



Legislative Assembly of Alberta

The 31st Legislature  
First Session

Standing Committee  
on  
Private Bills

Bill Pr. 5, Community Foundation of Lethbridge and Southwestern Alberta Act  
Bill Pr. 6, Burman University Amendment Act, 2025

Tuesday, April 15, 2025  
10:15 a.m.

Transcript No. 31-1-6

**Legislative Assembly of Alberta  
The 31st Legislature  
First Session**

**Standing Committee on Private Bills**

Pitt, Angela D., Airdrie-East (UC), Chair  
Cyr, Scott J., Bonnyville-Cold Lake-St. Paul (UC), Deputy Chair

Bouchard, Eric, Calgary-Lougheed (UC)  
Ceci, Joe, Calgary-Buffer (NDP)  
Deol, Jasvir, Edmonton-Meadows (NDP)  
Dyck, Nolan B., Grande Prairie (UC)  
Hayter, Julia K.U., Calgary-Edgemont (NDP)  
Johnson, Jennifer, Lacombe-Ponoka (UC)  
Lunty, Brandon G., Leduc-Beaumont (UC)\*  
Sigurdson, Lori, Edmonton-Riverview (NDP)  
Wright, Justin, Cypress-Medicine Hat (UC)

\* substitution for Justin Wright

**Also in Attendance**

Miyashiro, Rob, Lethbridge-West (NDP)

**Bill Pr. 5 Sponsor**

Miyashiro, Rob, Lethbridge-West (NDP)

**Bill Pr. 6 Sponsor**

Johnson, Jennifer, Lacombe-Ponoka (UC)

**Support Staff**

Vani Govindarajan  
Nancy Robert  
Jody Rempel  
Amanda LeBlanc

Parliamentary Counsel  
Clerk of *Journals* and Committees  
Committee Clerk  
Managing Editor of *Alberta Hansard*

## **Standing Committee on Private Bills**

### **Participants**

Bill Pr. 5, Community Foundation of Lethbridge and Southwestern Alberta Act.....	PB-28
Charleen Davidson, Executive Director, Community Foundation of Lethbridge and Southwestern Alberta	
Kayla Plaustainer, Vice-president, Board of Directors, Community Foundation of Lethbridge and Southwestern Alberta	
Bill Pr. 6, Burman University Amendment Act, 2025 .....	PB-31
Loren Agrey, President, Burman University	



**10:15 a.m.****Tuesday, April 15, 2025**

[Ms Pitt in the chair]

**The Chair:** Hon. members, please take your seats. Let's get this meeting started. Order. MLA Johnson and MLA Dyck.

Hon. members, I'd like to welcome members, staff, and guests to this meeting of the Standing Committee on Private Bills.

My name is Angela Pitt. I am the MLA for Airdrie-East and the chair of this committee. I'd like to ask that members and those joining the committee at this table introduce themselves for the record. We'll start with Mr. Dyck to my right.

**Mr. Dyck:** Nolan Dyck, MLA for Grande Prairie.

**Mr. Lundy:** Good morning. Brandon Lundy, MLA for Leduc-Beaumont.

**Mr. Cyr:** Scott Cyr, the MLA for Bonnyville-Cold Lake-St. Paul.

**Mrs. Johnson:** Jennifer Johnson, MLA, Lacombe-Ponoka.

**Mr. Bouchard:** Good morning. Eric Bouchard, MLA for Calgary-Lougheed.

**Mr. Deol:** Good morning. Jasvir Deol, MLA for Edmonton-Meadows.

**Ms Hayter:** Good morning. Julia Hayter, MLA for Calgary-Edgemont.

**Ms Sigurdson:** Good morning. Lori Sigurdson, MLA for Edmonton-Riverview.

**Member Ceci:** Hello. Joe Ceci, MLA for Calgary-Buffalo.

**Ms Govindarajan:** Good morning. Vani Govindarajan, Parliamentary Counsel.

**Ms Robert:** Good morning. Nancy Robert, clerk of *Journals* and committees.

**Ms Rempel:** Good morning. Jody Rempel, committee clerk.

**The Chair:** We have one substitution, which is Mr. Lundy for Mr. Wright.

A few housekeeping items before we turn to the business at hand. The microphones are operated by *Hansard*. Committee proceedings are being live streamed on the Internet and broadcast on Alberta Assembly TV. Please set your cellphones and other devices to silent for the duration of the meeting.

