



Legislative Assembly of Alberta

Electoral Boundaries Commission
Public Hearings

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Legislative Assembly of Alberta

Electoral Boundaries Commission

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Electoral Boundaries Commission Public Hearings – Calgary

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1:24 p.m.

Tuesday, January 13, 2026

[Justice Miller in the chair]

The Chair: Good afternoon, lady and gentlemen. Welcome to the afternoon session of – well, for transcript purposes maybe I should have said ladies and gentlemen – our second day of public hearings of the Alberta Electoral Boundaries Commission.

By way of brief introduction I just want to go through some history of our commission before we hear from the presenters. Our commission is an independent body established by the Legislature of Alberta, and it consists, obviously, of the five individuals that are listed and that appear before you. If you want to know our background, you can simply go to our bio section on the website.

We have been given the task of dealing with two challenges or two problems. One is the expansion of the Legislature from 87 seats or electoral divisions to 89. In addition we are a boundary commission that is the first one since the last commission report of 2017. Over that period of time we have had a huge population increase in this province, probably an unprecedented population increase, and so we have the challenge of: where do we place the two new electoral divisions given the power given to us in the legislation, and how do we properly apportion the great increase in population?

To give everyone a sense of the population increase, when the 2017 Bielby report was released, Alberta's population was just slightly over 4 million people. At the commencement of our boundary commission in 2025 we looked at population sources, and we landed on the most up-to-date 2024 confirmed statistics. We are at about a 4.8 million population in Alberta.

To put some context and bring that down to the local electoral division level, in 2017 they used this formula and they came up with an average population per electoral division of 46,697. Of course, we are not a rep-by-pop jurisdiction. We do not rely on representation by population or exact one person, one vote formula as they do in the United States. Rather we focus on the term "effective representation," and we'll talk about that in a few moments.

The 2017 report had a target. That target was minus 25 and plus 25, and it ranged from 35,000 to just over 58,000 per electoral division. We've had a substantial increase with the new population level, and the average is 54,000, almost 55,000, and that targeted range varies from 41,000 to almost 69,000.

The task of the commission, given to us by the legislation, by the case law, and by Canadian tradition, is to come up with boundaries that provide for effective representation. We were established as a commission in late March or early April of this past year, and we did four basic tasks from that time period on.

First of all, we met and came up with a population-based standard on which we could use to make formulas for our constituency boundaries. We agreed upon the source of the most recent Statistics Canada figures, regularly and routinely updated by the Office of Statistics and Information of the Alberta Treasury Board.

We also reviewed hundreds of written submissions that were provided to our commission starting in April and May, and throughout May and June we toured the province and heard submissions from interested Albertans from as far as Fort McMurray down to Pincher Creek and criss-crossed the province to hear those presentations. All those presentations, I believe, are online and can be accessed on our website.

After we completed that, throughout the summer and fall we met with individuals from the office of Elections Alberta to come up with maps and create maps to apportion the 89 boundaries. That

then led to the completion and release of our, what we call, interim report.

The interim report was provided to the Speaker of the Legislature in late October and was tabled, and each member of the Legislature received a copy, and it became a public document. That is the document that you may have seen online or you may have had a copy. In completing that report, we followed as best we could with the information we had to take into account all the factors in the legislation. As we go through the hearings, you no doubt will make some submissions and they will touch on those issues listed in the legislation.

1:30

Our goal is to create understandable and clear boundaries for Albertans. Upon completion of that interim report and release to the Legislature, we opened a portal to hear feedback from Albertans in written format, and we did hear feedback. From November 3 to December 19 in excess of 1,100 written submissions were submitted.

Now at this stage we want to open it up for public presentations. Starting on January 12 we are holding hearings in Calgary for three days and then moving to Edmonton to hear in-person hearings, and we will hear submissions from the rest of the province virtually while we're in Edmonton. That will encompass the rest of this week and all of next week.

Upon completing and concluding the public hearing aspect of this second round, we will then take all the written submissions and the public feedback we've received and take this interim report and revise it if necessary and create a final report that we will submit to the Legislature in late March. The Legislature then takes that report and has the flexibility and the discretion to do what they wish with it, but it is expected that they will pass legislation based on the recommendations that we give them in our final report. By way of background information, that gives a bit of a historic context to how we got here.

I now have the privilege of opening it up for public submissions. I'm pleased to ask Theresa Letendre to come forward first. Have a seat at the table, make yourself comfortable, and tell us what electoral division you live in and which electoral division you wish to comment on.

Mrs. Letendre: Good afternoon, and thank you for the opportunity to speak today. I'm Theresa Letendre, and I'm chair of the board of trustees for Foothills school division, and I currently reside in the Banff-Kananaskis riding.

Today I'm speaking on behalf of the board, and my remarks are grounded in the written submission we provided to the commission on December 17. Foothills school division serves a large and diverse geographic region. Today our perspective is offered because school communities fall within the commission's mandate to consider communities of interest.

Before I continue, I would like to briefly clarify the scope of this submission. In the letter we sent in December, I referenced Cochrane-Springbank. I would like to clarify that Foothills school division is not directly impacted by the proposed changes to Cochrane-Springbank.

Our concerns are focused specifically on the proposed reconfiguration affecting Okotoks and Diamond Valley, the shift from Banff-Kananaskis to Banff-Jasper, and adjustments involving High River-Vulcan and Livingstone-Macleod. While spanning multiple ridings is not new for our division, what is new and somewhat concerning is the number and simultaneity of the proposed boundary changes that would affect Foothills communities.

Rather than restating the details of the letter, I would like to use my time to share two brief stories.

The Chair: Sorry. Can you just give us the date of that letter?

Mrs. Letendre: Yes. December 17.

The Chair: December 17. Okay. Thank you.

Mr. Evans: Which school division?

Mrs. Letendre: Foothills school division.

I'll share two stories that illustrate how the proposed boundary changes would be experienced by families, particularly when those changes are considered together. My first story is from Longview and the surrounding rural Foothills community. Longview, if you're not familiar, is a small rural village of approximately 300 people, and Foothills school division operates a K to 6 school with about 60 kids. While the size of Longview is small, it does not exist in isolation. The village and the surrounding rural area function as one interconnected community. Families share Foothills schools and school councils, transportation services, volunteer spaces, and common rural education concerns.

Under the proposed changes the village of Longview would move into High River-Vulcan while families just outside the village to the west would fall within proposed Banff-Jasper. On a map that boundary line may appear minor, but in lived experience it's not. Families whose children attend the same school, whose parents sit on the same school councils, and who raise the same concerns about rural equity would now be represented by two different MLAs in two very different electoral divisions. One MLA riding would be shaped by a regional rural centre of gravity, so High River-Vulcan; the other would be shaped by a park- and tourism-centred gravity, the Banff-Jasper. From an education perspective advocacy becomes fragmented, accessibility becomes uneven. And for a small rural Foothills community there's a loss of a coherent voice, not because the community has changed but because representation has been split around it.

The second story is Okotoks-Diamond Valley and the loss, essentially, of the Highwood riding. The second example comes from Okotoks and Diamond Valley. Today Okotoks, Diamond Valley, and the surrounding Foothills communities function as a single, integrated education community. Families are connected through shared Foothills schools, attendance boundaries that cross municipal lines, and a long-standing school council and advocacy relationships. Highwood has historically reflected a Foothills-centred reality. Under the proposed options a Foothills-based riding disappears. If we consider the Calgary-Okotoks option, Okotoks families will be drawn northwards into Calgary and anchored by a Calgary-focused division while Diamond Valley and some of the surrounding Foothills county families will be reassigned to High River-Vulcan. [A timer sounded] Oh, my God. My time is up? No.

Mirroring what will happen in Longview, families whose children attend the same Foothills schools, raise the same education concerns, and participate in the same school communities will now be represented by MLAs whose ridings are shaped by different dominating centres of gravity, one oriented towards Calgary, the other towards a regional rural constituency. What is lost is not simply a boundary but a Foothills-based lens on representation.

Why do these stories matter? I shared these two examples, one rural and one urban adjacent, because they illustrate the same underlying issue. When integrated school communities are divided across electoral divisions with different dominant centres of gravity, representation becomes partial rather than whole. Public education systems function as a community of interest. Families are

connected through schools, not municipal borders. Representation works best when those connections are respected. When boundary changes divide those connections, representation becomes more complex, less accessible, and somewhat less effective even when each individual change appears to be reasonable on its own.

In saying that, Foothills school division recognizes that the commission is carrying out a legislated mandate arising from population change, and change has to happen. Our role as trustees and a school board is to ensure that the lived realities of families and school communities are visible within the process. With this in mind, as you move towards a final recommendation, we respectfully ask that the cumulative impacts on education communities be considered together and that the final report articulate how proposed changes strengthen effective representation for the families affected.

Thank you for your time and for considering this community perspective.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mrs. Letendre. A quick question for clarification and then I'll open it up to the rest of the commissioners. Could you just give us a description as to the boundaries of the Foothills school division again? What geographic area does it encompass?

Mrs. Letendre: Foothills school division operates – if you think of Calgary and then you have Rocky View county going around it, Foothills is the connector. We have schools going from the edge of Calgary . . .

1:40

The Chair: South of Calgary.

Mrs. Letendre: South of Calgary, all the way down to High River and Cayley. Nanton is outside our area. Then we go west: Longview, Millarville, and then into Red Deer Lake, Priddis. Bragg Creek is outside our boundary. We kind of are in a . . .

The Chair: The east boundary is where?

Mrs. Letendre: The east boundary is the Strathmore – like, the edge, pretty much up the QE II.

The Chair: Okay. That's helpful.

Okay. Any questions, Mr. Clark?

Mr. Clark: Yeah. Thank you very much. I really appreciate that presentation. It's so helpful to have people who live in the communities and, like, experience on the ground. I was playing around, looking at Longview as you were talking. It's just an interesting artifact of how we've drawn things for other – you know, we thought very rational reasons at the time.

I guess I'm interested in two things. The kind of community of interest piece: you used a really interesting term. I think you said, "a Foothills-based view of good representation," right? How would you describe that? Like, what are those things you think would connect you together? Obviously, you come at it from a school division perspective. Are there other things? You know, what sort of belongs with what, and what's sort of like with like, and where would you draw some lines and say that sort of there's a different view of representation for this region or that group?

