service Award in 2016, the RCMP Officer in Charge, Certificate of Appreciation Award in 2010, the B.C. Solicitor General volunteer award in 2008, and the city of Burnaby Local Hero Award in 2005.

Congratulations, Bill, on receiving this award, and thank you so much for your contributions to volunteerism and making Burnaby a more welcoming place for everyone.

#### VILLAGE OF CHASE

**T. Stone:** This summer the village of Chase is celebrating the 110th anniversary of the establishment of the current townsite. Located on the shores of Little Shuswap Lake, this close-knit community of 2,500 serves as the western gateway to the Shuswap Lake region. The history of Chase and the surrounding area is rich, given that it has been home of the Secwepemc people for thousands of years.

Since 2004, Chase councillor and local historian David Lepsoe has been leading walking tours to help locals and visitors alike better understand the vibrant history of the region. David's tour now includes important stories such as how the gold rush brought people to the region, how the coming of the railway transformed the village and how the village was named after a flamboyant character named Whitfield Chase, who settled in the area in 1865. Whitfield Chase was first non-Indigenous settler that farmed and raised a family in what was then called the Shuswap prairie.

[10:30 a.m.]

An American logging company came to the area in 1907, purchased the townsite, subdivided and sold the lots. The Chase mill became known as the Adams River Lumber Co. and started up the same year. At its peak, the mill was the largest in the interior of British Columbia and employed over 300 workers. After the big mill closed, a number of smaller mills ran until 2005.

In the 1970s, the village began to market itself to the region and the province as a tourist destination, and growth followed. Today Chase is full of young families, small business people, artisans, entrepreneurs and farmers. It's full of folks keen on retiring by the lake, perhaps with a golf cart, since Chase is rightfully proud to be the only community in Canada within which you can legally drive a golf cart on designated municipal roads during designated months of the year.

It is a community that offers a tremendous quality of life, it's a community full of people with big hearts, and it's a community that I'm very proud to represent here in British Columbia's Legislature.

#### SURREY FOOD BANK

**R. Singh:** In 1981, in response to a downturn in the economy, a coalition of churches opened a temporary food cupboard in Surrey. Two years later, in June of 1983, the Surrey Food Bank Society was formed and opened up in a dilapidated building on King George Highway.

What began as a temporary solution to a temporary problem has now grown to an 8,000-square-foot warehouse in Whalley, a fleet of five vehicles, a lift truck, 400 dedicated volunteers and a staff of 15.

The Surrey Food Bank Society currently distributes approximately 2,000 food hampers each week and has many different programs tailored to specific population groups — programs like Tiny Bundles, which caters to families with pregnant moms and children under one year of age; a senior-specific distribution that allows someone aged 65 or older to collect their food in a respectful and non-rushed environment; and a hamper-to-your-home program that delivers food to those with mobility or other health issues who otherwise wouldn't be able to access services at the food bank. On top of the food-specific programs they offer, the Surrey Food Bank interfaces with many local agencies to provide social services to our city's most vulnerable.

After 35 years of existence, they have come to the realization that people will always need their help, but as they like to say, they are giving people a hand up, not a handout.

I would like to thank the Surrey Food Bank for 35 years of dedicated service to our city.

#### Oral Questions

##### IMPACT OF EMPLOYER HEALTH TAX ON NON-PROFIT AGENCIES

**A. Wilkinson:** Last Tuesday I asked the Premier, and I asked him to clarify, what he meant when he told non-profits and government agencies that they would be kept whole from the employer health tax. We all know this is a 2 percent tax right off the top of the payroll from any organization in British Columbia, including charities and non-profits.

The Finance Minister responded rather than the Premier. She said you'll see an implementation plan. Well, we've seen nothing. It's been 84 days since Budget 2018 was presented — 12 weeks in which non-profits and charities have been unable to plan for the future because they don't know if they're going to be exempted from the employer health tax.

Will the Minister of Finance finally come clean with the charities and non-profits of British Columbia and tell them whether or not they're going to be subject to the payroll tax?

**Hon. C. James:** I was waiting for a "come clean" response that would come in this session, so it's finally arrived.

As the member knows, in implementing the employers health tax, we have been gathering information. We have been talking to not-for-profits. We have been talking to school districts and universities. We are taking a look at the resources they are saving and which organizations have been paying medical service premiums, because it's an important piece to be able to look at when you're implementing the employers health tax.

[10:35 a.m.]

Organizations across the board who have been paying MSP will, in fact, be saving 50 percent as of this year, in 2018. They'll be saving 100 percent when we actually get rid of medical service premiums in 2020. As I've said often and will say again, that is a huge savings. Individuals will be saving

\$900 a year, and families will be saving \$1,800 a year.

I appreciate the member's question. That information, as we continue with the implementation of the employers health tax, which starts in January 2019, will be coming forth.

**Mr. Speaker:** The Leader of the Official Opposition on a supplemental.

**A. Wilkinson:** The pattern is now very clear. Whenever a question is asked about the payroll tax, the Finance Minister stands up and tells us about how families are going to save \$900. What is never made clear by the government is that they are simply implementing a plan that was initiated by this government, and they are going to take the credit for it. What is not clear, though...

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Members, we shall hear the question.

**A. Wilkinson:** ...is what the non-profits and charities of this province, thousands of which operate with large cohorts of employees, are going to do in the years to come. The Finance Minister mocks them. These are volunteers. These are people who try to make our communities better. These are the backbone of the volunteer sector in our economy, and what does the Finance Minister do? She blows them off. She tells them: "Oh, don't worry. You'll save money."

By no means will they save money, Finance Minister. When are you going to tell the non-profits and the charities of this province what your plans are? Surely you've figured that out in the last three months.

**Hon. C. James:** I'd say across to the member that in fact, we have been talking to not-for-profits. We've been meeting with not-for-profits. We've been meeting with charities. We've been meeting with school districts. We've been meeting with municipalities. I'm sure it's new to the other side to actually listen to British Columbians before you implement something. I understand that the other side wouldn't get that.

I think the real question here is: what would the other side do? Are you suggesting that we should leave a regressive tax in place that actually penalizes families and penalizes individuals, or would you rather cut health care funding?

We are doing the responsible thing. We are saving families and saving individuals dollars, and we are protecting health care programs and providing investments that people and seniors need in British Columbia.

**Mr. Speaker:** The Leader of the Official Opposition on a second supplemental.

**A. Wilkinson:** As we near the end of this session, the interview requests are coming in, and they're saying: "What's

the theme about this government? What's this government doing? How are they doing?" The theme is very obvious.

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Members.

**A. Wilkinson:** They're really good at raising taxes and really indecisive about governing. Everything goes out for study. "Let's implement the B.C. Liberal plan to eliminate MSP, and then we'll take the credit for it. Then let's turn around and tell the non-profits: 'Gee, we're just going to have to tell you to wait.'"

It's time to govern. The Finance Minister has to make a decision. You can't study things forever. When are you going to respond to Board Voice when they say that not knowing if the province will pay this extra mandated tax is going to impede their ability to enhance the well-being of British Columbians? When are you going to make a decision?

**Hon. C. James:** I think, in fact, that I've been spending most of question period since we started in February answering for decisions that we have made as government. I'd like to talk about governing. I'd like to talk about the investments that we have made as government in less than a year, or just a year now.

We, in fact, have introduced an affordable child care benefit that will benefit families and child care. We are investing more than \$6 billion in affordable housing for families, for seniors, for Indigenous people, for people in this province. We're increasing rental assistance so that people who are the working poor, who are struggling, will be able to benefit. Seniors will benefit with increases in SAFER. We're eliminating MSP premiums by January 1, 2020.

There is so much good news that I'll save some of it for future questions. But we are continuing to be proud of the affordability that we're providing for families, improving services and building a sustainable economy across this province.

[10:40 a.m.]

**S. Cadieux:** Perhaps the Finance Minister isn't aware that non-profits can't just add a tax to balance their budgets. They actually have to fundraise for every dollar that they spend on services in our communities.

Now, Board Voice wrote to the minister on March 7 to tell her: "The impact of the employer health tax is now." On May 12, Board Voice wrote again — this time a letter to the editor in the minister's local paper, trying to get her attention. Their message is the same as two months ago: "Her tax will hurt non-profits, and they need an answer now."

To the Finance Minister, when will she tell non-profits if they will be made exempt from the tax?

**Hon. C. James:** Again, there are many not-for-profits that, in fact, have been paying medical service premiums for their

employees. Those organizations are saving 50 percent as of January 1 because we have cut MSP by 50 percent. Those are savings for not-for-profits. We are reviewing all of those organizations, including not-for-profits and charities, taking a look at the savings from MSP, making those calculations. That is a normal part of the implementation. That information will be out shortly.

**Mr. Speaker:** The member for Surrey South on a supplemental.

**S. Cadieux:** Again, perhaps the Finance Minister doesn't know that non-profits can't save money this year and spend it next year. It doesn't work that way with their budgets.

This is what Board Voice said on May 12: "For a great number of non-profits, the new tax will add hundreds of..."

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Members.

**S. Cadieux:** I'll do that again, since the members weren't listening.

"For a great number of non-profits, a new tax will add hundreds of thousands of dollars to their expenses. The tax is scheduled to take effect less than eight months from now. It's urgent, in the short term, that the government commit to additional funding..."

Non-profits across the province have been begging for answers for months. When will the minister get to an answer?

