

Pacific Northwest Economic Region

18. Moved by Mr. Horsman:

Be it resolved that Alberta become a full participant in the Pacific Northwest Economic Region consisting of the states of Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington and the provinces of Alberta and British Columbia in order

- (1) to promote greater regional co-operation among the participating states and provinces in a wide variety of areas, including international trade, economic development, human resources, the environment, natural resources, energy, and education;
- (2) to enhance the overall competitiveness of the participating states and provinces in international and domestic markets;
- (3) to increase the economic well-being and improve the quality of life of the citizens of the participating states and provinces; and
- (4) to identify opportunities for economic and social development in the participating states and provinces.

Be it further resolved that four members of this Assembly be appointed by the Assembly to the delegate council of the Pacific Northwest Economic Region and that one of those members be appointed as a member of its executive committee.

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MR. HORSMAN: Motion 18 is for the purpose of establishing Alberta's membership in the Pacific Northwest Economic Region, which would bring legislators from five U.S. states and two Canadian provinces to identify opportunities for regional co-operation. Participating jurisdictions will include the states of Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Alaska, and the Canadian provinces of British Columbia and Alberta.

The idea for this group came from a former Edmontonian, Senator Alan Bluechel, who's now a Senator in the state of Washington, a strong proponent of close ties between Canada and the United States. In October of 1989 he invited legislators from the states and the provinces to go to Seattle to discuss the possibility of establishing some means of formal co-operation. Alberta was represented at that meeting by the hon. Speaker of this Assembly. For two days the legislators brainstormed and came up with a lengthy list of areas where regional co-operation could be beneficial. Since that time the legislators have met four more times to refine their ideas and to establish a work plan.

One of those meetings was held last June in Edmonton, ably hosted by the hon. Member for Red Deer-North and other members of the Assembly. The priorities that were established at the Edmonton meeting were in six areas in which they felt the most opportunities to achieve benefits through co-operation were promising. The six areas were tourism, value-added forestry, advanced education, marketing recycled products, environmental technology, and human resource programs. They also agreed the forum would not be the appropriate place to try to deal with outstanding trade disputes between Canada and the United States, such as the softwood lumber issue.

As the motion states, the aim of the group is to promote the economic and social development of the provinces and the states in this region. In achieving that aim, we think this initiative will help to enhance the economic well-being and quality of life for the people of the Pacific northwest.

11:50

What it is not, however, is important to define. There are limits to our ambitions. As mentioned, we do not believe we can solve outstanding trade disputes. Those, of course, will have to be worked through with our respective federal governments until they are resolved. We are not expecting to address them in this forum. In addition, we would stress that this group is focusing on promoting the economic development and well-being of our citizens. It is not, however, as some speculative jour-

nalists have wondered, a step to some form of political integration. It is definitely not that. Co-operation with our neighbouring states does not somehow mean that Alberta is making steps to leave Confederation or to create this mythical country which has been called Cascadia.

In the international context we believe that for our province we must continue to play an important role in order to have prosperity internationally. Our economy is very dependent on our exports and greatly affected by the actions of our major trading partners. For at least 20 years Alberta has been the leader among Canadian provinces in its international outlook and activities. Through the course of these years we have devoted considerable resources and expertise to the promotion of Alberta's goods and services throughout the world. At no time have such initiatives been more important than now. The trend today is very clearly towards the increasing globalization of economies. No country, no province, no state can afford to be isolationist. This is consistent with other provincial and state initiatives. Membership in the Pacific Northwest Economic Region is consistent, as I indicated.

As members are aware, as Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs I have been very active in meeting with state legislators in a number of fora. Till recently I was the Canadian co-chairman of the Canada/U.S.A. legislative project. I'm currently honorary board member for the State Legislative Leaders Foundation. Alberta has become an honorary member of the Western Legislative Conference. Over the years I have attended and participated in many meetings of such organizations as the National Conference of State Legislatures and the Council of State Governments.

