

Spring Session Report 2008

Official Opposition Exposes Government's Poor Handling of Health Care, the Environment, Energy and More



Kevin Taft, Leader of the Alberta Liberal Caucus

During the first sitting of the Legislature since the election, Kevin Taft lived up to his commitment to hold the government accountable for its actions.

Right now, Albertans are telling us that they're most concerned about health care, the environment (particularly environmental concerns in the oilsands), and huge MLA salary increases (which only the Alberta Liberal Caucus voted against).

Kevin raised all these questions in the Legislature, and he also covered a wide range of other issues, each with impacts affecting our quality of life and Alberta's future economic and social health. Here's a brief summary of the issues Kevin brought to the Legislature on your behalf:

Health Care

Health Care System
Shortage of Health Practitioners
Peace River Health Region

Energy

New Oil and Gas Royalty Framework
Bitumen Royalties
Nuclear Power
Electricity Prices

Environment

Waterfowl Deaths in Oil Sands Tailings Pond
Contamination by Oil Sands Tailings Pond
Monitoring of Oil Sands Tailings Ponds
Environmentally Sustainable Oil Sands Development
Reclamation of Oil Sands Tailings Ponds
Minable Oil Sands Strategy Presentation
Environmental Protection Security Fund

People

Farm Worker Safety
Whistle-Blower Protection
School Nutrition Programs
Seniors' Benefits
Closed-door Cabinet salary increases
United Horsemen of Alberta Inc.



Kevin Taft in the Legislature

"...Albertans do not think that the Premier, cabinet ministers, or MLAs should decide their own level of pay. It's a concern that Alberta Liberals share. There are better options. My question is to the Premier. Will this government immediately set up an independent panel to set remuneration levels for cabinet and members of this Assembly?"

"Last Monday 500 birds landed on a toxic tailings pond near Fort McMurray, and fewer than five came out alive. The same day the minister was writing on his website that 'Alberta is proving to the world that you can produce energy in an environmentally responsible manner.'"

"Thousands of seniors on fixed incomes are finding it harder and harder to get by, and some are at risk of being forced out of their homes because they can no longer afford the costs. Alberta's seniors deserve better.

Why is it that this government does so little while the high costs of living, including taxes, electricity, rents, home heating, and gasoline, are threatening to force seniors out of their homes?"

"Hundreds of thousands of Albertans can't get family doctors...it's common for Albertans now to spend days in hospital emergency wards because beds are closed due to a shortage of nurses, yet today at a news conference the Minister of Health and Wellness waffled on whether this shortage of doctors and nurses was a serious problem in Alberta or not."

"Can the minister confirm from this report that two litres of toxic tailings leak into the Athabasca River every second from the foundation of the Tar Island pond and that a further 65 litres per second leak from the dike construction?"

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