



## Alberta Weekly Review

Friday, April 6, 2018

### Session Schedule & Activities

- UCP Founding AGM to be held in Red Deer May 4-6, 2018
- 14 months until expected provincial election

### Government News and Announcements

#### *Push for Pipeline Expansion Continues*

The Alberta government's push for pipeline expansion and action on the Trans Mountain pipeline continued this week on several fronts. The Alberta government is in talks with the federal government to secure exemptions to Bill C-69, An Act to enact the Impact Assessment Act and the Canadian Energy Regulator Act, which is currently being debated in Ottawa. Bill C-69 overhauls the federal environmental assessment process for major projects. It has been condemned by numerous energy associations such as the Canadian Energy Pipeline Association, Canadian Electricity Association and the Mining Association of Canada, who warn it would suffocate further pipeline development. This week UCP Leader Jason Kenney sent a letter to Premier Notley proposing the Legislative Assembly of Alberta debate a motion declaring its opposition to the pipeline. The Premier's office has declined as they said they are already involved in discussions.

Additionally, next week Notley will go on trips to New York, Toronto and early next month the North American Governors and Premiers Summit (NGA Summit) in Arizona to speak about the Climate Change Leadership Plan.

#### *Federal Government Alberta Infrastructure Funding Announced*

This week, Hon. Amarjeet Sohi, federal Infrastructure Minister announced Alberta will receive \$3.3 billion of Ottawa's \$33 billion infrastructure fund for transit, green infrastructure, recreation and other needs over the next 10 years. The \$3.1 billion will be broken down to:

- \$2.1 billion for public transit (\$878 million to Edmonton and \$1.01 billion to Calgary with rest of funds going to smaller centres to be announced at a later date;
- \$1 billion for green infrastructure;
- \$140 million for community and recreation; and
- \$160 million for rural and northern communities.

The fund is phase two of the federal infrastructure fund announced in the 2015 federal election.

## *Province's Negotiations with Alberta Medical Association Continue*

After 5 months in negotiations Alberta Health Services and the Alberta Medical Association (AMA), which represents the provinces 10,000 physicians, have yet to reach an agreement. The current seven-year agreement expires this weekend.

In the 2018 Alberta budget the government set aside \$5.3 billion in total spending for physician compensation this coming year which is a 3.5% increase from the previous year to accommodate higher patient volumes. The province has said the goal going forward is to limit the growth of physician compensation between 3-5% annually.

This year the province reached pay freeze agreements with United Nurses of Alberta and other healthcare workers, while the dentists and pharmacists have seen fee decreases. The Nurses and the Health Sciences Association signed three-year agreements that will see them negotiate wages in the third year. The AMA has indicated they are looking for a long-term deal beyond three years.

## Political News

### *2017 Provincial Donations List*

Elections Alberta released the 2017 list of political donations in the province and the NDP topped the list raising \$2.11 million with the United Conservative Party in a close second at \$2.07 million, but only across 5 months. The UCP's legacy parties also reported substantial cash receipts with the PC Party at \$1.84 million and the Wildrose Party at \$1.22 million. The bulk of the funds reported by the PCs was in constituency transfers. The Alberta Liberal party raised \$237,758 and the Alberta party raised \$215,154.

### *NDP Minister Not Seeking Re-Election*

Late last week Brandy Payne, Associate Minister of Health and MLA for Calgary-Acadia announced she would not run in the 2019 Provincial Election. In 2015, Payne defeated PC incumbent and then Justice Minister Jonathan Denis. Payne had been the owner/operator of her own yoga studio in Calgary

In the announcement Payne, a mother of young children, has said that she would like to focus on her family. Payne was first appointed to cabinet in February 2016 when she was expecting a child.

## Municipal News

### *Calgary Olympic Bid Continues*

The City of Calgary is the only North American city on the list of seven released by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) expressing interest in hosting the 2026 Olympic Winter Games.

Earlier in the week, the federal and provincial governments announced they would support the formation of a bid corporation, Olympic BidCo, to develop a plan for the Calgary bid and analyze the costs of hosting the games. A total of \$30 million will be used to develop the bid and bid corporation with \$10.5 million from the federal government, \$10 million from the province and \$9.5 million from the City of Calgary.

The provincial government has made their share of the funding conditional upon the City of Calgary's engagement and consultation with residents which would include a plebiscite on the Olympic process. According to city officials the plebiscite will take up to six months to organize at a cost of \$2 million. The province also requires engagement with indigenous communities.

The City of Vancouver held a plebiscite prior to submitting its bid for the 2010 Vancouver Olympics and received 64% approval, in addition to holding over 400 town halls. The Olympic bids are due to be submitted to the IOC in October.