**Hon. C. James:** I'm very well aware, as our government is, of not-for-profits and charities and the incredible work they do in this province. In fact, when we take a look at the supports that we're putting in place, many not-for-profits will see increases in supports for programs and services they provide. We are committed to improving services in British Columbia, and many of those are provided by not-for-profits.

Those groups and organizations will receive, as is the normal process for implementation, that information shortly.

CAMOSUN COLLEGE TECHNOLOGY  
ACCESS CENTRE AND FUNDING FOR  
INNOVATION PROGRAMS AT COLLEGES

**A. Olsen:** The Camosun Technology Access Centre, part of the Camosun innovates program, provides unique and essential services to students and businesses alike. For students, it's an opportunity to get hands-on experience tackling modern problems and developing the skills needed to succeed in the emerging economy. The problems are brought to students through partnerships with small businesses. The benefit to local companies is access to research and development that they would not otherwise be able to create them-

selves, because they're too small.

I've toured these facilities and know that they present an enormous opportunity for the students who attend them.

My question is for the Minister of Advanced Education. I know that we have taken great strides in creating new spaces for students at a number of technical institutes and universities, but the Camosun TAC centre is unique in our province. What are we doing provincially to support this groundbreaking program and the critical opportunities it offers its students?

**Hon. M. Mark:** We've been waiting for nine months to talk about post-secondary and how excited I am as the minister about what we're doing to invest in students accessing post-secondary education across beautiful British Columbia.

We have an amazing post-secondary ecosystem across B.C. I've heard great things about the Tech Access Centre that the member opposite is speaking about. It is truly the only one in B.C. out of 30 centres across Canada. I will be working with the member. I'm committed to working with the member to invest in tech. But if I may, I wouldn't mind just a moment to talk about how we are investing in tech.

[10:45 a.m.]

For the first time in a decade, 2,900 seats invested in tech across British Columbia. Camosun is going to benefit from that. They're going to get 40 new seats because of an injection, an investment of funding from our government of \$200,000 for students to study in web technology programming and engineering graphics. Those are 21st-century jobs that we're committed to students by investing in.

Today is the first day of the B.C. Tech Summit that we're co-hosting, as government. We're proud to be investing in 21st century jobs, new technology and tech all over B.C.

**Mr. Speaker:** Saanich North and the Islands on a supplemental.

**A. Olsen:** It's wonderful to hear about the investment of new seats. The Camosun innovates program receives Technology Access Centre grants, or TAC grant funding, from the federal government as part of the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council's college and community innovation program.

In 2017, it was, as the minister said, one of the only institutes in B.C. to win a CCI grant award. This continues a trend where B.C. colleges are receiving comparatively less in CCI grant funding than their counterparts in Ontario or Alberta. All of the murmuring — this is not new. This has been going on for quite some time.

Since the mid-2000s, Ontario has made a dedicated effort to ensure that its colleges are at the cutting edge of innovation, creating new policy and establishing new programs to facilitate partnerships between small business and colleges. This has put Ontario institutions in a strong position to win the competitive and peer-reviewed CCI awards. My question...

Interjection.

**A. Olsen:** Thank you.

...is once again for the Minister of Advanced Education. The Ontario plan is working. I'm wondering: what's ours?

**Hon. M. Mark:** I'm not going to take the time to talk about what the old government had every opportunity to do when it came to investing into tech, but I will spend all the time the member would like to talk about our record investments — of having, for the first time, a civil and environmental engineering degree program at the University of Northern British Columbia. The members opposite would love to take credit for all of the talk that they did over the last 16 years, but I'm so proud to be part of a government that acts.

Let's talk about the new Innovate B.C. that was announced by the Minister for Jobs, Trade and Technology — the new innovation commissioner. The old government had every chance. We're investing in new technology. We're investing in innovation. We're a government investing in people.

I want Camosun to shine, like all of the public post-secondary institutions in B.C., and they're going to do that with 21st-century training.

#### USE OF PRIVATE EMAIL ACCOUNT BY CITIZENS' SERVICES MINISTER

**J. Johal:** Yesterday the Minister of Citizen's Services couldn't get out of the message box, but there's been a full day to have the script updated, so I'm going to ask another question.

Can she explain why she told the media that only a single email on her private account was government business when she knew this wasn't the case?

**Hon. J. Sims:** I want to thank my colleague for that question. I really appreciate members of the opposition, now that they're sitting on that side of the House, finally taking an interest in FOI. We've been very clear, unlike the members opposite when they were in government, that this is an issue we are taking very, very seriously.

[10:50 a.m.]

I've answered this question in the House. The member opposite knows that I proactively ensured these records were part of the government record. That's why he has them.

**Mr. Speaker:** The member for Richmond-Queensborough on a supplemental.

**J. Johal:** I guess the script hadn't been updated. Here are the facts.

The emails sent and received by the minister on her personal email on February 16 and 17 were identified by professional civil servants as pertaining to government business. Her constituency staff emailed this policy advice not to the

minister's government email but to her private email account, as they were instructed to do so.

Why did the minister instruct her staff to routinely — routinely — send confidential government policy advice and recommendations to her private email?

**Hon. J. Sims:** Once again, I thank my colleague for the question. I've been very, very clear that the emails were transferred into government records, and that's why they have them. My staff also retained the records, and the members across the way have those in their hands because they are part of the government record. I addressed this issue proactively, unlike the members opposite.

Here's what the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner had to say about record practices while they were in government, following the triple-delete scandal. "It is difficult to overstate the seriousness of the problems that my office discovered in the course of this investigation and the resulting effect on the integrity of the access-to-information process in our province," said the then OIPC.

#### USE OF PRIVATE EMAIL BY CITIZENS' SERVICES MINISTER AND CONTRACTS FOR INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

**T. Redies:** We know that the Minister of Citizens' Services received personal correspondence on February 16, with policy advice relating to a multi-million-dollar IT contract. But what we don't know is what the minister sent to the unnamed third party in response.

Did the minister respond to the February 16 email through her government email, and will she table that response?

**Hon. J. Sims:** I want to thank my colleague for the question. Let me say that the emails were forwarded into government accounts, ensuring they are part of the government record. While I was on my personal device, I forwarded emails to my government account, to my staff on a government account, so they could be part of the government record.

But let's take a look at the record of the members opposite when it comes to good email practices. Following the triple-delete scandal, the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner had this to say. "In the course of this investigation, we uncovered negligent searches for records, a failure to keep adequate email records, a failure to document searches and the wilful destruction of records responsive to an access request. Taken together, these practices threaten the integrity of access to information in British Columbia." That is a quote.

This issue is one that we take seriously, and I'm happy to continue to answer questions in this House.

**Mr. Speaker:** The member for Surrey-White Rock on a supplemental.

**T. Redies:** It seems to be the height of hypocrisy for the minister to be lecturing us about our emails, given her track record in this particular area.

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Members, we shall hear the question. Thank you.

**T. Redies:** It seems logical that the minister would respond to correspondence that was addressed to her on her private email.

My question is, again: will she voluntarily release a reply to the February 16 email from whatever email account it was sent from?

[10:55 a.m.]

**Hon. J. Sims:** I thank my colleague for the question. The email became a part of government records because it was sent into a government account. That was available to my colleagues across the way because they got it from the government records through an FOI request.

But let me say that it really, really does seem hypocritical to hear my colleagues talking about emails and things. When they were in government, they had a history of triple delete and “Win at all costs.”

Once again, those emails were transferred, as per the requirements, into government emails, and that’s why those colleagues have them.

**P. Milobar:** Let’s be clear for the minister. The reason that we keep asking for the reply email is because it has not shown up in any FOIs. Therefore, the natural assumption is that it’s yet buried in her private email accounts.

Yesterday the Minister of Citizens’ Services did not address questions related to her responsibilities for government procurement. Her private correspondence included policy advice on multi-million-dollar IT contracts.

Did the minister inform the project board or a fairness adviser of her communications with the third party related to the contracts?

**Hon. J. Sims:** I want to thank my colleague for that question as well. An email came into a non-government account. That email, following the processes that we have, was sent forward to staff, as would be appropriate in this case. It was an email of an article that was in a newspaper, and it was sent forward....

Interjections.

**Hon. J. Sims:** Let me....

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Members. Members, we shall hear the

response.

**Hon. J. Sims:** As I have said previously, the emails, as per policy, were transferred into government emails and dealt with appropriately.

**Mr. Speaker:** The member for Kamloops–North Thompson on a supplemental.

**P. Milobar:** Well, imagine how refreshing it would be if the minister would take responsibility for her own actions, instead of trying to blame things that happened years ago.

Fairness is a legal obligation in any procurement process. The minister’s use of personal email to send and receive policy advice or recommendations related to IT contracts is incredibly reckless.

Has the minister reported the advice she received on her private email, about the contract, to the project board or the fairness adviser?

**Hon. J. Sims:** I want to thank the member for the question as well. Let me assure the members across the way that we take this issue very, very seriously. I’ve answered this question in the House. The member opposite knows that I transferred those emails into government records, and that’s why they have them.

But let me just read out a quote from the Privacy Commissioner about their practices. “In the course of this investigation, we uncovered negligent searches for records, a failure to keep email records, a failure to document searches, and the wilful destruction of records responsive to an access request. Taken together, these practices threaten the integrity of access to information in British Columbia.”

This is an issue that we take very seriously. I will continue to answer questions, so bring them on.

[11:00 a.m.]

#### USE OF EMAIL BY ADVANCED EDUCATION MINISTER

**M. Stilwell:** My question is for the Minister of Advanced Education, Skills and Training. Did the minister send any emails, text messages, BlackBerry messages, Slack messages or WhatsApp messages during the month of February?

