



FOURTH SESSION - TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE

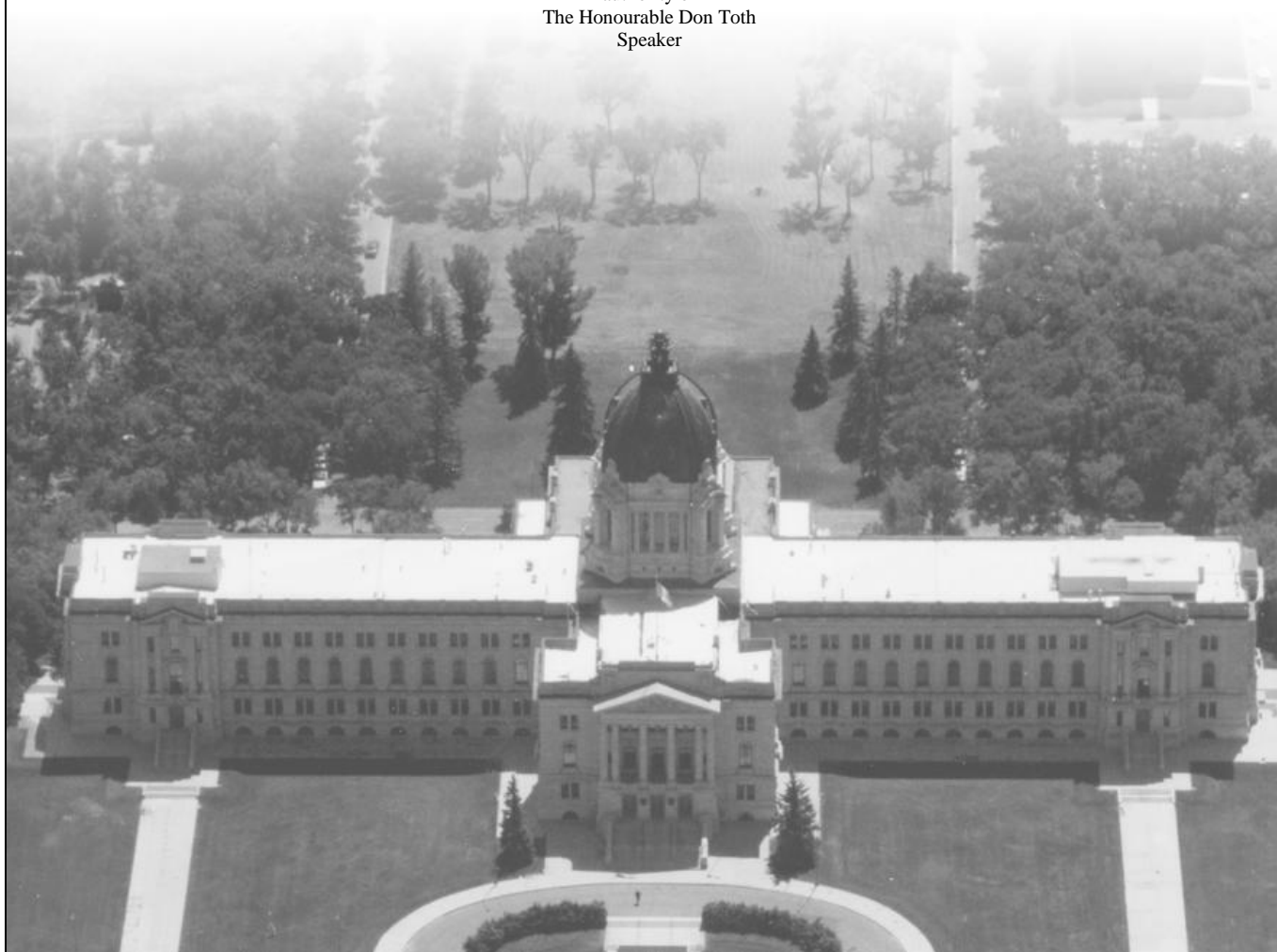
of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(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

Name of Member	Political Affiliation	Constituency
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
Broten, 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
Gantefoer, 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, Nancy	SP	Martensville
Hickie, Hon. 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
Lingenfelter, Dwain	NDP	Regina Douglas Park
McCall, Warren	NDP	Regina Elphinstone-Centre
McMillan, Hon. 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
Ottobreit, Greg	SP	Yorkton
Quennell, Frank	NDP	Saskatoon Meewasin
Reiter, Hon. Jim	SP	Rosetown-Elrose
Ross, Hon. Laura	SP	Regina Qu'Appelle Valley
Schriemer, Joceline	SP	Saskatoon Sutherland
Stewart, Lyle	SP	Thunder Creek
Taylor, Len	NDP	The Battlefords
Tell, 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
Wyant, Gordon	SP	Saskatoon Northwest
Yates, Kevin	NDP	Regina Dewdney

[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

TABLING OF REPORTS

The Speaker: — Before routine proceedings, under section 14(1) of *The Provincial Auditor Act*, I table the Provincial Auditor's report.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — And before introduction of guests, if the members will allow, I'd like to acknowledge the presence of a former speaker of the Assembly, Mr. John Brockelbank, who has joined us this afternoon. If Mr. Brockelbank will give us a wave.

I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. On the 13th of December, it's a Monday, the Saskatchewan Party will nominate its candidate in Regina Dewdney. But the deadline for nomination papers has passed with only one submission. And so I'd like to introduce to you and through you the next candidate for the Saskatchewan Party in Regina Dewdney, Gene Makowsky of the city of Regina.

Mr. Speaker, by way of a very brief introduction, I can tell you that Gene and I have a lot in common. We're both married to wonderful women named Tami and spell it in a very unique way. Mr. Speaker, we both coach minor football. I think he's probably a little better at it than I am. We both have Rider jerseys with the number 60. I wear mine quite a bit, Mr. Speaker. I can tell you that I'm often mistaken for Gene Makowsky as I go around the province.

Mr. Speaker, we know Gene well in this Assembly. He was born in Saskatoon, played for the U of S [University of Saskatchewan] Huskies. He's a two-time CFL [Canadian Football League] outstanding offensive lineman, several times on the all-star team. But more important than that, he's the father of three. He's a husband. He's someone involved in his community and countless charities that the Riders are involved in. He's also a coach in minor basketball. And, Mr. Speaker, we don't know about the status of his current career, a very successful career as a football player, but we know that he will work very hard as a candidate.

A lot of coaches in the CFL would love to have Gene Makowsky on their team and, Mr. Speaker, we're looking forward to that too. And so I'd just like to introduce to you and through you today to all members of the Assembly the potential future member for Regina Dewdney, no. 60, Gene Makowsky.

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

Mr. Yates: — Well thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the Premier and welcome Gene to

the Legislative Assembly. I've been a long-time fan of one of the teams that he represents, as I think all members of the Assembly are. But, Mr. Speaker, I'm glad he has a seat in the Assembly in the gallery, and I hope, Mr. Speaker, that he enjoys the view from there for a very long time. Thank you.

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

Mr. Yates: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's rather unusual. We don't have very many introductions today. But, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly 40 grade 12 students from F.W. Johnson Collegiate in the riding of Regina Dewdney, Mr. Speaker. They're accompanied today by their teachers, Donarac Deringer, Mandy Gullickson, and Delaney Jackson, Mr. Speaker.

And I'll have the opportunity later to meet and speak with these wonderful students. And we'll have an opportunity to have a discussion about what they'll see here during question period and proceedings this afternoon, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to join with you in welcoming John Brockelbank, former Speaker, former minister, former MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly], a colleague in our caucus for a number of years, also a very good friend of many of us in the Legislative Assembly.

John and his wife Ina are strong representatives in Saskatoon in many organizations. I just want to welcome you here today, John, and I hope you enjoy. And I hope our members are in the best behaviour so that you can point that out to people in Saskatoon. So thanks for that.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Yorkton.

Mr. Ottenbreit: — Mr. Speaker, to you and through you to all members of the Assembly, I'd like to introduce to you Ms. Tina Friesen in your gallery. We had a nice meeting with the SAAG [Self-Advocacy Action Group] group this morning, advocating for people with disabilities and looking for changes to improvements, further improvements to our disability income support program called SAID [Saskatchewan assured income for disability]. And I'd like all members to welcome her to her Assembly.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I too would like to join in introducing to the House through you and to you all the members of the House, Tina Friesen who's a strong advocate for those people who are living with disabilities.

And she's done an awesome job of advocating for people who matter a lot in our communities. And to that end, and she was explaining to many of the MLAs here today their trip to Berlin at an international conference, they raised over \$35,000 to do

this — an outstanding job, and represented our country and our province, our people very well.

And as well, I'd like to mention that she's also an executive member of the Regina Douglas Park NDP [New Democratic Party]. Thank you very much.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Ms. Junor: — I'm first. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise again today to present a petition on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan who wish to bring to our attention that many seniors, Saskatchewan seniors live on fixed incomes and are victims of physical, emotional, and financial abuse; that Saskatchewan seniors have a right to social and economic security and a right to live free from poverty; that Saskatchewan seniors have a right to protection from abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan to enact a Saskatchewan seniors' bill of rights, which would provide Saskatchewan seniors with social and economic security and protection from abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

This is from over 40 people who have signed from the communities of Val Marie, Climax, Hanley, and Melfort. I so present.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to rise and present a petition in support of eliminating poverty in Saskatchewan. And we know that freedom from poverty is an enshrined human right by the United Nations, and that all citizens are entitled to social and economic security. And Saskatchewan's income gap between the rich and the poor continues to grow, and now one in five children in Saskatchewan live in deepening poverty. And we also know that when governments reduce spending, often supports for social supports are cut first. 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 develop an effective and sustainable poverty elimination strategy for the benefit of all Saskatchewan citizens.

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

And, Mr. Speaker, the people signing this petition come from Regina and Saskatoon. I do so present. Thank you.

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

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I stand today to present a petition that calls for expanded hospice and palliative

care here in Saskatchewan:

We, the undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan, wish to bring to your attention the following: that all Saskatchewan people deserve quality end-of-life and bereavement care; that hospice and palliative care is known to help enhance the quality of life for those facing advancing illness, death, and bereavement; that a publicly funded and administered hospice and palliative care system, including residential hospices, would increase end-of-life care options for Saskatchewan people.

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan cause the provincial government to enhance and increase publicly funded and administered hospice and palliative care, including in-home hospice care services and residential hospices, in order to ensure that all Saskatchewan people have access to high-quality end-of-life care.

Mr. Speaker, I so present.

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

Ms. Morin: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise to present yet another petition from Furdale. A government ministry has directed SaskWater to cut off supplies of water for domestic use to Furdale customers. The same government ministry has directed that customers may no longer treat non-potable water using methods approved by Sask Health.

The Furdale residents, in dealing in good faith with SaskWater for over 30 years, have paid large amounts for their domestic systems and in-home treatment equipment as well as for their livestock and irrigation lines. The alternative water supply being referred to by a government ministry is a private operator offering treated, non-pressurized water at great cost with no guarantee of quality, quantity, or availability of water, Mr. Speaker. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to withdraw its order to cut off non-potable water to the residents of the hamlet of Furdale, causing great hardship with no suitable alternatives; to exempt the hamlet of Furdale from further water service cut-offs by granting a grandfather clause under *The Environmental Management and Protection Act, 2002* and *The Water Regulations, 2002*; and that this government fulfills its promises to rural Saskatchewan.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, these petitions are signed by the good residents of Furdale and Saskatoon. I so present.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise once

again in the Assembly here today to present petitions on behalf of concerned residents from across Saskatchewan as it relates to the unprecedented mismanagement of our finances by the Sask Party. They allude to the two consecutive deficit budgets tabled by the Sask Party and the amount of debt that is growing under the Sask Party — \$4.2 billion in the next four years alone representing 55 per cent, Mr. Speaker, and having a direct impact on Saskatchewan people whether that be through increases in power bills, cuts to health care, or cuts to education, Mr. Speaker. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly condemn the Sask Party government for its damaging financial mismanagement since taking office, a reckless fiscal record that is denying Saskatchewan people, organizations, municipalities, institutions, taxpayers, and businesses the responsible and trustworthy fiscal management that they so deserve.

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

These petitions are signed by concerned citizens and good folks of Arcola and Fillmore. I so submit.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Northwest.

World AIDS Day

Mr. Wyant: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today is World AIDS [acquired immune deficiency syndrome] Day. It is a day to recognize the disease and those that suffer from it around the world. It is a disease that has affected many people and many right here in Saskatchewan.

We know, Mr. Speaker, that the number of new cases of HIV [human immunodeficiency virus] have been climbing in Saskatchewan since 2003. And, Mr. Speaker, the Ministry of Health has been working closely with health regions, community-based organizations, First Nations and Métis, and the Public Health Agency of Canada.