I would like to draw everyone's attention to the draft meeting agenda. Would anyone like to propose any amendments? Would anyone like to approve the agenda? Mr. Ceci.

**Member Ceci:** Yes.

**The Chair:** Mr. Ceci moves that the Standing Committee on Private Bills approve the proposed agenda as distributed for its April 15, 2025, meeting. All those in favour, please say aye. Any opposed, please say no. So carried.

We also have a set of minutes from our last meeting. Would anyone like to propose any amendments? Would anyone like to move a motion to approve the last minutes? I saw Mr. Ceci first. Mr. Ceci moves that the Standing Committee on Private Bills approve the minutes as distributed of its meeting held on March 25, 2025. All those in favour, please say aye. Any opposed, please say no. So carried.

I will have Mr. Miyashiro introduce himself for the record.

**Member Miyashiro:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Sorry. I was a little bit confused as to where I was going to sit because I'm not on this committee. Rob Miyashiro, Lethbridge-West.

**The Chair:** Welcome.

Hon. members, petitions on two private bills are being heard today. Copies of the bills are available online. Pursuant to Standing Order 104 Parliamentary Counsel's report on the bills was distributed to members just last week.

I'll give a quick outline to the next steps in this process that we'll follow today. The petitioners and, when appropriate, any other interested parties appear before the committee. All individuals giving evidence on the record must be sworn in by Parliamentary Counsel, which I think has happened. No. Okay. We'll do that in a minute.

Petitioners have been advised that they have up to 10 minutes for their opening remarks. Following each presentation from the petitioners committee members and Parliamentary Counsel are provided the opportunities to ask questions. Please ensure that you have asked for all the information you need to be prepared to make a recommendation regarding each of the bills before us here today.

Once hearings on both of the bills have been completed, the committee will deliberate on the bills consecutively, and then for each private bill the committee will need to make one of the three following recommendations: proceed with the bill as is, proceed with amendments, or that the bill not proceed at all.

Once the committee has made its recommendations, I will report on behalf of the committee to the Assembly. The Assembly will consider our recommendations, and then for any private bills that proceed to the second reading, the process is the same as any other bill in the House. Any questions on the process before we continue?

Seeing none, Bill Pr. 5, the Community Foundation of Lethbridge and Southwestern Alberta Act, is our first bill before us. At our meeting on March 25 the committee received an overview of the petition for Bill Pr. 5 from Parliamentary Counsel, and the petition was found to be in compliance with standing orders 90 to 94. On March 26 the chair reported to the Assembly on the petition pursuant to Standing Order 99. The bill was subsequently introduced in the Assembly on March 27 by the bill's sponsor, member Rob Miyashiro. Then in accordance with Standing Order 100 the bill was automatically referred to the committee after its introduction.

I'll now ask that the presenters for Bill Pr. 5 be invited to join us, and I'll ask Parliamentary Counsel to now swear them in.

[Ms Davidson and Ms Plaustein were sworn in]

**The Chair:** Good morning. Welcome. Thank you for joining us here today. We all just saw you get sworn in, and that could be confirmed.

MLA Miyashiro, just for the record you are to participate and operate like any other member of this committee. You just don't have a vote here at the end, and you can't move motions. Please be welcome.

A couple of notes before we begin this hearing. The microphones are operated by *Hansard*, so you don't need to push any buttons. If you have any phones with you, please put them on silent, including the vibrate mode. It messes with the microphones.

I will start by having the committee members introduce themselves. I think I saw you when we did the first introductions, but we'll do this again, starting with Member Dyck to the right.

**Mr. Dyck:** Nolan Dyck, MLA for Grande Prairie.

**Mr. Lundy:** Still Brandon Lundy from Leduc-Beaumont.

**Mr. Cyr:** Scott Cyr, MLA for Bonnyville-Cold Lake-St. Paul.

**Mrs. Johnson:** Jennifer Johnson, Lacombe-Ponoka.

**Mr. Bouchard:** Eric Bouchard, Calgary-Lougheed.

**Member Miyashiro:** Rob Miyashiro, Lethbridge-West.

**Mr. Deol:** Jasvir Deol, Edmonton-Meadows.

**Ms Hayter:** Julia Hayter, Calgary-Edgemont.

**Ms Sigurdson:** Lori Sigurdson, Edmonton-Riverview.

**Member Ceci:** Hi. Joe Ceci, Calgary-Buffalo.

**Ms Govindarajan:** Vani Govindarajan, Parliamentary Counsel.

**Ms Robert:** Good morning. Nancy Robert, clerk of *Journals* and committees.

**Ms Rempel:** Good morning. Jody Rempel, committee clerk.

**The Chair:** I think next time we should move chairs and then do introductions.

**Member Ceci:** Take one chair away.

**The Chair:** Take one chair away and see if anybody notices.

We'll now turn the floor over to our presenters. I'll have you introduce yourselves, and then you can go straight into your presentation.

