



FIRST SESSION - TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE

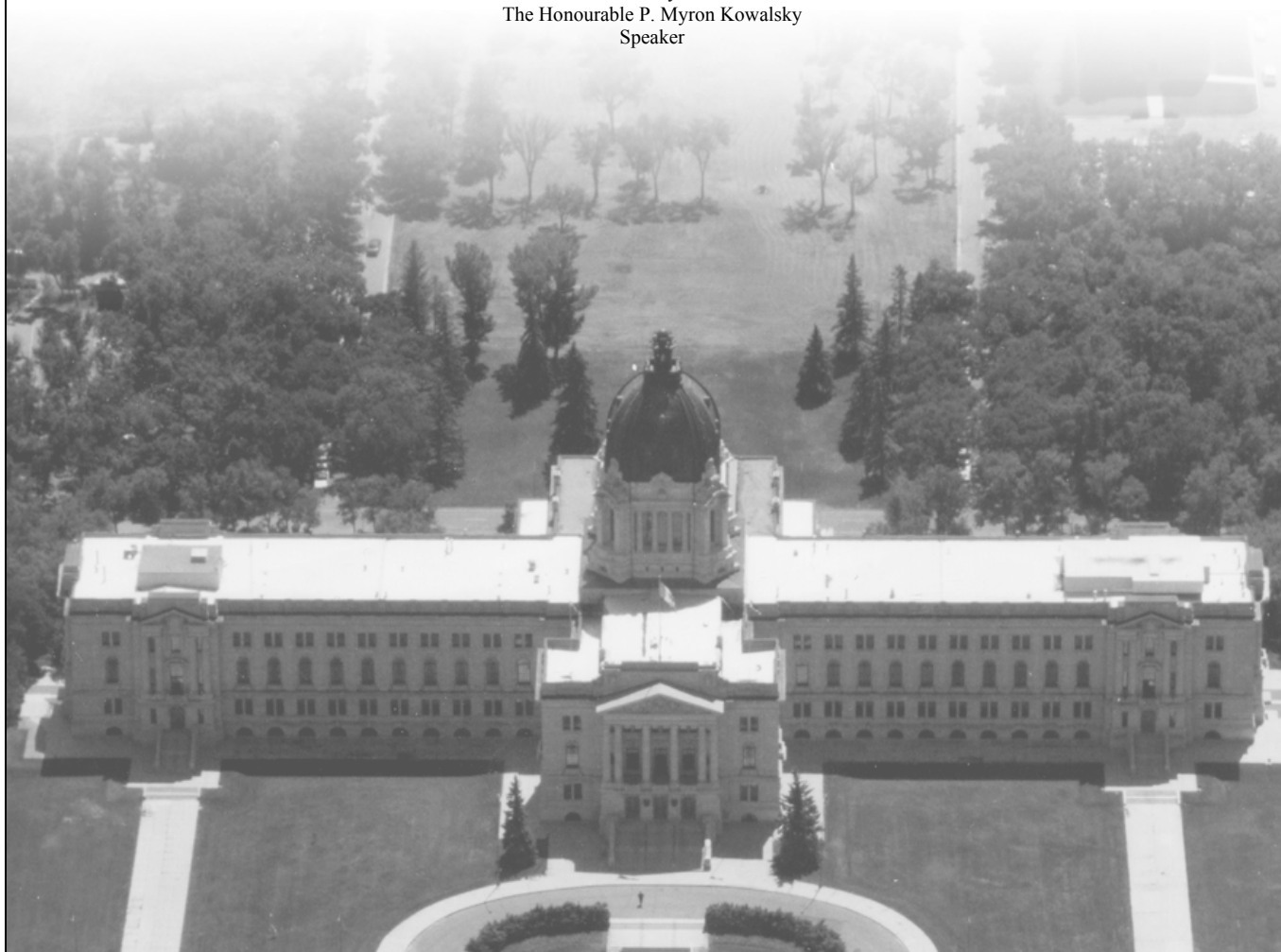
of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(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 Lackey, Brenda	SP	Weyburn-Big Muddy
Beatty, Hon. Joan	NDP	Cumberland
Belanger, Hon. Buckley	NDP	Athabasca
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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
Gantefoer, Rod	SP	Melfort
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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: — The Chair recognizes the member for Cypress Hills.

Mr. Elhard: — Mr. Speaker, today I have nearly 300 names on a petition involving a different highway in the constituency of Cypress Hills, Highway 18 that runs from Claydon to Robsart. 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 actions to ensure that Highway 18 from Claydon to Robsart is repaved at the earliest possible time to ensure the safety of drivers in the area and so that economic development opportunities are not lost.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, these petitions are signed from individuals from the immediate Claydon area, but also from the communities of Robsart, Consul, and a substantial number from Frontier and Maple Creek. I so present.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Cannington.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too have petitions to present today. 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 the portion of Highway 47 south of Highway 48 to Stoughton is resurfaced.

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

These petitions, Mr. Speaker, come from pretty well all of the communities in that area both along No. 47, 48 and No. 1 Highway and a number of people from right across the province, Mr. Speaker. I so present.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Kelvington-Wadena.

Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm rising today on behalf of people who're concerned about the drug crystal meth.

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that you Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause this government to take the necessary action to pass a law that will give Saskatchewan parents the ability to place their children into involuntary drug treatment.

The people that have signed this petition are from Rose Valley and Fosston.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Rosetown-Elrose.

Mr. Hermanson: — Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker. I have a petition to halt the forced amalgamation of school divisions because the proposed changes to amalgamate 59 school divisions by January 2006 will not prove to be cost effective. The prayer of the petition reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the provincial government to reverse the decision to force amalgamation of school divisions in Saskatchewan and continue reorganization of school divisions on a strictly voluntary basis.

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

Mr. Speaker, the signatures on this petition come from the fine community of Wiseton, and I'm pleased to present it on their behalf.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Estevan.

Ms. Eagles: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, again today I rise to present a petition on behalf of those people from my constituency who are very concerned about the assistance to autism-affected families. And 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 improve access to resources for families who desperately need help for their autistic children.

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

And, Mr. Speaker, this is signed by residents of Estevan, Bienfait, and Moose Jaw. I so present. Thank you.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member from Melfort.

Mr. Gantefer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am proud to rise on behalf of citizens concerned about the condition of Highway 368. The prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take immediate action and make necessary repairs to Highway 368 in order to address safety and economic concerns.

The signatures on this petition are from the communities of Annaheim, St. Brieux, Cudworth, and Lake Lenore. And I'm proud to present on their behalf.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Humboldt.

Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And today I too have a number of petitions with citizens concerned about the

deplorable state of Highway No. 368. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take immediate action and make necessary repairs to Highway 368 in order to address safety and economic concerns.

And the signatures, Mr. Speaker, are from St. Brieux, Melfort, Annaheim, Humboldt, Middle Lake, Muenster, Regina, Naicam, Saskatoon, and Yellow Creek. I so present.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Wood River.

Mr. Huyghebaert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I present a pile of petitions from people who are upset about the forced amalgamation of school divisions. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the provincial government to reverse the decision to force the amalgamation of school divisions in Saskatchewan and continue reorganization of school divisions on a strictly voluntary basis.

Mr. Speaker, these petitions are signed by citizens from Hazenmore, Lafleche, Meyronne, Kincaid, and basically throughout all southwestern Saskatchewan. I so present.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Moosomin.

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As well, to present petitions regarding highways and the disrepair of the highways. And I read the prayer regarding Highway 47:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary actions to ensure the portion of Highway 47 south of Highway 48 to Stoughton be resurfaced.

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

Mr. Speaker, the petitions I present this afternoon are signed from by the good folks from Glenavon, Forget, Osage, Stoughton, Creelman, Ocean Man, and a number of other communities. I so present.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Arm River-Watrous.

Mr. Brkich: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a petition here from citizens that are still waiting for the government to resurface Highway 15:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary steps to ensure that this portion of 15 Highway be repaired and resurfaced immediately so as to remove the safety hazard to all motorists who rely on this vital road for transportation and economic purposes.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Signed by good citizens from Kenaston and Dundurn. I so present.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Biggar.

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to present another petition from constituents opposed to possible reductions of the 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 services maintain at the very least their 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: — The Chair recognizes the member for Carrot River Valley.

Mr. Kerpan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too rise today to present a petition on behalf of citizens of Saskatchewan who are concerned with the effect that the TransGas Asquith natural gas storage project may have on their quality and the quantity of their water, Mr. Speaker. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to immediately address the concerns of all individuals affected by this project, pay 100 per cent of the costs involved to rectify disruptions to water supplies, produce an environment assessment study encompassing a larger area outside the scope of the project, disclose the project's long-term effects on these areas, and consider alternative sources of water for the project.

Mr. Speaker, I so present on behalf of citizens of Grandora.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Saskatoon Northwest.

Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise with a petition. The condition of Highway 368 starting 4 miles south of Lake Lenore to 4 miles south of St. Brieux which has seriously declined over the last number of years, and that the condition of this highway endangers the safety of drivers and harms economic growth in the area. The petition reads . . . prayer:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take immediate action and make necessary repairs to Highway 368 in order to address the safety and economic concerns.

And in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

From the good people of Humboldt and Saskatoon.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Saskatoon Southeast.

Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to rise in the House today to present another petition with regard to the condition of Highway No. 368. I will read from the prayer for relief:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take immediate action and make necessary repairs to Highway 368 in order to address safety and economic concerns.

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

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by citizens of Melfort, Pilger, and Lanigan, and St. Brieux. I so present.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Last Mountain-Touchwood.

Mr. Hart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a petition that I'm pleased to be able to present on behalf of citizens of Saskatchewan who are very concerned and disappointed by this government's unwillingness to implement the SARC [Saskatchewan Association of Rehabilitation Centres] human resources plan and the negative effects it's having on Deer Park Villa in Ituna. The prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly will please consider implementing recommendations as outlined in SARC's human resources plan.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Signatures to this petition, Mr. Speaker, come from the communities of Ituna, Kelliher, and Goodeve. I so present.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Batoche.

Mr. Kirsch: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak to a petition on the Hon. Assembly to agree to the repairing of Highway 368. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take immediate action and make necessary repairs to Highway 368 in order to address the safety and economic concerns.

As is duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

And, Mr. Speaker, I've got 22 pages and they're all signed by the good people of St. Brieux.

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Deputy Clerk: — According to order the following petitions have been reviewed and pursuant to rule 14(7) are hereby read and received:

A new petition concerning repairs to Highway No. 368 as

sessional paper 818.

And addendums to previously tabled petitions being sessional paper nos. 72, 96, 640, 666, 716, 798, 814, and 815.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — Members, I am very pleased to introduce Mr. Marvin Bernstein and his wife Helen, who are seated in the front row in the Speaker's gallery. Mr. Bernstein has been recommended as our newest independent officer of the legislature, the next Children's Advocate for Saskatchewan.

Mr. Bernstein has 28 years of advocacy and senior leadership experience in the child welfare field in Ontario and nationally. Most recently he has served as a director of policy development and legal support for the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies, acting as their provincial spokesperson on issues affecting the interests of children and families.

In February 2005 the Board of Internal Economy appointed a selection panel to conduct the search for an individual to be recommended for the position of the Children's Advocate, an officer of the legislature. The committee held an open, national competition which attracted 131 applicants before recommending the successful candidate to the board at a meeting on May 17, 2005. On May 17 the Board of Internal Economy considered the report of the selection committee and passed a motion recommending that Mr. Bernstein be appointed Children's Advocate for Saskatchewan, effective September 6, 2005.

Later this afternoon members will have an opportunity to meet Mr. Bernstein in the library reading room. At this time I would ask all members to welcome Mr. Bernstein and his wife to Saskatchewan.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Also seated in the gallery are several staff members from the Children's Advocate's office and the Provincial Ombudsman's office, and with them also is Arlene Julé, member of the selection committee and former MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] for Humboldt. And would members of the Assembly please welcome these guests to the Assembly as well.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Biggar.

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you I'd like to introduce three friends and constituents of mine to the members of the legislature. I'd like to introduce Sandy, Georgina, and Stan Bergen, and I'd just like everyone to join me in welcoming them to their legislature.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

[13:45]

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Saskatoon Centre.

Hon. Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this afternoon in the west gallery are a number of people who participated in some very innovative projects to improve habitat for piping plovers and burrowing owls. Mr. Speaker, both of these species are regarded as endangered.

