



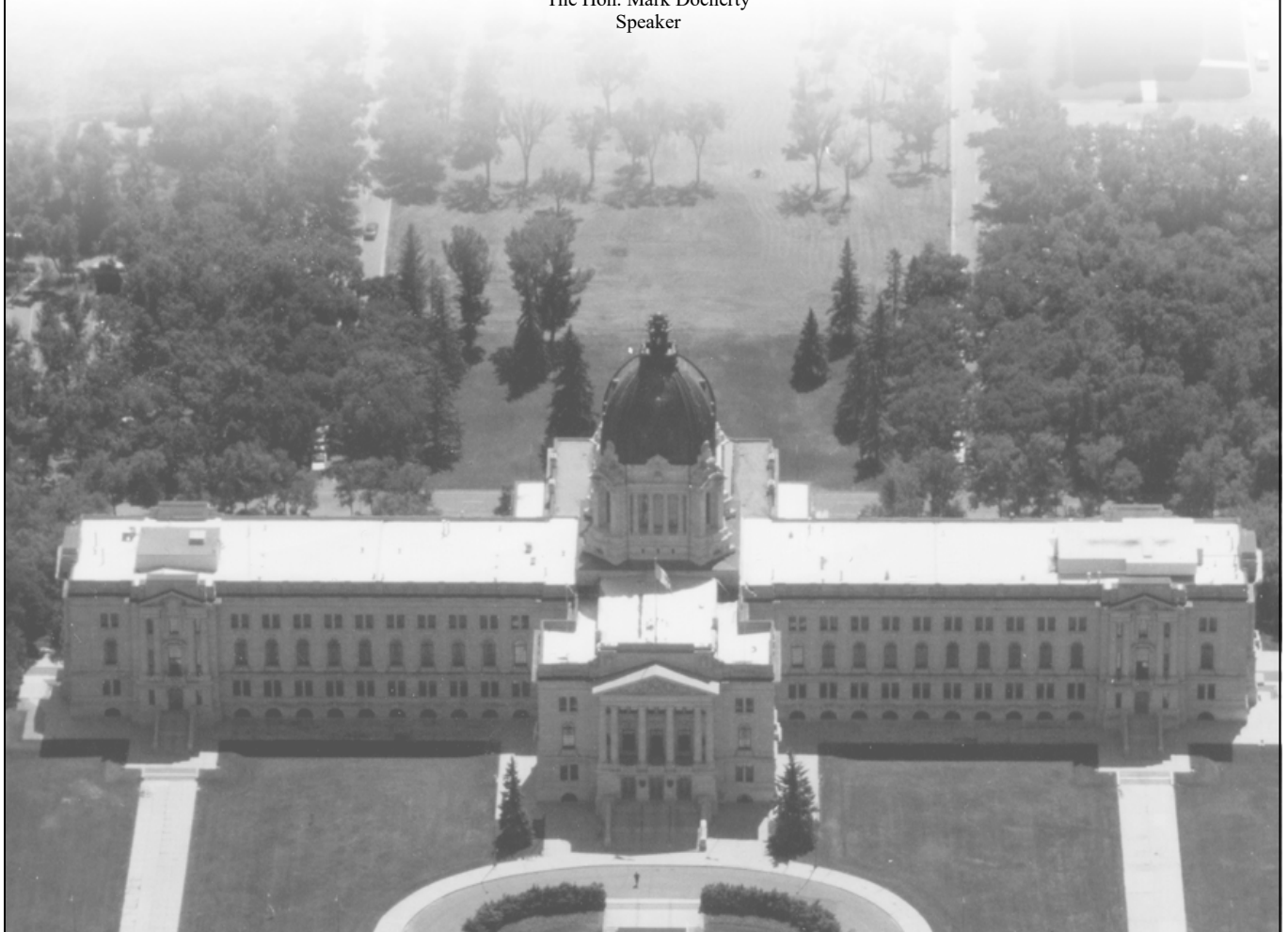
FOURTH SESSION - TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(HANSARD)
Published under the
authority of
The Hon. Mark Docherty
Speaker



MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
4th Session — 28th Legislature

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Premier — Hon. Scott Moe
Leader of the Opposition — Ryan Meili

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Lambert , Lisa — Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood (SP)	Vacant — Regina Walsh Acres
Lawrence , Greg — Moose Jaw Wakamow (SP)	Vacant — Saskatoon Eastview

Party Standings: Saskatchewan Party (SP) — 46; New Democratic Party (NDP) — 13; Vacant — 2

Clerks-at-the-Table

Clerk — Gregory A. Putz

Law Clerk & Parliamentary Counsel — Kenneth S. Ring, Q.C.

Principal Clerk — Iris Lang

Clerk Assistant — Kathy Buriannyk

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[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — I would request leave for an extended introduction. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Thank you. It is my pleasure to introduce some special guests to the Legislative Assembly today. I'd like to welcome representatives from the Council of State Governments Midwestern Legislative Conference, more commonly known as MLC. Joining us today are Illinois State Senator Elgie Sims, Jr., who serves as the 2019 Chair of MLC; Ohio State Representative Bob Cupp, who also serves as the Co-Chair of the MLC Midwest-Canada Relations Committee; Mike McCabe, director of the CSG [Council of State Governments] Midwestern Office; and Ilene Grossman, assistant director of the CSG Midwestern Office.

Saskatchewan has been a member of MLC since 2000 and was its first international affiliate member. MLC is a non-partisan regional forum for state- and provincial-level legislatures. In addition to Saskatchewan, MLC includes the following 11 Midwestern states: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin; and three Canadian provinces: Alberta, Manitoba, and Ontario as affiliate members.

In August 2019 Saskatchewan became the first Canadian province to become a full member of MLC. We are celebrating this achievement today with the signing of the MLC proclamation welcoming Saskatchewan as a full member.

As a midwestern region, states and provinces have the opportunity to share ideas and solutions to common problems, promote greater regional collaboration. Over the years, Saskatchewan's engagement and interest at MLC has grown. In 2005 we hosted a highly successful MLC annual meeting, and we're the first Canadian jurisdiction to do so. And since 2000, 30 members of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan have completed the Bowhay Institute for Legislative Leadership Development, better known as BILLD, a program designed exclusively for midwestern legislatures. Regardless of political stripe, Saskatchewan legislators continue to enjoy their experiences and friendships forged as part of MLC.

I ask that all members of this Assembly join me in welcoming our distinguished guests to the Saskatchewan legislature and to our province.

While I'm on my feet, sitting in the Speaker's gallery I'd like to welcome 16 grade 8 students from Mother Teresa Middle School. And with them today is their teacher, Greg Rieder. And looking forward . . . We've already had one that we've had a photo on the steps, and I'm looking forward to taking some questions from this awesome class.

Please join me in welcoming Mother Teresa Middle School to their legislature.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Crown Investments.

Hon. Mr. Hargrave: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I ask for leave for an extended introduction.

The Speaker: — Minister has asked for leave for an extended introduction. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — I recognize the minister.

Hon. Mr. Hargrave: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce a number of representatives from Regina Crime Stoppers. And later my colleague the member from Regina Pasqua will give a member's statement in the same regards.

Mr. Speaker, seated in your gallery up there — and I can see a couple of them in your gallery, and I might ask them to give a wave when I mention your name — is president, Craig Perreault; vice-president, Amanda Halderman; treasurer, Cory Little; executive director, Ron Podbielski; Keith Prior, Starla Grebinski, Chris Mbah, Boris Lubura, Megan Byers, Logan Fraser, Colin King, Muna De Ciman, Nicole Bissonette, Anita Krupski, Inspector Audra Young from the Regina Police Service, Constable Janet Klemp from the Regina Police Service.

Mr. Speaker, I had the privilege of meeting with this group earlier today and I can say that I'm very proud of the work they do for the community, and we should all be very proud of the work that they do for our community.

Mr. Speaker, last Wednesday the Regina Crime Stoppers announced that earlier in October at an international conference in Singapore, they received the international award for leading the world on improvement in the recovery of the proceeds of crime. This award was given in the category for small to medium-sized communities with a population under 300,000. Last year the Regina Crime Stoppers recovered \$587,700 in drugs and stolen property. I'd like to give a special shout-out to Constable Janet Klemp, who I am told is the heart and soul of the organization, who investigates all the Regina Crime Stoppers tips, and is a big reason why they won this international award.

I'd ask all members of the Assembly to join me to welcome them to their legislature. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Regina Douglas Park.

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the minister in welcoming these members of Regina Crime Stoppers, Craig in particular, but the rest of this leadership team.

I was trying to figure out why all these wonderful people were here today because so much of this leadership team has so many different hats. Actually they're so involved in their community in so many different ways. It's great to see them come together

for this important cause as well. We'd like to congratulate them on their important recognition and thank them for their service to the community. I'd ask all members to join me in welcoming them to their Legislative Assembly, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Regina Elphinstone-Centre.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to just very quickly join with the members in welcoming one particular person with the Regina Crime Stoppers to her Legislative Assembly. I had the occasion to go to school with this individual a few years back, Mr. Speaker. And certainly Starla Grebinski finished out her career as an educator as an outstanding principal at Sacred Heart Community School in Regina Elphinstone-Centre, did tremendous work throughout her career.

But, Mr. Speaker, it's no surprise that she's continuing on that good work through other chapters. It's always wonderful to see Starla, and I'm always reminded of how thankful I am for the work that she does for all of us. So please welcome Starla Grebinski to her Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Meili: — Thanks, Mr. Speaker. The member beside me just mentioned that she went to school with Ms. Grebinski's children while Mr. McCall went with Ms. Grebinski herself. A whole generation's represented here.

I do want to acknowledge someone who's in the east gallery today, Mr. Steve Wolfson. Steve Wolfson of Wolf Sun Productions and his wife, Penny Ward Wolfson, are filmmakers here in Saskatchewan, an industry that has been hard to persist in due to some decisions, government decisions in this industry, but they have been persistent in doing so and in putting a great number of excellent productions online. I've been fortunate enough to do some interviews with Steve and Penny in the past, and I want to ask all the members here to join me in thanking them for sticking around and telling Saskatchewan stories.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Regina Northeast.

