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Subject: ActionAlberta #35 - MINIMIZING RED TAPE AND IMPROVING THE COST OF ALBERTA'S GOVERNMENT
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HELLO ALL (The Group of 6,040+ and growing):

MINIMIZING RED TAPE AND IMPROVING COST/ EFFECTIVENESS OF ALBERTA'S GOVERNMENT

by **Richard D. Shannon (of Action Alberta)**

INTRODUCTION

Premier Kenney hit the ground running immediately after his government was sworn in on April 30th. He has made public the detailed and very **ambitious action plan** to begin the process of resolving a number of **critical issues negatively impacting Alberta**, including the following:

- **Proclaimed Bill 12** which allows Alberta to **restrict the flow of gasoline to B.C.** in an effort to persuade B.C. to drop its objection to the Kinder Morgan pipeline expansion – which is already the subject of a court challenge by BC;
- **Challenging the constitutionality of the Federal carbon tax** – the Saskatchewan Court of Appeal ruled 3-2 in favor of the constitutionality of the Federal tax and the case will be heard by the Supreme Court of Canada;
- **Challenging the constitutionality of Bill C-69** – referred to as the “no pipelines bill” which will be a serious obstacle to any major infrastructure projects, unless ruled exempt;
- **Challenging the constitutionality of Bill C-48** – which would restrict only tankers carrying Alberta oil from transport through certain BC waters;
- **Conducting a public enquiry into the foreign funding of entities** actively involved in the objective to **landlock Alberta oil**, with a view to holding them accountable; and
- **Pursuing a constitutional Referendum on Equalization.**

Premier Kenney also noted, during his eastern trip last week, that **50% of Albertans believe Alberta is not being fairly treated in Confederation and are now in favor of independence.** If Alberta is unable to resolve the above

the new level of independence in Alberta is unable to resolve the above issues and negotiate a fair and equitable revision of Confederation to its satisfaction, pursuing a Referendum on Secession may be our **only effective remedy**.

We will be watching with great interest for progress reports on each of the above noted vital initiatives and we are hoping for the very best, as success in one or more of those matters would yield a **quantum leap in Alberta's prospects**. The unfortunate fact is that improving Alberta's position in each of the above instances relies on factors largely **beyond Alberta's control** including:

- **Protracted negotiations** with or legal challenges against the Federal Government;
- **Complex negotiations and legal challenges** with B.C. and other provinces; and
- **Uncertain, complicated, costly and time-consuming legal proceedings.**

There is an old proverb which says that **SELF HELP** is the best help. In other words, the easiest and most efficient changes you can make, in any variable impacting your life, will come from those categories you control and which you can therefore change without assistance from or permission of outsiders. **SELF HELP** is incredibly empowering because you can do what's in your best interests without undue interference by others having diverse agendas. The paragraphs below outline **some effective actions** Alberta can and should take to **increase the efficiency and/or reduce the cost of delivering government services and reduce red tape** for those doing business in the province, all of which undertakings are completely within Alberta's control. While these endeavors will never be as sexy or exciting or of similar scale or magnitude as the major issues first listed above, they will, if properly managed and implemented, make a measurable, reliable and lasting contribution to the economic well being and viability of the province's economy.

REDUCING RED TAPE

We were pleased to note that during the election campaign, in early March, **Premier Kenney announced**, as part of the UCP Platform, the objective to **reduce red tape in Alberta by one-third**. According to a Calgary Herald

~~reduce red tape in Alberta by one-third.~~ According to a Calgary Herald article March 7, 2019, the stated objective is **not to reduce consumer, environmental, health or safety protections** but rather to apply regulations in a smarter way. He unveiled a website:

<https://www.albertastrongandfree.ca/stop-red-tape/>

to **crowdsource input** from businesses and the public on what regulations should be scrapped. He also announced the UCP intention to reduce public sector red tape and said he would be **appointing a minister dedicated to red tape reduction.**

Grant Hunter (<https://www.alberta.ca/grant-hunter-bio.aspx>) was **appointed as the Minister of Red Tape** Reduction on April 30 and we welcome him into that very important role. Our followers collectively have a wealth of experience operating diverse businesses across the full spectrum of industries in Alberta and other provinces and countries. **We encourage every Action Alberta follower to sign on to the website linked above and provide their input on what changes can/should be made to make it easier to carry on business in Alberta.**

We look forward to **ongoing reports** from Minister Hunter regarding the input received from businesses and the public and concrete actions being taken or proposed. We will provide periodic updates to our followers as material changes are made and will seek to chronicle the success of the program as the results become public.

