

**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**  
**MAY 10, 2016**  
**4:30 P.M.**  
**AGENDA**

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1. Agenda Additions/Deletions
2. Agenda Approval
3. Fort McMurray Local Response Update
4. Correspondence
  - a. Edmonton Journal – April 29, 2016 – David Staples  
Alberta Government Moves to End Province’s Industrial Tax Fiasco 2-19
5. Additions
6. In-Camera
  - a. Legal Section 27(1)(2) - (Unightly Property) **Sep Pkg**
7. Adjournment

# David Staples: Alberta government moves to end province's industrial tax fiasco



[David Staples, Edmonton Journal](#)

[More from David Staples, Edmonton Journal](#)

Published on: April 29, 2016 | Last Updated: April 29, 2016 1:19 PM MDT

The Alberta government is moving to fix one of the great taxation inequities in the province.

Rachel Notley's government will soon propose changes to more fairly share \$1.9 billion in industrial taxes between the province's cash-poor towns and cities and its cash-rich counties.

"We've signalled pretty strongly that we are not leaving collaboration up to chance, that it is not OK that there are such hard lines imposing significant disparities across the province," Municipal Affairs Minister Danielle Larivee says.

Multiple measures to ensure a more co-operative approach between towns and cities and counties will be part of the new Municipal Government Act, which will be introduced in the legislature at the end of May, Larivee says.

Alberta's towns and cities have been badly treated on taxes for decade. The counties have enjoyed an almost unfathomable taxation bounty, courtesy of their formerly powerful Progressive Conservative friends.

Industrial taxes from factories, plants, refineries and pipelines are one way for local governments to share in the province's great industrial wealth. In 2014, these taxes amounted to \$1.9 billion.

The problem? While a huge number of Albertans create industrial wealth, and while people in villages, towns and cities work in plants and build and maintain pipelines, if those plants and pipelines fall outside the town or city's municipal boundaries, all the tax revenue goes to the county.

In 2014, this meant that out of the total of \$1.9 billion, \$1.8 billion went to county governments representing just 15 per cent of the population. The remaining \$100 million was split between the 85 per cent of Albertans who live in towns and cities. Not only does this inequity exist, but it's been rapidly growing. The counties now collect \$1 billion more than they did in 1996, but the villages, towns and cities collect just about the same amount as in 1996.

Former Peace River town councillor Don Good has been investigating this issue for years and is armed with numbers. For example, the Town of Slave Lake, population 6,782, is surrounded by the Municipal District of Lesser Slave Lake, population, 2,929. But in 2014, Slave Lake got just \$127,000 in industrial taxes, compared to \$13.4 million for the municipal district.

In southern Alberta, the City of Brooks, population 13,676, got \$403,000 in industrial taxes while the surrounding County of Newell, population 7,138, received \$31.8 million.

The PCs preached that counties and towns were free to work out local agreements to share the wealth. Some did, but most did not.

Enter Rachel Notley and the NDP. During the 2015 election campaign, Notley said of the industrial tax mess: "This can't go on. This isn't rational, so how are we going to fix this?"

Co-operation on sharing costs for regional services will no longer be voluntary, it will be required. As Larivee, who is from Slave Lake, puts it: "We're trying to not leave it to chance, where some places it (sharing and co-

operation) is going good and other places it's not. Instead, we will ensure that municipalities have the tools and the support to ensure that that is actually happening right across the province.”

It looks like the plan is that county and rural towns will share a major part of the industrial tax base, the so-called “linear” taxes from pipe and transmission lines. As for Edmonton itself, the city and its regional partners have appointed a panel of heavy hitters to devise a new sharing mechanism for industrial and business taxes.

Mayor Don Iveson called regional cost sharing and co-operation his top priority when he was running for mayor, so he's pushing hard on the issue.

One idea is that a portion of the Edmonton region's industrial taxes would go into a regional pot used for regional needs, such as transit and affordable housing.

County mayors are onside with the negotiations, and have several good reasons to be.

Iveson says a new deal can be a win for the counties, Edmonton's surrounding towns and cities and for the capital itself. If everyone pulls and works together, taxation policies can be aligned and more business attracted.

“Grow the pie and we'll all be better off,” Iveson says.

There is, it seems to me, another somewhat darker reason driving county co-operation. If the counties don't fully co-operate and continue to refuse to share more, Albertans now have a government in the NDP that might well push for amalgamation, as has happened to municipalities and counties in other parts of Canada. The counties would be kaput.

