



Alberta Weekly Review

Wednesday, March 7, 2018

Session Schedule & Activities

- Legislative session is scheduled to resume Thursday, March 8, 2018.
- Budget 2018 will be tabled in the legislature on Thursday, March 22, 2018.
- 14 months until expected provincial election.

Government News and Announcements

Spring Session Opens

Spring session of the legislature will begin tomorrow with a throne speech at 3:00 pm MST. The primary focus of the session will be Budget 2018 which will be tabled on March 22 in the legislature. However, Government House Leader Brian Mason announced today that Premier Notley will bring forward a motion to debate the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion in the legislature on Monday. At the start of the conflict with BC UCP Leader Jason Kenney published an open letter to the Premier requesting an early return to session to have an emergency debate on the issue.

This session will mark the first time Kenney will take his seat in the assembly as Leader of the United Conservative Party. Additionally, former UCP MLA Rick Fraser will take his seat with the Alberta party after crossing the floor in January. Fraser came in third in the Alberta Party Leadership race won by Stephen Mandel last week. Session is scheduled to run until June 7, 2018.

Alberta Makes Moves Support Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion

The Market Access Task Force, created by Premier Notley in wake of the trade tensions with British Columbia held its second meeting this week. Despite the Alberta government removing the wine ban, the Task Force is continuing its work and strategy development in support of the Trans Mountain Pipeline expansion. On the advice of the Task Force, the province sent officials to Ottawa this week to work towards aligning Alberta's legal efforts with federal legal efforts. The Task Force also discussed ramifications for the country should BC continue to block pipeline expansion and further retaliatory measures if necessary.

UCP Leader Jason Kenney was in British Columbia this week and has said should he be Premier he would consider as a last resort stopping shipments of Alberta oil to B.C. through the existing Trans Mountain Line. Another possible measure Kenney suggested was tolling BC's natural gas shipments through Alberta. Kenney said these measures would all be last resorts but ones he would be willing to take if necessary. With the Premier calling for a Trans Mountain Pipeline debate expect Kenney to articulate these positions in the legislature.

Brian Jean Announces Retirement From Politics

Brian Jean, Former Wildrose leader and runner up in the United Conservative Party leadership race announced he would be stepping down as MLA for Fort McMurray-Conklin effective immediately.

In his announcement Jean said he will focus on family and rebuilding his Fort McMurray home. Premier Notley has six months to call a by-election in the constituency. Another by-election is already needed in Innisfail-Sylvan Lake after UCP MLA Don MacIntyre resigned in February due to a sexual interference charge. The next provincial election will occur by May 2019. Jean had already taken a step back following his loss in the leadership to Jason Kenney.

Funding for Affordable Housing and Seniors Housing Announced

Lori Sigurdson, Minister of Seniors and Housing announced \$1.4 million funding approved for planning seven projects across the province as part of the Provincial Affordable Housing Strategy this week. The seven projects will receive between \$100,000- \$250,000 in funding each and include two projects in Calgary and one in Edmonton. Planning stages include scope, cost-definition and feasibility studies. Housing proposals that receive funding planning may not receive development funds to move onto the next stage.