A comprehensive provincial HIV strategy has been created to guide the work to address the rising incidence of HIV. The overarching goals of the strategy, Mr. Speaker, are to reduce the occurrence of new cases of HIV, to improve the quality of life for those who are affected, and to reduce the risk factors for acquiring the infection. We have committed two and a half million dollars, Mr. Speaker, with the object of enhancing front-line services. Mr. Speaker, the HIV strategy includes short-, medium-, and long-term projects. And I'm happy to say one part of the plan already implemented has had a positive effect. The introduction of rapid point-of-care testing to increase the opportunity for testing high-risk populations is in effect and early reports are encouraging.

Mr. Speaker, an important component of the HIV strategy is to enhance the capability of stakeholders both inside and outside the health system. This involves engaging communities to address HIV and AIDS prevention, education, treatment, and awareness. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Aboriginal AIDS Awareness Week

Mr. McCall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today is World AIDS Awareness Day, and it is also the start of Aboriginal AIDS Awareness Week. According to the Public Health Agency of Canada's website, the number of people living with HIV including AIDS rose from an estimated 57,000 in 2005 to 65,000 in 2008. And Saskatchewan has one of the highest rates of HIV/AIDS in all of Canada. And the government has voiced lofty goals to battle HIV/AIDS, but it provided little action and limited resources.

Meanwhile there is a crisis at hand. In 2000, 34 Saskatchewan residents were diagnosed with HIV/AIDS. In 2008 there were 174 new HIV/AIDS cases in Saskatchewan. The most recent Saskatchewan data is from 2009, where there were 200 newly reported HIV cases. Mr. Speaker, the trend line for this disease is on the rise, and it shows no sign of stopping.

[13:45]

Ken Clement, CEO [chief executive officer] of the Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network, said in Monday's *Leader-Post*, "We hear about the high rates of infection among vulnerable populations, yet we don't see enough resources going into those communities." Mr. Speaker, First Nations and Métis people account for 70 per cent of those affected in Saskatchewan. If the epidemic is left unchecked and ignored, then it will be even more difficult to fight this disease in those communities. Ignorance is not an option. And as I was reminded today at the Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network Conference, AIDS and HIV is 100 per cent preventable, but it takes will, knowledge, and resources to get the job of prevention done.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatchewan Rivers.

Girl Guides Celebrate Their 100th Anniversary

Ms. Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, 2010 marks the 100th anniversary of the Girl Guides movement. The Girl Guides of Canada launched their centennial celebration on January 19th, 2010. They joined with millions of other Girl Guides throughout the world in celebration of their history.

Girl Guides of Canada has always strived to prepare girls to meet the challenges they will face in their lives with strength and determination. Whether it was Agnes Baden-Powell teaching girls to bandage wounds during World War I or girls today working on our anti-bullying challenge, Guiding has continually changed with the times to reflect the needs and interests of contemporary girls and women.

To commemorate the 100th anniversary of Guiding in Saskatchewan, over 100 Girl Guides from Regina have decorated the Christmas tree located in the Saskatchewan gallery. The festive evening saw the Guides decorating the tree, doing crafts, and enjoying cookies and hot chocolate. For their participation in this event, the Girl Guides will be able to use their efforts and time towards their community service badge.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to extend congratulations to the Girl Guide movement on their celebration of 100 years. Thank you to the Guides and the leaders, past and present, for providing girls with the opportunities, skills, and knowledge they need to become the dynamic, effective leaders of tomorrow. Thank you.

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

Extraordinary Examples of Leadership

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to offer congratulations and to recognize the extraordinary examples of leadership provided by Dr. Vianne Timmons and Dr. Anne Doig. These two Saskatchewan women continue to inspire all of us. Earlier this week, Dr. Timmons and Dr. Doig were named to the top 100 list of Canada's most powerful women.

This top 100 list presented by the Women's Executive Network recognizes proven achievers who are strong contributors to their organizations, their fields of endeavour, and their communities. Dr. Timmons, the University of Regina's seventh president and vice-chancellor, was honoured for the third year in a row because of her work with family literacy and inclusive education.

Dr. Doig, a Saskatoon family physician, is a past president of the Canadian Medical Association. One of Dr. Doig's key achievements has been the development of a charter for patient-centred care which has been supported by representatives of the patient advocacy community. Both these women and this list are testament to the fact that there's no shortage of strong, smart, and caring women in our country and right here at home in positions of leadership, making a positive impact for all of us.

This year's theme at the Top 100 Summit and Awards Gala was The Power of Collaboration and Connectivity. This theme recognizes our lives are more connected than ever before and collaboration is the best way to guide an organization to success. It is women like Dr. Timmons and Dr. Doig who demonstrate how to harness the power of collaboration to get good things done. Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in recognizing the achievements of these two women who show us what leadership is all about. Thank you.

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

One of Canada's Most Powerful Women

Hon. Ms. Ross: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It is truly an honour and a pleasure to rise in the House to speak to the accomplishments of a very talented member of our society. For the third straight year, University of Regina President Vianne Timmons has been named one of Canada's most powerful women. The top 100 list represents women's . . . excuse me. The top 100 list presented by the Women's Executive Network recognizes the hard work of executive-minded women.

Vianne was honoured due to her work with family literacy and inclusion in education. She was also included in the top 100 list

in 2008 and 2009. Mr. Speaker, Vianne has even been named one of the top 10 influential women in Saskatchewan in 2009. In September of 2008, Vianne Timmons became the president of the University of Regina, the seventh president and vice-chancellor. Before she began working at the University of Regina, Timmons spent six years on the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. Currently she is also president-elect for the International Association for the Scientific Study of Intellectual Disabilities and is the Chair of the Canadian Bureau for International Education.

I would like this Assembly to join with me in recognizing our good friend Vianne Timmons for her incredible display of leadership in our community. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

Dismantling the Medicare System

Ms. Junor: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Saskatchewan is known as the birthplace of Canada's public medicare system. It was in southwestern Saskatchewan in Swift Current Health Region No. 1 that the system was conceived within our province. Now from the same corner of the province comes the latest sign that this government is dismantling the medicare system that the people of this province pioneered.

Doctors in the Cypress Hills Health Region, Mr. Speaker, withdrew services yesterday after a nearly two-year-long contract delay. This isn't the first time the Sask Party government has shown this kind of disrespect for health care workers. They dragged out negotiations with front-line health care providers for over two years, ripped up a contract, a signed deal with chiropractors, and now risk driving resident physicians from the province by delaying a fair contract for them as well.

This is a government that talks patient first, then cuts beds, underfunds ambulance care, and leaves communities that are trying to recruit health care workers abandoned and ignored. Mr. Speaker, this is a Premier who says he supports our public health system but disrespects those who deliver and receive the care while farming out to the private sector surgeries that could be done more cost effectively in the public system.

Mr. Speaker, the province's people value their health care providers, and they deserve better for their public health care system than a procrastinating Premier and a piecemeal privatizer who won't protect medicare in the province where it was born.

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

Cadet Squadrons Honoured

Mr. Chisholm: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is truly an honour to rise in this House to speak about a very special group of young men and women in our province. Today, Mr. Speaker, three Saskatchewan cadet squadrons have been recognized for excellence within their respective communities.

The cadet program is one of the largest and oldest youth programs in our nation. For over 100 years, Saskatchewan's cadet program has served to teach our youth the core values of loyalty, professionalism, and integrity.

A selection committee comprised of senior officers from the North and South recommend top units, with the final determination selected by their respective league officials.

Mr. Speaker, this year's deserving recipients are, firstly, the #45 Royal Canadian Sea Cadet Corps, Jervis Bay from Saskatoon; secondly, #2293 the North Saskatchewan Regiment Army Cadet Corps from Saskatoon; and finally, Mr. Speaker, the #41 Royal Canadian Air Cadet Squadron from here in Regina. These cadet units were evaluated on a series of disciplines including community involvement and member participation.

I would like this Assembly to join me in honouring and congratulating each of the recipients, not only for their involvement within the community, but also for proudly participating in the most noble of traditions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Management of Health Care System

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan have come to expect and count on having good quality medicare in the province of Saskatchewan, at least until three years ago with the election of this government. But since that time we've seen mismanagement of the health care system to the extent that few could have imagined.

In fact it's led to such prolonged mismanagement that the doctors in southwest Saskatchewan, as of yesterday, withdrew services in a number of communities that the Premier will well know, including his hometown.

My question to the Premier is this: when will the Premier come to realize that this kind of mismanagement and the failure to protect Saskatchewan families' health care is important and needs to be dealt with?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When we took over as government from members opposite from 16 years of NDP rule, there were a number of realities that we faced in Saskatchewan. Wait times were longer than almost anywhere else in the country, Mr. Speaker. There was a dramatic shortage of nurses in the province of Saskatchewan. We weren't training enough doctors. We weren't training enough residents, Mr. Speaker. That government had not built one new long-term care bed in about 16 years, Mr. Speaker.

File by file, issue by issue, we've been making progress. We're training more doctors today in the province. We're training more residents today in the province. We've already met our four-year goal of 800 new nurses in the third year, Mr. Speaker. We're adding new long-term care beds in the province,

including in the city of Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker. We have a wait times initiative, Mr. Speaker, that is demonstrating progress for people who've been waiting too long for surgery, Mr. Speaker. We're happy to compare the record of this government in three years to 16 years of NDP neglect, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, the Premier doesn't need to lecture members on this side of the Assembly. He should be talking to the doctors; he should be talking to the health science professionals, the 3,000 health care professionals who now in negotiations but negotiations have broke down, members of the various health care workers' associations that feel let down by this government.

My question to the Premier, based on the Provincial Auditor's report of today . . . In the press release that was issued, the auditor says, and I quote, "Poorly-maintained medical equipment is putting Saskatchewan patients at risk, according to Acting Provincial Auditor, Brian . . . [Wilkins]." My question to the Premier is this: how in the world can he continue to defend his mismanagement of the health care system and his failure to defend and protect health care for the families of Saskatchewan?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, I remember in this Assembly when members opposite posed questions just before the government settled with the nurses. Their position was, the sky was falling; there would never be a contract with the nurses. I remember similar rhetoric from members opposite just before the health care providers of this province eventually settled with a contract, Mr. Speaker, and are providing that valued service to the people of Saskatchewan.

We hear it again now from the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Speaker. Negotiations with the doctors are under way. We're confident that there will be an agreement soon, Mr. Speaker. And here's something else we know. We know this, Mr. Speaker, that as long as those members stay on that side of the House, we will continue to make progress in training more doctors, in hiring more nurses; we'll build long-term care beds; we'll reduce the wait-list. Yes, using private partners; yes, providing arthroscopic surgery where none existed before, Mr. Speaker; yes, with the patient-first approach of our government. We will put the record of this government in three years against the record of members opposite over 16 any day of the week, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Again, Mr. Speaker, the words of the Premier are cold comfort for the families who couldn't get health care service yesterday because the doctors — in frustration because of the lack of a contract for 19 months — couldn't get health care service in many hospitals yesterday right here in the province where medicare was born.

The fact of the matter is that the situation, Mr. Speaker, is not as the Premier describes. Many people in the health care services, whether they're professionals in the health science, whether

they're doctors, whether they're resident physicians, whether they're the men and women studying to become doctors in this province, trying to make a decision whether to make their career here or move to other provinces where they are respected — they're making that decision today.

And one of the reasons we have 120 vacancies for physicians is because of the action of this Premier and of this government. When will the Premier recognize that his management has failed the families of Saskatchewan and the health care services in this province?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, the contract negotiations with doctors continues apace and, Mr. Speaker, we're confident there'll be a resolve to the current negotiations. In the meantime, Mr. Speaker, what we know is true in Saskatchewan today, in terms of doctors, is that there is on average 7 per cent more doctors practising today than when members opposite were in government, Mr. Speaker. We know well today, we know well today there are more doctors being trained at the College of Medicine than when they were the government.

Mr. Speaker, we know there are more residents being . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order. Order. Order. Order. Order. I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, we know there are more doctors being trained, Mr. Speaker. We know there are more doctors practising today in the province. And we know that because of this government, because of the leadership of the Minister of Health, that the wait times for surgery is reducing. In today's *StarPhoenix*, Mr. Speaker, in big bold font that I commend the members opposite read, it talks about Surgicentre serving 100, Mr. Speaker. Wait-lists for surgery are being reduced, Mr. Speaker.

This government has stopped talking about health care and started fixing the problems left behind by the NDP.

[14:00]

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

Arrangements for a Long-Term Care Facility

Ms. Atkinson: — On May 10th of this year in this Assembly, the Minister of Health stated in reference to the Amicus nursing home deal, "We're not guaranteeing any loan for Amicus, Mr. Speaker, not whatsoever." And then twice on May 17th, the minister again denied to the Assembly that there was a loan guarantee saying, and I quote, "We don't look at this as a loan guarantee." And then a few minutes later he repeated, "This is not a loan guarantee." To the minister: does he still stand by those words?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, what we stand by is the patients of this province. We stand beside seniors that are living in acute care centres, Mr. Speaker, which was perfectly fine under the NDP, to have seniors living in acute care centres.

