



THIRD SESSION - TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE

of the

**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

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**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS**

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(HANSARD)

Published under the  
authority of  
The Honourable Don Toth  
Speaker



**MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN**

Speaker — Hon. Don Toth  
 Premier — Hon. Brad Wall  
 Leader of the Opposition — Dwain Lingenfelter

<b>Name of Member</b>	<b>Political Affiliation</b>	<b>Constituency</b>
Allchurch, Denis	SP	Rosthern-Shellbrook
Atkinson, Pat	NDP	Saskatoon Nutana
Belanger, Buckley	NDP	Athabasca
Bjornerud, Hon. Bob	SP	Melville-Saltcoats
Boyd, Hon. Bill	SP	Kindersley
Bradshaw, Fred	SP	Carrot River Valley
Brkich, Greg	SP	Arm River-Watrous
Brotten, Cam	NDP	Saskatoon Massey Place
Chartier, Danielle	NDP	Saskatoon Riversdale
Cheveldayoff, Hon. Ken	SP	Saskatoon Silver Springs
Chisholm, Michael	SP	Cut Knife-Turtleford
D'Autremont, Dan	SP	Cannington
Draude, Hon. June	SP	Kelvington-Wadena
Duncan, Hon. Dustin	SP	Weyburn-Big Muddy
Eagles, Doreen	SP	Estevan
Elhard, Wayne	SP	Cypress Hills
Forbes, David	NDP	Saskatoon Centre
Furber, Darcy	NDP	Prince Albert Northcote
Gantfoer, Hon. Rod	SP	Melfort
Harpauer, Hon. Donna	SP	Humboldt
Harper, Ron	NDP	Regina Northeast
Harrison, Hon. Jeremy	SP	Meadow Lake
Hart, Glen	SP	Last Mountain-Touchwood
Heppner, Hon. Nancy	SP	Martensville
Hickie, Darryl	SP	Prince Albert Carlton
Higgins, Deb	NDP	Moose Jaw Wakamow
Hutchinson, Hon. Bill	SP	Regina South
Huyghebaert, Hon. D.F. (Yogi)	SP	Wood River
Iwanchuk, Andy	NDP	Saskatoon Fairview
Junor, Judy	NDP	Saskatoon Eastview
Kirsch, Delbert	SP	Batoche
Krawetz, Hon. Ken	SP	Canora-Pelly
LeClerc, Serge	SP	Saskatoon Northwest
Lingenfelter, Dwain	NDP	Regina Douglas Park
McCall, Warren	NDP	Regina Elphinstone-Centre
McMillan, Tim	SP	Lloydminster
McMorris, Hon. Don	SP	Indian Head-Milestone
Michelson, Warren	SP	Moose Jaw North
Morgan, Hon. Don	SP	Saskatoon Southeast
Morin, Sandra	NDP	Regina Walsh Acres
Nilson, John	NDP	Regina Lakeview
Norris, Hon. Rob	SP	Saskatoon Greystone
Ottenbreit, Greg	SP	Yorkton
Quennell, Frank	NDP	Saskatoon Meewasin
Reiter, Hon. Jim	SP	Rosetown-Elrose
Ross, Laura	SP	Regina Qu'Appelle Valley
Schriemer, Joceline	SP	Saskatoon Sutherland
Stewart, Lyle	SP	Thunder Creek
Taylor, Len	NDP	The Battlefords
Tell, Hon. Christine	SP	Regina Wascana Plains
Toth, Hon. Don	SP	Moosomin
Trew, Kim	NDP	Regina Coronation Park
Vermette, Doyle	NDP	Cumberland
Wall, Hon. Brad	SP	Swift Current
Weekes, Randy	SP	Biggar
Wilson, Nadine	SP	Saskatchewan Rivers
Wotherspoon, Trent	NDP	Regina Rosemont
Yates, Kevin	NDP	Regina Dewdney

[The Assembly met at 10:00.]

[Prayers]

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Regina Qu'Appelle Valley.

**Ms. Ross:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you and through you three very important guests, and I would ask them to stand while they are being recognized.

Sergeant Lorelei Rollings has been a member of the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] for 14 years. She is currently a training coordinator in applied police science at Depot Division. Corporal Curtis Davis has been a member of the RCMP for 13 years. He is currently an applied instructor at the police science department. And Cadet Lisa Buller is originally from Winnipeg, Manitoba and is posted to Yorkton, Saskatchewan. She will graduate from the Depot Division on November the 23rd. If everyone would please welcome them to their Legislative Assembly.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Centre.

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. With leave to make an extended introduction, please.

**The Speaker:** — The member from Saskatoon Centre has asked for leave to make an extended introduction. Is leave granted?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Agreed.

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and to my colleagues. I have a special group of seniors with us today. Tomorrow of course is National Housing Day, and seniors are very concerned about affordable housing. And so a group have asked me to present a petition which I will do later.

But I wanted to make sure that we took a moment and acknowledged each one and the group that they represent. And they're sitting in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, right above me over here. So I'll ask each one to give a wave as I read out their name.

We have some people from the Saskatchewan Federation of Union Retirees. We have Betty Pickering, Ron Monk, Fiona Bishop, and Chuck Ames. We also have a person from the Federation of Superannuates, the national association, Andre Nogue. We have Louis Wood from the Seniors Education Centre.

And we have three people from the Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism: Holly Schick, Joanne MacDonald, and Ian

MacDonald. And the Seniors Mechanism played a huge role in the petition I'm about to present.

And as I said earlier, tomorrow's National Housing Day and it's a day that we take to reflect on housing for everyone. And I would ask all members in this House to send a warm welcome to these seniors who've come here to watch our proceedings, and to their House. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Greystone, the Minister Responsible for Advanced Education, Employment and Labour.

**Hon. Mr. Norris:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's my great pleasure to introduce to you and through you to all members of this Assembly a group of young leaders, those who are engaged and inspiring in their work, assembled in your gallery, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to introduce four members of the Saskatchewan Students' Coalition. President Jon Elder, president of the SIAST [Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology] Students' Association, Kelsey and Wascana campuses; President Kyle Addison, president for the University of Regina Students' Union; Vice-President Katie Honey, vice-president external for the University of Regina Students' Union; as well as Vice-President Chris Stoicheff, vice-president external for the University of Saskatchewan Students' Union. And joining us a little later today will be Ms. Diane Adams, president for the First Nations University of Canada Student Association.

Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Students' Coalition represents over 30,000 students across our province. This new student coalition exists to represent, serve, and support the academic community and career needs of Saskatchewan students through united provincial leadership. I'm looking forward to our meeting a little later this morning, Mr. Speaker.

So, Mr. Speaker, I'll ask all members of this Assembly to please join in with me in welcoming these young student leaders to their legislature.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Massey Place.

**Mr. Broten:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the minister in welcoming Chris, Kyle, Katie, and Jon to the Assembly today, Mr. Speaker. Always a good day when student leaders are in the Assembly and talking about issues that matter to students, especially on a day like today when the topics being discussed are so relevant to the future of students here in Saskatchewan.

I join with the minister in welcoming these individuals to their Assembly.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Moose Jaw Wakamow.

**Ms. Higgins:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. While I'm on my feet, a couple of welcomes and an introduction. But I

would like to join with the member opposite in welcoming the cadet and RCMP officers here.

Mr. Speaker, it doesn't matter where we are, whether it's in Canada or beyond our borders. When we see the red serge, we feel a great deal of pride. So to have the officers here today joining us is a great privilege. And I would like to join with the member on behalf of all of the official opposition to say welcome and also thank you for the work you do on a day-to-day basis.

And while I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you and through you a class that is sitting in the east gallery. These students go to a school that is about a block away from where I live. It's Sacred Heart Community School, which is in the heart of South Hill in Moose Jaw. There is 14 grade 8 students that are here with us today, and they are joined by teachers, Derek Hassen and Kyle Lichtenwald. I am very pleased, as all of us are, when we have an opportunity to have constituents, and especially students, that have taken an interest in the democratic process and have taken the time and effort to be here in the legislature to see the operation and some of the work that is done.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would ask all my colleagues to join with me in welcoming Sacred Heart grade 8 class. Thank you.

#### PRESENTING PETITIONS

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Centre.

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise to present a petition in support of affordable housing for Saskatchewan seniors. And we know that living costs, including housing, are having a major impact on Saskatchewan senior citizens and that Saskatchewan's growing economy and housing market have translated into challenges for many renters, including senior citizens; that more affordable housing options would significantly help Saskatchewan seniors cope with the cost of living, especially those living on fixed incomes.

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

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to act as quickly as possible to expand affordable housing options for Saskatchewan seniors.

And, Mr. Speaker, these petitioners have come from a variety of communities throughout the province. In fact some are watching on TV as we speak. And I'll just read off the communities: Unity, Stewart Valley, Swift Current, Warman, Saskatoon, Maidstone, Imperial, Eatonia, Watrous, Victoire, Dodsland, Dorintosh, Laird, Paddockwood, Englefeld, Colonsay, Asquith, Davidson, Love, White Fox, Whitewood, Esterhazy, Stockholm, Allan, St. Louis, Liberty, Frenchman Butte, Shaunavon, Christopher Lake, Meath Park, Sonningdale, Humboldt, Bruno, Lanigan, Wadena, Annaheim, Regina, Kindersley, and Moose Jaw. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

**Mr. Vermette:** — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition in support of a new long-term care facility in La Ronge. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to immediately invest in the planning and construction of new long-term care beds in La Ronge.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

It is signed by the good people of La Ronge and area. I so present. And as I have presented before, it has hundreds of signatures to this petition. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Massey Place.

**Mr. Broten:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I stand today to present a petition in support of fairness for students here in Saskatchewan through the necessary expansion of the graduate retention program. And the prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to immediately expand the graduate retention program to include master's and Ph.D. graduates.

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

Mr. Speaker, the individuals who signed this petition are from the cities of Saskatoon and Regina. I so present.

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

**Ms. Morin:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present yet another petition on behalf of rural residents of Saskatchewan who question why the Sask Party government is leaving them behind with respect to providing safe and affordable water, and who as of yet have not had any commitment from the Sask Party government. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to financially assist the town of Duck Lake residents for the good of their health and safety due to the exorbitant water rates being forced on them by a government agency, and that this government fulfills its commitment to rural Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, these petitions are signed by the good residents of Duck Lake. I so present.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Fairview.

**Mr. Iwanchuk:** — Mr. Speaker, I stand today and present petitions in support of maintaining quality health care services. Mr. Speaker, we all hope that the Government of Saskatchewan recognizes the essential role of health care providers as valued

members of the health care team. Mr. Speaker, the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to commit to maintain quality health care services and job security for all public health care providers.

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

And the petition is signed by residents of Humboldt, St. Gregor, Lanigan, and Bruno. I so present.

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

**Mr. Taylor:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased today to rise and present a petition in support of affordable rents and housing for The Battlefords. The petitioners note that some Battleford area apartments have been given rent increase notices of 40 per cent and also note that rental accommodation in The Battlefords is diminishing or decreasing. Mr. Speaker, the petition prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to call upon the Government of Saskatchewan to develop an affordable housing program that will result in a greater number of quality and affordable rental units to be made available to a greater number of people throughout The Battlefords and that will implement a process of rent review or rent control to better protect tenants in a non-competitive housing environment.

Mr. Speaker, the petitions are signed by residents of North Battleford and the town of Leoville. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Regina Rosemont.

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present petitions on behalf of very concerned residents of Saskatchewan as it relates to the unprecedented mismanagement of their finances. I believe with the announcements here today that these petitions will continue to be received fast and furious, Mr. Speaker. The prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the Sask Party government to start managing our provincial finances responsibly and prudently to ensure that it does not continue its trend of massive budgetary shortfalls, runaway and unsustainable spending, equity stripping from our Crowns, and irresponsible revenue setting.

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

Of course, Mr. Speaker, I've presented these daily, every day this session, from all across Saskatchewan, and today I present these from Regina and Saskatoon. I so present.

## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Regina Dewdney.

### Rider Pride

**Mr. Yates:** — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Rider nation and our Saskatchewan Roughriders. It has been 33 years since the Riders have hosted the CFL's [Canadian Football League] western conference final. And the excitement and anticipation for this weekend's matchup against the Calgary Stampeders has taken over the province.

Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Roughriders have become one of the most feared teams in the league, in part because of the 13th man. And Rider fans are recognized worldwide for their loyalty and their Rider pride. And often you can find a group of Rider fans following the team across the country.

Mr. Speaker, this Sunday marks one of the most important days in Rider nation history. At this time the Riders sit atop the CFL's western conference and are poised to make another run at the Grey Cup.

As fans everywhere come together to support the Riders, they are bursting with optimism, enthusiasm, and pride. It has been reported that one out of every, or pardon me, it's reported out of every dollar spent on CFL merchandise, 54 per cent is spent on green.

Mr. Speaker, this weekend a sea of green awaits the Calgary Stampeders and the 13th man will be there to help our Riders win this game this weekend. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Rider nation and the 13th man, I salute Saskatchewan's team, the people's team, and my team — the Saskatchewan Roughriders.

[10:15]

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Regina Qu'Appelle Valley.

### RCMP Partners With Habitat for Humanity

**Ms. Ross:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The RCMP stands for guard over Canada, protecting us from threats from within and without. But the force also does a lot of public service that doesn't make the headlines, Mr. Speaker. But it plays an equally important role, which is why it is my honour today to be involved in the announcement of the Mountie house.

The RCMP and Habitat for Humanity Regina are joining forces to build a home for a low-income family. The cadets from depot will build the home in what is just another example of selfless attitude of Canada's national police service. This morning announcement, Mr. Speaker, will be impressive. The RCMP will be performing a unique display of dismounted cavalry drill created specifically for this auspicious occasion.

Mr. Speaker, the building of the Mountie house is also part of the \$1 million our government announced for Habitat for

Humanity province-wide. There's been ground breaking province-wide, Mr. Speaker, as our government moves forward with local Habitat for Humanity groups to ensure all Saskatchewan people benefit from our province's prosperity.

Mr. Speaker, through partnerships with Habitat for Humanity, organizations such as the RCMP are helping low-income families realize a dream many of us take for granted — a home. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

### Mathematics Review

**Mr. Furber:** — Well, well, well, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to recognize Saskatchewan's first ever observance of Mathematical Sciences Awareness Week. The aim of this week, Mr. Speaker, is to interest people in honing their math skills. And given the numbers the government released today, never has an awareness week been more timely.