Perhaps they would rather share than be dissolved.

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[twitter.com/DavidStaplesYEG](https://twitter.com/DavidStaplesYEG)

## COMMENTS

The best initiative so far by the NDP government. Now if we can just get back to one person one vote instead of giving individual rural voters more power than urban voters, democracy will have been well served.

Like · Reply ·  11 · Apr 29, 2016 1:29am



Laura MacRae ·

Edmonton, Alberta

Rural Alberta is not sitting with a pot of gold. We won't take this like lemmings. Urban Alberta, and especially Edmonton, may find the Bill 6 protests nothing compared to what this will cause. Between the carbon tax, Bill 6 OHS costs and this, the NDP will kill family farms in Alberta. Enjoy your factory farm food.

Like · Reply ·  9 · Apr 29, 2016 6:29am



Mike Olesik ·

SAIT

Laura MacRae Still whining about bill 6. You are whining because the farmers got their way under the Cons. Funny, Sask has had a bill similiar to bill 6 and so-called family farms still exist., besides small farms have been in decline long before the NDP came to power.

Like · Reply · 5 · Apr 29, 2016 9:31am



Andy Rondeau

This is loot and pilliage. Notley is punishing the regions where her support has always been weakest.

Like · Reply · 5 · Apr 29, 2016 10:05am



Tom Barrett ·

University of Alberta

Andy Rondeau No Andy, this is justice at last, whoever made these changes. The Tories bribed the rural areas at the expense of the urban ones for more than 40 years and locked them up as their base, gerrymandering to give them more voting power. Then many, but far from all, rural voters, who now feel sickeningly entitled and priveleged, abandoned them for the Wildrose. This money will finally be administered fairly and hopefully a fair redistricting weill drag rural voters into the Twenty First Century. There is a whiff of the post-Civil War American south in rural Alberta's outrage about being forced to accept a fair deal and good government.

Like · Reply · 7 · Apr 29, 2016 11:51am



Warren Matheson ·

Lloydminster, Alberta

Mike Olesik still schilling for the Journal huh.....good retirement money in that?

Like · Reply · Apr 29, 2016 2:03pm



David Staples ·

Edmonton, Alberta

Laura MacRae

Like · Reply · Apr 29, 2016 2:13pm



Laura MacRae ·

Edmonton, Alberta

Mike Olesik Read the Acts. They are very different as you well know. Saskatchewan knows they have a less than 25% compliance rate

Like · Reply ·  2 · Apr 29, 2016 2:19pm



Brian Olafson ·

Edmonton, Alberta

Mike Olesik Mike, you apparently need to get a deeper understanding of bill six and the way farms operate. The Sask bill differed from Bill Six in major ways and that is why it is being reconsidered.

Like · Reply ·  2 · Apr 29, 2016 10:43pm



Bill George ·

Edmonton, Alberta

Laura MacRae Not many farms in my county so whats your point?

Like · Reply · Apr 30, 2016 11:38am



Laura MacRae ·

Edmonton, Alberta

Bill George There are lots in mine and my county includes the Acheson Industrial Park as well as Stony Plain and Spruce Grove. So what is your point?

Like · Reply ·  1 · Apr 30, 2016 1:36pm



Laura MacRae ·

Edmonton, Alberta

Tom Barrett I love how NDP shills claim this is "not a rural vs urban issue" and then proceed to argue that it is because in their view the "Cons" (because you cannot spell apparently) favored rural Alberta. Pick a position.

Like · Reply ·  1 · Apr 30, 2016 1:37pm



Don Good ·

Peace River, Alberta

In my own area for example, Peace River has approximately 36% of the regional population yet receives only .57% of the regional industrial property tax revenues. That's only \$258,738.00 out of \$44,847,550.00. Latest available figures form Alberta Municipal Affairs (2014). Ask yourself if this seems fair...

Like · Reply ·  10 · Apr 29, 2016 2:42am



Josh Gibb

Don can you please post the relative expenditures as well? This article makes no mention of costs for municipalities versus counties. Plus, is tax revenue for counties not solely sourced by the rate payers?

Like · Reply · Apr 29, 2016 9:29am



JT Miller ·

University of Manitoba

Josh Gibb No, tax revenue for counties is not solely sourced by the rate payers. There is commercial, industrial, and linear property in every county as well.