**Hon. M. Mark:** I don’t have Slack. I don’t have WhatsApp. I have Twitter. I have Outlook. I don’t have a BlackBerry.

Interjections.

**Hon. M. Mark:** I have an Outlook email, yes. Sorry. How many emails? I have a Nisga’a warrior princess email. I get Gmail.

**Mr. Speaker:** The member for Parksville-Qualicum on a supplemental.

**M. Stilwell:** So the minister acknowledges that she has email and she has text messages. However, shockingly, it seems that the minister....

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Members. Members, we need to hear the question.

**M. Stilwell:** Shockingly, it seems that the minister didn't use her government phone at all. A request was made for all of the minister's sent messages during the month of February.

The response we received was that a thorough search was conducted, but no records could be found — not one. Every single message had been deleted.

Did the minister actually not send anything worth retaining?

**Hon. M. Mark:** I am proud to stand in these chambers as the Minister for Advanced Education, Skills and Training, investing in public education, governing for the province.

I do not do business on Post-It Notes. I work with my team. I was fully aware and briefed when we formed government on the FOI laws and expectations as cabinet. I take the role seriously.

For members opposite who are familiar with working with Outlook, you are able to create folders. I have sent, inbox and drafts. I can give you a full briefing on how to use Outlook. I can explain to you that I have a whole bunch of drop-down folders. If you want any questions on housing, there's a drop-down folder there. I file the emails that come to my attention.

Thank you for the question from the member opposite.

**Mr. Speaker:** I'm going to allow the question, and that is the member for Cariboo North.

#### USE OF EMAIL BY PREMIER'S OFFICE STAFF

**C. Oakes:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

The Premier's office staff have routinely deleted every single email that they've sent. This practice, we now know, has continued to at least January. Yesterday the Premier stated: "Those records do exist on servers, if the members want to look for them."

Can the Minister of Citizens' Services explain why, then, if these records do exist as the Premier said, that they were not produced in a response to the freedom-of-information request?

**Hon. C. James:** As the Premier has said, government and staff have been directed to manage records appropriately, consistent with all of the recommendations of the Information and Privacy Commissioner. We believe it's important

that best rules and practices are followed, and that's what our government is doing.

[End of question period.]

#### Tabling Documents

**Mr. Speaker:** I have the honour to present a report intitled *Working Within the Rules: Supporting Employment for Income Assistance Recipients* from the Office of the Ombudsperson.

#### Orders of the Day

**Hon. M. Farnworth:** In this chamber, I call second reading on Bill 33, the South Coast British Columbia Transportation Authority Amendment Act.

In the Douglas Fir Room, I call continued debate on the estimates of the Ministry of Health.

[11:05 a.m.]

In Section C, the Birch Room, I call committee on Bill 19, the Protected Areas of British Columbia Amendment Act.

**C. Oakes:** I seek leave to make an introduction.

Leave granted.

#### Introductions by Members

**C. Oakes:** I see that we are joined today by some lovely guests that I met last night. They are from the great state of Hawaii, and they're here on a trip travelling across British Columbia. Would the House please help me welcome my friends from the state of Hawaii, and may you have a beautiful trip across British Columbia.

[L. Reid in the chair.]

#### Second Reading of Bills

##### BILL 33 — SOUTH COAST BRITISH COLUMBIA TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY AMENDMENT ACT, 2018

**Hon. S. Robinson:** I move that Bill 33, South Coast British Columbia Transportation Authority Amendment Act, be now read a second time.

I'm pleased to be introducing this important piece of legislation. This bill will provide TransLink with a new authority to impose and collect development cost charges in TransLink's transportation service regions, and it will support the agency's ability to make important investments in the expansion of the regional transportation system.

These investments are needed to address growing congestion in Metro Vancouver and will help people spend less time stuck in traffic. It will provide them with the opportu-



ity to have more time with their friends and with their family, because that's what people want.

This legislation provides the authority for a new development cost charge and will help to ensure that the new growth that benefits from a healthy transportation system is paying its fair share. The proposed amendments for the new DCC authority are modelled on the existing framework that is in place for local governments. This is a system that is tested and well understood by local governments. It's similar to the existing authority for local governments, and this legislation will give TransLink the authority to set DCC rates by bylaw.

[11:10 a.m.]

It provides for the DCC to be collected and remitted within TransLink's transportation service region by local governments or the responsible jurisdiction. TransLink will be able to use these funds for the capital costs of expanding its regional transportation system, and it will have the authority to vary rates by different zones, uses and by different sizes or numbers of lots or units in a development.

TransLink will be able to apply DCC revenues to a range of critical expansion projects, including rapid transit lines and stations, bus depots, SeaBus and the expansion of any road and bridge infrastructure that TransLink owns, including pedestrian and cycling infrastructure.

Now, a number of accountability and transparency provisions have also been built into the structure of the proposed DCC legislation. For example, the DCC bylaw must be approved by the provincial inspector of municipalities. This will ensure an opportunity for oversight on important matters, including whether meaningful and informed consultative input has occurred on proposed bylaws.

In line with this government's commitment to transparency, the legislation will also require TransLink to list the revenue it anticipates it will collect from DCCs for each year of the plan in its investment plan, and TransLink will be required to publicly report on its DCCs as part of its annual reporting process. These measures will ensure that rates are fair and equitable and that they are set and maintained openly and transparently.

As we all know, housing affordability is a significant concern here in British Columbia, and this crisis has had a significant impact on Metro Vancouver. That is why it's important that any new charges levied on housing do not have negative effects or negative impacts on increasing the supply of housing that people can afford. To this end, there are several provisions within the legislation that will help ensure that housing affordability objectives are met.

First, the inspector's bylaw approval role gives oversight over whether consideration has been given to the potential for rates to deter development or discourage the construction of reasonably priced housing. The legislation also permits TransLink to provide waivers and reductions to DCC amounts for developments that provide affordable rental housing.

Looking towards implementation, this authority provides for a 12-month protection window from the new DCC rates

for those projects that are in stream — in-stream development applications. This new authority is a critical element of a funding strategy for TransLink and will support the agency in making important investments in Metro Vancouver's transportation system while not impacting housing affordability in the region.

I hope that everyone here in this chamber joins me in support of Bill 33. I look forward to hearing the discussion.

**T. Stone:** I am pleased to rise and speak to Bill 33, the South Coast B.C. Transportation Authority Amendment Act. I want to start off by first making very, very clear for the record that I am very proud, we are very proud on the official opposition side, of what we believe is a very strong record on transit investments in Metro Vancouver and, indeed, across British Columbia.

Our former government was the first government in the country to sign a bilateral agreement with the federal government to pave the way for the most significant injection of federal investment in transit in British Columbia. I was fortunate to be the minister responsible at the time that we got that deal done. Of course, over our last term, we were able to work with the Mayors Council to assist them in the development of a very good plan.

The mayors have put some exceptional work on the table and have come up with a plan for transit investment across Metro Vancouver. Phase 1 was fully funded as per all of the partner contributions. Phase 2 is now the focus of that expansion plan.

[11:15 a.m.]

We do know that the Canada Line, the Evergreen Line and the significant improvements in service levels on SkyTrain generally across the Lower Mainland have been very, very important and that more is needed to address and deal with the growth that the region is seeing.

Overall, in our last budget, we provided \$3.2 billion over three years for continued transportation investments. When you add in federal contributions over that time period, it works out to about \$4.6 billion. So I'm very, very proud of the work that we did when we were in government and very supportive of the Mayors Council, in working with TransLink, which has come up with their current plan, which will see about \$890 million in service upgrades, bus service upgrades, across the region.

That will provide for an 8 percent increase. There will be a 7 percent increase in handyDART service levels across the region — that's very good — and \$495 million more for enhanced SkyTrain service. There are about 100-plus new SkyTrain cars that are on their way that will help upgrade the system and complement that added capacity.

Of course, there are the major rapid transit expansions: the Broadway line in Vancouver and the Surrey L-line, as well as, in the longer-term plan, likely SkyTrain service from Surrey centre out to Langley. That's currently a \$7.3 billion plan. Again, it's very reflective of some exceptional work that the mayors have done.

In terms of Bill 33, at the request of the Mayors Council, this legislation gives authority to TransLink to set and levy development cost charges, DCCs, on new construction in Metro Vancouver to, in part, fund the local portion of the mayors' ten-year TransLink plan. The other funding measures at the local level include, I believe, a 2 percent transit fare increase that kicks in, in 2020, an increase in the sales tax on off-site parking and a modest property tax increase as well.

Now, when TransLink and the Mayors Council, a couple of years ago, were doing some work on potential funding sources and the development cost charge, the DCC piece was one of many potential revenue sources for consideration. TransLink estimated that this charge would likely be in the neighbourhood of \$300 to \$600 per unit, depending on the specifics that would be determined later, if that revenue measure was pursued.

We now learn that this per-unit development cost charge could be more realistically in the neighbourhood of \$1,200 to, potentially, up to almost \$3,000 per unit of new residential housing in the Metro Vancouver region. We understand that for commercial construction, commercial development, DCC would likely be assessed in the range of 50 cents to a buck 25 per square foot. And for industrial development, the charge would likely be in the range of 40 cents per square foot.

I do want to acknowledge that, as I say all of that, I'm foreshadowing our main concern with this piece of legislation. That is the potential for these added costs to actually work against the government's initiatives, initiatives that we also believe are very important, and that is to address the housing affordability situation across Metro Vancouver. I'll go into that in a bit more detail in a few moments.