#### **Bill Pr. 5, Community Foundation of Lethbridge and Southwestern Alberta Act**

**Ms Davidson:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Oki and good morning. I'm Charleen Davidson. I am the Executive Director of the Community Foundation of Lethbridge and Southwestern Alberta. Joining me today to represent our board of directors is Kayla Plausteiner, our vice-president. For those who don't know, our community foundation is located on the traditional lands of the Blackfoot people, and oki is the customary greeting. We are a CRA-registered charity. We are nonpartisan, and we adhere to CRA regulations. Thank you very much for letting us meet with you today. We are here today to request to repeal and replace our founding act.

A little bit about us. Our community foundation was established in 1966 through an act of the Legislative Assembly as the Lethbridge foundation. We are known today as the Community Foundation of Lethbridge and Southwestern Alberta. We are one of over 207 community foundations across the country and 14 within the province of Alberta. A little point of pride: we are the ninth-oldest community foundation in the country, which is quite remarkable when you realize that in 1966 the population of Lethbridge was just over 37,000.

We shared with you a copy of our most recent Giving Together publication, which includes an overview of our work, a map of the region we serve, which is on page 8, stories from supported projects, and a full list of our 2023 grants. As our fiscal year is the calendar year, we have not yet released our 2024 publication.

We serve a community that extends from the border down at the United States-Canadian border that goes all the way north up to the Nanton area, we go west to the B.C. border, and then we go east to the MD of Taber, and that's where the Community Foundation of Southeastern Alberta comes in.

Much has changed since our establishment. What began as a small volunteer-run foundation in Lethbridge has grown into a regional organization serving all of southwestern Alberta. Today we manage a \$44 million endowment and grant more than \$1.5 million annually to support the charitable sector in our communities. This year we're on track to award \$1.8 million to our community. Since our founding, we have awarded over \$20 million in grants across southwestern Alberta. Despite this growth, our act has not undergone any significant updates beyond changes to our name and regional scope.

**10:25**

As part of a governance review we examined our constating documents to ensure that they align with our current practices, meet the needs of our stakeholders, and ensure we can continue to serve our region effectively for years to come. That review identified a few parts of our act in need of modernization. The proposed changes to our act are as follows: to permit community foundations incorporated in the province of Alberta to serve as a custodian of all or any of our trust property, to amend the manner in which the directors of the board are appointed by replacing the committee of nominators with our existing nominations committee struck by our board of directors, and, finally, to clarify the regional boundary that our community foundation serves.

We extend our gratitude to MLA Miyashiro for sponsoring our bill, Vani for her guidance and her patience, and, of course, all of you for your time and consideration. We're happy to take your questions.

**The Chair:** Wonderful. Thank you so much for your presentation.

I'll open the floor up to questions for our presenters. MLA Sigurdson.

**Ms Sigurdson:** Yeah. Thank you so much. It's nice to see you here. Thank you for coming all the way up here. I just wanted to ask you: obviously, you told us about the geographical area that is covered by your foundation, but how do you ensure that all the charitable activities reach all parts of your described geographical area, including the smaller communities and, you know, rural areas?

**Ms Davidson:** We have a number of committees, and we tend to recruit from around our region for those committees, because we believe very firmly that we need full representation of our region, so we do recruit in from around the region. We are also very lucky that we have a full-time grants co-ordinator who works one-on-one with the charitable sector to make sure that when they're applying for grants, they're set up for success but also to make sure they know that they can apply for grants. We also do community visits. We try and have a presence in the rural community so that everyone knows we do serve them, and I think we have very good success with that.

**Ms Sigurdson:** Follow up?

**The Chair:** Wonderful. Yeah. Go ahead.

**Ms Sigurdson:** How many – did you say boards, or are they committees?

**Ms Davidson:** One board.

**Ms Sigurdson:** One board.

**Ms Davidson:** Eight committees.

**Ms Sigurdson:** Eight committees. Okay. So that would blanket the whole area. Okay. Just was curious about that.

**Ms Davidson:** I will add, if I may, that we also have a bequest that was left to us at \$4.5 million in 2016, and that fund is open for application, but it's restricted to the rural community. We work very closely with rural communities to make sure they know they can apply directly to that fund. Lethbridge organizations cannot apply to that fund because it is restricted to rural.

