



Legislative Assembly of Alberta

Electoral Boundaries Commission
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Electoral Boundaries Commission

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[Judge Walter in the chair]

The Chair: Good morning. Thank you for taking the time to come out and share your views with us today. I know I speak for the whole commission when I say that we're looking forward to hearing from you.

My name is Ernie Walter, and I'm the chairman of the Alberta Electoral Boundaries Commission. I'd like to introduce to you the other members of the commission here with me today: to my far right, Dr. Keith Archer of Banff; next to me on my right, Peter Dobbie of Vegreville; on my immediate left, Allyson Jeffs of Edmonton; and on the far left, Brian Evans of Calgary.

Our task is that we've been directed by legislation to make recommendations to the Legislative Assembly on the areas, boundaries, and names for 87 electoral divisions based on the latest census and population information. In other words, our job is to divide Alberta into 87 areas so that each Albertan receives an effective vote and so that each Albertan also receives effective representation by a Member of the Legislative Assembly. Over the next few months we will seek community input through a province-wide consultation before developing our recommendations. Through public hearings such as the one here today we want to hear what you have to say about the representation you are receiving in your community.

In carrying out this work, we have to follow the provisions of the Electoral Boundaries Commission Act. It says that we are to make proposals to the Legislative Assembly regarding the areas, boundaries, and names of 87 electoral divisions. You will recognize that that means we are mandated to propose four additional electoral divisions in Alberta, which will come into effect at the next provincial general election. We are also reviewing the law, what the courts have said about electoral boundaries in the province of Alberta and in Canada, the work of previous commissions and committees which have studied boundaries in Alberta, and the population information which is available to us.

A brief summary of electoral boundaries law. As I've mentioned, our function is to make proposals to the Legislative Assembly for 87 electoral divisions. We have a limited time to accomplish this task. We are required, after consideration of representations made at these public hearings, to submit an interim report to the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly in February of 2010 that will set out the areas, boundaries, and names of the 87 proposed electoral divisions and reasons for the proposed boundaries. Following publication of the interim report, a second round of public hearings will be held to receive input on the proposed 87 boundaries. After consideration of the input the commission must submit a final report to the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly by July of 2010. Then it is up to the Legislative Assembly by resolution to approve or to approve with alterations the proposals of the commission and to introduce a bill to establish new electoral divisions for Alberta in accordance with that resolution. This law would then come into force when proclaimed, before the holding of the next general election.

One way to ensure effective representation is by developing electoral divisions with similar populations, especially where population density is similar. The law directs us to use the populations set out in the most recent census of Alberta as provided by Statistics Canada, the 2006 census, but if the commission believes that there is population information that is more recent than the federal census supplied by Statistics Canada, then the commission may use this data in conjunction with the census information. We should tell you that for the cities of Edmonton, Calgary, and a

number of other urban centres in particular we do have the 2009 numbers, which do significantly in areas increase the population. I also note that we are also required to add the population of Indian reserves that were not included in the census, as provided by the federal Department of Indian and Northern Affairs.

In dividing Alberta into 87 proposed electoral divisions, the commission will take into consideration any factors it considers appropriate, but it must and shall take into consideration the following:

- (a) the requirement for effective representation as guaranteed by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms,
- (b) sparsity and density of population,
- (c) common community interests and community organizations, including those of Indian reserves and Metis settlements,
- (d) wherever possible, the existing community boundaries within the cities of Edmonton and Calgary,
- (e) . . . the existing municipal boundaries,
- (f) the number of municipalities and other local authorities,
- (g) geographical features, including existing road systems, and
- (h) the desirability of understandable and clear boundaries.

The population rule in the act states that a proposed electoral division must not be more than 25 per cent above or below the average population for all 87 electoral divisions, with one exception. Up to four electoral divisions may have a population that is as much as 50 per cent below the average population of the electoral divisions in Alberta if three of the following five criteria are met:

- (a) the area . . . exceeds 20 000 square kilometres or the . . . surveyed area of the proposed electoral division exceeds 15 000 square kilometres;
- (b) the distance from the Legislature Building in Edmonton to the nearest boundary of the proposed electoral division by the most direct highway route is more than 150 kilometres;
- (c) there is no town in the proposed electoral division that has a population exceeding 8000 people;
- (d) the area of the proposed electoral division contains [a First Nation] reserve or a Metis settlement;
- (e) the proposed electoral division has a portion of its boundary coterminous with a boundary of the Province of Alberta.

It goes on to say that for these purposes the municipality of Crownsnest Pass is not a town.

9:05

That's a very general overview of the legislation, but the Alberta Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court of Canada have also provided guidance. In rulings they have agreed that under the Charter the rights of Albertans include the right to vote; the right to have the political strength or value or force of the vote an elector casts not unduly diluted; the right to effective representation; and the right to have the parity of the vote of others diluted, but not unduly, in order to gain effective representation or as a matter of practical necessity. These rulings as well as the Electoral Boundaries Commission Act must guide our decisions and, ultimately, the proposals that we will make to the Legislative Assembly.

Now, that's the law that we are to be guided by, but the most important input is the views of the people. We believe that what we hear from you, the people who will be affected by these boundary changes, will be critical in making the recommendations for a new electoral map that will ensure fair and effective representation for all Albertans.

Again, on behalf of the commission let me welcome you here today. For those of you who will not be speaking, you can still make your views known in writing by mail, fax, or e-mail.

With that background information I'll now call on our staff to call the first speaker. Each speaker will have 10 minutes to present and then five minutes for questions and answers with the commission.

I should tell you that the commission's public meetings are being recorded by *Alberta Hansard*, and the audio recordings will be posted on the commission's website. Transcripts of these proceedings will also be available. If you have registered as a presenter or choose to participate in this morning's meeting, we ask you to identify yourself for the record prior to starting your presentation.

Ms Friesacher: Our first presenter is Mr. Gordon Olsen.

The Chair: Good morning, Mr. Olsen, and welcome.

**Gordon Olsen, Calgary-Elbow
Progressive Conservative Constituency Association**

Mr. Olsen: Thank you. It's a pleasure to present to you today on behalf of my colleagues on the executive and the board of the Calgary-Elbow Progressive Conservative association and, of course, on behalf of our Member of the Legislative Assembly, the Hon. Alison Redford. I know that you're extremely busy meeting with groups and individuals here in Calgary today and yesterday and across our great province, and I commend you all for taking time from your personal lives to provide this service to Albertans.

You mentioned, Mr. Chairman, that I have 10 minutes to make my presentation. I don't know that I'll need that amount of time. I do want to touch upon a couple of points and then make some recommendations for the commission to consider as you go about perhaps the thankless task of redrawing the electoral map.

To begin, I'd like to comment on the process, which was reviewed by the chairman. We in the Calgary-Elbow PC association agree that it's appropriate to review electoral boundaries from time to time. I believe that the law prescribes that this be done after every second provincial general election – I'm sort of paraphrasing – or at least within 10 years after the work of the previous commission. We believe that this formula will allow us to keep our electoral map current so that it reflects changes in population and growth.

On that point we're aware that Alberta has seen significant population growth, yet there has not been an increase in the number of seats in our Legislature since 1982, so we believe that it's entirely appropriate that the number of seats increase from 83 to 87. We have a million more people in our province than we did in the early '80s, and we also believe that notwithstanding the current economic difficulties Alberta's population will continue to grow in the future.

Second, a brief comment on the formula used for redistribution. It's far too simplistic to draw an electoral map based on the principle of representation by population. We agree with the Alberta formula – I believe it was tested by the Supreme Court of Canada – which allows a variance of up to 25 per cent of the provincial average. It allows under special circumstances – and the chairman outlined that – for up to four constituencies to have a variance of up to 50 per cent below the provincial average.