Like · Reply ·  5 · Apr 29, 2016 11:12am



Don Good ·

Peace River, Alberta

Hi Josh, costs are, to some extent a red herring. Politicians will spend whatever money they can get to do, arguably, "good things" with it. No-one, including myself, is saying that the money is being wasted. But the municipal structures that control the setting of regional priorities on how that money is used can be improved. Besides, if the industrial taxes stay within a region, all that would change in an amalgamation is how the citizens of that newly structured region would set priorities. There would still be the same amount of money available.

For one example, the Town of Wainwright is located inside the MD of Wainwright. Why shouldn't everyone inside the borders of the MD have an equal say in how the available money is spent? I'm quite sure that everyone in the region contributes to its overall prosperity.

Also, if a municipality, regardless of urban or rural, has access to large amounts of industrial revenues they can do a lot of things that poorer ones can't do. In our region for example one rural MD with a population of 1446 has a total property tax

revenue of only 2.5 million while another rural County with 2,525 people has a total property tax revenues of 37 Million and another MD which it borders has 3555 people and has 18 Million in total property tax revenues. The richest has 22 Million in linear taxes alone while the poorest MD has only 884 thousand. These industrial taxes need to be accessible to Albertan's based on something other than the luck of where oil is found. It's not just inequitable rural to urban.

As to "ratepayers", the word is not synonymous with voters as JT Miller mentioned. I do believe that all voters within a region should have an equal say as I'm sure you do too.

All the best to you,

Don

Like · Reply ·  10 · Apr 29, 2016 1:09pm



Mike Olesik ·

SAIT

A lot of these people think its fair, because they are a bummed out that the PC,s got booted out.

Like · Reply ·  1 · Apr 29, 2016 4:16pm



Laura MacRae ·

Edmonton, Alberta

And who makes up the tax difference when linear taxes are sent to cities. The 15% of rural Albertans? So the NDP war on rural Alberta, especially the farmers and ranchers continues. There will be riots.

Like · Reply ·  4 · Apr 29, 2016 6:07am



Mike Olesik ·

SAIT

There will be riots, .....are you related th Donald Trump?

Like · Reply ·  8 · Apr 29, 2016 9:34am



Warren Matheson ·

Lloydminster, Alberta

Mike Olesik the skill is back again. Mikey the skill.....

Like · Reply · Apr 29, 2016 1:54pm



David Staples ·

Edmonton, Alberta

All due respect, it's ridiculous to frame this as country vs cities. The most dedicated and strongest proponents for getting rid of the industrial tax rip off are from rural Alberta, the town and village councillors and mayors who get hammered because they share in so little of their region's wealth. If you're in a county and you're looking for a fight, look to battle the people of the village or town nearest to you because that is who the current system is harming.

Like · Reply ·  12 · Apr 29, 2016 2:16pm



Laura MacRae ·

Edmonton, Alberta

David Staples All due respect, I've spoken with municipal councillors. They are not proponents at all. Many have open letters expressing their concern

Like · Reply ·  1 · Apr 29, 2016 2:21pm



Peter Mason

David Staples fortunately people are ridiculous because mostly they are poorly informed on these issues and do not want to view the situation from their opponents position. Too bad really.

Like · Reply ·  1 · Apr 29, 2016 10:07pm



Laura MacRae ·

Edmonton, Alberta

Peter Mason I am prepared to defend my position. Are you?

Like · Reply · Apr 30, 2016 12:38pm



Don Brack ·

Edmonton, Alberta

This is going to be a blood bath when it comes to Strathcona county and the industrial heartland bathing its riches will have to share. I doubt if.

The MLA's for these area would rather defect from the NDP rather than feel the rath of the voters IMHO

Like · Reply ·  4 · Apr 28, 2016 9:17pm



Vernon Wise

Agreed. Strathcona County is a specialized municipality so Sherwood Park can grab all the tax revenue from the rural areas. There is already inequality there as Sherwood Park spends virtually all the rural tax income on Sherwood Park leaving the rural areas suffering. If this goes ahead Sherwood Park will probably dump the rural area all together since it is not profitable and become a city.

Like · Reply ·  2 · Apr 29, 2016 6:18am



Trevor Kozak ·

NAIT

Cause rural Strathcona County has it so bad with all their paved back roads. Go across the river to Sturgeon county and check out their roads.