Mrs. Letendre: Yeah, it's an interesting perspective. I would say that Longview is the clearest example, right? The families that are west of Longview that attend Longview school, that are in Longview community: it's a rural farming community. You see the cattle drives on the back roads throughout the year. It's not something that I would naturally equate to the tourism hubs of

Banff and Jasper. They feel very opposite to that. In terms of the rurality of the High River-Vulcan area, I see that that – I know your challenges here. The scope and size of Livingstone-Macleod as it exists now and Highwood is massive. There are a lot of niche communities that have each of their own individual needs within that rural context. How do you reflect all that voice and then also shift the boundaries? I feel that Longview would fit more appropriately with High River-Vulcan because there's more commonality and synergy with that.

The Okotoks to Calgary: I can see a trend that Okotoks is a growing bedroom community, but it's not quite Calgary, and I don't know if it ever will be. Part of Okotoks is the small-town charm, where they really celebrate what it is to have that small-town feel in kind of an urban setting. Could it fit with Calgary? Yes, but I feel like the greater alignment is with the Diamond Valley. Diamond Valley amalgamated between Black Diamond and Turner Valley not too long ago into becoming one town, where they were separate before, so that in itself is growing as well. Okotoks is probably the advanced stage of where Diamond Valley will eventually be, so it makes sense to pair those together from that perspective in terms of priorities.

Mr. Clark: Great. Just one quick follow-up if you don't mind. Is there value in having more than one MLA advocating for you? If I look at that boundary, you know, around Longview in particular, you're absolutely right. But it's not – I'm sorry, Susan; I'm going to steal your term – a brick wall, right? It is a boundary that's permeable. In this scenario you'd have more than one MLA, potentially, advocating for whatever it is that you're looking for. I'm just kind of curious on your thoughts on that.

Mrs. Letendre: Yeah. Currently we have three MLAs that represent our area. We have Minister Sigurdson and we have MLA Petrovic and we have MLA Elmeligi. We work hard to ensure that they're aware of everything that is happening with Foothills school division and the communities. Is it nicer to have three people at the Legislature advocating for Foothills school division? Definitely. If we combined it all into one, would it be a detriment? Perhaps, because it's one voice in a larger span. I think the biggest worry about Banff-Kananaskis stretching to Banff-Jasper is just the fact that if the MLA was situated in Jasper, for example, the odds of them coming all the way down to Millarville, to Longview area for community consultation – I have empathy for that person because that's a massive area to cover and to represent. So a bit of yes and a bit of no.

Mr. Clark: Fair enough. That is an entirely acceptable answer in our world. We live in those greys all the time. Thank you very much.

Mrs. Letendre: Perfect. You're welcome.

The Chair: Okay. Dr. Martin.

Dr. Martin: Thank you.

This is a huge footprint for a school district, and kudos to you and your colleagues for managing it because it's very large. I wanted to ask you a bit about that footprint. If we did a map that identified all the schools in your district, I mean, you know, the countryside would have fewer and Okotoks would have more, but they would be scattered across the entire footprint, right?

Mrs. Letendre: That's correct.

Dr. Martin: For example, you'd have an elementary and a middle school in this village but people would have to bus further to go to a high school. That's a very typical example from my own history.

But then, quite apart from the sprawl of just the overall footprint, (a) you're used to having several different MLAs in play and how to advocate with them, and two, I mean, we speak about, "Well, Diamond Valley kind of goes with Okotoks," but I'm thinking, you know, the entire district that on my map is just blank is full of schools, so some of them are going to have a say in how you get represented by you and your colleagues at the board level and so, too, with the MLA. I suppose what I'm saying is that if the lines are drawn as we have in our interim map as opposed to how they had been in the previous and still-existing configuration, you still have the same problems of identifying representation.

Mrs. Letendre: Yeah, we would. Like you said, the majority of our schools are located in Okotoks and the next in High River, but it's currently that equity of rural education that's really come under the lens, the spotlight. As classrooms get more complex and education becomes a whole different beast, which we won't dive into, it's the rural opportunities that the kids have. When a public school system offers a rural school, it's often the anchor of the community. If a school pulls out of a rural town or village, often that space: people move out of it and it becomes obsolete. So we have a responsibility to ensure that this rural school is a flourishing school to provide a flourishing community, and it's done easier when you have an MLA who actually lives in the area, who knows the landscape, and who I can say I've seen at the store or whatnot, right? That's the challenge when we live in Canada. When it's such a broad, vast land, we have this sparsity, right?

Dr. Martin: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mrs. Samson.

Mrs. Samson: Thank you.

Thank you for your presentation. I think we're all on the same page in that it is a big area, and it's three MLAs. I feel bad that we couldn't offer you no change in that area. You know, the school system will suffer a change, but I think, ultimately, you will still end up with three MLAs. It's just the boundaries will have changed, so you have to rekindle those relationships.

Mrs. Letendre: That's part of the work that we do as trustees and elected officials. I guess the biggest takeaway for us, though, is that opportunity for effective representation of those families. When you're sitting at a school council meeting with a group of parents and they say, "Well, my MLA is this, and my MLA is that," but we live on the other side of the road, you go, "How is that?"

1:50

Mrs. Samson: Exactly. How is that possible?

Mrs. Letendre: As we spoke before, some MLAs are exceptional in reaching out to their constituents and being available, and others not as much. You can't predict that, so you have to work with the structures that you're given. If we can help shape the structure in a way that will afford us an easier path, we definitely would do that.

Mrs. Samson: Exactly. Okay. Thank you very much.

Mrs. Letendre: You're welcome.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Evans.

Mr. Evans: Good afternoon. Thanks for your presentation. A question for you. You know, clearly within a school division that big you have within that school division different community interest groups, and you have areas and communities that would be more urban than rural and some that would be more rural than urban. In terms of them representing their interests and conveying them to you as a school division, how do they do that, and then how do you take in that information to adequately represent them with respect to the province?

Mrs. Letendre: That's a very good question, and it's definitely the crux of the work. We often describe ourselves as a rural school division because of just that. The way we are structured, the fact that we have urban elements supports those rural elements. The way education is funded on a per-student piece, the more densely populated areas can support those rural areas.

From an elected official standpoint we have trustees that are elected in the different wards. We have two that are in Okotoks, one in High River, and then we have another three that are in the more rural areas. We are regularly out in our community, and we attend school council meetings and bring that voice of the parents to the table of the board to inform those decisions. But yeah, it's a careful balancing. How do you equitably balance opportunity in the rural and in the urban?

Mr. Evans: How do you decide your ward boundaries? That's exactly what we need to know.

Mrs. Letendre: I know. Well, it's funny because one of our newly elected trustees asked that question. I did a deep dive into it, and I could not find a solid answer. Foothills school division was established in 1938, and then in the '70s it had another relook at the ward boundaries. There is some guidance from the minister, but it is ultimately this division that chooses how its ward boundaries have been set, but I cannot tell you. I'm still looking for that answer.

Mr. Evans: Well, when we're done this.

Mrs. Samson: We'll get on that.

Mr. Evans: If you need Justice Miller to, you know, train us all, we're ready to go.

Mrs. Letendre: Perfect. You'll have the experience, and you can come. That would be great because some of it makes no sense with the boundaries as well.

Mr. Evans: I don't know that we have good experience, but we'll have some experience

Mrs. Letendre: Experience nonetheless. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you very much. I have one question, and it may betray my ignorance. Is there an equivalent school division on the separate school side that covers the same geography that Foothills does?

Mrs. Letendre: Not necessarily. Not really. Catholic schools are formed largely in urban centres. They don't necessarily serve the rural areas as much, so they span actually all the way from Strathmore to Canmore. They span a bigger population, but they're not busing kids or moving families in those small . . .

The Chair: Okay. They don't have the same experience you do.

Mrs. Letendre: Yeah.

The Chair: Okay. Well, thank you so much, and your personal examples were very interesting and helpful. I'm quite proud of the commission that no one blurted out: where's Longview?

Mrs. Letendre: It's okay. I should have brought beef jerky because they're famous for it.

Mr. Evans: I know exactly what you're talking about.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mrs. Letendre: Yes. Well, thank you for the opportunity today.

The Chair: Please feel free to stay for the rest of the presentations.

Mrs. Letendre: I will stay for a little bit. Thank you.

The Chair: Our next presenter is Gerry Burger-Martindale.

Take a moment and get comfortable, Ma'am, and when we've got the frame presented on the screen, you can introduce yourself and tell us what riding you're from.

Mrs. Burger-Martindale: I will, indeed. It's very interesting, and I think you'll probably think that this is a bit of from the sublime to the ridiculous, and it's probably Alberta in a nutshell, right? A huge amount, and then the details that I hope that I can pass over to you.

My name's Gerry Burger-Martindale, and I want to thank you for this opportunity to present to you. When I was reading the interim report, I thought: what an incredible job to have. I'm quite jealous. It's really difficult, but isn't that a wonderful thing to do?

The Chair: We can put a chair up here.

Mrs. Burger-Martindale: Absolutely. Next time please think of me because: fascinating.

Mr. Evans: I'll take your spot and talk about Montgomery.

Mrs. Burger-Martindale: Okay. We're on. I thought you did an incredible job, well executed. I've obviously got some points and other people have got some points. That's what it's about in our democracy, isn't it?

Okay. I'm Gerry Burger-Martindale. I have lived in Canyon Meadows since 1989. God. Wasn't meant to be that long. And since 1993, which is the earliest I could track back, I've been part of the constituencies of Calgary-Lougheed, Calgary-Fish Creek, and Calgary-Acadia, and I haven't moved one iota. It's with pleasure that I have found myself in Calgary-Acadia for a few years, as I know this area. I shop in local stores. My daughter attended school, daycare, and youth groups in Kingsland. I know the communities up and down Elbow Drive, and I can say with certainty that Elbow Drive forms a community and social barrier and a logical constituency border as much, believe it or not, as larger roads recognized in the report such as 14th Street Southwest and Macleod Trail.

I hope you've all got my little map here so that we can point to things.

