

Intelligence MEMOS



From: Lennie Kaplan
To: Alberta Fiscal Observers
Date: September 8, 2025
Re: **TRANSPARENCY, PLEASE, FOR ALBERTA'S PRODUCTIVITY REVIEW CABINET COMMITTEE**

The work of the Alberta government's "cost-cutting" cabinet committee, know as the Productivity Review Cabinet Committee (PRCC), continues to be kept out of main view, and the results of its activities should be disclosed to Albertans in the name of openness and accountability.

The PRCC, or Alberta's latest program review process, was quietly established by government between April and July 2024 and tasked with evaluating and measuring the efficiency and effectiveness of programs and services, identifying initiatives for savings, and focusing resources on the government's core priorities.

But aside from a United Conservative Party townhall a year ago when Premier Danielle Smith told party members she had created a cabinet committee, there has been little public discussion of the committee or its work.

The 2025 budget apparently incorporated savings initiatives discussed during that 2024-25 PRCC process. And, according to the budget papers, the PRCC will continue in fiscal year 2025-26 and beyond. Last May, without any fanfare, the [current committee members](#) were listed on a cabinet website.

It is important that Albertans be aware of the multi-million expense reductions and revenue increase initiatives that have been and are being considered under PRCC. Although Alberta has reviewed some of its programs and services over the past 20 years, through such processes as Core Efficiency Review, Value Savings Reviews, Fiscal Corrections Review, Deputy Ministers' Review, Cabinet Budget Committee Review, Results Based Budgeting, and Program Review, these efforts have been fragmented, reactive to crises, limited in scope, and lacked permanence.

What makes the PRCC process any different than these earlier mixed efforts? We may never know because the public has not seen any of the tangible results. There is little public information about the Fiscal Position Improvement Proposals, developed by government ministries, such as Health, Education, Advanced Education and Seniors and Community Social Services, and submitted to the PRCC over the fall/winter of 2024.

Possibly, one such PRCC proposal, brought forward in previous program review exercises over the past 20 years, is a July 1, 2025 decision by the government to increase seniors' maximum co-payments [under the Seniors and Non-Group Drug Coverage to Albertans](#) by a \$1 a month over a 10-month period, until it reaches \$35 next April.

Obviously, the government should build systems and processes that encourage innovation, good ideas, and better program and service outcomes. Putting all provincial programs and services under a permanent program review lens will ensure that they are more responsive to the needs of Albertans. A robust program review framework should establish a better alignment between financial resources and desired outcomes, a key instrument for making government more results oriented.

However, with apparently a wide variety of expense reductions and revenue increase initiatives on the table for PRCC consideration from such ministries as Health, Education, Advanced Education, Seniors and Community Social Services, Environment and Protected Areas, and Immigration and Multiculturalism, among others, the government must be completely transparent with Albertans about how these multi-million cost cutting and revenue raising decisions are being made, and it should not hide behind a veil of secrecy.

Lennie Kaplan is a former senior manager in the fiscal and economic policy division of Alberta's Ministry of Treasury Board and Finance and was Executive Director to the MacKinnon Panel on Alberta's Finances.

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