Mr. Speaker, through Amicus we're going to add 100 new beds. That's new beds over top of the old complement, Mr. Speaker, 100 new beds, Mr. Speaker, that seniors will benefit as we move forward. I don't know, Mr. Speaker, where the opposition stands on that. Obviously they'd rather have them in acute care centres.

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

Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Speaker, this is an important question. The minister has made a very clear statement. But I want him to be absolutely clear and I want to give him an opportunity to be completely forthcoming with this Assembly on this matter. So I'll ask the minister again: has his government, either through his ministry or through the health region, provided what in essence is a loan guarantee to Amicus?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, the agreement that is struck between the Saskatoon Health Region and the Catholic Health Ministry is not a loan guarantee, Mr. Speaker. We've had many different people weigh in on that.

She was trying to draw that bow last year, Mr. Speaker. It didn't work for them then and I know she's trying to draw it now. We've had many people weigh in and say this is not a loan guarantee, Mr. Speaker. It is an agreement between the Saskatoon Health Region and the Catholic Health Ministry to supply beds, Mr. Speaker, for seniors in this province.

As I said yesterday, Mr. Speaker, she's been fishing in this pond way too long. It's time to move to the next one.

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

Ms. Atkinson: — Okay. Mr. Speaker, on page 1446 of my freedom of information request, there's an email that's dated April 6th, 2010, and that email is from Maura Davies, the chief executive officer of the Saskatoon Health Region. To the minister: can he tell the legislature what's contained in that email?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, you know, I try and remember each and every email that goes across my desk. I don't remember one that was on page 1472 and the exact wording of that email, Mr. Speaker.

The opposition has been trying to frame this as a loan guarantee. We've had many people . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order. Order. The member was allowed to

ask the question without a lot of interference. I'd now ask the members to allow the minister to respond without interference. I recognize . . .

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, we've had many people weigh in on this. They've looked at it and they categorize this as not a loan guarantee. I know the opposition wants it to be. They feel they can get great political points if it is a loan guarantee, Mr. Speaker. What this is, an agreement between Amicus, the Catholic Health Ministry, and the Saskatoon Health Region to supply appropriate care, which never happened under the NDP, appropriate care for seniors in the Saskatoon area.

I find it quite astonishing a member that serves Saskatoon for as long as she has would be so against such a program.

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

Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Speaker, I just want to jog the minister's memory and I want to quote from the email:

As you can see, this deal provides Amicus with funding to cover both their operating costs, which are higher than the per diem provided to any other SHR affiliate, and their debt servicing changes with protection to the bank that the region and ministry will assume the debt if the deal falls apart or Amicus defaults on its loan. Many details of this arrangement were essentially agreed to by government before the region became involved in these discussions.

So to the minister: why did he tell this Assembly — not once, not twice, but three times — that there was no loan guarantee when clearly there was?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, we'll try this again. It is an agreement between the Catholic Health Ministry and the Saskatoon Health Region. The Catholic Health Ministry, through Amicus, is building a facility, Mr. Speaker. We've entered into a five-year agreement with an extension of a five-year agreement to lease this facility, not only for the per diem cost but some for capital, Mr. Speaker, to cover their cost as they move forward. Mr. Speaker, this is not a loan guarantee in the terms that she's trying to imply, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, this again is a good deal for seniors in our province. Unfortunately, for years and years and years, that government would rather have seniors live in acute care centres than live in appropriate accommodations such as in Amicus, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Atkinson: — I have one more question. It's quite clear from the CEO's email, and I quote:

. . . with protection to the bank that the region and ministry will assume the debt if the deal falls apart or Amicus defaults on its loan.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want the minister to be very clear. He has told this Assembly not once, not twice, but three times there was no loan guarantee; yet the CEO of the Saskatoon Health Region says there is. Which is it, Mr. Minister?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, day after day we see that member come into this House and smear family names, Mr. Speaker, try and smear family names, whether it's the Stensruds, Mr. Speaker, or the Donlevys. Mr. Speaker, we took it one step further later on, Mr. Speaker, last week . . .

The Speaker: — Order. Order. Order. Now there's a half a dozen members on the opposition side that are not allowing the minister to answer the question. I ask the members to allow the minister to respond.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Last week, we saw a member opposite talk about a person that got a contract through the IT [information technology] service, Mr. Speaker, that had the last name similar to mine, the same as mine, Mr. Speaker. And they I think were certainly spinning with the media that it was some sort of a conflict, that there was some sort of collusion there, Mr. Speaker.

Not only did they do that, Mr. Speaker, but what they also did was phone my mother, my 90-year-old mother living at home, to see if she knew a Bill McMorris. My mom has lived in this province for 90 years, has never received a phone call about Bill McMorris. Later on that day, these members raised the question, Mr. Speaker. Absolutely unbelievable.

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

Children in Care

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, a fundamental role of government is to protect the most vulnerable in our society. Yet today the Provincial Auditor has reported for the second year in a row that the Sask Party government is failing to protect children who are in its care. He says this is an urgent matter. To the minister: why is this government failing to protect the children who are in its care?

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

Hon. Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, the children in our care is a very important issue, not just to me as the minister responsible but to everyone on this side of the House.

I want to make sure that the members opposite are clear that some of the statements that were made by that member earlier today were not correct. He said that the Pringle report was going to be released . . . It was going to take two years to be released. Mr. Speaker, I've had the report for a month and a half. It's going to be released in less than a month. It'll be released by the end of this month. So that we will be sure that that information will be released.

Mr. Speaker, what we have been doing for children in our

province, making sure that they have what they need, is an important issue to our government.

We talk about issues like foster homes, and it's something that we as a government are very . . . are committed to. That's why we've reduced the number of children in foster homes with more than four children by one-third since we've become government.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Well, Mr. Speaker, the Provincial Auditor said that the Ministry of Social Services doesn't even know how many children are in the minister's care, who they are, or where they live. This is simply appalling, Mr. Speaker, appalling. To the minister: why is this government not even able to tell us today how many children are in its care, let alone who they are or where they live?

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

Hon. Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, I would encourage the members opposite to go to the website where we have the Internet stats on the number of children that are in our care. And at September 30th we have listed, not only the number of children in out-of-home care. We have the number of children in care. We have the number of non-wards. We have the number of children in care on reservations. We have the number of children in our care in foster homes. We have the families receiving children protection services. And we have all the numbers just to identify for ourselves every day that we have a responsibility to children, and they are our future, and we are looking after them.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Mr. Speaker, this minister should stop being so smug about the stats that she drags out every day. This is about protecting children today. Today. Not about some stats.

Now the Provincial Auditor has found that the ministry's own policies for placing and protecting children are not being followed. And the auditor says this, and I quote, "As a result of these deficiencies, the Ministry did not know if the children it was responsible to protect were safe and receiving proper care."

Now we know, and the minister's just referred to a report that cost nearly \$1 million, likely sitting on her desk, and she's waiting till the end of the month. Will she release that report today? And will she lay out the government's immediate plan to start protecting the children in her care today?

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

Hon. Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, I a few minutes ago told the member opposite that I've had the report for about six weeks. That we've been involving the number of First Nations and Métis individuals who need to be looking at it as well. I will be releasing that report by the end of the month, and I'm

sure that the members opposite will be quite delighted in the work that's been done because children are very important to us. I also want to make sure that the members opposite know that we have a new database that was identified in February of 2010 that gave greater rigour to the approval process and the reapproval process.

And, Mr. Speaker, maybe the members opposite should also realize that the Provincial Auditor talked about the significant efforts and progress that we've made in various areas of improving our staff. There is nothing more important to our government than our children, and we are looking after them. There's nothing smug about children. They're our future.

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

Combatting AIDS

Ms. Junor: — Mr. Speaker, today is World AIDS Day. We know that Saskatchewan has the highest rate of HIV/AIDS in all of Canada and has alarming new cases reported every year.

To the minister: what is he doing to address this epidemic in our province?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, certainly the rise in numbers that we see in our province over the last number of years regarding HIV and AIDS is a deep concern to our province and, you know, our sympathies go out to those people that have contracted AIDS and HIV.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, our government has worked closely with the stakeholders, First Nations communities, public health organizations, Mr. Speaker, Westside Clinic, all the organizations to put forward an HIV/AIDS strategy for this province, something that this province hadn't ever seen before, Mr. Speaker.

We've put \$2.5 million into this strategy, Mr. Speaker, that will see more surveillance. And you know what happens when we see more surveillance? It's extremely important we know the magnitude of this issue. As we do more surveillance, we're going to see those numbers increase before we see them drop, Mr. Speaker. That's just the nature of more surveillance.

But I will tell you that we have programs in place through the communities, Mr. Speaker, to start addressing this through education and prevention.

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

Ms. Junor: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well surveillance and sympathy aren't working so far. HIV/AIDS is plaguing our First Nations and Métis communities. Seventy per cent of people with HIV/AIDS in Saskatchewan are First Nations or Métis, many of whom live in small, remote communities.

Just last week the medical health officer in Prince Albert compared Saskatchewan's situation to sub-Saharan Africa and

said this:

If you think decimating the African population was bad, HIV in this province will kill 15 to 30 per cent of the Aboriginal population. Not all at one time, but over a five- to 10-year period.

This is shocking, Mr. Speaker, and it demands urgent action. Again to the minister: talk is cheap; what is he doing to address this situation?

[14:15]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, as I said, we have put together the committee that's put an HIV strategy forward for the province. We funded it at \$2.5 million through community clinics like the Westside community clinic. Mr. Speaker, \$250,000 has gone to that clinic for education, Mr. Speaker.

It is important that we know that this is a different issue than what was faced in Africa. Mr. Speaker, the spread of HIV/AIDS in Saskatchewan isn't through the homosexual community, Mr. Speaker. It is through the intravenous drug use community, and that makes a huge difference, Mr. Speaker. We've realized that. We are taking steps, Mr. Speaker. There are programs in place through the needle exchange program and other programs, Mr. Speaker, that will help see the reduction of these numbers into the future.

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

Ms. Junor: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I've been to Africa and I have been on a policy dialogue on HIV/AIDS and visited communities that had AIDS and HIV. This is like that. This is like that. This is spreading throughout the whole community. Babies are being born in our province with HIV despite the fact that proper medical care can almost entirely eliminate the likelihood of mother-to-child transmission.

Stephen Lewis — if we're going to talk Africa — the former UN [United Nations] special envoy for HIV/AIDS in Africa, said this about Saskatchewan: "It's just inexcusable. It's indefensible. It's unconscionable that Aboriginal babies should be born HIV positive when it's not necessary."

So to the minister: what priority is the Saskatchewan Party government placing on this crisis, and when will we see some urgency to address this unconscionable situation?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, as I said from the outset, the first answer, this situation is of deep concern to our government, and that's why we've moved. The member opposite said, what are you doing? And I'll point to many programs that we are doing, such as the point-of-care program that the member from Saskatoon talked about in his member's statement earlier. Point-of-care contact, Mr. Speaker, is a program to prevent the very thing that that member just talked about — mothers giving birth to children that have contracted

HIV, which is completely preventable, Mr. Speaker.

We are taking steps through the Saskatoon Health Region, through the Regina Health Region, through the community clinics to make sure that, first of all, the education is out there so that expecting mothers know that they do not have to transmit HIV/AIDS to their children, Mr. Speaker. They have to identify, Mr. Speaker. Point of care is testing on the spot so that this transmission doesn't spread to the children. We're taking action, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Junor: — I'm glad the minister is clear that the programs are just in Saskatoon and Regina. There's the whole province that this is affecting — small communities, rural communities, northern communities. What's being done there, Mr. Speaker? What's being done to stop this HIV/AIDS epidemic in small communities, in rural communities, and in northern communities?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, I may have identified a couple of health regions. It was not limited to those two health regions, Mr. Speaker. There is work being done across the province, definitely in P.A. [Prince Albert] Parkland as well as Prairie North, Mr. Speaker, as well as the health regions, the two northern health regions. Work is being done through all the health regions to tackle this situation.

Mr. Speaker, we do see the numbers increasing. It is a concern. I will tell you that the numbers will continue to increase over the next two years or three years because of greater surveillance, but I will also tell you that there are programs in place to help drive those numbers down. Part of it's education, Mr. Speaker. We're there, Mr. Speaker, and we've funded it. And we're going to see improvements into the future.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 161 — *The Election Amendment Act, 2010*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I spoke to the amendments regarding the human rights Act and I'd indicated to the members opposite that I was providing somewhat more detail than I would ordinarily. And with regard to this Act I'm going to follow the same pattern and provide some further background information on this as well.

Mr. Speaker, it's my privilege today to rise today to move second reading of Bill No. 161, *The Election Amendment Act, 2010*.

Mr. Speaker, members will know that *The Local Government Election Act* is to be amended this session to require voters at

local government elections to produce approved identification such as government-issued photo ID [identification]. The Bill will follow the municipal initiative to result in similar ID requirements being authorized for voters at municipal, provincial, and federal elections in Saskatchewan.