REDUCE PROVINCIAL EXPENDITURES

David Dodge, former Governor of the Bank of Canada and now affiliated with the law firm Bennett Jones, provided some **very useful statistics on the cost of delivery of provincial services** in this document:

<https://www.bennettjones.com/PreBudgetAnalysis>

The per capita cost of government program spending by province reveals some interesting comparative numbers. The **per capita costs** for the big 4 provinces are as follows: **Alberta - \$12,575, Quebec - \$11,228, \$BC - \$10,192 and Ontario - \$10,080.** The **average for the four provinces was \$11,019 per capita**

capita.

Alberta currently has a population of 4.3 million so if it could reduce its program costs from the existing level of \$12,575 to the average of \$11,019 noted above, the **savings of \$1,556 (14.1%) per capita** would, in the aggregate, result in a **reduction in Alberta government expenditures of \$6.74 billion. Based on the forecast expenditures for this year of \$56.2 billion, the calculated savings of 12%, would be an exceptional reduction in the cost of government.**

In mid-March, during the election campaign, **David Yager** – a highly experienced oil and gas businessman and writer and author of the excellent book, **From Miracle to Menace – Alberta a Carbon Story** – published a paper titled: **Election 2019 – Alberta Must Change Direction for Investment To Resume.**

<https://energynow.ca/2019/03/election-2019-alberta-must-change-direction-for-investment-to-resume/>

One of his key questions in that paper was: “If we don’t do something different, what are the future economic prospects for you, your friends and family?” Yager stated: “There are multiple world economic and environmental realities **beyond the control of Alberta’s NDP government**, but there are also important aspects of Alberta’s future that are entirely within its purview. These are the size, cost, role and direction of the provincial government.” He then reviewed the relative per capita government expenditures of the big provinces, similar to the Dodge report cited above. Yager then observed that **government sector employees enjoy a 9.6% wage premium over private sector employees, retire earlier, are less likely to be fired and while 72% of government workers are covered by a registered pension plan only 24% of private sector employees have pension coverage.**

In the same article Yager goes on to state that **Alberta** has for decades operated the **most expensive government in Canada** and needs to bring its per capita spending in line, at the very least equal to or less than the levels of the other big provinces.

CONCLUSION

The important lessons learned from the above sources are that **government in**

The important lessons learned from the above sources are that **government in Alberta is too expensive** and the scope and cost of government expenditures are fully within the control of Alberta. As a result, the low hanging fruit, easiest cost savings that can be achieved, will come from **controlling those costs**. The process to capture those savings must include **staff hiring and pay scale freezes, elimination of non-essential services, third-party expense reductions** and such other creative and appropriate solutions as are required to get the job done.

We will all be hoping for, and will vigorously applaud, **homeruns by Premier Kenney and his team** on the big issues noted in the first paragraph above. However, the most reliable improvements in the Province's cost to deliver government services will come from **direct expenditure reductions** falling within the government's control. We will be watching carefully to see that the objectives of **SELF HELP**, the easy expenditure cuts or low hanging fruit, will be proven, through disciplined execution, to be a continuing high priority of the Alberta government as it strives to control its destiny.

OUR READERS' COMMENTS SECTION

1. From a Reader: I have enjoyed working here these past several years. You have paid me very well and given me benefits beyond belief. I have 3-4 months off per year and a pension plan that will pay my salary till the day I die and then pay my estate one year salary death bonus and then continue to pay my spouse my salary with increases until she or he dies along with a health plan that most people can only dream of having. Despite this, I plan to take the next 12-18 months to find a new position. During this time, I will show up for work when it is convenient for me. In addition, I fully expect to draw my full salary and all the other perks associated with my current job. Oh yes, if my search for this new job proves fruitless, I will be coming back with no loss in pay or status. Before you say anything, remember that you have no choice in this matter. I can, and I will do this.

Sincerely, Every Member of Parliament running for re-election

2. From a Reader: It surprises me that I have not read anything at all about Carbon Tax regarding natural gas. Putting carbon tax on natural gas is equivalent to taxing food. People living in the colder parts of the country particularly on the prairies require natural gas to heat their homes a necessity for life. They are also paying the biggest share of the carbon tax for their

natural gas as the temperatures are substantially lower than in the lower mainland of BC or Toronto and most of the Maritimes. Yet when it comes to rebates they will receive refunds equal to what people on the prairies receive even though they paid far less in the first place. A massive shift of wealth from the colder climes to the warmer. No wonder BC is on board for the carbon tax just another way to steal from their neighbors. There is no substantive value in taxing the clean burning natural gas. We have no choice to heat our homes and there are no real alternatives and there will be no real alternatives available for years. There is not even close to enough electrical generation to convert even a small fraction of Canadian homes to electricity nor will there be in the near term. So taxing natural gas to force people to alternative heating will not achieve any reduction in the use of natural gas. Great strides have been made in cleaner burning more efficient furnaces, better insulated houses in the last number of years but any further improvements are very minimal at best. There is no argument here to support the government case in terms of climate change.