But I do want to acknowledge that this bill does provide for some exemptions — areas or examples of where the charges would not apply. The DCC would not apply to developments with less than four units or where units are smaller than 29 metres. DCCs would not apply to the construction, alteration or extension of a building that will be exempt from taxation, such as a place of public worship. And DCCs will not apply if the work doesn't exceed \$50,000 in total value.

[11:20 a.m.]

The bill would also set rules for where the development cost charge can be waived or reduced, but these can all be later amended in regulation as well. At the moment, what's hard-coded in the act is that the DCC can be waived or reduced in the case of not-for-profit rental housing, for-profit affordable rental housing, subdivisions with low greenhouse gas emissions and developments with low environmental impacts.

The bill also sets out that in setting the development cost charge, TransLink must take a number of items into consideration: future land developments, the phasing out of work and services, how to achieve low environmental impact, whether charges will be excessive in relation to capital costs of the eligible project, whether the charges

will deter development, whether the charges will discourage affordable housing or discourage that desire for low environmental impact.

Much of that is fairly subjective and will be left up to an independent inspector in consultation with TransLink. I have some concerns about that as well.

There are some accountability and transparency provisions built in, as the minister mentioned previously. There is a requirement for TransLink to list the revenue it anticipates it will collect from development cost charges for each year of its investment plan.

There is a requirement for TransLink to publicly report on its development cost charges as part of its annual reporting process. That's good.

As well, in setting up these development cost charges, TransLink must take into account some very specific items, such as or including future land use patterns and development; phasing of works and services; the environmental impact, as I mentioned earlier; the impacts, potentially, on development and affordability; and the development of a certain type of housing, as I mentioned previously.

TransLink must also detail for each local government in Metro and make available to the public on request.... I do have a problem with this. It should just be made public; the public should not have to request it.

TransLink must detail for each local government and make available to the public on request the considerations, information and calculations used to determine the development cost charges — except for information respecting the contemplated acquisition costs of specific properties. Again, why this information just wouldn't be made available to the public in a gesture of transparency is beyond me.

Now let me focus more on our concerns with this bill. As I said a moment ago, our main concern is the reality that we're all concerned about: housing affordability in Metro Vancouver. It is a well-understood fact that development cost charges add a significant burden to the cost of construction of residential housing in Metro Vancouver. By many accounts, development cost charge levels in Metro Vancouver are very, very high.

Again so that we're clear on what there is today, development cost charges are levied by municipal governments to cover the costs of growth typically associated with the costs of roads, water and sewer networks, and so forth. But there are also many other charges that are layered on top of residential construction in this province and by many local governments in Metro Vancouver.

Community amenity contribution fees are quite prevalent and have been steadily increasing. Public art fees. The myriad of permit requirements, with the associated costs and inspection fees. These are all layered onto the costs of construction of residential housing in Metro Vancouver.

The Urban Development Institute in Vancouver estimates that in 2008, the average 900-square-foot home in Vancouver had a total cumulative cost of taxes and fees associated with construction of that unit — the total cost of fees and

charges — of \$43,000, whereas ten years later, the total cost of all of those fees and charges — community amenity fees, art fees, and so forth — is over \$340,000 per unit.

[11:25 a.m.]

That's the cost of construction today. That doesn't include layering on top of the existing reality these new TransLink development cost charges.

Interesting timing. Just today the C.D. Howe Institute released a report called *Through the Roof: The High Cost of Barriers to Building New Housing in Canadian Municipalities*. It comes to the conclusion that excessive regulations and costs are choking the supply of new housing in Metro Vancouver. One of the co-authors said: "You look at what the price of housing is, and you compare it to what it actually costs to build a house. When there are great big gaps between what it costs and what people end up paying, that tells me there is some pretty serious market dysfunction."

There is a huge gap that this report identifies, a huge gap between the cost of building new housing and its market price, with extra costs on new housing ranging from — this is what the C.D. Howe Institute found — an average total, of these costs, of \$229,000 in the eight most restrictive cities across Canada. So \$229,000 is the total cost in new units of residential construction across those eight restrictive cities.

The total cost in Vancouver is estimated to be just north of \$600,000 per unit for those fees — the cumulative impact of those fees. Again, that is before we layer onto the cost of construction these additional development cost charges, these TransLink DCCs, which we're now learning, again, could be in the range of, on the lower end, \$1,200 per unit to, potentially, upwards of \$3,000 per unit.

The cost of construction is already very high, and it's in large part because of that cumulative impact of the fees and the charges that are there today. I would be remiss if I didn't also acknowledge that, yes, there's a decreasing supply of available land. Land acquisition costs are increasing, and that's driving some of this escalation in costs. So are strict zoning regulations at the local level, which is why we've called for work to be done, in partnership with local governments, on that point as well.

I've said many times, in and outside of this House, that it continues to baffle me as to why the focus on the part of the current government continues to be almost exclusively on addressing the housing affordability crisis with measures on the demand side as opposed to the supply side of the equation.

We've got the foreign buyer tax that was increased and more broadly applied across the province. There's a speculation tax. There are the federal mortgage rules, the tightening of those federal mortgage rules. These are all playing their part, but they're all on the demand side. We need to focus on supply. I will say it again: we need to focus on supply. One of the flaws of this legislation is that there's no focus on densification along the transit lines.

We need to also work with local governments to speed up the approvals process. I and a number of other members of

this House have talked about the huge backlog that exists at the local level: 120,000 units of residential construction is sitting in local government offices awaiting approval. The time to approve those permits can take five to six to seven years, depending on the municipality. That's not acceptable.

We've said: "Let's work in partnership, in collaboration with local government, to figure out what those tools are that the province could put on the table to incent local governments to speed up the approval process." Perhaps it's some additional short-term resources to add some additional capacity inside a local government, to speed up those approvals. But let's get on with approving those tens of thousands of units of residential market supply, residential housing units, that the private sector wants to build, and they want to start building tomorrow.

[11:30 a.m.]

I mentioned densification a moment ago. The bill does not in any way tie these fees to densification along the transit lines. There should be a direct correlation or a linkage through the charging of any fees, such as are proposed in this bill, and the type of densification that we want to see around key transit hubs.

We're also very concerned about the fact that this legislation provides for a blanket development cost charge across the entire Metro Van region. This is not just a proposed fee, a proposed DCC, within a certain distance of key transit hubs or along the key transit corridors. As we read this legislation, this is a proposal on the table that would impose this development cost charge on all new construction, new development — residential, commercial, industrial — across the entire region, even if you're tens of kilometres away from a transit hub.

Talk to folks in Surrey — as I have at great length in recent weeks and, certainly, since the introduction of this bill — and folks are rolling their eyes once again. It's another opportunity here, in this legislation, for Surrey to step up, through construction costs that are incurred in one of the fastest-growing municipalities in British Columbia and Canada, to cover the costs of transit improvements that the folks in Surrey deem to be taking place largely elsewhere.

Now, a lot of that is addressed in the mayors' ten-year plan. There's significant transit investment coming to Surrey, and again, I'm very proud to have done a lot of work on that.

But why doesn't this legislation restrict where these DCCs are applicable, both out of an interest of fairness and also out of an interest of really driving the densification that's required in those transit hubs and those key transportation corridors? That's another major, major flaw of this proposed piece of legislation.

We're always concerned — it's our role to hold the government accountable, ask these questions and put these issues on the table — about a belief that some have that TransLink has an insatiable appetite for new revenue.

The original proposed development cost charges plan that TransLink had put on the table was originally proposed to raise \$20 million per year. The Urban Development Institute

actually advised the current government that they would prefer to see the new TransLink DCC charge not go ahead but that if it does go ahead, there should be a cap of some sort. UDI suggested \$20 million per year.

We now learn that this DCC is anticipated to generate upwards of \$29 million per year, and there are no controls in this piece of legislation that make it difficult for TransLink and the current government to continue to ratchet up those development cost charges.

Now, I went and looked at development cost charges, community amenity fees and art fees. As I mentioned, there are all kinds, a million different names for them, in different municipalities around Metro Vancouver. You have to really look hard to try to find an example of a municipality that implemented, say, a community amenity charge at a certain level and actually began to ratchet it back at some point.

All I can find are examples of these kinds of charges that, once they're put in place, are almost never repealed. They're almost never reduced, but they always increase. I'm worried about that, because this is, essentially, downloading a cost onto homeowners. This is making housing less affordable to build and less affordable to purchase in Metro Vancouver.

TransLink gets 17 cents a litre as it is. They're going to modestly increase property taxes. There will be a 2 percent increase of fares at the transit farebox. There will be the increased sales tax for off-street parking. If this bill goes through, as I'm sure it will — with the government supported by the Greens, they will push this through — TransLink will have a development cost charge.

[11:35 a.m.]

I'm very concerned about where the level of those charges is today and where they may go in the years ahead. We know how this government loves to increase taxes. I don't see this government standing up to TransLink in the years ahead and saying: "No. You know what? We're going to say no to a further increase in these DCCs." I just don't see that happening. I hope I'm wrong.

The other context here is that the overall cost.... When I say I'm worried about TransLink's appetite for revenue, it's because I understand how and I'm paying close attention to how the costs are escalating, on the major rapid transit projects in particular.

You know, it wasn't that long ago that the total cost of the three major rapid transit lines was \$6.3 billion. It was only about four years ago. Just weeks ago the TransLink CEO, Kevin Desmond, released the new plan for phase 2 of these transit investments, and the total cost is now estimated to be \$7.3 billion.