These astonishing individuals have been working with the Saskatchewan Watershed Authority and earlier today I had the opportunity to meet with these individuals and present them with an award in recognition of their contributions and commitment.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce these individuals and some of the guests accompanying them and if they might just stand and give a short wave. In the gallery, Mr. Speaker, is Irvine Warren from the Rouleau area. Mr. Warren has been providing habitat for the endangered burrowing owl now for many years by growing cover that provides an area for the owls to capture food.

Also in the gallery are a number of individuals dedicated to creating a viable habitat for piping plover. Joining us today are the Hoffarts from the Bengough area, Rhonda and Garnet. And unfortunately, from the Assiniboia area Donald and Kathy Stevenson were planning to be here but could not be here.

Mr. Speaker, these people have all contributed to the protection of these shorebirds, providing them with a safe nesting habitat away from grazing livestock to improve the piping plover's breeding success.

With them, Mr. Speaker, are some other guests: Trisha Lang and Dr. Mark Brigham, who study the burrowing owl, working with Mr. Warren; Kim Dohms, coordinator of the Operation Burrowing Owl, Nature Saskatchewan; Claire Sanders, Saskatchewan Burrowing Owl Interpretive Center. And I don't know . . . I don't see Piper. She doesn't have Piper with her today. And Ross Macdonald, an agrologist with the Saskatchewan Watershed Authority. As well with them is Malcolm French from the Watershed Authority, and from my office Rachel Birns.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to acknowledge our federal partners who help fund these projects through the habitat stewardship program for species at risk. Everyone involved should be commended for taking steps to ensure that our burrowing owls and piping plovers are available for future generations.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members of the Assembly to welcome these folks to our Assembly this afternoon.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Saskatoon Northwest.

Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour this afternoon to welcome 29 grade 8 students from Lawson Heights School in my area. I'm sure they're counting the days, not to the end of the school period but until the chance they get an opportunity to choose which high school that they're going to go to. I welcome them here. I'd like to thank their teacher, Mr. Daryl McKen, the chairpeople who helped to bring them here,

Lori Traill, Lori Newlove, Louis Barlas, and Loraine Pura. I want to thank them for bringing these fine young people to their Legislative Assembly. And on behalf of all of us here, welcome.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Regina Walsh Acres.

Ms. Morin: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Seated in your gallery today — and perhaps he could stand when I mention his name — is Michael Carpentier. He is sitting with our Saskatchewan legislative internship program students. And he is currently a master's student in political studies at the University of Saskatchewan. He is originally from Zenon Park, Saskatchewan, and he is a friend of two of our current interns, Rhiannon and Alyssa.

So I would ask all the colleagues in the House to welcome him to the legislature today.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Saskatoon Northwest.

Addictions Expert to Expand Facility

Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize a very special person in our province, Mr. Serge LeClerc, who is head of Teen Challenge, an addiction treatment centre located in Allan, Saskatchewan for men from 18 years of age and older. Serge is a renowned expert in Canada with over 25 years of experience. Serge has been a keynote speaker requested by police forces and provincial governments across Canada.

Mr. LeClerc runs an addiction centre that has graduated 15 young men successfully from a program that heals and comforts them from their addictions. Mr. LeClerc is an expert in his field and yet the member from Sutherland has never called or asked him about his field of expertise or the excellence of his program. A man who is classified as a expert across Canada is not even consulted.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Serge LeClerc is in expansion mode for an additional doubling the size of the facility. Teen Challenge, like other facilities, have a waiting list and hopefully this expansion will assist more young men in our province. Once again this will be done by the parents, business, and other concerned citizens.

To Mr. Serge LeClerc, on behalf of myself and my colleagues, congratulations.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Regina Wascana Plains.

New Water Treatment Plant in Edenwold

Ms. Hamilton: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Water is an essential element of life, and yet water quality is something that we often take for granted. But this is not the case for the people of Edenwold. A few years ago the Premier and I were in Edenwold at the signing of the first water agreement in the province. This morning I was extremely pleased to see the Minister for SaskWater had the privilege of attending the official grand opening of Edenwold's new water treatment plant.

Mr. Speaker, like many small communities throughout our province, Edenwold depends on a dugout as a water source. The relatively shallow water in the presence of sunlight creates an environment in which algae and aquatic vegetation can thrive. This can sometimes result in poor water quality.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the days of poor water quality are a thing of the past in Edenwold. Now thanks to investment by SaskWater of \$530,000 in a new water treatment process, the water now meets all the regulatory standards established by Saskatchewan Environment. Mayor Deval Ruecker says and I quote:

This is an outstanding solution to the challenges faced by our water system. Knowing that it is in the hands of qualified technicians and is being constantly monitored, we can be assured of quality drinking water.

Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the residents of Edenwold for taking steps to have an adequate supply of healthy drinking water that will meet their needs well into the future.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Biggar.

Upcoming Marriage in Biggar

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Shortly after my election in the 1999 provincial election I asked my wife who I should hire to be my constituency assistant for my Redberry Lake office. Her immediate reply was Ed Young. Ed and Cindy went to school together and attended St. Gabriel's Church.

After several days of talking to family and friends and acquaintances who knew about the job and its challenges, Ed accepted the position. Ed's life really has been a training ground for his future job serving constituents first in Redberry Lake then in Biggar.

Ed is not only active in St. Gabriel's parish, serving as welcomer, lecturer and as Eucharistic minister, he is also an active member of the Biggar Knights of Columbus, Lions, Legion, Biggar Wildlife Association, and local gun club. His community involvement also included the chairperson of the Biggar Tourism Board, putting on functions like the Apple Blossom Festival, and fireworks events. Ed also teaches hunter safety.

Terry Zimmer has lived for many years in Biggar. She is now the owner of Shear Touch salon and spa and drives bus for the Biggar School Division. Terry's daughters Sarah and Jessica are

very busy with school and sports. Terry's very active with the girls' team serving as manager, organizer, and driver. Terry has also been very active with the Apple Blossom Festival.

I'm very pleased to announce that on June 25, 2005, Terry Zimmer and Ed Young will be married. Please join me in congratulating Terry and Ed on their special day. We wish you and the girls the very best in the future.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Yorkton.

Yorkton Short Film and Video Festival

Hon. Mr. Serby: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Starting today and running until May 29, Sunday, our fair city of Yorkton will again host the prestigious Yorkton Short Film and Video Festival. In its 58th year, Mr. Speaker, this film festival — the first in Canada — is showcasing to the world its talent that comes from this province and from the country.

Saskatchewan's scenery and thriving natural environment will fuel the creativity and imagination that Yorkton residents and visitors will see on the big screen this weekend. It's no wonder, Mr. Speaker, that this festival has over the years earned the reputation as one of the most outstanding celebrations of film.

Mr. Speaker, participants in the films will be engaged in workshops and numerous social activities that showcase the country's film industry and help educate our young people about the opportunities that can be found right here in our province and across Canada.

I want this afternoon to congratulate film executive director Fay Kowal of the board of directors and all of the volunteers for the work that make this festival such a success in our community and our province.

And, Mr. Speaker, on May 28, I will be participating in this year's Golden Sheaf Awards, a banquet that wraps up the festival's screening and honours the best of the best of the numerous film categories. I invite, this afternoon, Mr. Speaker, all members of the Assembly to join me in Yorkton and take in a film or two at the festival and rub shoulders, Mr. Speaker, with Canada's finest producers and filmmakers. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Kelvington-Wadena.

Voting One's Conscience

Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today in response to the comments made in this Assembly yesterday. That member yesterday, the member from Regina Wash Acres, stood in the House and bared her soul on the government directed legislation.

She said she wanted to help the vulnerable workers in society.

She said she wanted to help the single moms, the working poor, and the young workers. She said she hopes members of the House have the courage and conviction to rise up to the challenges of the 21st century. She said she wrestled with her decision and she gave great thought to her decision. She even went so far as to blame the opposition for forcing her government to repeal the government directed hours legislation.

The irony of this situation escaped the members opposite. The member from Walsh Acres got out of her chair and gave an impassioned speech on the merits of this legislation, and then moments later voted against it. Her actions are both hypocritical and very telling; telling of how democracy is not respected by members opposite. She belongs to a party that does not allow her to vote her conscience. She belongs to a party that does not respect democracy.

During my career as a legislator, I have on two separate occasions voted differently from my party. My party gave me the democratic freedom to vote with my conscience and with my constituents. I was not forced to vote a party line. I was not forced to vote like a mindless bob. I was given a choice, not like the members opposite.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Regina Walsh Acres.

Prärie Sängerfest Choir Festival 2005

Ms. Morin: — Okay. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker . . .

The Speaker: — Order please. Member for Regina Walsh Acres.

Ms. Morin: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, the member for Regina Walsh Acres, am Saskatchewan born, but I'm also a proud German-Canadian so I know that German language traditions are alive and well in the province. However, Mr. Speaker, even I was impressed with the celebration of German culture I had the privilege to attend at the Centre of the Arts here in Regina on Sunday.

Mr. Speaker, every two years for the last 30 years or so, German folk music choirs from Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Alberta have been getting together for a weekend of fellowship and song, celebrating German folk music and culture.

This year, in honour of Saskatchewan's centennial, Regina's Volksliederchor Harmonie asked to host the Prärie Sängerfest Choir Festival 2005. And they did a wonderful job. According to all accounts this is always a great event but this year's surpassed all expectations. Over 350 singers and 13 choirs from across the prairies were in town, Mr. Speaker. There were performances from each individual choir, a massed male choir, a massed female choir, and a finale by all voices in a massed mixed chorus. It was inspiring, Mr. Speaker, and incredibly stirring.

The afternoon performance was followed by a banquet attended by some 500 people and the singing and celebration continued. I felt both proud and privileged to be part of all of it.

Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate and thank all the members and volunteers of the Volksliederchor Harmonie for hosting this outstanding musical celebration and showing once again that Saskatchewan's German community is one of the strongest and brightest cultural threads in the province of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Cannington.

A Health Care Success Story

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The leader of the Saskatchewan Party has said in the past that we will give credit to the government when credit is deserved. Well today I'd like to share with this Assembly a health care success story.

The patient was born in Naicam and has resided in Wascana Plains constituency for the past three years. Mr. Speaker, two weeks ago Carmello Jackson had X-rays to confirm that he needed knee surgery. He was prepared for the usual long waiting list he has heard about from family and friends. But lo and behold he got in to see his doctor right away, he got his X-rays that he required, and was booked in for surgery in two weeks time — two weeks, Mr. Speaker. And the reason that he had to wait for two weeks is because his surgeon is in Germany. The surgeon returns from his trip on May 30, and Mr. Jackson will see him at 8:30 a.m. that day and will undergo day surgery.

Now we know that a two-week wait for knee surgery is practically unheard of in Saskatchewan. In fact one of our researchers required this surgery and had to wait for 22 months — almost two years. But Mr. Jackson gets in right away.

And of course that begs the question, Mr. Speaker: how is it that some cases get treated almost immediately while others must wait almost two years or more in pain, unable to walk, unable to enjoy life's qualities? Well I'll tell you why, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Jackson got special treatment because he's a yellow Labrador retriever. Mr. Speaker, Jackson's future is very bright in Saskatchewan because when our pets get better health care than people, one thing is perfectly clear — this province is going to the dogs.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

[14:00]

ORAL QUESTIONS

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Thunder Creek.

Worldwide Pork Ceases Operations

Mr. Stewart: — Mr. Speaker, yesterday hundreds of people in Moose Jaw and area were dealt a devastating blow. Worldwide Pork in Moose Jaw shut down operations, laid off 300 workers, and left dozens of hog producers and local businesses wondering if and when they will ever get paid.

Mr. Speaker, this government is one of the owners of

Worldwide Pork. They invested \$1 million in this business. And the Minister of Agriculture is listed as a major shareholder. Mr. Speaker, beyond the government's \$1 million equity investment, does the government have any outstanding loans to Worldwide Pork?

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Agriculture and Food.

Hon. Mr. Wartman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, Mr. Speaker, the government does hold a position in Worldwide Pork. And Worldwide Pork is however a private company, and the owner of that company has been working diligently recently to try and restructure relationships with both the producers and within the company to try and make this company successful.

Today layoff notices did go out, and there will be a downtime, Mr. Speaker. But it is our hope — and we are monitoring very closely — it is our hope indeed that Worldwide Pork will be back up processing and being a vital part of the economy in Moose Jaw and this province. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Thunder Creek.