Mr. Pedersen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd also like to join in welcoming Steve Wolfson to his Legislative Assembly here. Steve has a varied past as a contributor to our community going many, many years back. At one point he was the Acting Dean of the National School of Dental Therapy for First Nations. He's been an award-winning author of children's books: *The Monster Cheese* and *Filbert the Backward Flamingo*. He was president of the Beth Jacob executive and, Mr. Speaker, I must say he was an excellent neighbour to have. So I'd ask all members to join with me in welcoming Steve to his Assembly.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Regina Rosemont.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I present petitions once again on behalf of concerned citizens, local businesses, and communities from all across Saskatchewan as it relates to the Sask Party government's hit on our economy by expanding the PST [provincial sales tax]

and foisting it onto construction labour. Of course they expanded it across so many other goods as well: children's clothes, Mr. Speaker, through to insurance. And then hiked it as well, hitting households hard who are now paying more than \$800 per year more in PST alone from what they were paying just four years ago. Mr. Speaker, it extended into areas like the restaurant industry of course as well.

The choice to expand the PST has really hurt our economy. Where it relates to PST on construction, projects have been shelved all across Saskatchewan. Permits are sadly down all across the province. Thousands of hard-working Saskatchewan tradespeople have lost employment in this very important industry. And so many of those tradespeople have been forced to find employment in provinces outside of Saskatchewan, representing a tremendous loss for our communities, for their families, and for us as a province as a whole.

The prayer reads as follows:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Sask Party government to stop saddling families and businesses with the costs of their mismanagement and immediately reinstate the PST exemption on construction and stop hurting Saskatchewan businesses and families.

These petitions today are signed by concerned residents of Regina. I so submit.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Biggar-Sask Valley.

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise today to present a petition from the citizens who are opposed to the federal government's decision to impose an unfair and ineffective carbon tax in the province of Saskatchewan.

I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the following action: to cause the Government of Saskatchewan to take the necessary steps to stop the federal government from imposing a carbon tax on the province.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by the good citizens of Dalmeny. I do so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Centre.

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition calling on the Sask Party government to call by-elections in Regina Walsh Acres and Saskatoon Eastview. The undersigned residents of this province want to bring to our attention the following: that the seats in the Legislative Assembly for Regina Walsh Acres and Saskatoon Eastview are currently vacant. Unfortunately because of a loophole in *The Legislative Assembly Act*, by-elections are not legally required to be called in Regina Walsh Acres and Saskatoon Eastview because the former MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly] did not resign before August 6th, 2019. They chose to resign the next month.

[13:45]

Now unless a by-election is called, constituents in Regina Walsh Acres and Saskatoon Eastview will go without representation for nearly 14 months until the next provincial election is held on October 26th, 2020. Now the Premier has the authority and power to call by-elections in Regina Walsh Acres and Saskatoon Eastview. Even though *The Legislative Assembly Act* does not require it, it would be the right thing to do.

I'd like to read the prayer, Mr. Speaker:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan urge the Premier to call by-elections in the constituencies of Regina Walsh Acres and Saskatoon Eastview.

And, Mr. Speaker, the people signing these petitions today come from Regina Walsh Acres and Saskatoon Eastview. I do so present. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Today I'm rising to present a petition to reinstate and expand SaskPower's net metering program. The people who have signed this petition today would like to bring to our attention the following: an unprecedented number of residents want to take part in renewable energy opportunities. The SaskPower net metering program was very successful, which caused SaskPower to shut it down early, in September of 2019, rather than expanding it. As a result of the abrupt shutdown of the program, up to 800 jobs will be lost and federal rebate dollars will be left on the table. The Sask Party government's failure to plan for transition from a carbon-intensive economy to a low-carbon economy is short sighted and detrimental to our economy and our future, and the Renew Saskatchewan energy transition program would expand that metering to reduce emissions and save people, businesses, and municipalities money on power bills.

Mr. Speaker, I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan urge the Sask Party government to act to address climate change by restoring the SaskPower net metering program and introducing the Renew Saskatchewan energy transition program.

Mr. Speaker, the people who have signed this petition today are from the communities of Cupar and Regina. I so submit.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Fairview.

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition to end unacceptable emergency room wait times. These citizens wish to bring to our attention that despite the Sask Party government's promise to eliminate emergency room wait times in 2012, wait times in Saskatchewan's emergency rooms continue to grow; that instead of making smart investments to meet emergency room targets, the Sask Party government watered down targets to the point where they no longer exist; and

that the Sask Party has cut funding to address emergency room wait times and has no meaningful strategy to get emergency room wait times under control.

I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Sask Party government to fully fund and execute a plan, as they promised to do in 2012, to lower and eventually end emergency room wait times across Saskatchewan.

The individuals signing this petition are from Battleford and Spiritwood. I do so present.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Prince Albert Northcote.

Federation of University Women Celebrates 100th Anniversary

Ms. Rancourt: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Canadian Federation of University Women is celebrating its 100th anniversary this year. In Prince Albert we have a very active chapter of this national organization, and it has been in operation for 88 years. The president in Prince Albert is Dalelene Yelland, and I see her at many events around Prince Albert and know how active she is in our community.

The CFUW [Canadian Federation of University Women] or University Women, as they are more commonly known in Prince Albert, fundraises each year to create scholarships for young women completing post-secondary education. Their main fundraiser is a twice yearly book sale, and it is always very successful, receiving donations of books to sell and many willing buyers. All the books are sold by donation and the CFUW members are always amazed and grateful at the generosity of Prince Albert people.

This year in honour of the 100th anniversary the CFUW, Prince Albert chapter created a special centennial scholarship of \$1,000. The recipient was Jerri Frantik, a young Prince Albert woman who is completing her master's degree in Indigenous social work at the First Nations University.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members join with me in congratulating the Canadian Federation of University Women on its 100th anniversary and the Prince Albert CFUW on creating the special centennial scholarship and to the recipient, Jerri Frantik. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Lumsden-Morse.

November Fundraising Campaign

Mr. Stewart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the fundraising team, Team Mo(e), I'd like to wish everyone a happy Movember. For the entire month of November, men will put down their razors to sport magnificent mos — like this one, Mr. Speaker — to raise money for prostate and testicular cancer. By growing these moustaches, we are committing to starting a

conversation about men's mental health and well-being. Though it is a lighthearted campaign, Mr. Speaker, the discussions that the Movember campaign have been able to start have already helped millions of people.

Mr. Speaker, it is estimated that one in seven Canadian men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer and 1 in 20 men will die from testicular cancer. Mr. Speaker, these statistics are more than just numbers. These numbers represent important people in our lives — family members, friends, co-workers, and neighbours. Mr. Speaker, it truly affects everyone, and if growing moustaches helps to decrease these statistics, we're all for it.

Mr. Speaker, we will sport our moustaches proudly throughout the month. I encourage everyone to support this year's Movember campaign by donating during the month of November, and best of luck to those who are fundraising this year. Thank you for supporting this important cause, and thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Nutana.

Government's Record

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, since 2016 this government has been letting the people of Saskatchewan down. The Throne Speech was rife with statements about what has happened since 2007. But, Mr. Speaker, they don't answer the main question that people who are growing tired of this Sask Party government's record of disappointments are asking now: what has this Premier done for me lately?

This Premier has been in charge for almost two years but can't seem to answer what he has accomplished for Saskatchewan — cuts to education, growing class sizes, \$400 less per student in our schools, leaving school boards across the province with an \$80 million shortfall. Long-term care and drugs for seniors are more expensive under this Premier's leadership. Cuts to advanced education, making it harder for young people in this province to get the training they need to succeed. The number of people in this province unable to pay their mortgages is the highest in the country and climbing under this Premier's leadership.

And this Premier, Mr. Speaker, only has two responses: he either points fingers to distract from his record or he tries to take credit for what was done long before he was in charge. Coattail riding and finger pointing is failed leadership. The people of this province deserve better.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Regina Pasqua.

Regina Crime Stoppers Receives Award

Mr. Fiaz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to stand here and announce, in October the Regina Crime Stoppers received an international award for the biggest improvement in the recovery of drugs and property. The Regina Crime Stoppers is a self-funded, charitable organization that provides an anonymous way for the public to provide information on crime and missing people. It is one of over 1,700 Crime Stoppers programs around the world in a total of 32 countries.

The category for this award was communities with a population of under 300,000 people. Mr. Speaker, for all the great work Crime Stoppers does around the world for communities' safety, it is nice to see how our Regina program stands out as a leader. In 2018 the Regina Crime Stoppers recovered \$587,700 in drugs and stolen property. This was a 208 per cent increase from 2017, and an amount more than the previous four years combined.

Since the Regina Crime Stoppers' inception in 1984, over \$11 million in stolen property and drugs have been recovered, all thanks to the help of this program.

I now ask all the members to please join me in congratulating and thanking the Regina Crime Stoppers for their community safety efforts and receiving this prestigious worldwide award. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Lloydminster.

Company Donates to School Mental Health Programs

Ms. Young: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to thank a very important organization on an investment that will truly change the lives of many students and future generations. Mr. Speaker, Canadian Natural Resources Ltd. has donated \$25,000 towards mental health programs for the Lloydminster Public School Division. They presented the donation to the Lloydminster Health Foundation on behalf of Project Sunrise, as they saw opportunity in giving back to their community.

Project Sunrise started as a small initiative in 2014 but has since then grown to a larger development program for better mental health services in Lloydminster and surrounding communities. Mr. Speaker, the donation will go towards a variety of projects including Kids Have Stress Too! This program is a collaborative effort between parents, children, and educators, helping them better understand childhood stress as they provide tools and skills they need to deal with stress in a healthier manner.

Mr. Speaker, CNRL [Canadian Natural Resources Ltd.] operations superintendent Garnet Zarowny said in their organization's giving program, they "believe it is important to give students tools to help them become healthier and more resilient as they work toward their future."

I now ask all members to join me in thanking Canadian Natural Resources Ltd. for this generous donation. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Estevan.

