



FIRST SESSION - TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE

of the

**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

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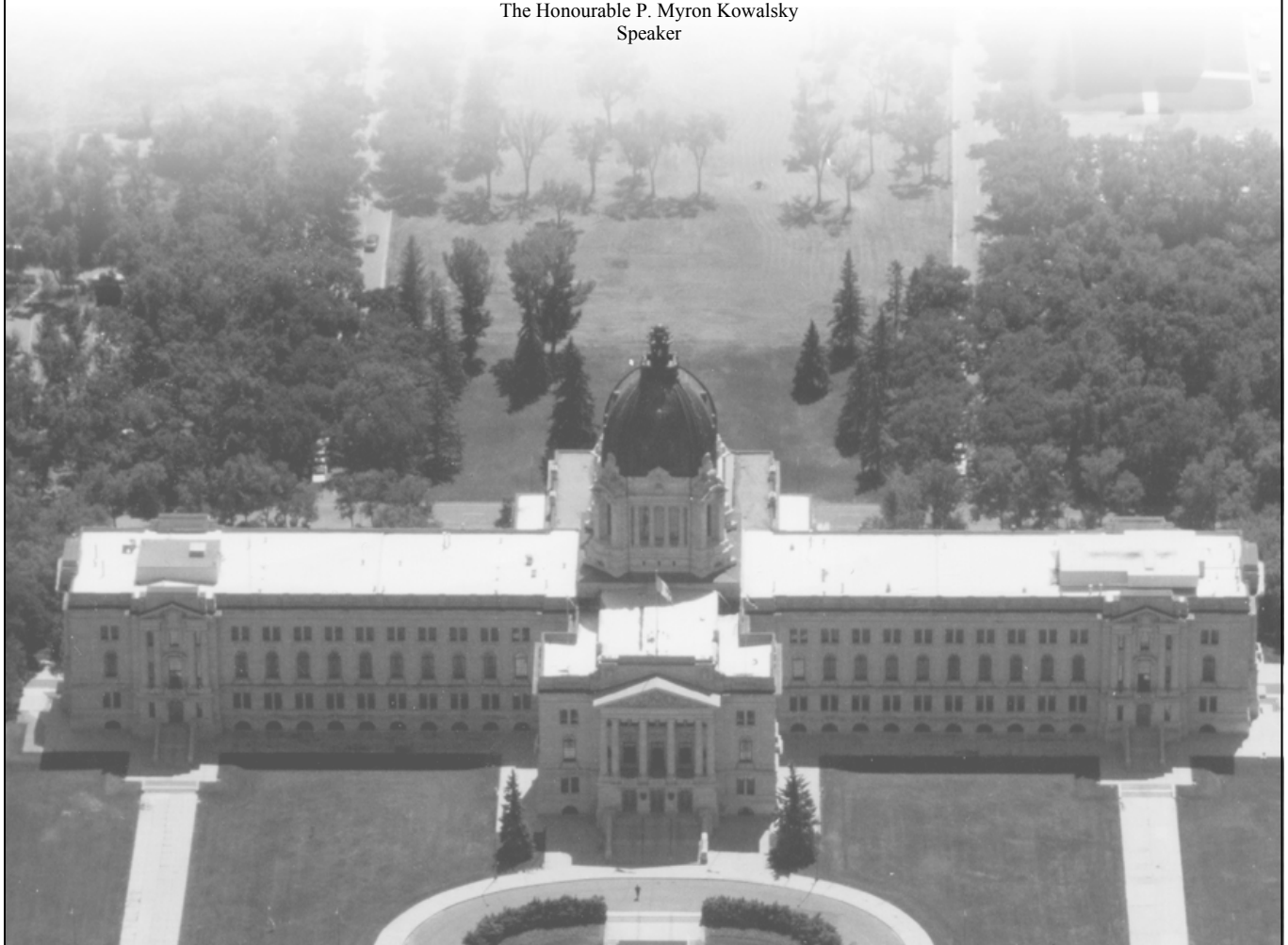
**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS**

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(HANSARD)

Published under the  
authority of

The Honourable P. Myron Kowalsky  
Speaker



## MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN

Speaker — Hon. P. Myron Kowalsky  
 Premier — Hon. Lorne Calvert  
 Leader of the Opposition — Brad Wall

Name of Member	Political Affiliation	Constituency
Addley, Graham	NDP	Saskatoon Sutherland
Allchurch, Denis	SP	Rosthern-Shellbrook
Atkinson, Hon. Pat	NDP	Saskatoon Nutana
Bakken, Brenda	SP	Weyburn-Big Muddy
Beatty, Hon. Joan	NDP	Cumberland
Belanger, Hon. Buckley	NDP	Athabasca
Bjornerud, Bob	SP	Melville-Saltcoats
Borgerson, Lon	NDP	Saskatchewan Rivers
Brkich, Greg	SP	Arm River-Watrous
Calvert, Hon. Lorne	NDP	Saskatoon Riversdale
Cheveldayoff, Ken	SP	Saskatoon Silver Springs
Chisholm, Michael	SP	Cut Knife-Turtleford
Cline, Hon. Eric	NDP	Saskatoon Massey Place
Crofford, Hon. Joanne	NDP	Regina Rosemont
D'Autremont, Dan	SP	Cannington
Dearborn, Jason	SP	Kindersley
Draude, June	SP	Kelvington-Wadena
Eagles, Doreen	SP	Estevan
Elhard, Wayne	SP	Cypress Hills
Forbes, Hon. David	NDP	Saskatoon Centre
Gantfoer, Rod	SP	Melfort
Hagel, Glenn	NDP	Moose Jaw North
Hamilton, Doreen	NDP	Regina Wascana Plains
Harpauer, Donna	SP	Humboldt
Harper, Ron	NDP	Regina Northeast
Hart, Glen	SP	Last Mountain-Touchwood
Heppner, Ben	SP	Martensville
Hermanson, Elwin	SP	Rosetown-Elrose
Higgins, Hon. Deb	NDP	Moose Jaw Wakamow
Huyghebaert, Yogi	SP	Wood River
Iwanchuk, Andy	NDP	Saskatoon Fairview
Junor, Judy	NDP	Saskatoon Eastview
Kerpan, Allan	SP	Carrot River Valley
Kirsch, Delbert	SP	Batoche
Kowalsky, Hon. P. Myron	NDP	Prince Albert Carlton
Krawetz, Ken	SP	Canora-Pelly
Lautermilch, Eldon	NDP	Prince Albert Northcote
McCall, Warren	NDP	Regina Elphinstone-Centre
McMorris, Don	SP	Indian Head-Milestone
Merriman, Ted	SP	Saskatoon Northwest
Morgan, Don	SP	Saskatoon Southeast
Morin, Sandra	NDP	Regina Walsh Acres
Nilson, Hon. John	NDP	Regina Lakeview
Prebble, Hon. Peter	NDP	Saskatoon Greystone
Quennell, Hon. Frank	NDP	Saskatoon Meewasin
Serby, Hon. Clay	NDP	Yorkton
Sonntag, Hon. Maynard	NDP	Meadow Lake
Stewart, Lyle	SP	Thunder Creek
Taylor, Hon. Len	NDP	The Battlefords
Thomson, Hon. Andrew	NDP	Regina South
Toth, Don	SP	Moosomin
Trew, Kim	NDP	Regina Coronation Park
Van Mulligen, Hon. Harry	NDP	Regina Douglas Park
Wakefield, Milton	SP	Lloydminster
Wall, Brad	SP	Swift Current
Wartman, Hon. Mark	NDP	Regina Qu'Appelle Valley
Weekes, Randy	SP	Biggar
Yates, Kevin	NDP	Regina Dewdney

