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| ***Province*** | ***Législature*** | ***Session*** | ***Type de discours*** | ***Date du discours*** | ***Locuteur*** | ***Fonction du locuteur*** | ***Parti politique*** |
| Alberta | 28e | 1re | Discours du trône | 24 mai 2012 | Colonel (Retired) Donald S. Ethell | Lieutenant governor | Alberta Progressive Conservative Party |

Albertans, distinguished Members of the Legislative Assembly, visitors and guests, welcome to the First Session of the 28th Alberta Legislature. It is my privilege to deliver the Speech from the Throne and to serve this province as Lieutenant Governor.

Alberta has the potential to reach greater heights than ever before. Economic recovery is under way in many parts of the world, and demand for our energy and skills will grow in the years ahead.

Albertans are looking to the future with new hope and confidence. They see a chance to build the best lives possible for themselves and their families, and they are ready to make the most of that opportunity.

The people of this province have declared that they are not content to gaze inward and build walls. They want to look outward and build bridges. They seek to engage with the world around them and, through investment and innovation here at home, play a leading role in making our world a better place. Alberta, your government has heard you loud and clear, and its plans and policies will continue to reflect your values, goals, and aspirations.

This province is the most economically free jurisdiction in North America. Nowhere else do businesses have so much room to operate without interference and adapt to market conditions. Your government will further these freedoms and find new ways to simplify regulatory burdens so businesses continue to drive our prosperity.

We have one of the most technologically astute, safe, and responsible energy sectors in the world, a field that provides hundreds of thousands of Alberta families with reliable livelihoods. That sector is working hard to improve its efficiency and reduce its footprint as it expands production. Your government will partner with industry on research and development through a second Alberta Oil Sands Technology and Research Authority to maintain a competitive, world-class resource economy for the 21st century, grow the marketplace for clean energy, and protect the jobs so many Albertans depend on.

We have strong and responsive public services that offer Albertans a great standard of living. Your government will invest in those services, in the infrastructure that supports them, and in the families and communities that depend on them to secure Alberta’s economic future, and it will keep those services public and bring new fiscal discipline to budgets so they deliver the outcomes Albertans want in a financially sensible way.

Your government will accomplish all this because it has solid foundations to build on. The last 41 years have brought incredible benefits to our province and seen society evolve in ways that have changed how Albertans think and live.

It was the decisions of past governments that helped us adapt and get to where we are today. Every one of those governments was distinct, and each put forward the right vision in response to the issues Alberta confronted. Each was suited to its time and place and pursued the right course for the right circumstances in sync with Albertans’ values. This government will uphold that tradition even as our province adapts and changes faster than ever.

Technology has put more knowledge and power at Albertans’ fingertips than at any time in history. Competition and rising expectations are placing heightened pressure on the energy industry that has sustained us for so long, and demographic shifts are asking more of Albertans and the public services that nurture, educate, and care for them.

Alberta has robust traditions in which to find answers. Our western spirit and heritage and our entrepreneurial energy have always served us well. The unique pride, self-reliance, and fiscal conservatism that have made this province such a special place to live are as strong as they have ever been, and this government will use these traits to forge a brighter future. They define us as Albertans, and they are too precious to put aside.

But the challenge of change demands a response. It requires leadership ready to strike the right balance between progressive and conservative thinking. Your government will find that balance. Your government has a policy framework for this time and place, a plan in harmony with Albertans’ socially progressive values and fiscally conservative beliefs, and implementation has begun.

Your government promised to increase both AISH payments and the allowable income exemption. Budget 2012 raised the former by $400 per month and doubled the latter.

Your government promised to offer subsidized child care for families earning less than $50,000 annually. Budget 2012 provided $12 million in funds for that purpose.

Your government pledged to make Alberta’s Child and Youth Advocate independent to better help at-risk youth and investigate when things go wrong. At the beginning of April the advocate’s office became fully independent.

This government’s fiscal and economic plan includes no new taxes, no sales tax, and multiyear budgets to control public spending.

On every single count those promises were met, and this government will continue to do so in every area.

Albertans have expressed a desire for change and no-nonsense, effective leadership. They know that a great province starts from the inside out, with an efficient and responsive public service that judiciously uses their tax dollars to provide support and create the conditions for success.