What we're seeking and what the commission and, I believe, the government is seeking is effective representation for our citizens in our Legislature. Our elected people are busy, sometimes busy beyond belief. Our member of the Legislature, for an example, makes time to visit seniors' centres. She visits schools and meets with teachers and principals. She meets with representatives of Mount Royal University, which is in our constituency, Rockyview hospital, Heritage Park. She has regular meetings with the 14 community associations on top of spending regular hours in her constituency office meeting with constituents. And this over and above the additional responsibilities that the Premier has given her as Minister of Justice and the Attorney General for Alberta.

I guess the point I would make, Mr. Chairman, is that we need to

draw up electoral boundaries which take into account community of interest so that it's at least a little bit easier for an individual to provide effective representation to their district. I believe this to be the case whether he or she represents a rural or an urban constituency.

If you'll allow me a few minutes to speak about Calgary-Elbow's specific issues, I'll begin by providing a brief description of the current boundaries. If you begin at Heritage Park and follow the reservoir along the northwest shores to the community of Lakeview, then up 37th Street, taking into account the community of Glamorgan, to Richmond Road – that's our northern boundary – to Crowchild Trail, then it takes sort of an odd little dip down Crowchild to 50th Street, back to the Elbow River, and then takes in the communities of Erlton, Elbow Park, Rideau, Roxboro, Parkhill, and Stanley Park and is bordered on the east side by Macleod Trail. For the most part, within those boundaries are well-established older communities, by and large city-centre communities. Most use the same transportation corridors, enjoy the city centre park systems, and shop in the area's commercial shopping centres.

I should note that the population is said to be 38,727, which is 2.4 per cent above the provincial average. We're slightly above the provincial average, but we are aware that other constituencies, particularly in the northwest and southern parts of Calgary, have considerably larger populations. The challenge for this commission will be to bring these constituencies back in line with the formula and provincial average. As such, we expect that the number of citizens in a redrawn Calgary-Elbow constituency will increase. Because of the nature of the communities, being older and more established, we see little likelihood of new development, and therefore we expect that additional population will be added likely by the addition of additional community associations.

One recommendation that you may consider is that if you take the boundary between the Elbow River and Crowchild Trail at 50th Avenue, it could be moved north to 34th Avenue. This would take in the communities of Altadore and Garrison. Thirty-fourth Avenue is a natural boundary between the community of Altadore and, on the other side of 34th, South Calgary. That's why we selected 34th as a potential northern boundary.

A second recommendation would be to extend the southeast corner from Heritage Drive and Elbow Drive to Heritage Drive and Macleod Trail. I mentioned that our eastern border is Macleod Trail, but at Glenmore it takes a little jog to Elbow Drive and goes down to Heritage, so we would recommend that the border be extended along Macleod to Heritage Drive. That would take in the community of Kingsland in its entirety.

A third recommendation would be to extend the northeast corner of the current boundary to include the Mount Royal community.

Now, together these changes would mean the addition of several thousand citizens and put us well beyond the 25 per cent provincial average threshold. We'll leave it to the commission to decide which specific changes, additions, or subtractions you wish to make. But the point that I would make is that any of these three recommendations will allow the Calgary-Elbow constituency to assume a larger population while continuing to meet the important test of community of interest.

Thank you. Appreciate your time.

9:15

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Olsen. Your suggestions certainly give us some room to think about this.

Brian, have you some questions?

Mr. Evans: Well, thanks, Mr. Chairman, and thanks very much, Mr. Olsen. Reviewing your suggested changes, certainly Calgary-West

is well over the quotient. Moving to the west over to Sarcee shouldn't be an issue. Moving in the southeast into Egmont again shouldn't be an issue because that's a fair bit of population increase as well. It strikes me, though, that if you went into the northeast, would you not be going into Calgary-Currie?

Mr. Olsen: Yes.

Mr. Evans: Currie, again, is an established area. Have you or has anyone in Elbow had any discussions with Calgary-Currie about how they would see making up for or changing their boundaries to add this area in the northeast in Mount Royal into Calgary-Elbow at their expense?

Mr. Olsen: No, we really haven't spoken to Currie. We looked at some of the odd sort of boundaries that we currently have and wondered: well, if the commission in its wisdom decides to redraw it a certain way, we could collect some population here. But, no, there has not been a formal discussion with the Currie folks.

Mr. Evans: Okay. Thank you. My other question is just dealing with populations in excess of the quotient in urban areas and whether either the association or your MLA has made any comments about the ability in areas in urban constituencies where there is more of a community of interest to be able to deal with larger populations, as opposed to areas which are primarily in the centre and the inner city, where you might very well have many more interests being represented and more social services demands, if you will, which tends to be the case in inner cities. Any comments that you'd want to make in terms of either the association or your MLA?

Mr. Olsen: I'm sorry; I'm not sure I follow the question, sir.

Mr. Evans: If you have a constituency such as yours, which you've indicated has a great deal of commonality of interest, is that any easier for an MLA to represent in an urban setting – I'm just comparing urban to urban – than an area where there are a number of interests, a number of different communities with different backgrounds, with different histories, more issues that would involve the MLA on a day-to-day basis? If you've had no comment about that, if you've had no discussion about it, and your MLA has made no comments that you're aware of, that's fine and dandy to answer that way.

Mr. Olsen: I don't believe that we've had that kind of discussion, in terms of the demographics within. We were looking strictly at communities, community associations, and population numbers in terms of how our constituency may be configured at the end of the commission's work.

Mr. Evans: Just to clarify, the reason I'm asking that is just that, obviously, we're trying to get as close to the quotient as possible. If we are to err on either fewer than the quotient or more than the quotient, we're trying to determine whether there are some criteria that we should be aware of and should take into consideration.

Mr. Olsen: I see.

Mr. Evans: Thanks for your input.

The Chair: Allyson.

Ms Jeffs: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Olsen.

Just by way of the numbers – and we've been trying to clarify this as we're going along because our data is shifting a bit – I think that your population figure would be the 2006 census number, that 38,727. Just for your information, we will be able to use more updated census information from the city. We don't have it on a riding-by-riding basis, but that may nudge your numbers as to where you're at. Also, using the updated census information, our new estimated quotient is different than the one that I think was initially put out by the commission. It's now 40,583. So just for your information on that, when we're looking at this, these will be the numbers we're using. I think the riding is still going to be fairly close one way or another to the quotient.

Thank you for your different scenarios to add population if that becomes necessary. Are those given to us in any order of preference? Do you have any thoughts?

Mr. Olsen: No. We sat down as a group, and we considered these three scenarios. Again, it was our assumption that our numbers would increase. We don't know, census data being what it is, what addition of some constituencies might do to the average number. We were just looking at the enormous populations in some of the outlying constituencies that continue to grow.

I'll give you an example anecdotally. I was involved in the election campaign past. I think that within our constituency we had 68 polls. I was in a poll in the southeast, and they had 140, so they were considerably larger than us. It was our assumption that the average would probably grow, and thus we would be required to take on additional population.

Ms Jeffs: Well, you share a border with Calgary-West, which is one of the areas we're going to certainly have to deal with, so I appreciate that.

Those are my questions.

Dr. Archer: Well, thanks for your presentation, Mr. Olsen, and the detailed comments about where population could be shifted. Just so that I understand what kind of changes make sense and what don't, on the entire southern border of your constituency, is that all the reservoir and Weaselhead? Are there serious physical barriers between the Elbow riding and the Glenmore riding? I ask that just wondering whether it's possible for us to think about incorporating some changes that bring people from Glenmore into Elbow because, again, it's one of these cascading issues.

