

## Alberta Weekly Review

Friday, May 18, 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

#### *Trans Mountain Expansion*

With less than two weeks until Kinder Morgan's deadline the Government of Alberta and Government of Canada have both said they are working hard behind the scenes to ensure the pipeline moves forward. However, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau did not meet with Premier Rachel Notley when he was in Alberta earlier this week for infrastructure announcements.

On Wednesday, federal Minister of Finance Bill Morneau announced that the government was willing to "provide indemnity" to any investors be it Kinder Morgan or new investors to ensure the project proceeds. The announcement came the day prior to the annual Kinder Morgan shareholders meeting.

The same day the Alberta Legislative assembly passed Bill 12, Preserving Canada's Economic Prosperity Act. The bill will give the government the power to restrict and redirect flows of oil, gasoline and natural gas is now awaiting royal assent. The government accepted an amendment that puts a two-year limit on the bill. The amendment also provides the government the option to extend the bill after two years if it receives approval of the legislature. BC Premier John Horgan has said he will take Alberta to court if the province enacts the legislation which he calls unconstitutional.

#### *Trudeau Makes Infrastructure Announcements in Alberta*

This week Prime Minister Justin Trudeau was in Alberta to make two large infrastructure funding announcements. In Edmonton on Tuesday morning he announced \$40 million to go towards a railway underpass and increased lanes on 50<sup>th</sup> street. There will also be a sidewalk and shared use paths.

The funding is coming from the National Trade Corridors fund which will allocate \$2 billion across the country over 11 years. The provincial and municipal governments previously announced funding for the project which the province spending \$28.3 million and the city \$87.5 million. Edmonton MP and Minister of Infrastructure Amarjeet Sohi was also present for the announcement and joined the Prime Minister the night prior as he visited Gurdwara Millwoods in Sohi's constituency.

Trudeau later made an announcement in Calgary of \$1.53 billion to go towards the first stage of the green line, the expansion of the city's light rail system to link Calgary's north and south. The province of Alberta and City of Calgary have also committed \$1.53 billion each to the project. The first stage of the Green Line is slated for completion in 2026. This was a reannouncement, previously announced by the Harper Conservatives.

## Government Legislation

The following details status updates on key pieces of legislation as of May 18, 2018

### *Bill 2 — Growth and Diversification Act (Hon. Deron Bilous, Minister of Economic Development and Trade)*

This legislation will create 3,000 new spaces for technology programs in Alberta's colleges, polytechnics and universities through a \$43 million-dollar commitment. An additional \$7 million (over 5 years) will be allocated for a scholarship program focused on encouraging women to join the sector.

- Passed second reading May 17, 2018, awaiting committee of the whole.

### *Bill 5 — An Act to Strengthen Financial Security for Persons with Disabilities (Hon. Irfan Sabir), Minister of Social Services)*

This act would amend current Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped legislation (AISH) to enable families, guardians and AISH recipients to set up trusts to provide for persons with disabilities without impacting their eligibility for the program.

- Currently being debated in committee of the whole.

### *Bill 6 — Gaming and Liquor Statutes Amendment Act, 2018 (Hon. Kathleen Ganley, Minister of Justice)*

This bill introduces amendments to the Gaming and Liquor Act in preparation for the legalization cannabis and gives the Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission (AGLC) the tools to oversee and enforce the cannabis market.

- Passed committee of the whole May 16, 2018, awaiting third reading.

*Bill 9 — Protecting Choice for Women Accessing Health Care Act (Hon. Sarah Hoffman, Minister of Health)*

This bill establishes a 50 meter “access zone” at Alberta’s two non-hospital abortion clinics- Kensington Clinic in Calgary and Woman’s Health Options in Edmonton

- Passed committee of the whole on May 15, 2018 with amendments, awaiting third reading

*Bill 11 — Lobbyists Amendment Act, 2018 (Hon. Christina Gray, Minister Responsible for Democratic Renewal)*

This bill introduces several changes aimed at strengthening the rules that regulate lobbying activity to enhance transparency.

- Passed committee of the whole on May 16, 2018, awaiting third reading

*Bill 12— Preserving Canada’s Economic Prosperity Act (Hon. Margaret McCuaig-Boyd, Minister of Energy)*

This bill enables the province to restrict the export of natural gas, crude oil and refined fuels across its borders.

- Passed third reading on May 16, 2018, awaiting royal assent and proclamation.

*Bill 13 — An Act to Secure Alberta’s Electricity Future (\$) (Hon. Margaret McCuaig-Boyd, Minister of Energy)*

This act empowers the Alberta Utilities Commission (AUC) to penalize electricity and natural gas service providers for breaches of customer service.

- Currently in second reading.

*Bill 14 — An Act to Empower Utility Consumers (Hon. Stephanie McLean, Minister of Service Alberta)*

This bill expands the mandate of the Alberta Utilities Consumer Advocate (UCA) to allow consumers to resolve disputes with utility bills.

- Passed second reading on May 15, 2018, awaiting debate in committee of the whole.

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

This bill 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

- Passed second reading on May 16, 2018, awaiting debate in committee of the whole.

## Political News

### *Minister Taking Medical Leave*

Lori Sigurdson, Minister of Seniors and Housing will be taking a 40 day leave of absence following a diagnosis of acute promyelocytic leukemia. Minister Sigurdson, MLA for Edmonton-Riverview was elected in 2015 and previously served in the portfolios of Advanced Education and Labour. Irfan Sabir, Minister of Social Services will be acting Minister for her portfolio.

Over the weekend it was announced Erin Babcock, NDP MLA for Stony Plain, is undergoing treatment for uterine cancer. Babcock worked as a Licensed Nurse Practitioner before her election in 2015.