Like · Reply ·  1 · Apr 29, 2016 7:48am



Bill George ·

Edmonton, Alberta

Vernon Wise I don't think any hamlet,village,town or city will be able to grab all the tax revenue from rural areas. Any comments like this are probably better left until the numbers of the new policy are announced, instead of assuming that we already know.

Like · Reply ·  1 · Apr 29, 2016 11:00am



Pam Horne

it's called sharing!!!!.....

Like · Reply ·  3 · Apr 29, 2016 4:10pm



Mike McKee ·

Olds College

I guess if the urban municipalities insist on stealing "their fair share" of the rural tax base we can always charge tolls to any of them that choose to use the rural roads as well then? Perhaps some border checkpoints at the city limits and passports for Calgary and Edmonton are in order? It's about time that the cities became self autonomous and separated from the rest of Alberta, go ahead and drown in your socialist ignorance, just leave the rest of us out of it.

Like · Reply ·  3 · Apr 29, 2016 10:57am



JT Miller ·

University of Manitoba

I guess then you won't mind if the Towns do the same to you? \$5 every time you come shopping, or go to the post office? An extra \$20 when you visit our pool, or an extra \$500 on your hockey fees as a rural user instead of urban?

The reality is, the urban taxpayers have been subsidizing your recreation...urban road use...services we provide to your MD's, etc...for years, and many (NOT ALL!) MDs and Counties pay far far less than their fair share for these services YOU don't pay taxes for.

Go ahead and drown in your socialist ignorance, just leave the rest of us out of it.

Like · Reply ·  7 · Apr 29, 2016 11:26am



Mike McKee ·

Olds College

JT Miller As a matter of fact my rural municipality pays a larger portion per capita to recreational facilities in the towns and cities nearby than the towns and cities do themselves already. As for my use of urban roads, if i never have to set foot in calgary or edmonton again, i would be a very happy camper. Unfortunately the provincial and federal governments in their infinite wisdom have placed certain essential services, paid for in part by my tax dollars as well by the way, inside the large urban municipalities forcing me to use their infrastructure. Perhaps the next large hospital should be built in wheatland county so i wouldn't have to impose on your infrastructure? Suits me just fine.

Like · Reply ·  2 · Apr 29, 2016 11:43am



JT Miller ·

University of Manitoba

Mike McKee That's fantastic that your rural supports urban infrastructure that everyone uses so well.

You are the exception in the province, not the rule. Not by a long shot.

Like · Reply ·  2 · Apr 29, 2016 6:00pm



Mike McKee ·

Olds College

JT Miller I think you're wrong on that count, I know all the rural municipalities surrounding (3 of them) our local business hub kick into the funding for pretty much all the recreation projects and also fund a portion of the city's fire department while at the same time funding our own departments and rec projects. There may be some issues around the big cities, but the surrounding areas aren't really rural in nature, that's more of a small urban vs. large urban problem. I would be willing to bet that when dollars per capita are added up, rural taxpayers pay more for much less service than any urban municipality.

Like · Reply · 1 · Apr 29, 2016 10:54pm



Nancy Evans-Skrynyk

It is absolutely a misguided ideology. Rural municipalities are responsible for the construction and maintenance of all rural roads and bridges in their boundaries. The provincial government used to have programs to cost share bridge funding but no longer does this. Bridges run in the millions to replace and repair. If the Alberta government thinks the infrastructure to get resources to market will be maintained without linear assessment they had better think again. You think you have a depressed economy now, wait till the resources that keep everyone in this province going can no longer get to market because of inadequate funding to maintain rural infrastructure.

Like · Reply · 3 · Apr 29, 2016 10:32pm



Vasant Chotai

For the last thirty years Albertans didn't realise how the previous government was feeding their "back-scratchers" (rural voters and corporations) and pulling wool over our eyes. Now true democracy has been ushered in by the new government - revenue sharing through this new Municipal Act, fairer tax system, polluters pay scheme, transparent campaign financing changes, etc etc. Now Premier Rachel Notley please bring in a true one person one vote system by drawing sensible constituency boundaries. Please don't stop...

Like · Reply · 3 · Apr 30, 2016 2:07pm · Edited



Laura MacRae ·

Edmonton, Alberta

Have you eaten today. Then thank a farmer.

Like · Reply · Apr 30, 2016 1:38pm



Vasant Chotai

Yes, I have eaten today, I have paid the farmer for the food and I have thanked the farmer at the farmer's market. (By the way, my father-in-law was a farmer in Alberta before he passed away). Although the intent of Bill 6 was good (namely to protect farm workers like all other workers), the process followed by this government was faulty (namely did not consult family farmers on how to go about doing it). But that does not negate all the other good policies this government has brought in.