**Ms Sigurdson:** I see. Okay. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Perfect.  
MLA Dyck.

**Mr. Dyck:** Thank you. I appreciate this. I grew up in southern Alberta, so thank you for coming up here. I'm just curious about the board appointments by the board. Can you just explain a little bit? It could just be a friend of the board. I'm assuming there are some parameters. Can you just expand upon how a board appoints their own board members?

**Ms Davidson:** The board appoints the committees. They have authority to do that, and we do try and have representation. We look for skill set representation and diversity so that we have a well-rounded group of committees. Then they spend some time on the committee. They get to know us, we get to know them, we see their commitment, and then they are recommended to join our board of directors.

**Mr. Dyck:** Okay. Who controls the parameters of what a director or a board member or committee member is? Is that yourself? Is it the board that controls those parameters? I guess what I'm directly looking for is, just, what is the accountability mechanism for the board and who's on the board?

**Ms Davidson:** Our board is comprised of folks from around our region. We look for a few things. We look for representation from the region. We look for skill set, because, for example, we have an endowment fund that is invested. We want folks on our board and our committee that understand the investment world to make sure we are maximizing our income while minimizing our risk, so we look for the different things we need. Our treasurer is a CPA. Our treasurer has been a CPA since I joined. We look for those skill sets, but we also look for diversity and representation from the region.

Did that answer that?

**Mr. Dyck:** Chair, may I continue?

**The Chair:** Go ahead.

**Mr. Dyck:** I guess, just, what instantly pops to my mind is just the potential of – and I would never assume that this would ever happen – a small group of friends to just put their own friends on, so the skill set doesn't develop to get a mature and active board.

**Ms Davidson:** To answer that, our committee of nominators, our internal committee of nominators is not just people from the board. So we do have checks and balances in place for that. Everyone who comes to either the committee or the board must actually apply, and then it's vetted through our nominations committee, and if it's at the committee level, it goes to the board for approval.

**Mr. Dyck:** Sounds good to me. Thank you for the explanation. I appreciate it.

**The Chair:** MLA Deol.

**Mr. Deol:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you for all the effort you're doing in today's presentation. My question, actually, is around: what kind of criteria do you have? Like, how do you determine who gets the money, who gets the funds?

**Ms Davidson:** Sorry. Someone is speaking in the hallway. Could you repeat that?

**Mr. Deol:** Oh, okay. How did you usually determine, like, who gets the funds? What is the criteria?

**Ms Davidson:** Great question. Again, we have committees. We have a large unrestricted fund. Last year was the first time our donor-advised funds surpassed that fund. That accepts applications twice a year, and we have a committee of volunteers from across our region who reviews those applications and brings forward a recommendation to our board of directors. It's a very good committee, very diligent and very careful with our dollars.

It's the same process for our rural life committee, for the rural community, except those committees can only be from the rural community so we're capturing the rural community's voice.

**Member Ceci:** Thank you very much for the explanation, overview.

It's not a question about anything that's before us; it's more in your description of the investments, both the endowment and the amount of money that goes out yearly. What are your rules around that? Is it less than 5 per cent of your interest? It doesn't sound like very much money gets into the community from \$44 million endowment. I'm just kind of wondering.

**Ms Davidson:** Because we're a CRA-registered charity, we must adhere to CRA regulations. CRA regulations allow us to work with what they call a minimum disbursement quota, and that is 5 per cent, but we are also allowed to allocate a portion of our 5 per cent to our charitable activities. That doesn't include me, but that would be my grants co-ordinator. We have a very elaborate formula and spreadsheet. We have to submit a T3010 to the CRA annually that talks about our grants and our gifts out, and then we can include our charitable activity into that to come to the 5 per cent.

**Member Ceci:** Okay. CRA does that so that foundations like this stay healthy and liquid. Yeah.

**Ms Davidson:** If I may say, I think community foundations are very generous. I know that the 5 per cent only came into effect a couple of years ago. Prior to that it was 3.5 per cent, and most community foundations when investments were healthy were granting above the 3.5 per cent. We are here to support the community, so it's important to us to get that money out to the community.