Voters are already required to show approved ID in order to vote in federal elections and provincial elections in British Columbia, Ontario, and Quebec. This is a standard that will be followed during the next general federal election. It is appropriate that Saskatchewan move to meet this evolving national standard for improved voting integrity.

Mr. Speaker, voters will now be required to show identification prior to voting. Those with approved government-issued photo ID and who have been enumerated will only need to show that ID in order to get a ballot. Those who cannot meet this requirement will be required to show additional forms of identification or have another voter with such ID vouch for them. A voter may vouch for only one other person.

Mr. Speaker, there's been some suggestion that this process will prevent people who want to vote from being able to do so. That is not the intention and in our view will not be the result. Our intention is simply to ensure that the existing long-established identity and residency rules for voting are demonstrably followed. It is not good enough to trust an out-of-date process with something so fundamental to our democracy.

Mr. Speaker, to ensure that no one is disenfranchised, we will include in the regulations a broad range of supplementary information that may be used to establish identity and address for a voter. We will be starting with the review of the existing federal alternative voter ID list for such information and then consider adding any forms of Saskatchewan information that would be of assistance here.

Mr. Speaker, the federal process provides a long list of approved information that a voter can use to establish their identity and address. The approved alternative identification cards or original information documents include driver's licence, health card, Canadian passport, certificate of Canadian citizenship as in a citizenship card, a birth certificate, a certificate of Indian status, a social insurance number card, an old age security card, a student ID card, provincial/territorial identification card. A liquor identification card, a hospital or medical clinic card, a credit or debit card, an employee card, a public transportation card, a library card. A Canadian Forces identity card, a Veterans Affairs Canada health card, a Canada blood services card, a CNIB [Canadian National Institute for the Blind] ID card.

A firearm possession and acquisition licence or possession-only licence; a fishing, trapping, or hunting licence; an outdoors or wildlife card or licence. A hospital bracelet worn by residents of long-term care facilities. Utility bills including telephone, TV, power, gas, or water. A bank or credit statement; vehicle ownership or insurance proof; correspondence issued by a school, college, or university.

A statement of government benefits — employment insurance, old age security, social assistance, disability support, or child tax benefit. An attestation of residence issued by the responsible

authority of a First Nations band or reserve; a government cheque or cheque stub; pension plan statement of benefits, contributions, or participation. A residential lease or mortgage statement, an income or property tax assessment notice, an insurance policy, a letter from a public guardian or public trustee.

Any one of the following issued by the authority of a shelter, soup kitchen, student/senior residence or a long-term facility. They are, an attestation of residence, a letter of stay, an admission form, or statement of benefits.

Mr. Speaker, these changes are being made to update the ID process and to continue to ensure the integrity of the provincial electoral process. As this partial list shows, it will not prevent legitimate voters from voting. Mr. Speaker, the reason I have read those into the record is specifically so that we are able to get an understanding of the steps that the government is going to ensure that people are not disenfranchised.

But as I said yesterday in the media, Mr. Speaker, it is imperative that people get their affairs in order so that they are able to have their proper paperwork when they present themselves at the polling station. It will simply not be enough to arrive at the polling station a few minutes before closing time and indicate that it is your desire to vote and hope that they will either recognize you there or be able to vote. Voting is something that the people of this province can and should take seriously, and it is not an unreasonable request on the part of our democracy to ask people to be able to show who they are.

Mr. Speaker, voters in Saskatchewan deserve nothing less than a process that is demonstrably fair. This Bill will ensure that our process meets the standard set federally, in other provinces, and now at the municipal level in Saskatchewan as well.

Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to move second reading of Bill No. 161, *The Election Amendment Act, 2010*. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — The Minister of Justice has moved second reading of Bill 161, *The Election Amendment Act, 2010*. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Moose Jaw Wakamow.

Ms. Higgins: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a privilege to rise and add comments into the Act to amend *The Election Act*, Bill No. 161.

It was an interesting list that the minister just read into the record. And as I was listening to him read this wide-ranging list of papers, documents, Bills — I mean, it just went on — different licences, your blood donor's card, all kinds of things. If that's actually what he's looking at, I'm wondering why we're making these changes at all. Because I'm trying to figure out how that wide-ranging list of options for identification — other than making identification compulsory if asked, which I believe it is currently — why we are proposing these changes in the first place, changes that aren't really changes at all.

Another area that caused some concern. I was looking through the press release, through the Bill, through some media reports that have been put out when the Bill was first tabled and, Mr.

Speaker, in listening carefully to what the minister said in his comments. Now he talked about a wide range of supplementary information that would be considered allowable, and he read into the record this wide-ranging list of a wide array of documents. But then he made a comment to it that said he may consider adding . . . These are a range of documents that they may consider adding to regulations.

So here, what we have is legislation that is being changed. It was first brought out and talked about in the Speech from the Throne as requiring photo ID to be able to vote. And there was quite a bit of backlash on requiring photo ID because that really discriminates against a number of sectors of society and many, many people across this province. It would be outright discrimination against those citizens and would really make voting more difficult for those citizens.

So, Mr. Speaker, now we hear a wide-ranging list of documents that may be allowed, may be considered, that the government may consider adding into regulation — not legislation, but regulation. And, Mr. Speaker, then you start to wonder why are we doing this. To move the requirement into regulation, getting the government to make changes as they see fit without it being brought to this Legislative Assembly, without citizens in this province having an opportunity to voice concerns or make comment on changes because we know regulations can be made in a cabinet meeting. They can be signed off by an order in council. We will learn of them a week after they have been brought into effect, and it's too late. You would be fighting a huge uphill battle whether you agreed, whether you disagreed, whether you felt that they were discriminatory or really caused more damage than what they ever avoided.

[14:30]

So, Mr. Speaker, when I look at some of these changes . . . In the initial press release that was put out with the government introducing amendments to *The Election Act*, it is referred to — photo ID — elections to produce approved identification such as government-issued photo ID. So that's still being used as the example that was the main push that was talked about in the Speech from the Throne. And we talked about this in the House. I know many of my colleagues have spoken about it being discriminatory.

And a basic question was asked. The minister again said, well Ontario does this. Yes, but Ontario allows a number of pieces of photo ID, and they also supply free photo ID to their citizens. Is this government going to look at free photo ID? Does that go hand in hand with photo ID being a requirement? And we'll still wait and see if there is other options that are put forward because, as I said, the minister has said quite clearly and in the documents that it will be in regulation, that it won't be in the legislation. So we're just really going to have to wait and see.

In the press release, the minister made the comment that it is appropriate and necessary that Saskatchewan follow suit to ensure the integrity of our provincial electoral process. Well, Mr. Speaker, we just went through a whole process of hiring a Chief Electoral Officer in the province of Saskatchewan, so I would find it somehow contradictory I guess is . . . I'm trying to be diplomatic about this. But it's somewhat contradictory for the minister to talk about integrity of the electoral process when

that government in effect meddled in the process that has been established in the province of Saskatchewan for the hiring of a Chief Electoral Officer in this province.

It has been a recommendation by a panel of people that have a great deal of experience. They are well-respected in their field in the careers that they have chosen. They do the short listing. They look at the applications. They make a recommendation to the various steps through the Legislative Assembly so that this independent officer of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan is chosen in a fair manner, Mr. Speaker, taking into consideration all of the requirements are met and to be able to achieve the job that is needed to be done here in the province. And we know the uproar that was caused by this Saskatchewan Party government meddling in the process and the recommendation that was put forward.

So now we have the minister who figures, I guess, it's fair to meddle in the hiring of an independent officer of this legislature who would serve in an unbiased fashion the people of this province and uphold the requirements of his role, his or her, Mr. Speaker. But now we have a Minister of Justice who is speaking in his press release about the integrity of our provincial electoral process. Well gee, Mr. Speaker, I wish he had of thought of the integrity of the electoral process when he was meddling in the hiring and disagreed with the recommendation that had been made by the independent panel for a Chief Electoral Officer in the province of Saskatchewan.

So, Mr. Speaker, maybe he's just a johnny-come-lately. Could be. Maybe he's going to realize the error of his ways and he's turned around. But you know what? I doubt it. I sincerely doubt it. So that raises a number of concerns.

Mr. Speaker, the press release goes on to say that voters will be, with government-issued photo ID will be required to show other forms of ID. Voters without government ID will be required to show other forms of ID or have another voter with the required ID vouch for them. The list of other allowable forms of identification will be extensive. Which it is, Mr. Speaker, if that's actually what's put in the regulations. It will be developed after further consultation with stakeholders and set out in the regulations once the Bill has passed.

And, Mr. Speaker, in today's story in the *Leader-Post*, December 1st, 2010, there is a comment from SUMA [Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association], the association of urban municipalities. Chief Executive Officer Laurent Mougeot said his organization will want to be part of the discussions around what ID is acceptable. Not that they are already involved, it's just that they would want to be a part of the discussions.

So I truly hope that this list that the minister just laid out, and at great length, and talked about just about every piece of paper you've got in your junk drawer at home in your kitchen . . . or that's what I call it at my house, anyway. All the oddballs I don't know where to put all go in this junk drawer. But he talked about just about every paper I've got in there would be eligible for me to go receive a ballot and vote.

So, Mr. Speaker, I hope there is some consultations as we move forward. I don't have a great deal of confidence in what we've

heard so far. It raises many, many questions. But, Mr. Speaker, I know everyone in this House agrees that the people of this province have a right to vote. And that they need to be able to have their say on this decision that is being put forward or this change in legislation that is being put forward by the government. And any changes that affect the rights of citizens needs to have a thorough discussion and it really needs to be a broad discussion, Mr. Speaker. I feel that wholeheartedly.

Mr. Speaker, I think we all realize that having that right to vote is a right that we should exercise, and that all people in this society, a free and democratic society, need to follow through on that vote. And it's not just people who are able to access appropriate photo ID. It's just not for those of us who are comfortable or have the income to just take for granted that photo ID and passports are a part of life. But for people who may not be as privileged as us, Mr. Speaker, they also need the right to vote. They have the right to vote, and this government needs to make sure that that right is maintained.

Mr. Speaker, in this day and age I'm so surprised by this piece of legislation, for starters. I mean I was just surprised that it came about, that photo ID would be a push for this government.

Mr. Speaker, if you go to the universities or you go to any of the post-secondary institutions or even to high schools, Mr. Speaker, and you talk to young people . . . I don't think there's anyone in this Assembly who hasn't at some time or another been in a conversation about how do we get young people interested in politics. How do we get young people to realize the impact that the decisions we make in this Assembly can have a huge impact on their day-to-day life?

Politics, many young people talk about politicians and politics and places such as this Assembly as being rather irrelevant to their lives. And we argue against that, Mr. Speaker. And we've all debated. I'm sure the Saskatchewan Party has. I know that, as New Democrats, we often will talk about what's the best way to encourage young people to be involved, to have their voices heard. Well, Mr. Speaker, it's not by putting more barriers in place when it comes to voting.

I would have expected something to be a little more progressive. In fact I was at a . . . Instead of photo ID, I would have been looking at something a little more proactive for legislation that would have looked at taking advantage of some of the new technologies, making voting easier, making access to voting easier.

You know we have had these discussions. I know as New Democrats, we have talked about why is it that electronic voting, voting from your home computer with all of the security techniques that are out there . . . And, Mr. Speaker, I know people need to be much more technical than I am to be able to explain this, but we've seen it done with no problems. Why aren't we, as institutions, looking at moving forward and embracing the new technologies to encourage more young people to be involved, to encourage our citizenry to adjust to a more flexible system that accommodates their busy lifestyles, but the accessibility to technology . . . not being stuck in this same rut of looking at the same old same old and adding a few more barriers, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Speaker, there are so many options out there. We need to be open-minded, and we need to look at the opportunities not only on the municipal side but on the provincial side.

This is a beautiful building, Mr. Speaker, but it is just a building. And we need to be able to reach out. We need to be able to encourage all citizens across the province of Saskatchewan to take an interest in politics, to take an interest in the day-to-day workings of the Government of Saskatchewan, and to look at how they can be involved because we will be a much better province the more involvement we have from citizens, the more input we have from citizens, and the more representative that this Assembly is of the population of Saskatchewan.

And, Mr. Speaker, you don't do that by putting in place barriers. You do not do that by putting in place barriers by requiring photo ID. I do hope the minister looks at expanding the list. I hope he . . . Again I'm back to where I started. I'm not sure why we're doing this if we are going to have this wide-ranging option for identification at polling stations.

But I would like the minister to say, while you're looking at *The Election Act*, maybe you should look at being more proactive and look at opportunities to take advantage of technology, to embrace some of the ideas that younger citizens are quite comfortable with, and make sure that we are more inclusive in the long run.

Mr. Speaker, I know there are many of my colleagues that wish to make comments on this. And I guess there would be nothing less expected because, as politicians, all of us are quite interested in the democratic process. It's probably one of the things that brought us into politics in the first place, our involvement. We realize the importance of it, and we also realize the importance of not disenfranchising citizens so that they don't have the ability to vote.