Mr. Speaker, a university professor estimates that on average, if pressed to take a math exam immediately, the average person would score about a grade 6 level. Now I know, Mr. Speaker, that most people in Saskatchewan would score much higher than that, but that with these latest government figures, I can only assume that the Finance minister and the Premier are severely hurting the provincial average.

The top recommendation for Math Awareness Week, Mr. Speaker, is for people to review math basics. So I'd like to review the Finance minister's achievements in the four basic mathematical areas.

First, addition. This minister has added millions in unsustainable funding to the provincial budget, increasing spending by 32 per cent over two years.

Second, subtraction. This minister has taken away \$2.3 billion from the rainy day fund and the Crowns in order to cover up miscalculations.

Third, multiplication. Mr. Speaker, he's got a multiple of excuses for blowing \$2.3 billion that the NDP [New Democratic Party] left in the bank.

And finally, Mr. Speaker, division. With these latest numbers, the minister and his Premier have created the clearest possible division between the NDP record of prudent fiscal management and a record of a mathematically challenged government that deserves a failing grade of zero. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Cut Knife-Turtleford.

### Achievements of Battlefords Community Organizations

**Mr. Chisholm:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, over this past weekend I attended the opening of the Eagles Nest Youth Ranch in North Battleford. Our government provided approximately \$1 million in funding to help construct this building.

The new facility is going to help the city and its partners address the needs of local youth who are homeless or at the risk of being homeless. The building is going to be a therapeutic group living centre for up to 10 youth and has individual bedrooms, a central living area, an office space, in a culturally appropriate setting. This new facility demonstrates our government's commitment to building brighter futures for some of Saskatchewan's most vulnerable youth.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to congratulate the Battlefords Quarter Horse Club and chairman Ray Cox for organizing the second annual Santa Claus parade, and to my friend Herb Cox for providing me with a compatible mount for this event.

This event had around 100 horses and riders along with an assortment of floats, cutters, and wagons. And the event was able to raise \$9,000 for the Empty Stocking Fund to help disadvantaged families and children at Christmas.

Mr. Speaker, our government appreciates the effort and dedication of CBOs [community-based organization]. They work tirelessly to meet the needs of the most vulnerable within our society. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Massey Place.

### A Parable

**Mr. Broten:** — Mr. Speaker, I want to share a little parable with the House and the people of Saskatchewan. I call it the parable of the spendthrift cheerleader.

Once there was a cheerleader down on his luck. He had tried cheerleading for a right wing government in the 1980s but that ended in crushing defeat. In the 1990s he tried his hand at the private sector. Two companies started with big dreams, but both ended in bankruptcy. Alas the cheerleader, like many of his neighbours, began to question whether he could manage a two-house paper route.

But then his luck changed. One day while out searching for a political career, he stumbled upon somebody else's wallet. In it, he found \$2.3 billion. Suddenly the cheerleader decided he was a great manager after all and began to spend the money with reckless abandon. And oh, it was fun — for him. But after a couple of years the money ran out, and all the cheerleader's grand schemes sat unfinished like a herd of white elephants.

Worst of all, when the owners of the wallet realized what had happened and came looking for him, he refused to stand up and account for his spending spree and mismanagement. He just left town.

The moral of the little parable, Mr. Speaker: once a cheerleader, always a cheerleader.

While it may be fun to spend somebody else's money, one day the chickens will come home to roost. Somebody should warn the spendthrift cheerleader: you'll have to stand up and account for your mistakes some day. You might as well come home and face the music. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Yorkton.

### **Regina Crime Stoppers Celebrate Anniversary**

**Mr. Ottenbreit:** — Mr. Speaker, last evening I was honoured to attend the 25th Anniversary Gala for Regina Crime Stoppers. MC [master of ceremonies] Manfred Joehnck from CTV [Canadian Television Network Ltd.] Regina was great, and Sask Express did an excellent job of entertaining the crowd.

Board members were recognized, along with current and surviving past presidents and received special recognition.

Greetings came from Mayor Pat Fiacco — landslide Pat Fiacco, I would add. I was honoured to share his table, as well as Regina chief of police, Troy Hagen.

Crime Stoppers began in 1984 and they have received over 12,000 tips leading to 1,922 arrests which have solved 3,000 cases. Additionally, over \$9 million of stolen property has been recovered. Along with this, \$5.8 million of illegal drugs have been taken off our streets.

Mr. Speaker, inspiring speeches were firstly given by our own Saskatoon Northwest MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] on his life story and his 20-year involvement with Crime Stoppers. His speech focused on taking responsibility for our own actions and being involved to make a difference.

Also Lorne Pavelick wrapped up the evening with his family's inspiring story. He spoke of how they are dealing with the loss of their son, Misha, from a 2006 stabbing, how they are overcoming grief, seeking justice, and making a positive difference through Crime Stoppers. Standing ovations were received by both of the evening's speakers.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join with me in thanking and congratulating Crime Stoppers for 25 years, along with those involved for their efforts and continued success. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Regina Coronation Park.

### **Contributions of Former Colleague Celebrated**

**Mr. Trew:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to celebrate the contribution made to the city of Regina, the province of Saskatchewan, and indeed the country of Canada by a former colleague of ours, Mr. Harry Van Mulligen.

Last evening 300 friends and admirers took our hats off to Harry for his years of dedicated public service as a city councillor, an MLA, and a cabinet minister. Harry received plaudits from far and wide, Mr. Speaker, for his long and principled service in the cause of social democracy, with congratulations offered by people ranging from constituents of Regina Douglas Park to former Premier Roy Romanow to our current leader, and many more.

Receiving the greatest praise of all however was Harry's foresight in questioning this government's grossly over-optimistic revenue projections in the March budget. Allow

me to quote Harry's prophetic words from March of this year, Mr. Speaker: "... wild revenue assumptions, out-of-control spending, and a mounting debt problem, this budget is all about short-term gain for long-term pain."

With today's financial update, Mr. Speaker, the government is trying to take a mulligan on last year's budget. How much better off our province would be if instead they'd taken a Van Mulligen. Mr. Speaker, Harry closed by saying, "The government would have . . ."

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

## **STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER**

### **Ruling on Scope of Questions**

**The Speaker:** — Before we move to oral questions, I yesterday indicated I was going to review question period and some of the questions. And I'd like to make this statement.

Yesterday I undertook to review the questions asked during question period and rules pertaining to the scope of questions. I have now done this, and I am now prepared to rule on the matter.

I find that the questions asked by the member from Moose Jaw Wakamow contravene rule 19(2) that states, and I quote, "Questions on issues not officially connected with the government, of a private nature, related to the Board of Internal Economy, caucus, party or political responsibilities are prohibited."

The member from Moose Jaw Wakamow asked the following question:

My question is: was the Sask Party policy followed? And were these . . . [changes] brought to the attention of the party and the Kindersley constituency association?

This question was then repeated. This question is clearly out of order. I would like to remind members that this rule was recently, rule 19(2), was recently adopted by the members specifically to exclude this type of question from question period.

I would also like to remind members, I have some concerns in regards to the way questions have been presented and answers have been given. And I will be conferring through the two House leaders to their respective members. Thank you.

## **QUESTION PERIOD**

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Regina Rosemont.

### **Management of Provincial Economy**

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The mid-year report just released confirms the government's March budget was in fact the most irresponsible budget in the history of Saskatchewan. It was a budget based on phony revenue projections, unsustainable runaway spending, and financial

trickery designed to hide historic raids on both our Crown corporations and our public's rainy day fund.

In 2007 this government inherited \$2.3 billion in the bank and a booming economy. Two years later, we have a billion dollar deficit on a summary financial basis and an economy that's in the grips of recession. Mr. Speaker, can the minister explain how his government blew the boom and threw Saskatchewan into deficit?

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

**Hon. Mr. Gantfoer:** — Mr. Speaker, today we acknowledged in the mid-year report that potash revenues have suffered an extreme hit, if you like, going from a budgeted amount of \$1.9 billion to \$100 million. Mr. Speaker, that is a significant and very, very dramatic change in the revenues of the province of Saskatchewan. I fully acknowledge that. I fully acknowledge that the government was inaccurate in terms of any kind of prediction of that event occurring.

Mr. Speaker, if you look at a range of predictions, is what the government generally does when you're trying to set a forecast for the future. We look anywhere from the most optimistic to the most pessimistic numbers, and we try to pick a number somewhere in the medium of those ranges. Mr. Speaker, if we would have taken the most pessimistic number of any forecaster in the world, we still would not have come up with the kind of numbers that have been impacted in the announcement today.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Regina Rosemont.

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, this minister is denying accountability. This is a problem of their own making. The minister likes to talk about two stories in Saskatchewan. And there are two stories: his fantasyland budget and reality.

Let's look at his own budget documents released today. Yes, potash sales are down; we stated that last March. But also oil sales are down 46 per cent. Natural gas sales are down 55 per cent. Manufacturing sales are down 12 per cent. Building permits down, 24. Housing starts, down 54 per cent. Retail sales down. And instead of a clueless 2.1 per cent economic growth forecast in the March budget, we see the economy contracting by 2.9 per cent — shrinking. Everything else is going great guns, Mr. Speaker.

When is this minister and this government going to face the facts and explain how they blew the boom and threw Saskatchewan into deficit?

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

**Hon. Mr. Gantfoer:** — Mr. Speaker, as I've been saying the last couple of days in question period, there are two stories in this province right now, two significant stories. One is related to potash and the incredible impact these collapsing prices have had on the economy. But more important is, we've got to look at how Saskatchewan is faring, as compared to the rest of the world, in light of the whole recession that everyone is facing.

Mr. Speaker, in this year to date there are some job statistics

that I think are important. And Canada has lost 294,000 jobs in this period. British Columbia has lost 60,000 jobs. Alberta has lost 23,000 jobs. And Ontario has lost 172,000 jobs. In that same period of time, in this current period of time, Saskatchewan has grown 9,030 jobs, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, that is just but one example of the very positive news for the economy of Saskatchewan. People in Saskatchewan are optimistic about the future.

[10:30]

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Regina Rosemont.

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — The member opposite can spin and cheerlead with part-time job statistics. This opposition is worried about the huge job loss of full-time jobs, Mr. Speaker.

In the March provincial budget speech, the minister said, and I quote: "Our new budget is a balanced budget. This new balance is built on strong but cautious revenue estimates."

Mr. Speaker, which exactly were the cautious revenue estimates? Were they the potash revenue estimates that were off 95 per cent, or the natural gas revenue estimates which were off 67 per cent? Goodness help Saskatchewan if this crew had thrown caution to the wind.

When is this minister and this government going to admit that they based their provincial budget on phony revenue estimates, runaway and unsustainable spending, and financial trickery to hide their raids on both Crown and the rainy day fund, the people's assets of Saskatchewan?

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

**Hon. Mr. Gantfoer:** — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, what the opposition doesn't seem to understand is there's a tremendous spirit of optimism and looking forward to the future out in the province of Saskatchewan. Every time we go home for a weekend, you run into the people of Saskatchewan, the real people of Saskatchewan who understand that this province has had an unprecedented growth. And it's continuing . . .

[Interjections]

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order. Order. I would ask that members give the minister the same opportunity of responding to the question without undue interference. I recognize the Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Mr. Gantfoer:** — Mr. Speaker, I indicated that the positive numbers in terms of job growth in the province of Saskatchewan, that is virtually unprecedented in any province in Canada facing this economic recession that the world has experienced.

Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt that there are more challenges ahead. But, Mr. Speaker, it's remarkable that we're continuing to benefit from the provincial economy. We have had a growth rate of population in Saskatchewan, for the first time in a tremendously long while, of 16,000 people in this province, Mr.



Speaker. Mr. Speaker, those 16,000 people believe that there is a future in Saskatchewan for them, as we believe there's a future in Saskatchewan for them.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Regina Rosemont.

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Spin, spin, spin, and spin some more, Mr. Speaker. Things were good in Saskatchewan. That's right. They were good.

Mr. Speaker, also in the March budget speech the minister said, and I quote:

There are those who have said that Saskatchewan today is an economic star of our country. If that is the case then . . . [let us be the] right kind of star. Not a shooting star burning bright for an instant and then fading away, but let us be a North Star, the one that you can set your compass by.

Can you just visualize the pompoms waving gently to the hallelujah chorus over there?

Mr. Speaker, it's time for a reality check. This government inherited \$2.3 billion in their bank account, a booming economy. Two years later, we have a \$1 billion deficit on a summary financial basis and an economy that's in the grips of recession. Can the minister please explain to the people of Saskatchewan how this government blew the boom and threw Saskatchewan into deficit?

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

**Hon. Mr. Gantfoer:** — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt that the Saskatchewan economy is in a decline, into negative numbers this year as it's facing the most incredible challenge of the potash industry since 1972, Mr. Speaker. And we're going to manage that and move our way through it because the people of this province are optimistic about the future. They understand that Saskatchewan is going to lead the nation next year. They're going to be at the very strong economic growth after a one-year slowdown.

Mr. Speaker, that is incredible. All of the private sector forecasters are saying the same thing, that Saskatchewan is likely to lead the nation in economic growth next year.

Mr. Speaker, the potash industry is going to experience growth next year, as the industry is continuing to invest in infrastructure spending of over \$7 billion, Mr. Speaker. They understand there's a future of growth and optimism in the province. Why can't those 20 members opposite understand that?

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

#### Support for Long-Term Care

**Ms. Junor:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The mid-year financial report shows exactly where this right wing government chooses to cut spending when faced with a tight budget squeeze. Health

care tops the list. Today the government announced it is cutting \$122 million that it had announced for the construction and repair of Saskatchewan's long-term care facilities.

This government has money for insiders like Doug Emsley and Garnet Garven. It has millions for its two-week Olympic pavilion. It can afford \$11 million to throw away on severance costs, but it cuts nursing homes for our seniors.

Mr. Speaker, to the minister: what does this say about the Sask Party government's spending priorities?

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

**Hon. Mr. McMorris:** — Mr. Speaker, certainly, you know, the mid-term financial report, which has been explained very well by the Minister of Finance, has some pressures. And, Mr. Speaker, the issue around long-term care couldn't be further from what that member just said. She said they cancelled them, which couldn't be further from the truth.

But actually, Mr. Speaker, most people are believing that they can't believe a word that that opposition says, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, because these long-term care facilities have been deferred. The money would not be spent in this fiscal year through the health regions. The communities aren't ready, the scoping hasn't been ready, Mr. Speaker. But I find it passingly strange that she would be so concerned about long-term care facilities now. When they were in government, they did very, very little to do anything about them.