The Chair: Yes.

Mrs. Burger-Martindale: Thank you.

With schools to the east and west side of Elbow Drive, not to mention higher-priced housing stock on the west side than the east

side, I've got a little bit about the constituency. I got some of this from Wikipedia.

The Calgary-Acadia electoral district was created in the 2010 Alberta boundary redistribution. It was created primarily from the old electoral district of Calgary-Egmont . . .

I was probably part of that, too, and a portion of Calgary-Glenmore. When created in 2010, the Calgary-Acadia electoral district had a population of 37,718, which was, amazingly, 7.7 per cent below the provincial average of 40,800. Minor adjustments to the district occurred in the 2017 electoral boundaries redistribution, where the Chinook Park community moved out of Calgary-Acadia and into Calgary-Glenmore, dividing on Elbow Drive.

Further, Bow River would no longer bisect the constituency and, instead, would largely form its eastern boundary. The boundaries as adjusted would give the electoral district a population of [48,900] in 2017,"

which Wikipedia says is 9 per cent above the provincial average.

This is where the map comes in. In the draft report it's proposed that Calgary-Acadia lose Kingsland and Manchester – those are the red areas; I'm not very artistic – with a combined population of 5,713 and gain Lake Bonavista, the green area, with a population of 10,293, for a population gain of 4,580. Calgary-Acadia would also lose the thriving commercial area north of Glenmore Trail and east Blackfoot Trail. So that's the sort of slightly nebulous area to the top right-hand side, and that area makes a good mix with the residential areas south of it. I have personal knowledge that these businesses enjoy being recognized and represented by their MLA.

2:00

Adding Lake Bonavista means over 18 per cent of the constituency will be new, which is a huge percentage and will drastically change the riding. Moreover, Lake Bonavista is quite different from existing areas of Calgary-Acadia, i.e., northwards of Anderson Road is Willow Park and Acadia. So that's on that slide. Calgary-Acadia is already 4 per cent above the provincial average using the 2016-2017 provincial boundaries commission report, and these changes take it to 4.9 per cent above it. Furthermore, adding Kingsland to Calgary-Glenmore takes its population – "its" being Calgary-Glenmore – to six per cent above the provincial average.

The report touches on the status quo, quoting

. . . that [if] the status quo is achieving effective representation, that warrants consideration.

And again,

This is consistent with Justice McLachlin noting in *Carter* that "history" is a proper consideration in drawing electoral division boundaries.

With regard to proposed changes, and I'm quoting from page 40 of your report,

In order to increase Calgary-Acadia's population, it is accordingly further recommended that areas north of Canyon Meadows Drive, east of Macleod Trail, south of Anderson Road, and west of Bow Bottom Trail . . .

even describing it is a mouthful,

. . . be moved from Calgary-Fish Creek to Calgary-Acadia.

So that's the green area.

These areas share significant . . . centres and infrastructure with neighbourhoods to the north and west already in Calgary-Acadia, says the report. Respectfully, I'll challenge that statement with data on slide seven.

What we're looking at here is data that I've pulled from the last of the marvellous city of Calgary community profiles, which ended in 2019. I used to use them all the time in my former life. I pulled out percentage of population with postsecondary education, percentage of population with a degree, and percentage of population with an income above \$150,000 in 2019, and the

Calgary average for those three is 61 per cent, 36 per cent, and 27 per cent, respectively. Comparing Acadia and Willow Park, which are part of Calgary-Acadia, with Lake Bonavista, we see that Acadia has 54 per cent, 22 per cent, and 15 per cent of postsecondary degree and income, and Lake Bonavista has 68 per cent, 43 per cent, and 44 per cent of the population with income above \$150,000. If you know Calgary, you know what I'm talking about. It's hugely different.

Comparing Kingsland to Chinook Park, where the report says that they're similar, we've got 58 per cent, 28 per cent, and 11 per cent of the population with an income above \$150,000, and in Chinook Park we have 71 per cent, 52 per cent, and 41 per cent, respectively. Now, these are 2019 figures. Things change, gentrification changes, but these are some quite interesting statistics we have here.

Also with regard to one of the big, shared service centres and infrastructure is Southcentre Mall, and I'm quoting from the Southcentre report, which says the mall serves as "a super-regional shopping centre," and annual footfall reaches about 6 million visitors, generating \$300 million in total sales, which is terrific, but it just shows that it's not a local shopping centre. Everyone shares Southcentre. There are local shopping areas, some quite large such as Lake Bonavista and Willow Park, within each of these communities with no need to share these facilities. With regard to Calgary-Glenmore and Calgary-Acadia, all the small commercial activities, i.e. the corner strip malls, are within Calgary-Acadia on the east side of Elbow Drive.

There are some possible alternatives to the changes that you recommended, but that's not my job. I would and I wouldn't. By that I mean that I'm not yet treading on your toes, right? The new Calgary-Hays is 5.1 per cent below average, and boundaries could be moved between Calgary-Peigan, Calgary-Fish Creek, and Calgary-Acadia to create more consistent populations while utilizing existing boundaries and still significant geographic features.

In summary, I would say that currently Calgary-Acadia is 4 per cent above provincial average. It includes a mixture of fairly average in terms of education and income, communities and commercial businesses. With proposed boundary changes Calgary-Acadia would lose commercial businesses, would lose the communities of Kingsland and Manchester, population 5,713, and gain the community of Lake Bonavista, population 10,293. The increased population brings it to 4.9 per cent above the average. Kingsland's population is vastly different from the adjacent, across Elbow Drive, Chinook Park: percentage of incomes over \$150,000, 11 per cent versus 41 per cent, and clearly reflected in the housing stock. Acadia's population – that means the community of Acadia's population – is also very different from Lake Bonavista's, also reflected in the housing stock and leisure activities.

My request is to relook at the proposed changes to Calgary-Acadia. Thank you.

The Chair: Okay. Thank you very much. And thank you for your – obviously, a lot of work put into examining our report here.

I'll start with Mr. Evans. Any questions or comments?

Mr. Evans: Yeah. With respect to the socioeconomic data that you put up in terms of the number of postsecondary degrees and people over \$150,000, what were you using that to illustrate? You were using that data foundationally to do what with respect to your proposal?

Mrs. Burger-Martindale: Well, the report talks about the consistency of shared services and the consistency of adjacent areas in the ridings, and this is just to say that there aren't. They're quite

different areas, and this is a demonstration of that. I'm not saying that there aren't any other areas that also share these sorts of differences, which, you know, after all, is the way that the big cities are made up. I absolutely understand that. I'm saying that, particularly with the Kingsland and Chinook Park division, Elbow Drive is a significant divider every bit as significant as the adjacent ones of 14th Street and Macleod Trail, certainly to the people who live there. I've talked to people on the other side of Elbow Drive who live in Calgary-Glenmore, and they agree with me entirely. I've lived these many years traipsing up and down Elbow Drive. I know what the differences are, and that community of Kingsland fits very nicely and happily within Calgary-Acadia.

Mr. Evans: So your options are:

- (a) sparsity, density . . . [population growth],
- (b) communities of interest . . .
- (c) geographical features,
- (d) the availability and means of communication and transportation . . .
- (e) the desirability of understandable and clear boundaries, and [then]
- (f) any other factors the Commission considers appropriate.

Would this be something that you would say we should throw into – it would be a factor in (f)?

Mrs. Burger-Martindale: I think it could be.

Mr. Evans: And would it help us to identify, for example, a community of interest?

Mrs. Burger-Martindale: Well, I think that you went through the initials. There is a geographic boundary. Elbow Drive is the geographic boundary.

Mr. Evans: But in terms of your socioeconomic data.

Mrs. Burger-Martindale: Yeah. Well, maybe I just got carried away down a rabbit hole, but I thought it was very interesting to put those two together and say that there's no difference. There's very much a difference. Similarly, with Lake Bonavista and the communities to the north of it. I mean, I had no idea that Lake Bonavista had the population it did.

Mr. Evans: Thank you.

Mrs. Burger-Martindale: You're welcome. Thank you.

The Chair: Susan.

2:10

Mrs. Samson: Thank you for your presentation. It was well thought out. When we were looking at the riding of Calgary-Acadia, I thought that the end result had very clear, definable, understandable boundaries and that that would be helpful when people are thinking about: who is my MLA, and where do I find them? I think that's what we were looking at when we were doing it, and there were some communities taken away and some added in.

My question to you would be – the biggest change is Lake Bonavista. Can you live with Lake Bonavista? Like, they must have overlapping needs that they would request representation with their MLA the same as whether you lived in Lake Bonavista or somewhere else within the riding, you know, when you talk about the basics of housing, health care, education. What are your thoughts on that?

Mrs. Burger-Martindale: I'm sorry. I'm not quite sure what the question is.

Mrs. Samson: Like, could you live with the people from Lake Bonavista? Do they not have similar needs to you?

Mrs. Burger-Martindale: Oh, I'm sure we all do. It's interesting. The former presenter talking about the kids' parents in their school districts having different MLAs. My daughter went to French immersion school, not the local school. How many MLAs were represented by the kids there? Doubtless many. It's an urban issue as well as a rural issue. I mean, you're right. It looks like a square, rectangle if we include Lake Bonavista. I could say that some of my best friends live in Lake Bonavista. But I think Lake Bonavista looks south, not north, whereas the area of Kingsland and the northern part of our riding would say they're, if not in the inner core, in the good old doughnut around the city centre. I'm not sure that Lake Bonavista, with its eyes on its beautiful lake, would necessarily be looking downtown as the centre.

I mean, yes and no. We all have the same services, but the medical facilities aren't put one each in the constituency nor any of the other services with the exception of some of the shopping centres. For instance, the Lake Bonavista shopping centre: I think if I lived there, I would find that very suitable except for when I wanted to go to a big box store. The same can't necessarily be said of the little shopping malls up and down Elbow Drive. I mean, I think the answer is yes and no. We all need the services. Living in the same place but in various constituencies over the last 30 years, I've still gone to the same place, if they're still alive, for my medical services and the schools. Again, they're still there.

I think it's fairly nebulous there. I don't think they're distributed in terms of provincial or even federal constituency boundaries, quite honestly.