The two most significant pressure points that we'll be looking at that are in the southwest are Calgary-West and Calgary-Lougheed. With the data that we have from the 2006 census, Calgary-West is 47 per cent over the average and Lougheed was 26 per cent over the average. So those, I think, are going to be the drivers of the shifts. Calgary-Glenmore is a bit under, so one could imagine moving some of the people from the Lougheed constituency into Glenmore. I'm trying to get a sense as to whether it's possible to see some of that cascading up. If the Glenmore southern boundary was moved down, is it possible for the northern boundary to move down and for some of that to be incorporated into Elbow?

Mr. Olsen: Well, the answer is yes, that there's no physical barrier as per your first question in respect of whether the boundary could move south. In fact, in our discussion with our little group there was some suggestion that, you know, the constituency could move further south from Heritage to Southland, for that matter, recognizing that Calgary-Lougheed has considerable population pressures. So the quick answer is: no, there wouldn't be any reason why it couldn't move further south and some of the northern polls then be redistributed into other constituencies.

Dr. Archer: Okay. Thanks. The other question has to do with what may happen if we go in the other direction and move some of the people from Calgary-West into Calgary-Currie, for example. That's sort of consistent with your recommendation to move part of the northern boundary from 50th Avenue to 34th Avenue, and I'm wondering if there is any building still going on in the Garrison area. Is that all built out now, or is there some potential for continued population growth that we should be mindful of in that part of the city?

9:25

Mr. Olsen: Well, without knowing too specifically, I believe that there is still some development within that Canada Lands area. I mean, really, we started with the premise that we're pretty close. We know the constituency, and it's a good constituency. There may be some additional development, but we saw it as being quite limited.

Dr. Archer: Yeah. Absolutely. I think that if this was our starting point, we'd probably say that this riding looks pretty internally consistent in terms of communities of interest and very close to our target population, so this is likely one that wouldn't change. It's the cascading effect, I think, that would likely have an impact ultimately on Currie.

Then, just one final question: if Currie became involved in taking on some more population from Calgary-West, would there be any need to necessarily stop the north movement of your riding at 34 Avenue? The Marda Loop seems to also be kind of a consistent community, and one could imagine using 33rd as a bit of a core in defining a community and then taking the northern boundary even a little bit farther north. Does that make sense to you, or do you see some need to not go beyond 34th Avenue?

Mr. Olsen: Well, again, I mentioned that 34th is the natural border between the South Calgary community and the Altadore community, so that's why we took it to that point. Then we looked at what the potential increase of population would be from taking the numbers of people that live within that area from 50th to 34th and thought: that probably is as much as you need to take or should take. Of course, the cascading effect is that you're taking population out of Currie, so Currie somehow has to make up their numbers.

Dr. Archer: Right. Yeah. Thanks.

Mr. Olsen: As you say, it's a cascading effect. If you redraw this line to here, then there's an implication. That's why I suggested it might be somewhat of a thankless task at the end of the day.

Mr. Dobbie: Thanks, Mr. Olsen. Have you provided a copy of your presentation?

Mr. Olsen: No.

Mr. Dobbie: Would you leave a copy or e-mail us a copy so we can capture it in electronic form?

Mr. Olsen: Sure.

Mr. Dobbie: Just from a general principles question – you've obviously given some thought about the city as a whole – we haven't nailed down our principles for creating the electoral divisions yet, but one thing that we have canvassed is the concept of not creating new ridings or ridings on the outskirts that are likely to be growing

beyond the quotient immediately. So would you support the principle that in areas where it's clear there will be more rapid growth, they should be under the average to allow them to catch up, with the result that the more stable areas would necessarily start out above the existing quotient?

Mr. Olsen: Yeah. I would agree with that. I said in my remarks that it's our expectation that Alberta will continue to grow, so I think that's appropriate. The other thing I should mention and that the chairman mentioned is that you're using census data that is recent. I mean, we've had redistribution exercises where constituencies have been over the average just about as soon as the law was passed by our Legislature. I hadn't really thought about, you know, some of these rapidly growing and the expectation that they'll continue to grow into the future. Yes. By the time the next commission deals with the numbers, they probably would be over and above, so that would be, I think, an appropriate exercise.

Mr. Dobbie: Thank you.

The Chair: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Olsen. I appreciate your thoughts. Just one further question. As you know, we do have four new electoral divisions that we will be placing somewhere in the province. Do you have an opinion as to where they should go?

Mr. Olsen: You're not asking me to get into the Calgary-Edmonton issue, are you? I'm just kidding, of course.

I thought – and this is just an assumption – that the additional seats, knowing that Edmonton has grown quite a bit and some of its boundaries, would be likely Edmonton or Calgary constituencies.

The Chair: You realize, of course, that we have a riding in the north in Fort McMurray that is almost twice the average.

Mr. Olsen: That's right, too.

The Chair: Thank you for your thoughts, and thank you for coming. We would appreciate it if you could give us a written copy just for reference. That would be very helpful.

Mr. Olsen: Very good.

The Chair: Have a great morning. Thank you.

Mr. Olsen: Thank you.

Ms Friesacher: The next presenter is Ms Rebecca Aizenman.

The Chair: Good morning.

Rebecca Aizenman

Ms Aizenman: Good morning to all of you. Thank you for the opportunity to present to you as an ordinary citizen but as an involved citizen in the sense that I've been involved in politics in the sense that my keen interest crosses civic, provincial, and federal issues.

The Chair: Could I just stop you for one second? Could you for the record for *Hansard* give us your complete name.

Ms Aizenman: It's Rebecca Aizenman, and it's Ms. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you.

Ms Aizenman: Given my keen interest in what is going on at the political level, this week I would say to you – I say this most respectfully, and I put it in quotation marks – we need more beds, not more MLAs. I concur with the lady who presented yesterday, Ms Heynen: 87 MLAs are fine, but the constituencies could be much bigger, thus creating fewer MLAs. I realize that by legislation more MLAs, more seats have to be created. But at what cost at a time when we face a \$6 billion or \$7 billion deficit? I calculated the cost of four new MLAs. My figures are very, very conservative. During the year a single MLA would run at approximately \$130,000. I used \$90,000 as a base salary and allowed for committee involvement, et cetera. With four new MLAs it would run over half a million dollars, if not more. Again, at a time when we are so short of funds, one has to look at the financial implication albeit that representation is important.

I look at the workload of an MLA compared to the workload of a city alderman in Calgary. I can't comment on Edmonton; I don't know Edmonton. There are 14 aldermen and a mayor in our city. The only time they collectively take time off is in the month of August. They duly deserve a holiday. Each of our wards, hit or miss, is approximately 50,000 people. Interestingly enough, I too live in Calgary-Elbow, and ward 11 is almost contiguous with the present boundaries of Calgary-Elbow. There is a proposal before council right now to extend ward 11, which would make for an interesting study given the fact that you just spoke about adding more people to Calgary-Glenmore from the south and west side, but I'll come back to that in just a moment.

9:35

In the province of Ontario provincial electoral boundaries are contiguous with federal boundaries, and that would make for an interesting exercise because if you live in Willowdale, you know that you live in Willowdale provincially and federally. If you live downtown, you live in St. Paul's, which recently had a by-election, and it overlaps with the federal boundaries of St. Paul's. I realize you have to follow a very, very strict formula, but you have to ask yourselves: how many people can a single MLA represent? Given the fact that in Alberta the sitting days for the provincial Legislature are very, very nominal compared to other places – and we do have a population of well over 3 and a half million – what would more MLAs accomplish? I say that as an observer, but I am aware of the parameters that you must work in given the present legislation.