The Broadway line cost has escalated to \$3 billion. That's up 20 percent since 2015. The Surrey L-line is now estimated to cost \$1.65 billion. That's up considerably. And the proposed rapid transit to Langley is now going to cost \$2.83 billion.

Where it gets really worrisome is when you hear a comment like was made publicly by the TransLink CEO, who, by the way, I have tremendous respect for. I think he's doing a

very good job with this organization. It's not an easy job. He's doing a good job.

But recently he was asked: "What's your level of confidence with these costs, considering they've gone up \$1 billion in the last couple of years?" And his exact quote was: "By the time we go through the procurement process, the numbers could change again."

I would suggest they're probably going to change again. The land acquisition costs are continuing to escalate. There is cost inflation in the construction industry. The Canadian dollar, if it weakens any further.... These are all external pressures.

What's going to happen, if the cost of these projects continues to escalate, is TransLink's going to have to come back to the well again, and the well is the taxpayer. And they now will be provided, through this legislation, a very simple, straightforward, easy-to-use tool — this development cost charge tool — to raise the revenue that they need to meet the region's component of the funding for these projects. I think we should all be very worried about that.

The last point I'll touch on briefly is this. Again, it's a pattern that we've seen in virtually every piece of legislation that this government has introduced, and that is: to provide for significant details of a particular piece of legislation to be determined at a later date through regulation. This bill is no different.

I would be remiss if I did not remind the members opposite of the years — certainly the four years that I was the Minister of Transportation and would bring bills into the House — of howls of outrage that the members opposite would throw onto the floor in this chamber at the inclusion, in a bill, of the right of details to be determined by order-in-council at a later date.

[11:40 a.m.]

Now, it's one thing if it's housekeeping details, but there are some pretty significant components of this bill, this issue relating to development cost charges, that the minister can implement and change and remove and alter and expand and reduce at a whim through order-in-council. We won't know what those details are. We'll ask some questions in committee stage of the bill, of course, but I point out the hypocrisy here in pushing significant details of this bill into regulation.

At the end of the day, the official opposition is not going to support this bill. We're very supportive of transit investments and continued transit investments in the region. We're equally supportive of ensuring that all that can be done is being done to make housing more affordable in Metro Vancouver.

This bill and its imposition of thousands of dollars of development cost charges per unit of residential housing will not make housing more affordable in Metro Vancouver. It will not. It's sad to say, but this bill provides for yet another NDP tax that will be layered on the backs of homeowners, who are already struggling under the weight of significant tax increases in other areas, by this government to this date.

We will not be supporting this bill. We will be canvassing it thoroughly in committee and certainly hope to get some answers from the minister to the questions that I've posed here today.

**A. Olsen:** It's an honour to stand today and speak to Bill 33. It seems like a lot of sitting and standing going on this week. I spoke to a number of bills.

This bill is an important one, as we continue the discussion in our communities and in the various regions in our province about transportation, the impact that transportation has on the overall family budget, on the overall budget of the province and, as well, the impact that it has on the mental health and well-being of our people and our families.

I don't think that we have had, as part of the discussion of community development, a loud enough conversation or a strong enough conversation about the impact that transportation and transportation planning has on the health and well-being of citizens, constituents and on families. There is, as we know, a social cost to congestion, as was mentioned by the previous speaker.

I would also like to emphasize that the fact remains, when you're locked up in a car either going to or from work or to and from your daily activities, that there is an increasing level of frustration, increasing levels of stress. The last thing that I want to be doing after a long day here in the Legislature is to be spending time in the vehicle, locked up in my vehicle. My preference, of course, would be with my son, as he plays — he's got a baseball practice tonight — or hanging out with my daughter or going off to an event in our community. As we get locked in congestion, the stress levels rise and it decreases the quality of life.

Of course, there's a cost to the environment, the congestion on the environment, to damaging ecosystems, to increasing greenhouse gas emissions. The next bill, Bill 34, which will be debated in this very chamber, is going to be about setting greenhouse gas reduction targets. Of course, we know that huge percentages, up towards 40 percent, of the greenhouse gas emissions in our society are created by transportation. Finding ways to decrease greenhouse gas emissions by providing other options — mass transit options — in our communities will go a long way to us hitting the targets that we are going to set by the end of this spring session.

I think that it's really important to point out that we have had a generation or two of what I would classify as poor planning — poor planning in the sense that we've disassociated the construction of our residential and commercial infrastructure from the infrastructure required to transport people.

[11:45 a.m.]

We'd often say, when I was a councillor in the district of Central Saanich, that the roads are what the economy rode on. We provided those roads and provided them connected to a provincial network, no question. I think that it's important for us to strongly connect the development

of our communities, the development of residential and commercial infrastructure buildings for people to live and work in, with really modern and state-of-the-art transportation networks.

When we don't have those networks.... I think we see right here in the capital region, where we've got one part of the region who will boldly stand and proclaim, with great verbosity, the housing developments that they're creating and the solutions that they're creating for housing, while on the other hand, they diminish the challenges that they're creating with transportation.

Having differing levels of government responsible for that, it's easy for a local government to approve housing developments. As was pointed out, the supply side of the housing affordability equation always keeps being talked about and for good reason. We have to continue to provide supply, but we also have to do it with care and attention. We have to make sure that, as we're building communities, we're also extending the types of transportation networks that are going to allow those people a quality of life that's going to be worth living in.

We don't want to be jamming people into neighbourhoods just for the sake of driving housing costs down, while increasing transportation costs. That makes no sense. We often disassociate the cost.... We talk about housing affordability. The affordability of life also includes transportation costs.

While we hear the former Minister of Transportation talk about the grand investments that were made in transportation, I would think that it's important to point out that there was considerable concern from the many people that I've talked to in and around the transportation field, my colleagues at the local government level — not only in Metro Vancouver but, as well, in the capital region, the Cowichan Valley regional district in Cowichan Valley as well in other parts — that the former government did not make the kinds of investments that were needed in mass transit.

We'd talk about lots of bridge building, building big, wide bridges for single-occupant vehicles to travel back and forth on. We don't talk enough about the kinds of investments in green and clean mass transit, moving people in and around our communities that could have been made.

In fact, arguably, it could have been said that the fight that happened, the referendum that happened in Metro Vancouver around TransLink and the insatiable desires the former minister talked about, could have gone a long way to the seat count in the last election, as we see the former government's seat count strongly diminished in the Lower Mainland. That's what happens when you fight people in their transportation and the feelings that they have around the increasing stress levels.

I think that it's important that the current government look at that very closely in making sure that we're providing people an ability to be transported around their regions, around their communities and neighbourhoods.

I think we often get into a discussion about transportation

infrastructure and transportation funding. We have to recognize that you have to invest in transportation ahead of people utilizing transportation. It may seem like a rather simple equation, but you can't put the wagon before the horse on this. You have to build the infrastructure for people to be able to utilize it.

These investments in transportation are often long-term investments, ones in which governments that are focused solely on a four-year plan of getting re-elected and continuing to get re-elected term after term don't focus on the long-term investments and the long-term benefits of transit and transportation.

Having a much longer-term plan, not only for the Lower Mainland but, as well, for the capital region and the Cowichan Valley regional district, who have all seen cuts in their transportation budget, their transit budgets.... Making those investments now will not only increase the quality of life in the short term, but also will help the community development over the long term.

[11:50 a.m.]

Through Bill 33, as has been pointed out on several occasions but I'll reiterate.... This allows TransLink — it's focused on Metro Vancouver — to apply a DCC, a development cost charge, something that those of us who have been in local government are quite familiar with. These are cost charges that are applied directly to new development. This allows for the community to put in certain amenities. They're very strictly focused towards specific amenities. In this case, through Bill 33, we're enabling Metro Vancouver and TransLink to expend and to charge a DCC on new development so that it can be targeted towards funding.

This was part of the commitment that the government made to fund 40 percent of the projects that the former minister, now in the official opposition, was talking about. It allows for some stable source of funding to allow for the construction of much-needed transportation, mass transit, infrastructure. It also allows for municipalities and local governments to waive or reduce the fees should there be an affordable housing component in this.

What was interesting from the member in the official opposition who just spoke was that the main concern was around housing affordability. I think that everything, from the backlog that was talked about when it comes to supply.... Every single aspect of development, the longer it takes, clearly, the more costs that the developer must hold or must incur. Of course, developers then pass that along to the end-user. The same thing could be said, of course, for adding a charge for transportation.

It is also important to recognize that the overall affordability for people in our society includes transportation costs. If we can be providing transportation options that will allow a family to go from a two-car family, as an example, to a one-car family — if we're providing that mass transit or the transportation infrastructure for them to transition out of their vehicle — then we can also be decreasing the costs.

I think that it's very easy to simplify these arguments in

here and make things appear to be the way that they're not, actually. It's important that when we have this discussion that we maintain the complexity within it. These are not easy conversations to be having. It's not easy to be making a decision to invest in transportation infrastructure that's going to not only just benefit us in the short term but also benefit over the long term. It's not easy to see that amortization in a short period of time.

It's important for us to be having the complex conversations and not just drawing this down to the simplest terms and turning it into a purely emotional dollar-and-cents argument. We have to be talking about all of the benefits that transportation investments make and have for our families and for our communities in terms of quality of life.