Like · Reply ·  3 · Apr 30, 2016 1:50pm · Edited



Laura MacRae ·

Edmonton, Alberta

Vasant Chotai When you call all rural Albertans conservative 'backscratcher' do you not see that is a stereotype and really bigoted response?

Like · Reply ·  1 · Apr 30, 2016 3:58pm



Vasant Chotai

I did not call "all" rural Albertans conservative backscratcher: I said the previous government fed their back-scratcher. If I had called "all" rural Albertans back-scratcher, yes, then it would be bigoted - the last thing I would want. My father-in-law was a rural Albertan, a very loving man and concerned about safety everywhere even if it meant it cost him. I think you and I see the world differently and have different priorities; so we should let each other just be and let democracy take its course.

Like · Reply ·  2 · Apr 30, 2016 4:48pm · Edited



John Macdonell ·

Works at Self-Employed

Seems like there is an inequitable sharing of tax revenue between urban and rural areas - with the rural getting the lion's share. What's wrong with trying to - fairly - rebalance the sharing formula?

Like · Reply ·  4 · Apr 29, 2016 2:07pm · Edited



Stephanie Betts Williston

'Some did, but most did not.' Do you care to back that statement up with facts beyond an anecdote? My understanding is that statement should be flipped around. There are varying degrees of sharing, but I'm betting you'd be hard pressed to find a county that shared nothing. Also, the idea that population is the sole variable that drives expenditures and needs within a region doesn't hold a lot of water. The AAMDC did a report a few years ago that showed asset bases are a better predictor

of municipal expenses for municipalities under 100,000. Simply put, Edmonton and Calgary do not provide analagous examples to draw conclusions for the rest of the province. Maybe you can research both sides of the discussion?

<http://www.aamdc.com/.../1252-apples-to-apples-main.../file>

Like · Reply ·  2 · Apr 29, 2016 8:35am



David Staples ·

Edmonton, Alberta

Out of the \$1.8 billion taken in by the counties, they shared about \$100,000 million last year. So it's not nothing... but it's not equitable either.

Like · Reply ·  3 · Apr 29, 2016 2:17pm



Stephanie Betts Williston

Equitable is a tricky term to define, though. Equitable can't just be defined as spreading money out on a per capita basis - it's more complex than that. For example, Your comments reflect one side of the balace sheet. It's no different than saying 'Look how much money Edmonton takes in! Those are huge numbers compared to their neighbours! They need to share!' It doesn't reflect very real needs and cost drivers that come with that revenue. Without knowing what the costs are on the other half of the sheet, you aren't forming opinions based on the full picture.

Like · Reply ·  2 · Apr 29, 2016 3:37pm · Edited



North Darling ·

Calgary, Alberta

David Staples Keep in mind they are not sharing but providing fees for services provided - Fire Departments, Water And Sewer, etc. The Counties released the figure making it seem like they wrote 100M in cheques for free. There is significant capital and operating costs carried by Towns and Villages to receive this money. Bait and Switch by AAMDC as usual.

Like · Reply ·  2 · Apr 30, 2016 10:35am



Ashley MacLean ·

Salisbury Composite High School

As one of the 15%, and not a big fan of this government, I do tentitively support this. It will negatively affect me pesonally, but it's easy to see the net benefit to the province as a whole, and the inequity of the current situation. It will be interesting to see how it all works though...

Like · Reply ·  2 · Apr 29, 2016 10:56am



Nancy Evans-Skrynyk

The post on lineal tax sharing was not completed by Nancy Skrynyk it is posted by Mike Skrynyk councillor for the Municipal district of Lesser Slave River (apparently on Nancy's account). I can not believe the amount of services that the governments have been down loading on municipalities both rural and urban. The NDP no longer pays for the taxes on the social housing projects to municipalities this in its self short changed Slave Lake by more than 100,000.00 dollars last year the local residents had to pick up. The city of Edmonton raised taxes this year more than expected as they did not receive the expected tax transfers from the province this year. Best educate yourself as to what has been happening across the board by provincial government downloading before you jump on the myth that this can be resolved by tax sharing.