Facility Captures 3 Million Tonnes of CO₂

Hon. Ms. Carr: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as you know, our government has demonstrated a long-standing commitment to action on climate change. This has been laid out in our Prairie Resilience strategy which includes a commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions from 2005 levels by 40 per cent by 2030. A major part of that commitment is the investments in reducing electricity emissions through development and installation of the world's first major post-combustion carbon capture use and storage facility at Boundary dam unit 3.

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure today to announce that on

November 4th the CCS [carbon capture and storage] facility at BD3 [Boundary dam 3] captured its 3 millionth tonne of CO₂ since operations began. This is the equivalent of greenhouse gas emissions of 750,000 vehicles. SaskPower is especially proud to note that this achievement was accomplished without a single lost time injury. As we increase our use of renewables such as hydro, wind, and solar, we still need reliable baseload power. Boundary dam unit 3 continues to provide enough low-carbon electricity for 100,000 customers, 24 hours a day.

The Boundary dam CCS project is one of many initiatives the corporation is pursuing to keep up with this ever-growing demand for power in Saskatchewan, and I couldn't be more proud it's in my own backyard. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Moosomin.

Transition Residence Opens

Mr. Bonk: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to let everyone know that Cowessess First Nation opened a new transition residence on Friday. The home, called Sacred Wolf Lodge, will allow girls in care ages 14 to 17 to live on the First Nation. Mr. Speaker, the home has 10 beds and two other bedrooms for the staff who will live with the girls.

The girls will be selected with help from agencies including Yorkton Child and Family Services, the Ministry of Social Services, and agencies in neighbouring provinces.

This residence will be a place of healing, safety, and culture for the girls living there. It will be a place that they can call home. And, Mr. Speaker, another goal is to make staff feel like family. Instead of being referred to as social workers or intake workers, they will use words like auntie, mom, grandmother, or kohkom.

Mr. Speaker, we are proud of our partnership with Cowessess First Nation and will continue to work with them in the future. I ask all members of the House to join me in recognizing and congratulating Cowessess First Nation on the grand opening of Sacred Wolf Lodge. Thank you.

QUESTION PERIOD

The Speaker: — I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Solar Power Net Metering Program

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today we're joined by Brenden Owens and Nolan Dezotell of Prairie Sun Solar. Their locally owned and operated company helps Saskatchewan people be part of the solution to the climate crisis by diversifying our grid and taking full advantage of our abundant sun exposure in the province.

Like the rest of the solar industry, the folks at Prairie Sun were not consulted when the government went ahead with a decision to replace a program that was working with one that just doesn't — a program that the 800 folks working in the solar installation industry in this province have made abundantly clear will kill the solar industry.

So my question today for the Premier is this: will he rise today

and tell Brenden and Nolan why the Sask Party is turning its back on the solar industry and putting companies and the folks who work for them here in Saskatchewan at risk?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the member opposite for the question on an important way for us in this province to generate renewable power, Mr. Speaker. There are a number of options on how we are going to reduce our emissions profile here in Saskatchewan. Part of that is by people across this province generating their own renewable power, Mr. Speaker, that we have had the opportunity to put a program in place that did have a cap on it, Mr. Speaker, and provided an opportunity for us to build capacity in this industry.

[14:00]

However as we move forward through the years, Mr. Speaker, we need to ensure that we have a program that is (a) sustainable, Mr. Speaker, sustainable so that it can continue for years into the future; (b) that it is a program that gives Saskatchewan people, Saskatchewan residents, the opportunity to participate in, Mr. Speaker.

We have talked. My office has consulted with people across this province — installers, Mr. Speaker — and we now have a program that is in place. Although it is not as lucrative as the original program, Mr. Speaker, it is a sustainable program. It is a program that provides the opportunity for people in this province to self-generate their renewable power, Mr. Speaker, and it's among the very best programs in the nation.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Brenden and Nolan are concerned that this government is misrepresenting its faulty net-billing program, pretending that it's still net metering, and as the Premier just said, telling people that this is the best in the country. Mr. Speaker, we know, based on analysis of per-kilowatt hour and credit rates, that this is in fact the third-worst program in the entire country.

So would the Premier be willing to shine some light on why his government chose to essentially double the payback period and make solar unaffordable for Saskatchewan ratepayers?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, the program is sustainable. It's sustainable for years into the future. It has one of the shortest payback periods here in the nation, Mr. Speaker, right here in the province of Saskatchewan. As I said, it provides people across this province, people that I have talked to over the course of the last number of weeks that are going to continue to move forward with their installation of their panels, Mr. Speaker, their solar panels in their yard or in their yard site, Mr. Speaker.

But this does ensure that this program is going to be sustainable, Mr. Speaker. It ensures that it is going to be available not just for a capped number of megawatts, but it is going to be available for everyone and anyone to participate with here in the province, Mr. Speaker. And we look forward to all of those individuals across

the province participating in this program, lowering our greenhouse gas emissions, Mr. Speaker, and making money at the same time.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This government is grasping at straws to try to explain away its backward decision, a decision that they're trying to explain after the fact, after failing to consult with the industry, after failing to understand the true opportunities that are before us. Mr. Speaker, we're in the sunniest place in the country. We should be developing this resource. This is an industry that was growing, that was doing well, and this government, instead of seeking the opportunity to advance this, to lower people's bills, to put thousands of people to work, to move to clean energy, they chose to kill the industry.

Why, Mr. Speaker, did this government look at a growing industry and say, sure, we care about the economy — just not that industry, just not the film industry, just not certain industries? Why did they keep picking winners and losers?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of the Environment.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have met with the Distributed Energy Association as recently as last Thursday. I met with them before the new program was announced, Mr. Speaker. We met with a number of the companies as well, certainly through my office. And SaskPower did as well, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I can report to the House that since the 16-megawatt cap was hit, there were 75 applicants who came in after the 16-megawatt cap, and 36 per cent of those have indicated that they're going to move forward with their application. We're still waiting to hear back from an additional 39 per cent, Mr. Speaker, and only 25 per cent have indicated that they're not going to go forward.

So, Mr. Speaker, with those applications that we know about already moving forward, that's an additional 700 kilowatts that's going to be produced. That's on top of the 10 megawatts that we're doing through the power generation partner program, which are smaller projects. That's not utility scale, Mr. Speaker. So we believe that this is a program that is sustainable and will provide work for the industry.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If the minister met with the Distributed Energy Association, he'd know that orders have dropped by over 90 per cent. But maybe he wasn't really listening.

And when it comes to really listening, Mr. Speaker, we heard the STF [Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation] release its Re-Imagine Education survey today, which told us the same things we heard from the NDP's [New Democratic Party] education survey, which are the same things I'm sure the minister has heard in his conversations around the province, Mr. Speaker. He's heard these things, but has he listened?

The quotes that we're hearing, what did we hear? We heard that:

We need to fund our education system appropriately . . . we either fund students during their PreK-12 education now . . . or we fund increased incarceration, reliance on social/welfare, etc.

That's absolutely right. We need to make those upstream investments in kids now for future strong economy and decreased costs.

I'll share another quote with you, Mr. Speaker, and I quote:

Stop cutting funding for education! Stop taking teachers out of classrooms, cutting support staff and bring back guidance counselling for these kids!

Mr. Speaker, it couldn't be any more loud and clear.

Has the Premier finally heard the message? And when will we finally hear a plan to adequately fund education in Saskatchewan?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of the Environment.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Mr. Speaker, with all due respect to the Leader of the Opposition, I don't think he heard what I had to say. Of the 75 applications that came in after the program cap had been reached, Mr. Speaker — applicants that had applied under the old program, and were notified that the old program did no longer exist and there was a new program — 36 per cent of those customers have decided to move forward with their programs, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, as well, and I will quote:

This existing net metering program was not financially sustainable and could result in substantial utility financial impacts if not corrected. Matching the new net metering program energy-credit rate will allow customers to continue generating solar-powered electricity while paying an amount closer to the break-even costs.

That's not SaskPower, Mr. Speaker; that's Saskatoon Light and Power, who now also have to make a decision on whether they want to continue forward with a program, Mr. Speaker, that passed the costs on to people who cannot afford solar panels.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Funding for Education

Mr. Meili: — Mr. Speaker, dozens of people have lost their jobs because of this decision and dozens more will lose their jobs. Hundreds will lose their jobs. Instead of actually taking a forward-looking approach and investing in solar, making that transition . . . But this isn't what this government wants to do.

We see a short-term view every time, and that comes right back to cuts in education, cuts in our classrooms, failure to address class size and composition, trying to brush teachers off by putting up another do-nothing committee. When will this government show that they actually understand that education matters and make the investments in our future?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, this government has made record investments in public education in Saskatchewan, not just operating, Mr. Speaker, but on the capital side. I'm glad the Leader of the Opposition had a chance to review that report, Mr. Speaker, that the STF released this morning. I went to that release, Mr. Speaker. The STF gave me an opportunity to say a few words. Here's what they said, Mr. Speaker: that the system is not broken. They said that in their report, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, contrary to what the members opposite continue to say about the education sector being in crisis, Mr. Speaker, obviously the STF and the people that helped prepare that report, Mr. Speaker, they acknowledge that there needs to be some changes in how we deliver public education. And I've stood on my feet countless times since I've been the Minister of Education and acknowledged that, Mr. Speaker.

We've talked about class size and we've talked about composition, Mr. Speaker, but we also talk about the importance of ensuring, ensuring that the issue of composition is properly addressed. And if you don't take my word for it, Mr. Speaker, there's many people that have spoken with respect to the issue of class size and composition, including, Mr. Speaker, the dean of Education at the university who says class composition is at the heart of the issue.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Riversdale.

Condition of Saskatchewan Hospital Building

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, mister . . . Mr. Speaker. It's been a little while since I've asked a question. Saskatchewan people are concerned that their brand new hospital has so many problems: a roof that leaks, water that you can't drink, and we've heard reports of water damage closing wards. My question to the minister: have there been any other problems with this brand new Saskatchewan Hospital North Battleford that the people of this province should know about?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Central Services.