Finally, I would just like to say that this is a bill that we, as a Green caucus, look at and are very supportive of. We'll be supporting the government to move in this way. I think that it is important for us to ask some questions in the committee stage. We will be doing that. I'll listen with great interest to the member of the official opposition, the questions that he asks as well, in an effort to improve this bill so that we can get the funding necessary to build the infrastructure we need to provide for our citizens.

I think that it's important that we make these investments because they are, in fact, generational investments. They are ones that are not only going to improve our quality of life now, but they will improve the quality of life for our kids and our grandkids. If we make the right decisions and we connect that to the planning arm of the municipalities, then we can make sure that our communities are moving much more smoothly than they are now. We see gridlock happening in our communities, and it is largely because we've disassociated the community development and the transportation development pieces.

I see the light come on. I'll take my seat.

**Deputy Speaker:** Hon. Member, noting the hour, if you'd be so kind as to move adjournment of the debate.

**A. Olsen:** This will be the first time I've had the opportunity to move adjournment of the debate. I don't even need to reserve my right, because I'm done. I thank you very much for the opportunity to speak.

A. Olsen moved adjournment of debate.

Motion approved.

[11:55 a.m.]

### Report and Third Reading of Bills

#### BILL 19 — PROTECTED AREAS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA AMENDMENT ACT, 2018

Bill 19, Protected Areas of British Columbia Amendment Act, 2018, reported complete without amendment, read a

third time and passed.

[Mr. Speaker in the chair.]

Committee of Supply (Section A), having reported progress, was granted leave to sit again.

Hon. S. Simpson moved adjournment of the House.

Motion approved.

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

The House adjourned at 11:56 a.m.

### Proceedings in the Douglas Fir Room

#### Committee of Supply

ESTIMATES: MINISTRY OF HEALTH  
(continued)

The House in Committee of Supply (Section A); B. Ma in the chair.

The committee met at 11:10 a.m.

On Vote 30: ministry operations, \$19,606,664,000  
(continued).

**J. Thornthwaite:** I just have one question to the minister as a follow-up to my question yesterday that actually wasn't answered. So I'm going to re-ask my question with regards to the therapeutics initiative. Who are the 65 experts on the therapeutics initiative, and what specialties do they represent? Are there any people, experts, on the therapeutics initiative that have any expertise in psychiatry?

**Hon. A. Dix:** The member has, I think, misunderstood something. I'll try and take her through it. She's referring to a therapeutics initiative letter. A draft of all those letters is sent out to professionals for comment.

In the case of letter No. 95, which is in question, that went out to 65 professionals for feedback. That included several psychiatrists, both local and international. So that feedback informs the letter that's finally produced.

The purpose of the letters generally is to inform both family practice doctors and others as to the most recent information and to provide advice around issues of prescribing. That's what happened here. The 65 people it's sent out to are to provide advice back to the therapeutics initiative before the letter is finalized and sent out to doctors and others in the province.

**R. Sultan:** I would like to begin by thanking the Ministry of Health for the significant progress they have achieved with respect to the modernization and expansion of the Lions Gate Hospital campus of Vancouver Coastal Authority.

It's my understanding that the mobilization of the strategically vital energy plant has broken ground or is about to break ground on the North Vancouver campus, on a site that's already been boarded off, ready to go. Equipment, in fact, has already been mobilized. I saw it myself a few weeks ago.

The schedule, as I understand it, is for completion of the new energy plant by late 2019. That's the information I've received. Approximately \$25 million was committed by the government for the project. Could the minister indicate whether my information is generally correct?

**Hon. A. Dix:** Yes.

[11:15 a.m.]

**R. Sultan:** Thank you to the minister.

In February 2017, the Ministry of Health announced its approval of a concept plan for a new acute care facility at Lions Gate Hospital. This announcement was made alongside the Lions Gate Hospital Foundation's commitment to raise \$100 million from the community for the proposed new facility.

The North Shore community, acutely aware that a new facility is long overdue, has once again rallied behind its hospital foundation. In just over one year, more than \$86 million has been raised from over 4,700 citizens. In other words, they're \$3 million and change shy of attaining their goal, and through the hard work of chair Pierre Lebel and foundation CEO Judith Savage, I'm very confident that the \$100 million promise will be fulfilled.

To the hon. Minister of Health: I understand the business case was submitted to your ministry two months ago or so. The next step is to approve the necessary procurement specifications so that the design bid aspects of a contract could begin to be quantified. There's an awful lot of calculating and estimating, and so on and so forth which has to be done before bids can be received, clearly, and this itself is about an 18-month process. So even if we got the go-ahead from the ministry with respect to the project itself, construction is hardly imminent.

Can the minister please give some indication of when the government will approve or, in fact, will approve the business case and when this good news can be relayed to the North Shore community so that the bid specification work can begin?

**Hon. A. Dix:** I think the answer is soon. The business case was provided recently. And what we've been trying to do in the Ministry of Health is reduce the time that we move from concept plan to concept plan approval, from business plan to business plan approval, unless there would be some reason to change that.

This project, I think, represents.... I think it's really of interest, because I meet regularly on these issues with the Chair, the member for North Vancouver–Lonsdale, as well, who's a strong advocate, as the member is, for the hospital — as really the whole North Shore community is.

I think this is a remarkable and unusual project. The member will know that many health care projects of this size and scope go through the Treasury Board process. In this case, it's the combination of the extraordinary commitment.... I think we can speak a little bit about Paul Myers and his family and all they've contributed to this project and so much else. That's just an extraordinary story.

Because of this, the amount contributed by the local community and the fact that the remaining money is from Vancouver Coastal Health and has come from disposition of assets, things are very much in line to move forward. We're hoping to move expeditiously in our review of the business plan, and we're hopeful for good news for people on the North Shore.

This is a long-overdue project. As was raised earlier in estimates, and the member will know this, we had an extensive debate around another issue that my colleague from North Vancouver–Lonsdale has been raising with me regularly. The member for Coquitlam–Burke Mountain raised it in estimates around Evergreen, which is obviously connected on site. That's a separate set of questions.

But on this project, there's enormous community support and approval. I just can't praise the foundation enough for their work, and I think their work reflects the extraordinary work of hospital foundations all over the province in making projects happen. It's especially important in Metro Vancouver, where, as the member will know, there's no local contribution to major capital projects.

**R. Sultan:** Thank you to the minister for that very encouraging response. And yes, indeed, the member for North Vancouver–Lonsdale, embedded in the government as she is, has certainly helped, shall we say, grease the skids on this project, one would expect, and things seem to be pretty much heading for the green light. I also would like to repeat the minister's praise of the generosity of Paul Myers, a union contractor for many years who took \$25 million out of his own pocket and contributed to all of us on the North Shore.

[11:20 a.m.]

Turning now to another major ministry project, can the minister give a broad-brush timeline progress report, with perhaps some ballpark financial numbers, on another project which, while not on the North Shore, is clearly a vital component of the entire Metro Vancouver health system? It will provide services in many specialized areas to the North Vancouver community. I'm referring to the new Providence Health Care campus at False Creek — a project also of great interest to our community.

**Hon. A. Dix:** Well, there is something in that. I feel that the member for Kelowna–Lake Country is asking for this

response — a lengthy, historical overview of this project — because I think he was suggesting yesterday that the answers were not fulsome and detailed enough.

As the member will know, the St. Paul's project was first announced by the previous government in 2002. It was then announced in a business plan in 2006 that the project would go to the False Creek Flats. It was then announced in 2009 and again in 2011 that it would stay on the current site. It was then announced in 2015 that it would go to the False Creek Flats. It was then announced in 2016 that they were moving towards a business plan phase.

When I arrived as Minister of Health, we'd gone, in 11 years, from a business plan to a pre-business plan phase — in July of 2017. Now we have received, from Providence Health Care, a business plan for the new St. Paul's Hospital. So it's a long venture. I feel like at the end of a book, my part in it has merely been an afterword. Hopefully, we're going to write a new book, which is the building of the new St. Paul's.

I think St. Paul's Hospital is one of the most extraordinary.... If you look at the history of Vancouver and how long St. Paul's has been there on the current site, from the 1890s to the present, it's arguably, certainly, the most important building, the most important place, the most central place of care and the institution that's affected the most people in Vancouver, most importantly.

I strongly believe in a continuing role for Providence Health Care in our health care system and that as we work to achieve a new St. Paul's and a new generation of people receiving care on a new site, we maintain the Providence Health Care structure. I've made that very clear. I think the future for what's sometimes called Catholic health care, which includes quite a bit of long-term care but also, obviously, has as its centrepiece St. Paul's, is crucial and valuable.

If you look at what St. Paul's has contributed, and we can name hundreds of things over the years — their contribution of people at that hospital in the development of a worldwide response to the HIV/AIDS crisis, changing that disease, in many respects, from a deadly disease to a chronic disease by the work of the extraordinary doctors and researchers associated with the hospital and the generosity and openness of the people of Providence Health Care — I think that it's a reflection of how our health care system benefits from having Providence in the midst of it.

I'm very positive and very hopeful about the new St. Paul's. We've received a business plan, and we're doing, obviously, lots of work on it. It's a major and significant project for all the people of B.C. When I meet people on St. Paul's, often these projects are seen as Vancouver projects. But when I meet people all over the province who go to St. Paul's to get the care that they need, I think it has — more so than maybe any other hospital project in the province — provincial support as well as local support.

**R. Sultan:** Let me add my strong endorsement to the need to revitalize this important institution serving all of Vancouver. I have occasion to be at St. Paul's from time to time. If



ever a facility was overcrowded, somewhat dangerous and, obviously, seismically highly vulnerable....