Mrs. Samson: Great. Good. Thank you.

Mrs. Burger-Martindale: You're welcome.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Dr. Martin, any questions?

Dr. Martin: Thank you. I want to follow along a similar theme and ask you about the Lake Bonavista area. I take it – but tell me where I'm wrong if I am – that it was built later than the area immediately north of Anderson Road.

Mrs. Burger-Martindale: I've got a funny little story if I may. I'm from England, and a million years ago when I was at high school, I had a friend who, obviously, had an aunt, and she travelled in Canada and sent me a postcard. The postcard said that her aunt lived in this strange community. It's all flat and they built an artificial lake, and she thought it was the strangest thing she'd ever seen. I finished high school in '72. My house in Canyon Meadows is '74, so Lake Bonavista isn't all that new. Now, the Acadia district probably is more like '60s. I never thought that I'd come to live near where my friend was quite dismissive of, but there you go.

Dr. Martin: I'm just trying to tease out – your impression that you offered up was that the Lake Bonavista neighbourhood, roughly speaking, is orientated south. I mean, obviously, the Fish Creek park is on their southern flank, as it were, so that makes some sense to me, but is there a southern orientation with respect to shopping?

Mrs. Burger-Martindale: Well, as I say, the Lake Bonavista shopping centre is quite a good shopping centre. It has, you know, a Safeway. It has a pharmacy. It has all sorts of things. Like, all of us, we go to Southcentre. We go to Tsuut'ina for our Costco. Those aren't built on any boundaries except city boundaries, so I don't

know that there are any particularly southern shopping centres, not in the same way of Southcentre. Oh, yeah. There's Shawnessy. I don't know where they shop, but I would think Southcentre and Tsuut'ina for Costco.

Dr. Martin: And your major point there, really, was that they're not orientated north.

Mrs. Burger-Martindale: No. No. I can't see why they would be going north of Anderson. That intersection there is pretty hefty. The reason to go north – well, except, of course, for Fish Creek library, which is just on the edge of Anderson and Lake Bonavista Drive, so they presumably go to Fish Creek library unless they go to Shawnessy library, but mostly it's within their area.

Dr. Martin: Well, thanks.

The Chair: Mr. Clark.

Mr. Clark: Yeah. You know what? I think I was going to ask a little bit more about Lake Bonavista, and all my questions have been asked. Thank you so much for being here.

Mrs. Burger-Martindale: I know much more about Acadia than I do Lake Bonavista despite my friends living there.

Mr. Clark: Thank you so much.

Mrs. Burger-Martindale: Thank you very much.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mrs. Burger-Martindale.

Mrs. Burger-Martindale: Would you like any documents that I...

The Chair: Please leave them with Aaron.

Mrs. Burger-Martindale: Okay.

The Chair: Sandy Stevenson is the next presenter.

Mrs. Burger-Martindale, please stay if you can for the rest of the presentations. It's always helpful.

Mr. Stevenson, have a seat and tell us what riding you live in and what riding or electoral district or districts you wish to comment on.

Mr. Stevenson: Thank you. I live in Calgary-Varsity, and I wish to comment broadly on the work of the commission, not on any particular riding, because I think other people from Calgary-Varsity have already made some very good, detailed comments about the proposed boundary changes. The only thing I would say to that is that, having reviewed some of those, I'm quite in agreement that adding Montgomery to Calgary-Varsity has a high probability over the next 10 years, before the next boundary commission is convened, to wind up with pushing us well over the 25 per cent maximum that we're trying to accomplish.

My remarks are almost entirely generically on the work of the commission. In my initial comment, Mr. Chairman, to the commission on May 23, 2025, and again on December 18, 2025, I raised the very serious issue of the perception that the provision of the electoral boundaries was at risk of being an exercise in blatant gerrymandering across the province, which was a bit of an extreme view. However, the 1993 boundary revision history of the current party and government gives enormous weight to the possibility of that outcome and the further risk of undermining democracy in the province and entrenching rigid divisions of opinion on public policy here in this province. Any boundary revision that is perceived by the 777,404 citizens who did not vote for the current government

party may result in those citizens refusing to accept the legitimacy of the result of the next election. That is a situation that must be avoided.

Avoiding that situation is not helped by the passage of a bill banning voting machines and elections in the province. It has been proven in U.S. courts that tampering just isn't possible, which leaves many citizens mistrustful of the integrity of future provincial elections. Fortunately, the actual October 28 interim report goes a long way toward allaying those concerns.

2:20

In most respects municipal boundaries, when setting riding boundaries across the province and our two largest cities in particular, have been very well done. Most of the riding boundaries reflect an attempt at fair, equal, and effective representation. It goes halfway to recognizing the rapid population growth in Calgary and Edmonton by adding another seat in each city. Adding another in each city would go the rest of the way, in my opinion.

Of course, the purpose of interim reports and public feedback sessions is to solicit commentary on oversights, identify missing information that could change the final boundaries and perception of potential misjudgments. Others have already outlined in detail the need to use much more up-to-date information when setting the boundaries for my riding of Calgary-Varsity. That information clearly shows that there is a serious risk in creating a riding which will significantly exceed the plus 25 per cent margin from the provincial average population criteria over the next 10 years. The current boundaries, in my opinion, must be retained in order to avoid that outcome.

The other aspect of boundary setting which creates division and mistrust in the electoral process is the use of hybrid ridings. Any good marketer will tell you that perception is reality and must be dealt with as such. Perception of hybrid ridings is that they only exist to favour the rural voters who support the government party and to disenfranchise urban voters. Any well-meaning intent around some of them has been, in my opinion, more than off-set by that perception, unfortunately, and I encourage the commission to avoid them wherever possible.

Burdened as it is with the negative perceptions rooted in Alberta's political history, the commission must also consider that they'll be watched closely to see if the interim report was only meant to lull urban voters into a sense of complacency only to be rudely surprised by a final report which is anything but fair, equal, and effective. For the good of the province I urge the commission not to be swayed into going down that path. Instead, I urge the commission to continue to use its mandate, as it has in the draft report, to create boundaries that maximize the public perception of fairness, equality, and effectiveness of representation.

The best result that this commission can produce is one that renders all of my fears completely groundless, and I look forward to a final report that achieves that goal. Those are my comments.

The Chair: Thank you for your very good analysis and brief presentation.

Mr. Evans, any questions or comments?

Mr. Evans: No. Thank you for your presentation.

Mr. Stevenson: You're welcome. Thank you for your time.

The Chair: Mrs. Samson.

Mrs. Samson: Thank you for coming out today. That was good information. Also, know that we heard a lot about Calgary-Varsity, so thank you for adding to that.

Mr. Stevenson: Well, as I said, there are other people who have, as I'm aware, put forward some very detailed and comprehensive explanations. I don't need to spend time with that here.

But really, having voted in elections since 1971 in this province, I'm very concerned about the current state of division in Alberta society today. It is far more divisive than anything I've seen in my 50 years of voting, to the point where I'm rather alarmed that we seem to have been on a path over the last several years of divergence to the point where it makes the usual process of crossparty negotiation and compromise enormously more difficult. There are always going to be people who are extremely passionate believers in their particular political party or point of view; it's inherent in a democracy when we have that diversity of opinion. However, there have always been ways in my period of living in Alberta where we have found ways to accomplish reasonable compromises, and what alarms me is that I see that capability continuously slipping away.

You folks have a particular mandate, which is rather limited, but I applaud the fact that you have taken the opportunity to move us more toward the ability to achieve consensus than away from it. That, folks, when I read your October 28 report, was an absolute delight. Thank you for doing that.

Mrs. Samson: Thank you.

The Chair: Dr. Martin, any questions?

Dr. Martin: Well, I just want to say that I fear we will not be able to allay all your fears, but insofar as they are fears about electoral boundaries, we'll do our very best.

Mr. Stevenson: That's all you really can do.

Since they've been used as a device in the past, which left me aghast in 1993 with what happened back then, when six weeks before the election the ruling party rewrote the boundaries and, in fact . . .

The Chair: None of us were there doing that.

Mr. Stevenson: Well, guess what? I was old enough that I was. Even the Premier would have lost a seat if they'd kept the original boundaries.

Well, you know, they got acceptance. One of the things of democracies is acceptance of either side to the other one's eventual victory and acceptance of defeat of the other side. If you lose that, I don't know what happens, and I really don't want to find out. That was the reason why I came to present today, and I appreciate your time and attention to my remarks.

The Chair: Mr. Clark.

Mr. Clark: Yeah. Just a real, you know, thank you. We take this role very seriously, and I really appreciate your comments about the interim report. I think it is noteworthy that it's the first unanimous interim report in 20 years, 25 years. It's been a long time. It is certainly something I think we were striving for for sure.

I guess just maybe one last chance for you to tell me what specifically about the interim report you like. Yeah. Maybe I'll just ask that.

Mr. Stevenson: Well, as I said in my written remarks, what you really tried to do was make fair and equal and effective representation. I did not see in going through that report where there was any serious attempt to manipulate the boundaries in favour of one party or the other, okay?

Most people don't think about these things, quite frankly, mostly because we haven't had to because we have always had these ways to not worry about them, to come to compromises. That's always been possible all the times that I have been the age of majority. But now the level of extreme comment that you see not only on social media but in published media across the board leaves one with the impression that that is becoming enormously more difficult.

I think what I liked about your report is that you folks made a tremendous effort to avoid any of that and just to give us fair, equal, and capable representation. Obviously, as an urban resident and a voter I would be much happier to see another seat in Calgary and another one in Edmonton, but at least we have gotten, you know, as I said, halfway there.

I would also point out that what I dislike about hybrid ridings is that urban voters have a very different lived experience from rural ones in Alberta. We have been diversifying in that experience space for all the 50 years I've been an adult, and that process continues. I at one time would have agreed that hybrid ridings, say, 20 or 30 years ago, were not a bad idea because you've got an opportunity for somebody to develop an understanding of both sides of the coin and the very different requirements of an urban versus a rural riding. Regrettably, I don't believe any longer that that's true. You will disenfranchise an urban voter by having an MLA who's distracted with rural concerns.