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

**Ms. Junor:** — Same old answer, Mr. Speaker: what did we do. He continues to have no answer for what he's doing.

The minister has said this announcement for the money for long-term care was made under a ready-for-growth initiative. Now he's telling the people in the long-term care industry and the seniors and the health district, be ready for disappointment. It means this government is not going to get on with building and repairing Saskatchewan nursing homes this year. And their promise to do it next year is worth about as much as their budget forecasts.

Let me ask the minister this. He says nothing is lost by deferring \$122 million in spending. Is he admitting that he was incompetent to have included this amount in the March budget? Or is he claiming that seniors don't really need quick action on nursing homes? Mr. Speaker, to the minister: which is it?

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

**Hon. Mr. McMorris:** — Mr. Speaker, the deferral of 13 long-term care facilities across the province is simply that. It's a deferral. The communities weren't ready in a number of cases with their 35 per cent. The scoping hasn't been ready, Mr. Speaker. So that money could either sit in the account . . .

[Interjections]

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order. I think it would be appropriate

to allow at least the guests to even have an opportunity to hear the response. I recognize the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Mr. McMorris:** — So, Mr. Speaker, when the scoping is complete, the money will be there. And it'll be paid as the projects proceed.

But, Mr. Speaker, I cannot believe that that opposition now would criticize us for deferring for a year, Mr. Speaker, when they would announce for ten years, a hospital in Humboldt; for seven years, a hospital in Preeceville. And never followed through with those commitments, Mr. Speaker, until we became government.

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

**Ms. Junor:** — And now, Mr. Speaker, he's not following through with anything he's promised. He can claim this is a deferral, but that's just a politician's word for a financial IOU [I owe you].

The cuts to health care don't end with nursing homes. The government has also cut \$95 million from the children's hospital in Saskatoon and \$3 million from the surgical care centre planned for Regina. Again all these projects have to go on our financial IOUs from the group that can't count. Which shell is the pea under today?

To the minister, Mr. Speaker: why should Saskatchewan families have to pay for the government's financial mismanagement with cuts to vital health care programs and services?

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

**Hon. Mr. McMorris:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, first of all, I tried to explain in the first answer, there is no cut. These are deferred, Mr. Speaker. Our government is committed to following through, number one, on the children's hospital. That will be there when the money needs to be there, in long-term care facilities when the money needs to be there, Mr. Speaker.

But once again, we have an opposition that was in government for 16 years. In 1999, the official press release of a new hospital in Preeceville. Well, Mr. Speaker, 1999 announced. After two years of Sask Party government, tomorrow I'll be there for the grand opening, Mr. Speaker. We're following through on our word.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Centre.

### Support for Seniors' Housing

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Most Saskatchewan seniors live on fixed incomes, and many have little income beyond old age security and the guaranteed income supplement. Well, we know we have a collective responsibility to ensure that the people who built this province enjoy a good quality of life in their retirement.

But a review of the waiting lists for senior housing units across

Saskatchewan and selected communities, based on the government's own answers to written questions, indicate that the number of seniors waiting for spaces has increased from 521 in January of 2008 to 781 in September 2009. That's a 50 per cent increase.

To the Minister of Social Services: why have the waiting lists for senior housing increased so dramatically under this government's watch?

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

**Hon. Ms. Harpauer:** — The answer is quite simple, Mr. Speaker. It's because the province is growing and that housing has always been a challenge of a growing province. But we will meet that challenge because we will ensure that this province continues to grow.

What have we done to help seniors with this particular situation? Well I have a number of senior housing units that we have opened since we've been in government. We also have increased the amount of affordable housing and senior housing that we have completed. We have completed over 500 units since we formed government. We currently have over 500 under construction, and we're in the development and planning stages of 600 more units.

Mr. Speaker, we have opened more housing in two years than the NDP did in three prior to the election. So, Mr. Speaker, we are addressing this issue. It does take time to build the housing units, but we're doing it.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Centre.

**Mr. Forbes:** — I find that answer very interesting. And we can go on at the 500, 600 number that the minister likes to throw about, but that's for another time.

The figures I mentioned today are provincial totals. But it's important to talk about the impact on individual communities as well. The number of seniors waiting for spaces in Swift Current has increased from 36 to 95. The average wait time is now seven and a half months. Yorkton, an increase from 36 to 74 seniors with an average wait time of five months. North Battleford, an increase from 36 to 64 seniors. Yet there are currently no seniors' housing projects under construction in any of those centres, and very few anywhere in the province actually, for that matter. These waiting lists are now so long that we'll never reduce them unless we set targets and commit resources to the problem.

To the minister: will she agree here today to set targets and commit dollars so that these seniors no longer have to wait for an affordable place to live?

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

**Hon. Ms. Harpauer:** — This is just another example of say one thing and do another because the NDP, when they were in government, refused to set targets. In fact we had a Health

minister who said, you know, we don't want to set . . .

[Interjections]

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order. Minister Responsible for Social Services.

**Hon. Ms. Harpauer:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We had a Health minister who said, we don't want to set targets because we may not be able to meet them.

Mr. Speaker, we understand that housing is an issue in our province. We have acted on most of the recommendations that came forward from our task force that we struck shortly after the election. One of those recommendations was to increase the income level for seniors to qualify for seniors' housing. We are accelerating the number of housing units that we're building throughout the province.

But when it comes to seniors, I wonder when that member was sitting at the cabinet table, he wouldn't want to talk about the seniors' income plan because for 16 years the NDP did absolutely nothing about the seniors' income plan. We increased it by 110 per cent, Mr. Speaker. And not only do they get the increased income from the seniors' income plan, they also get the extra health benefits that come with it.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Centre.

**Mr. Forbes:** — I'm glad to debate the seniors' income plan. I don't know if the members opposite knew that over 3,000 were thrown off the seniors' income plan this summer. That's another issue we can talk about.

We can talk about our health plan that we introduced, that was over \$50 million that affected over 100,000 — 100,000 — seniors. So we're very proud of our record when it comes to helping out the seniors.

Well today, Mr. Speaker, we've seen the consequences to the finances of this province by this government's financial mismanagement. But I ask members to think for a moment about the many vulnerable people in this province who are ultimately paying the price for this government's blunders.

Too many seniors in this province are already having trouble making ends meet with the rising rents and the higher utility costs, like an 8.5 per cent increase in SaskPower rates last spring. And now this government has abandoned vulnerable seniors looking for affordable places to live. This government can toss out its rhetoric, but the fact is seniors now are worse off since this government came to power.

To the minister: why are seniors looking for affordable housing paying the price for this government's financial mismanagement?

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

[10:45]

**Hon. Ms. Harpauer:** — Mr. Speaker, in the 16 years that the NDP did absolutely nothing with the seniors' income plan, do you know what inflation rate was during that time? The inflation rate was 43 per cent.

Instead of just increasing the income by 43 per cent, Mr. Speaker, we decided to increase it by 110 per cent. So we far exceeded the inflation rate of the neglect of the NDP. But when the member opposite talks about neglecting vulnerable people, well I'll tell you, Mr. Speaker, what would he like cut? If we're overspending, if we're misspending, what would he like cut? We indexed an increase and indexed shelter rates . . .

[Interjections]

**The Speaker:** — Order. Minister Responsible for Social Services.

**Hon. Ms. Harpauer:** — Perhaps he could let us, this House know and let the people of Saskatchewan know what he would like cut if we are overspending foolishly. We increased and indexed shelter rates. We increased rental supplements. We adjust those every six months, so there's been three adjustments since we've been government.

We lowered income tax, taking 80,000 people, many of them seniors, right off the tax rolls completely. We introduced the low-income tax credit. Seniors were qualified for that as well. And if the member has more questions, I'd be more than happy for him to tell me other programs he'd like to see us cut.

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

### Management of Provincial Economy

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question to the Minister of Finance. We now know from the mid-term, mid-year financial report based on the budget of this year, that we now have the single most irresponsible budget in the history of the province. That's now a fact. It's on the record. As the member from Rosemont has raised, phony revenue projections, irresponsible and unsustainable government spending, trickery in taking money out of the rainy day fund, and stripping money out of the Crown corporations — all of this in the name of trying to pretend that the books of the province are balanced.

My question to the minister: did the Premier make him write in the numbers, or is this his own idea of monumental mistakes of his own making? Is it his idea, or was it the Premier of the province?

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

**Hon. Mr. Gantfoer:** — Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition implies that we have spending out of control. Well, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, we have kept significant commitments to the people of Saskatchewan that I think are important. Because keeping your commitments to the people of Saskatchewan is something we understand, and the members opposite don't.

Mr. Speaker, we have dealt with education property tax. We've dealt with municipal revenue sharing. We have a graduate

retention program. We have nurse and physician recruitment and retention programs in place. Mr. Speaker, we've funded Avastin, a colorectal cancer drug that that opposition, when they were government, refused to consider to add to the formulary. We have a seniors' income plan, social services rent and food indexing and housing initiatives.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask the member opposite, which of those things are irresponsible? Which one of those things would their opposition not do? Would you throw the most vulnerable people over the side of the boat, Mr. Speaker?

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

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Question to the Minister of Finance. He knows that the deficit is now back. After 16 years of balanced budgets, the deficit is now back. Everyone in this province knows that the tax cuts announced by this government are deferred taxes and are now on the backs of our families to be paid with interest at a later date. That's a fact.

My question to the minister is this: he now admits that the phone calls from the Premier where he talked about moving money on weekends, that the Premier's not responsible, that this is of his own making. Would he now do the honourable thing, because he's responsible for the biggest mistake financially in the history of the province, do the responsible thing and resign his position and not wait to be asked by the Premier?

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

**Hon. Mr. Gantefer:** — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, I said in my remarks this morning at the press conference announcing the mid-year report that Saskatchewan is doing very well compared to every other jurisdiction in Canada. Mr. Speaker, every province in Canada is experiencing the impact of the most severe recession since the dirty thirties. Mr. Speaker, our province is doing well, in relative terms, to any other jurisdiction in Canada and in North America.

Mr. Speaker, I know that there are things that are difficult for the opposition to understand. They don't understand that in the two years since we've been government, we have been able to reduce the debt by \$2.6 billion in the province of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, that is an important initiative because even today we recognize the fact that that has saved \$15 million since the first quarter on interest payments. Very worthwhile things indeed.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, it's important to recognize the other things that we have done — \$2.3 billion on infrastructure. Mr. Speaker, I want to recognize that these are important initiatives for the people of Saskatchewan.

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

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, my final question to the minister. Mr. Speaker, I believe the minister and the members of government protest too much. I believe that the people of the province, when they see this monumental mistake, they will call this government to task. And I ask the minister one more time: will he take the responsibility, resign his position, before the

Premier or the people of this province need to make that decision for him?

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

**Hon. Mr. Gantefer:** — Mr. Speaker, the members opposite are very reluctant to talk about the reality of what the people of Saskatchewan believe. The people of Saskatchewan, in two polls that were commissioned and released two weeks ago, told . . .

[Interjections]

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order. I recognize the Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Mr. Gantefer:** — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan have said clearly that this administration, that this government is the best equipped to lead the province as it's going forward. Mr. Speaker, the opposition is sitting there thinking that they have all the rightness of the world on their side. They also only have 17 per cent support in the polls, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition asked if I would resign my position. I said this morning, and I'll say it again for the House: I would rather be the Finance minister of this province than any province in Canada. And I serve with pride.

[Interjections]

**The Speaker:** — Order.

#### TABLING OF SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES

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

**Hon. Mr. Gantefer:** — Before orders of the day, Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to submit supplementary estimates accompanied by a message from His Honour the Lieutenant Governor.

**The Speaker:** — I ask members to rise to hear the message from His Honour the Lieutenant Governor. The message is as follows:

The Lieutenant Governor transmits supplementary estimates of certain sums required for the service of the province for the 12 months ending March 31st, 2010, and recommends the same to the Legislative Assembly. [Signed] the Hon. Gordon L. Barnhart, Lieutenant Governor, province of Saskatchewan.

Please be seated.

#### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### WRITTEN QUESTIONS

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

**Mr. Weekes:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the

answer to question 499.

**The Speaker:** — Answer to 499 is tabled.

### SEVENTY-FIVE MINUTE DEBATE

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Regina Qu'Appelle Valley.

#### H1N1 Vaccine Delivery

**Ms. Ross:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move:

That this Assembly commends the provincial health care officials and health care providers of Saskatchewan for the strategic delivery of the H1N1 vaccine.

Mr. Speaker, I would now like to speak to the motion.

It is a pleasure to join my fellow legislative members in commending the provincial health care officials and the health care providers of Saskatchewan for the strategic delivery of the H1N1 vaccine.

It all started last spring when the first wave of the H1N1 influenza strain began capturing the headlines all over the world, and Canada was no exception. It seems that everyone had their eyes turned to all the media outlets for the latest update on the H1N1 developments, especially as autumn grew near.

Well I'm sure most Canadians were hoping they would stay healthy, and dedicated health care providers were putting their own health at risk as they experienced the virus head-on. They put their personal needs aside to help others, some who even contacted the H1N1 virus.

With leaves changing colour and the air getting cooler, fall was right around the corner and so was the re-emerging threat of H1N1. Our Saskatchewan government teamed up with provincial hard-working health care officials and providers, knowing full well that they could never deal with the resurgence of H1N1 without them.

You see, these are men and women who work tirelessly every day to save lives. Now many people call these individuals heroes, especially if they or their family members were also patients and have since fully recovered. Now as our government joined forces with these professionals, we were so honoured to be working with those who were doing what they could, doing their very best saving lives and improving people's health.

Saskatchewan has a team of health care officials and workers and professionals dedicated to pursuing a strategic plan for the H1N1 rollout. Now these dedicated health care individuals helped our government come up with a plan to vaccinate Saskatchewan's most vulnerable, most susceptible residents first. Even as the disappointing news came at the end of October that all the provinces would be receiving significantly fewer dosages than were expected of the H1N1 vaccine, Saskatchewan was still in pretty good shape.

Our chief medical health officer confidently said that our province would still have enough vaccine to immunize young children and pregnant and postpartum women. Now this was our first step of our rollout plan. Basically we would still be able to follow the original plan. If not for the strategic and thoughtful planning from our health care officials and providers, we would not have been so calm, cool, and collected, even in the eyes of difficult and frustrating news.