**Member Ceci:** Okay. Is that \$4.5 million – would you call it rural bequest money? – part of the \$44 million?

**Ms Davidson:** Yes.

**Member Ceci:** Okay. Thanks.

**The Chair:** MLA Cyr.

**Mr. Cyr:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you for joining us today. I'm very appreciative of it. I'm looking at your 2023, like, annual report here, and it's just remarkable to see the good work that you're doing for southern Alberta. I can see your local MLA shaking his head, showing how well and how much support you've got. I just want to confirm that none of the changes that we're

making within this act are going to hinder your ability to be able to continue with your good work because I would hate to see that.

**Ms Davidson:** Absolutely not. Our goal is just to modernize so we can be more effective. No, absolutely not.

**Mr. Cyr:** Well, thank you for that. You know what? It's always good to make sure that you're heading in a direction that we can help with.

Restructuring the board in a way that gives you more flexibility, I'm assuming, is one of the tools that we're putting forward?

**Ms Davidson:** It's not restructuring the board; it's allowing the board to appoint from within instead of externally. The board would stay the same. We would still be looking for skill set, region, and diversity. That would not change. It's just the method of appointment.

**Mr. Cyr:** How is this strengthening your ability, by appointing within versus external? Again, I have full confidence in your board members. Please don't take that as a slight in any way.

**Ms Davidson:** I think a couple of things. First of all, we know our needs best of all because we're the ones doing the work day in and day out. We've come into an era where – I mean, back in 1966 mayors and reeves and judges probably were well connected to the community. We're a much larger community, which means those individuals are much busier, so bringing that committee together can be a bit of a challenge at times.

Do you want to jump in with anything? Any thoughts?

10:35

**Ms Plaustein:** Yeah. Sure. Just a few comments to clarify our current practice. Our current practice for a board appointment is actually that our board of directors strikes the nominations committee, which is composed of both current board members as well as external community members, who come up with a list of nominees of people that have been well vetted and that we believe are well suited to serve the board, okay? That collection of individuals then goes to the Committee of Nominators for the final stamp of approval. We're actually not changing our current procedure except for we're just taking out the final step, where we get the final stamp from the Committee of Nominators, is the first comment.

The second comment is that the community foundations in Canada were actually modelled after the Cleveland Foundation from 1914, which is, obviously – we're a century later. Communities have changed. The individuals connected to the community have changed. We think that the change that we're proposing here stays with the founding principle that we should have a community trust that is run and controlled by those who know the community needs best. We just think that the people who know the community needs best have changed over the last century.

Again, just to reiterate, we haven't really changed or we're not considering a substantial change to our process, just a slight change, and we believe that the change is in alignment with the foundational principles of community foundations at large.

**Mr. Cyr:** Thank you for that.

One more quick question.

**The Chair:** One more.

**Mr. Cyr:** Are the current staff allowed to be directors and be nominated, or is there, like – and then is there a cooling-off period to this as well? Can you please explain that process?

Thank you.

**Ms Davidson:** Gosh, I didn't look at the policy, but I believe it's one year. So if I were to resign and wanted to come back as a board member, I would have to wait one year before I could join the board, and I would like everyone else have to apply.

**Mr. Cyr:** Thank you so much for that. Thank you for the good work you're doing.

**Ms Davidson:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Any other questions from members of this committee? Seeing none, any questions from Parliamentary Counsel?

**Ms Govindarajan:** Just one question, Madam Chair. Are you aware of any affected parties that have expressed any opposition to this bill?

**Ms Davidson:** Not at all.

**The Chair:** Perfect.

**Ms Govindarajan:** Nothing further.

**The Chair:** Wonderful. This will conclude the hearing for Bill Pr. 5.

I'd like to thank you for your submission and your attendance here today. You're free to leave; you're free to stay and watch the remainder of the proceedings. Thank you.

**Ms Davidson:** Thank you, all.

**Member Ceci:** Madam Chair, can Rob stay?

**The Chair:** Yeah. You can stay.

Okay. Hon. members, at our meeting on March 25 the committee received an overview of the petition for Bill Pr. 6, Burman University Amendment Act, 2025, from Parliamentary Counsel, and the petition was found to be in compliance with standing orders 90 to 94. On March 26 the chair reported to the Assembly on the petition pursuant to Standing Order 99. The bill was subsequently introduced in the Assembly on March 27 by the bill's sponsor, Mrs. Jennifer Johnson. Then in accordance with Standing Order 100 the bill was automatically referred to the committee after its introductions.