Having spent 13 years of my life working for Agrium, which was an agricultural company, and being exposed on a daily basis to the concerns of rural Albertans, in fact rural western Canadians, I no longer believe that an MLA that is representing an urban riding can do justice to what the significant requirements and concerns are that are unique to a rural riding and require someone from that riding who has lived that experience. It just isn't the same. They're too diverse.

That is basically what I liked about your report. You went a long way, when you talk about fair and effective representation – sorry to go on a bit at length, but that's what I need. You know, 13 years of reading Green Markets every week, you acquire a bit of an appreciation as to what the broad agricultural issues are, and then living in an urban environment, when you go to the office every day and deal with urban experiences: very, very different.

2:30

Of course, what that also requires, if you do elect along those requirements – and I appreciate, Dr. Martin, what you're saying about that you can't ever with just a boundary commission resolve these issues. You can't at all. You can only make one contribution toward it, which I'm grateful for you doing. But you're going to have to have those two folks try to sit down and work out a legislative agenda which does justice to both, which is inherently difficult, inherently problematic but also inherently necessary in this province or in any other democracy where you have an urban-rural mix.

Mr. Evans: Can I ask a question, Justice Miller?

The Chair: Very quickly.

Mr. Evans: I'm interested in terms of your ability to adapt in that environment, because unless you had a rural upbringing . . .

Mr. Stevenson: I was a city slicker first and foremost.

Mr. Evans: But you had to adapt.

Mr. Stevenson: Oh, yeah.

Mr. Evans: Can you tell us about that? Because that experience would seem to be something that an MLA would have to go through. What was that like for you? What extra effort did you have to do?

Mr. Stevenson: Well, first of all, you know, I was involved in last-mile transportation, delivering 2 million tons of product every year, and I negotiated all the freight rates for that plus some in the western United States, as Agrium was then constituted. My tenure was from 1986 to 1999. Then, of course, the entire business changed with the change of the former co-ops into joint stock companies and the liberation of hundreds of millions of dollars of capital, which they then used to buy out every fertilizer dealership in western Canada, which evaporated my job because then the joint stock companies took over all the freight.

It involved understanding rural delivery requirements. It involved going into and meeting with some of the largest dealers that we had, understanding how their market worked, how they marketed our product, their transportation requirements, how unique they were. I had worked five years for Trimac, which was the third-largest bulk trucking company in North America, as a cost analyst, so I was well prepared to understand the cost basis of transportation at that time. I worked closely with Lloyd Ash at that time, who trained me in truck costing. He's recently passed away, but he wrote the federal government report on the cost of trucks in Canada for many years.

As a result, you became sensitized to a lot of these significant concerns about infrastructure in particular, because all right, that's fine, but you're delivering 60 per cent of your volume in a 12-week period, which is highly compressed delivery time frames, and you're doing it in the middle of road ban season. Now, how do we manage that with 40 per cent loads and 60 per cent loads, all sorts of things which directly get into service and deliverability to the rural market?

Sorry to run a bit at length on that, but it was kind of my job. I do apologize for maybe bending your ear a bit too much, but I lived it for so long.

Yes, adapting to that would require an enormous – I mean, it's a lot of work. With the volume of information that anybody in government, God bless them, has to go through now – I mean, you look at the recent civic election and the constant mention with the new mayor of the firehose effect of just the city government at a \$5 billion budget. Now think about what that does for an almost \$100 billion budget across an entire province. You get the firehose of that.

Plus, it's tough enough for an urban MLA to hold enough town halls to stay in touch with their clients' ongoing concerns, with the constant changes that we all experience today, versus a rural MLA with all of their huge travel requirements and the greater distance. I'm particularly sensitive to those because transit times were my thing, and I just don't see where you can properly service one versus the other. You know, change always happens. It's the rule of life, and we have to adapt to the current environment, not what it was even 20 years ago.

Does that answer your question?

Mr. Evans: If you would have been someone brought up in a rural community, would it have been easier for you to have carried out your role?

Mr. Stevenson: Yeah because I would have known the difference between flax and wheat and barley. I learned all of that stuff and also the soil types. I spent umpteen hours staring at soil type maps to understand the underpinnings of consumption rates and

disappearance rates, the various fertilizer rates and who bought what, why they bought it, and what they needed it for. That was a pretty steep learning curve. Fortunately, I had a lot of fellow colleagues who were born and raised on a – thank you.

I'll end it there, but basically I had a lot of help on that range. Yes. I see where your point is taken, and it only reinforces . . .

The Chair: Mr. Stevenson, I'm going to have to cut you off. Thank you very much for your answers.

Mr. Stevenson: Sorry.

The Chair: I'm going to excuse you, but please stay to hear the rest of the presentations and possibly an opportunity for informal dialogue after. Thank you.

Mr. Stevenson: Sure. You're welcome.

The Chair: Is Mr. Pavit Sidhu here? Oh, great. Please come forward.

Mr. Sidhu: Sorry. Just give me a moment.

The Chair: Sure. Please identify yourself, and tell us what electoral division you're in and which division or divisions you wish to comment on.

Mr. Sidhu: Okay. My name is Pavit Sidhu. I'm here to comment on the riding of Calgary-Falconridge, and because of the nature of the changes, there'll be some commentary on Calgary-Cross as well. That will be the topic for my presentation.

Am I good to begin?

The Chair: Yes, sorry. Please proceed, sir.

Mr. Sidhu: Okay, of course. I'm just going to give you a little bit of background as to why I'm speaking on the boundaries because I think it will give you a good idea of where my insights are coming from. I am currently a constituency manager for the riding of Calgary-Falconridge. I've worked in the office of the MLA since the summer of '23. You know, of course, through supporting constituents, you gain a lot of insights into kind of how they navigate the riding: services, everyday life, identities, perceptions, communities, all those kind of nuances that are going to inform the wonderful work you're all doing.

Then I also have a personal connection. I've been a resident particularly of Whitehorn since I was eight, Temple before that, right next door, the ridings that are actually flipping between Calgary-Cross and Calgary-Falconridge. It was in Calgary-Cross originally, now in Calgary-Falconridge, now going back to Calgary-Cross. I'm also part of the board there as well, the community association, as vice president for the last eight years, and I have extensive grassroots engagement. I was a youth worker before this role with the MLA. So I spent a lot of time, actually my whole life, in this part of the city.

I'll be speaking again based on that feedback as well as the report as to what I think of the changes.

The Chair: Sorry. Can I just stop you? I didn't realize Mr. Clark was out.

He's speaking to Calgary-Falconridge and parts of Calgary-Cross.

Mr. Clark: Yes. I got that. Sorry. I apologize for popping out.

Mr. Sidhu: Oh, no worries.

First of all, I just want to thank the commission for the report. I know it's not easy. It's a Herculean task, and I don't envy any of you sitting on this side of the table because you have so many things to keep in mind as you go through this report, but what I do want to do is just highlight a couple of things about Calgary-Falconridge.

Just to give a little bit of a background as to how this riding started, this one was created in 2017 during the previous commission. They abolished Calgary-Greenway and shifted Calgary-Cross south and took parts of Calgary-McCall, now Calgary-Bhullar-McCall, and made the riding of Calgary-Falconridge, which includes Temple, Whitehorn, Castleridge, Falconridge, Coral Springs, and the east half of Taradale currently. Of course, I know with the boundaries there are some changes, and I'll speak to those in a second. Homestead is also included, which is the new area on the east side of Stoney as well.

2:40

Originally, when the riding was created, it was already 13 per cent above the median. You know, we all know that this part of the city, the northeast quadrant in particular, north parts and adjacent areas, if you look at Airdrie or the area between Chestermere and Calgary, communities like Homestead all the way down to Belvedere: lots of growth. At that time, they said that they weren't expecting growth, but of course we know that was wrong. Part of the reason why there was a lot of growth in Calgary-Falconridge, just to give context, is that besides the addition of Homestead there's a lot of densification happening in some of the older, more mature communities on the south end of the city as well as we have to acknowledge the reality that people in this part of the city live in multigenerational households, especially the ethnic population. So that adds to the density in a way that we might not see by household maybe in some of the other ridings across the city.

Just to speak, kind of, on the particular changes: I'm happy to see the addition of Martindale moving into Calgary-Falconridge. This actually makes a lot of sense, partially because the demographics of Martindale match the adjacent communities of Castleridge, Falconridge, and Taradale quite well. You know, for example, these are communities with significant South Asian populations – actually predominantly South Asian – with a significant Filipino population as well as a growing East African population. Languages like Punjabi, Urdu, and Tagalog are very widely spoken throughout this area, so it makes a lot of sense.

In addition to that, the addition and the removal of Whitehorn and Temple also make a lot of sense as well, just due to the fact that, though it may not seem like it, Calgary McKnight has quite a significant division within the community. Like, the North of McKnight Communities see themselves in one type of way whereas this community south of Calgary McKnight see them in a very different way. For example, Whitehorn and Temple are part of what we call The Properties, right? So that also includes Rundle and Pineridge, which is currently in Calgary-Cross.

These changes make a lot of sense given that, if any of you know the history of the migration of ethnocultural populations in the city, they all start in the Forest Lawn-Penbrooke area, and they move north. That's why you see the South Asian community furthest north, especially in areas like Redstone, Cornerstone, and then you see a lot of growing East African populations kind of in Marlborough Park, Marlborough, because that's more of the recent immigration that's happening to this part of the city. So it absolutely makes sense.

I know there's a little bit of a lack of neighbourhood cohesion, particularly you see it with, like, Taradale and Monterey Park, but you know, it does make sense given that a lot of the people in those communities – there's a lot of fluidity between those communities. I know it's not going to be perfect. Just because the population is

so immense in that area, there's going to have to be, you know, a couple of sacrifices, so that definitely does make sense.

Of course, Westwinds is also included in this area, which also makes sense as it's a huge cultural hub. There are lots of community organizations, religious organizations, places of worship, cultural groups, small businesses, particularly ethnocultural businesses. Often a lot of people from Martindale think they're in our riding anyway, so this addition does make sense because it's just north of the Westwinds industrial area.