Mr. Stewart: — Mr. Speaker, when the government invests in business ventures, they have a responsibility to ensure that people don't get hurt. The collapse of Worldwide Pork is a disaster for everyone involved — the 300 families who lost their jobs, the hog producers and other businesses who are owed money, and Saskatchewan taxpayers who are on the hook for \$1 million at least. Can the minister tell the 300 workers who lost their jobs yesterday if and when they will get their jobs back?

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Agriculture and Food.

Hon. Mr. Wartman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we have a secured position of course with Worldwide Pork. And as I indicated in the first answer to the question, the owner is working diligently to try and restructure the relationship with the producers. The producers need to be delivering hogs if the plant is going to be operational. And there has to be a confidence that the owner will provide them the returns that they deserve for their hogs. Mr. Speaker, in order to do that, there needs to be a restructuring. Now is the time when that owner is trying to get that restructuring in place.

There are other options that could be pursued down the road, Mr. Speaker, and certainly we will be on top of it. And we want to see a vital operation there in Moose Jaw, and that's what we're working towards. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Thunder Creek.

Mr. Stewart: — Mr. Speaker, hog producers stopped delivering to Worldwide Pork a couple of weeks ago because they weren't getting paid. The Minister of Agriculture is one of

the owners and he's not paying his bills.

Mr. Speaker, producers have told us that Worldwide Pork owes them as much as \$3.5 million, and they fear they may be at the bottom of the list of creditors. Can the minister tell us today how much money does Worldwide Pork owe hog producers, and when can they expect to be paid?

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Agriculture and Food.

Hon. Mr. Wartman: — Well, Mr. Speaker, this seems odd coming from the Conservative member opposite, advising on government involvement in investment. But we know that they like to play both sides of the fence verbally as often as they can, Mr. Speaker.

But, Mr. Speaker, as a responsible holder of debt in this company, we certainly want to see it productive. We want to see it operational. And those people who have been delivering to Worldwide Pork knew that there was risk in delivering and were receiving a premium for delivering to that plant, Mr. Speaker. That premium was to encourage them despite the risks there. And, Mr. Speaker, once that relationship is restructured, it is the owner's hope that they will continue to deliver product there. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Thunder Creek.

Mr. Stewart: — Mr. Speaker, let's try again. This NDP [New Democratic Party] government keeps telling us how they have to bring in labour laws to protect workers from bad corporations. Yet what does this government do with one of the companies it owns? It lays off 300 workers. It doesn't pay its bills. Not exactly a model corporate citizen.

Mr. Speaker, this NDP government walked away from millions of dollars of outstanding bills in SPUDCO [Saskatchewan Potato Utility Development Company]. Now they appear to be doing the same thing again. The people of Moose Jaw and area would like a specific answer. When will Worldwide Pork re-open? When will the workers get their jobs back? When will hog producers and other creditors get paid? And how much money exactly is owing to hog producers?

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Agriculture and Food.

Hon. Mr. Wartman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, these high-rolling financiers across the way here seem to be mistaking something between owning a company, Mr. Speaker, and carrying some of the debt in that company, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Order, please. Order. Order. Order. Minister of Agriculture and Food.

Hon. Mr. Wartman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think it is very . . . I'll step back and just say I think it is very important that all of us understand the distinction between being an owner and holding some of the debt. We do hold some of the

debt. It is secured, Mr. Speaker, and we want to make sure that taxpayers' money is protected in this.

The owner is responsible for the operations of that plant. And, Mr. Speaker, we are encouraging that owner to follow through, to restructure in a responsible way so that those people who he owes money to can be paid and so that this operation can move forward and be productive in the future. That's our hope. That's what we're working towards, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Kelvington-Wadena.

Legislation for Treatment of Drug Addicted Youth

Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, one month ago I introduced a private member's Bill, The Protection of Children Abusing Drugs Act. We know this government does not fully support the Bill, yet we've still not heard one single, solid alternative.

Georgina and Stan Bergen and their daughter, Sandy, are here today from Biggar to tell this government this status quo will not work. Something must be done.

Mr. Speaker, Sandy overdosed on crystal meth a little over a year ago. She's been clean for a year now, and she and her parents believe the government needs to give parents more tools to get kids the help they need. Mr. Speaker, will the minister tell them why she hasn't done anything yet.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Community Resources and Employment.

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The member says one thing and the facts say another. The fact is that we have as of today got in place mechanisms for prevention, for treatment, for education, for reducing drug supply, enforcement, as well as the 24-hour health line. Now these things in this budget, there's money for new treatment beds, and as well I committed to and have been using the full powers of section 18 to apprehend youth where that's necessary.

But before we take the additional step of locking up youth, you have to be sure that the processes and mechanisms that are put in place strike a balance between the rights of youth and the need for protection of children.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Kelvington-Wadena.

Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, Sandy had been abusing drugs since she was 13, and she was in and out of treatment when she was younger. Georgina and Stan were frustrated because they couldn't get Sandy to stay. Last May Georgina got a call from Sandy who said to her mom, I'm going to die. Sandy overdosed on crystal meth and was rushed to Saskatoon Hospital. She was in a coma for 10 days. Her kidneys, liver, and lungs failed. She only had 7 per cent of her heart

function. Miraculously she survived. And today she has 52 per cent of her heart function.

Mr. Speaker, Georgina and Stan and Sandy know that parents need more tools to get their children help. If this government isn't going to act on my Bill, what are they going to do?

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister for CRE [Community Resources and Employment].

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — I think I want to mention a couple things here, Mr. Speaker. Historically it was in 1987 when some of the members opposite were part of the government that the provisions were removed that allowed apprehension of youth who were 16 and 17 because too many young people were ending up in jail, Mr. Speaker. So it's very important that the standards we set, that people who make that decision, and the appeal procedures that are bearable to the youth are appropriate.

I met recently with the Children's Advocate office, and they are going to be consulting youth, not to form an opinion on it, but to bring forward the voices of youth in this discussion. I made a commitment that by September we'll be coming to a final conclusion. All the other services are being put in place as we speak.

But the fact is Alberta, on which this Bill is copied and modelled, is taking a year because they understand the seriousness of having the right processes and services in place before you put the law in place.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Kelvington-Wadena.

Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, Alberta's waiting till next July so that they will actually have the treatment beds ready. They've got the Bill passed and what they're telling parents is, we have the tools ready and we're going to be working on it. This government isn't doing that.

Doctors in Saskatoon told Sandy's parents last May that she would not live. All of her organs were failing. Her heart was as hard as a rock. Her lungs had collapsed and all of her veins had hardened. She brought a picture of herself lying in a hospital bed with more tubes going into her body than anyone can imagine. When she finally came out of the coma, she was released into her family's care within three days.

Mr. Speaker, she could hardly walk, and she was given no aftercare except a follow-up EKG [electrocardiogram]. This family was given no support, no home care, no addictions counselling, no treatment, no nothing.

Why is this government failing to provide families with addictions services especially in cases like this? Is it because we just don't have enough beds?

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister for CRE.

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — Mr. Speaker, I take great exception to the statement that we are doing nothing. This very budget that we are discussing in this legislature contains provisions for additional beds in the province for this very purpose.

And, you know, I have a huge, huge care and sympathy for the family that's here today. We all have had experiences in our families where people have gotten tragically involved with things that were hard to handle.

And as a result the member from Sutherland who is talking to all the people with expertise around the province . . . And certainly if the member opposite has people he should be talking to that he hasn't, then he can be helpful, by forwarding those names to that member. So before he provides his final report in June, we can have the best thought possible to put into this question.

But I have to say that it is a combined effort of enforcement interprovincially as the premiers will be doing at the conference in June. But as well we are putting all those services in place and strengthening the ones that already exist.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Kelvington-Wadena.

Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, Sandy's family has been through extreme hardship. When Sandy was on meth, she would stay up for hours and hours. And when she was trying to stay clean, her four sisters each took turns staying with her, talking to her, trying to help her get through the nights. Mr. Speaker, Sandy's mom believes if she could've forced her daughter to stay in treatment when she was younger, it would never have come to this.

Mr. Speaker, will this government allow my Bill to go to the committee stage, so we can get one step closer to giving parents the ability to give their children help?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister for CRE.

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — Mr. Speaker, again I would say that it is very important to be thoughtful about the services and the processes before you take the step of locking someone up. Now I have to say that this is a whole community problem. I think it's very good that the young person is fortunate to have a caring family, a caring community, but we also need services that work.

In some instances where young people have been locked up, it's been found that it causes them to be more resistant over the long term to the interventions being made and sometimes causes much of the problem to go underground.

So we're checking this out very carefully. I have taken the step of apprehending, so I am acting in the spirit of what the member is suggesting. And I think that no matter what we do, we will have a much more comprehensive program in place much before Alberta.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

[14:15]

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Kelvington-Wadena.

Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, the crystal meth dealers and traffickers aren't going to go on holidays or wait until this government thinks they have things just right. They're still going to be dealing to our children.

When this Premier ran for leadership on the NDP, he told people if he became Premier, he would work to reconnect people with the government. In a November 2000 news release from his campaign, the Premier said, and I quote:

I believe every citizen should have access to the legislative process and the results would be better public policy [and] that . . . [would be] good for Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, the private member's Bill may not be perfect, but at least it's a starting point. Why doesn't this government allow this Bill to pass second reading and go to committee so that people like Sandy and George and Stan can have access to the process and give their input? They have walked the walk, and they have much to give.

Mr. Speaker, will the Premier keep his word? Will he give these people a chance to have their input?

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister for CRE.

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — Mr. Speaker, there are many people having people present their input at the moment. There is the member from Sutherland who's doing the special work on this, who's been all around this province, staying in communities for long periods of time to meet with treatment workers, to meet with families, to meet in community meetings.

Certainly in our department, we're talking to all the provinces about what they found works best in their provinces. Certainly the Children's Advocate office is looking into some of the youth issues related to this.

At the end of the day, Mr. Speaker, I think we'll have a very good process. And we will not just be dealing with crystal meth, Mr. Speaker. We'll be dealing with all of the other addictions, many of which — although not as perhaps immediate in their impacts as crystal meth — are certainly as life-threatening and as life-damaging. And we want to have those all included.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Martensville.

Improper Access to Information

Mr. Heppner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, well it's déjà vu all over again. Back on May 22, 2002, Mr. Speaker, I rose in this House and called for swift action to ensure that the security of information that people give the Government of

Saskatchewan would remain secure. And I was assured, Mr. Speaker, by the members opposite that since 1992, this has been a very serious concern.

Mr. Speaker, if it's such a serious concern, why do we once again have government employees under suspension for improperly accessing a government vehicle registry database?

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister for Community Resources and Employment.

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. There have been three employees suspended without pay for improper use of data. There are a very limited number of employees who have access to this data, and the problem was caught because SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance] noted the high number of contacts. And that's how it was caught, and that's as it should be. And it was dealt with.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Martensville.

Mr. Heppner: — Well, Mr. Speaker, as it should be should be that there is no access where we have our information dilly-dallied out throughout the province. That's as it should be.

Mr. Speaker, we had this government hire Deloitte & Touche to undertake a sweeping privacy review in 2002, Mr. Speaker. This happened after employees from SGI, the Health department, the Department of Social Services as it was then known, and SaskPower — all of those, Mr. Speaker — were found to have provided confidential information to unauthorized people. On May 22, 2002, almost two years ago to the day, we had the minister responsible stand up in this House and say what a serious concern this was. Then why, Mr. Speaker, is it still happening?

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister for the Public Service Commission.

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. First of all I want to indicate to the public that the Government of Saskatchewan takes matters of privacy and confidentiality very seriously. And any breach of policies or legislative provisions is a serious matter and may result in discipline up to and including dismissal.

Mr. Speaker, when we became aware of a situation, we undertook the following. We hired in May 2002 Deloitte & Touche to review the policies and procedures and information security practices regarding confidential information. In February 2003 our government announced that it would implement all 11 of the Deloitte & Touche recommendations. In 2003 our government established an overarching privacy framework which designates a privacy officer in each department. And, Mr. Speaker, in 2003-04, during a period of fiscal restraint, the government expanded the budget and staffing for the Office of Information and Privacy Commissioner. And, Mr. Speaker, in this budget we've established an access and privacy . . .

The Speaker: — The member's time has elapsed.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Martensville.

Mr. Heppner: — Well, Mr. Speaker, after that bit of a filibuster for an answer, we should probably just ask, how's it working for you?