Yesterday there were some questions about census numbers and what communities were in various electoral districts. I thought about that. I respectfully make some suggestions, and I can give you at least one source. Every year the city of Calgary publishes a very, very substantial document on the census. Our census was completed in April of 2009. I believe the document should be ready by the end of the year or, if not, in the new year.

In that document every community is listed within each of the wards, and within those communities there is very, very helpful information. It gives a household breakdown. It gives an age breakdown. It gives a breakdown as to the type of accommodation. It gives a male and female breakdown, and I think there's also an age breakdown. Then you can match communities to the electoral divisions and the wards. Anyone working an election campaign automatically knows the communities within their boundaries, and most often election campaigns are organized to hit each of those communities. It's easy to identify your communities as to where you have support and where you have to do more work. In Calgary people are very community conscious. They identify with their communities. It is a very, very strong, shall I say, indescribable feeling: I live in this community, and I live over there.

Let me just backtrack. Yesterday there were some presentations involving the newest areas of Calgary, where the fastest growth was. I would again respectfully suggest that the panel obtain the Plan It Calgary document, at least a précis of the document. It is going through city council on Monday. There's been a lot of discussion as to where the growth should be in the future. As was indicated yesterday, the far south, the far west, and I would add the far north are growing at an unbelievable rate, recession or no recession. If it is within the boundaries of your hearings and your investigations and if it doesn't prejudice your work, a field trip, a drive through these areas, would be very, very revealing. Just going west on 17th Avenue as far as you can go will show you the growth in that part of the city. It's phenomenal. It's the same in the deep south, whether it's on the east side of Macleod Trail or the west side, as far south as Spruce Meadows. It is very, very hard to comprehend where all these people are coming from and how they get into Calgary, but they have to vote, so they have to be in a constituency.

I tried the exercise in my head as to where I would start to redo the boundaries. I thought that maybe you should start with the north, start from the north end and look at the growth up there and add it to Calgary-Mackay because I think that's where the most growth in Calgary north is. Calgary west is similar. It's easy to build out there because it's flat, and it just goes on and on. It's the same in the south. I would start at the edges of the fastest growing communities and work towards the core of the city in a very, very general way.

As far as boundaries are concerned, I would go with distinct, natural features such as the Bow River. That's easy enough to do. I would also look at the major arteries that form a very, very strong feature of the city: Sarcee Trail, Glenmore Trail, Deerfoot Trail, et cetera. Those should be the boundaries confining a constituency. You shouldn't have to cross any of these to go to a polling station, as I think is the case in Calgary-Elbow, where I happen to live. Seventeenth Avenue is a good divider; it's a natural divider. The gentleman who preceded me looked at 34th Avenue. There are certain arteries and features of the city that make for natural boundaries.

I would urge you to keep communities together. I live not far from that famous corner of Elbow and Glenmore Trail, where most of the construction occurred recently in Calgary, and I can't for the life of me understand how a boundary could be drawn down Elbow Drive so that if you live on the west side of Elbow Drive, it's Calgary-Elbow; if you cross the street into Kingsland, it's Calgary-Egmont. We cross Elbow Drive to go to the shopping centre, and we cross Elbow Drive to send our kids to the school, yet Kingsland, a little entity unto its own, is dumped in with Egmont, and then Egmont, as you heard yesterday, goes all the way out to Ogden, where you have Riverbend included in the constituency. I would urge that Egmont be looked at in terms of keeping like communities together. Kingsland could very easily fit into Calgary-Elbow, or if you're going to adjust the boundaries of Calgary-Glenmore, that could easily be the north end of Calgary-Glenmore.

There is one area in Calgary-Elbow that should be looked at very carefully. It's a forgotten area. Maybe it's in Egmont. It is a strip of older, older housing on 1st Street S.W. between 46th Avenue S.W. and 58th Avenue as the most southern boundary. It's part of an old, old community called Manchester, which is now being redeveloped. These people never know if they're in Elbow or somewhere else because if you use Macleod Trail as your dividing point, they get shuffled into whatever it is over there, and that discourages them from voting. I don't know people who live there, but I drive through it frequently. They should not be disenfranchised because the boundaries have to be changed. There are probably other areas in Calgary, but I can't say.

Several years ago in looking at the new boundaries that were to be set up for the Calgary Southwest federal constituency, because you had to work with the formula, I couldn't believe that you could take a chunk of Calgary-Elbow, which had the geographic quadrants of Elbow S.W. as your street address, and then put it into what was going to be the federal riding of Calgary East. That was changed on the basis of the process because, again, one could present to the panel.

9:45

I also gave some thought to some names for your new constituencies. Some are not very original, but I did come up with a few names, and there probably will be more in the written submission that I will send to your office. Given that the growth rate is very, very intensive in the far north, the far south, and the far west – and this is really not too original, but it's a start – I came up with Calgary-Southview, Westview, and Calgary-Northview. Then I came up with Calgary-Olympia, using Olympic Park as a landmark. Then if one used the natural transportation routes, you could play with Blackfoot-Sarcee. Knowing a little bit about the history of Calgary, Calgary-Hays and Calgary-Mackay were very, very appropriate, so I came up with Calgary-MacEwan and Calgary-Manning. I gave some thought to other historical names, but without consulting a history of Alberta, I ran out of names last night. I didn't have too much time to go any further, but I thought it would be an interesting exercise. I thought about Calgary-Egmont, edge mont, which means you should see the mountains. The mountains are not too much in view in most parts of that constituency.

I believe that concludes my presentation. I do have some strong views about the number of MLAs, but that is set within the context of our present economic situation. I thank you for this opportunity, and I look forward to seeing the new map of the boundaries, at least for Calgary.

The Chair: Well, thank you very much. I really would encourage you to put in a written submission.

Ms Aizenman: I shall do that, sir.

The Chair: You do have some very interesting thoughts, and it would be most helpful. The ladies at the back can give you the address, the e-mail, the website, and we'd really like to see your thoughts. The only caution: we'd like to get them before the 13th of October.

Ms Aizenman: That's not a problem.

The Chair: All right.
Brian.

Mr. Evans: Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't have any questions. A very clear presentation. I just want to thank you for a very thoughtful discussion. This is valuable information for us, and you obviously have a very significant history with Calgary and a great knowledge of the community you live in. Thank you very much for your contribution.

Dr. Archer: Ms Aizenman, thanks again for your comments this morning. I wanted to make sure I understand a couple of the specific recommendations you had with respect to Elbow. One of them had to do with the community of Kingsland. The map that I'm looking at shows that on the southeast corner of your constituency it looks like the boundary seems to be Macleod Trail, then it jogs

west and then goes south. Is that the Kingsland community, the part that's excluded there?

Ms Aizenman: On the map the southern boundary of Calgary-Elbow is Heritage Drive. At one time the community that I live in, CKE – Chinook, Kelvin Grove, Eagle Ridge – was cut in half, and I had to come before your previous colleagues to have that corrected. Kingsland is immediately east of Elbow Drive, south of Glenmore, and concludes at Macleod Trail, entering into an automobile showroom strip which is now being redeveloped. For the life of me I couldn't understand why the line went down Elbow Drive.

Let me add one more item. If you're doing a mail drop in the most southern part of Calgary-Elbow, it's very difficult. In my community we don't get a mail drop because the postal codes go way, way over into Egmont. So at times, for political purposes, the decision was made: well, we're not going to drop there because it's all going outside of the constituency.