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for the question. Again as I've said in this House before, the Government of Saskatchewan's number one priority is ensuring the safety and well-being of patients, staff, and visitors to the hospital. It's a well-known fact that the hospital has had some challenges, but we are doing a complete audit and making sure that everything is looked at. I assure the members of the House that this is a top priority for the government, and it continues to ensure that we find out all of the answers.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Riversdale.

Ms. Chartier: — These closures and problems aren't just inconveniences for hospital staff and current patients. They mean fewer patients are able to get the care they need. We received written questions that showed the Saskatchewan Hospital North Battleford admitted fewer patients last year than the year before,

a total of 13 patients, Mr. Speaker, despite many, many people being on the referral list.

We know that, with the crisis in mental health and addictions in our province, there's no shortage of people who desperately need help. How many people are going without the treatment and support they need because of the problems plaguing this new hospital?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Central Services.

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you very much again, Mr. Speaker, for the question of the member opposite. Again her facts aren't entirely correct. There was 18 individuals admitted. And I can tell you that the work that's been done in the admissions office, yes it had to be moved to a new area, but it has not impeded it . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order, please. I recognize the minister.

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Admissions have not been impeded in any way because of the situation at the hospital at this time.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Riversdale.

Ms. Chartier: — Mr. Speaker, those were this government's tabled numbers from the spring sitting. And just to be clear there, people who've been in the hospital more than three . . . in acute psychiatric facilities waiting to get into that hospital, you look at people who've been admitted more than three times — it was more than 200 people in the last fiscal year, Mr. Speaker. Those are people who could benefit from longer term acute psychiatric care.

Last week the Health minister said there would be an audit of the Sask Hospital and the problem so far, and the minister spoke of that. We've seen this movie before with the GTH [Global Transportation Hub]. The Sask Party launches an audit with a narrow scope and then claims afterward that the audit found no wrongdoing. Will the facility audit of the Sask Hospital North Battleford have free range to look at all the issues with this hospital, including how these problems have impacted patient care? And will it look to see if the materials used in the brand new hospital were chosen because they were right for the job and not just because they were the cheapest the P3 [public-private partnership] consortium could find?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Central Services.

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I can assure the member opposite that this will be a complete and full audit, and all information will be brought forward. But I also remind the member opposite that indeed we are talking about a hospital. Yes, it's having some challenges, but we do have a state-of-the-art hospital to talk about. If the NDP were still in government, they'd be talking about doing a hospital but they just didn't quite get it done. What about a children's hospital, Mr. Speaker? They just quite didn't get it done, Mr. Speaker.

So yes, you know, this hospital, I can tell the members opposite, it does have increased mental health services. It has a gymnasium. It has a workout facility, Mr. Speaker. It has a chapel. It has a First Nations healing lodge. All things that wouldn't be there if the NDP had an opportunity to continue in government. The Sask Party is getting it done, and we ensure the people of Saskatchewan that this facility will be functioning at utmost authority in the near future.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Regina Rosemont.

Safety of Water Supply

Mr. Wotherspoon: — I understand it also has water features in every room, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, it's not just our brand new hospital that's exposing Saskatchewan people to lead in their water. This morning the results of a year-long investigation into Canadian water quality was released with very concerning implications for Saskatchewan's cities. It revealed that water samples in Saskatoon, Moose Jaw, and Regina routinely exceeded Health Canada's recommended limits for lead content, and the average sample was more than four times what is considered safe.

When asked, the government deferred to the Water Security Agency. But this is a serious matter requiring serious provincial leadership and response and answers for people. What's this government's plan to partner with municipalities to ensure the people of Saskatchewan have safe drinking water?

[14:15]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Highways.

Hon. Mr. Ottenbreit: — Mr. Speaker, the quality of water supplied to our municipalities in this province is a top priority to not only the provincial government but the Water Security Agency, and I know it is for our municipal partners as well.

Residents of Saskatchewan can be assured that the water supplied to those municipalities meets or exceeds national standards. And anybody that does have a concern with what might be in their water, they can obviously get that water tested at the provincial laboratory.

But municipalities work with the WSA [Water Security Agency], with other waterworks owners to monitor for lead on a regular basis. In fact, Mr. Speaker, we just heard from the city of Regina today, only a few moments ago, that they are assured that 95 per cent-plus of their water is totally safe. They regularly monitor it, and there's not issues with the water supplied. So we look at the water supply in our province. It is top quality, Mr. Speaker. Municipalities are delivering top-quality water.

The issue for the most part resides with the homes, Mr. Speaker, where we have lead pipes in some of the older homes, some of the older areas, Mr. Speaker. And of course that's the responsibility of the homeowner.

So, Mr. Speaker, we know municipalities have had ample revenue sharing and they have different programs. They work with homeowners to address some of these issues.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Regina Rosemont.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, I don't know if the minister's aware of the results here, but the results were actually four times what's deemed safe by Health Canada. And there are many lead pipes that are part of the distribution network within our cities, not just the pipes within someone's homes.

The Water Security Agency has pointed towards better testing and reporting, and those are important. But we know that municipalities already have much of this information and they know how serious this issue is. In some cases the level of lead in the water exceeded the values tested in Flint in the height of the water crisis.

To suggest we should just stick with the status quo just simply isn't good enough. What specific measures will the province be taking to work with municipalities to provide answers to the public and to ensure that our drinking water supply in municipalities across Saskatchewan is safe?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Highways.

Hon. Mr. Ottenbreit: — Mr. Speaker, I'll repeat for the member opposite, maybe a little more clearly. The water supply in this province is absolutely safe. The water supply to our municipalities and the water they deliver is safe, Mr. Speaker. Wherever there is issues with lead in distribution systems, the city maintains those and monitors those. If there's ever an issue, they deal with it, Mr. Speaker. We were assured again by the city of Regina today that 95 per cent of their distribution system is absolutely safe, Mr. Speaker.

The issue resides mainly with the homes that are older with lead piping, Mr. Speaker. That's why, for example, through different programs that the different municipalities will share with their homeowners, specifically Saskatoon, they will cover 60 per cent replacement of the lead piping; the homeowner's responsible for 40 per cent, Mr. Speaker. That's due in large to the high rate of revenue sharing that the province has shared with municipalities. They can offer these different programs, Mr. Speaker. If anybody is wondering about, again, lead in their water, they should really get their water tested by the provincial laboratory.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Regina Rosemont.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — I'm rather astounded with the dismissive approach of this minister and the lack of knowledge as well, not to recognize that lead pipes are a part of the distribution system for many of our municipalities, the ones that are referenced here. And it's not just the pipes within homes, which are also a concern. We also know that our towns and cities have faced significant cuts and offloading from this government in recent years. And our hometowns are stretched thin trying to make ends meet and can't remedy this situation alone. We know this issue can't be tackled without the support and leadership of the province.

This is about health and safety. There needs to be a plan developed in full partnership with municipalities to assess the current state and health of our drinking water to ensure safe drinking water for all. People deserve that confidence and they deserve transparency. Will this government commit to taking on

this very important work?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Highways.

Hon. Mr. Ottenbreit: — Mr. Speaker, again I will share the comments of Pat Wilson of the city of Regina that she just shared only moments ago: Regina's water is safe; the distribution system is safe; Mr. Speaker, the supply from the provincial government through Water Security Agency is safe.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, I mentioned how some of the municipalities are working with their residents to address some of the issues should they surface at their residence, Mr. Speaker. But also, Mr. Speaker, that's why we, with the infrastructure program through the federal government, asked for flexibility with the transportation portion, that we would address issues in our province that are important to us, namely water distribution, water quality, and issues like we're speaking about here today, instead of maybe some of the transportation initiatives that they'd like us to take on, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the Water Security Agency has not seen any higher or increased levels in any of the distribution systems, as the member's seeming to be alluding to. The city of Regina has said that their water system is safe, that they test regularly, and regardless of what he may assume about their distribution system, I think they know better.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Centre.

Call for By-Elections

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, two seats sit empty today in this Assembly because the two gentlemen who filled these seats exploited a loophole that has robbed their constituents of a voice in this Assembly for over a year. Will the Premier please tell the people of Saskatoon Eastview and Regina Walsh Acres why they don't deserve a voice today in this Assembly?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, those elections are going to be held October 26th, 2020. And on that date there's going to be a lot of other things taking place in the province. There will be voting taking place in every constituency in the province. And there might be a lot of change in some of those things, maybe 9 or 10, 12 or 13 less seats from across the way, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, if I was those members opposite there, I wouldn't be so quick to be calling for by-elections that may well do them some significant damage in the eyes of the public, Mr. Speaker.

Our government introduced set election dates when we were elected in 2007. Mr. Speaker, there was processes put in place at that time. Those processes that were put in place were to ensure that there was not the unnecessary expense of elections as there was when Wayne Elhard was first elected as the first Saskatchewan Party MLA elected, who was elected in a by-election and did not sit in the House until after the next general election, money that was not spent wisely.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Centre.

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We'll stick up for democracy every day. People deserve a right to have their voices heard in this legislature. And you know, we know some people over on that side who agreed with that statement a few years ago, but for some reason they seem to have changed. But don't take my word for it; let's hear what some of these folks said.

Here, let's listen to the longest-serving member of this Assembly, the member from Cannington, who said, and I quote, "I think that's just not acceptable, Mr. Minister, that a seat should . . . [sit] vacant for one whole session . . ." And that was the member from Cannington. And the member from Lumsden-Morse, this is what he had to say: ". . . it is simply wrong to let people remain unrepresented in this Legislative Assembly which exerts so much control over their lives for any more than six months."

You know, I think they're on to something. And we agree, Mr. Speaker. The Premier should call by-elections in Regina Walsh Acres and Saskatoon Eastview. Why won't the Premier listen to the forgotten wisdom of the member from Cannington and the member from Lumsden? Will he call those elections today? Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm always glad when the members opposite want to listen to the wisdom of some of the senior members on this side of the House, people that are even more senior in this House than I am, and that goes back a very, very long time. Mr. Speaker, I listen to the wisdom of those people as well. And they're great folks and I would urge the members opposite to not only listen to what took place in those particular statements, but a lot of other statements that were made by those members as well.