Like · Reply · 2 · Apr 29, 2016 10:45pm



Jerry Macdonald

This from the City of Grande Prairie website: "...In 2015, the City of Grande Prairie had \$1,881,919 in linear tax revenue. The Municipal District of Greenview received \$45,257,087 while the County of Grande Prairie collected \$20,151,461...That meant that linear properties provided 1.8 per cent of total municipal taxes [in the City] while this form of assessment comprised 61.2 per cent of Municipal District of Greenview municipal taxes. For the County of Grande Prairie, linear assessment accounted for 27.9 per cent of municipal taxes..." So whether small towns, big cities, or in between, the inequity is clear and pervasive.

Like · Reply · 4 · Apr 29, 2016 6:52am



Peter Mason

That is why business moves to counties so they don't have to pay business tax because the county has more cash flow than cities & towns.

Like · Reply · 1 · Apr 29, 2016 10:04pm



Laura MacRae ·

Edmonton, Alberta

Actually we move to small towns for a myriad of reasons. Cheaper industrial land, tax reductions during build out, less bureaucracy and related costs, excellent workforce and terrific standard of living for our employees.

Like · Reply · 1 · Apr 30, 2016 8:42am



Peter Mason

Laura MacRae same idea

Like · Reply · Apr 30, 2016 7:20pm



Rhys Davies ·

Works at Toastmasters International

The inequity in taxes for municipalities and neighbouring counties also messes up the MSI funding for municipalities as almost half of the funding is based on assessed land values.

Like · Reply ·  2 · Apr 28, 2016 7:22pm



Hazel Anderson

Sounds like more dark dictatorship to me. It will take a long time to undo all the harm this witch has done.

Like · Reply ·  1 · Apr 29, 2016 9:21am



Leo Piquette ·

Senior Advisor Business and government relation at Senior Advisor for Alberta Counsel

Great plan, it's about time!

Like · Reply ·  7 · Apr 28, 2016 9:36pm



Norman Gee ·

Edmonton, Alberta

Can't see why anyone would object to this.

Like · Reply ·  3 · Apr 28, 2016 7:53pm



Tim Bulger

You're obviously not familiar with how comments sections work

Like · Reply ·  9 · Apr 28, 2016 9:28pm



Tom Young ·

Edmonton, Alberta

Tim Bulger Best.

Like · Reply · Apr 28, 2016 9:37pm



Neil Carey ·

Edmonton, Alberta

No, I can completely understand how 15% of the population would object to this. The nature of unreasonable advantages is that no one wants to give up the ones that benefit themselves.

Like · Reply ·  4 · Apr 28, 2016 11:03pm



Vernon Wise

Think of it this way. Lets say you own some land, there is an oil well on it which pays you \$1000 per month. Would you share that with your neighbours that do not have oil wells just because they live next to you?

Like · Reply ·  1 · Apr 29, 2016 6:23am



Matt Rennie

Vernon Wise this isn't even close to a fair analogy. If you have an oil well that produces \$1000 per month, and your neighbor provides a place for you to get groceries, entertainment, other general services, and on top of this police and firefighters, would you share it now? Or would you do what counties do now and just keep your taxes low and use all the city/town services at your neighbors expense?

Like · Reply ·  6 · Apr 29, 2016 8:05am



Laura MacRae ·

Edmonton, Alberta

Matt Rennie Our neighbours don't "provide a place for us to get groceries". They set up businesses which we choose to support. With super mailboxes and online banking, we have little reason to go to rural towns and cities now except for the fact that our tax dollars pay for the pitifully few health services left in rural Alberta and for half the recreation facilities.

Like · Reply ·  1 · Apr 30, 2016 8:45am



Laura MacRae ·

Edmonton, Alberta

Neil Carey We have to build our own roads and bridges. We contribute heavily to all recreation buildings, parks, groups that are located within those same cities and which we and are children rarely access. We donate county land to those towns for expansion.(27 quarter of land were recently donated by the County of Brazeu to the Town of Drayton Valley as an example) It takes a minimum of a quarter of a mile of road to provide access for one quarter section. Many are losing their major businesses like coal fired electrical plants and coal mining. So arguing that all taxes should be divided per capita is certainly going to be interesting. It really is too bad that Alberta cannot just get rid of everything outside the two major centers. Oh, sorry, they are. It is far easier after this year to make a business case for just shutting down most small farms and converting them to factory farms or acreages. That is the new "rural" Alberta. Progress always comes with a price.