Kingsland is a natural fit on the most southern east side of the constituency, and as a matter of fact it was part of Calgary-Elbow prior to 1993, I believe, or '94. It was rejigged. I know it was in Elbow. It was taken out – I won't say why – and placed into Egmont. As the previous speaker alluded to, Heritage would make for a very good natural boundary. If you want to be very, very ruthless, I was going to say, or this is the way it's going to be, the Glenmore Trail makes another boundary, but Heritage would be a good fit. Again, there's a community south of Kingsland that was thrown into Glenmore, yet these communities by geography automatically fit together. We cross each other's streets. We go up the main streets like Macleod Trail, Elbow Drive. There are some social factors that just bring us automatically together.

Dr. Archer: Right. The other community that you had mentioned is Manchester.

Ms Aizenman: Yes, sir.

Dr. Archer: Is that just east of Macleod Trail?

Ms Aizenman: It's east of Macleod Trail. It's under redevelopment. At one time it was on the edge of the city. It was a community. I vaguely remember going to school with kids from that area. Change has occurred. There are new buildings. There is a new condo unit that has recently come on scene. There are some new, shall I say, low-cost housing developments. There is a home there for people with special needs, and there's lots of room in that area for redevelopment when the time is right.

Dr. Archer: It's divided from the rest of its constituency by Deerfoot Trail, then.

Ms Aizenman: No, sir. It lies between Macleod Trail and the LRT tracks. It's ripe for development, but those people, you know, they get moved here and there because the line goes down Macleod Trail. Well, maybe it should go down the CPR line further to the east.

Dr. Archer: Great. Thanks for those comments.

Ms Aizenman: Thank you, sir.

Mr. Dobbie: Ma'am, could you please spell your name for me so I have it accurately on my list?

Ms Aizenman: A-i-z-e-n-m-a-n.

Mr. Dobbie: Thank you, Ms Aizenman. You've given us a list of matters to consider: natural boundaries, major arterial routes. The challenge we will have is that sometimes these conflict. The most recent example would be that you feel strongly that the major arterial routes are a barrier, but in the last example the little area you just talked about is on the east side of Macleod Trail. In your written proposal if you can attach a sketch, it would be helpful for us because we are having to weight the various factors, a river versus a road: which one do you follow? You're from this area, and your personal knowledge will be of assistance to us. For example, if we move east of Macleod Trail in one area, we are creating the same problem apparently that the existing jog to the west of it has. So we need to balance these things and hear from you as to: "All right. You've given us a list. Something has to give. Which should give first?"

Ms Aizenman: All right. I can do that.

Mr. Dobbie: Thank you.

The Chair: Allyson.

Ms Jeffs: Yes. Thank you very much for that detailed presentation. I really just have one clarifying question about the Plan It document that you mentioned. It's not yet been adopted by city council, or it's wending its way through that process?

Ms Aizenman: It's through the process. It comes before city council this Monday with amendments that were a result of two or three days of very, very intensive public hearings. The essence of the document is that there should be very, very high-density development in the core of the city and along the LRT line, especially at LRT stations, an example of which we have not far from here. At Heritage Drive there are two huge towers that recently went up. That's the kind of development the city wants to see at LRT stations, and there's a similar development at the far end south of Canyon Meadows.

9:55

The document talks about quality of life, how new suburbs should be presented, what the density should be in the new suburbs, and then there's a question of interpretation as to how city planners see the new suburbs and what the developers envision. The document goes before council, and whether or not there'll be further amendments I don't know, but it was a very, very involved process. It was a very expensive process. People agree, people disagree with it, but it does provide guidelines – I say guidelines – as to what the growth pattern should be given the rate at which we expand because, again, the far edges of the city contain growth that is quite difficult to absorb, in my opinion.

Ms Jeffs: Okay. All right. It sounds like it's about to be finalized, so that would be very helpful.

Ms Aizenman: I know there are précis of the document available.

Ms Jeffs: Thank you very much for that.

The Chair: Ms Aizenman, thank you very much. We look forward to your written submissions. Thank you.

Ms Aizenman: Thank you, sir.

Ms Friesacher: The next presenter is Mr. Michael White.

Michael White

Mr. White: Good morning.

The Chair: Good morning, sir.

Mr. White: I guess I come at it from another tack, totally the opposite. I don't have a submission. I wasn't able to do as much research work as the previous speaker. I guess where I come from is that living downtown Calgary, an urbanite, right downtown – and I probably couldn't back this up – I don't think we get a proper census, a proper total number of people that are living downtown. In other words, the enumeration, I think, is lacking. A lot of people, when you talk to them downtown, don't know the enumerators. This is in my personal building that I live in. I live in Prince's Island Place, which is Calgary-Buffalo. For those people that know anything about downtown, I'm across the street from the McDougall building, where most meetings are. I'm right across the street from there, and there are a lot of people in my building that aren't ever enumerated.

I sometimes get really upset with Alberta. I think that there are more people living in urban centres, and we don't get to say as much or contact as much just for the simple reason that, you know, I don't think there's ever proper enumeration. I don't know how you go about doing that. While you're studying the boundaries – and as the last speaker spoke about natural boundaries and everything, that's fine – I just think that when you do this, besides making them equalized or whatever, if they could have proper enumeration, you know, so that everybody gets a voice. There are so many nooks and crannies in downtown Calgary that you'd never – I don't know how well the buildings get enumerated. I know that when I go home and it says that the enumeration's being done, I know that when you go and see the voters list, it doesn't look anything like the number of people that are in the building. That's my personal building, and I know that there are a lot of downtown buildings like that.

That's basically all I have to say.

Mr. Evans: Thanks, Mr. Chairman. That's an interesting observation, Mr. White. We've heard from at least one MLA that I recall saying that it's difficult to get into high-rise buildings to meet with constituents.

Mr. White: Right.

Mr. Evans: Is it any easier from your perspective, from your experience, for the census takers to get into Prince's Island Place? At least there's a notice there that they're going to be around.

Mr. White: Yeah. And that's what I think. The other thing is that I know that if they talked to the building management, I think that building management should be letting people, the census takers and the registrar of voters, for the sake of another word, into the building to do the enumeration. I mean, I don't think it should be legislated or anything, but the national census that they do every five years: you're supposed to fill that out. But I just think that it's very underrepresentative, the number of people downtown that you would find on the voters list.

Mr. Evans: The other side of the coin, of course, is that you can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him drink. So if somebody refuses to open their door, you know, you're in big trouble. Do you have any suggestions about how you make that more effective?

Mr. White: Signage. Signage in the buildings.

Mr. Evans: Just signage. Okay. Thanks very much for that input.

Mr. White: “Are you registered as a voter? There will be an election.” And maybe in a couple of different languages because I know that in my building a lot of people are immigrants.

Mr. Evans: Okay. Thank you very much for that input.

The Chair: Allyson.

Ms Jeffs: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for your comments, Mr. White. Just following up with what Brian Evans was saying. Do you notice that it is the same with the sort of provincial voting enumeration as it is with the civic census?

Mr. White: Yes.

Ms Jeffs: There’s not really any difference. Nobody seems to get in and get completely enumerated. Okay. So it’s a bit of an ongoing, across-the-board problem.