Mr. Speaker, this piece of legislation requires that if a seat does not become vacant within the first 40 months of a general election, that the seat will remain vacant. In the cases of these two seats, Mr. Speaker, there are adjacent members that are looking after the constituents and that's taking place. I'm one of them and it's working well, Mr. Speaker.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 181 — *The Mineral Taxation (Modernization) Amendment Act, 2019*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that Bill No. 181, *The Mineral Taxation (Modernization) Amendment Act, 2019* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Government House Leader that Bill No. 181 be now introduced and read a first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel: — First reading of this bill.

The Speaker: — When shall this bill be read a second time? I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Next sitting.

The Speaker: — Next sitting. I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Before orders of the day, I would ask leave to move a motion regarding the Advocate for Children and Youth.

The Speaker: — The Government House Leader has asked leave to introduce a motion. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government House Leader.

MOTIONS

Appointment of Advocate for Children and Youth

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to move the following motion:

That pursuant to section 3 of *The Advocate for Children and Youth Act*, Lisa Broda be appointed to the position of Advocate for Children and Youth.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Government House Leader:

That pursuant to section 3 of *The Advocate for Children and Youth Act*, Lisa Broda be appointed to the position of Advocate for Children and Youth.

Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Speaker: — Pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

I'd like leave for an introduction. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — Thank you. Joining us today in the Speaker's gallery, Ms. Lisa Broda, the Advocate for Children and Youth.

On October 30th, 2019, the Board of Internal Economy recommended to the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan that Ms. Lisa Broda be appointed to a five-year term in the role of Advocate for Children and Youth for the province of Saskatchewan, effective November 4th, 2019. Today the Legislative Assembly unanimously agreed. Congratulations, Ms.

Broda. Please join me in welcoming Lisa to her Legislative Assembly.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 174 — *The Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Amendment Act, 2019/Loi modificative de 2019 sur l'exécution des ordonnances alimentaires*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to move second reading of *The Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Amendment Act, 2019*.

Mr. Speaker, the maintenance enforcement office was created in 1986 and provides residents of Saskatchewan with assistance in both the recording and enforcement of maintenance orders registered with that office. There are presently 9,000 active orders and agreements registered with the office.

Saskatchewan has one of the highest collection rates in Canada. Nearly \$47 million was collected in the last fiscal year for children and families, and the office is on track to collect \$50 million in the current fiscal year.

The Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Act, 1997 sets out the enforcement mechanisms available to the director to assist in enforcing delinquent maintenance payments. Some of the existing enforcement mechanisms include firstly, summoning the payer to court for questioning; secondly, seizing bank accounts, RRSPs [registered retirement savings plan], and pension entitlements; and thirdly, suspending driver's licences and passports.

The Act is regularly reviewed to ensure that the maintenance enforcement office has the most effective mechanisms in place to assist with the collection of outstanding maintenance payments.

[14:30]

Mr. Speaker, the Act permits the director to demand from any person or public body, including the Crown, information about a payer or recipient. This includes information respecting the payer or recipient's wages, financial status, location, address, place of employment, and assets or liabilities. The proposed amendments will expressly add banking information to the list of information that may be requested. In practice, the maintenance enforcement office regularly sends demands for information to employers, seeking financial information about delinquent payers. Since the Act was passed in 1997, more employers are directly depositing paycheques into employees' bank accounts. As a result, employers are now more likely to know information relating to the employee's financial institution. The ability to demand this type of information will assist the maintenance enforcement office with the collection of outstanding funds.

Mr. Speaker, the proposed amendments will also revise the

service provisions to permit service by email in accordance with the Queen's Bench rules. The maintenance enforcement office is already able to serve demands for information and notices of seizure by email. The proposed amendments will also revise the definition of "maintenance order" to include maintenance awarded through arbitration and orders recalculated by the recalculation office.

In July 2019, amendments to *The Arbitration Act, 1992* came into force respecting the arbitration of family disputes. Where parties enter into an arbitration agreement and maintenance is awarded, such an award should be treated the same as a court order and be enforceable by the maintenance enforcement office. Similarly since spring of 2018, Saskatchewan's recalculations office has been recalculating orders pursuant to *The Family Maintenance Regulations, 1998*. Where the amount payable for support is recalculated to either a higher or lower amount, this new amount should be enforced by the maintenance enforcement office.

Mr. Speaker, related amendments to *The Family Maintenance Act, 1997* will allow the recalculation office to recalculate the amount of support set out in an agreement filed with the court. This will ensure agreements that include maintenance payments through court orders are treated consistently and the maintenance enforcement office is able to enforce recalculated agreements.

Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to move second reading of the enforcement of maintenance amendment Act, 2019.

The Speaker: — Question before the Assembly is a motion by the Minister of Justice that *The Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Amendment Act, 2019* be read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And once again I'm very proud to stand during this fall sitting of the Assembly in 2019 to offer our perspectives on some of the bills being proposed for the government and for those being proposed by the government.

For those that are watching the Assembly, Mr. Speaker, the process is very simple. The government introduces their legislative agenda at the fall sitting and of course we would have our first look at the laws being proposed by the current Saskatchewan Party government. And then we would have the time between the fall sitting and the spring sitting to reach out to different groups that are impacted by any of these bills, and that allows us to have the robust discussions on the various parts of the legislative agenda that the Sask Party may have.

Mr. Speaker, it's very important we do the outreach, but it's also very important that people out there that are being impacted by these bills do contact us as well. That advice and direction, as I've maintained on many occasions, is highly valuable and has paid off in the past. So it's important to explain that particular perspective as I give a very brief few comments on the impact of Bill 174, *The Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Amendment Act, 2019*.

Now, Mr. Speaker, from basically what we've see in the Act, it basically updates the language throughout the Act. It allows the

court to collect banking information for an accurate calculation of the payment that's due, and also adds a new clause to prescribe items under the definition of "maintenance order."

Mr. Speaker, this is a really important file to pay attention to, as we all know as MLAs we get subjected to many calls of families that are having difficulty in making ends meet. We hear those calls on a . . . They're increasing as each day passes, Mr. Speaker. And part of the process of families going through the unfortunate process of breaking up, there is court cases, there are child support payments that are necessary in many of these instances.

And there's all kinds of pitfalls for, whether it's a single mom or a single dad, that people have to be aware of, and it is a very challenging time for the family as a whole. We often hear that information and certainly some of the stories that people share with us as to how difficult it is to have a number of young children, being a single parent and not having enough to make all the ends meet, Mr. Speaker. It is a very traumatic and trying time for many single parents — single mothers and single fathers as well.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we have to find out whether the current Act works, whether the proposal that's being presented today addresses some of the grievances that we have heard about at the doorstep. Some of the questions we would have in the interim is how many arrears in child support payments are there due as of December 31st, 2018. That'll be a great look at how well the legislation is delivering. How does the ministry intend to enforce payments of the . . . Are you planning on hiring more enforcement officers? Because obviously it's important to be vigilant in ensuring that some of these maintenance orders are in place. So how are they going to ensure that? Is it going to be through legal means? Is it going to be through enforcement officers? Is it going to mean more restrictive processes such as your licensing? As indicated, BC [British Columbia], they have gone so far as stripping driver's licences from bad payers. And how's that working here in Saskatchewan? These are some of the really important questions we have as it relates to child maintenance enforcement orders.

And as well the interaction, Mr. Speaker, with the recipients of income assistance. Some of them have seen their benefits reduced and they're not allowed to keep their child support payments. How is that interactive with the Ministry of Social Services as it pertains to strengthening the family, Mr. Speaker? So these are really, really important questions.

A lot of people in Saskatchewan don't know, but what happens is when a child is apprehended by the Department of Social Services, the national child tax benefit is then turned over to the provincial government and they get all the child tax benefit that that child is deserving, Mr. Speaker. And the parents obviously don't get it because they don't have their children. We'd like to know exactly how much of that money is coming into the Department of Social Services and how it interacts with the maintenance orders of this particular bill.

So there are a lot of pitfalls for some of the single parents that are out there in terms of trying to make ends meet, to keep the family intact, to provide leadership and support and love for those children. There are tremendous challenges in this day and age, Mr. Speaker. We need to make sure that if there are enforcement

orders out there, that these Acts and these laws are effective, they meet the demand, and they certainly, Mr. Speaker, support the family and the single parent as much as they possibly can without any repercussions or clawbacks that we know that the Saskatchewan Party's famous for when it comes to social assistance or helping families in need, Mr. Speaker.

So a lot of questions on this bill. My colleagues are going to have the opportunity to reach out to many families that are impacted. And that's one of the reasons why we want to give our first impression today of the bill and to make sure that the Saskatchewan Party is not being part of the problem as we work hard to build families, especially those going through separation and divorce.

So on that note, Mr. Speaker, I move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 174, *The Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Amendment Act, 2019*.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Athabasca has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 174. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 175 — *The Marriage Amendment Act, 2019*
Loi modificative de 2019 sur le mariage

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to move second reading of *The Marriage Amendment Act, 2019*. Mr. Speaker, this bill will amend *The Marriage Act, 1995* and *The Wills Act, 1996* to take steps towards addressing predatory marriages. There has been a recent increase in case law where individuals with diminished capacity have been the target of predatory marriages. As a result, we have re-evaluated the legislative tools available to address instances of predatory marriages.

Mr. Speaker, the proposed amendments to *The Marriage Act, 1995* will add a new provision to permit an application be made before the Court of Queen's Bench to nullify a marriage where an interested person believes one of the parties to the marriage did not provide valid consent to enter into the contract of marriage. This new provision does not change the substantive law of marriage in any way. What it will do is provide clear direction to family members that an application may be brought before the courts to determine if the marriage was validly formed.

The bill also includes housekeeping amendments to *The Marriage Act, 1995* to include updates and revisions to section 19 of the Act. Section 19 permits a judge to authorize the issuance of a marriage licence to a person under 16 years of age. In 2015 the federal government passed amendments prohibiting the marriage of a person under 16 and section 19 is being amended accordingly.