The Assembly met at 13:30.

Prayers

**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

**PRESENTING PETITIONS**

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Cypress Hills.

**Mr. Elhard:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise again to present petitions on behalf of Crown grazing leaseholders in the constituency of Cypress Hills. The prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the provincial government to take the necessary steps to ensure current Crown land lessees maintain their first option to renew those leases.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, I have a number of petitions here. The ones I'm presenting today are signed by people from Maple Creek as well as the community of Frontier and Tompkins.

I so present.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Kelvington-Wadena.

**Ms. Draude:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today again on behalf of people from my constituency who are very concerned about their nursing home. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary actions to ensure that the Red Deer Nursing Home is not closed or further downsized.

The people that have signed this petition are all from the town of Porcupine Plain.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Thunder Creek.

**Mr. Stewart:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present a petition signed by individuals concerned with the possible downsizing or closure of the Craik & District Health Centre, and the prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary action to ensure that the Craik & District Health Centre is not closed or further downsized.

And as in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by individuals from the communities of Findlater, Holdfast, and Bethune.

I so present.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Estevan.

**Ms. Eagles:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, again today I rise to present a petition on behalf of constituents of mine that are very concerned about the possible closure or downsizing of the Radville Marian Health Centre. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary action to ensure that Radville Marian Health Centre is not closed or further downsized.

And as in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

And, Mr. Speaker, this is signed by residents of Radville and Ceylon.

I so present. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Weyburn-Big Muddy.

**Ms. Bakken:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition on behalf of constituents of Weyburn-Big Muddy who are concerned about the changes to the crop insurance program. And the prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the provincial government to take all necessary actions to reverse the increase in crop insurance premiums and the reduction in coverage.

And as in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

And the petition is signed by residents of Pangman, Viceroy, Ceylon, and Ogema.

I so present.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Wood River.

**Mr. Huyghebaert:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Once again I rise with a petition from citizens in my constituency who are extremely concerned about the possible closures of long-term beds and health centre facilities. And the petition reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary action to ensure that the Lafleche & District Health Centre is not closed or further downsized.

And as in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

And, Mr. Speaker, this is signed by the good folks of Lafleche and Gravelbourg.

I so present.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Biggar.

**Mr. Weekes:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also have a petition from constituents opposed to the possible reduction of health care services in Biggar. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary steps to ensure that the Biggar hospital, long-term care home, and ambulance service is maintained at the very least at current level of services.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Signed by the good citizens of Biggar and district.

I so present.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Kindersley.

**Mr. Dearborn:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today on behalf of constituents of west central Saskatchewan concerned with losing ambulance service. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary action to ensure that the Dodsland and Luseland ambulance services are not discontinued.

And as is duty bound, our petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by the good folks from Kerrobert and Major, Saskatchewan.

I so present.

#### READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

**Deputy Clerk:** — According to order the following petitions have been reviewed and are hereby read and received:

A new petition concerning the Kerrobert hospital;

And addendums to previously tabled petitions being sessional paper nos. 63, 96, 145, 157, 158, and 161.

#### NOTICES OF MOTIONS AND QUESTIONS

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Estevan.

**Ms. Eagles:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I shall on day no. 37 ask the government the following question:

To the Minister of SaskTel: what is the rate of compensation for a SaskTel high-speed Internet dealer?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Cypress Hills.

**Mr. Elhard:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that I shall on day no. 37 ask the government the following question:

To the Minister of the Crown Management Board: will the minister please provide the out-of-country travel itinerary and the cost of each trip for the president of CIC for the

calendar year 2000? I have a similar question for year 2001, 2002, 2003, and similar questions for each head of the Crown corporations.

#### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Health, the member for Regina Lakeview.

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I am very pleased today to introduce to you, in your gallery, Mayor Haugerud of Craik and Dr. Narinda Moree. I'll be meeting with them later to talk about the health care facilities in their neighbourhood and I welcome them to the legislature.

And while I'm on my feet, I also welcome, in the east gallery, a number of the Friends of the Midwives who are here to celebrate this particular day, here in Saskatchewan, along with their friends right across the country. I had a very good meeting with some of their representatives yesterday, and I look forward to working with them in the future.

**Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Thunder Creek.

**Mr. Stewart:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to all members of this honourable Assembly, two gentlemen from Craik. The mayor of Craik, Mr. Rod Haugerud, and the reeve of the Craik RM (rural municipality), Mr. Hilton Spencer. Unfortunately today Dr. Moree couldn't attend.

We're one month away, in the community of Craik, from opening an interpretive centre on energy efficiencies and environmentally sound practices in building construction. The town and the RM have both committed to reducing their ecological footprints. The grand opening of this sustainable living project will be held July 23, and I think the town and the RM of Craik ought to be commended for their efforts in this regard.

I'd also like to say about Mr. Haugerud, the mayor of Craik, Mr. Haugerud was the Liberal candidate who ran against me in Thunder Creek. He ran hard and he made me run hard, and it was a hard fought, but cleanly fought campaign. And now as always, Mr. Haugerud and I just share a deep concern — a deep and abiding concern for the constituents of Thunder Creek and the institutions therein. I hope that all members will welcome these two fine gentlemen.

**Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Saskatchewan Rivers.

**Mr. Borgerson:** — Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly, 48 grade 8 students from Redwing School just north of Prince Albert. Redwing School is just at the south end of Sask. Rivers constituency, about 3-4 miles north of Prince Albert, and just down the road from where the Sask. Rivers constituency office

will soon be set up.

I'd like to welcome all of the students here as well as their teachers, Chris Elchuk, Holly Abreyhare and principal, Merv Letkeman. And they're accompanied by 10 parents — and if I could just have a little bit of a wave from each of them — Elaine Longlitz, Jill Rennie, Bev Halyk, Steven Pask, Mike Ursu, Shelley Anderson, Janet Jurgens, Sharlene Cowles, Sharon Clark, and Marcel Hedley. And I'd like all members to welcome the Redwing students and staff to the Assembly.

**Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Kelvington-Wadena.

**Ms. Draude:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the Minister of Health in welcoming the special people that are in the east gallery today, the Friends of Midwives. We have Christie Langen, Sonya Duffee, June Friesen, Eileen McKenzie, Sylvie Roy, Jeni Minion, Joanna South Perras, and Kathy Ellis. Along with them is one little person, I don't know his name, but I'm sure it's the first time he's been in the legislature. And I welcome everyone to your legislature.

**Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Regina Walsh Acres.

**Ms. Morin:** — Mr. Speaker, I'd also like to introduce to you, through you and to all the members of the Assembly just a special note with one of the group from the International Midwives Day. I have Elijah and his little baby brother Benjamin, and Jeni Minion and what's special about . . . is special about them is that they are constituents of Regina Walsh Acres, and their mother Deb Minion was very instrumental in helping me with my campaign. And I just want to say welcome to you and thank you for coming.

**Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

#### STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Regina Walsh Acres.

#### International Midwives Day and Fetal Alcohol Awareness Day

**Ms. Morin:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today is International Midwives Day. One of the primary responsibilities a midwife takes on is to offer care and education to the prospective mother throughout her pregnancy in order to ensure the health of both mother and child.

Mr. Speaker, given the midwife's vital role in providing physical care as well as emotional and social support, it is also fitting that today is also Regina Fetal Alcohol Awareness Day.

Mr. Speaker, this morning I had the opportunity to attend the opening session of the Regina FASD (fetal alcohol spectrum disorder) Awareness Day at the Core-Ritchie Neighbourhood

Centre, an event organized by the Regina FASD Community Network and the Regina Community Clinic. Mr. Speaker, it became . . . it began with some very stark and moving performances by Regina high school students who used drama to illustrate some of the issues associated with FASD. This was also followed by a very interesting panel discussion.

Mr. Speaker, the primary concern of this morning's event, and one of the concerns of the province's midwives, is raising awareness, attempting to find creative solutions to this complex but preventable disorder.

Mr. Speaker, this morning's event was disquieting but also very enlightening. I thank the Regina FASD Community Network and the Regina Community Clinic for their work regarding FASD, and I commend the drama students for the insightful portrayals of the issues. And I thank the Midwives Association of Saskatchewan for their role in promoting healthy choices for expectant mothers and thereby helping to prevent incidence of fetal alcohol spectrum disorder. Thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Kelvington-Wadena.

#### Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder

**Ms. Draude:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was also honoured this morning to attend an FASD awareness play and panel held at the Core-Ritchie Centre and hosted by the Regina Community Network.

Mr. Speaker, FASD, fetal alcohol spectrum disorder, is a condition that breaks my heart. Babies, innocent babies, are born with a combination of mental and physical disabilities that affect them their entire life. The condition can never be cured and children don't grow out of it, but it is 100 per cent preventable — no alcohol consumed during pregnancy, no FASD.

Six wonderful high school students who obviously care about the issue put on today's skit. They brought forward another side of the story. They portrayed a young girl with FASD trying to make her way in an adult world, where she was in trouble at home, in trouble at school, and in trouble with the law because of a condition that wasn't her fault.

The words, I can't do it, I don't understand, who cares, and I'm sorry are too big a part of the life of a young person with FASD, many of whom have never been diagnosed.

There's a book called *Damaged Angels* written by Bonnie Buxton, which I believe should be compulsory reading for everyone.

Mr. Speaker, as elected representatives, we must recognize that the issue goes beyond political lines. I commend the government for the work they've done, but mostly I implore them to make it a priority to do more. I implore them to make it a goal to totally eliminate FASD, while providing supports for those who currently have it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

(13:45)

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Eastview.

#### **National Mental Health Week**

**Ms. Junor:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. May 2 to May 8 is national Mental Health Week in Canada.

The Saskatchewan division of the Canadian Mental Health Association is one of the oldest and largest community-based human service organizations in the province. Like many such organizations, it depends on a small but dedicated staff and a huge number of volunteers to accomplish its goals.

National Mental Health Week is a focal point of their efforts of raising awareness of the various issues associated with mental illness and mental health — working to erase the stigma of mental illness, providing educational opportunities to help the public understand mental health issues, offering social and vocational programs to people with mental illness, giving them hope, and unlocking the door to a better quality of life.

Mr. Speaker, the many programs, services, and initiatives of the Saskatchewan division of the Canadian Mental Health Association are all aimed at supporting and promoting the rights of persons with mental illness so they can reach their full potential as well as to promote and enhance the mental health and well-being of all members of our community.

Mr. Speaker, this year's theme for Mental Health Week is Emerging into the Light and Making Connections. I'm sure all my colleagues will join me in expressing our sincere appreciation to the staff and volunteers of the Saskatchewan division of the Canadian Mental Health Association who work so diligently making connections that benefit our entire community.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Carrot River Valley.

#### **Pasquia Hills Oil Project**

**Mr. Kerpan:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, a new project in the Carrot River Valley constituency has many residents there very excited. This endeavour is called the Pasquia Hills oil project. The Uranium Power Corporation is currently in its first phase of their 2004 pre-feasibility study. The hope is that this study will result in an undertaking to extract approximately 4.3 billion barrels of shale oil.