I know my colleagues have many comments to make on this topic. But at this time, Mr. Speaker, I will give my colleagues an opportunity, and I myself, to sit down and read exactly what the minister said in his second reading speech. But I'm sure we will have much more to say on the amendments proposed for *The Election Act*. And at this time, I would adjourn debate.

The Speaker: — The member from Moose Jaw Wakamow has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 161. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 162 — *The Local Government Election Amendment Act, 2010*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Municipal Affairs.

Hon. Mr. Hickie: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to move second reading of Bill No. 162, *The Local Government Election Amendment Act, 2010*. Mr. Speaker, this Bill will amend *The Local Government Election Act* that provides the legal

framework for fair elections in municipalities and school divisions. This Act governs elections for mayor, reeves, and councillors in all types of municipalities, including cities, urban, rural, and northern municipalities. It also governs school board elections which are usually conducted by municipalities on behalf of school divisions.

Amendments to the LGEA [*The Local Government Election Act*] are generally made in the time between municipal and school division elections. The next general elections are in fall of 2012. Rural municipality elections are in a staggered term, and the next rural election will be in the fall of 2011.

Mr. Speaker, to be in place for the next municipal elections, amendments are being introduced in this session to give our municipalities more time to prepare for the changes and for related regulations to be put in place. The amendments proposed in this Bill fit into three general categories: number one, amendments to address issues raised with the ministry by the municipal sector; number two, amendments to address issues that have arisen as a result of recent elections that are largely of a clarification and “housekeeping nature;” and number three, the third category of amendments fulfills government’s commitment to adjust the term of office for municipal and school elections to four years and introduce voter identification requirements to strengthen local election practices.

At this time, Mr. Speaker, I would like to discuss this last category of amendments first, namely those to increase the terms of office for local elected officials and those that will strengthen local election practices.

[14:45]

Mr. Speaker, in 2008, SUMA, the Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association, passed a resolution requesting amendments to extend the term of office for urban municipal officials from three to four years. SUMA felt increasing the terms of office will help improve the effectiveness of elected local officials. Following this, Municipal Affairs consulted extensively with the municipal and education sectors, and nearly all were in favour of four-year terms of office.

In early 2010, both the Saskatoon and Regina city councils passed resolutions supporting a move to four-year terms of office. And in March 2010, the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities, SARM, passed a resolution supporting four-year terms for rural elections, while retaining the current staggered election dates. And this position was reaffirmed at the SARM mid-term convention held in early November, just a few weeks ago.

Mr. Speaker, these amendments will fulfill government’s commitment to extend the term of office of locally elected officials to four years, commencing with elections in 2012, to help councils plan and implement longer term goals toward more effective and efficient local governance.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, this group of amendments will introduce requirements for voters to show identification verifying their name and address prior to voting. Mr. Speaker, some may question the need for these requirements. They are

being added to local election legislation to improve accountability and transparency in local elections, to strengthen local election practices, and to reduce uncertainty and challenges regarding a voter’s eligibility at the polls by candidate representatives and election officials. Currently people need only sign a declaration saying they are eligible to vote in a municipal election. This does not provide assurance of a person’s identity or eligibility and does not safeguard against voter fraud.

Voter identification requirements are already in place for federal elections and are being developed for provincial elections. The proposed amendments will provide for consistent requirements among all elections — federal, provincial, and municipal.

Mr. Speaker, we understand there are concerns this will make it more difficult for some people to vote and that not all people have photo ID. And so these amendments provide for other forms of identification to be produced that don’t have a person’s photograph but still establish a person’s name and residence.

Further, the amendments provide for alternatives to assistance with situations where an individual is unable to produce any identification or where it may be impractical. These may include having another voter vouch for an individual and allowing facility administrators to provide quick certification of identity and residence. Other jurisdictions have developed methods of establishing identity for those without identification or without a fixed address. And, Mr. Speaker, the proposed amendments will allow for such methods to be delivered for Saskatchewan’s municipal elections.

More detail of forms of identification that may be used and the alternate methods of establishing a person’s identity will be put in regulations after these amendments have passed and after extensive consultations with stakeholders again. Broad consultations will be undertaken with the sector to ensure all appropriate forms of ID are included and local situations and individual circumstances are addressed.

I would now like to discuss the amendments requested by the municipal sector. Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Association of City Clerks asked for a number of amendments to improve local election processes and enhance accessibility. These include moving the call for nominations up by one week to allow more time for a second call for nominations; allowing special polls and places such as personal care homes to be held other than on election day and only for the residents of those facilities; and providing for alternate methods of voting, such as mail and ballot systems. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to say the proposed amendments in this Bill provide for these changes.

The last set of amendments, Mr. Speaker, address issues that arose as a result of recent local elections and are primarily of a housekeeping nature to clarify procedures and improve consistency between urban and rural municipal elections. These include clarifying that canvassing within 100 metres of a polling place is applicable only when polls are open and not during the entire campaign period; harmonizing timelines and retention periods for election processes and materials so they are consistent for urban and rural elections; and clarifying the

activities associated with such matters as revising voters lists and vote recounts, among others, must occur during business days.

Mr. Speaker, these amendments were developed in consultation with representatives of municipal and education sector associations including SUMA, SARM, the Saskatchewan City Mayors' Caucus, the Saskatchewan Association of City Clerks, the Urban Municipal Administrators' Association, the Rural Municipal Administrators' Association, the Saskatchewan School Boards Association, the Saskatchewan Association of School Business Officials, the Provincial Association of Resort Communities of Saskatchewan — PARCS — and the Saskatchewan Association of Northern Communities, New North. The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Justice were also consulted. I would like to take the opportunity to thank all those individuals who took the time to provide input, advice, and feedback on the development of this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, this government recognizes the importance municipalities play in our province's future. These changes are being made to update and continue to ensure the integrity of municipal electoral processes. We intend to continue working with municipal leaders to ensure that we have responsible and appropriate municipal governance and fair, open, and transparent local elections to build the quality of life we desire in our communities and to provide a future for our families and young people.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill No. 162, *The Local Government Election Amendment Act, 2010*.

The Speaker: — The Minister Responsible for Municipal Affairs has moved second reading of Bill No. 162, *The Local Government Election Amendment Act, 2010*. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from The Battlefords.

Mr. Taylor: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the opportunity to rise today to speak on Bill 162 at second reading. Bill 162 is *An Act to amend the Local Government Election Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts*. Mr. Speaker, the short title of this Act, some people may simply refer to it as *The Local Government Election Amendment Act, 2010*.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the minister introducing the legislation today, making remarks with regards to what the Bill does, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the explanation that he's made, and I wish to make some comments in my remarks following the minister's remarks.

Just earlier, Mr. Speaker, before the Minister of Municipal Affairs introduced this legislation, the Minister of Justice, the Attorney General for the province, introduced Bill No. 162, which introduces photo ID into the province of Saskatchewan for provincial elections.

The aspects of what the Minister of Justice had to say also apply in the case of Bill 162. But, Mr. Speaker, I want to draw the public's attention to the comments made by my colleague, the member from Moose Jaw Wakamow, Mr. Speaker, who spoke on Bill 161 immediately following the Minister of

Justice's remarks. Mr. Speaker, the member from Moose Jaw made it very clear what the community response has been to photo ID being introduced at provincial elections, Mr. Speaker, and I want to echo the comments that my colleague from Moose Jaw made, Mr. Speaker.

And without going into all the detail that she did, although I might refer to some of her comments in a few moments, without referring to her whole speech, Mr. Speaker, her comments about the importance of democracy, the importance about ensuring that those people who wish to participate in our democratic process, that their right to do so, Mr. Speaker, is made as easy as possible as opposed to as difficult as possible, Mr. Speaker. And this legislation, Bill 162 at the municipal level and Bill 161 at the provincial level, Mr. Speaker, certainly lead us to understand that this direction for photo ID does make things more difficult.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Justice used the phrase, the legislation must be "demonstrably fair." The process must be "demonstrably fair," Mr. Speaker. And I think that this legislation and the provincial legislation, Mr. Speaker, aren't meeting that test very well about being demonstrably fair.

Mr. Speaker, in regards to 162, one of the arguments for photo ID that the Minister of Municipal Affairs used was that the current legislation does not protect against voter fraud. Well, Mr. Speaker, there has been no outcry about voter fraud in the province of Saskatchewan nor in the municipal sector, Mr. Speaker. The issue is not one in which either, as I will argue shortly, Mr. Speaker, that either the municipal sector or the public generally has called on the government, Mr. Speaker, to ensure that we clamp down on processes to protect against voter fraud, Mr. Speaker. There's certainly many different ways in which we can manage these matters.

While I'm on the issue of photo ID, Mr. Speaker . . . And I realize that the local government elections Act, Bill No. 162, does more than just bring forward the Sask Party, the provincial government's desire to bring photo ID to the province of Saskatchewan. I realize the Act does more than that.

I want to talk about the photo ID provisions just for a moment. The idea was introduced to the people of Saskatchewan just a few weeks ago, Mr. Speaker, in the Throne Speech read in this very Chamber back on October the 27th. Right near the end of the Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker, in fact the last two paragraphs before the concluding remarks, the Throne Speech says these two things, Mr. Speaker, and I quote:

Changes to *The Local Government Election Act* will establish four-year terms for municipal politicians and give municipalities the authority to require photo ID when conducting local elections.

My government will also be introducing a similar act, requiring voters to produce photo ID when voting in provincial elections.

Mr. Speaker, those two paragraphs read from the Throne Speech.

Two things come to mind, Mr. Speaker. First and foremost is

that immediately following the delivery of the Throne Speech, there was quite a negative response to this proposal, Mr. Speaker — people across Saskatchewan writing letters to the editor of newspapers; talking on talk shows; responding to polls that were run by radio, television stations, or newspapers, Mr. Speaker; and letters to various members of the Legislative Assembly and, I am assuming, to the Minister of Justice, the Premier, and the Minister of Municipal Affairs. Mr. Speaker, the public said, this is not right. We need to protect the rights of people to vote simply and easily for their government at the local level or the municipal level. So, Mr. Speaker, there was quite a response in the days and weeks following the introduction of this idea in the Throne Speech.

Well here we are, Mr. Speaker, and we're about four and a half weeks since the Throne Speech was read. All of the other legislation identified in the Throne Speech has been introduced already, Mr. Speaker. And this legislation, with only a few days left in this session to go, Mr. Speaker, appears to be the last package of legislation that the government is bringing forward.

Why, if it was so important in the Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker, did it take four and a half weeks to be brought forward? Well, Mr. Speaker, I think the reason for that is because there's been a change since the public responded negatively and the introduction of the Act today.

Mr. Speaker, let me go back to the Throne Speech and the exact language that was used in the Throne Speech. Paragraph number one, for municipalities, it says, "... and give municipalities the authority to [I quote, in better ways, Mr. Speaker] require photo ID when conducting local elections."

And, Mr. Speaker, the paragraph following it, for provincial legislation, "My government will also be introducing a similar act, requiring voters to produce photo ID . . ."

Mr. Speaker, the Throne Speech, the idea brought forward by the government, the idea presented to the public, didn't talk about options, Mr. Speaker. It talked about requiring photo ID. And that's what the public responded to quite negatively.

If the public or those who are reading these remarks, Mr. Speaker, refer to earlier in the day the comments from the Minister of Justice in introducing photo ID for provincial-wide elections, Mr. Speaker, he talked about this not being a specific requirement but an option, Mr. Speaker, one of the options. And the legislation is quite clear. You either produce one piece of photo ID or you produce two other pieces of ID, Mr. Speaker, that can identify you. Mr. Speaker, that list of other identification is quite extensive. The Minister of Justice outlined that in his speech. But at the same time, Mr. Speaker, those provisions already exist — presenting, if challenged, two pieces of identification, none of which need to have a photo on it.

[15:00]

So, Mr. Speaker, I think that this government is trying to bring forward photo ID no matter what is said. But they are nervous about the public reaction, so they've watered this down. From the day they wrote the Throne Speech to the day they introduced the legislation in front of us today, Mr. Speaker,

there has been a change. And that's because members of the New Democratic Party, the opposition, has been speaking out on behalf of the public negative response on this issue, Mr. Speaker. And this government has responded with some fear, Mr. Speaker, about what the public feeling is on this.

It comes back to the phrase, consultation with the people of Saskatchewan, which I've got more to say about in a few minutes, Mr. Speaker. But if the government was truly listening to the public and was truly concerned about, as the minister indicated in his remarks, protecting against voter fraud, Mr. Speaker, they would have given a lot more thought to what is being proposed here.