Since 1986, by a resolution of this Assembly brought forward by the Member for Cypress-Redcliff, Alberta and Montana have also met on a regular basis on a forum called Alberta/Montana Boundary Advisory Committee. That is chaired by the governor, Governor Stephens, who I note is a native Calgarian who in his younger days went to the United States to find employment and has risen to a high, state government, governor's level position. I co-chair that conference with Governor Stevens, as I indicated. It meets once a year to discuss areas of common interest such as agricultural, trade, and energy issues to identify opportunities for co-operation and sort out any problems.

Just recently discussions by the committee have led to the upcoming signing of two agreements. One deals with the joint vehicle inspection station at Coutts, and the other is a vehicle weight agreement allowing Alberta trucks to travel to the Shelby reload facility, small matters perhaps, but nonetheless important for the commerce of this province.

I found all of these opportunities very useful as a means of raising awareness in the United States about Alberta. Attendance at these meetings and membership in these organizations has been a way of conveying messages to states about the importance of Alberta as a trading partner. I and my colleagues who have attended the meetings have also used them to promote a greater trade to disabuse Americans of some notions such as the fear that sometimes we want to flood their country with cheap natural gas. We want to sell natural gas, but we want a fair price for it.

Since the implementation of the Canada/U.S. free trade agreement, there has been an increasing focus in Canada on the importance of state governments. The government of Canada has recognized their influence over trade and other economic policies. Alberta has also witnessed the blossoming of international activity at the state level. State governments have begun playing a more active role in the international sphere. In fact,

many state governments have international offices in foreign countries now, similar to those maintained by the provinces, including Alberta.

Why the Pacific Northwest? Well, when Senator Bluechel first raised the idea, Alberta welcomed the opportunity to discuss regional co-operation in this region. We feel we have many ties with the states in the region, ranking, of course, along with our sister province of British Columbia, and we are important markets for each other's exports. Alberta ships a great deal of livestock, beef, and processed foods to the Pacific Northwest. Our economies are very similar in many ways, we face many of the same pressures and challenges arising from distance to other markets, and we share aspirations to compete successfully in the global marketplace.

What do we hope to achieve through this co-operation? As mentioned, we have identified six areas of potential co-operation, and last December we met in Seattle and set out a work plan for this year. The first order of business was to obtain legislative authorization in each state and province to allow this initiative to proceed. So far membership has been approved by Washington, Idaho, Montana, and Alaska. Oregon expects to have its legislation in place by July 1. British Columbia will not be proceeding through a legislative measure, but has paid its membership fee of \$30,000.

Rather than waiting for these measures to be passed, however, we decided to proceed on three initiatives as priorities. The priorities are environmental technology, value-added wood products, and tourism. British Columbia has taken the lead in the environmental technology field and held a conference in May to discuss the opportunities for joint promotion of expertise, Oregon has taken responsibility for investigating chances for enhancing the value-added component of the forestry industry in the region, and Alberta has taken the initiative on the tourism issue, since we are the recognized leader in this field. Under the chairmanship of the hon. Member for Calgary-Fish Creek we will be inviting legislators and industry officials to come to the province in September of this year. The group will be discussing how to raise public awareness of the importance of tourism to economic development, how to involve the private sector more fully in the policy process, and how to facilitate the exchange of information and expertise in the region.

In conclusion, I'd like to say that I think there are many benefits to Alberta from membership in this group. I think the advantages in co-operating with other jurisdictions to share ideas and information is undeniable. Besides the economic efficiencies that can be realized, co-operation can lead to the development of creative new approaches to problems. In an era of increasing globalization, our province will only benefit by extending its ties with other jurisdictions.