Nanook Exploration of Saskatoon has been contracted to do extractions from the oil shale. This will be done by core drilling to recover oil share from the 45-metre shale deposits located 21 metres below the surface. As a result of the economic potential that the Pasquia Hills oil project has, the Uranium Power Corporation felt that this was the time to act on this promising venture. Mr. Speaker, after refining, the estimated value of this

field is about \$84 US (United States) per barrel, which is more than double the current price of the world oil.

Mr. Speaker, with this government's extremely good record of ruining very good business ventures, I have deliberately neglected to tell this House that the mine is going to be about 16 kilometres northwest of Hudson Bay. Mr. Speaker, I feel that the further that this government stays away and out of that part of the province, the better the chance will be that this venture will have a great success. Thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for The Battlefords.

#### **Battlefords Business Excellence Awards**

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Mr. Speaker, last evening, May 4, I attended the 11th annual BBEX Awards. That's the Battlefords Business Excellence Awards, hosted by the Battlefords Chamber of Commerce. The awards, recognizing the accomplishments of the Battlefords business community, attracted such sponsors as SaskTel, SaskPower, SaskEnergy, SGI (Saskatchewan Government Insurance), CIBC (Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce), RBC Royal Bank, and BCU Financial.

The award winners for 2004 included a Heritage Award, Fran's Beauty Salon; Community Contribution Award, North Battleford Garden Market; Young Entrepreneur, Bryan Wall, Krazzee Kones; Marketing Award, Viewpoint Photographic Design; new business, Craig & Co.; and the BBEX Business of the Year for 2004, Maple Leaf Consumer Foods of North Battleford.

Mr. Speaker, this was an excellent evening with special thanks to chamber of commerce president, Keith Bossaer; executive vice-president, Linda Machniak; MC (master of ceremonies), David Dekker; the caterer, Jobo's Catering; and award maker, the master craftsman himself, Stan Wychopen.

My congratulations to all concerned.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Canora-Pelly.

#### **Norquay-Kamsack Northstars Midget B Provincial Champions**

**Mr. Krawetz:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate the Norquay-Kamsack Midget Northstars who now hold the title of Midget B hockey champions of Saskatchewan.

In the provincial final the Northstars defeated the team from Rosetown 10-5 in a two-game total series. This is truly a tremendous achievement because no midget hockey team from the Norquay-Pelly-Kamsack area had ever won a provincial championship. These boys never played together as a team in the past, but quickly gelled and developed a camaraderie that will last for years.

It seems they were a little uncertain as the season began because they had trouble winning their first few outings. Things turned around, however, and the Northstars' season record is a tie of two games, lost nine, but won 39 games. There are 13 members of the team from Norquay, five from Kamsack, two from Pelly, and one from Hyas.

I would like to recognize the coaches, Todd Achtymichuk, Jeremy Allard, Mark Clements, all of Kamsack, as well as manager, Wayne Prokopchuk, and stick boy, Andrew Jacquemart, both of Norquay. I understand that following one of the first practices, one of the Norquay boys returned home to tell his parents that he had awesome coaches.

The Northstars were asked if they would go through it all again, and they commented that they would in a heartbeat. Their camaraderie has developed to the point where the team may play slow-pitch together in the off-season. That, Mr. Speaker, is what sports is all about. It's about sportsmanship, desire, talent, a little bit of luck, but most importantly, friendship.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and all my colleagues in the Assembly to join me in congratulating the Norquay-Kamsack Northstars, the Saskatchewan Hockey Association's Midget B provincial champions.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Regina Wascana Plains.

#### **United Commercial Travellers of America Celebrates 100 Years**

**Ms. Hamilton:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Regina Council of the United Commercial Travellers of America has been dedicated to its members, their families, and their communities since before Saskatchewan became a province.

In May 1904 the Regina Council of the UCT (United Commercial Travellers) was founded and the first Grand Session of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta took place in Regina on June 14, 1912.

To recognize this milestone, the Regina Council hosted the 93rd annual UCT Grand Council sessions at the Regina Travelodge Hotel from April 30 to May 2. And I along with many others celebrated the organization's 100 years of community service or people helping people in the Queen City.

Mr. Speaker, the local council supports many civic and community service activities, including youth soccer and baseball programs, cancer education and patient comfort, public safety, drug awareness, and aid to citizens with mental disabilities.

In co-operation with the Associated Canadian Travellers, the UCT established the Travellers' Day Parade, now known as the Buffalo Days Parade.

And a very proud moment, the Canadian Cancer Society, founded in Regina in 1938, also stems from the roots of the original UCT cancer committee and from the hard work of a

group of dedicated UCT members.

Mr. Speaker, I'm sure my colleagues will join me in acknowledging the dedication and commitment of all Regina Council and UCT members, and in congratulating them on their 100 years of service.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

#### **ORAL QUESTIONS**

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Kelvington-Wadena.

#### **Proclamation of Midwifery Legislation**

**Ms. Draude:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health.

Five years ago the NDP (New Democratic Party) government passed legislation making midwifery a regulated profession in the province of Saskatchewan. To date the NDP have not proclaimed this legislation into law. This is yet another example of the NDP saying one thing and not keeping their words. Actions speak louder than words, Mr. Speaker. The NDP passed the legislation, but they've refused to proclaim it.

My question is to the Minister of Health: when is the NDP finally going to do the right thing and proclaim their own legislation by making midwifery a regulated profession in the province of Saskatchewan?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — Mr. Speaker, the midwives' legislation was passed a number of years ago. And as is true with all professional legislation in this province — and we have many, many groups that have professional legislation — requires that there be regulations in place and transitional councils to deal with the discipline issues and many of the other issues.

One of the challenges that we have with the midwife profession is that there aren't very many of them in Saskatchewan, let alone in Canada. And so it ends up that we have to work carefully with them. I've had some discussions yesterday. We've had other discussions with the people within the department who work on professional legislation, and we're trying to figure out a Saskatchewan way of providing this kind of professional guidance in Saskatchewan so that we can do that.

But it's a challenge. The midwives know it, and we're going to work together to solve it.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Kelvington-Wadena.

**Ms. Draude:** — Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan way to do something right doesn't take five years. This legislation will ensure women throughout Saskatchewan have access to the services of regulated midwives. It also allows Saskatchewan

women who want to become midwives to pursue this career right here in their own province.