Mr. White: I mean, keeping in mind that people do have a right to privacy, the privacy act or whatever you want to call it, I still think that if it was put that this is your right – I just find that, you know, a lot of people in Calgary say that they don’t ever get asked anything, and that’s because they don’t open their door. For many years I worked for Angus Reid Associates. “They have these surveys on the front of the *Calgary Herald*, and nobody ever calls me.” Well, we didn’t get on the phone. First of all, we got on the phone and said, “We’re calling from Angus Reid Associates.” “Well, who’s that?” Like, if you read it, it’s not going to say, “We’re calling on behalf of the *Calgary Herald* to do a survey” or Southam or whoever it was, Canwest, I guess, at this time. I know there’s confidentiality, yet there’s got to be a way to bridge that or get through that so that people do feel enfranchised.

Ms Jeffs: Okay. Thank you very much.

The Chair: Peter.

Mr. Dobbie: Thank you, sir. Thank you, Mr. White. Just to follow up on this issue, the numbers we look at are the census, which is a different process than enumeration, and the ’06 figure for Calgary-Buffalo is 43,312. Are you saying that that number is under-represented as well as the enumeration?

Mr. White: I think that number is probably a little bit more reflective.

Mr. Dobbie: Okay. We are using the more recent municipal data, and there’s certainly a financial interest for Calgary to capture every single person. Again, I think there is a distinction between enumeration and census, and I just wanted to be clear there because we are using census data irrespective of enumeration, which should have to the extent possible as accurate a number for Calgary-Buffalo.

In your constituency is there likely to be significant growth, or is the area fully developed?

10:05

Mr. White: In the west end it’s fully developed, and in the east end – now I’m trying to figure out where our boundary is on the east end. Is it 5th Street?

Mr. Dobbie: I’ll have a look here. It looks like the river, 7th. It sort of wanders.

Mr. White: Right. On the east end there’s quite a bit of development happening down there, too. So that has to be redone, you know, re-enumerated. A lot of immigrant people are in the big condominiums and stuff that are going up, so again a second language has to be taken into consideration, et cetera, et cetera.

Mr. Dobbie: Just along the same lines, are there any glaring errors in the existing riding? Are there some natural communities that should be part of it or some bad fits?

Mr. White: No.

Mr. Dobbie: It’s not a bad riding, then.

Mr. White: No. I think the riding works perfectly. The boundaries and stuff are fine.

Mr. Dobbie: Thank you, sir.

Mr. White: Thank you.

Dr. Archer: I don’t think I have very many additional comments. Maybe just to follow up on the line that Peter was pursuing, the northern boundary of Buffalo is the Bow.

Mr. White: Right.

Dr. Archer: And on the eastern edge is that the Elbow coming down there?

Mr. White: Yeah.

Dr. Archer: Yeah. And then what’s on the south? Is that 17th Avenue?

Mr. White: Yeah.

Dr. Archer: Yeah. So, yeah, those are such strong boundaries. Really, the only area where logically you’d move things around seems like on the western part of the constituency.

Mr. White: That’s the only thing you can do.

Dr. Archer: We’ve had some people comment that the Calgary-Bow constituency is a little bit peculiar because it stretches across the river to pick up the community of Wildwood, I think.

Mr. White: Yeah.

Dr. Archer: But because Buffalo is already over the provincial average, I’m not sure that it makes a lot of sense to push Buffalo farther west because that’ll just magnify the problem that your constituency already has.

Mr. White: Right.

Dr. Archer: No additional comments.

The Chair: Very good.

Well, thank you very much, Mr. White. If you do have any written submissions you’d like to add, please do.

Mr. White: I will send those along. At this point in time I don't, but I just wanted to make sure.

The Chair: Certainly.

Mr. White: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Ms Friesacher: Our next presenter is Mrs. Marlene Sorensen.

Marlene Sorensen

Mrs. Sorensen: Good morning. It's a pleasure to be here on a sunny morning like this. I'm a native Albertan. I've been a resident of Calgary since 1973 in the constituency of Calgary-Egmont. I just happened to come in when one of the presenters was actually talking about my constituency.

Just a little bit of background history on me. I've been involved in politics since I was born because my parents were involved at all levels: civic, provincial, and federal. When I went to university, I was involved at all levels, continuing in Edmonton, then to Calgary. I am here today because I'm involved at all levels yet, campaigning for my mayor and alderman and provincial and federal.

However, that being said, these are my comments, Your Honour Judge Walter and committee members. Why are there hearings today on the Electoral Boundaries Commission in the province of Alberta now? How much is this commission costing? Why are you having hearings in 12 centres unless you're planning changes in 12 centres, too? Our Premier has stated that he is cutting spending. It seems to me that the Electoral Boundaries Commission hearings are unnecessary spending at this time in Alberta. What are the advantages of these expenses?

As I see it, there is an advantage for the MLA who gets elected because he gets a salary, a pension, expenses, extra pay for committee work, an office in Edmonton, an office in Calgary or his constituency, and office staff. It is estimated, according to the press, that it'll cost \$10 million a year for four extra MLAs. I think it is totally irresponsible of the government to add these MLAs when revenue is being taken from education and health to cover the \$6.9 billion deficit to date. Each minister is equally confused about what is to be sacrificed to cover these debt costs.

What does representation really mean when all the decisions are made in caucus with the doors closed and no one shall speak outside? Promises are made during a campaign and never revisited or honoured once an MLA is elected. For example, the nursing home in Fort McMurray was promised, and they reneged. In Calgary the Stoney ring road was to be finished. Gosh, we don't even have land in south Calgary for that road yet. As an elected representative usually appears at my door during campaign time soliciting my vote, why is voter turnout so low?

Why do we need more MLAs? It seems that some constituencies could be blended. I went through that chart on your little flyer, and I noticed that some are very low in the rural areas. I'll point out why we need less government. With technology readily accessible to the public, communication would be effective, more timely, and more cost effective. MLAs just have to realize that the public wants to be served honestly. No wonder there's apathy, when the news comes from the media, newspapers and TV. Voters feel that there's a dissociation from government; that is, voters are not always sure their views are heard or their concerns are listened to. Voters feel that their votes aren't counted. Why do we vote? Do they listen to us?

The government can cut services like acute hospital beds and registered nurses, but they cannot cut themselves. No one would even notice if there were fewer MLAs. How many committee reports are prepared by MLAs and published and never acted upon? I have one here that I got. It's called Continuing Care Strategy: Aging in the Right Place. The report is a glossy example of a great project, and on page 3 it refers to client-focused care for aging people. Is that the decision that MLAs make to close 350 acute beds to assisted living? Is that community and client focused?

In conclusion, I presented a very comprehensive boundary presentation in the federal commission once here in Calgary much like the one that you heard from Ms Aizenman. When the meeting adjourned, one of the members approached me and my husband, who was with me at the time, and told me I had done a very comprehensive project with rivers and streets and avenues; however, these meetings were just a formality. The decision had already been made. I certainly hope this is not true of this commission. We do not need more MLAs.

I'm Marlene Sorensen.

The Chair: Thank you, Mrs. Sorensen, for your submissions. If you have a written one . . .

Mrs. Sorensen: You can have it.

The Chair: If you'd be so kind as to give it to the ladies at the back, we will get copies of that.

Brian.

Mr. Evans: Thanks, Mr. Chairman, and thanks, Mrs. Sorensen. Just at the outset I can tell you that we haven't made up our minds. Believe me, if we had, we wouldn't be wasting a bunch of time because I've got a lot of better things to do with my time, and I know that my colleagues on the panel are in the same boat.

Mrs. Sorensen: I'm pleased to hear that.

Mr. Evans: I'm shocked to hear that comment.

Mrs. Sorensen: We were shocked, too.

Mr. Evans: Very shocked.