There are, of course, some costs. In fact, Alberta will be paying an annual membership fee of approximately \$30,000 to cover the costs of the staff work that is being provided by the University of Washington of Seattle, and that money will be coming from the budget of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs. We anticipate the returns to this expenditure will be numerous. Through membership in the Pacific Northwest Economic Region we think we are establishing a framework for co-operation which will benefit Albertans for years to come. I would point out that there will be four members who will be named by a subsequent motion of the Assembly. Because this is a bipartisan approach in the United States, each state will name two legislators from the Republican Party and two from the Democratic Party. In this case, we are proposing to name two members from the government and one member from each

of the opposition parties, and those names will be brought forward later for the purpose of concluding the membership in the Assembly. I know that there is interest on the part of both opposition parties in having their members serve with members of the government in a nonpartisan way in the proposal which I now lay before the Assembly, and I urge the members of the Assembly to support the motion.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Kingsway.

MR. McEACHERN: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is our intention on this side of the House to strongly support this resolution, and in fact, I commend the minister on his excellent presentation of the purposes and goals of this organization. As a matter of fact, I've been following this organization since its inception, I think, a couple of years ago and have had a fair amount of literature on it and recently took the occasion to send in my membership dues and am now a full member of the organization. I particularly commend the minister on his approach here of asking opposition members to sit on this committee of four. It is something that this party on this side of the House has asked for on many occasions on a lot of committees, that this Assembly go to a more multiparty approach to a lot its committee work. So I think that this is a good example, and I think it will prove to be very worthwhile and beneficial to all of us.

12:00

The idea behind the Pacific Northwest Industrial Development Council is an excellent one. It seems to me what it's doing is refocusing some of our attention back on our own region as opposed to what has been happening in the past where the focus has been on international and global competition. I think of the free trade deal left between Ottawa and Washington, and that's sort of eastern Canada, and they use Europe as the example of how they've got to get some agreements with GATT and so on. The orientation to the globalized market can very easily bypass those of us in this region, so we need to take a look at our own resources and our own neighbours and see what we can do for ourselves. Certainly when you think that Washington and Ottawa control the politics of North America and that Bay Street and Wall Street control a lot of the finances, it does mean that the main economic powers are outside this region we're talking about.

Just a comment or two about this region and how big it really is. There are some 15 million people in the region named, in these five states and these two provinces. It's sort of a natural trading area on the edge of the Pacific Rim on the western side of North America. It makes a lot of sense that we should take a close look at each other and what we can do for each other and how we can co-operate to see that our own economies are healthy.

I just want to raise a few points around that theme. A former member of the Economic Development and Trade department - I believe he resigned a couple of years ago - made some interesting points, I think, which are relevant to this approach to economic development in western Canada. He was speaking specifically of Edmonton, I believe; nonetheless, he was looking at Edmonton also as part of this western part of North America. He talked about how we could develop value-added industries based on our natural resources, because this is a very rich region of the world and Edmonton is in the centre of a very rich economic region for resources, both oil and forestry resources. So he felt that that was an important orientation for Edmonton,

developing as a centre for economic development in this part of the world. He suggested also, though, that the idea of subsidizing foreign corporations based in other parts of the world to come in and develop our resources was not necessarily the most efficient way to do that. The idea of developing local co-operation should be taken further than just between the states and the provinces right down to the local level also. The reason I mention this is that I'm pleased to note that the Deputy Premier said that Oregon was the one that was going to lead the way in developing secondary industries associated with the wood and lumber industries.

The economy of Oregon has been very dependent on the lumber industry in the past. In 1982 when lumber prices collapsed, they found themselves in real dire straits, and one of the things that they did was to set up some local initiatives. In fact, they called it import replacement programs. I know people that are in favour of free trade tend not to like the terminology, but really all it amounted to was for local communities to take a really good look at what they could produce themselves and start working together with the next-door neighbour and then with the regional area and then of course the state area and then finally . . . I'm sure that part of this initiative comes from Oregon, where they're saying: "We've done our homework. We've got our towns and communities seeing what we can produce ourselves." Then they started co-operating town to town and region to region within Oregon, and then the whole state. Next, they started talking to the states next door. Now they're talking to the provinces next door, and so I wouldn't be surprised if Oregon was one of the main states behind this push. I think we all need to look at that local initiative and local development and co-operation.