The NDP's refusal to proclaim their own legislation is actually driving midwives right out of this province. Why would this government pass regulation it really has no intentions of proclaiming? When will this government proclaim its own legislation so that women in Saskatchewan can stay in their own province and practise midwifery?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — Mr. Speaker, yesterday I spent an hour and a half with the leadership of the midwife community here in Saskatchewan, and we talked about many options. And they know that they have a challenge to work with the doctors, with the nurses, with other professions, and with other programs to try to figure out how it fits here in Saskatchewan.

But what I would say, Mr. Speaker, is that the question from the member opposite is like many other questions that we get from that side of the House which reflect the fact that they're not ready to govern in this province, and I doubt if they ever will be.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Weyburn-Big Muddy.

#### Discount Structure for Off-Sale Beer Outlets

**Ms. Bakken:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, hotel and bar owners across the province are paying a heavy price for the NDP's disastrous budget. On budget day the NDP all but eliminated the volume discount on beer that allowed off-sale stores and bars and hotels to be competitive with the beer prices charged in government-owned liquor stores.

This decision is devastating to hotel owners. The owner of Bridges Ale House in Saskatoon says his family-orientated business would have never undertaken a \$100,000 expansion last summer if they would have known that this was coming. He has already had to lay off one employee as a result of this ill-founded money grab.

Mr. Speaker, Bridges Ale House in Saskatoon is not alone. Hotels all across the province are facing the same situation. Mr. Speaker, to the minister: why did the NDP launch this unfair attack on small businesses across Saskatchewan?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Industry and Resources.

**Hon. Mr. Cline:** — Mr. Speaker, as has been indicated before, the changing to the discount structure to off-sale premises which still gives a discount for the first \$100,000 in purchases of beer was designed to raise \$5 million, Mr. Speaker, for the health care system in this province. And, Mr. Speaker, just as people across the province are paying more for health care and the government is putting more money into health care, this is the contribution that off-salers make.

And I want to say to the House and to the public, Mr. Speaker, that in six provinces in Canada, hotels are not allowed to sell beer, and in most provinces there is no discount. We still have a discount, Mr. Speaker, but we decided — we made a decision which I defend and the government defends — to raise more money for health care from hoteliers and off-sale as we are from the general public, Mr. Speaker. We're all doing our part, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Weyburn-Big Muddy.

**Ms. Bakken:** — Mr. Speaker, the arrogance of this minister is unacceptable and unbelievable. What kind of contribution are these hotel owners going to make when they are no longer in business in this province? He says it's no big deal; it's not going to put anyone out of business. In fact the minister recently said hotel owners aren't going to lose any . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order please, members. Order. The member for Weyburn-Big Muddy.

**Ms. Bakken:** — The minister said that hotel owners aren't going to lose any money at all, and he'd be pleased to sit down with them and go through their books to show them that their concerns are unfounded. Mr. Speaker, I think bar owners in Saskatchewan know a lot more about running their business than this minister, and the last thing that they need is the NDP going through their books and figuring out how they can take even more money out of their pockets.

Mr. Speaker, this is nothing more than an NDP tax grab designed to take millions of dollars away from private business and give it to government-owned liquor stores. Mr. Speaker, to the minister: why is the NDP continuing to attack small business, and why are they intent on driving even more business out of the province?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Industry and Resources.

**Hon. Mr. Cline:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to indicate to the House that having a licence to sell off-sale beer and having a monopoly to sell cold beer to the public is a valuable commodity, Mr. Speaker. This is a business which is profitable, and people make money at it, and we support that business, Mr. Speaker.

As I've said to the House before, with respect to the smallest businesses, there is no change, Mr. Speaker. There is a discount on the first \$100,000 in purchases. But I want the House to know and the public to know — in response to the member who says that this is an effort to take business in beer selling away from the private sector — 56 per cent of the beer sold in this province, Mr. Speaker, is sold through private off-sale, 28 per cent through government stores, 13 per cent through private lounges. Mr. Speaker, we are not grabbing the volume of beer sales.



And I've indicated to the industry that if we are incorrect — which I don't think we are — but if we are and if their market share goes down, we intend to review this, Mr. Speaker. But there is no evidence that that has happened yet because it's too early to tell, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

(14:00)

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Thunder Creek.

#### Future of Craik Health Centre

**Mr. Stewart:** — Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health. A delegation from the town of Craik and area has travelled to Regina today because they are worried the NDP is about to close or downsize Craik's health centre.

Mr. Speaker, the Craik Health Centre is a busy place, staffed by a full-time doctor and includes both X-ray and lab services to the people in the community and surrounding area. In fact the Craik Health Centre saw 4,000 outpatient visits over the last year. One thousand and fifty-four patients accessed X-ray services. There were 1,954 patient visits to the lab and almost 17,000 tests performed at the lab last year.

Mr. Speaker, the Craik Health Centre plays a critical role in the provision of health care in the area. Will the minister assure the mayor of Craik, the reeve of the RM of Craik, and their delegation that the NDP government will not shut down or downsize the Craik Health Centre?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — Mr. Speaker, I'll be meeting with the mayor and the delegation from Craik later this afternoon. Mr. Speaker, as I've said before, what we're doing in the health care system in this province is asking questions about all of the things that we do, because we have \$160 million in new resources in our budget, but we have also a great demand for services right across the province.

And we think it's important that we can assure all of the Saskatchewan people that not only are we providing them good health care; we're also using the dollars that they give to us in the most efficient manner possible. And so I'm happy to talk with people in communities and have been right across the province. I know many of my members have, and we will continue to work to get the best health care for Saskatchewan people.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Thunder Creek.

**Mr. Stewart:** — Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Party has acquired a memo from the CEO (chief executive officer) of the Five Hills Health Region. The memo is dated April 19 of this year and addressed to the employees of the Craik Health Centre. In it the CEO of the Five Hills Health Region addresses

concerns about the future of the Craik Health Centre. He says and I quote:

Five Hills Health Region has received notification which, in our opinion, leaves us 2.4 per cent short of the necessary money to continue operating at the current levels.

End quote, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the mayor of Craik and the reeve of the surrounding RM of Craik and the people who depend on the Craik Health Centre want a straight answer. Will the minister make a clear statement today that the NDP will not shut down or downsize the Craik Health Centre?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the confirmation of the information that I provided. We have \$160 million of new money in our budget which will expand what we're doing in health care, but we still end up having challenges because the costs are increasing at a greater amount than the money that we have available.

What that means is we continue to work at a number of different levels. We ask questions in the local areas. How are we spending the money? We look at it on a province-wide basis and some of the expensive care in the cities. How are we spending our money? We go on a national level and say, where can we go in a national system to make sure we have adequate long-term resources?