I will now ask the presenter for Bill Pr. 6 to be invited to join us and ask Parliamentary Counsel to swear him in so we can proceed with the hearing.

[Dr. Agrey was sworn in]

**The Chair:** Good morning.

**Dr. Agrey:** Good morning.

**The Chair:** Welcome. Thank you for joining us here today.

**Dr. Agrey:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** I noticed you maybe were watching the previous proceedings, and I'm curious if we need to all introduce ourselves for the third time.

**Dr. Agrey:** I'm fine. I can introduce myself.

**The Chair:** Perfect. We will go to your introduction, then.



**Bill Pr. 6, Burman University Amendment Act, 2025**

**Dr. Agrey:** I'm Dr. Loren Agrey, president of Burman University in Lacombe, Alberta. It has been a postsecondary institution in this province for over a century: 1907 we were established; 1909 we actually moved the campus to Lacombe in its existing site.

We've gone through several iterations of name changes. We began as Canadian junior college and then Canadian union college and ultimately Canadian university college. In 2015 we were granted the right to become Burman University. Burman is one of the 26 PSIs, or postsecondary institutions, publicly funded here in Alberta, and we are also an independent academic institution. There are five, now six IALs in Alberta, and we are the only one in rural Alberta. We serve Lacombe as well as central Alberta, Red Deer and area in providing degrees to the baccalaureate level: undergraduate degrees in the areas of arts, in sciences, in business, and in education.

We also are a part of a much larger network around the world sponsored by the Seventh-day Adventist church. We are one of 13 in North America, one of 118 around the world, and if you count the entire system, K through 12 plus higher education, we have over 10,000 schools, over 110,000 teachers and professors, and over 2.3 million students. It's actually quite a large system. We're very pleased to have been in Alberta as long as we have.

I want to thank MLA Jennifer Johnson for sponsoring this bill. The bill itself is just updating some terminology. There are two parts of the bill that are somewhat obsolete, and we would petition to have them replaced. The first part: the bill speaks of us being located in College Heights, Alberta, which formerly was a recognized area. Our campus and College Heights have been brought in and are annexed under the city of Lacombe, so we would like to change that it's located in Lacombe, Alberta, rather than College Heights, which no longer exists.

The second change is that we have now been given the status of university through the PSLA, the Post-secondary Learning Act, so we would like to strike the term "college" and have it match the name of the institution, which is Burman University, and be referred to throughout the act as a university.

Those are the two fairly minor changes that we're petitioning.

**The Chair:** Wonderful. I will now open the floor up for questions. Any members have any questions?

It's not uncommon to have no questions. You did a very good presentation.

Oh, of course. MLA Dyck has a question for you.

**Mr. Dyck:** Thank you for the presentation. I really appreciate your time here today. In the preamble I just want to make sure I'm reading this correctly: "Whereas the Canadian Junior College." You want to change it to Canadian junior university?

**Dr. Agrey:** No. That was the original act in 1940.

**Mr. Dyck:** Oh, sorry. I didn't scroll far enough.

**Dr. Agrey:** It's made several iterations of changes, and the most recent change was to Burman University in 2015. We're asking not for any name change, but we're asking that the bill reflect the current community that we reside in, which is Lacombe, and that the term "college," which was in the previous acts, be changed to "university," which we are. We hold that current status.

10:45

**Mr. Dyck:** Thank you. I apologize. I didn't scroll down far enough in the bill reading.

**The Chair:** It happens.

Any other members? MLA Johnson.

**Mrs. Johnson:** Sure. Thank you, Dr. Agrey, for coming here today. It's been a delight to work with you on this, and I'm grateful for your willingness to come here today and meet with us. My question is if you could explain to the committee how the name Burman came to be with the university.

**Dr. Agrey:** Burman University is named after its founding president. In 1907 Charles Burman and his wife established a school in Leduc, actually. They then were approached about two years later by the town council in Lacombe and offered some land and some money if they would relocate. They chose to relocate to Lacombe and have been there ever since.

The Burmans themselves are real models of service. They went on and had careers in service activities. I was not on campus when the name change took place. A broad and full examination and invitation of possible names was conducted, and they decided to honour the founding president of the institution.