Now as fall arrived and the vaccines were delivered across Canada, each province, along with Saskatchewan, began rolling out their own vaccination plans. The week of October 26th, the delivery of H1N1 vaccine in Saskatchewan began. Now we focused foremost on health care workers and remote and isolated communities. And on November the 2nd our rollout expanded. Vaccination clinics began targeting children six months to less than five years of age, pregnant women, and women of four weeks post partum. As of November 5th, school-aged children from kindergarten to grade 6 were also eligible.

Meanwhile many other provinces, like Alberta for example, encountered difficulty and criticism as they unleashed their H1N1 plan on a first-come, first-served basis. And all of us have had the opportunity to see the long lineups on the newscasts.

[11:00]

Now as their health care workers were working tirelessly, the clinics faced very long lineups, wait times, and charges of queue-jumping. Now it quickly began a difficult situation for most of those involved in the vaccine rollout. Now that wasn't happening in Saskatchewan.

On October the 29th, *The Globe and Mail* article noted:

Clinics are already overwhelmed by demand, with some healthy Canadians jumping to the front of the queue despite the pleas of health-care officials to let those more likely to develop complications from the virus get vaccinated first.

The vaccine shortage left provincial health officials scrambling to visit their plans. So as some Calgarians were waiting upwards of six hours in line to receive their shots first, people in Saskatchewan were only waiting minutes. Other provinces across Canada started following Saskatchewan's every move as we carefully and methodically rolled out our vaccination plan.

Those provinces who decided to open clinics for everyone who wanted a vaccination were stepping back and re-evaluating their plan and looking to Saskatchewan as a model, and we have our dedicated health care workers and professionals to thank for that. Now they were realizing the importance of targeting those high-risk groups just as Saskatchewan had begun in the beginning.

Alberta Premier Ed Stelmach said lineups have been longer in Alberta because the province decided to make vaccine available for all residents off the bat, not just high-risk groups. And then they quickly realized our province wasn't facing the problems they were — no long lineups, no all-day wait times, and also no

queue-jumping. All the while Saskatchewan's local newspapers took notice, and reported on the patience of our province's people and the professionalism of our health care workers.

On October 30th the article in the Regina *Leader-Post* said, "Saskatchewan's approach — getting the vaccine to high-risk groups first, seems to be the right one." Now the article goes on to say that, "It would not be helpful, as the NDP Opposition had suggested, to dilute the strategy by opening the vaccine clinic at the University of Saskatchewan where several H1N1 cases had been reported."

National papers took notice of our diligence and thoughtful rollout plan as well. On October 31st, a *Globe and Mail* editorial said:

... one would have hoped that such a methodical approach would beget a logical vaccine rollout, one that would have, yes, placed high-risk individuals, pregnant women, aboriginals, children under five, [and] people with chronic lung issues, at the head of the queue.

Articles were noting that Saskatchewan was ahead of the curve because our plan caused no extra, unwanted, unnecessary stress. Saskatchewan was quickly becoming a national leader. In all the frenzy, we continued rolling out our plan, smoothly and steadily at a steady pace. We opened up vaccine clinics to other high-risk groups based on available vaccine and the most current information we have received about the H1N1 tendencies and patterns. We have followed every move.

Now the week of November 9th, after receiving 60,000 additional dosage, vaccine clinics were expanded to include people under the age of 35 with underlying health problems. Now once those additional doses were administered, about 30 per cent of Saskatchewan's population is now vaccinated.

Regional health authorities were reporting that there has been a good turnout and the uptake of the vaccine has been very high. Now our high turnout may be partly due to the Ministry of Health covering the cost of antivirals for anyone who presents with a prescription to the pharmacy.

As H1N1 second wave continues throughout the province, Saskatchewan's toll-free health information line hired additional registered nurses and opened more phone lines to field inquiries about the virus and vaccine program. The HealthLine — which is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week — provides guidance on such topics as how to address flu symptoms and when to call the physician or pay a visit to the emergency room, and the locations and the time for local H1N1 vaccination clinics. HealthLine and HealthLine online gives people another choice for their health care and improves access for basic health information and advice, including vaccination clinics.

It was reported in November that calls to the HealthLine increased steadily, doubling the average of previous months. Staff complements at the HealthLine have been increasing and direct messaging systems implemented to deal better with the surge of calls related to the H1N1.

It is because of these registered nurses — the friendly voice on

the other end of the phone — that many questions have been answered, fears have been quelled, and anxiety has been eased. As they say, knowledge is power and we are working hard to empower our communities.

As the rollout underwent, all Saskatchewan residents were continually urged to be diligent with infection prevention measures such as frequent hand washing, coughing and sneezing into the crook of one's elbow, and staying home if one is feeling ill. We also have [www.health.gov.sk.ca](http://www.health.gov.sk.ca) as constantly being updated with the latest up-to-date vaccine clinic information.

People are not only taking notice of Saskatchewan's vaccination rollout plan, but they are also applauding our plan. And I have stated before, our government gives credit to those on the front line, our health care workers.

So when Murray Mandryk, a political columnist for the *Leader-Post*, acknowledged our smooth and relatively painless rollout, we again give credit, and give credit where credit is due, to our health care providers. Murray Mandryk's column reads:

So why have things gone better in Saskatchewan than in other provinces? Well it largely has to do with a thing called process and the fact that the Saskatchewan Party government's health minister wisely . . . listen to those with some expertise on how to develop the best protocol, rather than listen to those who find it necessary to twist . . . health issue into [every] disjointed argument on how private delivery of health care would somehow be better.

Now we also applaud those men and women who are working hard to make our rollout a continuous success right here every day. We have complete faith in our health care providers. They are working diligently to roll up their sleeve, after sleeve, until everyone who wants a vaccination has a vaccination.

We are looking around this great province and we see our people living healthy and happy lifestyles. We will surely remember, over and over again, the valiant efforts of the hard working men and women in our health care system. To all of you, we are forever grateful. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the motion is:

That this Assembly commends the provincial health care officials and health care providers of Saskatchewan for the strategic delivery of the H1N1 vaccine.

**The Speaker:** — The motion presented to the Assembly by the member from Regina Qu'Appelle Valley reads:

That this Assembly commends the provincial health care officials and health care providers of Saskatchewan for the strategic delivery of the H1N1 vaccine.

Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Saskatoon Eastview.

**Ms. Junor:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There is no doubt that the people who provided the service for H1N1 delivery have

been . . . It's been commendable and they have worked above and beyond the call. But before we applaud ourselves too soon, there are many things that have to be addressed in this debate, as well as after in other forums.

There are several issues that cannot be ignored that happened during this, and are still happening because we're not done yet. And I had this brought home to me very quickly the other day when my nephew's baby was taken to the pediatric intensive care unit, unable to breathe. So we simply can't rest on our laurels any time too soon.

One of the first things that was really apparent about our delivery here in Saskatchewan is that it was extremely confusing to everybody who was out there waiting. And somehow or other, what we knew in April didn't translate well to an on-the-ground plan in September. And it certainly added to the angst and the uncertainty and certainly the worry and anxiety of people out there who did not know where they would fall in this sequence of vaccinations.

And it didn't get very much better for quite a while. The websites were inaccurate. They were certainly not consistent, and people who were actually wondering about different questions that affected them in particular had nowhere to go for those answers. One of the things I stressed in an early press conference was that we should have a dedicated hotline so people could phone and ask the particular questions.

I have two files of people's names and questions who have asked me what the answer should be to their particular question. Some of these questions you wouldn't want to ask publicly because you wouldn't want to raise people's concerns, but there has to be a way to answer those questions. And many, many, many of those people who emailed me, phoned me, and contacted me personally did not have a way to have those questions answered.

So there has to be at the end of this, at the end of this H1N1 episode here, this pandemic, we need to have a way to look at what we learned. And I hope what we learned is that we need to start our communications early and get them consistent and have them delivered across the province from a central voice, and not leave it up to every individual health district to do whatever they have decided at their local level. That really confused people. Not only did it confuse them, it really made them angry that a neighbouring district could have this done at this time, where in their district they could not.

One of the many, many things that was brought up in questions that people had and asked me was the high risk that some people live with — people that had heart transplants, people who are living with partial lungs. All those people were pushed to the back, further back than they thought was certainly necessary. They looked at who was getting some of the vaccines that were given out sooner than what they were told. They had no way . . . And they were very, very, very scared because their particular conditions, like a heart transplant, you're immunosuppressed. They were worried that they would die as they waited in line.

One of the main problems, not only for when they would get their vaccine, one of the things that was brought up was that

they had to stand in line with a great deal of the public. And that put them at even higher risk. There was certainly suggestions and certainly made by different physicians that because they dealt with people, these doctors dealt with people who were very high risk, that there should have been some mechanism for those doctors to deliver the vaccine out of their offices.

And I do know that the argument was that the vaccine had to be stored at a certain temperature. It had to be transported a certain way. It had to be mixed and delivered within a certain time if it was mixed because each vial contained 10 doses. I know all that and the people know all that.

But the doctors had those patients' names on file. There should be some mechanism in the future when we deal with a pandemic — which we will likely be doing again — that we should have some mechanism to allow individual doctors who identify patients that are very high risk, allow them to have some of the vaccine.

This would certainly make a difference in many, many, many of the files I have for people who had their individual problems that were not addressed. And they were certainly afraid from their day-to-day living. They could not go out. They could not attend events. They could not work. They were told to stay home, frankly, by their doctor because they were at such high risk. Yet they were not addressed in a timely manner.

Many of the things, the questions that came out were the firefighters. They were attending scenes with other health providers who were already vaccinated. And why weren't they? Same with the police. Some of the strange things — a pilot taking nurses up north for the nurses to vaccinate the people up north, couldn't be vaccinated himself. So we seem to have had a fair amount of rigidity in our processes that didn't allow for individual circumstances or group circumstances, like very high-risk people.

[11:15]

And there were certainly concerns in the classrooms and in the schools. Teachers were not happy and parents were not happy with the way the school situation was addressed. K to 6 [kindergarten to grade 6] in the same school as 7 and 8, the questions from the parents were, what about the 7 and 8's? They're in the same school as the K to 6. What about the teachers who are teaching in those classrooms and exposed? What about the teachers' aides? None of that was addressed.

And granted we had a protocol and we kept to it, but there were certainly questions that were asked and have still not been answered.

So when we do our review of what we learned, we need to have all those things addressed so that we are better prepared next time because there's going to be a next time. We're better prepared; we don't have people who have gone, sort of, underground to voice their complaints. They think that there's no one to speak for them because they are speaking . . . They're trying to save themselves or their family, their immediate family, and there's no one listening to them because we've, sort of, gone back behind the protocol and the process and have turned off their concerns. That isn't fair, Mr. Speaker.

We do have some of the young children . . . It's been too late for the caregivers of young children. That came on too late. Another thing we should have learned. We only vaccinated children from six months to under five years. But then it was determined that parents of children under six months were bringing home the vaccine so they needed to be vaccinated. Another thing we've learned. We should make sure we put that in our file.

And the geography of when the vaccines were available. That was really a very hard thing for people to accept, that because of where they lived determined how or when they got the vaccine. And there was so much confusion about, could you go to another district? And if you got there, then their processes or protocols were different. We need to have a consistent, across-the-board standard when this happens again. Another thing we have to know that we've learned, and we have to build on what we've learned.

One of the things that I certainly think was missing is that we should have had a dedicated hotline up right away. I've talked to nurses who have been called, and this isn't what they do. This isn't a nurse in a primary health centre. They've been called for questions. They felt that they were basically abandoned with having to answer all the questions that could have better been answered on a dedicated hotline.

The staffing of the HealthLine were stressed and overstressed because the questions coming in to them were basically flu related. And other questions of other health problems were taking second, third place. We could've avoided that by having a dedicated hotline.

I know some of the districts took up another suggestion that I made in my late September press conferences to triage people away from the general emergency. There was way too many people coming in to emergency departments because they had no other place to go. And we've said to people, come forward if anything like this is happening or if you feel worried — because this flu attacks quickly and progresses quickly. So come forward.

Well when they came forward, they could only come to emergency departments, and if we had triaged them off of the regular emergency departments it would have saved our emergency departments a lot of stress and overwork. And a lot of the backup in hospitals that eventually started cancelling elective surgeries was because of people coming into emergency. We need to learn that and do that better.

We also need to, as I've said, please be flexible. People that called me had no answer except no, that's not how we're doing it. That doesn't work for a person who has a heart transplant or is living with a partial lung or is waiting for a kidney transplant or is diabetic and is 64 and has all kinds of other problems. It doesn't work for women who are trying to get pregnant and don't know whether they should or not continue that trying because, if they get the vaccine, then what? There's no answers for those questions unless you have a dedicated hotline and people staffing it who know the answers.

And it certainly isn't a good idea to expect everyone to line up en masse. There has to be a way to deliver the vaccine for

people who can't stand in line in a great big public building. I had a woman tell me her mother — even though she was certainly compromised — she could bring a walker and have a chair there, but she had to go to the bathroom every five minutes. She couldn't stand in line in a major public facility. There has to be some way to address all the anomalies that we've seen with this. And we hope we have learned from that.

**The Speaker:** — The member's time has elapsed. I recognize the member from Moose Jaw North.

**Mr. Michelson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to commend the health officials and health care providers in this province and appreciate the responsibility that they have accepted in face of the H1N1 pandemic.

Pandemics have been a devastating fact on humanity over the centuries, and I guess perhaps it's okay to be a little afraid. Millions have died. As we look back in history, the first influenza pandemic was recorded in 1580, and since then influenza pandemics occur every 10 to 30 years. History has not been kind, but it has been educational.

The Black Death between 1348 and 1350 was one of the deadliest pandemics in human history. The Black Death killed between 30 and 60 per cent of Europeans' population, and it took 150 years for Europe's population to regain.

The Asiatic flu in 1889-1890, about 1 million people died in that pandemic. And I remember my grandfather, who was a boy in England, talking about it. The Spanish flu of 1918-1919 affected another estimated one-third of the world's population. I remember my grandmother talking about that, as neighbours died while she was pregnant with my father. Some estimated the total that were killed in that pandemic was 1 million worldwide. There was more deaths than the entire toll of the World War I.

The Asian flu of 1957-58 caused about 2 million deaths globally. The Hong Kong flu of 1968-69 killed an estimated 1 million people worldwide.

Mr. Speaker, as pandemics occur every 10 to 30 years, it wasn't surprising — but still somewhat alarming — when the H1N1 outbreak was first observed in Mexico last April. The Mexico government reacted appropriately and closed most of Mexico City's public and private offices and facilities to try to contain the spread of the virus. The actions of the Mexican government are to be commended; however, the virus quickly spread globally. And on June 11 the World Health Organization declared the outbreak as a pandemic.