Mr. Speaker, they say one thing; they do another. We've had the story about back in 2002 how they were going to solve it all. They haven't, Mr. Speaker. They say that protection of public information is a serious concern. They love to talk about reviews, policies, security framework, security committees put in place to deal with a whole range of issues. They just don't do anything that works, Mr. Speaker. They talk and talk, and the problems obviously don't get solved.

Mr. Speaker, people have a simple expectation of government, a simple one. Protect the sensitive public information it has about people. Mr. Speaker, why does this government continually fail to deal on that issue?

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister for the Public Service Commission.

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Speaker, in addition to all the information I gave in my previous answer, we delivered training sessions to over 1,000 managers in government on government's obligation under the freedom of information and protection of privacy legislation. In addition, Mr. Speaker, in the Crown sector they also developed a Crown sector privacy framework and delivered information to their managers.

Mr. Speaker, it was SGI, it was SGI that was able to determine that there had been improper access to information. And, Mr. Speaker, we believe that our framework policy and all of the mechanisms we've put in place identified this problem. And, Mr. Speaker, appropriate action has been taken.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Last Mountain-Touchwood.

Misuse of Funds in Environment Department

Mr. Hart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as a result of the Department of Environment's decision to repeatedly ignore the Provincial Auditor's recommendations, we have a situation where up to a half a million dollars of taxpayers' money may have gone missing. The minister said yesterday that he had made some changes within his department — as far as approval of payments and those sorts of things — yet the auditor says there's no way of knowing if those policies are actually being followed.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister tell us is anyone responsible to ensure that those policies are being followed?

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of the

Environment.

Hon. Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And of course the facts say one thing; the opposition — the Conservative Party over there — says another thing. We are not repeatedly ignoring. We are working hard to resolve this issue. We've put in several measures to make sure this stops. To the point, Mr. Speaker, we've hired a new person in the internal audit process to ensure this kind of thing doesn't happen again.

As well, Mr. Speaker, we've taken steps as part of managers' evaluations, annual evaluations, that this kind of thing doesn't happen again. Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Last Mountain-Touchwood.

Mr. Hart: — Mr. Speaker, the auditor noted that changes were made, but the auditor also said in his report that there was no way of ensuring that those policies were being followed, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, also the auditor noted on page 92 of his report, there's a table that outlines the spending of the resource stewardship branch, Mr. Speaker, over a period of six years. And the table indicates that out of a possible spending of \$2.2 million, possibly half a million dollars of that has gone missing, Mr. Speaker. Almost 23 per cent of that fund of \$2.2 million has gone missing, Mr. Speaker. How can the minister allow that to happen — such a large portion of that pot of money to go missing — and no one noticed over a period of six years, Mr. Speaker? How can the minister explain that?

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of the Environment.

Hon. Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. You know we take this very seriously, and we've been working with the auditor to ensure this kind of thing does not happen. And we have implemented several, several steps to make sure.

First of all we've implemented a new delegated signing authority that resulted in segregated approval for payments for those who've initiated the requests. We've initiated a training program for employees that focus on financial operating processes and procedures. We've delivered training programs to increase fraud awareness and internal control training. As well as I said we've increased internal audit capacity. And, Mr. Speaker, managers now receive annual performance reviews and will be evaluated on compliance with our approved authority grid that we initiated last year, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, with leave to move a motion to appoint our new Children's Advocate.

The Speaker: — Order, please. The Premier has requested leave to move a motion with respect to the appointment of the

Children's Advocate. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Leave has been granted.

MOTIONS

Appointment of the Children's Advocate

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, at the conclusion of my very brief remarks, I will be moving the motion that will officially appoint Mr. Marvin Bernstein as our new Children's Advocate. I understand my motion will be seconded by the member from Saskatoon Northwest.

Mr. Speaker, as members of this Assembly we all have recognized that the Office of the Children's Advocate has been very, very well served by Dr. Deborah Parker-Loewen since that office's inception — the first of its kind as an independent agency anywhere in Canada. And so we are sure that the selection committee that was struck to find a replacement faced a very daunting challenge when it came to filling the shoes of Dr. Deborah Parker-Loewen. They have, I am sure — given the information that we have received, given your introduction today, Mr. Speaker — we are certain that this committee has done an excellent job. And I want to thank members of the selection committee for their work and for their very wise recommendation of Mr. Marvin Bernstein.

The Children's Advocate office, Mr. Speaker, was created in 1994 as part of Saskatchewan's Action Plan for Children. As an independent officer of this Legislative Assembly, the Children's Advocate works to promote the best interests of Saskatchewan's children in our society and within our government departments and agencies. The Saskatchewan Children's Advocate office has therefore a very special and very important role to play in the life of our province and in the future of our province. The Children's Advocate not only listens to, but gives voice to Saskatchewan's children. This is an essential role in any society that strives to promote the welfare and dignity of every member of the human family.

To simply state that Mr. Bernstein is eminently qualified for the Office of the Children's Advocate may be something of an understatement. The time does not permit us here to enumerate all of Mr. Bernstein's accomplishments, his professional or his volunteer activities, his publications. But I can just say that one look at Marvin Bernstein's CV [curriculum vitae] makes it very clear that he has devoted much of his life to the service of children.

And so I thank Marvin Bernstein for offering to this province, to its people, and particularly to its children, his very considerable talents, his vast experience. And we look forward to his valued service beginning today for the people and the children of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Therefore, Mr. Speaker, by leave of the

Assembly I move, seconded by the member from Saskatoon Northwest:

That an humble address be presented to Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor recommending to the Lieutenant Governor in Council that Mr. Marvin Bernstein be appointed the Children's Advocate pursuant to section 12.1 of The Ombudsman and Children's Advocate Act.

[14:30]

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — By leave, Mr. Speaker, to conclude the motion. And I will read the motion again from the beginning:

That an humble address be presented to Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor recommending to the Lieutenant Governor in Council that Mr. Marvin Bernstein be appointed the Children's Advocate pursuant to section 12.1 of The Ombudsman and Children's Advocate Act effective September 6, 2005.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Premier, the member for Saskatoon Riversdale, seconded by the member for Saskatoon Northwest:

That an humble address be presented to Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor recommending to the Lieutenant Governor in Council that Mr. Marvin Bernstein be appointed the Children's Advocate pursuant to section 12.1 of The Ombudsman and Children's Advocate Act effective September 6, 2005.

The Chair recognizes the member for Saskatoon Northwest.

Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity to respond on behalf of the official opposition. I would like to concur with the Premier's remarks.

I would also like to say that the staff that are here with you today, sir, have done a commendable job. You are starting from a good foundation. I would also like to thank the committee and those members that are here today. From 132 people, sir, having read your resumé, it was a wise choice, a unanimous choice. And I can certainly understand why.

Ms. Deborah Parker-Loewen did a tremendous job on behalf of the children of the province of Saskatchewan. And I see that Mr. Bernstein's credentials are very impressive. And I know that you will continue to represent our most valuable assets, our children.

You, sir, have the full support of the Saskatchewan Party and we will welcome you and the strengths that you bring to your current position. Please call upon us at any time to assist you. And I look forward to personally meeting with you and having a discussion. Welcome and congratulations.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — With respect to the motion moved by the member for Saskatoon Riversdale, seconded by the member for

Saskatoon Northwest, regarding the appointment of the Children's Advocate, is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Speaker: — Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Motion is carried.

Why is the member from Cannington on his feet?

Mr. D'Autremont: — Mr. Speaker, on a point of order.

The Speaker: — Would the member from Cannington state his point of order.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise on a point of order that twice during question period the Minister of Agriculture, the member from Regina Qu'Appelle Valley, did twice deliberately mislead this Assembly and therefore the public of Saskatchewan. The member stated that — in questioning — that the members of the opposition, which he called financial high rollers, did not understand the difference between ownership and lending, Mr. Speaker.

Well a quick review, Mr. Speaker, points out that the member from Regina Qu'Appelle Valley is indeed a pig plutocrat.

The Speaker: — Order please. Order please. Order please. The member is not presenting a point of order. The member is entering into debate. The point of order is declined.

Why is the member from Melfort on his feet?

Mr. Gantefer: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to raise a point of order about information that was given to this House from the Minister of Agriculture.

The Speaker: — Would the member state his point of order.

Mr. Gantefer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the answers to questions from the member from Thunder Creek about the equity position in the Moose Jaw pork company, the Minister of Agriculture said that we should understand there's a difference between ownership and being a lender.

In a review of the title search of World Wide Pork Company Ltd., equity number 101002103, it lists the shareholders of the company and included in those shareholders listed is the Minister of Agriculture and Food. And it's a shareholder, and it says yes.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to have you review this document and the fact that there's 1 million shares listed in the minister's name and to see if the minister has indeed been accurate in the way he represented the ownership of this company by the province of Saskatchewan.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for allowing me this opportunity to address the point of order that's before the Legislative Assembly, or the so-called point of order. Clearly what we have here is a matter of debate and interpretation of terminology. I certainly understand, given their genesis back in the 1980s, that the opposition members have always had difficulties in Saskatchewan understanding finances, and today shows it's no different, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Members, I've listened to both sides and what we do have is an obvious dispute over facts which is a debatable item. A point of order is denied.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The Speaker: — Order please. Order please. Order please. Order please. Order please. Order. I would caution the member from Cannington of any remarks he might toss across the floor that are unparliamentary because it simply creates a great deal of disorder in the legislature. It's unparliamentary.

Are there any written questions? I recognize the Government Whip.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm extremely pleased once again to stand on behalf of the government and table responses to written questions no. 1,280 through 1,293 inclusive.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

Deputy Clerk: — Committee of Finance.

The Speaker: — I do now leave the Chair for the Assembly to go into Committee of Finance.

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

General Revenue Fund Health Vote 32

(Subvote HE01)

The Deputy Chair: — The business before the committee is estimates, Department of Health. Would the minister like to introduce his officials?

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Thank you. It's my pleasure to introduce to the Assembly this afternoon Mike Shaw, who is the associate deputy minister; Bonnie Blakley, who is sitting behind Mike, the executive director of health human resource planning branch; Max Hendricks, who is the executive director of finance and administration branch; and Lawrence Krahn, who is the assistant deputy minister.

The Deputy Chair: — Okay, thank you. Before the committee is central management services, (HE01). I recognize the

member from Arm River-Watrous.

Mr. Brkich: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I welcome the minister here today and his officials. I have just one concern that was raised, brought to me by a constituent concerned about funding for BridgePoint Centre for Eating Disorders. The centre is located in Mildred, Saskatchewan. I understand it's about the only centre of its kind in Saskatchewan and possibly maybe even in Canada.

The centre has been funded by the provincial government for the last number of years. They have now asked for an increase in funding for the first time in five years, and the request was denied. The reason for the request for an increase was due to the fact that their clients have increased from 166 to 321, and they are no longer able to sustain that many people. They will have to look at cutting back services. Can you give me a little information on that particular facility and the funding involved?

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — It's my understanding that through the Heartland Health Region they have a budgetary amount of about \$350,000. In this year's budget, as a community-based organization they received the 1 per cent increase in salaries across the board for the people that work there. So they have slightly more than that \$350,000.

I have personally met with the Chair of the board of directors briefly about this, and I know that there are some concerns about how this works. And we are trying to take a look at the services that they're providing and the kinds of things that they're doing. And that it is an area where we know that they do provide good service for many people. And so we are looking at their funding issues.

Mr. Brkich: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's good to hear because I know that they have been talking to some of the officials and also putting out petitions, I believe. And it sounds like it is a good program. The constituent that had to take their daughter there was quite happy with the results.

So my request to you would that you keep an open mind in this, and if you could possibly increase the funding for something like this because I think this is . . . The schools do quite a bit of awareness with this. It is a problem that isn't in Saskatchewan. It has been growing and being made aware of. There is a variety of organizations that deal with eating disorders and that I think any help that we can provide there will be very good.

So I will be in contact with the people, and I hope that you will keep an open mind on this. And if you can increase the funding for it. And we will maybe talk about this in a later date. Thank you.

[14:45]

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Thank you for that comment. And I would just remind the member opposite and the people in the province that BridgePoint provides good service, and it complements services that are provided right across the province through the regional health authorities as it relates to eating disorders. And it's a continual challenge to provide the right services, but we are going to do that.

The Deputy Chair: — I recognize the member from Moosomin.

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Minister. Mr. Minister, the last time we had Health estimates up I just had a kind of a tail end before we adjourned for the evening. But I would like to just raise a couple more points regarding the issue of a renal dialysis unit for the community of Broadview.