3. From a Reader (in the USA): I feel for you... we dealt with a lost leader for 8 years with Obama.... The best I could hope for in your economy would be a Canadian version of our President Trump... .on this side of the border, you either love him or hate him... there is no middle ground... those of us that love him do so because we hate politicians that keep selling us down the river.... I love your country and I love Canadians... even the dumb ass liberal ones.... you aren't as far gone as some of the areas of the US yet... but your policies are fast taking you there. Or should I say your leadership is taking you there.... Thanks for the email... always nice to see what is going on around the world... I had a close English gal friend that I met several years back when my family and I visited a property she managed in the south of France... she too was conservative and we have kept in touch over the years.... France is a lost cause... so is her country of England.... the US and Canada are the next to go if we don't stop them.... Trump was our great hope... I pray he wins another 4 years...

4. From a Reader: My impression is that much of Ontario is oblivious to how the past four years have been a wrecking ball for Alberta's economy and not particularly tuned into or sympathetic to the plight of provincial economies that are dependent upon oil and gas in general and pipelines in particular. Which of course does call for a very concerted, wide-ranging education program as well as a supportive national government. Traditional media are unlikely to be

allies...to put it mildly!

5. From a Reader: I became very disillusioned with my former friends from Ottawa and Quebec when I worked as a volunteer for the G8 summit in Kananaskis. I knew a lot of them from my time living overseas and they were mostly foreign service employees or from other federal government agencies. Most of them were children and grandchildren of people who had worked for the same organizations. Their disregard and disrespect for the West was blatant and very hurtful. The entire time they were in Calgary they insulted and laughed at Alberta and our 'Red Neck' culture. I finally stood up at a dinner one evening the told them they were guests in my province and that they should be ashamed of how they were acting and speaking. That whole situation made me aware of the attitude shared and supported by their culture...and believe me, it is a culture all its own. Federal employees from the east have jobs which are pretty much guaranteed and, in my experience and from talking with them, it is expected that they will work for the Federal Government in one way or another from one generation to another. It is a huge number of people all benefiting from taxpayer dollars and with no concerns about what happens elsewhere in Canada. My time with the G8 basically ended my friendships with a number of them.

Sadly, our province is presented terribly in the media in the East with often us being portrayed as racists and bigots with a complete disregard for the environment. The reality is that the average Westerner is welcoming, friendly and doing their best to clean up after themselves (metaphorically speaking). I don't know if there is a solution to this ideology. It saddens and angers me.

ADDITIONAL READING/ VIEWING

In closing, here is additional information on the problems we are facing and the need for us to take remedial action immediately to right our sinking ship.

1. INTERVIEW WITH ROBERT LYMAN ON DANIELLE SMITH'S SHOW (STARTING @ 1:01:10) VERY IMPORTANT

<https://omny.fm/shows/danielle-smith/today-s-show-canola-crisis-isis-refinery-in-kitima>

2. DANIELLE SMITH'S SHOW - MAC VAN WIELINGEN ON BILLS C-48 AND C-69 (EXCELLENT)

<https://omny.fm/shows/danielle-smith/hill-c-69-and-c-48#sharing>

<https://unity.in/en/over-40000-canadians-join-the-30-and-30-movement>

3. LIBERALS COMMITTED TO \$256 MILLION “INVESTMENT” IN CHINESE BANK WHILE REGIME BANS CANADIAN CANOLA, DETAINS CITIZENS

<https://www.thepostmillennial.com/liberals-committed-to-256m-investment-in-chinese-bank-while-regime-bans-canadian-canola-detains-citizens/>

4. LEAKED TAPE OF LIBERAL CABINET MEETING (VERY VERY FUNNY)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uwtpfC_SU_4&feature=youtu.be

5. GAFFE-TASTIC TRUDEAU

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8b73M_kA8io&feature=youtu.be

ACTION ALBERTA - WHO WE ARE

We are a group of deeply concerned, unpaid Alberta resident volunteers. Our work is intended to educate, inform and motivate all Canadians to be visible and vocal regarding the unequal, unfair and discriminatory treatment of Alberta by our Federal Government. Alberta's energy sector is the most important driver of the Canadian economy and its health directly impacts the standard of living of every Canadian. Unfortunately, that is not happening under our current Federal government!

Please **share** this email with your contacts so we can turn this unfair, inequitable, unjustifiable travesty around for the good of all Canadians. If you would like to submit information or articles, please send them to me.

Thank you for ALL of your support and interest!

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If you are an elected representative of any level of Government, you have a fiduciary responsibility and a moral obligation to hear constituent voices about the problems facing Canada and the Canadian energy and equalization/transfer payment crisis.

NOTE: Our website disclaimer applies to all our Alberta Action activities.

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