Mr. Speaker, at that time our government was alertly preparing to contain the pandemic threat of H1N1. Fortunately the summer months presented an opportunity for research to plan, anticipate, and get prepared. As the Canadian government ordered vaccine, the health organizations and officials were devising a plan to research, to educate, and to contain the H1N1 virus. The provincial health care officials and health care providers began working with the health regions to be prepared.

H1N1 is a new virus, largely an unknown, and more of a moving target, so to speak. Being prepared is the ultimate



importance. However, being prepared for exactly what was somewhat of an unknown. But, Mr. Speaker, the provincial health care officials and health care providers worked together, devising a pandemic plan for H1N1 vaccinations for all Saskatchewan's residents. Health care officials and health care providers worked diligently to be ready.

In my own constituency earlier this fall I met with Cheryl Craig, the CEO [chief executive officer] of the Five Hills Health Region. She talked a lot about the plan that they were putting in effect. I felt assured at the end of our discussions that we were well-placed to expect the unexpected and be ready for the second wave of H1N1. Just for an example, at the Moose Jaw Hospital, among other things, a separate entrance had been opened for H1N1 cases so that not to affect other sections of the hospital. The virus is here. However, our best efforts are in place to contain it and eventually to eliminate it.

In Saskatchewan every resident will have the opportunity to be vaccinated against the H1N1 influenza virus during the coming weeks, all without costs to them. The plan is in place, Mr. Speaker. It's a good plan, the Saskatchewan plan, and it's working. Health regions have begun flu clinics for groups considered to be at high risk of complications from the H1N1 influenza. There are no long lineups as in other provinces. People are not being sent home without being vaccinated.

Saskatchewan health care officials and providers continue their plan as they target high-risk groups. The reason for targeting high-risk groups rather than an aim for a mass immunization plan is twofold. First Saskatchewan, like all provinces, is receiving H1N1 vaccine in batches as vaccines become available. The second reason for targeting is that health care providers want to be sure that high-risk groups were the first to receive the vaccination. Flu clinics for high-risk people are organized in priorities. These are advancing according to the plan as vaccines do become available.

While some provinces have been overwhelmed by demands for the H1N1 vaccination, the Saskatchewan model is looked upon as an effective, efficient model and is being adapted in other provinces. The success of the vaccination program can only be attributed to the skills, the professionalism, and the hard work of Saskatchewan health officials and health workers.

However, Mr. Speaker, in a rush to judgment, the member from Saskatoon Eastview is quoted in the *Leader-Post* as saying, "There are a lot of questions that need answers really soon even if the public in your poll says they are confident that we are going to be prepared." Mr. Speaker, these are the words of someone who has little faith in our health care providers and workers. The member from Saskatoon Eastview also used the rhetoric of an alarmist in an attempt to score political points by saying that she is stunned, shocked, worried about this government's response to the H1N1.

Mr. Speaker, let me say this. Our health officials and providers have demonstrated they perform their jobs with the utmost care and professionalism. Fortunately for the people of Saskatchewan, we have the best health care officials and health care providers in the country. These health care officials and providers are immune to the political games played in this House. And their handling of this, the largest pandemic

vaccination process in the history of this province, is nothing less than superb.

Saskatchewan health care officials and providers continue to be successful as they target high-risk groups, Mr. Speaker, rather than offer mass vaccinations. And during the coming weeks, every Saskatchewan resident will have the opportunity to be vaccinated against the H1N1 influenza virus.

This is a serious situation, Mr. Speaker. We have to work together as a province. We have to work together, because influenza pandemics can be scary. They can be deadly. But with the help of all of the citizens of this province and the help of the workers in our health care field, we can win this battle. It won't be easy. There's a lot to be considered. There's a lot to be done and we need the co-operation of everyone.

The health care providers have put in clinics for the people of Saskatchewan and are conducting them according. And it's the best system that has been put in place across Canada. Everyone is looking at us as a model, and it is because our health care providers have done their work. They have been prepared. They've known what could be coming, and they are prepared for it, Mr. Speaker.

High risk is being protected. It is very important that we do the plan according to the plan and as the vaccines become available, Mr. Speaker. And they ought to be commended for the work that they have done.

Mr. Speaker, pandemics can be frightening. They are frightening. They've caused millions of deaths over the centuries, but we in Saskatchewan are prepared. We're facing the difficulty. Mr. Speaker, if we have learned anything, if we have learned anything from history it is this: that pandemics are not to be taken lightly in any way, and the best is to be prepared the best way we can in every respect. And our health care providers have done that. The provincial health care officials and the health care providers have done an exceptional job in the preparation and delivery of the H1N1 vaccination. And, Mr. Speaker, they are to be commended for all their efforts in this plan. Thank you very much.

[11:30]

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

**Mr. McCall:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to join in the debate today and to offer some compliments and to salute the good work of the provincial health care officials and health care providers in this province for the strategic delivery of the H1N1 vaccine.

No one in this House disputes the diligent efforts and the long hours and the hard work put in on the part of health care professionals in Saskatchewan, both in the . . . you know, particularly in the front lines out there delivering the vaccine, but also in terms of the planners within the Department of Health and the work that they've done in coordination and leadership of the province-wide effort.

So as to the letter of the motion:

That this Assembly commends the provincial health care officials and health care providers of Saskatchewan for the strategic delivery of the H1N1 vaccine.

We on this side I don't think have any problems with the black letter of that and certainly the spirit of the resolution.

What we do have some frustration with, Mr. Speaker, is the way that efforts made on the part of the opposition to ask for clarity, to ask, you know, valuable questions in terms of the rollouts, the way that is derided by the other side as somehow playing politics with a serious issue. And so again, Mr. Speaker, we don't think asking questions like, to quote from our health care critic, the hon. member from Saskatoon Eastview, in terms of saying things like:

When will Saskatchewan take delivery of the vaccine and how many doses will . . . [Saskatchewan] be getting? Where will it be administered and by whom? Is there a priority list of recipients or is it a first come, first served [basis]? Is there a plan . . . to replace health care providers if they become too ill from the virus? Are there specific plans for the vaccine to reach remote areas of the province and First Nations? Junor asked [to quote from a press release], These are important questions that the people of the province deserve answers to.

And again, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the . . . One of the jobs of an opposition to do is to, you know, ask those important questions. And particularly in the circumstance around the H1N1, the pandemic, this is a time when, as the member from Regina Qu'Appelle Valley has said, knowledge is indeed power. And in terms of communicating that knowledge to the people of Saskatchewan, we want this government to be as crystal clear in that communication of the knowledge as is possible.

So when questions are raised with us as the official opposition, we're certainly going to raise them in the forums available to us to ensure that we are getting that clarity on the process around H1N1 to ensure that we do have details to present to the people of the province, so that they can take that power over the securing of their own health and health care delivery.

I guess that there are a few things I want to make sure in my brief time up in this debate, Mr. Speaker. I want to particularly pay homage to the work of the Chief Medical Health Officer, Dr. Moira McKinnon. This is a public health official that has provided unquestioned leadership on this file despite, you know, succumbing to the illness herself, soldiered on through that, and is a real model of diligence and thoughtful public health delivery.

I know that she leads the team that has worked tirelessly to ensure that these efforts around addressing H1N1, both in terms of the delivery of care but also in terms of the delivery of the communications, to ensure that people have the knowledge. They've worked diligently and tirelessly on this file. So we really want to salute them for those efforts despite, you know, a very challenging circumstance.

And I guess I want to go on record as an MLA to say that we're glad that the government did pay attention to the professionals

in this regard, that they did listen to expert advice, and that they did let the health care officials work in terms of best practice and work in terms of the way that they saw best fit to deliver this care to the province. So we hope that that respect for advice from people that know the files the best, that respect for advice from people on the front lines in the delivery of health care, we hope that that tendency continues on, Mr. Chair of Committees.

I also note that Dr. David Butler-Jones, the chief official for public health — again he's one of the predecessors for Dr. McKinnon in public health in Saskatchewan — gone on to do a good job nationally. And I think nationally you have a fairly clear example of what happens when you get perhaps miscommunication, perhaps a poor connection between the officials on the one hand and the political oversight on the other. And certainly there have been issues raised on the national stage in terms of the rollout of the response to H1N1 and I think — I hope — that we've learned some of the lessons from that federal experience here in Saskatchewan. But certainly the work of Dr. David Butler-Jones, again having done tremendous work in the province of Saskatchewan, going on to the federal stage to do a good job given the circumstances in this instance, we look on that with great interest.

I think that in Saskatchewan we also benefited from the experience in Manitoba. And so I want to salute the leadership nationally on this file by then Premier Gary Doer who, at the premiers' gathering earlier in the summer, said that, you know, this is an issue that is the Mack truck coming around the corner and that people have to be prepared, because when there's an emergency like this, emergency preparedness is key to the good response. So again I'm glad that there were leaders like Premier Gary Doer out there making sure that the seriousness of this issue was well communicated and that people were responding appropriately.

I also want to communicate our congratulations from this side of the House, and perhaps from members opposite as well, congratulations to the people like those on Cowessess First Nation and the good work of Chief Gordon Lerat, people like band manager Alvin Delorme Jr. and the work that they've done in terms of the response on Cowessess to the H1N1 threats — being held up as a model in terms of emergency preparedness. And the response that they put forward certainly has been examined on the national stage, and we're very proud of the work that they did on Cowessess.

And we're very proud as well of the work that the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations have done in terms of working with the members of the federation in terms of ensuring that their membership, that their chiefs, that their First Nations are well acquainted.

And we also note with great interest, Mr. Chair of Committees, that FSIN [Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations] felt the need to go forward with their own call centre to ensure that there was good information being provided to the First Nations in this province as the health questions came in for them on H1N1.

So I guess in the accounting of how things . . . You know, we're not through this yet, Mr. Chair of Committees. But we await the accounting of the costs of this preparedness effort, of this

response to H1N1, and we'll be interested to see if there are any dollars that flow in terms of helping to ensure that we've got a good response across the piece in this province for all First Nations and for all citizens of Saskatchewan.

And I'd be remiss if I didn't bring forward a call that I'd received on the weekend from an elder in the city of Regina who's a member of a First Nation, who's got diabetes fairly severely, who's in a wheelchair, who's had a leg amputated, and who's been a leader for her community and for the people for many, many years. And as you can imagine, Mr. Chair of Committees, in terms of getting to the clinic to get the vaccine, she got to the clinic, they said that her underlying health concerns did not meet the criteria so they had sent her on her way, and without informing her of when she should be coming back.

And again, we realize that this is a massive response effort that's called on. We've got people working tremendous hours, but in terms of the concern that this individual had about the way that her case was being responded to and, you know, on the face of it, some very valid concerns being presented, we know that in terms of this massive response to H1N1 there's room for improvement, to be sure.

So we await the debrief; we await the accounting. But above all, Mr. Chair of Committees, we know that this has reached into many lives in often a tragic way, and we salute the work of our front-line health professionals and the health care system in responding to this crisis. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Elhard):** — I recognize the member from Lloydminster.

**Mr. McMillan:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chair of Committees. It's my pleasure to speak on the H1N1 rollout and what I would call an admirable job done by Moira McKinnon, our chief medical health officer, and the staff and the team that she assembled around her.

We first heard about H1N1 here in the spring. Really it came out of nowhere and people weren't sure what was going on. People didn't know if it was a new disease, what it was. Very quickly — and I think it's a testament really to the society we live in and the fact that we have the scientists that can identify a disease very quickly. They can come up with a vaccine in a matter of months which is relevant to the disease, and within a span of several months that vaccine can be tested. You know, I think that that is maybe the crux of this whole situation here. The expectations of our health care system are phenomenal and I think in this case it pushed it to the limit but, Mr. Speaker, in a tough situation I think that the members of Saskatchewan's health organizations, the staff that work here in Saskatchewan have really worked admirably.

The balance I speak of is to do a mass vaccination, Mr. Speaker, to almost every member of society potentially, by the time the rollout is complete. If that vaccine protects people from the offending disease, that is great. If there is some hidden component that the testing on the front end wasn't substantial enough, the ramifications of that could be very devastating to society, Mr. Speaker. So I know health organizations, companies such as GlaxoSmithKline which is the supplier here

in Canada, did as extensive and exhaustive of a study on the side effects of their potential vaccine as they possibly could to ensure the safety of the people that were taking it, Mr. Speaker. Doing that pushed back their release date to a point which made it very challenging for the provinces in Canada, and I would think jurisdictions around the world, to get it pushed out before flu season hit.

And that is why it was essential that Saskatchewan had a coherent plan, that that plan was based on facts, on details, and for a purpose. And I can stand here today with the view of hindsight — we're still in the middle of it — but I can with hindsight look at the start of the rollout and say, you know, there was a lot of pressure to cave in, to throw our hands in the air and go willy-nilly. But our health organization, our chief medical officer and her staff, did the right thing. They had a very good and well-thought-out plan and they stuck to it.

And, Mr. Speaker, the pressure to do otherwise was great. I know a young lady that has two small kids and she came to me and said, in Alberta they're doing everybody. You know, why can't I take my kids right now and get them vaccinated? Now this was in the first week of the rollout when health professionals in Saskatchewan were getting their vaccines. And it was very clearly stated from Saskatchewan Health that, in the case of a pandemic, the people that need to be the front line are the health care workers and that they would be done first so that as this disease progressed, as the flu season came in, that core group would be there to support the rest of society.

Where in Alberta, lineups were huge. I knew people in Alberta that were my age that would go in and get a flu shot before it was available in Saskatchewan for my own kids. And I got several calls on that because my riding's right on the border. And what I would express to people is, you know, this is a very difficult situation for everyone but we will be judged in the future on how we act today. If this thing becomes a devastating pandemic and it turns out that we haven't done the most critical groups first, we will be judged very harshly.

And I think that we have seen in those jurisdictions where it was open, wide open to the public off the bat very . . . I don't want to say very quickly. But with some sober second thought and maybe a view of the good work that was done here in Saskatchewan, we have been viewed as a leader, and our model has been copied by virtually everyone.

And I've heard this morning . . . I knew that we had done an admirable job and are still working towards our ultimate goal of supplying vaccine to everyone in the province, but that Canada is one of the leaders, if not the leader in the world, for the rollout of this vaccine. And in Canada, Saskatchewan is the leader.