With those few preliminary remarks, and certainly all the things the minister said about this organization sounded good to me, I would like to say that this caucus is firmly in support of this motion and intends to name a member to that committee.

MR. SPEAKER: Calgary-North West.

MR. BRUSEKER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, would like to just make a few brief comments. It's rare when I listen to a minister make a statement where I agree with everything he said, but I found this to be one of the best statements I've heard, and I congratulate the minister. It was an excellent overview. In particular, I think the comment that he made . . . I hope he doesn't get too swelled a head on that. In particular, I really think his comment was exactly right that we are Canadians here, and we are proud to be Canadians. Although we enjoy many benefits through and with the United States, I want us to remain Canadians. I don't want to form some new country by whatever name in this association, and I was pleased to hear the minister make a comment with respect to that particular issue.

Mr. Speaker, the first time I learned of this particular concept, I guess, was when I had the good fortune to attend a conference in Tulsa, Oklahoma, two years ago, in 1989, as a representative to the national convention on state Legislatures. The Senator gave me a ring, and we chatted about this very issue. At that time I was very interested and involved with the idea. I thought it would be a good direction for us to proceed.

I'm pleased to see that we've gone a little further, at least in part, with the direction with respect to identifying some of those areas. You know, the minister mentioned tourism as being one of our areas for particular growth of which we can be proud. I recall seeing in our budget this year that the Department of Tourism is expending about a million dollars or so to build a

tourist information booth in Montana. When I first looked at that, I must confess I was rather puzzled. I thought: why on earth would we want to do something like that? Then I considered the location of where it's being built and the purpose for that. I thought, you know, the idea there of perhaps steering some of those tourists, maybe Canadians who haven't been this way or Americans who haven't been this way near the Logan Pass, and saying, "Well, listen; why don't you come on up and see Waterton park, and why don't you come on up and see that new museum we had the good opportunity to see in Cardston, the Remington museum that's going to be ready shortly?" started to make a lot of sense. Let's get some co-operation going on there.

MR. MAIN: Or the western heritage centre at Cochrane.

MR. BRUSEKER: Well, that might be a little hard sell there, but it's worth a shot. I suppose they could have a brochure or two in the back, once the thing is built. They may even want to go all the way up to the Fort McMurray tar sands and see that as well, and maybe they could stop at the western heritage centre on the way.

But I think it's a good concept. The idea of co-operation, Mr. Speaker, is really what I'm talking about here as a good concept. So I think that's an interesting direction.

The value-added forestry: the obvious links are there between the regions mentioned. The jobs: the minister mentioned that a couple of the key players who are involved with this are former Albertans. I think that shows kind of a unique and obvious linkage. We get people who are raised in Alberta, and of course we don't all stay here. Some travel elsewhere and have impact in other places. Obviously, I think the indication just from those two individuals shows that we do get people traveling elsewhere, and let's look at creating more commonalities between those areas.

Environmental issues: of course, obviously we have our waters from these two provinces, British Columbia and Alberta, ending up going through some of these states that are mentioned, so clearly there's a linkage there; obviously, the same thing with air. Human resources: well, that's obviously tied to the advanced education issues.

Mr. Speaker, I think this is a terrific idea. I look forward to the proposal. One of the things the minister did mention is that there has been some preliminary work, I guess would the way to describe it, that's already occurred. Once this committee has been established and gets going with the different representatives from the states and the provinces mentioned, then I hope we'll get that sharing of information occurring. I think the particular aspect that the minister mentioned as he was wrapping up, the concept of two members from the government side and two members from the opposition side, is especially an encouraging concept. It's an obvious carryover, I guess, in a sense from the American system, which has two parties. Here in Alberta we have three parties, of course, and I guess we're kind of unique in that regard, in that we have three different parties represented in our Legislature, which is probably unique compared to the other bodies mentioned. I'm pleased to see that happening, because what we're looking at really has nothing to do with partisan politics. It's what's in the best interests of our province, and we're going to be working with other representatives.