Thank you for your comments about expenditures, but I would like to bring you back to the size of your constituency. It sounds to me like you know it well. It seems to be, by the information we have updated from 2006, pretty close to the quotient. If we were to increase the size of Egmont or to make any changes to Egmont, where would you suggest we make those changes?

Mrs. Sorensen: Well, I've campaigned all corners of Egmont, I believe. I was in Manchester. I've been to Maple Ridge, Queensland, and all those neighbourhoods. It would be hard to make a different judgment on where it is because we've got natural boundaries. You know, I know that Manchester was discussed in the Elbow report. Those people in Manchester were gracious when we went to the doors. I don't know how many of them were on the enumerator's list, but they were gracious, and I must say that they voted for the Liberals.

10:15

It's not just because I'm a Liberal that I'm presenting this, but I will tell you my political affiliation. I've been involved in all parties at all times. I was Social Credit for a long time. I was PC when I

was at university. I don't know; my affiliation has changed over the years for whatever reason. So I think that Egmont is pretty well distributed at the moment.

Mr. Evans: Are there other communities of similar interest, though, that are on the borders? You know, I'm looking into Calgary-Hays, which is quite large, or even Calgary-Fort, which would seem to me to be a little different demographically.

Mrs. Sorensen: They're on the other side of the road, though, aren't they?

Mr. Evans: I'm sorry.

Mrs. Sorensen: They're on the other side of Macleod Trail.

Mr. Evans: Right.

Mrs. Sorensen: That would be awkward. It should be on the same side because, believe me, it is difficult to move across. Like, at one time we had Haysboro, and that was really an awkward one to go to because it was on the west side of Macleod Trail, and it just didn't seem to have the same demographics.

Mr. Evans: Well, then, just as a closing comment, you know, there is time for additional input up to the 13th of October.

Mrs. Sorensen: I will be looking at the boundaries again, too.

Mr. Evans: That would be very helpful if you could identify some areas and provide that to us.

Mrs. Sorensen: I'd be happy to do that. Like I say, I've been involved in the demographics of a number of constituencies and looked at, you know, the people living there, their jobs, access roads in and out. I've been interested across the province, actually. I grew up in Red Deer.

Mr. Evans: Okay. Thank you very much.

Mrs. Sorensen: Thank you.

Mr. Dobbie: Thank you, Mrs. Sorensen. Just so I'm clear, you do understand that this commission has no authority to change the number of seats.

Mrs. Sorensen: I understand that. You're just looking at it.

Mr. Dobbie: You're giving us your opinion, but I want to be clear so that you don't believe that we have not listened to you. We simply have no authority to change the number from 87. That's what the legislation says, and that's what our task is. You have been heard, but we have no authority apart from allocating 87 seats.

Given your historical connection – and I understand you're giving a written submission. Part of our job is also to come up with names, and as you know, it's likely that new constituencies will be created within Calgary. Frankly, someone with your background would likely have some good suggestions as to names. When you are making a submission, if you could give us your suggestions as well, that would be helpful.

Mrs. Sorensen: I will look at it. I'm deeply concerned and interested in politics at all levels. I will look at it, definitely. I can get it in to you before the 13th, as I heard is the deadline.

Mr. Dobbie: The reason I'm asking is that I don't want you to call my mom and say: Mr. Dobbie did not listen to me about the number of seats.

Mrs. Sorensen: I know you listened because you were all looking at me.

Dr. Archer: Thanks for your comments, Mrs. Sorensen. I guess I wanted to pursue the same line of questioning as the last two questioners in terms of detailed suggestions with respect to what may be the appropriate thing to do with the Egmont constituency. In some ways when we look at your constituency and the ones immediately around you, there doesn't seem to be a strong and compelling reason to change these on their own.

Mrs. Sorensen: No.

Dr. Archer: To the extent that they're going to change, it seems like it's going to be as a result of the growth that's taken place in constituencies a little bit farther away, particularly Hays, the Hays constituency on the south, or McCall on the northeast.

Mrs. Sorensen: I realize that.

Dr. Archer: I think there's quite a bit of pressure in both of those instances to have some of the population shifted to other constituencies or create constituencies in those areas to accommodate the growth. If you can provide us with some guidance from your perspective as to what makes most sense. In particular, does it make sense to think of moving the southeast corner of Egmont farther down into the Hays constituency, although it seems like the Deerfoot Trail is a divider there?

Mrs. Sorensen: It is a big divider. It's really awkward. I will take another geographic look at it. You know, I've actually campaigned in all corners of the city as well for different candidates for different elections, by-elections, and whatever. So I will take another look at it. Getting across main thoroughfares is not easy when you're doing an election. Macleod Trail is bad.

Dr. Archer: The other possibility, I guess, just looking at the southeast part of the city, is if Egmont took in a little bit of Fort and if some of the constituencies in Hays were moved to Fort. But, again, I don't know if that's viable either, given sort of natural, physical divisions within that part of the city.

Mrs. Sorensen: I'll take a look. I'll drive it, or I'll even walk it. Really, it makes a lot of difference where the natural boundaries are when you're door-knocking or dropping literature or making contacts or getting people to polls. They don't like to cross busy streets and get into awkward situations.

Dr. Archer: Great. Thank you. That's all I have.

The Chair: Allyson.

Ms Jeffs: Thank you very much. Mrs. Sorensen, I don't have any questions. I think you have many assignments from us already for your written submission, and we're really looking forward to hearing from you on that. Thank you very much for your presentation and for lending us your experience of the city and your riding in particular.

Mrs. Sorensen: Sure. Well, I've looked forward to civic elections before, and I know that we're having boundary disputes in civic elections, too, so I'm up to all these challenges, I guess. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, again, and we look forward to that written submission.

Mrs. Sorensen: You'll get it.

The Chair: Thank you.

All right. That appears to be the presentations for this morning. We'll then adjourn till 2 unless there is anybody else in the audience that wishes to speak. We do have some extra time, and we're more than happy to hear from you.

I see there is a lady here.

Donna Michael

Ms Michael: Good morning.

The Chair: Welcome. Could I get you for the purposes of *Hansard* to give your name so that they can record it?

Ms Michael: Certainly. My name is Donna Michael. I'm a citizen at large, and I live in Calgary-Fish Creek. I wasn't prepared to speak, but I just wanted to concur with, especially, two of the speakers in terms of what has been going on. In relation to Mr. Dobbie, what he just said, I was hoping there could be a change. Not to do you out of a job or anything, but, you know, why do we need 87 seats? We've got 83. Again, is there any hope of looking at what Ontario is offering, for example, the details that Rebecca gave in terms of the ratio of voters to MLAs? That was one point.

I'm not apprised of what went on here yesterday, so I can't add to that. I certainly concur with Rebecca in terms of federal names matching provincial. There's been a lot of confusion in the past in terms of my riding, Fish Creek. I don't have any suggestions because I'm not – I've been happy with it. I'm more familiar with Calgary-Elbow and Calgary-Glenmore because I've certainly done door-knocking there. Glenmore isn't as bad as Elbow in terms of variations in boundaries, et cetera, so I concur with what Mr. Olsen said in the beginning, looking at the boundaries there carefully.

My question or comment is: I certainly agree that redistribution of the boundaries is necessary but at what expense? We have many MLAs out in the rural areas that are not attending to their constituents. I don't want to get into names or areas, but again they're not being effective where they are. My biggest point is probably looking at technology, as Marlene said. Again, could we not have online enumeration, even in the city, as Michael said? Or online voting: when is that going to come in? Here in Alberta, at whatever level, there is such apathy with the voting that it's very, very disturbing. So what can be done to increase the number of voters?