[11:25 a.m.]

With some of the most dedicated professionals I think you will find anywhere, working very hard and delivering superb service despite their physical circumstances, it is a tribute to the management of the institution. I am delighted to hear that the inevitable jockeying between the pope, on the one hand, and the minister, on the other hand, seems to have been resolved, and we are now moving forward. That's good news. Thank you, Minister.

Again, on the topic of this same institution. As a partially deaf person — that's me — I have a special interest in the treatment of deafness. In that regard, I was encouraged that Providence Health Care's St. Paul's hospital project appears to be providing for specialized deafness facilities at the new False Creek campus when it emerges from this extended planning process.

Is special attention being given, in the ministry's thinking, for what appears to be a growing epidemic of hearing loss generally — and plans for an advanced hearing loss medical facility at the new Providence Health Care clinic campus? I'd be very curious about any thoughts the minister may have in that regard.

**Hon. A. Dix:** As the member will know, these issues, especially the adult cochlear implant surgeries at St. Paul's, are a significant part of St. Paul's current mission. They are the place to go in B.C. It's good news, and we're continuing to work on this. The average wait time for a referral to surgery at St. Paul's has gone down. Clearly, that work will have a major role in the new St. Paul's as well.

One of the advantages of the new St. Paul's is, in more modern circumstances, to be able to do a better job across the board. That said, the issue of what's contained in the new St. Paul's is part of the business plan and part of what we're working through with Providence Health Care and the people working on the project. This is an important part of what St. Paul's does now, and it would be my expectation that it would be an important part in a new facility that's more modern in the future.

**R. Sultan:** Thank you, Minister. A final question. The minister has already anticipated it, in part. Namely, the cochlear implant capability lodged at St. Paul's is, clearly, vital to many severely deaf persons. I've been told I don't qualify, but I wanted to declare my potential conflict of interest here in advance.

It is also my understanding that the ministry, not so long ago, increased the funding program for cochlear implants to work down what appeared to be, from my limited information, a growing backlog of worthy candidates for a procedure which, in fact, allows persons who otherwise might be totally disabled to return to useful employment.

My question to the minister is: is there any way of getting a quantitative feel for the magnitude of this program and its

prospects in the future?

**Hon. A. Dix:** What I'll do is I'll share.... I have a fact sheet on the program that can take the member through the details of it.

[11:30 a.m.]

I think one of the.... There had been an accumulating wait time for surgery that was, to some degree, dealt with in 2015 and 2016 at St. Paul's. In that short period, the number of implants moved from 56 to 83, which had, obviously, a significant impact on overall wait times. There are still some wait times there.

There's also a pediatric cochlear implant program at B.C. Children's. St. Paul's addresses adult issues, and there's also a similar program at B.C. Children's, which is the appropriate place for similar procedures at that level.

We've got the details in terms of number of surgeries, in terms of what St. Paul's does and B.C. Children's has, and I'll be happy to have my office forward that to the hon. member today.

**R. Sultan:** Thank you, Minister. I am sure the responses of the minister will be received in a welcoming manner at St. Paul's.

**S. Sullivan:** My question is further to the previous question on St. Paul's. I just wanted to emphasize the urgency of the situation there. As the minister mentioned, in 1894 the building was begun, and since 1912, there have been all these additions. Right now the main floor is not on one level. You have to take elevators to get back and forth, and the elevators always have a traffic jam there.

This is not a downtown hospital; this is a British Columbia hospital. All heart transplants in British Columbia, about 500 so far, have been there. It's a centre of excellence for renal issues. I think it's one of two where you can get a kidney transplant. It's also a very important centre for the Downtown Eastside, and a lot of the ambulances are wending their way through the downtown to get to St. Paul's. The new site would be blocks away from the centre there that is the source of so many calls. And I know that the minister who is the member for Vancouver-Mount Pleasant would be very pleased.

Interjection.

**S. Sullivan:** Well, it would be in her riding that this new hospital would be established.

It's a great site because it has such great access from the SkyTrain station, literally blocks away from the Main Street SkyTrain. It's very accessible from the Evergreen Line, from the Expo Line, even from the Canada Line.

There are serious problems with the heritage structure there, with brick buildings that would fall down in an earthquake. But I notice that there is nothing in the budget for this hospital, to move it forward. Can the minister give me some

reassurance that things are in fact moving forward?

**Hon. A. Dix:** Yes, and I mentioned this earlier. I think part of the problem at St. Paul's has been a tendency to treat the issue as a political football, so I won't reflect on a project that was announced in 2002, 2006, 2009, 2011, 2014 and 2016 and really not proceeded with. But I think we've reached a point....

I think the member makes an important point. This is something I think about every time I think about St. Paul's, which is its absolute centrality to the health care system in B.C. — the number of patients it serves, the extraordinary work done by the clinicians there, how people in the whole of Metro Vancouver and the whole province feel about the hospital — and the fact that we've now pushed the lifetime of the existing building, without significant renovation, so far that waiting is itself no longer a luxury, if it ever was a luxury. I'm not sure it ever was a luxury, but it's not a luxury now.

The member will know that projects that are at the concept plan stage and at the business plan stage do not appear in the budget, and that is the case with St. Paul's Hospital. So even though there was a business plan provided back in '06 and so on, until a business plan is approved, which is the stage we're at now, it doesn't appear in the budget document.

[11:35 a.m.]

This is true of a number of other hospitals and other projects that have received approval, say, at concept plan stage. For example, the Mills Memorial Hospital, which we approved at a concept plan stage in advance of the budget, doesn't appear in the budget and won't until the business plan proceeds. Obviously, the St. Paul's project, which is one of the most significant hospital projects that this government, or any government, will undertake in B.C., because it really....

We're making decisions now, in terms of the planning of what will be in the new building, that we hope will guide health care for the next 50 years. That's a humbling thing to make, from this point. If you think back 50 years, could policy-makers have imagined what the health care system would look like today? In some respects, it hasn't changed. But in some respects, in practical ways in hospitals, it's changed dramatically.

These are difficult processes, but I hear, absolutely, what the member is saying — that this is a project that's long overdue and that we need to proceed with. Obviously, it's a high priority for the government, for Providence Health Care, and I'm hopeful that we can move forward.

But when we move forward, it doesn't necessarily appear in the budget. The reason it's not in the budget isn't that it's not in the plan, but it won't appear in the budget until it gets past that stage.

**T. Redies:** As we discussed the other day, the hospital needs of the communities of South Surrey and White Rock continue to grow every day. We have thousands of new

townhomes going in, and we have, of course, one of the fastest-aging populations in the province, if not the country.

Peace Arch Hospital is getting a new emergency tower thanks to the Peace Arch Hospital Foundation, which has raised a ton of money, and also the support of the previous government to build a new emergency tower and a few operating rooms. But the challenge, I believe, is that the growing needs of the community are such that it will probably be too little, too late by the time that tower is finished.

Now, the minister also knows that there is land that the hospital owns free and clear across the street in Surrey. Your government made a promise to build another hospital in Surrey. I think the opportunity in our ridings of Surrey South and Surrey–White Rock is that we have the land. It would be cost-effective to build. We have a growing population whose needs are not being met today, and probably, again, it will be too little, too late.

What I'm asking is: can the citizens of White Rock and South Surrey rely on the support of the minister in order to build that hospital and bring it up to the needs where it will meet the future demands for our population?

**Hon. A. Dix:** The member is correct. The previous government announced a number of emergency rooms in Fraser Health prior to the last election. While they had the privilege of making those announcements, it's my privilege to find the money to pay for them, which I am proceeding to do with the extraordinary work of foundations everywhere.

We extensively canvassed this issue yesterday with respect to another ER project where, again, announcements were made, but the task of actually delivering on those announcements falls to me. No money was put aside, in some of these cases, to make that happen. The challenging part is that in the case of these projects, that money comes from capital resources or future capital resources of Fraser Health and not through the Treasury Board process.

The Peace Arch Foundation. We were speaking earlier of Lions Gate as one of the most extraordinary hospital foundations in the province, and we're very appreciative of their role.

With respect to the new hospital, I announced in December that there would be a planning process, so right now, in consultation with the community, a concept plan process is in place. The Fraser Health Authority, under the direction of Mr. Marchbank, is directing that process and working with the community.

I've heard the member's suggestion. She's raised it with me personally, and I'm sure she has or will be raising it with Mr. Marchbank and the people involved in that process. We're reaching out to get ideas. As she will know, the mayor of Surrey has suggested another location, so there's a discussion about that.

What I'm doing is saying that we should have the people who have expertise and are working on this process do that over the course of the year. I think the concept planning process will be about a year, where they look at locations.

[11:40 a.m.]

Again, this is a critical decision for health care in Surrey. We have Surrey Memorial Hospital. Some of Surrey is served, obviously, by Royal Columbian Hospital, as well, to the north, although there are transportation issues that we know around that. Some people in Surrey are served by Delta, Peace Arch and Langley.

What I'm doing is allowing experts to provide advice on the various options in terms of land and not making, as the member would expect, my decision or my ideas about where the second hospital should be situated until I hear what the response is both from the community and from the people looking at that. But it's a significant question for Surrey.

I know that there are people around Peace Arch who have made suggestions around the expansion of that hospital. We're open to looking at all of the ideas, whether they're from the municipality, from Peace Arch or from wherever we can. It's not just, obviously, a decision about the present. This hospital will be there for 30, 40, 50 years. I think we have to be guided by a view of Surrey in 30, 40, 50 years as well as in the present. That's why we're leaving it to planning experts to do this.