[11:45]

Now, Mr. Speaker, that puts us pretty much in a world context where we're in maybe the best country for proportion of people that have got the vaccine. And in Canada, Saskatchewan is really a shining example of a structured, well-thought-out, methodical plan. And my credit goes out to all those involved that stuck to their guns at the start of this, Mr. Speaker.

Now I would like to, Mr. Speaker, take this opportunity to bring up where some of the pressure was coming from — some justified but some not justified as whether what we had laid out at the start was the right thing to do or not, Mr. Speaker. And I don't have to look very far to where, I think, maybe some inappropriate comments came from. In the speech we heard earlier from the member from Saskatoon Eastview, and I'm quoting from her — I jotted it down as she was speaking here not 20 minutes ago — that she had questions from people that you would not want to ask publicly because you wouldn't want to raise those alarms in the public.

Well, Mr. Speaker, that flies somewhat in contrast to some of the questions she asked here in this very legislature. On October 28th, this was in her question. Now "This raises the questions of a pandemic . . . [racing] across campus . . ." Now she's worried about alarmist statements, Mr. Speaker? She's raising the concern that "This raises the question of a pandemic . . . [racing] across campus for a full month before the vaccination . . . [are ready and] available for the faculty and . . . [staff]."

Mr. Speaker, that, I think, is inflammatory statements that could very well, in her words, alarm the public. She wasn't satisfied with that on the 28th of October, Mr. Speaker. So on the 29th she again brought it up and said, "Yesterday I asked the minister if, in the face of a full-blown pandemic . . . the University of Saskatchewan students [would] be able to . . . [address] the H1N1 vaccination before November 24th."

Mr. Speaker, twice, two consecutive days, she raised the spectre of a full-blown pandemic, then was advocating that we give up on our well-thought-out plan and go willy-nilly, chasing our tails, Mr. Speaker. Now we're talking about extremely serious subject matter here where the health care of society — of society, Mr. Speaker — is under concern. And we're having the Health critic advocating giving up on a well-thought-out plan.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to bring into this debate, just for context, Mr. Speaker. The member that was asking those questions is a registered nurse, has served the people of Saskatchewan as a nurse and knows the health care system and the importance of sticking to a plan and getting people vaccinated, Mr. Speaker. Most nurses would understand that health care professionals, nurses included, are the front lines. That if this thing were to go sideways and were to become a disastrous pandemic — which I think that we're grateful seeing that through the good work as well as a little bit of luck we are going to potentially avoid that — but if that were to have happened, having our nurses vaccinated would be key. Having our doctors, having the support staff in our health care centres vaccinated would be fundamental to getting through.

Now, Mr. Speaker, looking through a couple other questions that I thought may not have met the criteria of being a reasonable and responsible debate, Mr. Speaker. The member on October 28th, no, on October 27th, Mr. Speaker, and I quote from the critic of Health, "Today a caller into the Sask HealthLine was put on hold for almost 30 minutes . . ."

Now, Mr. Speaker, when asked in a scrum afterwards who this caller was, it was a staffer. At the start of a pandemic in Saskatchewan as it's rolling out, that member thinks it's appropriate, a former nurse thinks it's appropriate to have a

staff member call and tie up the HealthLine.

Now there are people with true concerns about this issue, potentially about many other things, that need to talk to a nurse on the HealthLine. And just so she can ask a question in question period, she has a staffer tie up the HealthLine, Mr. Speaker. I think that is inappropriate. Now I think it's inappropriate and I think a nurse ought to perform at a higher level, Mr. Speaker.

I think that it's important that we look at where we are now and going forward. I think we've shone enough light on what may be alarmist questions at the most inappropriate time for the people of Saskatchewan to make a rational plan moving forward, Mr. Speaker.

So I would just like to take my remaining moments to say that I have had a lot of interaction with the health care system recently. I have two little girls. They've both been vaccinated. I have a wife that has asthma. She has got her vaccination, Mr. Speaker. And I know there was a lot of apprehension, because she was listening to the news that the lineups were going to be big.

In Lloydminster on the Alberta side, there were massive lineups and people were turned away. There was a lot of fear in Lloydminster community that when Saskatchewan started their rollout, it would be a similar situation. And it was a great relief to me as a father, Mr. Speaker, that when my little girls went for their vaccinations they stood in line for about 15 minutes and it was a good system. There was forms printed off ahead of time and, Mr. Speaker, I really want to applaud the members of our health care system.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Elhard):** — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Centre.

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I appreciate the opportunity to rise today to enter into this debate on this important motion. I think that it's an important one that . . . I may be a little premature and I know that we're still in the midst of the pandemic, and we're not quite sure how it's all playing out. And I do think on one hand, though, the sentiment behind it is worthy. And we do think the health care officials, provincial health care work officials and providers are doing an outstanding job in many aspects. But as my colleagues on this side have said, that until there's a debrief, a complete debrief and lessons learned, then we can bring out the congratulatory remarks.

I think that this is an important topic, though, because for Canadians and people right around the world who've been watching the news, these are the stories that we remember. And I think it's important that we have a discussion around this because I do take exception to some of the comments that have been made from the government side, a comment like willy-nilly.

You know, as a teacher, and I still am a teacher, and I know that when you're dealing with crisis situations where people are feeling high anxiety, that I don't think there is such a thing as a bad question. It's how we deal with the questions. I don't think that you dismiss people out of hand and say, listen, that's the

wrong question; you don't ask that question right now. We know that was the old way of doing things, but I think a more appropriate way is understand that there's anxiety expressing itself in all sorts of different ways.

And on this side, I hope those folks on that side get questions. I don't know if they do. They don't seem to respond in a way to say that they kind of have asked those questions to the minister and to the right officials. But on this side, we have our certain channels that people expect us to use. It's our role as opposition to hold the government and the public service accountable and make sure it's transparent.

And whether the member from Moose Jaw North likes it or not, that's our job. And we will do a very good job of it. They can try to make us not ask those questions. They can try to push us around and not ask those questions. But we will ask the questions that people are asking us because that's our job, and we take it very seriously. You know, and I have some questions. And I'll talk about my own particular sector with the CBOs, but I'll get to that.

But I know people do have a lot of anxiety, and I know that the member for Saskatoon Eastview has championed the causes of many people who have anxious moments thinking about this. And we think about the long lineups in Calgary, and that thankfully didn't happen in Calgary . . . or happen here. It happened in Calgary.

But we had anxious moments. I know the folks up north, there was a weekend where people were wondering, what's going to happen? Where was that information? And the information wasn't right on the spot. We had questions about the website — what was happening to the website?

Now it's our job to ask that question. And I know there was high anxiety right across Canada. I think it was the summer when Health Canada, in preparation for the pandemic, actually sent out body bags to Manitoba, created huge anxiety. Huge anxiety. Not a good thing. We have to learn from those lessons. And of course some of the deaths that we have heard, we think of the young boy, the hockey player in Toronto.

And as parents, we wonder, the tragic events, are there lessons from that? Are there lessons? And of course the young scientist, the up-and-coming scientist — I think it was 38 years old — actually there was a Saskatoon connection. Tragic, tragic. How could that happen? How can that happen? So I think we're all looking forward to when this passes, when this pandemic is over, and we can look back and have a debrief and say, so what are the lessons learned? What could we do better? It's so important to do that.

And so I do take exception to the fact of saying, as the member from Regina Qu'Appelle Valley would say, have complete faith. I think you should have faith. You should believe in your professional health officials, and we do. But I think they should be prepared to hear our questions and should not be offended when we do have questions. We're trying to do this and make sure this rolls out as smoothly as possible. But our job as opposition is to have those questions.

So I take exception to comments like willy-nilly and addressing

this as if it's in the past tense. It's not over. It's not over. We hope it's well on its way to being over. But thinking about this as if it's done; it's not done. And clearly we have much more work to be done.

A couple of points I would like to raise, and I did not hear answers from the government side on this. And it really sort of focuses on the idea that this is all about the health officials and the health workers and vaccinations, and that's the only thing that we had to do and then the whole thing would be solved. Clearly there's many different layers to it.

And as the critic responsible for CBOs, I actually raised these questions through a press release. And the press release came out October 2, and it was entitled "NDP questions H1N1 preparedness in CBO sector." I had several questions raised to me from the CBO workers. And some of them were around, what would happen in group homes? Was there information about what would happen in group homes — both in terms of workers being sent home if they felt they had H1N1, or if they were required to stay in the group home if they were quarantined? There wasn't information flowing about what would happen. And that was a particular issue in rural Saskatchewan where many group homes are, and there just isn't the workforce to support the kind of situations that might have arisen.

The other issue that the CBO sector, the folks raised — and, you know, I raise petitions every once in a while about wages in the CBO sector and some of the working conditions those folks have — the questions they asked me were around sick pay. Many of these people are dealing with low wages and in having a tough time making ends meet. Many of us, and I'm in this group, who have a very good sick pay arrangement as teachers, we get 20 days when we start the first day of work each year. So we can accumulate sick days quite easily.

People who work in the CBO sector, they don't have that. They may have a day and a quarter, a day and a half per month. And they have to work that month before they get the day and a half, and they accumulate it that way. It was going to be a challenge for a CBO, for the worker themselves who should be staying home if they were sick, what do they do? How do they make the ends meet? And also for the CBO organization themselves, well what do they do to make sure the job gets done?

Now I want to take a minute, I know this time goes by pretty quick. And the other issue that I wanted to raise, and the other thing was CBO sectors, making sure that they were getting vaccinations in a timely fashion too, that they were considered priorities as well. And I know many weren't. And I know it's a tough job deciding who's on the priority lists or not. But many of them felt, because they were working with people, they should have been considered a priority.

The other issue, question I wanted to raise was particularly relevant to those in social services, families, especially those with young children who receive social assistance. Somebody had thought of a very innovative idea that many of us take for granted, that we have in our medicine chests different things, like Tylenol. That if we're not feeling well, we can take a little Tylenol and control our fever. And little things like that, that we take for granted. Or even having a thermometer to know if we

have a fever.

Unfortunately those families who are on social assistance cannot receive any benefits like that. And I think it would have been something, when we do the debrief, I'll raise this with the minister. Is there circumstances where we can see that they get kits, like a thermometer, a bottle of Tylenol, something like that? Not very much, but all of us, many of us take for granted that we have in our medicine cabinets at home, but people on social assistance don't have access to. They just don't have that cash. And if they do, and if it's outdated, if the medicine is stale-dated, it becomes a real challenge. So there are some real questions.

And I do think that while in many ways this motion is in order, and I do think the health care officials and health providers have done a great job, that I cannot support the motion because I do think it's a little early yet to do it. And I do think that in fact if we were to congratulate people, I think it should be the whole provincial government. Because many people are working right across the board to make sure public servants are doing their job day in and day out to serve the people of Saskatchewan — led by health care officials, led by health care officials for sure.

But let's not just keep it into silos. Too often we think of health care issues in silos. And this may be an example of that because this goes beyond just vaccinations. It goes beyond how do we serve the public day in and day out? How do we take care of families day in and day out?

And so with that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know there'll be lots of questions here today, and I have a few myself. But I do want to let you know that I will be voting against this motion. And with that, with the points I've raised, I thank you very much.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Elhard):** — We move now to the question session. I recognize the member from Saskatchewan Rivers.

**Ms. Wilson:** — Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chair of Committees. Many Saskatchewan residents are concerned and have questions about H1N1. A good source of answers is a health care provider because these workers have first-hand knowledge and training to answer such questions.

But too often the members opposite believe that they have all the answers and that they know what's best for those on the front lines without actually spending any time on the line. Mr. Chair of Committees, we should be listening to our health care providers because they know what they need, and they know what is happening regarding H1N1.

Mr. Chair of Committees, my question is to the member from Saskatoon Eastview: will she quit insulting front-line health care providers by pretending to be the expert, and instead support and listen to the actual health care experts?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Elhard):** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Eastview.

**Ms. Junor:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chair of Committees. The fact that I'm a registered nurse, and a currently registered nurse, has given me and continues to give me access to all kinds

of health providers who I talk to on a regular basis. And when I had a press conference and released a statement on September 3rd, that was in response to the questions and the concerns I was receiving from those health providers across the province. That was public health nurses, managers, long-term care, primary health care, nurse practitioners, laboratory technologists. Everybody was saying they weren't ready. They didn't know what the plan was going to be. That was September 3rd.

And I continue to raise questions that are given to me to raise on behalf of the public who actually expect that, as our job, that we should be responsive to their needs and ask their questions. There have been questions that I haven't asked in public because those questions may be a bit more pointed and should be asked somewhere else. And I've asked them of public health officials. I've tried to keep my questions responsible, and I think the people that ask them expect that and got it.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Elhard):** — I recognize the member from Elphinstone.

**Mr. McCall:** — Obviously we've got a lot of questions, Mr. Chair of Committees. My question is for the member from Moose Jaw North. I wonder, does he agree with the member from Saskatoon Northwest who has heckled over from his chair that for the member from Saskatoon Eastview to use the word "pandemic" in conjunction with H1N1 is somehow fearmongering? And furthermore does that member recognize that pandemic H1N1 influenza immunization is the head of the consent form that's being handed out by the Ministry of Health and in fact is part of properly describing in the situation as it presents? Thank you, Mr. Chair of Committees.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Elhard):** — I recognize the member from Moose Jaw North.

**Mr. Michelson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, you know I thank the opposition member for his question. However it's somewhat irrelevant to the topic at hand. And I just want to say that I think our health care workers are doing an admirable job of planning and executing the program that they have put in place for the pandemic. And as we can see, that this is being very well executed across the province in a timely fashion, and it's going to be for the benefit of all the people of Saskatchewan. Thank you.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Elhard):** — I recognize the member from Biggar.

**Mr. Weekes:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Naturally we never hear anything positive from the opposition members, and frankly we don't even expect it any more. However, Mr. Speaker, we found ourselves this year in new territory having to formulate and execute an H1N1 vaccination plan. In response our health care officials and providers continue to roll out the largest pandemic vaccination process in the history of the province. And that, Mr. Speaker, is commendable.

In light of this situation, we are beginning to wonder if it's too much to hope for some positivity from the members opposite. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to ask the member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre where everything that these public

servants have accomplished so far, will the NDP quit these petty political games and applaud their efforts?

[Applause]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Elhard):** — I recognize the member from Elphinstone-Centre.

**Mr. McCall:** — I'll tell you about the applauding that I have a problem with, Mr. Chair of Committees, is the self-congratulation in the applause that breaks out, you know, any chance they get over there in terms of the serious issues that we face in this House.