I don't want to get into rural versus urban, but if you're a PC up in Edmonton, as Mr. Stelmach is, it certainly favours his party. So, again, I would be interested in looking at redistribution for that purpose, so there is, you know, more fairness in the situation.

What guarantees are there that redistribution will increase the number of voters? I mean, we want representation and that, but could the MLAs who have a lot of downtime – it's just phenomenal how much time off they have outside of the Leg. Could they use their time more effectively? Not the city ones, because that's easier, of course, but the ones out in the rural so that they are more effective in terms of meeting with their constituents, especially as controversies arrive. I know you're not involved in beds, but Mr. Stelmach had promised – for example, the stakes are still in the ground as to

where that long-term care facility was to be built: right beside the existing acute-care hospital. The stakes are there. There's no hospital, but meanwhile down the road they're building a private facility, which is a P3, a private partnership, but there are a lot of public funds that are going into that.

10:25

Those are, essentially, my concerns. Again, I think it's a great idea if we could have the federal names match the provincial names. It'd make it a lot easier because there are a lot of people saying: well, where's Calgary-Egmont? It sounds like Edgemont, so you think it's up in the north. I would be happy to see that happen.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you.

Brian, do you have any questions?

Mr. Evans: Thanks, Mr. Chairman, and thanks, Ms Michael. I've heard now a couple of people talking about the amount of time that MLAs spend in the Leg. and the assumption that they're not working when they're not in the Leg. I just have to tell you from personal experience – I was an MLA for eight years, and I was in cabinet, so I was accountable every day in question period. I can assure you that the hardest work that an MLA does is not during the legislative session, and I would guarantee that opposition members would say the same thing. It's when they are out of session and when they are truly dedicated to doing the work for their constituents. That's the busiest time of the year for MLAs, not during session. You certainly have to be in session for that length of time to deal with the legislative agenda, but a very important function during the time that those MLAs are out of their seat in the Legislature is dealing with exactly what you've asked them to be accountable for, which is directly with their constituents. They knock on doors, they're in their constituency offices, they're going to their community associations, and they're meeting with municipal councillors, whether that's urban or rural. A very, very important time for the MLAs.

I just wanted to get that on the record because I feel very, very strongly about it. Again, it's from personal experience, knowing full well what my colleagues in the Legislature did and continue to do. It's a very important job, and it's a job I'm very proud to have been able to undertake and do for two terms.

Ms Michael: Thank you.

Mr. Evans: With respect to Calgary-Fish Creek and its borders I wonder if you could maybe just make some suggestions to us if you feel comfortable with that. You've got some real boundary issues with just geographic boundaries.

Ms Michael: Exactly.

Mr. Evans: Fish Creek itself and the river and then south as well. From a community of interest perspective do you see a natural addition to Fish Creek going into Calgary-Shaw and/or Calgary-Hays? If so, could you suggest where that would make the most sense?

Ms Michael: May I just have a closer look?

Mr. Evans: Certainly. Come on around.

Ms Michael: That would be better. Thank you.

Macleod has certainly been the division, has it not? Where's Anderson?

The Chair: There is a mike there.

Ms Michael: Well, for one, what about the river here being the natural – I don't think this is on, is it?

The Chair: Yes, it's on.

Ms Michael: Okay. So going west right there, north of Fish Creek, and coming down – its got to come a little south. I don't think you can get into the river change there east, so leave that as is. Is this 192nd across here? That's going to be higher than the variance, isn't it? Again, just keeping this, going across like that if possible, just north. Yeah. Then, you know, that includes there, so that's a logical spot right there. Then again, that certainly decreases Calgary-Shaw a bit, too, doesn't it?

Mr. Evans: But it's over where there's a lot of development potential there.

Ms Michael: Yeah. Oh, then Lougheed. I don't envy you your job.

The Chair: Anything further, Brian?

Mr. Evans: Nothing further. Thanks, Chairman.

Ms Jeffs: I don't have any questions. Thank you very much for coming up to the map and pointing that out to us. That's very helpful.

Just more of a comment, really. I'm appreciating your commentary about the number of MLAs. I just want to reiterate what I think we've said a few times, which is that, unfortunately, our mandate is set. We are tasked with creating 87 districts. By all means, thank you for your comments on that front.

Mr. Dobbie: Thank you, Ms Michael. You're not the first person we've heard from on the issue of federal names and provincial names. The challenge that we have is that there are 28 federal constituencies, and we have 87 provincial constituencies. So it is 3.1 times as many names that we have to come up with. The federal constituencies: currently there are 28; there's actually an article in the *Globe* today about some proposals for increasing it to 34 in Alberta. It is physically impossible to match the federal and the provincial boundaries simply because there are three times as many provincial boundaries. So we're not able to do that. The confusion is simply a result of our being in a different situation from Ontario, which has very close to the same number of provincial and federal seats. We don't have that luxury. For the record, it's not that we aren't hearing you, it's not that we don't care, and it's not that we disagree. It's just that we simply can't do it. Again, you know that by legislation 87 is the number we're working from.

The only other thing I would suggest. We received a tremendously detailed report from another constituent in Calgary-Fish Creek, that will be on the website, that details future growth and his suggestions. Obviously you're politically interested, and I would commend that to you. That should be up on the website; you should be able to access it. It's a report by Mr. Fryett. He is a person like you who is not politically active in the sense of affiliated with a party but interested in his constituency. It sounds like you two might

need to get together to think up some good ideas because he has some suggestions as to how the south and southeast portions of Calgary should be allocated into ridings.

Dr. Archer: Thanks, Ms Michael. Just further to Peter Dobbie's comments, the suggestion that we had yesterday was that Fish Creek is such a natural dividing point that we were encouraged to think of having constituencies solely organized below Fish Creek and then some above. The implication of that, I would take, would be that the Fish Creek riding moving westward to incorporate the rest of that area between the city limit and Fish Creek itself would make some sense. That would have some implications, I guess, for the southeast portion or maybe even the northeast portion of the Fish Creek riding as things are shuffled around a little bit. So that's just an observation.

Perhaps a question. As I understand your constituency, most of that area is probably fairly built out now. The major construction, housing construction, is all in the area south of you. One of the ideas that's been presented to us at some of the meetings and that we're beginning to talk about is whether it makes sense to have the ridings in which there's growth currently under way somewhat below the provincial average constituency size, recognizing that they're going to exist for eight years or 10 years, and have the ones that are fairly built out perhaps a little bit above the provincial constituency size, with the expectation that over the life of this set of boundaries they'll probably naturally come into greater conformity or population equality. Is that a principle that you'd like to comment on? Do you either support it or have strong feelings in opposition to that?

10:35

Ms Michael: No. I certainly support it, and you've reminded me that I'm going to a hearing next week on these high-density power stations that they're building because they're looking at that in terms of Anderson. How many years is that down the road? That involves a tremendous amount of people. Then there's one on the east side, close to me. I mean, as you say, with some of it there isn't the opportunity to build out in terms of extra land for, you know, individual housing: bungalows, et cetera. I would certainly agree with looking at what's happening 10 years down the road that has been projected and certainly factual.

Dr. Archer: Great. Thank you. That's all I have.

The Chair: Well, thank you very much, Ms Michael. It's been a pleasure hearing from you, and again we would appreciate any written material or your thoughts and suggestions. We'd appreciate that, and if you could before the 13th of October, it would be helpful.

Ms Michael: Thank you very much for the opportunity.

The Chair: Thank you.

Now, is there anyone else who wanted to speak?

There being no other indications, we'll adjourn then till 2.

[The hearing adjourned at 10:37 a.m.]