In the response at that time, Mr. Minister, you indicated that right now the dialysis committee for the whole province is looking at another three- to five-year plan because you indicated what had been done in the past seems to be working quite well. And you indicated at that time that information from Broadview would be certainly ... or you said obviously included in that.

Mr. Minister, just chatting with the gentleman who's been really working diligently to address the needs of people who need renal dialysis in the area ... and there's further meetings taking place at this very moment. And the concern I have, and I would like to hear from you, Mr. Minister, when you talk about the provincial dialysis committee and looking at where we have dialysis units at this point, will the committee actually be given the ability if they see the need to look at centres like Broadview?

And as we talked the last time, we indicated there were 17 individuals currently that travel from that area, and when you look at a centre like Moose Jaw — when the announcement was made — 12 individuals receiving services. We looked at Broadview and we see the First Nations communities all around that area have all given overwhelming support for a unit in that community.

What assurances, Mr. Minister, can you give these people that the work they're doing is worthwhile and is the type of work that is needed to address concerns of people who have to face these types of health issues?

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — The province-wide committee that looks after this whole program has provided advice and guidance as the renal dialysis has been expanded across the province. And what they do is get the information from who the patients are, where they live, what kinds of requirements there are. And they look at it very objectively and then say this is an area where you need to expand, this is an area where maybe there's not quite the same demand. My sense is that they do this in a fair way. They take information from communities where they've identified concerns, but they also are looking at a broader, longer-term picture.

I know for a fact that they continue to look at the Estevan area for the next expansion of renal dialysis. But I think the information that's been provided by this community and by the First Nations in that area, would be information that they would look at in light of the overall provincial plan.

Mr. Toth: — Mr. Chair, Mr. Minister, so I'm taking from what you've just indicated that the community and the ... all the people involved in the proposal for the Broadview proposal, could contact or would be able to contact, or how would they contact the provincial dialysis committee to have ... and have

the ability to sit down with this committee to present to them all the objective work that they have done to this point that is showing there's an overwhelming need in the area. And it's just not the need of receiving dialysis but as you're aware, Mr. Minister, for people who do have to travel to the larger centres, it's ... there's the cost, there's the mileage, there's the food costs. And it's not just the expenditure of receiving the care, it's the additional costs that people face of this nature.

And, Mr. Minister, I would also like to indicate that from the ongoing discussion and debate that has taken place, the community have been contacted by a doctor and a nurse in Manitoba that have actually been instrumental in putting together a dialysis unit north of Winnipeg — I believe it's in the northern part of the province — and they are willing to come to Broadview to share some of their thoughts and expertise.

So I guess the question at the end of the day, Mr. Minister, is, will this committee ... or what would be the process for the committee to sit down with the provincial committee to discuss their proposals for a unit in Broadview?

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — The normal access for people to get in contact with the committee would be through the Regina Qu'Appelle Regional Health Authority. That's where for southern Saskatchewan, the expertise lies around this whole service and I think that this committee has in fact had some contact already with the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Authority and the officials there. That's where the needs are assessed and then developed which ... and that information that they have is provided to the province-wide committee, who then makes recommendations as to where expansion should take place.

The Deputy Chair: — I recognize the member from Indian Head-Milestone.

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. I've again a number of questions in a number of different areas and it probably won't be any too terribly long in any one area.

The first question I have is regarding — this is very specific — but brachial therapy, and I don't know if you have any officials that will be able to help in this. But I had met a person in my constituency who ... I guess, brachial therapy, I didn't know much about it and I've been looking on the Internet and reading about brachial therapy. And it's implanting to deal with cancer, an implant and radiation implant and it's mainly targeted towards prostate cancer I believe.

This lady was ... The person that I was talking to, was questioning why it wouldn't be used in cases of breast cancer and I certainly don't have any answers for that. She was told that there was no one trained in the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Authority that could do that. They dealt with the prostate cancer but couldn't deal with breast cancer.

And she said it was just, to her ... It was explained to her that it was an issue of training; that there was no one trained in the area. Well this lady thought well if it just takes training, she went to work and has raised I think roughly around \$15,000 in that area. And said if we need somebody trained, we'll darn well pay for it. Here's some money to train the person.

Now when I did my quick bit of research on this therapy they didn't talk anything regarding this type of therapy for anything but prostate cancer. Can you expand? Do you have anybody that can expand on that? Or maybe I can leave it with you and get more information and get back to this lady in the future.

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — I don't think you'd want my speculation on this so we will take notice of that question and provide you with further information on that from some of the people that we would have access to in the department, and so that I can provide that to you hopefully by early next week.

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. I think probably what I will do is talk to this lady then and tell her that you'll be working on it and maybe even give her the number directly. I mean I could get the information; I'd just be transferring it and it might as well come from your department. So I will talk to her and have her phone your department on this. I'll just turn it over to the member from Cypress Hills.

The Deputy Chair: — I recognize the member for Cypress Hills.

Mr. Elhard: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Minister, I have a couple of questions on a couple of different issues, substantially different than I think have been addressed in this House in the recent past. The first has to do with a public health issue concerning the swimming pool in the town of Cabri. The community pool there is some 60 years old, I believe. It's really a fairly old structure but, to date, has provided very good service to not just the community of Cabri, but all the communities along Highway 32 from Leader right through to Swift Current.

And as a consequence of very careful attention by a group of volunteers in the community, they've been able to upgrade it and keep it in good running order. There's never been an issue with water quality in that particular swimming pool but apparently, according to the last public health inspection, it does not meet the 1999 standards for swimming pools.

Now the public health inspector has basically indicated that he's prepared to give them, in the community, five years to make the improvements that the 1999 standards require. But that's going to cost upwards of \$60,000. The community says they simply cannot generate that kind of money in the small community.

The request from the community is this: would the minister and the department consider grandfathering the Cabri swimming pool as a working and suitable facility in view of the obligations that would be brought to bear on the community in terms of meeting the requirements of the new regulations?

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — This is a very specific question about an issue. There is an appeal process within the Cypress Health Region around this particular order.

But I think what we have to do is step back a little bit and say why are there standards for swimming pools in general across the country. And basically, it relates to protection of the public. And I think that what maybe needs to happen is further discussion with the public health inspector and with the local community around how do we want to protect our kids and our

families to make sure that somebody doesn't end up with a problem that the national standards are meant to prevent.

And so I don't think anybody really would want to get into a grandfathering kind of position in a place where you're talking about the protection of the public — especially protection of, primarily, kids.

Mr. Elhard: — Mr. Minister, I understand the, you know, the concerns about liability and so forth. But you know the fact of the matter is that the pool has never had a bad report in terms of the water quality. The inspection of the pool has been met with immediate response by the community. They've upgraded the facility. They've done whatever changes needed to be made to the facility for the convenience and health of the patrons of that particular pool.

What you've got here is a requirement under the new regulations that a cement curb and a means of circulating the water off the top of the pool be made part of the facility. What happens now is they take water off the bottom of the pool and recirculate it, refilter it, and put it back into the pool.

So what you're asking for is cement guttering and skimming of the water off the top as opposed to recirculating it through the bottom. And it doesn't seem to me that given the, you know, given the added expense of making these changes for no likely improvement in terms of water quality, that it's a necessary step.

I guess the other thing, Mr. Minister, is that the individuals from the community of Cabri who have struggled with this particular requirement have done some surveys of their own. And they can't find any other pools in the province that are in the similar situation or a similar situation to them. They have found that almost all the other operating pools are significantly newer in construction and already meet these standards. Even though they might be 20 years old or so, those standards were included in the construction of the pool at the time of erection. So the point is that, even if you did consider grandfathering, it would be a rarity. This would be probably maybe the . . . one or two of the possible exceptions to the rule.

And I think what you would find, Mr. Minister, is the community would be quite, quite prepared to accept their obligation — if a provision of this sort was granted to them but their water quality was found to be poor, that they would take the necessary steps to close the pool. But in the meantime there doesn't appear to be any justification for closing the pool simply to meet standards which will make really no difference to the water quality.

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — As Minister of Health, part of my job is to be the preserver of standards and things, especially in public health areas around making sure the public is protected. And I really think that any solution here would have to involve the local community working with the public health inspector and obviously the managers of that particular operation to see how it can meet the standards. Because the national standards or the standards that are provided in this particular area are there for a reason. They're there to protect the public, and I don't think that any of us would want to step back from those standards unless there was some very, very good reason.

[15:00]

Mr. Elhard: — It would seem to me, Mr. Minister, that the standard that is of every . . . is of concern to everyone is the quality of the water. That is what is the priority here. That is what is being achieved by the standards, the new standards that have been instituted in 1999, and apparently are being achieved by the existing arrangements in the pool, in the existing configuration of the pool. The water standards, the water quality are being met.

And it's, you know, akin to standards to vehicles and insisting that because your vehicle is 25 years old, you don't meet the current standard so you have to take yours off the road. Now, you know, that analogy only goes so far, I understand. But nevertheless that's a very real concern for this community. And if we're going to impose the new standards, we're basically saying to the community of Cabri that your pool needs to be shut down, and I don't think that that's what we want to achieve here. We want to find some solution.

So if there's an appeal process that's available to the community, if there is some latitude, some discretion that is achievable here — assuming that they can meet the water quality standards — I think that it would be in the best interests of everybody to try and mediate a successful resolution to this particular issue.

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — It sounds to me it's appropriate that the local community continue to talk with the public health inspector to sort out how they can file an appeal with the Cypress Regional Health Authority. And the issue's been raised here, and I know that the staff in the department who work in this particular area will see if there's something that they can do to provide assistance to the Cypress Regional Health Authority.

Mr. Elhard: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. I appreciate that, and the community will appreciate any further attempts to resolve this particular impasse.

Mr. Minister, while I have your time here, I'd like to raise a couple of other issues. One I guess pertains to the situation affecting the community of Climax and the Border Health Centre. And I know that the last time we talked there was just about that same time a meeting between individuals from the communities of Climax and Frontier. They were planning to meet and have ongoing discussions with the board of the Cypress Regional Health District about the possible extension of service or continuance of service for the health centre in Climax. And I'm wondering, Mr. Minister, if you could give the House a report on any progress that might have been made in those discussions.

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — It's my understanding that the delegation from Climax and Frontier and that whole community in the southwest corner of the province met with the Cypress Regional Health Authority board on May 5, and they presented some pretty solid ideas about how things could be done.

The commitment by the regional health authority board was that they would be back to that committee on May 31 with their comments and ideas and understanding of their proposal. And it's my hope that that process is going to allow for something

that will work for the community and will make sense in the overall Cypress Regional Health Authority plans.

Mr. Elhard: — Mr. Minister, other than the description of what the local community representatives were proposing, have you been familiarized with the proposal from there? Do you know details, personally, as to what they were advocating and requesting of the health district?

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — The simple answer is yes, although not maybe as full a detail as the local board. But when I was down in Swift Current for the groundbreaking for the new health facility, then I had a chance to hear from the regional health authority board and senior management about the proposals that were coming from the Climax, Frontier people.

Mr. Elhard: — Mr. Minister, without committing yourself directly in your response, is it your feeling that the request and proposal that was being advocated by the local people was reasonable or had some opportunity to be implemented and found workable?

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Basically this is an issue for that region to sort out, but I'm hopeful that they're close to getting it sorted out.

Mr. Elhard: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. I think the constituents that are served by that particular health centre would be appreciative of any solution that would see the enhancement of hours or the extension of hours of service provided to that area, especially of course as ambulance service, EMS [emergency medical services], becomes more and more difficult to provide on a timely basis in that vast open area. Which leads me to the third and final topic I want to raise here today.

Mr. Minister, I know that we have fixed-wing air ambulance service in the province of Saskatchewan. Has your department and has your government ever entertained the idea, and would they consider the possibility of having an ambulance service provided through helicopters if that type of service was offered to the province of Saskatchewan?

There are some opportunities that seem to be coming together in the southeastern part of Alberta and there might be an opportunity to have that service made available to a huge area of southwest Saskatchewan for the benefit of individuals that would be in dire need of emergency services that could not be adequately supplied by a fixed-wing aircraft but would be reachable in quick order by a helicopter properly equipped for medical evacuations.