**Mrs. Johnson:** Wonderful.

**The Chair:** Go ahead.

**Mrs. Johnson:** Sure. If I can have a follow-up, you know, relative to the change here. You mentioned the annexation into the city of Lacombe. It used to be College Heights. Can you let us know as a committee here: when did that happen, and how has that affected your campus or your school?

**Dr. Agrey:** Sure. The annexation actually took place in 2000, so about 25 years ago, and it brought us into the Lacombe community in a sense. Previous to that, we were a separate community a little bit removed from Lacombe, and as Lacombe has grown, we have participated in that growth in releasing some of our land. We originally had over 1,500 acres, and we released about a quarter of that or are currently releasing that for development in Lacombe. We've been partnering with Lacombe, so we've been able to allow the community itself to grow. Currently, because Lacombe is quite a vibrant, small rural city, we are attempting and trying to achieve partnerships in several different ways so that we can support the community and be a full contributing partner.

For example, just on Friday I was in our School of Business, and they have a special business advisory council that they invite local business people from Lacombe and area to serve on and help establish strong connections with the community. One such connection is the small business advisory centre, which helps small businesses in Lacombe and beyond towards success. It has been a really strong partnership, I would say, not because of the annexation, but since the annexation it's become much more robust than it had been previously.

**Mrs. Johnson:** One more if I may.

**The Chair:** Yes. Then we'll go to MLA Dyck.

**Mrs. Johnson:** All right. One of the words we're striking out is "college" and replacing that with "university" to match what has happened. Can you explain to our committee maybe some of the programs or how that has changed within the institution and what programs you're highlighting or even the students that you are seeking to bring to your school?

**Dr. Agrey:** Yeah. Thank you for that question. Burman University serves not only central Alberta but Alberta at large. The largest cohort of students comes from Alberta, but we also serve across

Canada and around the world. If you were to come to our cafeteria, you would see over 30 flags of different nations represented in our student body. We have been very active in international recruitment. We've had a bit of a pause on that because, as you know, the environment has changed for international students in the last year or two. We're working to try to return to more of our regular ability to invite international students to Lacombe.

All of our programs – I missed this in the introduction – are approved by Campus Alberta Quality Council, or the CAQC, which approves all degree programs in Alberta. Our programs meet the standards of the CAQC and the expectations of the citizens of Alberta, and we're very, very pleased that all of our degree programs have that designation. We have some certificate and diploma programs as well, and they are all approved by the Ministry of Advanced Education here in Alberta. The CAQC doesn't approve at that level. They only approve degree programs.

**The Chair:** Do you have a follow-up to that?

**Mrs. Johnson:** I was just going to say thank you very much. I've been in the cafeteria. I've seen the over 30 flags that are hanging from the ceiling. It's beautiful. Again, I just want to say thank you for being here today.

**The Chair:** MLA Dyck.

**Mr. Dyck:** Thank you, Chair. A quick question here. I'm just curious on your accreditation. I know you just spoke to MLA Johnson about that. Can you just expand a little bit more about what that looks like and, also, how that works with the CAQC as well?

**Dr. Agrey:** Sure. Here in Alberta we actually don't use the term "accreditation" for programs. It's called degree approval, so all of our degrees, the four that I mentioned earlier – actually, there are four degrees, but within those degrees there are over 30 different tracks that a student can choose to go through. We just added our last one in the School of Business, a track in marketing, joining four other tracks.

The process is a two-step process for degree approval. You first apply to the Ministry of Advanced Education for approval to proceed. They do a systems oversight to see if it is appropriate to have a degree like that in the institution and in that area of Alberta. We're the only university in central Alberta. Then it goes to the program approval. In this process, then, they look at a very comprehensive set of metrics and regulations that any degree that is offered in Alberta would be expected to achieve, and we have achieved that for all the degrees that we offer.

**Mr. Dyck:** Excellent.

A follow-up, Chair, if I may?

**The Chair:** Sure.

**Mr. Dyck:** Okay. A final question from me. The Adventist Accrediting Association: that is an internal accreditation that you have gone through?

**Dr. Agrey:** It's internal in the fact that it's within the church or ecclesiastical tradition of the Seventh-day Adventists. Seventh-day Adventists have over 23 million adherents world-wide. As I described, the large education system is a very strong emphasis for our church. They actually provide an external accreditation as well. They bring in individuals from across – in our case it would be largely from across North America, although they have at least one representative from a different region of the world. It's a fairly rigorous process, but what they're looking at there is that not only are we providing excellence in

academics, but we are also doing what we say we are going to do through our mission of helping students adopt the values that we hold. Our values are: excellence, service, spirituality, community, and integrity. They come in and do quite a robust overview as well.