Mr. Speaker, this bill also includes a related amendment to *The Wills Act, 1996* which will repeal the provision that revokes a will on the marriage or cohabitation in a spousal relationship for two years of the testator. The concern with this provision is that

the capacity required to provide valid consent into a contract of marriage is significantly lower than the capacity required to create a will. With the repeal of section 17, the onus will be on the testator to change his or her will after marriage or cohabitation of 24 months in order to make the new spouse a beneficiary of the estate. If a new spouse is not a beneficiary under a will, he or she has other legal options such as applications under dependence relief or family property legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to move second reading of *The Marriage Amendment Act, 2019*.

The Deputy Speaker: — The Minister of Justice has moved that Bill No. 175, *The Marriage Amendment Act, 2019* be now read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Again it's my pleasure to stand today and respond initially to the proposed Bill 175, *The Marriage Amendment Act*.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the bill summary from our perspective after we've looked at the bill, it really challenges the legal validity of a marriage if one of the parties is a minor or a ward of the Ministry of Social Services, or if one of the parties is believed to have not been able to provide consent to marriage. And this is something that's really important for the people that are paying attention to these particular bills.

There are many, many issues that are at play as we look at the bill overall. It really talks about . . . It prohibits the issuance of a marriage licence for anybody under 16 years of age. It allows for a marriage commissioner to charge a fee — that of course the party has agreed to and the commissioner as well — for the marriage ceremony. And one part, Mr. Speaker, that I think is really important is that it amends *The Wills Act* to nullify an existing will if a spouse wants to change their will after marriage.

So, Mr. Speaker, there's a lot of issues around marriages and the process that . . . as people sometimes separate from their marital partners, and there are a lot of questions around what happens to some of these legal matters in a separation or certainly in a divorce. So there's a lot of things that people have to be very careful of. There's such a great amount of confusion around what rights lie with each of the spouse and how things are to be handled in the future. So this is the purpose that we have lawyers that help these clients to the path of divorce, and it's something that has to be very, very carefully monitored.

Some of the personal experience I've had, and I wasn't aware even as a, you know, as an MLA, that in the event that the spouse dies, even though they're separated, that the spouse, I think, is allowed to decide in determining where their husband or wife is to be buried, not the siblings. That's one of the things that I found out that was quite disturbing to families. But that being said, Mr. Speaker, a spouse certainly has a right to deal with family matters when he or she is married to her partner or his partner, and that's something that people have to pay very close attention to.

So there's a lot of issues around *The Marriage Act*, and we want to make sure that we take the time to understand it completely so we're able to explain it in greater detail and with better clarity than I'm doing right now. That, Mr. Speaker, will take time, so

on that note, I move that we will adjourn debate on Bill 175, *The Marriage Amendment Act*.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Athabasca has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 175. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

[14:45]

Bill No. 176 — *The Fiduciaries Access to Digital Information Act/Loi sur l'accès des fiduciaires à l'information numérique*

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to move second reading of *The Fiduciaries Access to Digital Information Act*. I am pleased to speak to this bill, which will confirm the power of certain fiduciaries to access digital assets on behalf of a person who lacks capacity or is deceased.

The rules with respect to a fiduciary's authority over real and personal property are clear: when an individual is unable to manage his or her own tangible property due to incapacity or death, someone else may step in to do so on the person's behalf. Less clear is the fiduciary's ability to access and manage digital assets.

Mr. Speaker, a digital asset is defined as any type of electronically stored record that is created, recorded, transmitted, or stored in a digital or other electronic manner. Digital assets can include cryptocurrency; electronic records such as documents, emails, and social media accounts; and audio content. It can also include digital data stored on personal computers, laptops, portable media players, tablets, or storage devices.

Attempting to access digital assets can be an expensive and time-consuming process, particularly in the wake of a family member's death or loss of capacity to make their own decisions. The current law does not consider how trustees, guardians, attorney, executors, or administrators will access digital assets. There has been a significant increase in the ownership of digital assets and direction respecting the rights of fiduciaries in relation to these assets needs to be clear.

Mr. Speaker, in 2016 the Uniform Law Conference of Canada adopted uniform legislation, which forms the basis of the proposed bill. The proposed bill will be the first of its kind in Canada and will create clear provisions respecting the rights of fiduciaries to access and manage digital assets. The bill also will establish the scope of the Act and which fiduciaries it will apply to, namely executors, administrators, property guardians, property attorneys, and trustees. Finally it will permit those fiduciaries to access digital assets.

Under the proposed bill, a request must be made in writing and include a copy or original of the court order or other document granting authority to the fiduciary. Once this request is received by a custodian, such as Gmail, Facebook, or Instagram, the

custodian will have 30 days to provide access to the account holder.

Mr. Speaker, the right of access will not be absolute. The proposed bill provides that the right of access is subject to any restrictions set out in the will, the power of attorney, or a court order appointing the fiduciary. The right of access of a fiduciary can also be limited by the account holder by agreeing to terms in a service agreement if the requirements set out in the Act are met.

Finally the proposed bill will permit fiduciaries to apply to court for direction and will provide protection against liability for custodians who provide access in accordance with the Act.

Mr. Speaker, the rules surrounding access to and management of the real and personal property of a person who is deceased or who has lost capacity are clear. The way digital assets of those persons are accessed should be equally clear.

Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to move second reading of *The Fiduciaries Access to Digital Information Act*.

The Deputy Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the Minister of Justice that Bill No. 176, *The Fiduciaries Access to Digital Information Act* be now read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Again it is my pleasure to stand in my place today to give the initial comments around Bill 176, *The Fiduciaries Access to Digital Information Act*. Mr. Speaker, basically it does . . . If one were to look at it and to simplify, a fiduciary really is somebody that is a trustee, a legal trustee in matters that pertain to some of the files that he or she may be involved with. And what this particular Act does, it allows them to have access to various electronic information or access to any of the emails and the servers that a client may or may not have at their disposal.

So it's important to note that, while the Act is a bit confusing with the terminology, Mr. Speaker, to simplify matters, it's just really a trustee that would have access to some of the digital information that a client may have made or may have used in this electronic age.

I think it's important to note that we can see how the bill may apply to SaskTel because it's within the province of Saskatchewan, and accessing SaskTel, since we own SaskTel and the value of a Crown ownership is apparent in this regard that we're able to access SaskTel. Where other electronic communication services, whether they're owned and delivered by the States or other jurisdictions, whether this particular bill applies to them and how the bill itself being declared in Saskatchewan, how we're able to access those particular servers and those digital media services that aren't headquartered here in Saskatchewan — that is the question that we would have instinctively, saying how would this impact Twitter or Facebook or other organizations that could have information that some of the clients that these commissioners or these trustees would be working with?

So it's important to look at all of that information, Mr. Speaker. There is quite a bit of worry in terms of making sure we get this

right. We have to research it. We have to reach out and see how the Act applies, because obviously if somebody's in a position of trust, that they should have as much access to information that they can access on behalf of their clients. And that's really important to note that that's one of the premises of being fair and accountable and certainly transparent, as they undertake their duties.

So on that note, Mr. Speaker, much more work needs to happen here. We need to see how effective this law is and, like I said, it's far-reaching and hopefully we end up at the end of the day being able to do our job as legislators to make sure that we point out some of the challenges and opportunity with each bill.

So on that note, I move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 176, *The Fiduciaries Access to Digital Information Act*.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Athabasca has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 176. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 177 — *The Miscellaneous Statutes (Electronic Register) Amendment Act, 2019*

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to move second reading of *The Miscellaneous Statutes (Electronic Register) Amendment Act, 2019*. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak to this bill that will amend over 40 Acts to permit occupational, professional organizations to make their register available to the public in any manner, including electronic format.

In Saskatchewan over 45 occupational and professional organizations are regulated by legislation which sets out the basic criteria for self-regulation and gives the organizations the authority to create bylaws. Professional legislation is intended to ensure the public is protected when using the services of a designated professional and that the activities of these members are regulated by an overseeing body. It is equally important the public be able to determine who is a member of a professional or occupational organization and that this information be easily accessible.

A handful of these organizations have provisions in their legislation worded broadly enough to permit the organization to make the register of members available in an electronic format. However, the remaining Acts regulating professional, occupational organizations specifically require that the organization maintain a register of its members and that the register be available for inspection by the public at the head office of the organization during regular business hours.

Some of the wording in these various pieces of legislation could be interpreted as prohibiting these organizations providing their registers in any form other than at the head office during regular business hours. Several organizations have expressed the desire and need to make the register available in other formats,

including on the organized website or through a phone app.

Mr. Speaker, the existing provisions do not take into account that organizations have websites that provide information to the public about their regulatory body and membership. The proposed amendments will permit, but not require, each of the organizations affected to make their register available in another manner, including electronic format. The amendments will not remove the existing requirement that physical access to the register be available to the public during regular business hours.

Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of *The Miscellaneous Statutes (Electronic Register) Amendment Act, 2019*.

The Deputy Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the motion by the Minister of Justice that Bill No. 177, *The Miscellaneous Statutes (Electronic Register) Amendment Act, 2019* be now read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Obviously when it comes to the organizations that are out there that are professing to have certain skill sets, and members are often challenged by the public to ensure that their certification and their ability to provide that service in a professional, trained manner is very, very important, Mr. Speaker.

Because often we find, Mr. Speaker, that people claim to be certain things, like the member from Cut Knife-Turtleford claims to be a great hockey player when he was younger. And I looked through all kinds of Facebook pages and I googled his name. No such fame is attached to the member from Cut Knife-Turtleford. So quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, as he often maintains that he was a professional hockey player, he should not claim to be something that he's not, Mr. Speaker.

And that's what I think the bill actually does. I understand that the bill gives electronic means to verify if somebody is indeed deserving of a professional title, Mr. Speaker. And this is a really important bill. It's a very important bill. I don't want to diminish its importance by making reference to my friend from Cut Knife-Turtleford, but again I'm not convinced of his claim.

That being said, Mr. Speaker, there are so many variances of professionalism that Saskatchewan has to be wary of. One of them of course is I would suggest around the *Forestry Act*, Mr. Speaker. My personal experience is that they've had foresters that come out of Alberta, foresters that come out of Quebec. And their application and their determination of Saskatchewan values as it pertains to what a forest can sustainably harvest, well we need to be able to say that they have a uniform assessment process across the forestry technician training programs right across the country. But, Mr. Speaker, we know that's not the case. So it is oftentimes a forester certification, a forester's assessment, their training from a different jurisdiction may be radically different from Saskatchewan's perspective. That's one of the areas that we need to look very closely at.