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — I thank the member for that question. This issue of helicopter service in Saskatchewan has a certain appeal to it when you look at it initially. I personally have gone to STARS [Shock Trauma Air Rescue Society] in Calgary and visited and sat in the helicopters and seen how the whole operation works. And there are quite a few limitations on helicopters for use in the Prairie regions just based on weather and the numbers of days that they're available to provide service.

It's one that we continue to keep our eyes on and we keep

making sure that we understand what the different options are. And so I would say that we haven't closed off any reasonable proposals. There are some real challenges around the costs of the system as well. And so how that could fit into an overall EMS system in the province and provide the service, it's . . . Some of the places where we would see that helicopter ambulances would be a real boon based on the number of roads that we have also are ones that are sort of almost outside the distance that that helicopter could serve. And so there are many, many factors to be taken into account. And I personally have gone to see what some of the options are, and I don't think at this point it's one that's there. But if a new proposal comes forward, we'll be willing to take a look at it.

Mr. Elhard: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. Let me detail just a little more about the opportunity that might be presenting itself at this point. The source of this idea and I had a discussion the other day, and this individual is looking at establishing Medicine Hat as sort of the centre of the service that would be provided. But if you look at the range of a helicopter, it could probably — in a circle about 150 miles from the centre — could service as far to the northeast as Beechy, probably east of Swift Current, and south almost as far as you go into my constituency of Cypress Hills.

And while I understand there's a lot of cost associated — or potentially a lot of cost associated — with this type service, I am thinking of sort of the issues related to large, open areas where there's scarce population, where you know roads and ambulances are not fully reliable, where service might be difficult to obtain in an emergency, and where you have an ever-increasing number of oil and gas industry related employment.

The individual that I was talking to today said that in the area east of Brooks, Hanna — that Highway 36 that runs north and south in Alberta, in that area to the Alberta-Saskatchewan border — at any given time there are 20,000 oil and gas workers in Alberta that aren't serviced by the STARS ambulance because of limitations to its distance of travel.

But if there was a facility, or I'm sorry, a capability located in Medicine Hat, those 20,000 people could be serviced from Medicine Hat quite readily, and the same workers on our side of the border — and they don't number 20,000 but there's probably many, many thousands out there right now — plus the additional service that would provide for these remote and isolated and small communities that may or may not have regular ambulance service. It might make it more appealing. It might make it more practical.

There's a possibility of an arrangement I think being worked with the provincial government, or the health district down there, where they would be an actual partner in the cost of this operation, but there might be other arrangements that could be worked out with them. And if the minister and his department and the regional health district are open to discussions, I think this individual would be more than happy to outline what his plans are for that kind of service delivery based in Medicine Hat but servicing all of southwest Saskatchewan on an emergency or as-needed basis.

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Well as I said before, if there's a

reasonable proposal that makes sense on a whole number of levels then I think we would be willing to look at it, just as we have looked at some of the other proposals that have come forward. But I am quite wary as a minister working in this whole area because I know that some of the costs and some of the limitations are quite severe. But this sounds like something that would have some possibilities and we'd be willing to look at it.

Mr. Elhard: — Mr. Minister, I appreciate your willingness to consider the idea. I will try and put the individual in touch with your office if that would be all right with you. I think the punster sitting next to me asked if this idea was going to take wing and I hope that it might. Thank you for your time, Mr. Minister.

The Deputy Chair: — I recognize the member from Melville-Saltcoats.

Mr. Bjornerud: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. And Mr. Minister, and your officials, welcome today. Mr. Minister, I want to . . . First of all, I guess with the strike at the EMTs [emergency medical technicians] in the Yorkton Sunrise Health District, has there been any movement on that situation to this point?

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — It's my understanding that the employer and the employees have reached an agreement.

Mr. Bjornerud: — That's very good to hear I think for everyone concerned, Mr. Minister.

I guess why I raised the question again then here, this weekend I had a constituent come to me, and the husband has had cancer for the last four or five years and about six weeks ago called the ambulance. And the ambulance — Crestvue Ambulance out of Yorkton — came, picked up the patient, took him to Yorkton. And the charge was \$200 and that was fine. Everything was fine. This last week again the same situation arose, they called the ambulance. There wasn't an ambulance available so they had to use the Langenburg ambulance system and the bill was \$478.

Now realizing of course in every situation this is a dramatic increase in cost, but in this situation of this family where this person has been off work for about four or four-and-a-half years now, dollars are very hard to come by. And I guess the complaint that they had was that they just couldn't afford this increase. And I think at that point the strike may have still been on or because they were short-staffed in Yorkton and only a number of ambulances going compared to what they normally have, they had to call Langenburg in. And the service was fine, the service was adequate; the problem was just the bill for \$478.

[15:15]

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — This sounds to me like something that the parties should raise with the region because it obviously is the bill for coming from Langenburg and then providing the service. But in that particular situation the region would, I think be willing to look at it and make sure that it's sorted out.

Mr. Bjornerud: — Well, thank you, Mr. Minister. I'm glad to hear that and I'll pass that information on.

One further question and I'm not sure that you're at liberty to answer this but the EMTs in the Yorkton area compared to the Melville area were 5 to \$8 an hour less. Has that problem been solved? I guess it's been solved to the satisfaction of the workers or at least to the point where they've gone back to work, but do we have equality within the health district between the two different centres?

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — I don't have that specific information but my understanding, that was a major part of the dispute and so there's obviously been some accommodation around that that allows for the matter to be resolved.

The Deputy Chair: — I recognize the member from Indian Head-Milestone.

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have a couple of questions regarding hearing aid and The Hearing Aid Act that was passed in 2001 — The Hearing Aid Sales and Service Act — but it is yet to be proclaimed. Can the minister explain why this piece of legislation hasn't been proclaimed in the last four years.

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — I appreciate that question because I had a chance to meet with the national association of the speech and language pathologists and others involved in this particular industry. And what has happened since the legislation was passed is that they have been working together with officials in Sask Health and in Sask Justice around developing the regulations and also a manual for the operators, the people who provide the service.

And the issue and why it's taking a little bit longer to come forward than might be normally the case is that if you recall, this particular legislation is both consumer protection legislation and a form of professional legislation, if I can put it that way. And one of the initial challenges was whether it stayed as a consumer protection issue within the Department of Justice or became a professional part in Health. Well they've worked out a lot of innovative ideas around how we can have that ability to protect the people who purchase these devices at the same time as we deal with a lot of the professional health issues.

And so it hasn't been an easy task. I met with some of the people who had been a part of this committee and they were quite pleased with the result. We anticipate that the regulations, the manual, and the Act will all be available and proclaimed this summer.

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. Because certainly that was the intent of the legislation was to protect consumers. And of course when you're dealing with this area, mainly seniors, and certainly obviously there's some protection needed, that's why the legislation came forward. So over the last four years there really hasn't been, I mean, any extra protection that this legislation could have provided. But you say that it will be proclaimed by the summertime, the regulations will be done, and it will definitely be proclaimed this summer.

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — That is the plan. And I know that the people who have been involved in the committee are feeling that they've sorted out a lot of these issues and now have a good proposal to go forward. I also know that many other

jurisdictions are watching this because it's sort of the first attempt to try to do this. And the sense I got from talking with the people at this national convention was that they were quite excited by some of the ideas that we had developed here and they were asking whether we'd be willing to share them, which we will.

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. We'll be following the progress of that as are other provinces, I guess.

My next set of questions will be regarding the regional health authorities. The first time that we were up doing Health estimates, I asked a number of questions on the health authorities. And I guess maybe some of the answers, it's not as easy to just give a straight number but I'm still trying to get a grasp. In 2002 we went from 32 health regions to 12 health authorities. And I'm trying to get a grasp on some of the savings that the Department of Health would have realized. Now I guess it wasn't savings in that the money wasn't spent, but maybe it was spent differently.

Can you give me some sort of a grasp on how much was saved — going from 32 health districts down to 12 — was saved or realized by the Department of Health and then of course then put back into services? But how much was saved?

Because it certainly . . . When you go from 32 regions to 12 authorities, hopefully we see some saving on administration. Could you give me some sort of an idea on how much that was?

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — The overall administrative costs for the regional health authorities over the last three years have gone down.

Now what's happened is we have in our accounting structure a very clear designation of which expenses are administration, which expenses are not. And in that process if we sort of restate the amounts from the year 2002-2003, from the 32 districts down to the 12, the total expense of admin across the board was about 7 per cent. In the '03-04 actual expenditure it was down to 6.4 per cent. Our budgeted amount for last year — we don't have the actuals yet because we're still gathering that information from March 31, '05 — but the budgeted amount was 5.5 per cent. So we saw a downward trend on that admin side. So that's one way of looking at it.

The other way which I think is much more dramatic is using the CIHI [Canadian Institute of Health Information] or the Canadian national data. And it shows that for the last three years that they have in their system that our admin costs in Saskatchewan were, and this is for '99-2000, was 3.4 per cent; 2000-2001, 3.2 per cent; 2001-2002, 3.3 per cent. And we basically ranked as the cheapest on admin in the whole country.

So out of the rank one to ten, we were number ten. And the Canadian average — in other words what the rank between five and six was, you know — 6.4 in the first year, 6.5, and 6.1. So we were effectively half of what the national average cost in admin was in our Saskatchewan structure. And we think from '01-02, we've actually been able to reduce it again.

So I think this is an area where it becomes a difficulty in sort of saying, well what kinds of things are we doing. But we have,

through the structures that we have, eliminated many of the administrative procedures that we've had before and reduced the costs overall.

Mr. McMorris: — Just to clarify then, Mr. Minister. I think just from the numbers that you said, in roughly the '02-03 year, fiscal year, to the next two years . . . terms that you used, we went from 7 per cent down to 5 per cent. A couple of per cent savings. I'd be interested in roughly what the dollar figure of that would be, if you could figure that out.

But also then when you were talking about the CIHI data, and the numbers didn't quite show the same savings — am I correct there? You were going 3.2 and 3.4. It didn't seem like there was near the savings according to CIHI over that same time frame as what you or your own department was showing.

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — I think the problem is, the problem is that CIHI uses just the hospital data, and also they're using the information from the three years prior to the last three years that we use.

Now just for clarity, I can say that the admin costs that we use in our province-wide budgeting process include general administration. So that's the executive offices, board costs, planning and development, those things that relate to the executive. They also include the finance — and cost, finance, and administration — human resources, information technology, and communications. So those are the things that we have in our admin costs in the operation.

Mr. McMorris: — Further to the different health authorities and the boards that are appointed, are there set salary levels . . . not salary but remuneration levels? For example the board Chair and the other boards, is it uniform across the 12 health regions, authorities?

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — For the board Chair and the members, it's the same right across the whole province.

Mr. McMorris: — Could I get a list of like, for example, what are board Chairs paid on an annual basis?

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — I don't have that with me but I'll be happy to send it to you. It's public information.

Mr. McMorris: — So what would be the criteria then? How do you come up and determine the salary levels? What criteria is used? I mean it's uniform across . . . How did you come up with those salary levels?

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — How the system was developed, these are honorariums. They're not salaries at all. And there is a retainer for the board Chair; that's the only person that has a certain amount that's paid on an annual basis. And then everybody else is paid on a per diem basis for the amount of days that they work or half-days, and they also get their expenses, their meals, and some of the travel. And it's based on trying to make a comparison with other similar operations across the province.

Mr. McMorris: — One more question on the health authorities and this is kind of specific to each health authority. When reviewing the annual reports, I have down here that the Regina

Qu'Appelle Health Authority cut 10 full-time positions from the senior management from 2004 compared to 2003 and the savings was about 615,000. The Saskatoon Health Region eliminated 12 position in senior management for that same time frame and the savings was about 912,000. Cypress Hills reported 14 fewer full-time and senior management during that same period but the savings was only . . . they only realized 6,000.

Can the minister explain that? Just going through the full-time equivalents in senior management and why there'd be such a discrepancy between the Regina Qu'Appelle, Saskatoon, and then the Cypress region?

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — That's a very good reading on your part, but I think there's a simple explanation for the Cypress Health Region. The people went from out of scope to in scope and so they still had the same jobs and the same amounts of money to pay as far as the region was concerned, but just they were not . . . no longer located in the same place in the annual report.

[15:30]

Mr. McMorris: — A couple of questions on the new MRIs [magnetic resonance imaging]. What is the status of the new MRI . . . Saskatchewan Health commitment to the new MRIs? Where is that? What's the status of that?

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — The second MRI in Regina is in the process of being built. And we basically have to build the space for it and then install the machine. And it's expected that this will be operational later this fiscal year.