But here in this legislature, one of the things that we are doing is working and voting for a budget which will provide more money for health care. I ask that member opposite and all of his colleagues to think seriously about voting for this budget.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Thunder Creek.

**Mr. Stewart:** — Mr. Speaker, the question is a simple and straightforward one. Will this NDP government . . . Will this NDP government close or downsize the Craik Health Centre?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — Mr. Speaker, the challenges that we have in health care are here, and we have a budget that has \$160 million more. If that budget does not pass, we'll be having much bigger challenges to deal with.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that member opposite to very seriously consider voting for that budget because it will be supportive of all of the health facilities in this province, including Craik.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Cypress Hills.

#### Natural Gas Rates for Residential Customers

**Mr. Elhard:** — Thank you. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the minister responsible for Crown Investments Corporation.

Two weeks ago, the Saskatchewan Party acquired information indicating that Saskatchewan Housing Corporation, a provincial Crown corporation itself, was dropping SaskEnergy and signing a contract to buy its natural gas from a private sector supplier because SaskEnergy's prices were too high. Now the NDP tried to deny that any decision had been made.

In fact then the minister attempted to discredit the private sector supplier's reliability. But today the president of the Sask Housing authority says that he has signed a contract with a private sector supplier because the housing corporation can get a stable, long-term contract and save almost \$1 million a year.

Mr. Speaker, why is the NDP forcing Saskatchewan families to pay artificially high prices for natural gas while the NDP's own Crown corporations are buying natural gas from private sector suppliers at much lower prices?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Government House Leader.

**Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, one of the issues that the member raises in his questions is the rate that we pay for natural gas through SaskEnergy in Saskatchewan, that is, for residential customers. Saskatchewan energy . . . SaskEnergy's record in this respect I think has been a good one over the years, and for the last seven years I believe SaskEnergy's rates for residential customers has been the lowest in Canada. Other years we've been the second-lowest in Canada. I think there is one time that SaskEnergy's rate for residential customers was the lowest in North America. I think that's a pretty good record.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, with respect to the question, we have also had competition in the natural gas marketplace in Saskatchewan now since I believe 1987, pursuant to direction from the federal government. And the marketplace reflects that, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Cypress Hills.

**Mr. Elhard:** — Mr. Speaker, the NDP government continues to make the patently false claim that SaskEnergy customers are not being overcharged for natural gas. The minister states that the price of gas to the consumer is passed along at cost but that's simply not true.

In fact the NDP has forced Saskatchewan families to pay more for natural gas than it costs the government to buy that gas in 29 of the last 36 months. This month the cost of natural gas is approximately \$5.54 per gigajoule on the market, but the NDP is charging Saskatchewan families and businesses a whopping \$6.98 per gigajoule. That's why the NDP's own housing corporation has decided to drop SaskEnergy and go with a private sector supplier.

Mr. Speaker, why is the NDP overcharging Saskatchewan families for natural gas?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister Responsible for SaskEnergy.

**Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, yesterday — not today, but yesterday — I looked outside the window, and I saw that it was partially sunny. And I guess the member might say that, no it was partially cloudy, but that does not make my observation that it's partially sunny, Mr. Speaker, something patently false. And I would, you know, implore the member to use language that's appropriate to this House.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, we have a system in which we contract to buy energy for a period of a year, sometimes half a year. That is the basis on which we provide natural gas to our customers. Other jurisdictions will change their prices on a monthly basis. We change our prices on a yearly or semi-annual basis, Mr. Speaker. We think that's the kind of system that our customers want. At the end of the . . .

**The Speaker:** — Member's time has elapsed.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Cypress Hills.

**Mr. Elhard:** — Mr. Speaker, we're quite prepared to back up our statements with fact. We're prepared to do that in the House and outside the House.

Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation has decided not to put up with the NDP's policy of overcharging Saskatchewan families and businesses for natural gas. This policy is intended to make up for the NDP government's interference in SaskEnergy's gas purchasing and pricing, and yet the minister says the NDP has set SaskEnergy's prices to reflect the cost of gas. Well I wonder, Mr. Speaker, what SaskPower has to say about that.

Mr. Speaker, SaskPower gets about five per cent of its power from natural gas fired generation facilities. In other words, SaskPower is a huge customer of natural gas in the generation of electricity. Mr. Speaker, the question: how much natural gas did SaskPower purchase from SaskEnergy last year to fuel its natural gas fired generation facilities?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister Responsible for SaskEnergy.

**Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, again we have a competitive marketplace in Saskatchewan for natural gas. Large industrial customers will purchase their own natural gas in the marketplace, and they will do it in ways that meets their specific needs and do it in a contractual way that — whether it's long term or short term — meets their specific needs. Other smaller customers will look to other ways to purchase their natural gas.

But at the end of the day, Mr. Speaker, 325,000 customers for SaskEnergy continue to believe and support SaskEnergy because they know that SaskEnergy provides them natural gas at rates that is very competitive with any marketplace in North America and has done very well that way, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Cypress Hills.

**Mr. Elhard:** — Mr. Speaker, surely the minister is aware that SaskPower doesn't buy any of its natural gas to fuel its generation facilities from SaskEnergy. And the reason, Mr. Speaker, is quite simple. SaskPower can buy its natural gas at a much lower rate on the market than SaskEnergy charges to its residential and corporate customers.

Mr. Speaker, if SaskEnergy is simply selling natural gas to Saskatchewan families and businesses at cost, how is it that SaskPower can buy its gas on the same market for much less? Why is the market price for natural gas that Saskatchewan families pay through SaskEnergy so much higher than the market price for natural gas that our own Crown corporations pay through the private sector suppliers?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister Responsible for SaskEnergy.

**Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen:** — Again, Mr. Speaker, people look to purchase and to meet their needs in various ways. For example, if someone has a mortgage, they look to see whether it's to their advantage whether they should have a five-year term for that mortgage, whether they should have a six-month term for that mortgage, or a year-long term for that mortgage, and people make their decisions about what best meets their needs in terms of predictability.

At the end of the day, one may not be better than the other but, you know, one may be better than the other. But, you know, various institutions, various businesses will have different needs and demands, and that's what the marketplace provides for them, Mr. Speaker.

Again, for residential customers in Saskatchewan, four out of the last seven years we have seen the lowest natural gas rates in all of Canada right here in Saskatchewan. We think that's pretty good, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Indian Head-Milestone.