As you can see, the bill itself has a lot of different professions that are being impacted and they have a Saskatchewan perspective. We're a bit spoiled by the incredible rigorous effort being made by all these organizations when it comes to good standing of their members, Mr. Speaker. They've done a

remarkable job. They make Saskatchewan proud, but nonetheless they should be able to, quite frankly, allow the registry to be made available in an electronic format if they are members of their association, make that easy for Saskatchewan people, businesses, and companies to utilize when the time comes.

So on this note, we want to talk about this at greater length, and I therefore make the motion to adjourn debate on Bill 177, *The Miscellaneous Statutes (Electronic Register) Amendment Act, 2019*.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Athabasca has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 177. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried

Bill No. 178 — *The Miscellaneous Statutes Repeal Act, 2019*

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to move second reading of *The Miscellaneous Statutes Repeal Act, 2019*. Mr. Speaker, as members of the Assembly know, we sometimes find that certain pieces of legislation become obsolete as laws evolve. New legislation is introduced, and new government programs are implemented. This bill will repeal these pieces of obsolete legislation which fits with the government's ongoing commitment to ensuring that our province's laws remain modernized and up to date.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is housekeeping in nature and the proposed repeal of these pieces of legislation will not have a substantive impact for stakeholders. For example, legislation such as *The Family and Community Services Act* and *The Veterinary Services Act* have been confirmed as being outdated and obsolete. Other legislation such as Water Appeal Board have been replaced by entirely new Acts.

Mr. Speaker, in preparing this bill, Justice officials have worked closely with officials from other ministries to confirm the proposed repeal of legislation is suitable and will not have any impact on stakeholders. Justice officials will continue to work with other ministries to identify any further pieces of legislation that may become suitable for repeal in the future.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to move second reading of *The Miscellaneous Statutes Repeal Act, 2019*.

[15:00]

The Deputy Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the motion by the Minister of Justice that Bill No. 178, *The Miscellaneous Statutes Repeal Act, 2019* be now read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's again my pleasure to stand in my place to provide initial comments on Bill No. 178, *The Miscellaneous Statutes Repeal Act, 2019*. Now, Mr. Speaker, the bill summary . . . A lot of people throughout the

provincial government may think that this bill is rather innocuous and not harmful at all because what the bill does, it repeals the following Acts: *The Family and Community Services Act, The Veterinary Services Act, The Water Appeal Board Act, An Act to incorporate International Bible College, An Act to incorporate Prince Albert Exhibition Association, An Act to incorporate The Regina Exhibition Association Limited*.

These are Acts, as the minister explained, that some of them are obsolete and some of them are changed in nature. And we in the opposition take our role very seriously, Mr. Speaker, to make sure that there isn't anything that the province might be trying to sneak through, the Saskatchewan Party government, that would appear to be something that's housekeeping in nature but could have profound implications on some of the programs that they are delivering.

And I want to make one particular example, Mr. Speaker, under this particular bill and that's *The Family and Community Services Act*. We're not sure what is being proposed in that particular Act. Our critic obviously has been paying very close attention to her file and she's indicated on numerous occasions when you look at a government instituting new programs where instead of supporting the families when it comes to rent payment, Mr. Speaker. In the old days you used to be able to work with the landlord association or the landlady association and to really begin to have direct payment of some of the rents that are required for some of these families.

And many times these families on assistance, Mr. Speaker, they certainly have addiction challenges. And before, at the very least, they had the process where landlords or landladies would be paid directly by the government and it would house some of the families that were on assistance, Mr. Speaker. Well the government, for some unknown reason, decided to change that and provide the dollars directly to the recipients. And on occasion, where we talk about trying to develop and promote independence of some of the people that are on assistance, Mr. Speaker, we have to make sure we do it strategically and intelligent and very, very careful.

And none of those particular attributes of being strategic, careful, intelligent about that process were undertaken when they decided to change the program. And instead of directly paying for the rent for some of the families that are on assistance — and many of the parents may have addiction issues — Mr. Speaker, we're finding now that they're handing the money over to the family. And a lot of times rents are not being paid in a timely fashion and that's creating more challenges for families that are struggling that are on assistance.

So sometimes, Mr. Speaker, they make many, many mistakes — and I'm talking about the current government — and what they should do is they should put their thinking hat back on, make the necessary changes that we've indicated are important to strengthen families, and stop trying to have families become homeless because they have put together a program that they have not thought thoroughly enough through.

So I think it's really important that we mention to the people of Saskatchewan that these Acts have impacts. The way they introduce new programs have impacts all across the way, and that's why it's important to pay very close attention to what the

Sask Party's doing because they make a big mess out of everything, Mr. Speaker.

So on that note, I move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 178, *The Miscellaneous Statutes Repeal Act, 2019*.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Athabasca has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 178. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 179 — *The Apiaries Amendment Act, 2019*

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Mr. Marit: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. At the end of my remarks today I will move second reading of *The Apiaries Act, 2019*. Mr. Speaker, these amendments will modernize *The Apiaries Act, 2005* keeping in line with legislation in other jurisdictions.

These changes have come after consultation with industry stakeholders and partners. We are confident that it's the right thing to do for our province's beekeepers. It will strengthen their sector and improve the health of our province's bee colonies. In addition, Mr. Deputy Speaker, *The Apiaries Act, 2019* will help ensure efficient and effective legislation.

As other legislation has changed over recent years, Mr. Deputy Speaker, so have the needs of our apiculture sector. For example, the implementation of Saskatchewan's premise identification regulations made it mandatory for all livestock producers in the province to register their livestock in the PID [premises identification] system. That includes honey bee keepers, effectively duplicating the beekeeper registry under *The Apiaries Act, 2005*. The PID system has combined with the beekeeper registry to reduce administrative work and red tape. Science too has led to changes since *The Apiaries Act, 2005* was put in place. 2005, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it was thought that attracting foraging bees to honeybee feeds would spread disease between bee colonies. Now, however, there is no published risk proving this to be true.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, *The Apiaries Act, 2019* will allow beekeepers to utilize the time-saving technique of open feeding bees over a particular time period, while also minimizing the risk of contaminating honey with foreign sugars. That said, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the amendments to the Act will also allow us to better manage disease outbreaks that do occur. *The Apiaries Act, 2019* seeks to define American foulbrood as a notifiable disease. Doing so will allow the Ministry of Agriculture to stay up to date on disease prevalence, in turn providing opportunity to intervene in the case of a region-wide outbreak.

Finally, Mr. Deputy Speaker, *The Apiaries Act, 2019* seeks to ensure regulatory compliance in a number of areas. A provision will be put in place wherein beekeepers must remove abandoned equipment. This type of equipment, Mr. Speaker, is a potential nesting site for feral honeybees. This is a disease concern for beekeepers, as feral honeybees can carry diseases that they then

pass on to managed colonies. *The Apiaries Act, 2019* will increase the maximum fines from 10,000 to \$25,000. While these fines acted as a deterrent when they were established, the current size of beekeeping operations has reduced their impact.

In summary, Mr. Deputy Speaker, *The Apiaries Act, 2019* seeks to reduce red tape, align with other legislation affecting beekeepers, enhance the provincial government's ability to deal with disease risk and outbreaks, and reflect the current and future state of the beekeeping sector. Updating *The Apiaries Act* is a step forward for Saskatchewan's apiculture sector, and one I fully support.

Mr. Speaker, I move *The Apiaries Act* to be read a second time. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the Minister of Agriculture that Bill No. 179, *The Apiaries Amendment Act, 2019* be now read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. One of the things I often share with the northern people during my travels back home is I talk about the incredible strength and value of agriculture in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. And of course we often hear the incredible exploits of Saskatchewan businesses and companies, as we're one of the solid trade partners from Western Canada. And we represent our country very well as we look at the agricultural exports that we are very proud of in Saskatchewan's history.

I think it's important to note that from the opposition perspective, every day we hear of the incredible value of the people of rural Saskatchewan, their contributions to our economy. And of course it's all done through the backbone of the provincial economy, and that is the agricultural sector.

And Bill 179 talks about players within that agricultural sector because it's not just about livestock. It's not just about grains, Mr. Speaker. It is also about beekeepers. There are hundreds of beekeepers throughout the province of Saskatchewan. The apiary association, Mr. Speaker, is very strong in Saskatchewan.

Obviously some of the examples that we would use in terms of their value, Mr. Speaker, is not only of course the obvious value of the creation of honey and the collection of honey from the beekeeping industry, Mr. Speaker, it's also wax. There are markets for wax, beeswax. There's also pollen, and there's also pollination services that the beekeepers provide to the people of Saskatchewan. So it's quite an important part of how interconnected we are in Saskatchewan, and how the industry of agriculture is so very dependent on all the players, and especially those that provide services to the beekeeping association.

So it's very important to note that we've had a number of people within our caucus talk about the incredible value of agriculture. We continue learning more and more each day as a northern MLA. And I can point out that a colleague of mine is quite familiar with the apiary industry. That's the member from Regina Northeast, who I'm sure will have a lot more to say about this particular bill and some of the proposed changes in the amendments. Again as we've mentioned in the past, anything to

support and help develop the agricultural industry of Saskatchewan, every party in this province should be on board. And certainly from our perspective as an NDP caucus, we shall support every effort in that regard.

So on that note, more knowledgeable people within my caucus will be making comments about this particular bill. So I look forward to hearing those comments. And in the meantime I would move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 179, *The Apiaries Amendment Act*.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Athabasca has moved to adjourn the debate on Bill No. 179, *The Apiaries Amendment Act, 2019*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 180 — *The Miscellaneous Statutes (Government Relations — Transfer of Gas, Electrical and Plumbing Functions) Amendment Act, 2019*

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Government Relations.