Mr. McMorris: — So that's the only commitment to a new . . . is the one new MRI in the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region? So then the next question is, I mean it seems like . . . And we certainly heard that often is that are they run 24 hours? It's a staffing issue as much as it is a machine issue. I realize that one extra MRI in the city of Regina and the Regina Qu'Appelle Health District will help. But it only helps if there's enough staff to run them.

And so prior to the new MRI coming, how is the staff level complement? Were we able to . . . What were the hours of operation, for example in the two health regions? Were we running it 8 hours a day or 12 hours, 24 hours? And with the new MRI, if we were short staffed before, how are we going to be addressing that issue?

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — In the '03-04 budget we expanded the numbers of hours of service. And the goal was — we didn't quite reach it all the time — but was 16 hours a day operation for the machine. At the same time we also provided a lot of extra money for training. And the goal was to train more people to provide that extra service, but also to help the regions be ready for the new machine when it comes forward. And so we've had the ability to train more people.

I think the plan is to have sufficient staff in place for when the new machine comes on to allow them to expand. Also it's an area where we continue to monitor as it relates to the overall training for the province-wide health human resources plan.

Mr. McMorris: — So the machines were, the target was 16 hours a day but wasn't always met and it wasn't always met because of staff shortages?

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — I think primarily that would be the case. But I think what I can say is, and I think it was in the paper today, that the numbers of MRIs in Regina over the last year have gone up quite dramatically. And the goal is to do that similar expansion for next year.

Mr. McMorris: — So we're running them 16 hours a day roughly this past year. So the years prior then, they were operating 8 hours a day. Is that correct? And, you know, when you're saying that we're trying to operate up to 16 hours, I would think it would be staffing issues — not enough. It wouldn't be the lack of demand for that diagnostic tool. I mean, there's enough people coming in that need it. So if it's not being run 16 hours I would think it was a staff issue. But when you look back a couple of years ago where they run it 8 hours a day and is that the increase simply because we're running them more hours in through the day?

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Well, I think the answer is yes that it is the fact they're running more hours per day. I mean, an example is that the number of patients that have been waiting for MRIs in Regina has decreased by 22 per cent this last year because of the ability to expand the number of hours that are there.

And we've made specific commitments in the budgets from a year ago, last year, and then now as we go forward to increase our capacity in this area. What we're also doing is going forward with our assessment of the diagnostics services across the whole province and looking at what other options, what other opportunities there are for providing province-wide diagnostic services which then includes looking at the human health, human resource issues, equipment issues. Looking at, sort of, what equipment we have to replace, not just for MRIs, but also CTs [computerized tomography], X-ray, everything.

Mr. McMorris: — Would there be . . . what is the drawback, and I'm just, on pure information. What is the drawback from running them other than we maybe don't have enough staffing? But the natural progression is if you're running them 8 hours a day and you went to 16 and we were doing so much better, there are 24 hours in the day. Why aren't we going with around the clock with the machines that we have?

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Well I think each day the machine does need some down time. But I think the bigger factor is staff working in the middle of the night, patients coming in the middle of the night, that kind of thing, and working and making sure of that schedule, and I think now if there are emergencies, well then the fact that we can provide some of those services.

But it's something that they, you know, continue to examine and push the boundaries of what's reasonable both in making sure that patients want to be there and staff want to be there. But having it operate the number of hours that it is now does provide many more procedures at times when people are willing to come there quite readily.

Mr. McMorris: — One last question on this issue. And I understand the issue of running them 24 hours. Of course

people are going to have some times that aren't your normal waking time to be going in. But talking to a number of people who have been on waiting lists for MRIs, frankly they'll say you tell me what time you want me there and I will be there.

And the other argument about . . . and knowing a little bit about the health care profession is that it is a 24-hour day in the health care field. Nurses work around the clock. Doctors work around the clock. It is a 24-hour day in the health care field.

So I guess my last question on the whole MRI issue is, are you looking at extending the day over 16 . . . to more than 16 hours to use the facilities that we have so we're not . . . You know, I mean it's all great to invest in another MRI but you have to look at the ones that we have and if we're using them to capacity. And if we can double the hours last year, can we add another 50 per cent on to them? I'm not sure.

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Well I think the best way to answer that last question is to say that in our budget for this year — which hopefully we're going to have passed very soon — we have 10.5 million that's going into provincial diagnostic imaging initiatives.

And of that, 2.1 million is going towards MRI and CT capacity increases and more bone mineral density examinations. We anticipate that it'll increase the numbers of MRI examinations in this budget year by 4,600. And so that will be added capacity using our existing three and, because the fourth one will come in late in the year, it won't make that much difference in the added capacity. And so clearly we're looking at all options to increase the capacity including making sure we have the dollars to do it.

The Deputy Chair: — I recognize the member from Cut Knife-Turtleford.

Mr. Chisholm: — Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Minister, I'd just like to know what the status is on the Maidstone hospital addition, or the Maidstone health care centre addition, and when we might expect to see some sod turned or . . .

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — My understanding on very recent information, information from this week, is that they're on track. The very first meeting of the group of professionals around the functional plan is going to be next week. So everything is moving ahead as we anticipate and we have the dollars set out for it in this year's budget plan.

Mr. Chisholm: — Thank you very much, Mr. Minister.

The Deputy Chair: — I recognize the member from Indian Head-Milestone.

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. To the minister regarding SWADD [system wide admission and discharge department]. Now I've . . . Certainly there's been some articles in the paper over the last number of months that I think probably all of us have read. Can the minister explain to me how this system wide admission and discharge program works? Because there certainly have been questions.

I know I've had a few phone calls from people reading the article and saying how could this happen when, for example, the doctor is saying this person should stay in the hospital but SWADD says no, I'm sorry, they're going to have to go home — we don't have a room in the inn tonight for them — and sends them home when the doctor is saying no, they should be staying here. So how does that . . . First of all, how does the SWADD program work?

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — It's my understanding that the system is set up in a way to ensure appropriate entry into the hospital and discharge of patients, and that there are utilization managers that are on the job effectively 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. And their job is to work with the doctors and the nurses and make sure that the patients are appropriately entering into the facility and also appropriately going out of the facility, either home or to some other particular place.

And so it's that area where there may be some discussions that take place between the doctors and the utilization managers. And I suppose there'd be a process of appeal to higher administrative people if that's required. But I think practically that's how the system works.

Mr. McMorris: — So ultimately it comes down to either you can stay tonight or you're out — you know you're discharged. And if a doctor is saying no, that person shouldn't be discharged, who has the final say? Does SWADD, in consultation with nurses and some of the doctors? But the doctor is saying that person should not be discharged from this hospital, but SWADD is saying yes, they're out of here. Who has the final say?

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — The physician has to sign the discharge. An administrator can't discharge somebody. So it would be the physician that would do that.

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you. It was interesting reading in the paper just earlier this week regarding a reporter in the city here that had been through open-heart surgery and he was talking about the code burgundy issue and some of the issues in his short stay in the hospital.

And you know I think what's happened — and this is my own impression — but the code burgundy is called so many times in the hospital that it doesn't even seem to be an issue anymore. That you know the hospitals are running at 110 per cent capacity all the time. There aren't enough beds. And you know I've heard it said by people that you know if you have an issue, a health issue, and you need to get into the hospital, just darn well go there and stay. You know, don't wait and be called in or . . . Just get in the hospital and stay and make them deal with you then.

[15:45]

And I think it happens over and over again. So I've asked the minister to comment on that. I think he probably read the article about code burgundy and how it's . . . You know, the people that were working in the hospital that this person was quoting are saying that it happens so often that it really . . . You know, I don't even know why they call it code burgundy anymore because it seems like they're operating in code burgundy 24/7.

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Well technically the term code burgundy isn't used anymore in Regina. What is used at . . . They now have a full capacity protocol. And so what they are designing is a system that makes sure that when people come into the hospital and require a place that there would be a place available. And so it's about how you manage the emergency rooms and the capacity in the emergency areas and getting people into the hospital.

This clearly is an issue in both Regina and Saskatoon. And so what is happening and using some of the technical money that we received in the federal health agreement, we are working together with the Health Quality Council and the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Authority, Saskatoon Health Authority around some of the new methods of managing the flow of patients to hopefully meet some of the concerns that arise from time to time because it really is sort of big issues that come all the time. And so in Regina, for example, at the General there's more pressure than at the Pasqua, and so the full capacity protocol is in place more often at the General than it is at Pasqua. And what that means is that they then end up having some ability to get patients that require to be into the hospital into the hospital. But still it becomes a real problem I think too . . . on an ongoing basis. And that's why we're looking at it on a broader basis across both of the major tertiary centres in the province.

Mr. McMorris: — I think you know the issue is . . . And I certainly would agree that the hospitals are trying to run as efficiently as possible, I mean that's the whole goal of it. But it seems like . . . and just from people again that we talked to is that the hospitals are running at 100 per cent. I mean they are at capacity, they're dealing . . . And there's an ebb and flow, just a natural ebb and flow of people coming into the system.

And it's okay as long as it's . . . You know at the lower point they're running at 100 per cent capacity but when you have you know a large influx, and it may only be 20 or 30 people, the system really struggles to handle that then.

And it seems like it's just . . . You know and they always say well, we're short of beds. I really don't believe it's ever an issue of that there's not enough physical beds. It's the people around the beds to man . . . to supply the services.

So it just seems like we're running it so tight, so tight that when there's any sort of an influx the system really struggles with it. And that's when you get the people in the hallways and waiting, and waiting, and waiting.

And you know I guess it's always fine if you happen to be entering into the system when the volumes are down. But if you happen to come in with a bulge, those are the stories we seem to hear of so often that people just didn't get the treatment and they were shuffled from one room to the next because we just . . . or one hallway to the next because there just isn't enough, wasn't enough capacity. And it's not again the capacity of pure beds, I think it's a capacity of personnel and human resources.

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — It's good questions that you're asking in this area because it is an area where people are trying to solve problems. And at the public meeting last night at the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Authority they presented some information

around their tertiary acute care, and basically that's Pasqua and the General.

And one of the things that they said last night — and it actually I think took place in March — was that they increased 10 convalescent beds, so sort of post-surgery beds, and then 7 surgical beds. So they, you know, so they've actually increased the number of beds by about 17 since March. And part of the reason for doing that is exactly what you've identified — that pressure that just stays there day after day after day.

And so they showed though that their occupancy rate on a year-round basis in 2002-2003 at these two hospitals in Regina was 89.4 per cent. In '03-04, it was 91.7 per cent. And then in '04-05, it was 90.4 per cent. But that ends up putting pressure on the whole system when you have that kind of an occupancy rate. But the full capacity protocol that was introduced in January led to them saying, we need these other beds to provide sort of expansion relief when there's a big influx of people.

The other thing that they're doing in conjunction with this is continuing to provide education to the public around the appropriate use of the emergency room because there's still many people that go to the emergency rooms for just regular doctor checkups that . . . It would be a lot easier if they went to some of the clinics or to their own doctor. And the education of the public around that will help alleviate some of these other concerns as well.

Mr. McMorris: — Yes, that is an interesting area, and I don't know . . . I mean, it's a tough area to tackle, but I certainly would agree with you. And not that I've sat in the emergency and done analysis on whether they should be here or not, but certainly you hear an awful lot of that, that people are using the emergency as their, you know, their doctor's office. And that was never meant to be.

I don't know why that has come. I think if you look back 20 years ago, that wasn't the case. And I'm wondering why that is the case now; why people are using that as their, you know, as their yearly checkup almost or, you know, if they've got a cold, to come into the emergency when I don't believe that was the case 20 and 30 years ago, at least I don't ever remember. I remember going to the hospital a couple of times and it was usually for stitches and that was about it, not for a cold.

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Well I'm not sure if you're really asking for an answer there, other than . . . But I think the point is that we need to remind people that they should use the most appropriate services and for many times . . . People phoning the health line, for example, and getting some advice there may eliminate a wait at the hospital.

One of the things that happens with the full capacity protocol is that patients that have come in and are part of that process will be prioritized over ones that come in through the emergency department because of just the way they've designed that system. And to remind people that, make sure that you use emergency rooms for true emergencies. Call the health line, work with your family doctor, go to some of the other clinics around the city and get your care there.

Mr. McMorris: — We don't have a lot of time left. I do have a

couple questions regarding sharps — needles and scalpels and that type of thing. Can you give me the status? I believe that there was . . . Was there legislation or there was talk? You had talked about legislation to SUN [Saskatchewan Union of Nurses] that this was of course a workplace safety area and you'd be moving on that. And could you give me a status on that?