I will be guided, ultimately.... Obviously, the decisions land at Treasury Board and with the government, but we'll be guided by the advice we receive from Fraser Health, from the people involved in the process. There's opportunity for people to get involved in that and make their ideas felt.

**T. Redies:** Thank you for the response, Minister. If we are talking about 30 or 40 years, that's a lot of population growth in our area. If the minister is looking at that time frame, surely we wouldn't be looking at just one hospital in Surrey, given that there are hundreds of thousands of people likely to move into the community, my riding of Surrey-White Rock, over the next few years.

My question: is the ministry willing to look at additional hospitals to the one that they promised, based on need?

**Hon. A. Dix:** I think we're always reviewing the capital needs of municipalities. It's hard to visualize, I think, that far out. We felt that there is a need for a second hospital in Surrey and that we should start the process to proceed on it right now. We're responding to that.

Surrey also has — and it was built by the previous government — the Jim Pattison Centre, which provides a lot of services. Health care is changing as well. So we have to look at the evolution of health care. The average length of stay in acute care has been reduced year over year over year in recent times, so we have to look at what it is that a new hospital will present that meets the needs of people in Surrey.

The member is right. We're going to see enormous population growth across the province. Where I have a greater concern.... We're obviously addressing the immediate period in Surrey by building a second hospital. I think the issue of greatest concern in communities such as Surrey, which is, right now, a younger community.... It's maybe the youngest

community in all of B.C. overall. That's not the case, necessarily, in White Rock, although I would say it's certainly young at heart.

I'd say that if you look to the future, even if it's a young community overall, that doesn't mean the absolute number of seniors isn't high. We've got a concern in Surrey about the very significant number of people who are unattached to a primary care doctor and the demands in home care, home support and in community care, which are profoundly linked to the effectiveness of a hospital such as Surrey Memorial.

Frequently, what you see in communities.... The member for Coquitlam-Burke Mountain and I talked about this over the last number of days. When you have a problem in hospitals, it's frequently that people are stuck in hospital because there's no place immediately to support them in the community.

These aren't one decision. It's not all that we need three hospitals or four hospitals. We need a continuity of care in a community like Surrey that meets the needs of the community. That means, for example....

We're not doing this, because we've just done magnificent work at Children's Hospital. But if we were starting from scratch today, and you said to yourself: "Where should the new children's hospital be....?" If you had no children's hospital, you'd clearly be putting it in Surrey, in Metro Vancouver. But we're obviously not going to do that. It is where it is. It's outstanding. It's beautiful. It's a new facility. That's not going to happen.

Those are the issues we have to look at it in terms of health care planning. Really, the link between the community and acute care in Surrey is something that we're really looking at seriously. Right now, we're proceeding to a second hospital. We also have Peace Arch, Langley, Delta and Royal Columbian that are around Surrey which deal with some of the population needs of Surrey at the acute care level. But my real focus in Surrey, in addition to the second hospital, is improving services in the community.

I move that the House rise, report progress and ask leave to sit again.

Motion approved.

The committee rose at 11:45 a.m.

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### Proceedings in the Birch Room

### Committee of the Whole House

#### BILL 19 — PROTECTED AREAS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA AMENDMENT ACT, 2018

The House in Committee of the Whole (Section C) on  
Bill 19; J. Rice in the chair.

The committee met at 11:16 a.m.

Sections 1 and 2 approved.

On section 3.

**P. Milobar:** I'm wondering if I could get a bit of further explanation around the name change with the Boya Lake Park — more specifically, how the name came about. Obviously, there was a First Nations discussion, but there are typically several First Nations that would touch on a park boundary. Was more than one First Nation consulted, and was there agreement, overall, around the name change?

**Hon. G. Heyman:** Thank you to the member for the question. As the member knows, it was the Kaska Dena First Nation that requested the change. The Indigenous name, Tā Ch'ilā, was used, and it means, in the elders' language, "holes in a blanket."

[11:20 a.m.]

There is an established process for consulting in cases like this, and the consultation was, to the best of our knowledge, with the Kaska Dena Council. That includes a number of nations.

**P. Milobar:** If I could get some further clarification on a similar style of question around the renaming of the Brooks Peninsula Park: who were all consulted around that name change as well, please?

**Hon. G. Heyman:** In terms of M̓q̓'n, or Brooks Peninsula, Park, there are three nations. The park is within the traditional territories of the Ka:yu:k't'h, the Che:k:tlas7et'h as well as the Quatsino First Nations, and all three of the First Nations supported the naming request.

**P. Milobar:** It's my understanding that a lot of the increases of the various parks in this bill have a lot to do with mapping, of that nature. I'm just wondering if we could get a bit more clarification around the increase in the size of Monkman Park — if it's around any specific features or if it's strictly a mapping exercise.

**Hon. G. Heyman:** I understood the member's question to be around the addition to Monkman Park. There are in fact 268 hectares being added. That's the addition of Slate Falls, to protect the waterfalls.

**P. Milobar:** Thank you for that. I'm wondering if the minister could just reconfirm for the record. My understanding is that the Haig-Brown family was supportive of the name change, as well as the local First Nations, who had a lot of input into the new naming of the Roderick Haig-Brown Park. I just wanted to confirm that that is, indeed, the case.

Will there be dual signage, much like we see with the

a.k.a. of the Boya Lake Park, where both names will be identifiable if people are searching for the park area, at least in the short term?

[11:25 a.m.]

**Hon. G. Heyman:** As the member knows, the name change is by request and to reflect the Secwepemc name Tsútwecw Park. The Roderick Haig-Brown family is quite supportive of the name change. There will not be a dual name for the park, but there will be recognition of Roderick Haig-Brown elsewhere in the park.

Section 3 approved.

On section 4.

**P. Milobar:** Just one question in this section. I'm just wondering about the amendment and the description around Manning Park. I notice that it's a decrease in size. If we could get a little more detail. Again, is it mapping? Is it of any consequence, the size overall — and the exact kind of area of where that decrease may be coming, so the public has a better idea of any potential impact to that park?

**Hon. G. Heyman:** The following comprises the modifications to address administrative boundary areas. There's a deletion of 4.7 hectares of parklands to accommodate the rail-lined highway at Westgate entrance. Highway realignment was carried out in the late 1970s, which resulted in a realigned 700-metre stretch of the highway travelling through the park while the former highway portion at this location was abandoned. The highway realignment resulted in 4.7 hectares needing to be removed from the park.

There's then an addition of 2.3 hectares of parklands that constitute the abandoned portion of the highway at Westgate entrance. The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure closed those portions of abandoned highway right-of-way, and the road closure *Gazette* notice was issued publicly on December 4, 2014, and those lands are now being added to the park.

A further addition of 0.96 hectare of parklands constitutes the former highway right-of-way at Mule Deer campsite. At the Mule Deer campsite, the original highway plan was registered in 1958, and it accommodated a former Forest Service campground at this location. The campsite was situated southwest of an irregular-shaped right-of-way portion of Highway 3.

The campsite later became part of E.C. Manning Park and was expanded, which resulted in an encroachment onto a portion of the highway right-of-way. The Ministry of Transportation agreed to highway closures, and the road closure *Gazette* notices were issued publicly on November 26, 2015.

In total, as a result of the various boundary adjustments, 3.3 hectares of land would be added to the park and 4.7 hectares deleted, which is a net loss of 1.4 hectares of parkland. Most of that is specifically focused at the Westgate entrance.

However, there's a significant benefit to the park in that the entire area of Mule Deer campsite and associated infrastructure would now be located within park boundaries.

Section 4 approved.

On section 5.

**P. Milobar:** One last question on this bill for the minister. I'm just wondering, again, if we could get an idea around the increases in the size of Duu Guusd conservancy — I'm probably pronouncing that horribly — and what exactly it encompasses.

**Hon. G. Heyman:** First of all, to the best of my ability, which may or may not be any different from the member opposite's, I believe it's the Duu Guusd conservancy.

[11:30 a.m.]

The description is amended as follows: 1,214 hectares in the K'aas Gandlaay area will be added to the conservancy on the recommendation of the Haida Gwaii Management Council. The first 16 exception statements in the boundary description are deleted. The lands covered by these exception statements are now excepted on the official plan. These exception statements pertain to 12 Indian reserves and four roads.

Exception statements 17 and 18 in the existing boundary description are also deleted. These exception statements relate to forest licences that are no longer active. These lands — four hectares and two hectares, respectively — are being

added to the conservancy. The commercial lease numbers and Land Act file numbers have been updated in the exception statements. A new official plan is provided to replace the existing official plan as a result of the addition and the mapping out of many of the exception statements.

The area of the conservancy will be corrected from 227,712 hectares — 143,539 hectares of upland and 84,173 hectares of foreshore — to a new total of 229,107 hectares, which is comprised of 144,934 hectares of upland and 84,173 hectares of foreshore. The total difference is an addition of 1,395 hectares.

The difference in area figure is as a result of the K'aas Gandlaay, which is 1,214 hectares, as I mentioned previously; the addition of lands covered by the former forest licences, a total of six hectares; and increased quality of elevation reference data — i.e., the height of land — for creating the official plan since the last boundary update.

Sections 5 to 8 inclusive approved.

Title approved.

**Hon. G. Heyman:** I move that the committee rise and report the bill complete without amendment.

Motion approved.

The committee rose at 11:32 a.m.



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