To support these outcomes, this government formed a new cabinet and government structure, combining departments and designing new ministries to focus on the things that matter to Albertans: having a strong fiscal framework, caring for families and the vulnerable, promoting and protecting our resources, and having solid consultation processes that ensure Albertans are heard. These tasks will stay at the top of the government’s agenda as it moves forward.

Your government will invest in Alberta’s future by supporting the families in whose hands that future rests. This means providing an accessible primary care system and giving Albertans the tools and guidance they need to take charge of their health.

Your government will continue to expand family care clinics in consultation with local stakeholders and the dedicated professionals who staff the system, building on primary care networks. It will bring more allied health workers like nurse practitioners to the front lines of primary care to lower wait times. It will design and implement a plan to extend the province’s network of continuing care centres so seniors can find accommodations that suit their budget and family arrangements.

Your government will extend improved access to care for the very Albertans devoted to providing it when we need it most. Bill 1, to be brought forward in this session, will guarantee workers’ compensation coverage for first responders suffering from posttraumatic stress disorder. PTSD’s devastating effects on individuals and their families are well understood, and it is time legislation reflected that fact. First responders rush to our aid in times of trouble, and this government will be the first in Canada to do the same for them.

Your government will promote trustworthy leadership that genuinely takes Albertans’ concerns to heart and establish openness and transparency as guiding principles. The new Associate Minister of Accountability, Transparency and Transformation will review Alberta’s Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy, FOIP, Act and oversee fundamental changes to the way the province does business. As part of this effort your government will survey conflict-of-interest issues and then introduce a new package of legislation that draws on the best solutions from around the world. As promised, this will include whistle-blower legislation. Albertans will be able to see with new depth and clarity how government works for them.

Your government will also secure Alberta’s economic future by demonstrating fiscal restraint and foresight, spending wisely and saving intelligently. Starting with Budget 2012, our most critical public sectors – education, advanced education, health, and municipal services – are receiving stable funding in the form of three-year budgets. Institutions and municipalities know in advance what to expect so they can plan ahead, guaranteeing reliable service delivery for all Albertans.

And to enforce unprecedented discipline in public spending, this government is pioneering results-based budgeting. Government will engage with Albertans to identify the outcomes they expect from public programs. Every part of the government’s operations will then be scrutinized on a three-year cycle. Program budgets will be reset to reflect findings, and the Treasury Board will publicly report on the progress made each year so Albertans can see how their tax dollars are being used.

Your government will also advance world-leading resource stewardship, developing our natural resources responsibly to safeguard Alberta’s environment, grow its markets, and keep our economy strong. The regulatory enhancement project, which combines multiple bodies into a single regulator for upstream oil, gas, and coal, is a critical part of this plan. Your government will simplify the system and give energy firms the nimble, responsive regulator they need to stay competitive.

The industry depends just as much on access to new markets, so through the Canadian energy strategy your government will pursue co-operation with other provinces, working with our neighbours to build the infrastructure needed to reach those markets.

At the same time your government will improve environmental monitoring. Together with Ottawa, Alberta will usher in a comprehensive, transparent, and scientifically credible system. The joint monitoring program will gather more information more frequently and allow faster detection of changes to the environment so industry and government can mitigate them.

Alberta’s prosperity cannot come at the expense of its beauty; the two must go hand in hand. This government will ensure they do, and in support of this strong relationship with the government of Canada we will be opening a new office in Ottawa. The office will help forge stronger relations in Canada’s capital and advocate Alberta’s perspective on important federal and provincial matters.

Strengthening our links with the federal government and our provincial neighbours will help to develop new opportunities that benefit all Albertans. This is about looking beyond our borders to build the bridges the people of this province want and meeting their expectations.

Albertans have entrusted their leadership with a mandate to respond to change. Over the next four years this government will rise to the occasion and deliver and fulfill a clear, focused, target-driven mandate. Albertans will know where the province is headed and how progress is being made because this is a government that will stay true to its promises.

It will partner with Albertans from every walk of life to arrive at solutions. It will treat all Albertans with fairness and respect no matter where they live. It will mirror their concerns and goals and make manifest their values and beliefs. And, most importantly, it will get out of Albertans’ way so they can unleash their creative potential and build a prosperous province, one that is not only rich in resources but in opportunity, and a quality of life that uplifts everyone it touches.

Thank you, ladies and gentlemen. May God bless you all.

God bless Alberta.

God bless Canada.

God save the Queen.

Merci.