We've talked about the good work that's being done by the public servants. We've talked about our agreement with the spirit of this motion. And we've talked about the long odds that are being faced by the front-line health care workers and the people doing the emergency preparedness to respond adequately to this situation.

What we take exception to, Mr. Speaker, is the fact that these people like to preach, oh we're not going to play politics with this. But the fact that, you know, not sentences later, there they go again in terms of trying to play games with a serious issue that the people of Saskatchewan have some very reasonable questions that they put to us and expect to be raised in this Chamber.

So in terms of the member's question, we've got a problem with the self-congratulatory approach that these people take to any kind of issue that raises its head in this province.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Elhard):** — I recognize the member from The Battlefords.

**Mr. Taylor:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And my question is to the member from Regina Qu'Appelle Valley. Mr. Speaker, the provincial government has some responsibilities, the federal government has some responsibilities for the rollout. And health care providers on the front line who may have some connection to both federal and provincial governments had some questions early in this process.

And I'm wondering if the member opposite knows how much consultation occurred between federal and provincial governments on the rollout of this. Specifically, Mr. Speaker, we have an individual who is a health care provider, does contract health care work for First Nations clients through Prairie North Health Region. But she was denied the vaccine for health care workers because she was neither treaty nor an employee of Prairie North Health, even though she was dealing daily with high priority clients.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Elhard):** — I recognize the member from Regina Qu'Appelle Valley.

**Ms. Ross:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Chair of Committees. I thank the member opposite for the question.

The provincial and federal governments have worked very closely together, have had lots of meetings, and are very well prepared for the rollout of the vaccine. The province has

received an additional 50,000 doses of vaccine on Monday of November the 16th, bringing the total to 320,400 doses received to date.

As you can see, Saskatchewan is getting a very large number of dosages. Over 34 per cent of our population have been vaccinated against H1N1, and our province is paying attention. Thank you very much.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Elhard):** — I recognize the member from Prince Albert.

**Mr. Hickie:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. A recent poll found that around two-thirds of the Saskatchewan population is satisfied with how their provincial government is dealing with the vaccination rollout.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, a *Leader-Post* columnist questioned why the vaccination plan is going better in Saskatchewan than in any other province. He answered his own question by saying, and I quote:

. . . the Saskatchewan Party government's health minister wisely decided to listen to those with some expertise on how to develop the best protocol, rather than listen to those who find it necessary to twist every health issue into a disjointed argument on how private delivery of health care would somehow be better.

Mr. Deputy Chair, the public and the media are proud of our health care officials and providers.

The question is to the member from Saskatoon Eastview: why is she advocating the vaccination of perfectly healthy, low-risk individuals, such as the opposition MLAs she's been lobbying for, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that have no underlying risk factors versus the great job that the ministry officials are doing getting the vaccine out to the high-risk population in Saskatchewan?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Elhard):** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Eastview.

**Ms. Junor:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chair of Committees. Interesting in the member's comments were that two-thirds of people are happy with the rollout of the vaccine. He fails to mention that one-third obviously aren't. And those are the people that we are getting the calls from and that want their voices to be heard as well. And I think that to deny them that is certainly undemocratic.

And it doesn't, it doesn't, it obviously doesn't have any, it doesn't have any relevance here. People want to have a democracy. They want to be able to be heard. And that's the job of the opposition — to bring their questions forward and their concerns forward, which is what we are doing and what we will continue to do. Thank you.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Elhard):** — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

**Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. My question is to the member from Moose Jaw North, I believe. Given the fact that you've been touting what the Sask Party's

been doing in terms of trying to resolve the H1N1 challenge, what additional resources has this government afforded to the three northern health districts and the First Nations communities to battle the H1N1 threat, given the isolation factor, overcrowding of homes, the fact that it is a high-risk group, it's a large population . . .

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Elhard):** — The member's time has elapsed. Time for the 75-minute debate is expired. We move on.

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS AND ORDERS

### PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS

#### SECOND READINGS

#### Bill No. 607 — *The Public Safety, Security and Protection Act*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Elhard):** — I recognize the member from Regina Dewdney.

**Mr. Yates:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Chair of Committees. It's with great pleasure I stand this afternoon to talk about a very important issue for the people of the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, Bill No. 607, *An Act to provide for the Public Safety, Security and Protection of the People of Saskatchewan*, is a very important piece of legislation. Mr. Speaker, it is raising the bar. It is a move to achieve a new standard in Saskatchewan for the protection of the people of our province.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, what this allows us to do in this Bill is to provide a greater level of protection and security for the citizens of our province, the people who we are all elected by, the people we are all accountable to. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we should all want to provide an environment for the citizens of our province that allows for the maximum, maximum protection that we can in providing for the public safety, security, and protection of our citizens.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm going to talk for a few minutes about the preamble. The first whereas clause says, "WHEREAS Saskatchewan's public employees are employed by the people of Saskatchewan." Mr. Speaker, simply recognizing that those people who work for any agency that is paid for by the tax dollars of the people of this province work for those very people. They don't work for the government. They don't work for the official opposition. They don't work for their managers. They don't work for a health district. They don't work for the Public Service Commission. They don't work for a government department. They work for each and every citizen of the province of Saskatchewan.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is an important thing for all of us to remember on a daily basis as we make decisions about things, about issues, about legislation, about direction — that every decision we make and that they implement is for and about the people of our province. It's not about the government. It's not about the opposition. Those civil servants, those health care workers, those teachers, they work for the people of the province, and it's the people of the province that pay them.

The second whereas clause says, "WHEREAS Saskatchewan's public employees have a duty to work for and in the best interest of the people of Saskatchewan." Mr. Speaker, this is something that every public employee in this province I think understands, that they're there to serve the people of the province of Saskatchewan, that they're employed by those people.

[12:15]

And I think the public employees in our province take that very seriously. They understand that their actions on a day-to-day basis affect the lives of the people of this province. And I believe that the public employees in our province take that extremely seriously, whether it's in our educational systems, whether it's in our health care system, in the public service, in our Crown corporations, Mr. Deputy Speaker, or in the Legislative Assembly Service, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We all are here, and those employees, like ourselves, are there to provide a service for the people of the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

And, Mr. Speaker, the third whereas clause says:

WHEREAS Saskatchewan public employees should not be punished in any manner for acting in the best interest of the people's public safety, security and protection [Mr. Speaker].

And I think that's something we each as citizens of this province, but in particular as those elected by those citizens of the province, should take seriously. Mr. Deputy Speaker, those public employees who are paid by the people of Saskatchewan should never face, should never face a threat or an action carried out by their employer as a result of trying to protect the safety of the people of the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

And if we as legislators don't provide that level of security to those employees, that level of protection to those employees that allow them to do their jobs without fear of being punished in some manner, then we're not doing ours. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would undertake to say to my colleagues in this Assembly on both sides of the House, we have to do our jobs before we can expect others to do theirs.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this Bill provides for those employees a new level of protection. It's raising the bar. It's establishing a new standard of transparency in government. It allows employees to bring to either their deputy ministers or head of agencies, going above their managers without fear of any type of ramifications or punishment, to go to their deputy minister above the chain of command, to the head of their Crown agency, to the principal or president of a SIAST campus.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it allows employees to ensure that issues dealing with public safety, the security or protection of the people of our province, that you have no fear for making those issues public — making them public to those officials only though that are named in this Bill. It doesn't allow them to go to the media, doesn't allow them to take it to the TV or to the radio or to the newspaper. But it allows them to make that information known — if it's in the interest of public safety, the



people of the province of Saskatchewan — to four identified groups. And, Mr. Speaker, that is something that every citizen in our province should expect of their public employees and that we as the leaders, we as the members of this legislature should undertake to ensure.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this Bill — its short title is called *The Public Safety, Security and Protection Act* — its powers and its legislative authority only covers issues that are in the interest of the public safety, protection, and security of the population and of our citizens, of our friends and neighbours, our colleagues, the people who live in our cities, towns, villages, and farms across Saskatchewan.

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if one of our public employees believes that an action being undertaken by a public entity, or for that matter a private entity which they regulate, puts at risk the safety, security, or protection of any individual, they have a right to make that known. They have a responsibility, I would argue, to make that known.

And we have a responsibility to protect that individual if they make it known. That individual, that public employee should face no ramifications, no discipline, and should not be in any way afraid, under threat — afraid, under threat, Mr. Deputy Speaker — to make known something that should be made known as long as it's made known to the proper authorities as indicated in this Bill.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this Bill is broadly encompassing of government agencies and government employees, public employees in the province of Saskatchewan. It would cover those that are covered by the Public Service Commission and departments and agencies of government. It would cover those employees employed in Crown corporations, whether they be Treasury Board Crown corporations or, Mr. Deputy Speaker, a Crown investment agencies, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It would cover employees — including being your managers, deputy ministers — all employees, if they made a disclosure to one of the four groups of people in the interest of public safety.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it would also encompass employees employed in our regional health authorities, in our school boards, and in other agencies, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that are paid for with the people's money, Mr. Deputy Speaker — people that are employed by the people of the province of Saskatchewan.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it would also apply to employees of the Legislative Assembly, the very employees who work in this institution, the institution in which we have the opportunity to serve and be part of. Mr. Deputy Speaker, those employees also have a right to protection when in fact they were to make a disclosure in the interest of protecting the public of the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to go through in some detail, so that members on both sides of the House understand, what level of protection we're looking at affording to people. And I'm not going to pretend this is not a new bar, a new standard, a standard that my colleagues on this side of the House clearly understand we will have to live with when we are government. We know the standard which we will have to live with when we

form a government.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to very clearly . . . Under the "**Protection**" section 4(1), it says:

No employee to whom this Act applies shall be disciplined, terminated or otherwise sanctioned as a result of acting in the interest of the public safety, security and protection of the public in the manner specified below.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'll now read into the record those specifications:

For greater clarity, no employee shall be disciplined, terminated or sanctioned in any manner for providing information to:

(a) a deputy minister, chief executive officer, Crown president, or the head of any agency, covered by this Act;

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, what this allows an employee to do is step above their front-line manager. If their front-line manager doesn't want to listen to their concern, to take that concern to the head of their agency, whether it be the deputy minister of a department, whether it be the president of a Crown corporation, or be it the Chair of a regional health authority . . . chief executive officer, pardon me, of a regional health authority, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It allows that employee the avenue to go to the very top of that agency without fear of ramifications or penalty, punishment, or sanction as a result of making that information known to the top official in that agency.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, that provision is not afforded employees today in the province of Saskatchewan in all cases in these public agencies, and it should be.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it would also make it acceptable and allowable for information to be provided to an independent officer of the Legislative Assembly so that if a child protection worker in the Department of Social Services had grave concerns about an action being taken and its potential impact on children or on a specific child, if they believed it put at risk a child and that child's safety and security was at risk, that social worker could in fact go to the Children's Advocate and not fear any ramifications, punishment, or action from their department.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm fully prepared to acknowledge that is greater protection than provided employees today. But it's raising the bar. It is making the actions of senior government and the actions of government employees and agencies more transparent. You can no longer hide behind the fact that people don't know because if it's wrong, it's wrong. And when an employee knows it's wrong and it puts at risk a citizen of this province, they have a right to make it known. We'd all have to live with it.

And there would be some growing pains with those changes, Mr. Deputy Speaker. There would be some growing pains as you change the standard, you raise the bar. But once it becomes the standard and becomes accepted as the standard, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it would be no different than it is today, except we'd have a much more open and much more transparent

accountability of both the political level of government, Mr. Deputy Speaker — those of us who stand in this Chamber today — as well as the senior officials in our departments. We can no longer hide behind the fact we can suppress information, that we could suppress the well-being and knowledge of the people of the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the third group that you would be able to divulge information to in the interest of public safety, so that there could be accountability of those who are responsible for putting at risk the public, would be members of the Legislative Assembly — us, the very elected people of the province of Saskatchewan, the population of the province of Saskatchewan elected for that purpose.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it would allow, as happens every day I might say, as happens every day to us as members of the legislature, we receive complaints, information, and concerns raised by our constituents. It's happening today. But what it does is provides a protection if a senior manager or a minister or coal workers dislike the fact that that information was made public.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, what's wrong with that? What is wrong with protecting people who are acting in the interest of the protection? I need to reiterate, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is for issues dealing with the public safety, protection, and security of people. It's not any issue. It's not any issue, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's those issues that are dealing with the public safety of the people of the province of Saskatchewan.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if you don't like your boss, it doesn't mean you can run around and do these types of things, Mr. Deputy Speaker. There has to be, there has to be an issue that's in the public interest, and an issue that's about protecting the public safety, security and safety of a citizen or group of citizens. It isn't *carte blanche* — anybody can do anything. We're dealing with a very narrow area. We're dealing only with the area of the public safety, protection, and security of the people of our province.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the fourth area or fourth group of people that you could give information to without fear of discipline or ramifications would be the police or appropriate law enforcement agencies, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Now the police are the law enforcement agency that comes to mind for most people. But within government there are many, many other agencies that are tasked with enforcing parts of legislation, or in fact enforcing parts of the law, and that could be the Environment department in the areas of water protection, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It could be the Environment department in concerns the protection of the spread of, an example, disease or influenza of some form through the animal population that may be passed on to the human population — things that are of the public interest for their own health and safety, security, and protection.

So that if you have a concern that something is not being made public that should be made public, that's not being dealt with that should be dealt with, and it could affect the people of the province of Saskatchewan and it could endanger their safety or security, Mr. Deputy Speaker, then you have a right to make it

known.

Clause 3, under the protection section, Mr. Speaker, says:

Employees may provide information to any of the above in the interests of the public safety, security and protection of the people of Saskatchewan if they believe the information will help provide for the public safety, security and protection . . .

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's pretty straightforward. It's talking about providing additional security for the people of our province.

[12:30]

Mr. Speaker, clause 5 of the Bill talks about saving harmless employees. The actual wording is, "Every employee to whom this Act applies shall be saved harmless from any discipline, termination or sanction by their employer." Mr. Deputy Speaker, it just is there to ensure that the full breadth of protection is provided.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, clause 6 binds the Crown by this Act. Once this passes and becomes law, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this in fact binds the Crown. It binds every one of us in this legislature. It binds our departments and agencies to protect employees so that they can help protect the people of this province without any fear or threat of discipline or sanction, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

For greater certainty, section 7 clarifies what happens if there were in fact a conflict between two pieces of legislation, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if there is more than one Act that covers the area under discussion, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It says, "Notwithstanding any other Act or law [so notwithstanding any other Act or law that's in place], this Act . . . [will prevail] where there is a conflict between the provisions of this Act and any other Act or law." So, Mr. Speaker, it makes it absolutely clear. It makes it absolutely clear that if there is another Act or law that may apply, so that there be no conflict as to what rights the individual has, this Act supersedes and overrules.

