



August 4, 2020

News Release

Kneehill County Lobbies Province against Oil and Gas Assessment Changes

On Tuesday, August 4, 2020, representatives from Kneehill County and Wheatland County met with Nathan Cooper, MLA for Olds/Didsbury/Three Hills, to lobby against the proposed changes to Oil and Gas Assessment announced by the Province of Alberta.

These assessment changes would reduce property taxes for some oil and gas companies, **shifting the tax burden from industry to County residents, commercial properties and local businesses.**

The four assessment scenarios proposed by the Province would result in significant tax revenue loss for the County, ranging from \$3.5 million (best case) to \$7 million (worst case). For Kneehill County to recoup this substantial loss, drastic cuts to services, extreme tax increases, and service fee escalations would be required. Support traditionally given to local municipalities, recreation facilities, and community groups would also be in jeopardy.

Make no mistake—these assessment changes WILL impact ratepayers, residents, and businesses within the County. It is important to note, however, that this is not a Kneehill County specific issue. Each and every rural municipality in the province will be impacted by these changes, and while some may see some benefit, the vast majority will be left with the same severe impacts and budget struggles, already challenged in 2020.

“We at the County fully support the oil and gas industry,” said Kneehill County Reeve, Jerry Wittstock, “But the changes the Province has proposed is not a viable solution to help that industry. Large oil and gas companies, who already have billions in profits, are the ones who will benefit, and there’s no guarantee that any money saved will even be reinvested in Alberta.”

“The Province needs to hear from you, our residents and ratepayers, before they come to a decision. We urge you to speak out about the proposed changes. Once the decision is made—which should happen in the next few weeks—it will be virtually impossible to reverse.”

Kneehill County residents can contact MLA Nathan Cooper:

Phone: [403.556.3132](tel:403.556.3132)

[780.427.2464](tel:780.427.2464)

Email: OldsDidsbury.ThreeHills@assembly.ab.ca

Kneehill County Councillors continue to engage the Province and work with the RMA (Rural Municipalities of Alberta) to advocate on your behalf. Please continue following Kneehill County for updates on this issue, and call your local Councillor if you have questions about these changes.

More information, including Impact Reports, can be found at www.kneehillcounty.com.