**Mr. Dyck:** Excellent.

Thank you, Chair.

**The Chair:** Any other questions from any other members?

Seeing none, any questions from Parliamentary Counsel?

**Ms Govindarajan:** No, Madam Chair.

**The Chair:** No? Perfect. Wonderful.

Well, thank you so much for your presentation and for being here today.

**Dr. Agrey:** Thank you for the privilege of being here. I appreciate it. I'd invite any of you, as you're travelling the QE corridor, if you have a few moments, to stop and visit the campus. You see it every time you drive by.

**The Chair:** Oh, perfect. Wonderful. Thank you so much. You're welcome to stay and join us and watch the proceedings, or you can leave. Whatever you choose.

10:55

Okay. Hon. members, let's move into deliberations and recommendations. Let's start with Bill Pr. 5, the Community Foundation of Lethbridge and Southwestern Alberta Act. The committee must recommend that the bill proceed, proceed with amendments, or not proceed. I will now open the floor for discussion. Mr. Ceci.

**Member Ceci:** Thanks. Is the motion up, the draft motion?

**Ms Sigurdson:** This is the discussion part.

**Member Ceci:** Oh, no, I have no discussion. I was just going to move that it proceed.

There it is. Moved by me; recommend that it proceed.

And there's a second recommendation, I think.

**The Chair:** Okay. Let's ask the question on this motion. Mr. Ceci moves that

the Standing Committee on Private Bills recommend that Bill Pr. 5, Community Foundation of Lethbridge and Southwestern Alberta Act, proceed.

Any discussion?

All those in favour? Any opposed?

That is carried.

Having finished our deliberations on Bill Pr. 5, we should consider our report to the Assembly. The committee could consider a motion directing staff to prepare the committee's report for presentation to the Assembly on April 28.

**Member Ceci:** I have that before me. I can make that recommendation.

**The Chair:** Perfect. Mr. Ceci moves that

the Standing Committee on Private Bills (a) direct the Legislative Assembly to prepare a draft report on the committee's review of Bill Pr. 5, Community Foundation of Lethbridge and Southwestern Alberta Act, which includes the committee's recommendations and (b) authorize the chair to approve the committee's final report to the Assembly on April 28, 2025.

All those in favour, please say aye. Any opposed, please say no. So carried.

Congratulations, Mr. Miyashiro.

Okay. Let's go to Bill Pr. 6, the Burman University Amendment Act, 2025. If everyone is ready, we can now move to deliberations regarding Bill Pr. 6. As mentioned earlier, the committee must ultimately decide whether the bill proceed, proceed with amendments, or not proceed. I will note the bill proceed with a nonsubstantive change to correct a numbering error. That has been proposed, and that's on the screen. Would anyone like to move the motion on the screen? Mrs. Johnson. MLA Johnson moves that

the Standing Committee on Private Bills recommend that Bill Pr. 6, the Burman University Amendment Act, 2025, proceed with the following amendments: that section 5 be amended by striking out section 9.3(1)(a)(iii) and substituting section 9.3(1)(b)(iii).

All in favour, please say aye. No. My apologies. Any discussion?

All those in favour, please say aye. Any opposed, please say no.

That is carried.

We have finished our deliberations on Bill Pr. 6. We should provide direction in preparing a report. The committee should consider a motion directing staff to prepare the committee's report for presentation to the Assembly on April 28. Motion on the screen. Any discussion?

Would anyone like to move the motion? Mrs. Johnson moves that

the Standing Committee on Private Bills (a) direct the Legislative Assembly Office to prepare a draft report on the committee's review of Bill Pr. 6, Burman University Amendment Act, 2025, which includes the committee's recommendations and (b) authorize the chair to approve the committee's final report to the Assembly on April 28, 2025.

Any discussion?

All those in favour, please say aye. Any opposed, please say no. This is a committee of efficiency, not discussion.

Motion carried.

Any other . . . [interjections] Hold on. No adjourning yet. Any other items for discussion under other business? Okay.

Next meeting date is at the call of the chair should any bills come forward.

Mr. Ceci moves that the April 15, 2025, meeting of the Standing Committee on Private Bills be adjourned. There's no discussion. All those in favour, please say aye. Any opposed, please say no. So carried.

The committee is adjourned.

[The committee adjourned at 11 a.m.]