In terms of population context, I knew it was already above, but I think with the new boundaries being just 2 per cent above with 56,000 roughly, that's greatly appreciated, but again, the growth drivers as I mentioned are going to be Homestead and other areas on the other side of Stoney as well as the density and the fact that a lot of that growth is always from multigenerational families, so we have more people moving in. I believe Evans had mentioned this, just before the new year in that report during the previous hearings, that you expected 18 per cent growth in that area, and even the adjacent areas are going to see a lot of growth. Like, Calgary-Bhullar-McCall is expected to see almost 29 per cent growth.

Those are kind of my thoughts on the Calgary-Falconridge changes. Again, I really appreciate it. You're doing the best you can with what you got.

Based on the changes that are happening at Calgary-Cross: again, I mentioned this earlier, but I'll reiterate it, which is that Whitehorn and Temple moving to Calgary-Cross restores kind of historical alignment. Everyone in Whitehorn and Temple already think they're in Calgary-Cross because they view themselves as being part of the group of communities south of McKnight and they see themselves as part of The Properties. That includes Rundle and Pineridge. This clarifies a lot of those kind of misunderstandings that often tend to happen when people are trying to find their local MLA, so this change definitely makes sense. You know, they share schools, right? I went to the schools in this area. They share libraries, recreation centres, service hubs, so this definitely does make sense.

It also kind of clarifies some of the demographics of the area. Calgary-Cross is actually similar in demographics to Calgary-East than it is to Calgary-Falconridge, so it's much more mixed. It's a mix of very old, established seniors from decades ago when the communities were first built, with very young newcomer families. It's a very interesting mix, and there's no one community whereas you have a multitude of various communities that have kind of moved up from the Penbrooke-Marlborough area that creates this interesting mix as well. They have their own unique needs as well – right? – as a more mature, kind of older, established community, so it makes sense that they're together because they already advocate together as well.

Those community associations, again, one of which I'm part of: we actively work with the areas south of McKnight, not traditionally north of McKnight, so it definitely does make sense in that regard.

I understand the inclusion of Conrich, which doesn't very much fit the demographics of Calgary-Cross, but I understand that due to population, of course, there are some oddities that are going to happen, so totally understandable. But, again, I think anything past that would be quite odd given that, you know – especially Chestermere, they have their own identity. They're very proud of that identity, as someone who's also worked with folks in Chestermere, and so I think anything past that would be not conducive to good representation, especially when Chestermere has its own needs. I understand why Conrich is included, given that they access Calgary-Cross for services.

Again, this aligns pretty much with public perception and how people think they're supposed to be in terms of boundaries, which is very nice to see, very good in terms of population, only 1.3 per cent above at 55,000. I know Evans had mentioned in the previous report an 11 per cent growth, so still steady compared to maybe some of the communities in the far part of the northeast.

I do have one or two comments just about Calgary as a whole, just to kind of add to the context in this. I know there's a lot of growth pressure, particularly in northeast Calgary, in terms of the actual quadrant, not the riding, just because it is potentially one of the fastest, if not the fastest growing part of the province, and we've seen that. I know Calgary-North East alone is expecting 55 per cent growth. I know this adds a lot of pressure to adjacent areas, so I do appreciate an additional riding being added to the Airdrie-Cochrane corridor that exists because that makes so much sense given how large Airdrie is now and given the movement of folks from the northeast into parts of Airdrie as well.

I know that there have, of course, been other – you know, Calgary-North East was basically cut in half, which makes sense given Deerfoot is a major boundary, and often people on the other side of Deerfoot don't really identify as being part of the cultural northeast, right? There are the physical boundaries and then there are the cultural boundaries, and so it definitely does make sense to keep everything contiguous on this side of Deerfoot.

Speaking of boundaries, I know that the majority of the growth, besides in the Airdrie, far northeast part is that there's going to be a lot of growth, I know, on the other side of Stoney. If you go all the way up from Homestead by Airport Trail, all the way down to Belvedere by 17th Avenue, that whole corridor is filling up. There are so many communities – right? – like Twinhills, Huxley, et cetera. Of course, that also includes the Conrich area as well, which has also seen significant growth, often transplants from the traditional communities like Calgary-Falconridge and Calgary-Cross.

I think with that added growth – and I know you folks have definitely done your best to plan for future growth, and I know there have been two ridings added to Calgary, again, with Calgary-Confluence and Calgary-Nose Creek, which is amazing. There is, I know, a hybrid-type riding potentially indicated on the south end of the city with Calgary-Okotoks, but I would say that instead of having a hybrid riding, that third riding should actually be a fully Calgary riding, given the expected growth, particularly around the outskirts of Stoney, because we know it's going to explode. That in-between area is filling up faster than most people can even keep track. You drive by a month later, and there's a new building up.

I think that, you know, despite these kinds of additions, I would humbly request that we should consider making that third seat a fully Calgary seat, given the abundance of growth that we know is going to happen in the coming years, because then we're going to end up in the same place where we are now, where we're playing catch up. Right? I also know that the urban ridings, of course, far exceed rural populations, but I know that often the urban ridings have concerns kind of around the equity, particularly around representation.

That kind of sums up all my notes. I tried to keep it concise and to the point. If there's anything that maybe you folks would like clarification on, I'm more than happy to kind of go back and address anything.

2:50

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Sidhu. A very concise and punchy presentation.

Mr. Sidhu: In my line of work we have to. My phone's already buzzing because I'm already getting calls from work, like: where are you?

The Chair: We always say that we're happy when MLAs come to present, and many times the alternative brain and the alternative person in the world of an MLA is someone like yourself. Thank you very much.

I'm going to turn it over to the commission for questions. Any questions, Mr. Evans? Okay.

Mr. Evans: Yes. What was your point? I wasn't sure if . . .

Mr. Sidhu: To summarize, I'm very happy with the boundaries that have been introduced because they align very much with, I think, the rationale with those mentioned in the report as well as the rationale that you see kind of on the ground at the grassroots level.

Mr. Evans: So you're okay with what we did with Currie and . . .

Mrs. Samson: Cross.

Mr. Sidhu: Sorry. Cross and Falconridge.

Mr. Evans: With Cross and Falconridge.

Mr. Sidhu: Yes. Absolutely.

Mr. Evans: Okay. That's what I thought.

Mr. Sidhu: Sorry. I get bogged down sometimes in detail. Apologies if I wasn't clear about that. Again, I think the only kind of addition I had was at the end, where I would encourage that last riding to be a fully Calgary riding because of, again, the expected growth. But I've been very happy with the report just because, again, it aligns much closer to the reality on the ground. I don't expect anything to be perfect. That's, like, nearly impossible given the task that you've all been given, but I do really appreciate what's been in the report.

The Chair: Okay. Thank you.

Mrs. Samson, any questions?

Mrs. Samson: Thank you for your presentation. I appreciate that. You should also know that we did get written submissions on the very topics you spoke about, and they mirror what you're saying to us today. So thank you.

The Chair: Dr. Martin.

Dr. Martin: Yeah. Thank you.

I was taken by a couple of occasions you spoke about McKnight Boulevard as being a perceived dividing line among the communities. I'm very interested in that kind of topic, you know, because you mentioned later that they're both physical and cultural boundaries. Am I right to infer that you think McKnight is both of those things?

Mr. Sidhu: Yes. Absolutely. I used the example earlier even of Deerfoot, right?

Dr. Martin: Yeah. Well, that's the big one.

Mr. Sidhu: I think it's one of those things where you may not see it as kind of an overview on a map, but based on how the communities work together, how they advocate, who is connected to whom, that often ends up being a very hard boundary. There's

even an organization called North of McKnight Communities, right?

Dr. Martin: Oh, really?

Mr. Sidhu: Then you have the properties south of it, that were kind of built together.

Dr. Martin: Then my inquiry becomes more pointed, if I may. It is because, as you see in the interim maps, we've drawn this new Calgary-Falconridge. There's an area that is south of McKnight. Are we wrong to presume that these are comparable communities north and south of McKnight?

Mr. Sidhu: Yeah. That north part of Monterey definitely is closer to Coral Springs, which is the other community just north of McKnight on that adjacent Stoney side. What I would say to that, just to clarify, is that I understand there's going to be some adjustments made due to population. You know, I don't want to be someone who makes your job tougher than it needs to be . . .

Dr. Martin: That would be hard to do.

Mr. Sidhu: . . . but I particularly know that, especially in the case of Whitehorn and Temple, those particular communities have a really strong affinity whereas folks in kind of Monterey Park and Coral Springs tend to kind of be a little bit on the outside, so they don't mind being on either side. But I know that in Whitehorn and Temple they have a very strong affinity to being with Rundle and Pineridge.

Dr. Martin: Okay. Thank you.

Mr. Clark: I just want to say thank you. I filled up a good half of my notepad here. I wrote down a question, and every time I wrote it down, you answered the question in the course of your submission. So, try as I might, I haven't got any clever questions because you answered them all. That's, I think, the hallmark of a good presentation. Thank you very much.

The Chair: Thank you very much for taking the time. Much appreciated.

Okay. Our next presenter is – I think we'll kind of bypass a break, as we traditionally have, and just go right through – Mr. Rod MacKenzie, please.

Mr. MacKenzie: Yeah. I'm here.

The Chair: Okay. Please come forward.

Thank you again, Mr. Sidhu, and stay if you can to hear the other presentations. I know you're a busy guy.

Mr. Sidhu: Unfortunately, I've got to go and get back to work.

Mr. MacKenzie: Who are you?

Mr. Sidhu: My name is Pavit. I just presented.

Mr. MacKenzie: Yeah, but what's your affiliation with the area?

Mr. Sidhu: I work in the area, and I live in the area.

The Chair: Okay. Thank you again.

Mr. MacKenzie: You did a very good job.

The Chair: Mr. MacKenzie, please have a seat, identify yourself for the record, and tell us what electoral division you live in and

what divisions you're commenting on. We've got a time-allotted period for you, so please proceed.

Mr. MacKenzie: My name is Rod MacKenzie. I live in Calgary-Cross, and that's the only riding I'm going to comment on.

The Chair: Okay.

