

# THE DAILY GLEANER



Dropped by for a visit: Alberta Premier Alison Redford addressed the members of the legislative assembly in the legislature on Friday. Above, Redford and Premier David Alward answer media questions afterward.

*Stephen MacGillivray/The Daily Gleaner*

## ENERGY

# PIPELINE WOULD BENEFIT ALL CANADIANS: REDFORD

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LEGISLATURE BUREAU

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FREDERICTON – Alison Redford is holding up the partnership between New Brunswick and Alberta in promoting the west-east pipeline as an example of how Canada is overcoming historic differences between the regions.

The Alberta premier told the Saint John Board of Trade Friday that a pipeline would bring benefits to both provinces.

"I've spoken to many people here about how our two provinces can work together to create opportunity and prosperity for our people," Redford said.

"Alberta and New Brunswick may be on opposite sides of the country, but we share many similarities."

One of these common traits, she said, is the attitude that the global economy is changing and, with it, we must change as well.

"There are new opportunities that are open to us and we have to seize them. And, more importantly, we have to seize them together as Canadians."

Earlier, in a speech in the New Brunswick legislature in Fredericton, Redford said a pipeline stretching from the west to the east would help knit together the country while providing new revenues and investments that would improve everyone's quality of life.

"We are starting to transcend historical differences," said Redford, the first premier from outside the province to address the New Brunswick House.

"There is a bright new spirit of cooperation at work in Canada and I am here to let you know that from Alberta's perspective we are ready to embrace it with open arms especially when it comes to crucial subjects like responsible resource development."

Redford stressed the importance of the proposed pipeline to her landlocked province.

She said Alberta is currently sitting atop a "bitumen bubble" referring to the gap between the price the province receives for its oil and the world price.

"Thanks to a slide in the price we receive for our oil, due in part to a lack of access to tide water, Alberta's revenues plunged \$6 billion this year alone," Redford told the assembled MLAs.

"That is the equivalent of our entire education budget."

She said the bubble is hurting more than the finances of Alberta.

"The cost to the Canadian economy is still being added up. But in this year's federal budget, Finance Minister Jim Flaherty remarked that the lack of market access for Alberta's resources had a \$4 billion impact on Canada's bottom line.

"The decline in Alberta's fortunes means that there were fewer revenues to go around nationally."

Her visit to New Brunswick comes four months after Alward conducted a similar trip to Alberta, where he toured the oilsands.

The visit also comes before a June 17 deadline by TransCanada Corp. (TSX:TRP) to receive binding commitments from oil producers. It needs those commitments before deciding whether to convert an existing 3,000-kilometre natural gas

pipeline to carry crude into Quebec, with the possibility of a 1,400-kilometre extension to Saint John.

Alward said he is confident the proposal, known as the Energy East Pipeline project, can stand on merit.

Although other pipeline proposals, including the Northern Gateway project through British Columbia, have hit major roadblocks, Alward said he believes there is widespread acceptance of the west-east pipeline in the provinces it would cross.

He said there is more work to be done in Quebec, but he is pleased with the level of support for the project.

"There is a level of momentum and synergy behind the project," Alward said.

Redford said Alberta and New Brunswick make a good team in promoting the west-east pipeline.

"Alberta is the only major oil producer on the plant without direct access to the sea," she said.

"New Brunswick is home to the biggest oil refinery in the country along with deep sea ports that could make Canadian crude accessible to other refiners on the Atlantic coast and from there to customers the world over."

Last year, Canada imported more than 6,000 barrels per day to keep its eastern refineries running.

Redford said a west-east pipeline would make available up to 850,000 barrels per day of western crude at comparably low prices.

"It would safeguard Canadian jobs and allow Canada to receive world prices for its bitumen, thereby raising revenues, taxes and investment country wide."

*-with files from Rhiannon Russell*