

Alberta Weekly Review

Friday, May 11, 2018

Session Schedule & Activities

- 12 months until expected provincial election
- Constituency break is scheduled May 21-25, 2018.
- Spring session of the Legislature is scheduled to conclude Thursday June 7, 2018.

Government News and Announcements

Government Continues to Push for Trans Mountain

The Alberta government released details on Thursday about its advertising campaign to increase support for the Trans Mountain Pipeline expansion. The \$1.2 million-dollar campaign will be run nationally and include billboards, television and radio spots. Nearly \$700,000 of the fund will be spent on BC efforts.

A new poll released this week shows that while Premier John Horgan enjoys the highest approval rating in BC of all the party leaders, 42 percent of British Columbians say the province is on the wrong track (versus 29 per cent that approve of the direction the government is headed). Additionally, A majority of British Columbians, 53%, also disapprove of the provinces handling of the Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain pipeline project.

The Government of Saskatchewan has also announced it is seeking intervener status in British Columbia's reference case on the province's ability to limit the flow of oil. Saskatchewan Premier Scott Moe said his government is taking this action as he believes the flow of products including bitumen is under federal jurisdiction.

Emission Reduction Alberta Announces Funding

Emissions Reduction Alberta (ERA) has announced nine Alberta oil sands technologies will receive \$70 million through the Oil Sands Innovation Challenge through ERA. ERA was created to accelerate the development and demonstration of innovative emissions reducing technologies. A Total of 47 projects were submitted for consideration and selections were made based on ability to advance innovative technology solutions to delivery, greenhouse gas emissions reductions and cost competitiveness enhancements. It is estimated that the chosen projects will result in potential greenhouse gas emissions reductions of up to 4.1 million tonnes of CO₂ emissions in Alberta by 2030.

The following projects were selected for funding:

- Suncor Energy Inc. – High temperature membranes for steam-assisted gravity drainage water treatment
- Canadian Natural Resources Limited – In-pit extraction process
- Enlighten Innovations (formerly Field Upgrading Ltd.) – CLEANSEAST™ demonstration project
- Heavy Oil Solutions Inc. – partner with Cenovus Energy Inc., partial upgrader with integrated water treatment
- MEG Energy – eMVAPEX pilot, phase 3
- Cenovus Energy Inc. – Flash Steam Generation field prototype
- Imperial – Enhanced bitumen recovery technology pilot
- ConocoPhillips Canada – Non-condensable gas co-injection for thief zone mitigation
- Cenovus Energy Inc. – Multi-pad pilot of a solvent-aided process

Government Legislation

The following details key legislation tabled between May 7 – May 11, 2018

*Bill 16: Election Finances and Contributions Disclosure Statutes Amendment Act, 2018
(Hon. Christina Gray, Minister Responsible for Democratic Renewal)*

Bill 16 aims to prevent associated political parties from using a multi-party structure to collude with one another to bypass the legal spending limit of \$2 million during elections and by-elections. The legislation also increases fines for parties that exceed the limit to \$100,000 from \$10,000 and doubles the penalties for candidates, nomination contestants and CFOs to \$10,000.

Associated parties share common leadership, political programs or policy statements, have similar advertising or branding and may have non-compete agreements. The enforcement of this law will fall under the newly created office of the Alberta Election Commissioner. Additionally, Bill 16 repeals the exemption that allows new political parties to not file an annual report if they are registered in the last four months of the year.

This bill is the latest in a series of changes to Alberta's election finance laws that have been introduced over the last three years including banning union and corporate donations, lowering donation limits, introducing spending caps and restricting activities of third party advertisers (political action committees).

United Conservative Party AGM In Red Deer This Weekend

The UCP Founding Convention last week drew over 2600 registered delegates making it the largest policy convention in Alberta's history. In addition to UCP Leader Jason Kenney, delegates heard speeches from Federal Conservative Leader Andrew Scheer, former Interim Conservative Leader Rona Ambrose and former Saskatchewan Premier Brad Wall. The party also elected its first permanent board of directors with Edmonton-based Erika Barootes selected as its first President. The 15-member board is made up of eight woman and seven men from across the province.

Governance and policy resolutions were also passed including 98% of delegates voting to repeal the Carbon Tax. Several controversial motions passed and garnered media attention including one that would require parents to be notified if their child joins a club of a religious or sexual nature. Party leader Jason Kenney later said he does not believe in mandatory notification for clubs of any kind and that it will not be part of the platform. Kenney has said platform development will begin shortly and be done by a platform committee the details of which have not be released.

Jason Kenney Talks Carbon Tax In Ottawa

On the heels of the UCP convention, UCP Leader Jason Kenney went to Ottawa to present to the federal Finance Committee as part of its budget bill review. Currently Alberta's carbon price of \$30 per tonne with plans to reach \$50 per tonne by 2022 follows Ottawa's nation plan. Kenney argued that the tax is punishing consumers for "filling their gas tanks and heating their homes" and also warned that the tax would only increase as time went on.

Kenney also announced on Sunday the UCP would seek intervener status in the Saskatchewan carbon tax court challenge that was launched in April. The Saskatchewan government has argued in its constitutional reference case the federal government doesn't not have the authority to impose a tax on the province.