Now, Mr. Speaker, getting a little closer to the other processes or the other provisions — that's the word I'm looking for, the other provisions — in Bill No. 162, the local government elections Act. The member from Moose Jaw earlier today referred to an article in today, December 1st's, *Regina Leader-Post*, in which the Saskatchewan Association of Urban Municipalities' chief executive officer said his organization wants to be a part of discussions around the ID provisions in the Act. To quote the executive officer, "If the preparation to go to the polling station is such that you have to go to an extensive process, I think it might be discouraging to some people." He also says there are other issues that need to be addressed, which is why consultation is important to ensure people who work at polling stations know what is appropriate.

Mr. Speaker, nothing could be more important. In municipal elections when people are sitting at the polling booth and somebody comes with four or five pieces of paper in their pocket, Mr. Speaker, that may appear to identify them, are the people at the polling stations fully aware of what they can accept and what they can't accept? If the Minister of Justice, the Attorney General of the province of Saskatchewan, is correct, Mr. Speaker, the list is almost endless. Everything in your kitchen drawer that you've accumulated for the last 10 years, Mr. Speaker, could be identification.

Mr. Speaker, there is another problem, though, that hasn't been identified here that I'm sure that municipalities will identify when they are consulted on this issue. Because it would appear, Mr. Speaker, from the chief executive officer's comments, Mr. Speaker, it would appear that this is one of these issues where there's been very little consultation with the municipalities as far as photo ID and voter eligibility is concerned, Mr. Speaker.

But there is another issue. And in the city of North Battleford, I can tell you that this issue would be very important, and I'm sure that there are other communities across Saskatchewan where it would be equally important.

The city of North Battleford has a fairly mobile population, Mr. Speaker. We have a lot of rural communities and First Nations communities within about an hour's drive of The Battlefords, Mr. Speaker. And during the school year and other times, people move into the city in the months of September and October, and they may move back to their home communities or to their rural locations, Mr. Speaker, in the spring after the school season is over, Mr. Speaker. We have a fairly mobile population geared around the educational calendar, geared around seasonal employment, Mr. Speaker. There's a number of

reasons why people are moving in and out of the city of North Battleford.

Well it just happens that municipal elections for urban municipalities are in the early fall, for the provincial election's now on the calendar, Mr. Speaker, in early November. It's entirely possible that individuals will be moving to a community, like the city of North Battleford, within the eligibility period to vote in the municipal and certainly the provincial election. But they will have moved at a time when it was not possible to, as the Minister of Justice has said, get their affairs in order.

It's entirely possible for someone to move into North Battleford in September from Red Pheasant First Nation, Mr. Speaker, be eligible to vote in the municipal election in the city of North Battleford in mid to late October, Mr. Speaker, but they have not yet got their identification in order that shows a North Battleford address. They may have taken a couple of weeks to find a location in which to live. They may not have a power bill or a phone bill or a telephone bill with that address on it yet. They may not have really the two types of identification or even photo identification, Mr. Speaker, that would establish a residence for that individual.

So, Mr. Speaker, in a community where there's a lot of mobility and you've got a volunteer sitting at the table that's going to identify who is eligible and not eligible to vote, Mr. Speaker, there are going to be some challenges that municipal city managers and local elections officials are going to have to deal with, Mr. Speaker. And I know that the municipalities are keenly interested in ensuring that they are consulted further on this, Mr. Speaker.

One of the main reasons why the opposition will not be rushing forward with passing this legislation, because we want to ensure that the municipalities are completely comfortable with the practicalities that are brought forward in this legislation.

Now this government is doing two things with this piece of legislation. On the one hand, they're doing something the municipalities want, and at the same time, they're doing something that municipalities are uncertain about. So, Mr. Speaker, municipalities are going to say, we need to have this legislation passed quickly because the four-year provision is important to us. But secondly, oh, we've got to take it a little more slowly. We've got to consult further, and we've got to know that all of the factors around this photo ID, this voter eligibility clause are dealt with in a manner in which we are comfortable.

So, Mr. Speaker, the old ying and yang of this government: do something that the public wants and then add something that they may not want or might not want and then wrap it all up in a ball and say we've got to do this right away, no need to consult further.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we understand and we recognize and we support that municipalities and school boards, Mr. Speaker, will benefit from four-year terms. That part of the legislation, Mr. Speaker, has come from the grassroots. It's been a part of the consultation process in advance. But, Mr. Speaker, photo ID has not been part of the consultation process — not with

municipalities, not with school boards, not with the public of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. It seems to have come out of something that the Sask Party believes is important for them but is not part of the demand of the public of Saskatchewan. Now, Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to make that clear before talking about some of the other provisions in the legislation in front of us.

The minister did indicate that this legislation applies to cities, towns, rural municipalities, and school board elections, Mr. Speaker. So let's take a look at some of these things. And more importantly, Mr. Speaker, let's talk about consultation, something that we've talked about in this legislation on numerous occasions about the way in which the current government, the Sask Party government, has been managing their legislative agenda here in the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Municipal Affairs indicated that the request for a four-year term came forward from the 2008 Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association conference. Mr. Speaker, 2008 conference occurred in late January, early February. We are only two and a half months away from the second anniversary of this resolution having passed, Mr. Speaker. Almost two full years have passed since the Urban Municipalities Association clearly indicated to government, after much consultation amongst themselves, that four-year terms was in order.

We now see, Mr. Speaker, that by the time . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Yes 2008, '09, '10 — two years. In 2011, Mr. Speaker, we're almost three years away. Pardon my math, Mr. Speaker. We're almost three years away from this legislation having been passed or this request and recommendation from SUMA coming forward, almost three years ago, Mr. Speaker.

So last year, Mr. Speaker, or pardon me, in November of 2008, six months after SUMA passed their recommendation, in November 2008, the opposition asked the then minister of Municipal Affairs when he was going to bring forward the legislation for a four-year term and actually were responding to comments that the media had picked up that the government was not going to respond immediately to the request for four-year terms.

Mr. Speaker, at that time on November 27, 2008, the minister of Municipal Affairs said, "On the other hand, in the way of doing public consultation [this is regarding four-year terms], we [the government, the Sask Party government, we] found some contrary views and other folks that aren't entirely convinced that changing the terms are the right thing to do." So, Mr. Speaker, the minister of Municipal Affairs, in answer to a question in this House about four-year terms, said there are contrary views. Not everybody likes this idea, Mr. Speaker. And in fact there are people who are not convinced that changing from a three-year term to a four-year term is the right thing to do.

So, Mr. Speaker, that immediately begged the question: all right, who are these people with contrary views? Who are these other folks? Who would the government consult with? If the municipal sector is saying, from convention, we wish to have four-year terms, who else would the government consult with? Mr. Speaker, it was interesting. If there were contrary views

two and a half years ago, Mr. Speaker, then what has happened over this last two and a half years that the legislation is now coming forward as requested by the municipal sector? And there's no reference to the government acknowledging contrary views and bringing the legislation forward — very interesting.

However, Mr. Speaker, the opposition in 2008 then asked the then minister of Municipal Affairs, who were these people that he was going to consult with next? Well here's the quote from the minister of Municipal Affairs on November the 22nd. He says, golly, Mr. Speaker who would they be kidding:

You've got to wonder who writes this stuff. The people that we're asking are the people who live in Saskatchewan . . . We decided that the respectful thing . . . would be to ask the public of Saskatchewan what do . . . [they] think of this interesting proposal.

So November 27th, 2008, the then minister of Municipal Affairs said we are going to consult with the people of Saskatchewan about four-year terms.

We weren't satisfied with that answer, Mr. Speaker, so a third question was asked of the minister on November 27th. All right, let's be a little more specific, Minister. We said who are these people? Where's the advice coming from about not going forward with four-year terms? And the minister of Municipal Affairs said, "The people we are consulting are twofold. The folks that are elected, the elected representatives of SUMA and SARM and the New North and also another interesting group of people called the public of Saskatchewan."

So there we have it again, twice, Mr. Speaker, during question period. The minister of Municipal Affairs said it's not enough to get advice from SUMA and SARM and the New North. We've got to consult with the people of Saskatchewan. So okay, Mr. Speaker, two and a half years later, where have the public meetings been on this issue, the consultation with the public of Saskatchewan? You know, just how did the government undertake this extensive consultation, the public of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, that the minister of Municipal Affairs is talking about?

Perhaps I didn't see something, Mr. Speaker, but maybe they added a question about four-year terms when they consulted the public about selling off habitat land in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. The government said they were going to consult widely on habitat land in Saskatchewan. Oops, Mr. Speaker, wait a minute. They didn't do that. There was no consultation there.

[15:15]

What about when they decided to de-index chiropractic services, Mr. Speaker? Did they add a question to the public about the four-year term for Municipal Affairs? Oh wait a minute. They didn't consult the people of Saskatchewan on de-indexing chiropractic services, Mr. Speaker.

What about when the budget of last year removed the ethanol tax rebate, Mr. Speaker, and the government said they'd consulted on that particular issue? Did they also consult on four-year terms with the people of Saskatchewan? Oh wait, Mr.

Speaker. They didn't consult on removing the ethanol tax rebate, Mr. Speaker.

What about the consultation on the New West Partnership, Mr. Speaker? There's an opportunity there to consult with the people of Saskatchewan on a four-year term like the minister of Municipal Affairs said they were going to do. But wait, Mr. Speaker. There was no consultation on New West Partnership in the province of Saskatchewan, another opportunity lost.

What about consultation with the public on the photo ID before this was introduced into this piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker? The consultation could've included the four-year term that the minister said was going to happen. Wait, Mr. Speaker. There was no consultation on photo ID. They couldn't have consulted on the four-year term.

What about working people, Mr. Speaker, in Saskatchewan, working people who the government said there were consultations on Bills 5 and 6, on Bill 40, Mr. Speaker . . . Bill 80, Mr. Speaker? The government said we're consulting with the public of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, they could have added the four-year term to that consultation, Mr. Speaker. But wait. There was no consultation, Mr. Speaker, no consultation.

How about when the Minister of Health said, I'm consulting with the public prior to giving fundraisers the opportunity to gain access to patients' information, hospital patients' information, Mr. Speaker? The consultation with the public? Wait a minute, Mr. Speaker. There was no consultation on fundraising and health care information to fundraisers.

Mr. Speaker, the minister two and a half years ago told the municipal sector, told the public of Saskatchewan, told the members of the legislature that they were not introducing this legislation — two and a half years ago — because they had to consult with an interesting group of people called the public of Saskatchewan. It didn't happen, Mr. Speaker.

This government brought forward legislation now. Mr. Speaker, I suggest the government is bringing forward the legislation now so that they can bring the photo ID in, on the one hand, with something the municipalities want. Not that they want it because they didn't consult. They didn't talk to anybody. They wouldn't do it before. They brought it in because the . . . [inaudible] . . . want it in order to get the photo ID stuff brought into law in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. This is a simple do something with the left hand so that they can't see what's going on with your right hand, Mr. Speaker. This is this old magical trick, this illusion that indeed, Mr. Speaker, something important is happening around us.

Municipalities should have the right to have their recommendations heard and acted upon quickly by government, Mr. Speaker. This was a simple matter of understanding what the municipalities want and finding a way to make it work. This legislation does not do anything about finding a way to make four-year terms work, Mr. Speaker. It simply says, it is now a four-year term. Municipalities want it. That's a good thing, Mr. Speaker.

It appears that school boards want it. There wasn't a lot of talk two and a half years ago about school boards. School boards

didn't have much to say publicly. This legislation includes school boards, Mr. Speaker, and that's an appropriate thing to do.

One thing the government didn't do, Mr. Speaker, where there has been some concerns raised is change some of the hours that municipal voting can occur. We've just had a number of RM [rural municipality] elections concluded recently, Mr. Speaker, just a few weeks ago as a matter of fact. Those municipal elections, Mr. Speaker, some people were indicating that the hours that the polling stations are open in rural municipalities are not long enough to accommodate all the residents of the rural municipalities.

I think many members in this Chamber will know that more and more people who live within a rural municipality are employed outside that municipality in jobs that are either related to mining or manufacturing or transportation or employment that takes place outside of the rural municipality, perhaps a 15-minute drive, perhaps a half an hour drive, in some cases an hour's drive from home. In rural municipalities, the polling station can also be a half hour drive from home, 20-minute drive from home, Mr. Speaker. So individuals have been saying that the polls are closing in rural municipalities at 6 o'clock. Anyone who works in the city is unable to get to the polling station in time before that poll closes, Mr. Speaker.

There was an opportunity in this piece of legislation which does impact the election, the practicalities of elections in rural municipalities, Mr. Speaker. We've had information that's come forward as immediate as just a month ago, Mr. Speaker, that would indicate that we should be looking at additional changes to *The Election Act* regarding municipalities. And I think it would be worthwhile for the government to entertain the idea that rural municipality polls should remain . . . or the hours should be reviewed. Let me put it that way, Mr. Speaker. The hours should be reviewed. Not saying they necessarily have to be changed, there's an issue there. It should be reviewed, Mr. Speaker, and I would ask the government to do that because they seem to have chosen not to do that.