#### Education Portion of Property Tax

**Mr. McMorris:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Learning is now saying that school board amalgamations is a prerequisite before any division or any property owner will see tax relief.

But, you know, it's quite funny. I didn't hear the Premier mention a word about that last year at SARM (Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities). In fact, I didn't hear the Premier mention a word about that during the last provincial election. But now all of a sudden the NDP are looking for excuses to get the Premier out of the words that he had spoke at SARM and during the last general election.

Mr. Speaker, these excuses are phony. Will the minister of Education or the Premier stand up in the House and not use excuses of amalgamation to avoid their promise of property tax relief in this province?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Learning.

**Hon. Mr. Thomson:** — Mr. Speaker, I can tell you, as I have told the delegates of SARM, as I have told the members of this Assembly, that restructuring of the school divisions is a necessary precursor to us dealing with the foundation operating grant so that as new money goes into the system, it goes throughout the province.

Today there are 18 school boards in this province that receive no money — no money — because of the way that the assessment works. We need to bring fairness and equity back to this system.

(14:15)

The member opposite says that we should not proceed with amalgamations. But that is not the view, that is not the view of the chairperson of the school board in his riding, who says:

The amalgamation of (school) boards of education, regardless of the pronouncements made by (the) . . . School Boards Association . . . that they will continue, is again in our view not accurate . . . we are of the view . . . the province should undertake a comprehensive initiative to amalgamate boards in . . . a fashion that . . . (makes) economic, demographic and geographic sense. The current situation seems to be at a slow down if not at a stall . . . hence a thrust from the provincial government is required to get . . . (the) amalgamation job completed . . .

That is from the chairperson of the board in his riding.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Indian Head-Milestone.

**Mr. McMorris:** — Mr. Speaker, once again we hear the minister taking liberty with words that we never said. We are onside of amalgamation. In fact the school divisions are onside . . . school boards are onside for amalgamation too.

The minister, the last minister mentioned that we wanted to see a 25 per cent reduction in school divisions in the province in the next four years. The school divisions, the school boards of this province have kept their promise, which is far more than I can ever say for any of the promises made by that provincial government.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. McMorris:** — Mr. Speaker, promises such as lowering taxes. How about this one . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order please, members. Order, so we can hear the question put. Member for Indian Head-Milestone.

**Mr. McMorris:** — Promises such as lowering taxes, promises such as 300 new jobs, promises such as 200 new police officers — commitments that this government made and never kept,

unlike school boards of the province who are asked to reduce 25 per cent in the next four years, and they've met that. There are many more amalgamations in the works, and we'll continue . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order, members. Order. Order, please. The member may proceed.

**Mr. McMorris:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this government fails to meet its promises on reducing property tax and tries to gloss the situation over and say it's only school board amalgamations that's going to solve the problem. It's absolutely wrong. When will they live up to their promise?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Learning.

**Hon. Mr. Thomson:** — I want to remind this Assembly as I did yesterday, Mr. Speaker, of what it is that this party did promise in the election campaign and the promises we are keeping.

We said that we would increase unconditional revenue-sharing grants to municipalities, and we have done that. We said we would deal with the grants in lieu for provincial government buildings, and we have done that. We said we would expand the infrastructure programs; we have done that. We said a further \$10 million increase in unconditional revenue-sharing grants for a total of \$85 million a year would be implemented, and we are keeping that promise.

Mr. Speaker, we have kept the promises; we are committed to building fairness and equity into this system. It is time that the member opposite, time that the member opposite set aside his petty political agenda and adopt the agenda that Saskatchewan people want, which is restructuring to restore fairness and equity so that we can deal with the property tax issue.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Indian Head-Milestone.

**Mr. McMorris:** — Mr. Speaker, it begs the question, why did the Premier ask Ray Boughen to strike a commission to look at the issue of property tax when you had absolutely no intention of following through on the recommendations?

But, you know, it's not that the Premier didn't read the Boughen report. He read the Boughen report. He read the part about raising the PST (provincial sales tax) by 1 per cent. Remember that? He also read the report about school board amalgamation. The chapter that he didn't read was reducing property tax.

Quit using all the other excuses to avoid . . . I wish the Premier would quit using all the other excuses and deal with the issue that's facing every property owner in this province; it's too high an education portion on their tax bill. Will they address that in the next month or two?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Learning.

**Hon. Mr. Thomson:** — Well I find it passing strange that the member opposite stands up and says that we should implement the Boughen report, a report that says that the sales tax should be increased and expanded. A commitment in that report that the member for Saltcoats says he would vote against under any circumstances, even if it went to school board restructuring and dealt with property taxes — that member should vote against it. That is a party in disarray, that has no clear policy, that does not have a rational approach to moving forward.

We will move forward with reform in the education sector. We will make sure that the school divisions are of a size and have an authority which is able to deal with the challenges before them. We need to make sure that this system is sustainable. We need to make sure that it's focused on the education of children, and it needs to do so in a way which is fair to taxpayers. That is the commitment of this side. What is the commitment on that side?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister for Community Resources and Employment.

### HomeFirst Housing Initiative

**Hon. Ms. Crofford:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. You know, today I had a very special honour of participating in the launch of the province of Saskatchewan's new housing strategy called HomeFirst. Premier Lorne Calvert introduced HomeFirst and he was joined by Dr. Geoff Pawson. I think many people here know him, president and CEO of Ranch Ehrlo Society. In addition, Ms. Margaret Beveridge, a mother and student living in Saskatoon — who has a great deal of first-hand experience of social housing — and helped give us her perspective on the importance of housing to our health and well-being.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, her involvement in this housing has helped create the stability for her and her children, for her to return to school, and she's now studying pharmacy at the U of S (University of Saskatchewan) in Saskatoon. The launch was notable as the event was held outside, and if you were outside this morning, Mr. Speaker, you know that the wind and the rain and the snow in the inner-city neighbourhood where we were — and I think probably in other neighbourhoods — helped to underline the importance of good shelter and housing in our province.

HomeFirst is a vision for quality, affordable housing for low- to moderate-income individuals, families, seniors, First Nations and Métis people, persons with disabilities, and others in need. HomeFirst is a five-year plan, Mr. Speaker, that will include new and existing housing programs to balance both availability and affordability. It's part of our Building Independence strategy which includes to date, Mr. Speaker, other supports such as the Saskatchewan Child Benefit, the Saskatchewan employment supplement, extended health benefits, increased child care subsidies, increased support for training and

employment as well as special supports for Kids First, early learning, and children with FASD, and now increased support for housing as well.