Mr. Speaker, I must admit I'm quite encouraged and quite pleased with this direction. I think it's positive for Alberta, for British Columbia, and probably also for the states. If we can all

help one another be more successful, I think that's a good direction to be headed in, so I look forward to the future.

Thank you.

12:10

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Centre.

REV. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I just want to make a small but significant point in respect to this motion. When I first looked at it, I thought it was just as it says, the Pacific Northwest Economic Region, and that the emphasis would be all on economics and economic development. But as I read through it, of course, it's broadened to things such as human resources and social development as being parts of the mandate of this council or whatever.

Insofar as that is part of the mandate and the parameters of it, I just want to point out an interesting thing that I'm quite aware of and increasingly aware of. It's the way in which a variety of states in the United States are envious of and want to model themselves after the Canadian health care system. I know that particularly the state of Oregon, for one, and even the state of Washington have made a number of strides to look at what they call a single-payer system for health services and expanding the title not just for medicare or medicaid recipients but for all the population. In fact, part of their economic malaise is that they've got insurance companies that are running all the way to the bank with a variety of competing health plans, and to have a single payer for entitlement and insured services for health services is a way that many of them want to go. The state of Oregon, for instance, has gone even further and done this very difficult issue that we are somewhat into, the whole business of rationing services. I don't want to talk about rationing services, but how far entitlement to certain services can extend and this whole business of ADL and home care and other things are pressing issues for us and I know for those states in the union as well.

I did hear, I think, the Deputy Premier refer to at least three items that are on top of the priority list, in terms of tourism, environmental technologies, and the rest. I would just hope that given what's going on in a number of states, particularly Oregon and Washington state and others, we could begin to do a bit more exporting of the knowledge of our health care system — what makes it work, how it works — and help various states in the union develop not only economically but socially in this manner, and hope that it will get on the priority list for discussions with this group sooner rather than later.

MR. SPEAKER: Calgary-Forest Lawn.

MR. PASHAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, think that this is an important and worthwhile initiative. As I've mentioned on previous occasions, if we're really serious about trying to develop an industrial strategy in this province and diversifying the economy, one of our major problems is the relatively small population we have, two and a half million people, and our distance from markets and the cost of getting to those markets. If you compare Calgary's situation with Toronto's, for example, Toronto would have an immediate market of some 60 million or more people, and it's on a waterway. We're 800 kilometres from a port. So I would hope that in some ways this motion and the group that's being set up as a consequence of this motion would help to further that kind of economic objective of expanding our market opportunities.

I do have, I suppose, a concern or a question with the notion of being a full participant in the Pacific Northwest Economic Region. I'm not quite clear what that means, especially the words "full participant." My assumption, I guess, would be that what's being contemplated here is that this is an advisory body or a recommending body only and that if measures do come out of it, they'd be subject to agreements between Alberta or whatever province and the states and also subject, I suppose, to international agreements that might exist between Canada and the United States. I would appreciate any comment that the minister might care to make on that point in his summation.

The second issue I'm concerned about is, of course, that whatever is being proposed here would have to be part of the larger trade agreement that we've entered into with the United States. Now, social democrats and the New Democrats in Canada are basically supportive of freer trading arrangements. We believe in that. It's a cornerstone of most of our economic theorizing. But we've had some profound reservations, as members opposite know, about some particular aspects of the trade deal that was entered into between Canada and the United States. It's related very much to some of the objectives of this motion that's being presented by the deputy leader.

One of our concerns is that because of the different sort of social structure that exists in Canada compared with that which exists in the United States, if we open up the border to completely unrestricted trade between Canada and the United States, it either puts Canadian companies at a disadvantage or we're going to have to change our tax structure and put our Canadian companies on the same basis American companies are on, and that puts a lot of our social programs at considerable risk. For example, in the United States they don't have the same health care system, as the Member for Edmonton-Centre just mentioned, and they don't have the same commitment to basic public education that we have in this country. That means the taxes that are imposed on working people in the United States are lower than the taxes that are imposed on our citizens.