And the final point that I want to make, Mr. Speaker, about Bill 162, the local government elections Act, we know very clearly, Mr. Speaker, that municipal governments have considerable amount of responsibility to their own taxpayers. Local residents participate in these local elections. And the rules that govern municipalities overall have changed a number of times over the years, Mr. Speaker. And in fact we have seen in the last six years some significant changes in the legislation that affects municipalities. You will recall there used to be the urban municipalities Act, the rural municipalities Act, *The Northern Municipalities Act*. There's now something called *The Cities Act*, and there's *The Municipalities Act*.

And we know, Mr. Speaker, that these pieces of legislation evolve, that as municipalities change — whether it's technology or whether it's some things that happen in other jurisdictions that prove to be better practices than what we're currently having in Saskatchewan — there are amendments to legislation that take place from time to time. It is interesting to see that the Sask Party government, the new government, is recognizing that legislation evolves and it's never static. What's done one day may need to be changed sometime down the road.

And I remember in this House, Mr. Speaker, when I stood as the minister responsible for Municipal Affairs and introduced *The Cities Act*, Mr. Speaker, the communities across Saskatchewan responded quite favourably. There were still rollouts that needed to be made, Mr. Speaker. The legislation was passed, and the consultations with the communities — the municipalities, the cities — continued, Mr. Speaker. And a year later amendments were made to *The Cities Act*, Mr. Speaker.

And I remember the opposition at the time saying, oh the government didn't get it right. They failed the people. There wasn't any consultation. They're changing the Act just one year after they brought it in, changing the Act, Mr. Speaker. Well the municipalities didn't fully appreciate those comments at the time because they understood legislation evolves and that ongoing consultation ensures that new legislation is brought in when there is an understanding and an agreement made that indeed changes to legislation need to be made.

Well here we are, Mr. Speaker. *The Local Government Election Act* has been around for quite a number of years, but we're amending it, Mr. Speaker, not that there were things wrong with it in the past but because through consultation with the municipal sector, we've found that some things need to be changed. And there's no doubt that the municipal sector feels the four-year term is an appropriate change that needs to be made, and we're pleased to accept that. And we will not criticize the government for the consultation that occurred in that case and the change that's being brought forward today.

But, Mr. Speaker, we also have to recognize and understand that there was very little consultation on introducing photo ID or a requirement for photo ID — not in this legislation and not for the province of Saskatchewan — that consultation needs to occur, Mr. Speaker.

And we will ensure that there is consultation made with the municipalities, with the school boards, and with the public of Saskatchewan to the best of our ability, Mr. Speaker, before this legislation moves forward. And we will ensure that there is a practical eye put on to this legislation to ensure that indeed, as the Minister of Justice said in his remarks, it is demonstrably fair, it is indeed fair. And, Mr. Speaker, to ensure that the Minister of Municipal Affairs fully understands the municipal sector, that it works in the interests of the municipalities — urban, rural, northern — and the school boards, Mr. Speaker.

So that having been said, I'd like to now move that the debate on Bill No. 162, *An Act to amend The Local Government Elections Act*, be now adjourned.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from The Battlefords has moved Bill 162, *The Local Government Election Amendment Act, 2010*, be now adjourned. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 159

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Norris that **Bill No. 159 — *The University of Regina Amendment Act, 2010*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise in this debate today. To state right off the top, I'm a proud University of Regina alumnus and certainly am very interested in looking into measures that relate to my alma mater, University of Regina.

On the face of it, it would seem that the measures proposed in this legislation are fairly straightforward, fairly pedestrian in their nature. The minister's remarks in introducing this legislation did give us some pause for thought or, you know, something that we'd like to see fleshed out a bit, where it's stated that these measures are not universally well-regarded after what seems to be fairly extensive consultation and the impetus for these, for this piece of legislation and this basket of legislative measures, coming from the university administration itself. So we're interested to see if there have been concerns raised about this legislation, what in fact those concerns are.

And beyond that though, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in terms of the changes around the office of the chancellor, the powers of convocation, the different ways that the senate . . . Their powers are adjusted somewhat as well as limiting the vote for the different senate positions to graduands within a certain district, raising the number of graduands required to sign off on an appeal for a special meeting. Again all these things seem to be fairly straightforward, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and not exactly something to write home about one way or the other. So we, on the face of it, we like the looks. I myself, I like the looks of this legislation.

But I am interested to hear more about those that might have some concerns around this legislation. Certainly President Timmons has come forward saying that these are a basket of initiatives that go toward serving administrative efficiency and cost-effective governance at the University of Regina. It would certainly, to my mind it certainly seems, the measures certainly seem to line up with that claim.

[15:30]

So we'll wait. We'll be canvassing the different stakeholders as well to see what the concerns might have been, or perhaps the minister could have been a bit more forthright in the introductory remarks around this piece of legislation. But we will take that work forward.

So with that being said, Mr. Deputy Speaker . . . Again I say this as a legislator, as a member of this Legislative Assembly based out of the city of Regina, the riding of Regina Elphinstone-Centre; I say this as an alumnus of the University of Regina; and I say this as someone who's got a strong interest in the affairs of post-secondary education in this province, that this would seem to be measures that come forward to aid and

promote administrative efficiency. But there is a slight note of concern that we would cite certainly in the minister's remarks — that was touched upon — but something that we want to take up with the stakeholders as we do the work of the opposition in terms of due diligence around this legislation.

So that being said, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would move adjournment of debate on Bill No. 159, *An Act to amend the University of Regina Act*. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Regina Elphinstone has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 159, *The University of Regina Amendment Act, 2010*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 160

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 160 — *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code Amendment Act, 2010*** be now read a second time.]

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Riversdale.

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm pleased to rise today to enter into the debate about Bill No. 160, *An Act to amend the Saskatchewan Human Rights Code and to make consequential amendments to The Labour Standards Act*.

So, Mr. Speaker, I want to talk first a little bit about what the minister's proposed, the changes he'd like to make to the Human Rights Code. Right now the tribunal, currently the Human Rights Tribunal conducts public hearings of complaints that have been referred to it by the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission, and it reviews these complaints that have been dismissed by the commission at the request of the complainant. So what's going to happen, or is being proposed in this Bill, is to move it to the Court of Queen's Bench to be heard by a judge rather than by this tribunal.

So right now in Saskatchewan, discrimination complaints can be based on race, colour, age, sex, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, religion, marital status, family status, place of origin, or ancestry. And actually the Human Rights Code itself covers discrimination in a variety of contexts if you're discriminated against with respect to your tenancy, employment, employment advertisements, publications, public services and facilities, purchases of property, and discrimination by unions or associations.

So just a little bit of history here, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The tribunal was originally created as a replacement for boards of inquiry which were appointed by the minister to review individual cases where the commission decided they had merit or where the complainant was appealing a decision referred to it by the commission. So at that time, sometimes it would take months for a board of inquiry to be even appointed, let alone hearing the case, particularly if the minister's office was having

difficulty identifying a member of the Bar that didn't have a conflict of interest with one of the parties in the dispute. So this delayed justice for the complainant which, in the case of human rights complaints, these are often very sensitive and emotional issues, and people deserve to have their cases heard in a timely fashion.

So the tribunal was originally created in part to address these concerns and try to speed things up a little bit. But today, currently, many people have expressed concerns that the tribunal now takes too long to issue decisions or complaints referred to it. And that's a very real concern. I've spoken to people who've gone through this process, and for some of them it has taken too long. And as I said, often human rights complaints cut to the very core of who we are. We have been discriminated based on something that we can't change. It's something about us that's inherent. And so they really are very emotional and sensitive topics, and for that reason alone deserve to be heard in a timely fashion.

So the opposition is very aware and mindful of the fact that the Human Rights Commission, and particularly the Chief Commissioner Judge Dave Arnot, has endorsed making these changes. In his words, I'd like to quote:

The Commission anticipates that a move of the tribunal function to the courts would elevate the stature of human rights issues within the justice system and improve the current decision timelines. Dedicated . . . judges would handle hearings and provide decisions.

So that's a very good thing. Elevating human rights, making sure the people fully understand and are educated about them, is critical. So I understand where Judge Arnot is coming from with respect to that.

The commissioner has also spoken about its desire. I'd like to quote here:

. . . a decision making process which is informal and accessible to all, provides for review of decisions, and is handled by experts who reflect our diverse society.

Again, we here in the opposition completely support that view. We want a decision-making process where people without a legal background can be heard. So it needs to be open to the average everyday citizen, and we want people who make decisions to have the necessary expertise and to reflect the diverse nature of our society.

In fact, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I've stood in my place here on many occasions in this legislature talking about the need to have, in particular, a diverse legislature. I think any decision, any item that's studied, needs to be studied by a diverse range of voices because we bring . . . When we're making decisions and don't have the many voices around the table, sometimes we forget or we don't always understand.

So again, that notion of diversity around a decision-making table is very important to us here in the opposition. So the commission has . . . Judge Arnot has also stated:

Under the court system parties to a complaint would see

no change to current processes. The Commission's complaint intake, mediation and investigation processes would not change. In addition the Commission's lawyers would continue to represent the complainant at the hearing at no cost whatsoever, including any subsequent levels of appeal right up to the Supreme Court of Canada if necessary.

That piece, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is absolutely imperative. The people who have suffered from discrimination continue to have the ability to seek justice without being forced to pay for a lawyer. So we've got vulnerable and marginalized people who've already suffered or allegedly suffered anyway in discrimination, and they shouldn't be forced to pay the government. They shouldn't be forced to pay to address some of these concerns, and currently they don't have to do that. So there would be some concern that these changes, somehow costs could creep in.

So the provincial government has spoken of its desire to attempt to resolve more disputes through mediation. I think that that's a fine idea. I've been through mediation process myself, not through the Human Rights Commission, but someone who's gone through a divorce. And my former husband and I chose to, instead of use lawyers, we chose to go the route of mediation. And it wasn't always easy, but it was the best choice in the end. I think many of us would choose, instead of a confrontational situation, we'd much rather have the opportunity to sit down and talk in an appropriate setting. So I think a move to try to resolve some of these issues before they get to the judge I think is a very, very good thing.

So every human rights complaint is an opportunity for education. I think sometimes we're all a product of our experiences. Our values are shaped through our experiences — where we grew up, what we experienced as a child, through the education system, through workplace. We're a product of our experiences. So sometimes we don't always understand what it's like to be the victim or be the subject of discrimination. And trying to create the opportunity for more of us to see what it's like to be on the end of a discriminatory action is a very good thing. So more education around what are some of the areas of discrimination I think is a very good thing.

So in terms of the opposition, I think our goal is always to have more information. And this Bill has just recently been introduced and it's incumbent upon us as opposition to . . . We've heard Judge Arnot, the Chief Commissioner, speak in favour of this, but it's very, very important for us to go out and speak to a whole different level of stakeholders. We want to speak to individuals and groups and have as much information as possible when it comes to making decisions. I'm a huge believer and I know my colleagues and I are huge believers in consultation and making sure that decisions are connected to people's realities.

I think often governments — and in particular I'll point to the Sask Party government — has made decisions without taking into account the experiences or the desires or how these decisions will impact certain groups. So it's incumbent upon us as opposition to make sure that we are gathering information and talking to as many stakeholders as possible because this is a fundamental shift in how human rights complaints are heard. So

it's incredibly important to make sure that we in this Legislative Chamber have all the information necessary, and all that information necessary comes from the people who will be impacted by this change. So we will be spending the next little while seeking out information and people's perspectives on these changes.

And we have to say, there's no doubt that speeding up this process is a very good thing because nobody wants to be dragged through a process two or three years long. As I said, human rights complaints by their very nature cut to the very core of who we are. But it's always important to question why a government is making a change, who does it benefit, and what the nature of the decision is all about.

And there is one particular red flag that in 2009 the Human Rights Tribunal in fact ruled that the marriage commissioners here in Saskatchewan were obliged to uphold the law and perform their duty to perform civil marriages to all Saskatchewan citizens regardless of their personal beliefs. So the Human Rights Tribunal in 2009 decided that, but the government's response to that was to refer these two pieces of legislation to the Court of Appeal that would allow marriage commissioners to continue to discriminate against some Saskatchewan citizens based on their personal beliefs.

So that is a bit of a red flag. So I'm not saying this is the case, but it's important for us to go out and talk to all kinds of people because is this . . . The timing is a little suspect, the getting rid of the Human Rights Tribunal in favour of a Court of Queen's Bench judge. Is this their motivation? I'm not sure. I'm not saying that is the case but it's important for us to make sure we have all the information at hand. And it's hard not to be a little cynical when the government . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Yes it's tough on this side, Mr. Speaker.

And we also have a number of questions on this side of House about how these changes to the Act to amend *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code* would work. So the current process allows people to appeal a decision by the Human Rights Commission that their complaint has no merit by referring it to the Human Rights Tribunal. So currently if I have a complaint, if I file a complaint with the commission and the commission decides or doesn't believe that my complaint has merit, there is still, right now there's still a process where I can appeal to the Human Rights Tribunal and they will make a decision. So if I don't feel the commission is addressing my concerns, I have an opportunity to appeal. So there's a concern.