Over the next five years the Government of Saskatchewan will invest 200 million that will directly benefit over 17,000 households, Mr. Speaker, who do not receive this benefit today. In the next fiscal year alone, we'll invest 25 million in the development of affordable housing in renovation grants for low to moderate households.

HomeFirst is a real change in the way we deliver housing in the province. It's a new way of thinking about housing programs and services and their role in building and maintaining independence. It includes a variety of new and existing housing supply and housing income support programs and services delivered in a way that promotes individual choice, personal accountability, economic and social independence. HomeFirst uses housing as a tool to improve the quality of life of Saskatchewan people by using it to support employment, education, training, neighbourhood renewal, and economic prosperity.

Over the next five years there's 161 million for housing supply and 39 million for housing supplements because we heard from many people that affordability of housing was one of the large issues out there, and again, keeping in mind that this will also apply to persons with disabilities.

All levels of government will participate in the delivery, but it will also contribute to the economic well-being of Saskatchewan citizens. It's estimated that we will see 300 million of activity in new home building and renovation, and I know the home builders that were there today certainly were interested in being part of this large new movement in housing to help continue to generate the housing numbers in Saskatchewan for new home building. So this will generate more jobs in the housing industry and related sectors.

Two thousand new ownership and rental homes will create 3,100 person-years of employment and generate up to 300 million in construction and renovation. Up to 10,000 families will benefit directly from the housing supplement. Disability housing supplement will benefit 1,600 households. Three thousand homes will be repaired and made more energy efficient, and 500 home ownership opportunities will be created to have government-assisted home ownership for low- to moderate-income families.

And I will just say that this is an important goal of HomeFirst — to make our communities better places to live by focusing and better coordinating our existing social, educational, and economic programs.

So I say, Mr. Speaker, that HomeFirst is about building a place that we can all call home.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — Before I recognize the member, I would just like to remind the member in her statement about her wording. She should not be using members' names but should be referring to them by title or by constituency name.

I recognize the member for Weyburn-Big Muddy.

**Ms. Bakken:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to respond to the minister's announcement about the new program called HomeFirst, and certainly this initiative is welcomed on this side of the House because this is about families and children who will benefit from these kind of housing initiatives.

And not only will the families and the children of those families benefit but also the communities that they reside in certainly benefit when there is a positive housing program because it gives stability to communities. And when there's stabilities in communities, the neighbourhood and the community at large and the province all benefit from this. And the whole idea of gaining independence, and key to that is home ownership and the pride that that brings to the people that are involved in this.

Mr. Speaker, as I look at the budget for this year, it indicates that there is a reduction actually in the spending in Saskatchewan Housing this year. And then when I read further the minister's statements, I realized that this initiative is not going forward until next year.

So we encourage the Government of Saskatchewan to continue to move forward on this initiative, and we will be watching very closely, Mr. Speaker, to ensure that they do carry forward with the initiatives that they have outlined in this proposal, and that these new developments do take place.

Mr. Speaker, there is . . . the minister indicated that HomeFirst includes a variety of new and existing housing supply and housing income support programs and services delivered in a way that promotes individual choice, personal accountability, and economic and social independence. And, Mr. Speaker, these are very, very key words. And I would just like to mention and say to the minister that I hope that she and her government will live up to this promise that they have made to the people that become involved in these housing projects.

Because the experience has been in the past, in some of these projects, that there have not . . . these initiatives have not been followed through and that many families have found that once they got into these programs, that they were ill served by them and struggled a great deal because they had this great hope of having a home that they could call their own, of being able to make choice and having a part to play in what went on, what repairs were made, and being part of the whole process. And sadly, this has not happened in some cases.

The vast majority of the cases in Saskatchewan, I believe, have been positive. But we must ensure that all those that go forward with this initiative and want to be part of owning their own home are given the opportunity to play the part that they're promised in it.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I would just like to say that the Saskatchewan Party does realize the value of home ownership. And it is very hard to measure because the benefit is wide and not only to the people that are building the homes and own the homes, but also to the economy. As the minister indicated, it will create a great number of jobs and economic activity for the province. So I welcome this initiative and we'll be watching closely to ensure that it does . . . the benefits are derived that it

is promising. Thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

### WRITTEN QUESTIONS

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Government Whip.

**Mr. Yates:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm extremely pleased today to stand on behalf of the government and table responses to written questions no. 264 through 266 inclusive.

**The Speaker:** — Responses to questions 264, 265, 266 have been submitted.

### GOVERNMENT ORDERS

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Government House Leader.

**Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen:** — Mr. Speaker, to facilitate the meetings of the Standing Committee on the Economy and the Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies, I move the House do now adjourn.

**The Speaker:** — It is moved by the Government House Leader that this House do now adjourn. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Motion is carried. This House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 1:30 p.m.

The Assembly adjourned at 14:30.

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## **CABINET MINISTERS**

Hon. L. Calvert  
Premier

Hon. P. Atkinson  
Minister of Crown Management Board  
Minister Responsible for Public Service Commission

Hon. J. Beatty  
Minister of Culture, Youth and Recreation  
Provincial Secretary

Hon. B. Belanger  
Minister of Northern Affairs

Hon. E. Cline  
Minister of Industry and Resources

Hon. J. Crofford  
Minister of Community Resources and Employment  
Minister Responsible for Disability Issues  
Minister Responsible for Gaming

Hon. D. Forbes  
Minister of Environment  
Minister Responsible for the Office of Energy Conservation

Hon. D. Higgins  
Minister of Labour  
Minister Responsible for the Status of Women

Hon. J. Nilson  
Minister of Health  
Minister Responsible for Seniors

Hon. P. Prebble  
Minister of Corrections and Public Safety

Hon. F. Quennell  
Minister of Justice and Attorney General

Hon. C. Serby  
Deputy Premier

Hon. M. Sonntag  
Minister of Aboriginal Affairs  
Minister of Highways and Transportation

Hon. L. Taylor  
Minister of Government Relations

Hon. A. Thomson  
Minister of Learning  
Minister Responsible for Information Technology

Hon. H. Van Mulligen  
Minister of Finance

Hon. M. Wartman  
Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Revitalization