In addition to that, their corporations historically have paid lower taxes. So for our corporations to compete on the same basis as their corporations, we've had to shrink our tax base, and we've seen the consequences of that. The federal government has had to run up a deficit of over \$400 billion. We're having trouble in our province; all Canadian provinces are having trouble balancing their budgets because the federal government has cut back in transfer payments to the provinces. What I hope would be a corollary of what's being proposed here is not just the expansion of business programs and business opportunities but also that we may take into these deliberations which are going to be taking place some aspects of what we have in Canada that are important to us: our health care system, our commitment to public education. If they can begin to embrace some measures in their society that are comparable to what we have in this country, then we're going to have a level playing field. Our corporations will no longer be at a disadvantage. If they put the same proportion of their productive wealth into supporting the kinds of social institutions we have in this country, then our corporations would be able to flourish in competition with their corporations in business enterprises.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I really welcome the goals that are spelled out in (3) and (4) in this motion; namely, to increase not only the economic well-being but to improve the quality of life of the citizens participating in this project, and to identify opportunities not just for economic development but also for social development. I think those are really worthwhile goals, and as such I support this motion.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Jasper Place.

MR. McINNIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is a very important initiative, and I don't really think it should be taken lightly by any member of this Assembly. The Pacific Northwest Economic Region does offer tremendous potential for those of us who are blessed to live in this region to help obtain some of the goals that the government has laid out for us in the resolution that's before the Assembly, Motion 18. It focuses on some of the benefits that may come from participation with our neighbouring states and provinces.

I would like to focus for a brief moment on the area of environment, environmental enterprise, markets for recyclables, and environmental technology, the latter item being one that the Deputy Premier mentioned as a current priority for the Pacific Northwest Economic Region and that British Columbia is taking the lead on that particular issue. I think Alberta needs to get involved with our neighbouring jurisdictions in these important areas, but we need to do a little bit of work ourselves to make sure we're able to participate effectively in the proposals that are being made.

I think that members should obtain information about the Pacific Northwest Economic Region and what they're actually doing so they can see how far we have to go as a province before we can participate effectively. For example, I'm looking at a recent newsletter of the Pacific Northwest Economic Region dated March of 1991, a focus article on Expanding Environmental Enterprise in the Northwest States and Provinces. The article refers to the fact that

environmental services and technology transcend political boundaries and open a [new] range of opportunities for the economies of the Pacific Northwest.

That's a quote from Chris Watts, who's a member of the steering committee from the province of British Columbia.

Well, I suppose it does, and perhaps it even opens up opportunities for others of these partners of ours to start to export hazardous waste material from their jurisdictions into ours, where we have a facility which is losing money hand over fist thanks to the excellent management skill of this provincial government and where we have an Environment minister who has many times referred to the desirability, from a bottom-line financial point of view, of increasing the market for that facility.

12:20

The news article goes on to say that "governments must act as facilitators of this idea by providing the regulatory framework necessary to stimulate enterprise growth," which I think makes it quite clear that this entity is involved in trying to promote free trade of environmental services within that particular region. I have a concern about increased amounts of hazardous waste material traveling through the major highways of the province of Alberta from other jurisdictions within this region, and I think it's a question that's presupposed by the literature published by the Pacific Northwest Economic Region. I think the government and members should be a little more clear in terms of what we're getting into.