Like · Reply · Apr 30, 2016 4:10pm



Rhys Davies ·

Works at Toastmasters International

I'm sure Calgary has the same problem with Rocky View County.

Like · Reply ·  1 · Apr 28, 2016 10:26pm



Atreyu Keats ·

Grant MacEwan University

Good stuff! Keep it up Notley and co!

Like · Reply ·  9 · Apr 28, 2016 6:55pm



Laura MacRae ·

Edmonton, Alberta

And who makes up the tax difference when linear taxes are sent to cities. The 15% of rural Albertans? So the NDP war on rural Alberta, especially the farmers and ranchers continues. There will be riots.

Like · Reply ·  2 · Apr 29, 2016 6:07am



Evone Monteith ·

CEO of my retirement at Retired

Don't be ridiculous - this is NOT a "war on rural" Alberta - it is actually helping them to avoid the many power struggles and disputes between counties and the towns and villages within a particular county. As it is now, the county gets to decide how

much or how little it will contribute to a town to maintain facilities that the county uses, such as police forces, fire departments, libraries, recreational facilities, etc. Last year there was some sort of war going on between the County of Ponoka and the Town of Ponoka - I wonder if this new proposal would have helped prevent that?

Like · Reply ·  1 · Apr 29, 2016 9:44pm



Mike McKee ·

Olds College

Evone Monteith Of course it's a "war" on rural residents, this was the only way that rural municipalities had any input on proposed infrastructure such as recreational facilities, libraries, ect. Now with this funding model, the towns and cities will run rampant with spending and ignore any input from the rural population as they aren't responsible at all to them. Tell me why our tax dollars are any less worthy of receiving consideration from the designers and proponents of these public projects than urban residents? What the ndp is doing here is effectively disenfranchising rural residents from having any say over where their municipal tax dollars are spent, do you really think that that's a fair thing?

Like · Reply ·  1 · Apr 29, 2016 11:10pm



Evone Monteith ·

CEO of my retirement at Retired

Mike McKee the towns are still part of a county, so I don't know how you can see it as they "will ignore any input from the rural population as they aren't responsible at all to them". Why is it so hard for people such as you to get the concept of COOPERATION? Perhaps your failure to understand that is why you perceive a fairer way of coexisting as "disenfranchising rural residents from having any . . ." But hey, if you want to get your panties in a knot over imaginary wrongs, go for it

Like · Reply ·  1 · Apr 30, 2016 10:30am



Wendy Nickel

"That's where the truth lies, right down here in the gut. Do you know you have more nerve endings in your gut than you have in your head? You can look it up. I know some of you are going to say "I did look it up, and that's not true." That's 'cause you looked it up in a book. Next time, look it up in your gut. I did. My gut tells me that's how our nervous system works." (Stephen Colbert). Unhappy rural residents can't seem to articulate a reasonable argument, but they are very good at ranting, raving, and rhetoric. I still haven't seen a compelling argument against Bill 6, nothing goes beyond "it will kill family farms". There is no way to dispute the facts on taxation inequity in this province, but there are a million ways to spin those facts. US versus THEM is the problem. If two dogs are fighting over a bone, you can get rid of the bone, or get rid of one of the dogs. Amalgamation might be the only way out of this mess.

Like · Reply ·  1 · Apr 30, 2016 11:09am



Laura MacRae ·

Edmonton, Alberta

Wendy Nickel Then you are not looking very hard because we have published the reasons repeatedly. How about we pass a law that every urban household has 6 weeks to bring their homes up to 2016 building codes that we intend to change during 2016. And then we say if you do not, you can and will be charged and that the costs of doing this, that you have had no opportunity to budget for are your problem. That is an analogy perhaps you could understand. Resulted in the layoff of about 23,000 people according to Stats Can figures from January 2016.

Like · Reply · Apr 30, 2016 1:32pm



Wendy Nickel

Laura MacRae I understand that farmers were not happy with the process of implementing Bill 6, fair enough, but Bill 6 itself was long overdue. Workers on farms should have the same protection as other workers.

Like · Reply · Apr 30, 2016 3:44pm



Alph Ray

about time

Like · Reply ·  4 · Apr 29, 2016 6:25am



North Darling ·

Calgary, Alberta

WOOOOOHOOOOOO

Like · Reply ·  3 · Apr 28, 2016 9:19pm



Wendy Nickel

Good work, Premier Notely.

Like · Reply · Apr 30, 2016 10:31am



See Senoir

Dissolve now.