Hon. Ms. Carr: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to move second reading of Bill No. 180, *The Miscellaneous Statutes (Government Relations — Transfer of Gas, Electrical and Plumbing Functions) Amendment Act, 2019*. This bill, if passed, will implement government's decision to transfer responsibility for gas, electrical, and plumbing licensing and inspection functions to the Technical Safety Authority of Saskatchewan, or TSASK, and place all regulated legislation under the responsibility of Government Relations.

The amendments needed to do this impact seven Acts: *The Electrical Inspection Act, 1993*; *The Electrical Licensing Act*; *The Gas Inspection Act, 1993*; *The Gas Licensing Act*; *The Public Health Act, 1994*; *The Technical Safety Authority of Saskatchewan Act*; and *The Uniform Building and Accessibility Standards Act*.

Mr. Speaker, these responsibilities and the administration of these statutes is carried out by different bodies. For example, gas and electrical inspection and the related legislation and regulations is administered by SaskPower. Gas and electrical licensing and the related legislation and regulations is administered by Government Relations. Plumbing licensing, inspection, and regulations is the responsibility of the Ministry of Health.

Having several bodies deliver technical safety services such as licensing, permitting, and inspection, and administer the associated legislation and regulations, can result in client confusion, delays, service overlap, and other inefficiencies. The amendments in the bill will help remove this confusion and reduce red tape by providing the necessary legislative authority for the transfer of licensing, permitting, and inspecting functions and responsibilities to TSASK starting in 2020.

They will also provide for the associated legislation and

regulations to be the sole responsibility of the Ministry of Government Relations, creating a single interface between TSASK and the government through one ministry. Specifically, Mr. Speaker, responsibility for the gas and electrical inspections Acts will be transferred from SaskPower to Government Relations. The plumbing regulations currently under *The Public Health Act, 1994* will be placed under *The Uniform Building and Accessibility Standards Act* which is also the responsibility of Government Relations.

Mr. Speaker, before I talk about the specific amendments, I want to briefly provide some background to government's decision to transfer these services.

In 2010, TSASK was established as a not-for-profit corporation to provide licensing, permitting, and inspection services for the industries that deal with boilers, pressure vessels, elevators, and amusement rides. This followed a review that recommended the development of a one-stop shop for all regulatory safety services. Since then, TSASK has demonstrated its ability to deliver quality, client-centred services to industry and the people of Saskatchewan by building a brand that is recognizable and represents quality and a commitment to public safety. As a result, government announced the transfer of gas, electrical, and plumbing inspections, licensing, and permitting in December 2018 and that the transfer will unfold over the next two years.

[15:15]

This brings me back to the intent of the amendments in this bill, Mr. Speaker. They are to facilitate the transition to a single point of contact for citizens, tradespeople, and industry regarding gas, electrical, and plumbing safety services. They will make consistent various provisions and process in these statutes with the ministry's and other technical and public safety legislation.

Mr. Speaker, the specific amendments we'll propose in this bill are straightforward and primarily involve ensuring the existing terminology, authority, and definitions in the various statutes cover the functions being transferred and are consistent with each other in the ministry's and other technical safety statutes. For example, definitions in the TSASK Act will be expanded to encompass the functions being transferred and the legislation governing gas, electrical, and plumbing licensing and inspection. And in the other safety statutes, changes to various references will ensure these Acts and their regulations allow for their administration and enforcement to be undertaken by TSASK under its safety standards agreement with the province, and for chief inspectors and other officials to be designated by TSASK.

I should note that no substantive changes are being made to the licensing or inspection requirements or processes or the codes and standards contained in these statutes. The intent with these amendments at this time is to facilitate the transfer of functions and responsibilities. The result will see these statutes better support public safety in the province and modernize the delivery of technical safety standards.

I want to point out that the amendments related to plumbing regulations are a bit unique in that the authority to administer and enforce these regulations is provided by order in council under *The Public Health Act, 1994*. This authority will be moved to *The Uniform Building and Accessibility Standards Act*, as these

regulations will be placed under the Act. The amendments then provide for TSASK to be designated as a local authority for the purposes of plumbing permitting and inspections. As well, the amendments will continue to provide the ability for other entities or specific municipalities such as Regina or Saskatoon to be designated as local authorities to administer their own plumbing permitting and inspections, as they do at present under the authority in *The Public Health Act, 1994*.

Finally, the amendments make the provisions in the statutes for matters such as enforcement measures, fines and penalties, service of documents, and public notices consistent with other technical safety statutes for which the ministry is responsible and that TSASK currently enforces.

Mr. Speaker, before I conclude, I want to mention that consultations with industry and trade associations took place over 2017 and '18 regarding improving the delivery of these services. Both the electrical and mechanical contractors associations of Saskatchewan support the delivery of services by TSASK and the creation of a single point of contact for contractors, industry, and the public.

Internally, the Ministry of Government Relations has been collaborating with the ministries of Justice and Health and SaskPower and TSASK on an ongoing basis since 2018, not only on the amendments in this bill, Mr. Speaker, but also to ensure a seamless transfer and transition of services occurs once the bill is passed.

In closing, this bill will help provide more streamlined delivery of gas, electrical, and plumbing services for industry and improve public safety for the people of Saskatchewan.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill No. 180, *The Miscellaneous Statutes (Government Relations — Transfer of Gas, Electrical and Plumbing Functions) Amendment Act, 2019*.

The Deputy Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the Minister of Government Relations that Bill No. 180, the miscellaneous statutes (Government Relations transfer of electrical and plumbing functions) amendment Act, 2019 be now read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Again, this is a very important Act that we in the opposition are paying very careful attention to because . . . not so much, Mr. Speaker, of what the intent of the Act is, but really who is proposing it. The Saskatchewan Party government have made a mess of any kind of relations that they've had with the many partners that governments of Saskatchewan should enjoy and should have in their delivery of government, Mr. Speaker.

Now as you look at Bill 180, it has a lot of impacts around gas inspection, gas licensing, electrical licensing, *The Technical Safety Authority of Saskatchewan Act, The Passenger and Freight Elevator Act, The Public Health Act*. And the list goes on, Mr. Speaker. And these are Acts that of course the minister has alluded to that are meant to really have TSASK become part of the process to find a way in which they could make sure that they're not compromising safety, but at the same time trying to make sure that there is the need to respond to some of the issues

around permits and inspections and so on and so forth.

And, Mr. Speaker, one of the things that's really important to pay attention to is that she made reference to the municipalities being part of the process, whether it's the city of Regina or whether it's the RM [rural municipality] structure. I'm assuming the RMs are part of the process, that they have a role to play as well, that they want to engage them as well, Mr. Speaker.

And the reason why I make reference to the Sask Party in terms of what challenges that they've had in the past is that when you look at how they do business with the municipal structure as an example, Mr. Speaker — they made reference to the municipalities in this bill — is we take them back to the challenge around PST, around construction, Mr. Speaker. Of how on one hand they say, oh we're giving the municipalities a bunch of money through revenue sharing, but on the other hand they put this PST tax on construction which costs many of our communities hundreds of thousands of dollars. In all instances, the PST on construction generated more bills for the municipal structure, Mr. Speaker. And matter of fact, the government got more money off our cities, towns, and villages. But they don't mention that fact when they talk about revenue sharing, Mr. Speaker.

The same token, you look at some of the arguments around gaming, Mr. Speaker, around police services. You look around the issue, you know, that they've implemented without any kind of support from the municipal structure, as made reference in this bill. Even with the cannabis sales, Mr. Speaker, the municipalities have asked for that particular sharing in some of those proceeds, Mr. Speaker, and to date there has been very little discussion that the Sask Party have afforded the cities, and certainly have afforded the municipal structure.

So when they propose bills like the bill that we're talking about, Bill 180, where they talk about the cities and municipalities being part of the process, really a lot of the municipalities and cities in our province would say they're downloading some of their responsibility, who is covering some of those costs, and that they are treating us the same way that they've treated us with the PST on construction, with a rejection on our effort to try and get some of the cannabis revenue stream back into our cities, Mr. Speaker.

Nobody has to wonder why the cities continue remaining very skeptical of this government, because they have rejected overtures from SUMA [Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association] and from SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities] on numerous occasions, Mr. Speaker. And if this Act is simply just to transfer more responsibility to the cities without the accompanying resources, Mr. Speaker, this is one of the reasons why we've got to make sure, as the opposition, that we reach out to SUMA, and particularly as they have been really out there knocking on government's doors, trying to become a responsible, contributing partner in this whole issue of governance in the province of Saskatchewan. But they have been rejected time and time again by the current government. That's why it's important to pay attention to all these bills, and especially if there's any reference to our municipal structure in the province of Saskatchewan.

So on that note, the bill talks about amendments, and they want to bring in a number of Acts that have consistent language and

with all the technical safety statutes provided for the Crown. And these are something that it's really important that we continue to look at. But, Mr. Speaker, we know very well that some of the best-intended legislation that's being proposed by the current government, somebody else is paying the price and somebody else is doing the work. It's certainly not the Sask Party.

That being said, I move that we adjourn debate on Bill 180, the miscellaneous statutes amendment Act, 2019.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Athabasca has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 180. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Before I recognize the Government Deputy House Leader, I thought that perhaps some members may have forgotten some of the rules of the Assembly under Order and Decorum. And I would just simply like to remind them of one of the rules. Rule 47(2)(b) says:

The members shall maintain decorum of the Assembly by observing the following Rules: (b) Food is not permitted in the . . . [Assembly].

I recognize the Government Deputy House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I move that this House do now adjourn.

The Deputy Speaker: — The Government Deputy House Leader has moved that the House adjourns. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — This House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 1:30 p.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 15:25.]

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Premier

President of the Executive Council
Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs

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Minister of Advanced Education
Minister Responsible for the Status of Women
Minister Responsible for Innovation

Hon. Lori Carr
Minister of Government Relations
Minister Responsible for First Nations, Métis
and Northern Affairs
Minister Responsible for the Provincial
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Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff
Minister of Central Services
Minister Responsible for Public Service Commission

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Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Power Corporation

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Minister of Energy and Resources
Minister Responsible for SaskEnergy Incorporated
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Water Corporation

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Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Government Insurance
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
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Minister of Immigration and Career Training

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Minister Responsible for Seniors

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Priority Saskatchewan