

# Spring Session Report 2008

## Official Opposition Speaks Out for Workers, Upgraded Infrastructure, and Better Value for Our Natural Resources

Hugh MacDonald, Shadow Minister for Employment & Immigration and Infrastructure



During the Legislature's first session since the election, veteran MLA Hugh MacDonald lived up to the Official Opposition's commitment to hold the government accountable for its actions.

Hugh serves as the Shadow Minister for Infrastructure, as well as Employment & Immigration. That means he keeps tabs on workplace safety, fair treatment for labour, and whether or not public infrastructure (schools, roads, hospitals and so on) is meeting the needs of Albertans. As former Shadow Minister for Energy, Hugh remains concerned with getting Albertans a better deal for our oil and gas resources.

Here are the topics Hugh raised in the Legislature on your behalf:

### Labour

Workplace Safety and Farm Worker Safety  
Temporary Foreign Workers  
Provincial Nominee Program  
Joint Worksite Health and Safety Committees  
Unpaid Wages  
Women Building Futures  
Student Temporary Employment Program  
Support for Low-income Albertans

### Infrastructure

Public Transportation  
Federal Infrastructure Funding  
Traffic Noise on Anthony Henday Drive

### Energy

Coal Royalties  
Electricity Supply  
Oil Royalties Price Cap

### Environment

Waterfowl Mortality Rates in Tailings Ponds



### Hugh MacDonald in the Legislature

"There were **154** job site related deaths in Alberta in 2007, up from 124 in 2006. That is a **24 per cent increase** from one year to the next. One hundred and fifty-four workers paid with their lives for our prosperity. That, again, is three workers per week who are losing their lives on our job sites, and the minister is right: it is unacceptable.

My first question is to the Minister of Employment and Immigration. Why are these tragic numbers in this province so high at this time?"

***"Why is it that cabinet votes massive increases to its own salaries but doesn't adequately protect the most vulnerable in this province from the soaring cost of living?"***

(On unpaid wages): "Given that there were over 4,100 registered complaints last year, will this government finally get tough on cheating employers and expand the window from six months back to 12 months? It's only fair.

If the workers have been cheated for six months or for a full year, they should get all the money that is owed them. It's only fair."

***"...[I]s it fair that construction workers are covered by some forms of occupational health and safety and corporate farm workers are not? What's fair about that?"***

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