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — This is actually an issue that comes under the Department of Labour and The Occupational Health and Safety Act. And my understanding is that they're working on the regulations around this and working on the consultation. And I know that in our Health budget, we have money around training for people in how to use the new . . . what would be the new requirements for these sharps.

So it's something that is clearly part of the plan and we're moving forward on it, but it's not as simple as just changing the product. There's some other things that seem to have to go with it.

Mr. McMorris: — So just one, I guess, you know . . . So we do have legislation and you're working on regulations. Is that correct? And I know it's not you, it's not the department . . . the Department of Labour but in consultation, I'm sure, with the Department of Health as to regulations around. There's legislation in place, but the regulations have not been put in place. Is that correct?

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — I think the way to describe it is that it's under The Occupational Health and Safety Act which allows you to make regulations around particular products that you might use for safety reasons. And so, practically, you don't have to change the Act but you can use the powers that you have there to create the regulations, and that's what they're working on right now.

Mr. McMorris: — A couple questions on a facility, Valley View Centre in Moose Jaw. What's the status report on that? Certainly there was lots of talk of it during the election. We're hearing rumours of it.

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Valley View Centre is part of the Department of Community Resources and Employment. Health has no interest or share of that at all.

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. That's all the questions I have for today. I'd like to thank you and your officials for the answers that you provided in the quick hour and a half that we had. Thank you.

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Thank you very much. I appreciated the questions and will provide some of the information that you requested and get that to you. I want to thank all the officials that are here and the ones that aren't here for providing information and for providing good service to the people of Saskatchewan. So thank you very much.

The Chair: — Thank you, members. (HE01) for the amount of 13,104,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried. (HE04) for the amount \$127,182,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried. (HE03) for the amount \$1,964,061,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried. (HE10) for the amount \$8,712,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That is carried. (HE06) for the amount \$541,282,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried. (HE08) for the amount \$238,176,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried. (HE05) for the amount \$1,249,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried. Amortization of capital assets is a non-voted, non-cash expense and is presented for information for the amount of \$757,000. Any questions on that? Seeing none, therefore:

Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty for the 12 months ending March 31, 2006, the following sums for Health in the amount \$2,893,766,000.

Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That is carried.

[Vote 32 agreed to.]

**General Revenue Fund
Supplementary Estimates
Health
Vote 32**

The Chair: — The supplementary estimates for Health is (HE03) for the amount \$9,000,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That is carried.

Therefore resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty for the 12 months ending March 31, 2005, the following sums for Health for the amount \$9,000,000.

Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That is carried.

[Vote 32 agreed to.]

The Chair: — And that concludes the estimates for Health. I would move that the minister move on to the estimates for . . . Pardon me. Thank you, members. This concludes the consideration of Health estimates.

[16:00]

**General Revenue Fund
Executive Council
Vote 10**

The Chair: — The next item on the agenda is the consideration of estimates for Executive Council (EX01) for the amount of \$3,814,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried. (EX07) for the amount of \$476,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried. (EX04) for the amount of \$1,339,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried. (EX03) for the amount of \$1,560,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried. (EX08) for the amount of \$420,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried. (EX06) for the amount of \$690,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried. Amortization of capital assets is non-voted, non-cash expense and is presented for information purposes only for the amount of \$4,000. Is there any questions on that? Seeing none, therefore:

Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty for the 12 months ending March 31, 2006, the following sums for Executive Council, the amount of \$7,609,000.

Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That is carried.

[Vote 10 agreed to.]

**General Revenue Fund
Supplementary Estimates
Executive Council
Vote 10**

The Chair: — The supplementary estimates for Executive Council, vote 10, administration (EX01) for the amount of \$305,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That is carried. Therefore:

Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty for the 12 months ending March 31, 2005, the following sums for Executive Council, the amount of \$305,000.

Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That is carried. That concludes the Executive Council.

[Vote 10 agreed to.]

**General Revenue Fund
Agriculture and Food
Vote 1**

The Chair: — The next item before the committee is estimates for Agriculture (AG01) in the amount of \$5,796,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried. (AG05) for the amount of \$5,833,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried. (AG06) for the amount of \$13,222,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried. (AG07) for the amount of \$13,664,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried. (AG12) for the amount of three million . . . pardon me. There are some statutory amounts and the amount to be voted is \$3,387,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That is carried. (AG04) for the amount of \$3,488,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That is carried. (AG08) for the amount of \$98,776,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That is carried. (AG03) for the amount of \$3,819,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried. (AG09) for the amount of \$4,124,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried. (AG10) for the amount of \$112,090,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That is carried. Amortization of capital assets and non-voted, non-cash expenses presented for information purposes only for the amount of \$175,000. Any questions on that? Seeing none, therefore:

Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty for the 12 months ending March 31, 2006, the following sums, for Agriculture and Food for the amount of \$264,931,000.

Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That is carried.

[Vote 1 agreed to.]

**General Revenue Fund
Supplementary Estimates
Agriculture, Food and Rural Revitalization
Vote 1**

The Chair: — Supplementary estimates, vote 1 for the amount of \$101,200,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That is carried. Therefore:

Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty for the 12 months ending March 31, 2005, the following sums, for Agriculture, Food and Rural Revitalization the amount of \$101,200,000.

Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That is carried.

[Vote 1 agreed to.]

**Further Estimates
Agriculture and Food
Vote 1**

The Chair: — (AG07) for the amount of \$732,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried.

[Vote 1 agreed to.]

**General Revenue Fund
Government Relations
Vote 30**

The Chair: — Okay. Government Relations, (GR01), for the amount of \$5,329,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried. (GR04) for the amount of four million . . .

**General Revenue Fund
Lending and Investing Activities
Agriculture and Food
Vote 146**

The Chair: — Members, lending and investing activities, found on page 156 of the Estimates book, Agriculture and Food, vote 146 for the amount of \$400,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That is carried.

Resolved therefore that there be granted to Her Majesty the 12 months ending March 31, 2006, the following sums for Agriculture and Food, lending and investing activities, for the amount of \$400,000.

Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That is carried.

[Vote 146 agreed to.]

**General Revenue Fund
Government Relations
Vote 30**

The Chair: — Government Relations (GR04) for the amount of \$4,409,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried. (GR07) for the amount of . . . it includes statutory amounts so the amount to be voted is \$139,308,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried. Municipal relations, (GR08), for the amount of \$5,113,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried. (GR03) for the amount of \$2,255,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried. (GR06) for the amount of \$1,071,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried. Amortization of assets, capital assets, non-voted, non-cash, for information only, for the amount of \$3,000. Is there any questions on that?

Some Hon. Members: — No.

The Chair: — Seeing none, therefore:

Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty for the 12 months ending March 31, 2006, the following sums for Government Relations, \$157,485,000.

Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried, and I know the minister's relieved that I got that right.

[Vote 30 agreed to.]

**General Revenue Fund
Learning
Vote 5**

The Chair: — The final item before the committee is Learning estimates. (LR01) for the amount of \$12,812,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried. (LR11) for the amount of \$396,763,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried. (LR03) for the amount of \$582,364,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried. (LR10) includes statutory amounts. The amount to be voted is \$6,974,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried. (LR12) for the amount of \$33,651,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried. (LR13) for the amount of \$69,513,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried. (LR15) for the amount of \$8,581,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried. (LR08) for the amount of \$3,306,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried. (LR09) for the amount of \$55,050,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried. (LR04) includes statutory amounts and the amount to be voted is \$20,782,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried. Amortization of capital assets is a non-voted, non-cash expense for information purposes only, the amount of \$3,503,000. Any questions on that? Sounds good. Seeing none:

Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty for the 12 months ending March 31, 2006 the following sums, for Learning the amount of \$1,216,795,000.

Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

[Vote 5 agreed to.]

**General Revenue Fund
Supplementary Estimates
Learning
Vote 5**

The Chair: — That is carried. Supplementary estimates on Learning, vote 5, (LR11) for the amount of \$13,500,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried.

Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty for the 12 months ending March 31, 2005, the following sums, for Learning for the amount of \$13,500,000.

Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That is carried.

[Vote 5 agreed to.]

**Further Estimates
Learning
Vote 5**

The Chair: — Members, further estimates for Learning, vote 5 (LR03) for the amount of \$24,500,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That's carried. (LR04) for the amount . . . includes statutory amounts. The amount to be voted is \$2,499,000.

Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That is carried.

[Vote 5 agreed to.]

**General Revenue Fund
Lending and Investing Activities
Learning
Vote 169**

The Chair: — Lending and investing activities for Learning, vote 169 (LR01). The amount to be voted is \$66,000,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That is carried. Therefore:

Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty for the 12 months ending March 31, 2006, the following sums, lending and investing activities for Learning in the amount of \$66,000,000.

Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That is carried.

[Vote 169 agreed to.]

**General Revenue Fund
Lending and Investing Activities
Education Infrastructure Financing Corporation
Vote 170**

The Chair: — Lending and investing activities, (ED01), is statutory for the amount of \$3,900,000. That's not to be voted, but are there any questions? Seeing none.

[Vote 170 — Statutory.]

[16:15]

The Chair: — I would invite the Deputy Government House Leader move that the committee rise, report progress, and ask for leave to sit again.

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — Yes thank you. I move that we rise, report progress, and ask for leave to sit again.

The Chair: — The government Deputy House Leader has moved that the committee rise, report progress, and ask for leave to sit again. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — That is carried.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Chair of committees.

Mr. Addley: — Mr. Speaker, I'm instructed by the committee to report progress and ask for leave to sit again.

The Speaker: — When shall the committee sit again? The Chair recognizes the government Deputy House Leader.

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — Next sitting, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

MOTIONS FOR RETURNS (Debatable)

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Government Whip.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I ask leave to consider motions for return no. 358 through 364 as ordered.

The Speaker: — The Government Whip has requested leave to consider motions for returns 358 through to 364 as ordered. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Leave has been granted. Leave has been granted and these items, returns 358 to 364, so ordered. The Chair recognizes the member for Athabasca.

Hon. Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I ask for leave to introduce guests.

The Speaker: — The member has requested leave for introductions. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — The member may proceed.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Hon. Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To you, and through you, I want to introduce three very special people that travelled a long way to be here today. And I'll begin

with the coach Kelvin Yee. Kelvin Yee is from the Hay River Lions Swim Club in Northwest Territories, and they're here as part of a training program, and they're taking part in the ROD [Regina Optimist Dolphins] Invitational Swim Meet. And Kelvin, being the coach of two highly qualified swimmers from the territories, and in fact both the swimmers that he's with here today have qualified for the Canada Summer Games. And they're here for the Regina Optimist Dolphins swim meet.

And with Kelvin Yee is Colton Yee. Colton is swimming at the ROD Invitational in a number of events, Mr. Speaker: the 200 free, the 50 free, the 50 breast, the 200 IM [individual medley], the 50 back, the 100 free, and the 50 fly.

And with Colton, his teammate is a cousin of mine, Michelle Daigneault, from Hay River as well. And she's also swimming at the ROD Invitational. And Michelle is taking advantage of the opportunity to compete in a number of events as well. That's the 50 free, the 50 breast, the 100 breast, the 50 back, the 100 free, and the 50 fly.

Mr. Speaker, Kelvin tells me — the coach — that they've got a number of swimmers in the territories, in Hay River to be more specific. There's 32 swimmers in that particular community and from that area. And Kelvin says these are the two swimmers that are deemed to be the excellent swimmers of that particular club, and they're here to compete in Regina all weekend.

I would point out that Michelle is from a family of athletes. Her uncle Izzy Daigneault played on the world famous Ile-a-la-Crosse Selects hockey team. Her uncle Leonard Daigneault is an avid curler, is not that good in terms of his win-loss record but he's really involved with curling. Her Dad Alec is also an excellent athlete in a number of sports, more particular in hockey. And I think overall that she gets a lot of her athletic ability from her mother.

And I just want to point out, Mr. Speaker, that it's a long ways from Hay River, and I think I'd ask all my Assembly colleagues to give the people from Hay River a big, warm Saskatchewan welcome and good luck on your competition.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Government Deputy House Leader.

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — Yes, Mr. Speaker, after that long speech, I would move that this House now adjourn.

The Speaker: — It has been 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 10 a.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 16:22.]

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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

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