Mr. Speaker, this Act is there to help protect the people of the province of Saskatchewan. I think each and every one of us in this Assembly should be prepared and willing to support the protection of the population of Saskatchewan. That, after all, is what we're elected for, Mr. Speaker. We are elected by our constituents to act in their interest. And the public employees of the province of Saskatchewan are employed by the people of Saskatchewan to act in their interest. They're employed to act in the interest of providing for the safety, security, and protection of them.

And, Mr. Speaker, I don't think it's too much to provide a level of security to those public employees so that they can discharge their duties without fear, so that they do not have to fear ramifications from a senior official of government, from a minister's office, from their colleagues, or from others, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, section no. 8 allows for the making of regulations because, as with all pieces of legislation, there needs to be in regulation generally some greater detail and clarification so that

you can in fact put how these individual clauses will be applied in greater detail and in greater understanding.

So this clause 8 says, “The Lieutenant Governor in Council may make regulations.” So the Executive Council of the government can make regulations.

Clause (a) says, “providing for the proper and effective administration of this Act according to its purpose and intent.” So like any Bill, it allows the Lieutenant Governor in the case of the cabinet of the day to put regulations in place to actually put this piece of legislation in force.

And it says, “providing for any situation or circumstance that falls within the ambit of this Act but not specifically addressed in this Act.” So it gives the opportunity for the cabinet or the Executive Council to be able to in fact clarify and expand upon the clauses contained in this Act in a manner which is intended by the intent of the Act and giving greater clarification.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the final clause is the clause bringing the Act into force.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, people may say, why at this time do you feel that you need to bring forward an Act that provides greater protection for public employees in the disclosure of information involving the public safety of the people of province of Saskatchewan? Well, Mr. Speaker, there’s a number of reasons. One is that we have a government today who has stated that they will in fact hunt down who releases information and they’ll discipline them.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we have not had that situation for many, many years. Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have had a government in the past, up until 2007, that undertook a public policy direction that said, no we weren’t going to punish public employees for disclosing information. We weren’t going to make victims of those who were acting in the interests of the public.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I can tell you today that on many occasions the members opposite, now the government, as they brought forward information that was provided to them by civil servants, by public employees, clearly stated — this government when they were in opposition — that the government had better not, had better not dare, had better not dare punish somebody for bringing forward information that the public had a right to know about.

And I can remember a number of very specific cases, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that members opposite raised that issue, including the current Premier on several occasions. And I could read into the record those very strong speeches made by the Premier and by other members of the former opposition that are now current cabinet ministers.

But there was one fundamental difference between then and now. And that fundamental difference is this, Mr. Deputy Speaker: the former government undertook publicly not to punish anybody. And I want to state this very clearly. The former government undertook publicly not to punish anybody for providing information to any of these four groups listed in this Bill.

Well, Mr. Speaker, today we don’t have that undertaking from the government, so employees are in fear, Mr. Speaker. They’re in fear of making information known that should be made known in the public interest. They’re afraid to do their own jobs because there may be ramifications as a result of doing the very thing they’re employed to do, which is protect the people of the province of Saskatchewan.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I wish I wasn’t standing today having to say this. I wish that we were all bigger than having to look at who we can punish for forcing us to do our job sometimes or questioning why we didn’t do our jobs. Because ultimately we, we the elected representatives of the people of the province of Saskatchewan, have final accountability. We are the ones that are accountable. We are elected by our constituents. We are elected by the people of the province of Saskatchewan, and we are answerable to them.

But, Mr. Speaker, this Bill which is simply practice — past practice, I would argue — will provide a certainty for public employees. I think a certainty they have a right to have, a certainty that we should all want them to have. Because, Mr. Speaker, it may result in some embarrassment from time to time if an employee takes information to the police or to an independent officer of the legislature or to one of our colleagues in this Assembly. But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if it’s done in the interest of our safety and our security, Mr. Speaker, in the end we should be proud that that person was willing to do so.

Because, Mr. Speaker, at the end of the day, this Chamber and this Assembly is not for us and it’s not about us. It’s about the people of the province of Saskatchewan and what we collectively do to make their lives better, to provide for their public safety, for their security, and for their protection.

Mr. Speaker, as I indicated very early, this is raising the bar. It’s establishing a higher standard. It’s an increase in transparency like we don’t afford to the public today. It allows those people who work in our public agencies the ability to question what we, Mr. Speaker, what we as legislators might do, the decisions we may make as the members of the Executive Council. But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we work for the people of the province of Saskatchewan, and we should not be afraid to be held accountable by the people of the province of Saskatchewan.

And, Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan has been a leader. Saskatchewan has historically led in providing protections for our citizens, for our employees, and within our province.

Mr. Speaker, many members may not know and understand that the first human rights code in Canada, the very first human rights code in Canada came from this legislature. That’s fundamental protection today that citizens across this country experience and have as a daily protection. The very first version of a human rights code in Canada was developed in this legislature and passed in this legislature. Now that’s significant. It’s very significant that this province was the leaders in developing a human rights code, for developing protection for people.

Mr. Speaker, many of my colleagues may not understand as well that the first trade union Act in Canada was enacted in the province of Saskatchewan, that the first right to bargain

collectively, the first right to provide those safeties and securities to employees in the right to bargain collectively and to act collectively when the employer failed to bargain in good faith, Mr. Speaker, were provided again in the province of Saskatchewan.

And why were all those firsts done in the province of Saskatchewan? Because this province has believed, and its people and its leaders and its legislators have believed, in the importance, in the importance of providing protections for citizens so that they not fear. So they have no fear in doing their jobs and standing up for themselves, for being different, Mr. Speaker, for being able to publicly, publicly address an issue that may not be popular, that may not be liked by others. But we provided those protections, Mr. Speaker.

And, Mr. Speaker, today this Bill No. 607 is before the legislature. I would implore my colleagues on both sides of the House to be prepared to pass this piece of legislation. Because, Mr. Speaker, I think if you're not willing to pass a piece of legislation that says you won't punish somebody for doing their job, for perhaps questioning what we as legislators do, for letting the people of the province of Saskatchewan be aware of what we're doing, that today may be able to be hidden, by making government more transparent and open and accountable to the people who elected us here, Mr. Speaker, then maybe we shouldn't be here. Mr. Speaker. Maybe we should not be here then.

[12:45]

And this is going to be a test. Because, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to undertake to ensure that this Bill is broadly distributed around Saskatchewan and to the people of the province of Saskatchewan so they understand what's being proposed. This Bill is about their protection, about their safety, and it's about government giving up some of their control in order to provide greater protection for the people. And it's about us being more accountable to the people of the province of Saskatchewan.

And, Mr. Speaker, what's wrong with that? What's wrong with the people having more control over their own lives? What's wrong with providing a greater protection to public employees so they in fact can challenge their very employers if they need to? I'm not saying over anything, Mr. Speaker. We're talking on a very narrow band of issues that provide for the safety and security and protection of the population, whether it be from a threat, a direct threat, or an indirect threat.

But if those threats exist, those employees should have the right to make that threat known to their deputy minister, in the case of a government department; over their manager's heads, to the head of a Crown corporation, if it's in a Crown corporation, Mr. Deputy Speaker; to the chief executive officer of a health region if it's in a health region; to an independent officer of the legislature, be it the Information and Privacy Commissioner, be it the Children's Advocate, be it the Ombudsman, agencies which have a responsibility, Mr. Speaker, to this legislature, as well as to the people of the province of Saskatchewan. But they are agencies that are there to ensure that we as members of the legislature and the government does its job right.

So if a social worker believes a child is at risk, that social

worker should have the right to go to the Children's Advocate without any fear, without any fear, Mr. Speaker, of discipline or sanction from their employer. They should also have the right to go to their member of the legislature and provide them that information. The member of the legislature can raise that issue with the minister responsible so that the public can know that the government's being held accountable if and when something is being done. There should not be fear, the public employee doing their job, a public employee making known to appropriate authorities listed in this Act of potential wrongdoing that affects the safety, security, or protection of the population.

Mr. Speaker, I once again want to talk about the four groups of people that information could be provided to, to ensure that there is accountability and transparency and to allow for the protection of the people of the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, the first . . . And logically, in a logical step, the first group you go to of course is the deputy minister or chief executive officer, Crown president, or the head of any agency under which is covered by this Act, but also the agency which you're employed by. If you have a particular problem and you believe your manager that you've talked to isn't examining the issue the way it should be or, in fact, and under that failure to examine it puts at risk the safety, security, or protection of a single member of our society, Mr. Speaker, or multiple members, you should have a right to go to the head of the . . . the ultimate head of the agency and say, look, this is my concern. And they go over the head of their individual manager, maybe two or three levels above their manager even, Mr. Speaker. They should fear no discipline, ramification, punishment and, Mr. Speaker, should never, ever — even in the worst of scenarios, Mr. Speaker — ever be concerned about losing their job for doing their job. Mr. Speaker, if you're doing your job, you shouldn't be punished.

Mr. Speaker, the second group are the independent officers of the Legislative Assembly who are employed by this legislature — not by the government, not by the opposition, but by the entire legislature as an oversight of the very actions of the government. They are here to be independent of a government so they can hold the government accountable. So that if an employee once believes that an issue is putting at risk an individual or group of individuals, they have a right to go to the Ombudsman or to go to the Children's Advocate, Mr. Speaker, and have that issue looked at by an independent third party and have it raised publicly by that independent third party to hold the government accountable for what they have done and not done. But that's their job as well, Mr. Speaker. That is their job.

Mr. Speaker, the third group of people is, of course, members of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, all of which are elected by their constituents to represent them in this Assembly. Mr. Speaker, provide information to a member of the Legislative Assembly so they can raise it, to hold the government or an agency accountable, is what their job is. It's their job. So you should not be punished for providing information, increasing transparency, or to hold a government accountable for what they're doing or not doing if it affects your safety, security. Mr. Speaker, it's unbelievable that in 2009 we're talking about a Bill that's about protecting people in doing their very jobs.

And, Mr. Speaker, the fourth group that you could disclose information to in the interest of public safety, of course, would be a police force or an appropriate law enforcement agency. And, Mr. Speaker, that could include conservation officers in the Department of the Environment. It could include in some cases perhaps a fire commissioner in the event of rental properties without appropriate smoke detectors, Mr. Speaker.

But all these things, this issue covers only issues that deal with the protection, security, and safety of the public. But it protects the employees for disclosing that information if in fact their own agency, responsible for enforcing and regulation, aren't acting, because we have the opportunity as members of the legislature to act in the best interest of the people of Saskatchewan. In fact we don't only have the opportunity, we have the responsibility to, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, why am I doing this? Well one, I believe good public policy needs to be examined from time to time. And, Mr. Speaker, I've said from the very onset of this debate that this is in fact a new standard. It raises the bar. But it raises the bar in the interest of protecting the people of our province. And why would any one of us not want to do that? I would challenge my colleagues on both sides of the House to tell me why they wouldn't want to raise the bar and why they wouldn't want to protect the people of Saskatchewan.

And, Mr. Speaker, I can assure you, I can assure you that we are going to . . . Mr. Speaker, I can assure you that we're going to force this to a vote. And the members opposite will get the opportunity to vote, whether they have any interest in protecting the people of Saskatchewan or not. And, Mr. Speaker, I think the people of Saskatchewan will have a great deal of interest in how their elected representatives respond to this.

Now, Mr. Speaker, why are we doing this? Why am I doing this? I'm doing this because I raised an issue in this House. I raised an issue in this House that was about the safety of the people of this province of Saskatchewan, and the minister's response was not about protecting the people of the province of Saskatchewan. His concern is about how did I get the information.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the current government sat in opposition for many years and got many, many brown envelopes and raised many issues in this Assembly. And not once, not once when the official opposition was in government, was an individual punished for it. Nor should they. Nor should they. But what we have today is a minister responsible . . . And get this, Mr. Speaker, the Minister Responsible for Corrections, Public Safety and Policing, the minister that is actually responsible for public safety saying that he will do anything in his power to find out who released that information and that he will be punished.

Then my colleague, the Leader of the Official Opposition, asked the Premier about the witch hunt. And the Premier said they would undertake their investigation. They'd find the individual and they'd punish the individual. Mr. Speaker, that's sad. It's really sad. And today a young man sits at home that's been on administrative . . . I will admit the government is paying him to sit at home because they believe he may have released the information.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to say today publicly in the House, on the public record, on the public record, and I can defend the public record, Mr. Speaker. I ask them to challenge me publicly, because I'll prove it that three days before this individual accessed the computer apparently, I had that information here in the building and shared it with others who can confirm it. Not others from my caucus, Mr. Speaker, others from the media.

So we have an individual today with two young children at home and a wife who doesn't know whether he's going to have a job a month from now, who's worried because he's been sent home because he supposedly gave me information. That's shameful. How would you like — or any member of this Assembly — like to be in that situation, not knowing about their future employment, their children worrying about what their family's future is about?

And, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, my understanding is this individual admits he accessed a computer. But, Mr. Speaker, they can check what time he accessed the computer. They can check what he accessed because our systems allow that to happen. And I can prove that three days prior to him accessing the computer, I had that information.

But this guy's sitting at home. This young man's sitting at home and his family's worrying. That's not fair. That's not right, and every member of this Assembly should be concerned about that. Because, Mr. Speaker, the law must not only seem to be done, Mr. Speaker, it must be perceived to be done appropriately. And, Mr. Speaker, this man's family is very, very concerned.

So, Mr. Speaker, as I conclude my remarks, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the House to pass this legislation, to understand that we set the examples, to understand that by creating fear in any citizen or any public employee is not the right thing to do. We have a responsibility to the population of Saskatchewan. We have a responsibility to our constituents. We have a responsibility to those who are employed by us. But, Mr. Speaker, this is our opportunity to in fact carry through with our words.

So, Mr. Speaker, this time I would like to move second reading of Bill No. 607, *An Act to provide for the Public Safety, Security and Protection of the People of Saskatchewan*.

**The Speaker:** — Being the hour of adjournment, this Assembly is adjourned until . . . The member has moved second reading of Bill No. 607, *The Public Safety, Security and Protection Act*. However, being now the hour of adjournment, this Assembly will recess until Monday afternoon at 1:30 p.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 13:00.]

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