Mr. MacKenzie: I'm sure you've heard a lot about Calgary-Confluence. I don't care about that. I'm only going to comment on Calgary-Cross, and I will be candid with you. I am the president of the UCP Calgary-Cross board. I have a long affiliation with the Amery family. I was the president of Calgary-East when Mickey's dad, Moe Amery, was the MLA there. This is my background.

Most of my life I've lived in south Calgary. I lived in Lake Bonavista and Millrise. Seven years ago I moved to Calgary-Cross to live in the riding where I work because my office is there, and my office has been there on and off for 25 years. So I feel I have strong connections to Calgary-Cross.

Now, my concern with the new boundaries is that I believe, as a principle, that the historic communities that have been in the same riding should be together. So I believe that the proper setup for Calgary-Cross would be Pineridge, Rundle, Marlborough Park . . .

The Chair: Slow down.

Dr. Martin: Mr. MacKenzie, only one of us is from Calgary, and these are just words, so we have to write them down.

The Chair: Pineridge, Rundle. What else?

Mr. MacKenzie: Marlborough Park, Marlborough, Mayland Heights, and Vista Heights, plus the Prince of Peace retirement trailer park.

You know, I kind of agreed with what the last guy was saying. In my view, 32nd Avenue is a natural division for the area. Like, that should be a divider for that in terms of the same schools and everything else. The communities south of 32nd Avenue – Marlborough, Marlborough Park, Pineridge, Rundle – had the same schools and demographically they're quite similar.

I don't know how much my friend got into this, the guy that was before me, but when you look at the demographics of those communities, it's highly Caucasian, it's Arab whereas Monterey Park more resembles the demographics of Falconridge. Like, it's a large Sikh population and Punjabi speakers.

In terms of demographics, the communities that I mentioned are very similar; they're Arab, they're Caucasian, a large Filipino population, which is also true of Monterey Park and the northern parts of that region. In terms of shared transportation, shared schools, those communities – Pineridge, Rundle, Marlborough Park, Marlborough – belong together.

To balance it out, I think that Mayland Heights and Vista Heights probably have more in common with those communities than Monterey Park, right? Monterey Park probably belongs with – and I think my friend kind of touched on this before. Monterey Park probably more resembles the demographics and the shared infrastructure with the Calgary-Falconridge community. This is my view of it. The Prince of Peace retirement home, the retirement trailer park: I believe that they also share infrastructure with those communities, and I think that they would be properly lumped in with them.

That's my presentation. If you have any questions, I'm prepared to answer.

The Chair: Actually, I wouldn't mind if you went to the map up there, the screen, grab a microphone, and I want you to point out to us where Monterey Park is.

Mr. MacKenzie: Yes. I can do this. Let me just approach it here. This is the new map that you guys are proposing.

The Chair: Yes, this is the new map. So just generally point out the various districts that you – starting with Monterey Park.

3:00

Mr. MacKenzie: These two blocks . . .

The Chair: Okay. Two blocks: meaning the two higher blocks?

Mr. MacKenzie: They're Temple and Whitehorn. This is Rundle, where I live. This is Pineridge. This here is Monterey Park.

The Chair: Okay. That's right at the intersection.

Mr. MacKenzie: Yeah. And this is like a rural area there. But, as I say, this is really important to us, in our view. Marlborough and Marlborough Park belong with Rundle and Pineridge. These two areas here: we're not happy that they're being removed from our riding at all. So these two, Whitehorn and Temple, belong in Falconridge. Monterey Park probably is better than Falconridge. But this area here is what we think should be our riding. Plus, to make the numbers work, we think that Mayland Heights and Vista Heights would be good additions to our riding as well, plus the Prince of Peace retirement trailer park.

Mr. Clark: Where is that?

Mr. MacKenzie: That's kind of in that rural area there.

The Chair: Go and point it out again, please.

Mr. Evans: So 32nd Avenue is the dividing line?

Mr. MacKenzie: This should be the dividing line. Well, yes, exactly right. This should be the dividing line. So Prince of Peace is like here somewhere, so that's fine, but I don't know if the numbers would work, like we have to make the numbers work, right?

Mr. Clark: Is it within, is it like just – I could probably google it.

Mr. MacKenzie: I think this is Temple. Prince of Peace is in here somewhere.

The Chair: Is it south of 16th or north of 16th?

Mr. MacKenzie: You know, I think it's parallel to Temple. Just a minute. Let me turn my phone off here. I actually think it might be north of 16th, but we'd be happy with that. So that rural area there: if the numbers work, we're happy with that. But if the numbers don't work, then we have to do something else, right?

Mr. Clark: I think as it stands now, that is in Cross, that little dip down there where it says city of Calgary – oh, wait a minute.

Mr. MacKenzie: And that was not part of the riding before. This is like a rural area. We're not opposed to that, but if the numbers don't work, then we would be saying we'd rather go with Vista Heights and Mayland Heights. We have to make the numbers work as well, and I appreciate . . .

Mr. Evans: So you're saying that above 32nd Avenue, that goes elsewhere; below 16th Avenue is in.

Mr. MacKenzie: This is Temple here, so Prince of Peace would be here. We're interested in Prince of Peace, to be honest with you, but if we can't make it work, that's fine.

Mr. Evans: Below 16th Avenue, where's the cut-off line?

Mr. MacKenzie: So 32nd Avenue should be the boundary, right here. Right here should be the boundary, then we have Rundle, Pineridge, Marlborough, Marlborough Park, then shake this place. I don't know if we can make it work, but, as I said, Prince of Peace is somewhere in there, and we'd be happy with that.

Mr. Clark: Yeah, it is. Currently it's inside Cross.

Mr. MacKenzie: In this map here, Prince of Peace is part of that.

Mr. Clark: Yes, that's correct.

Mr. MacKenzie: But this is a new map.

Mr. Clark: Yes, this is the new map. We have put it in.

Mr. MacKenzie: Historically, it was not part of Calgary-Cross.

Mr. Clark: No, but it is in now.

Dr. Martin: But this also includes Conrich, which you're suggesting, you know, we could switch out.

Mr. MacKenzie: We're happy with Conrich as well, but this is new, and if it can't – I know you have to make the numbers work, like you have to make the numbers match. Much more important to us, to be honest with you, is that we would rather see Marlborough and Marlborough Park together with Rundle and Pineridge because historically that's what we've done.

Mr. Evans: Where are the schools?

Mr. MacKenzie: You have Lester B. Pearson, which is in Pineridge, an important high school. I believe that some of the kids in Marlborough and Marlborough Park would go to Forest Lawn, but that's not in the riding. I think Lester B. Pearson is the most important one in terms of high schools. And then there are a number of elementaries, but that they share, and there are a few others. Yeah.

Mr. Evans: Okay.

The Chair: Okay. We've kind of had that dialogue already started. Any more questions of Mr. MacKenzie, Dr. Martin?

Dr. Martin: No, thank you.

The Chair: Well, thank you very much, sir, for coming. It's obviously an area you're very familiar with, and thanks for pointing out the suggested changes.

Mr. MacKenzie: Thank you for your time today.

The Chair: Okay.

Mr. MacKenzie: So you're a justice?

The Chair: I am.

Mr. MacKenzie: A King's Bencher?

The Chair: King's Bench.

Mr. MacKenzie: Thank you. Nice to see you.

The Chair: I believe that leaves us with Mr. Maslanka. Is Jerzy Maslanka present? Please state your name, sir, and again, tell us where you're from and what electoral divisions you wish to comment on.

Mr. Maslanka: Where I was driving from. Okay. I was driving from Nordegg, Alberta. It takes four hours, three and a half hours in winter conditions to get here.

The Chair: Where in northern Alberta?

Mr. Maslanka: Nordegg, Alberta.

The Chair: Oh, Nordegg. Sorry. Okay.

Mr. Maslanka: That's my Polish accent.

My name is Jerzy Maslanka. I would like to thank you for the opportunity to sit in front of you and make this submission. I'm a resident of Misty Valley. It's a small subdivision about 10 miles from Nordegg. I've been a resident there for 22 years, and I worked in the oil and gas business for 30 years. I retired. I should say, I was forced to retire by COVID in 2021. Then during COVID I realized that I don't want to go back.

I love history. I love Alberta history. I love to research Alberta history, and I love to research the colonial Alberta history. I'm always searching for the truth, and, you know, it's very exciting to actually learn about the Alberta history. I decided to start a tour company, and I have a Jeep Wrangler Sport four-seat, so I cannot take too many people but just two mostly. I didn't even realize that I'm going to be one of the most seeking tour operators in Banff national park. I do tours. I offer the tours. For the last 20 years I'm very involved with the community. I know the community. I have many friends at Big Horn reservation, Smallboy Camp reservation. It's not an official reservation, but it's not far from here.

Why I am here: I have to say that I love the boundary. I'm familiar with the boundary, and we discussed with many friends those boundaries back in the summer.

Mrs. Samson: Can I just clarify. I don't mean to tell your story. Are you liking the boundary that includes Nordegg in Banff-Kananaskis or in Banff-Jasper?

Mr. Maslanka: No, I love the proposed boundary.

Mrs. Samson: In Banff-Jasper? Okay. Thank you.

Mr. Maslanka: I have to be clear. I love the Jasper boundary.

Mrs. Samson: Okay. That's what I wanted. Thank you.

Mr. Maslanka: I don't like the other boundaries. The reason for this is – I was not planning to be here on Saturday morning, but then I followed the Clearwater county council meetings. They post the agendas, and today there was a council meeting, and they voted to submit proposed electoral boundary changes affecting Clearwater county to you. That is going to be presented on January 19. I went through this, and I said: I don't like anything there.

So I contacted my ward 5 councillor. I said: "Why did you never ask me? Why did you never come to our community and do a meeting and say, 'Guys, what do you think?' before we are submitting?" I said: "This is not fair. This is not fair, to say something that I don't agree with." On Sunday I found the website. I signed up. I am very thankful that in the last minute I had the

chance to submit why I don't agree with the county submission and what I like in this new proposed boundary.

3:10

I've been living there for 22 years, and I've been working there for 22 years, so I know the region very well. I know the people. Honestly, it's a stagnant, very rural area with a very, very solid conservative base. I remember when I came to this country in '87. They were still burning crosses there in this region. I always understand. It's very good, hard-working people that I work with but very opinionated. A person like me, who doesn't really align with the Conservative Party policy, you know, a voice like me is marginalized. I never had a chance to really sit with MLA Nixon or other MLAs and say: let's talk. Let's talk differently about things – right? – how we want to see this old boundary.