A second major issue that's dealt with in the March '91 newsletter is Creating Regional Markets for Recyclables. Now, this is a particularly interesting area because we already have our partners in the Pacific Northwest region who are involved in the Alberta marketplace for recyclables trying to tie up our sources of recyclable material. It's interesting that British Columbia is spearheading this area because British Columbia is exactly the province that's trying to round up supplies of newsprint in the

province of Alberta, with some success. In the city of Calgary they have cut a deal with Southam, the publisher of the *Calgary Herald*, and if I'm not mistaken, I believe that the *Calgary Sun* is involved as well. They've established a limited collection system whereby they're going to send our wastepaper to British Columbia to be processed and sold back to us as recycled paper.

Now, I'm not so certain that that's the way we want this market for recyclables to develop. I think maybe we should look at processing some of that material here in the province of Alberta, but you're not going to be able to do that until you have a collection system in place which is of a scale and a size which allows for manufacturing in Alberta. We have a company in Alberta, Alberta Newsprint, which is interested in establishing a deinking line in their paper mill. The capability is there to handle a hundred percent of the wastepaper in the province of Alberta, but if suddenly we're in a regional market for recyclables, which is the proposal put forth in the Pacific Northwest Economic Region, all of sudden we may be exporting our waste material for processing elsewhere, a familiar pattern throughout the history of Alberta. I really think that in this day and age and especially in the more sustainable type of industry, which recycling represents, we should be looking at doing some of that processing right here in the province of Alberta.

It refers to "a 14-state western paper buying coalition" whereby the states of Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington and nine others are involved in purchasing recycling paper at a discount using their economic muscle in the marketplace. Is that what we want to buy into, a purchasing coalition whereby we can access cheaper materials imported, no doubt, from the United States? I'm not so certain, but it is clear that the primary steps for action in 1991 set forth by the Pacific Northwest Economic Region are, number one:

Examine Barriers to Regional Cooperation on Creating Markets for Recycled Materials. Specifically, review lack of procurement policies, and lack of uniform recycled material content standards, and the constraints to the development of such standards.

So it does seem clear that they are interested in gathering up more of our raw resources for processing, and it doesn't surprise me one little bit that British Columbia is at the head of this.

I think we should participate, but I think we should do it on the basis that we have our act together, that we have a good idea as a province where we want to go in terms of processing of recycled material, in terms of jobs and opportunities for our young people in Alberta. We don't have that in place today. All that we have is another grant program from Alberta Environment, which is discretionary, capital funds only, a ribbon-cutting type of program. We don't have a provincewide collection system; therefore, we don't have the forward link in the processing system. All that we have to offer is a place where we can dispose of their hazardous and toxic wastes, which I'm not sure that Albertans support at this time. So I believe that we should exercise some caution in what may come of this from the point of view of our own economic future.

MR. SPEAKER: Deputy Premier, summation.

MR. HORSMAN: Well, very quickly, I would thank all parties in the House for their support of this motion. I can assure the hon. members that "full participation" means that we're going to pay our dues as well as take part in meetings. That's really what it means. It does not, obviously, transfer any jurisdiction from our province or this Legislature to any other body, and it will be a consultative body only. But we hope that out of that consultation will come some policies which will benefit the people of

Alberta and British Columbia and the five states which will also be participating.

I just want to put on the record that with respect to the health care issue, and this is somewhat aside from this, I did mention in my opening remarks that I'm an honorary director on the State Legislative Leaders Foundation. At my invitation several state legislators will be coming to Kananaskis in July. At least 60 state legislators will be coming to Kananaskis, perhaps more than that, to review with us the medicare system, the health care system, in Canada because there is a great deal of interest. That particular conference is outside this particular Pacific Northwest Economic Region, but I thought I'd just mention that since the question was raised about our role.

I thank the members for their participation. I recognize the caution that has been urged upon us. Since there will be, as I indicated, a bipartisan or multipartisan approach to this, it will, I hope, be an opportunity for all caucuses to better get to know and understand this region, which has a population of 15 million and great opportunities for economic development and, with economic development and growth, a greater opportunity to provide the social services that flow from that economic prosperity.

MR. SPEAKER: The question before the House is Motion 18. Those in favour, please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed, please say no.
May the record show that the motion passed unanimously.