I feel that there is no balance. There is no balance. Once when I realized and I've seen the new boundary, I said: "Yeah, this is the balance. This is the place where the marginalized voices can be heard." When we look at the map, you can see the Rockies. I mean, the Rockies means tourism. The Rockies means 5 million people coming to this region, and I'm part of it. You know, I bring those people to this region. I show them the province, the history. I focus on the culture. My company is called Elite Brands Culture Discovery Tours. I love to share. I love to share this with people. And I believe that when we talk about these new boundaries, we have to look for the balance for the growth, the environmental stewardship, right? It's very difficult. It was always difficult to talk about the environment, and it is with the current boundaries because everybody knows in this province what the opinion is on the eastern slope piece by the current government, right?

Also, what I really like to see in this new boundary: I really like to see that for the first time First Nation communities are included and being an integral part of this boundary. I have many friends on the Stoney Nakoda reservation. Morley is, you know, the place that all the chiefs are. This is a totally different boundary, right? Their voices are never heard. They have to talk to the chiefs that live in the different part of the constituency. There's no communication. The chiefs speak about their problem or don't speak at all. So with these new boundaries, they're very excited. My First Nations friends are very excited. They said: "You know what? We're going to have one MLA. I don't need to go more and talk to the chief. I can go like you. I can go sit with the MLA and talk to them."

Especially, you know, there are plans for this region where I live, and there are big plans. There's \$23 billion that the government wants to invest into this region. And knowing that without proper communication with the First Nations people, with the people who live there, these are going to be, like, very difficult things to acknowledge. Having everything under one room: that's the best way to do it.

I wrote this yesterday, you know, the points, what I'm going to talk about, and this morning I woke at 5 o'clock and I was too early today, Commissioner Samson.

Mrs. Samson: Yes, you were.

Mr. Maslanka: You know, when I was looking at what I wrote and I look at the old boundaries, the new boundaries that you are proposing, I just realize that the Jasper boundaries – I start to think about the separation from Canada, Alberta separating from Canada.

The Chair: Okay. Sorry, sir. We've got a six-minute limit for your presentation. We've met that now. Can I summarize your point, that you are in favour of the proposed boundary and you're concerned about the Clearwater municipality's position contrary to that? Is that correct?

Mr. Maslanka: Yes. Yes, I am. That probably would help you to articulate the question when you're going to make the . . .

The Chair: Okay. Let me open it up to questions now. I think we've got your point. I have to say – sorry. It's kind of break time, and that's why I kind of jumped in there.

Mr. Maslanka: No. You know, I truly understand. I mean, there are people that can talk for 20 minutes.

The Chair: Okay. Let's start.

Mr. Clark, any questions or comments?

Mr. Clark: Yeah. I want to follow up.

The Chair: I'm going to just excuse myself.

Mr. Clark: You bet. I understand.

First off, thank you for your presentation, and thank you for deciding to come down today. That's very much appreciated. That's been a great part of this process, just listening to folks who are, you know, concerned about their communities and care about democracy and can share some local knowledge of kind of conditions on the ground, if you will.

One of the things I think we're interested in and very much, I think, the intent of this draft constituency – one of the intents was to bring together Indigenous people. I just wanted to know if you would comment, please, if you can, on including the O'Chiese reserves as part of Banff-Jasper.

Mr. Maslanka: Yes. O'Chiese is part of it. Stoney Nakoda: part of it. Tsuut'ina is going to be part of it. I think it's going to be much easier, you know, because, obviously, that's treaties 6, 7, 8 – right? – all together. Also, I mean, this part of the region, the Kootenay Plains, Nordegg, historically is not a treaty region, and it has been contested in the court ongoing. The land claims are contested ongoing by all the First Nation people. We have to think about that. But other than that, yes, O'Chiese is going to be part of it.

Dr. Martin: In the chair's absence he tapped me on the shoulder, so I'm the chair, and I'll make one comment. I mean, O'Chiese is in the old riding as well, so the O'Chiese and Sunchild and Big Horn were in the existing riding. Your point is that in this new configuration that's before us today, they would be joined by a whole series of First Nations in the southern end of this new configuration.

Mr. Maslanka: Yes. I mean . . .

Dr. Martin: That's all. I just want to clarify that.

Mr. Maslanka: Yeah. Not the O'Chiese, but Big Horn, definitely.

Dr. Martin: Susan, comments or questions?

Mrs. Samson: Thank you.

When you think about your previous electoral boundary with the Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House-Sundre riding and now you are the Banff-Jasper, am I correct in reading between the lines that you think this is going to be much more beneficial to the development of tourism and other environmental issues in the area?

Mr. Maslanka: Definitely. You know, like I said, there are big difficulties to develop the tourism. That's how I've seen it for 20 years. I mean, in today's world of tourism you need to be open minded. You have to think differently, and the county never thought differently. There was a beautiful town, Nordegg, that they just

destroyed, right? Today if those buildings would stand up there, it would be one of the most unique places to visit. Definitely, I am of the view that it's going to change. It's going to change because it's going to bring and light everything. There are going to be people from different political spectrums contributing, arguing. That's a good thing. Arguing is a good thing.

Mrs. Samson: I agree. Thank you.

The Chair: That's our bread and butter, sir. I missed your dialogue. I'll have to read the book.

Mr. Evans.

3:20

Mr. Evans: Yeah. I had a question. I was just double-checking the same sort of thing that Susan was checking. You are closest to Rocky Mountain House in terms of where you live?

Mr. Maslanka: Yes.

Mr. Evans: And in terms of you getting to Banff, which is quite a bit of a jaunt, you've got to jump – like, are you close to highway 11?

Mr. Maslanka: Yes. One of the issues that has been brought many times is safety, right? People are arguing Banff hospital versus Rocky Mountain hospital, and we have to think about that. I go there almost three times a week, and I really like that we are called to Banff hospital because Rocky Mountain hospital has very limited facilities, so in case of serious accidents they have to fly to Red Deer.

Mr. Evans: They have to fly to Red Deer? Is that what you said?

Mr. Maslanka: Yes.

Mr. Evans: Okay. Where's the \$23 million investment that you mentioned?

Mr. Maslanka: I think it's more than that. I think \$35 billion.

Mr. Evans: Billion? What is it?

Mr. Maslanka: That was announced by the Alberta government. That's what they're going to invest into tourism development.

Mr. Evans: You said \$35 billion?

Mr. Maslanka: Thirty-five billion dollars by 2035. That's huge.

Mr. Evans: In all of Alberta.

The Chair: Yes.

Mr. Maslanka: Definitely it's a critical, critical boundary that everybody is going to look into very soon. It's good that it's going to be one MLA because national parks have to be collaborated with the federal government – right? – so it's much easier to deal with them from the political point of view.

The Chair: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Maslanka.

Let me share the history of this riding. I recall distinctly when that presentation was made back in June, I guess it was, to one provincial riding, Banff-Jasper. I was originally very much taken by that and very impressed with that. However, I am concerned about the balkanization of a riding like that; in other words, one provincial representative representing this whole area. I don't think

you were here this morning, were you, for this morning's presentation?

Mr. Maslanka: No.

The Chair: There was a presentation by a Mr. Peter Scholz, who came out very strongly against that concept. As someone who is experienced in that alpine region, he made the case for not creating a Banff-Jasper riding but, you know, having at least two ridings from the foothills but into the national parks because of the very difficult challenge of dealing with the highly regulated national parks. I wish you'd have been here to hear that presentation because it would have been fun to have you two dialogue.

Mr. Maslanka: I mean, you know, from my experience doing this for the last four or five years, I think you're right. It's challenging to work with the parks, but it depends which party is in power, right? I've always been thinking, in this country, out of the box, and we have to think about that box because – I know that you caught me because I mentioned the word "separation," but we have to think about that. I came from the region that lost six countries. If I go back to Poland, this whole region is different. There are no countries, or there are extra countries. We have to think about that. Those parks will be there, and they will be always under federal jurisdiction, and I think it's much easier. I think it's about power and keeping the power and influence in this region. We have to think that tourism is going to drive this region.

The Chair: It was exactly that point that Mr. Scholz made. I think what he stressed is that there needs to be cross-pollination between the provincial representatives and the federal parks, and it is stronger if there are at least two or three that bump up against the federal . . .

Mr. Maslanka: I think it's better to meet in Canmore, in Banff at the one table than to travel around between Rocky Mountain House, Edmonton. I think it's better. It's better to go for a beer in the evening and have a good argument.

The Chair: Especially in Canmore. They've got a good brewery.

Mr. Maslanka: Yeah. That's good beer, so you can have a good argument there.

I love it. I talked to many people, you know, who are not conservative driven in opinions but who are open minded, and everybody likes it. I know that there are businesses, tour businesses that are against that, but they are very attached to the current connection. I think it's politics, but we should forget about the politics. We should think about how to build this whole region strong and give opportunity. I think we have so much opportunity to change tourism in the Rockies. I mean, Banff national park is almost destroyed. I think we have to go outside the boundary. We have to create opportunities to make sure that we save this park because we are basically saving this park from destruction.

The Chair: Two representatives might be better than one.

Mr. Maslanka: Exactly.

I think I like to have it in one place. I like to have one door. I like to have all the chiefs sitting together arguing. We all know that we all like to argue, right?

Oh, I forgot to mention that I love that Rocky Mountain House is out of the boundary because if Rocky Mountain House would be inside the boundary, that would totally challenge the balance, you know, during the election, right? Then you get another 18,000 people who vote and have no idea what's going on. I think it's important to keep Rocky Mountain House outside of the boundary. It's great. I have to admit you did a great job by introducing this new Banff-Jasper boundary.

Thank you so much for the opportunity.

The Chair: Thank you for coming and making the trek.

Okay. I think that is everyone. No one else is on the list. We'll close the proceedings this afternoon and reconvene tomorrow morning at 9.

[The hearing adjourned at 3:28 p.m.]