How does this work in this new model where the Human Rights Commission itself has decided that a complaint has no merit, but the complainant still wants to appeal? So logistically is there still going to be that option? If the commission decides, rules that the case has no merit but the person is convinced that it does, is there an appeal process?

And if there is an appeal process, who would represent the complainant then? So if a complainant had to find their own lawyer, one, would they have to pay for the lawyer themselves? And even if they didn't have to pay for their own lawyer, they also need . . . Do they need to go out and find one who will take their case? So not everybody . . . The reality in this life is we don't all start from the same place, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And

not everybody has the wherewithal or the capacity to know how to even go about seeking, hiring a lawyer. Not only do people not have the financial capacity, but sometimes it's beyond financial capacity. It's just general life skills. We don't all start at the same place, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And there's some concern that (a) will there be an appeal process, and (b) is there the opportunity to support people in going through that appeal process if necessary. So one other thing to note.

[15:45]

So this amendment to *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code*, Bill No. 160, seems to be based on the assumption or at least partly on the assumption that using the Court of Queen's Bench would move things along faster. So definitely some of the delays in the current system are a consequence of the fact that human rights tribunals' members currently have practices of their own and are busy and perhaps the human rights work doesn't always get prioritized. But it's also a fact that courts don't always work as quickly as they could as well, and courts don't always rule on matters in a timely fashion. So is this going to be faster? I'm not sure.

Were there other ways to enhance and improve the existing system? This, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is a major departure in how we currently deal with human rights complaints. So was there another way, a simpler way, a less costly way perhaps? I'm not sure. But just as effective . . . If it's all about time, was there another way to make these changes to speed up the process?

So those are questions we'll be . . . When we talk to stakeholders, individuals, and organizations who understand this better than me and better than some of my colleagues, those are some of the questions that we'll be discussing.

So when the government . . . One other thing. The government has proposed changing the limitation periods for filing a complaint from two years to one year. So this also we need to ponder carefully because sometimes there might be circumstances in which it was not possible to file that complaint in one year. So what, where does this change come from? I'm wondering what the rationale, and I'd like to hear from the minister what the rationale is for making this change from, the limitation period from two years to one year.

And I just . . . Again on the point around diversity. So the commission has noted, the Chief Commissioner has noted that it's important to have experts reviewing these cases that reflect the diversity of our society. So again it's a simple fact that the reality is we are a product of our experiences, and those experiences inform our views and our values and impact sometimes our ability to understand other people's life experiences. So you have to consider too . . . And judges, I know, are skilful in their decision making, but the reality is many decisions, we can't help but bring . . . It's very hard, Mr. Deputy Speaker, not to bring our experiences to the table. Even that notion of objectivity I think can be very, very difficult sometimes.

So I think one of the merits of having more than one person hear a case is the diversity of voices around the table because

you have more chance of someone around that decision-making table actually understanding the experiences of the complainant, perhaps.

But as I said, we will need to talk to stakeholders, find out what they're thinking and feeling. They may very well think that these changes are necessary. I want a little bit more information from the minister around his rationale on some of these changes. I think that that's absolutely critical to know why the government is proposing this. Is it driven by the Human Rights Commission or is it driven by the government? So it's absolutely imperative for us to understand all of this. And these changes may . . . There are definitely . . . The gist of the changes — speeding up the process — is definitely with merit. But is there another way to make these changes, Mr. Speaker? I would like to have some more input on that.

So we will consult extensively and take our time to ensure that the government did in fact get this legislation right. Because as I said, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is a big departure from how human rights complaints are currently heard. So with that, I know that I have other colleagues who are very interested in wading into this discussion. This is a very important Bill. And so with that, I would like to adjourn debate.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Riversdale has moved to adjourn debate on Bill 160, *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code Amendment Act, 2010*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 158

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert that **Bill No. 158 — *The Correctional Services Amendment Act, 2010*** be now read a second time.]

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Elphinstone . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Regina Dewdney, sorry.

Mr. Yates: — Well thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. I thought maybe somebody had stood up at the same time as me, so thank you very much for the recognition. Mr. Speaker, I'm extremely pleased today to enter into debate on this very important piece of public policy legislation.

Mr. Speaker, some people may have difficulty understanding the importance of this piece of legislation to our community and to the people of the province of Saskatchewan. But this is a piece of legislation that is designed, fundamentally, to protect the citizens of our province, those who work in correctional facilities and, Mr. Speaker, also inmates who are serving time in our correctional facilities, Mr. Speaker. Additional information and intelligence that can be gathered through the monitoring of telephone calls outside the institution can play an integral role in understanding what's going on within an institution and understanding what planning or plotting may be going on that could affect others, Mr. Speaker.

And as a result of being able to get greater intelligence and more information about what may be a potential harmful outcome either to individuals or to other inmates, individuals on the street, Mr. Speaker, or inmates or potentially staff, that's very, very helpful in managing the affairs of a correctional facility, Mr. Speaker, but also very, very important in the protection of people in our society and in the public as well as staff and other inmates, as I mentioned a few minutes ago.

Mr. Speaker, it also gives the ability of staff and the correctional facility management to understand where potential drugs may enter the institution, where other potential wrongdoings may be occurring that may not be of a nature that would be of potential immediate threat to any individual, but could have long-term consequences or could in fact have unintended consequences by the action, not to mention, Mr. Speaker, which is also illegal activity, Mr. Speaker.

Staff in a correctional system and management in a system of course are very concerned about the illegal activity, but they're also very concerned about what that illegal activity and the outcome of that activity may have, to influence or endanger people within the system.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I heard a member opposite also mention just generally the potential of escapes or people leaving the correctional facility before their sentence is up, Mr. Speaker. Well of course that's a concern always as well, Mr. Speaker. Intelligence gathered through the telephone system and monitoring telephone calls, Mr. Speaker, in fact, could give information that would lead to an investigation and prevent an escape. And, Mr. Speaker, preventing that escape could prevent a number of things, not just an individual that's to be incarcerated being on the street, Mr. Speaker, but it could also help individuals who are potentially at risk as the result of that individual being out of the correctional facility, Mr. Speaker. So, Mr. Speaker, this is, for many reasons, good public policy.

We do however have one or two concerns and, Mr. Speaker, those one or two concerns have nothing to do with the actual public policy issue that's before us that's in the legislation. It has to do with who is paying for this new initiative. Mr. Speaker, this initiative is . . . The majority of the cost is being passed onto the families of those being incarcerated and those who are incarcerated themselves, Mr. Speaker. The new phone system that was put in to accommodate the ability to monitor telephone calls is being paid for by an added surcharge to those who utilize the telephone system, Mr. Speaker.

And as you would understand, I think — and the majority of people in the province — many of the people who are incarcerated in our correctional facilities don't have great financial means or great financial resources, Mr. Speaker. So these new added charges can put their family members or themselves in situations where they're not able to keep the normal family contact that's appropriate. You could have a father or a mother potentially incarcerated with children who are not yet fully able to understand the situation, not old enough to totally comprehend, that need and want to talk to their parent each day.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that may be cost prohibitive for that family at a cost of \$1.85 per call plus long distance and minute

charges, Mr. Speaker. It can become a very expensive, very expensive cost to that family, Mr. Speaker. And those costs can create additional troubles within a correctional facility if those individuals don't have the ability to maintain that contact with their family. Family and those who are . . . Loved ones close to an individual are very, very important in the ability of an individual to rehabilitate themselves, to work on their problems, and to create a better life for themselves, Mr. Speaker, when they leave custody.

So, Mr. Speaker, the monitoring of telephone calls and the intelligence-gathering process is without doubt great public policy. But, Mr. Speaker, who's paying for it is really an issue that needs to be re-examined. Mr. Speaker, that should be a cost that's borne largely by the system, Mr. Speaker, and traditionally has been borne or paid for by the correctional system, Mr. Speaker, so that individuals who are incarcerated . . . I think it's fair ball to say they should have to pay for their long distance charges, Mr. Speaker, and that's the way it's been forever.

We're not saying they get free long distance. We're not saying that there shouldn't be some charges, Mr. Speaker, because they lose their freedom when they go to jail. There's no doubt. And I'm not saying that there should be no charges. What I'm saying is that an additional \$1.85 per call, if you were to call home daily, results in about a 12 or \$13 charge per week. And that can be a significant, significant additional charge on a family who's on very fixed resources.

Mr. Speaker, in some cases it's grandchildren phoning grandparents, and that grandparent is the only contact they have to the outside world to be able to talk about their issues and to be able to work through some of the problems that they face each day, Mr. Speaker. And so anything we do that limits the ability of an individual to have that necessary contact, Mr. Speaker, I don't think is fair to the individual incarcerated or to the family because, Mr. Speaker, the majority of these calls are collect.

And, Mr. Speaker, as I said a minute ago, I'm not suggesting that they don't pay the long distance charges. I'm not suggesting they don't pay the same charges every other citizen in Saskatchewan would pay. All I'm saying, Mr. Speaker, is they should pay the same charges as the rest of the people of Saskatchewan; they shouldn't pay additional charges, Mr. Speaker. They should be treated as every other citizen in our province is treated as it reflects the utilization and cost of telephone service, Mr. Speaker. The additional cost of \$1.85 per call, Mr. Speaker, is a charge for a system that the government chose to put in place, which I agree with. I'm not disagreeing at all with the system, but that's a charge that the government should pay.

And the individual incarcerated pays in many ways for that incarceration through a loss of freedom, Mr. Speaker, through a loss of other rights, Mr. Speaker. I agree 100 per cent they should pay the same phone charges that any other citizen in the province should pay, Mr. Speaker, but they shouldn't pay any more. Our system and our society has been developed along the principles of fairness and equality and, Mr. Speaker, it should be maintained in this area as well.

Now as I said, Mr. Speaker, I don't want to speak long about this because this is a piece of legislation we do agree with. The additional charge issue is a subsidiary issue to it, as to who pays for the actual installation and upkeep of the system itself, Mr. Speaker. And you and I as citizens in the province of Saskatchewan, our phones are paid for by the province, Mr. Speaker, or by the supplier of the telephone and it's part of our cost per minute, Mr. Speaker, or our monthly charge. And, Mr. Speaker, all I'm simply saying is we should, in what we do, reflect the same rights and charges for telecommunications services for inmates as we do for any other citizen in the province — no more, no less. Whether they're in jail or not, they are still citizens of the province and should be treated with the same rights and dignities of any citizen, Mr. Speaker.

So, Mr. Speaker, with that I think that this piece of legislation should receive the support of all members of this Assembly prior to the end of this session, Mr. Speaker. So for those reasons, Mr. Speaker, I would at this time move this Bill to committee.

[16:00]

The Deputy Speaker: — Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the Minister of Policing and Corrections that Bill 158, *The Correctional Services Amendment Act, 2010* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Clerk: — Second reading of this Bill.

The Deputy Speaker: — To which committee shall the Bill be referred to? I recognize the Deputy Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — I designate that Bill No. 158, *The Correctional Services Amendment Act, 2010* be referred to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

The Deputy Speaker: — The Deputy Government House Leader has referred this Bill to the Standing . . . *The Correctional Services Amendment Act, 2010* be referred to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Justice, Intergovernmental and Justice Committee.

Bill No. 157

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Boyd that **Bill No. 157 — *The Oil and Gas Conservation Amendment Act, 2010*** be now read a second time.]

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Northeast.

Mr. Harper: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to enter into this debate, the debate on the Act to amend *The Oil and Gas Conservation Act*.

Mr. Speaker, I am not necessarily an authority on oil and gas, but I will share with the members gathered here my opinion on this Bill after having the opportunity to review some of it. And, Mr. Speaker, it's truly a complex Bill. It's a Bill that probably reflects the industry itself, the industry itself being quite a complex industry. And I guess it sort of goes hand in hand to suggest that the Bill would be a complex Bill to match the complexity of the industry.

But I think it's important to note and to be able to determine to what degree this Bill has effects on the various levels of the industry, both the industry itself as well as the industry players. And it will of course take some time to review and to consult with the various stakeholders across the province and the associations that are affected by the changes or could be affected by the changes to this Act, and to determine from them themselves as they see the effect on their industry and on their own particular operation within that industry.

And so the need of course for that consultation is there, as is the need for the opposition to have the time to do that consultation and to be able to determine if the government has actually been involved in some serious consultation with the industry. And has that consultation taken a meaningful role? And has there been meaningful consultation? Has it been purposeful? Has it been able to identify the needs of the industry?

And this is an extremely important industry to our province, to the economy of this great province of ours. And there is a need to be able to make sure that whenever changes are made, they are changes that will benefit the industry so that the industry can move forward, the industry can grow, and do so and have a positive effect, a positive effect on our economy and thusly a positive effect on the people of Saskatchewan.

And I believe, Mr. Speaker, that's the role of any government. And I believe that's the role and the desires of any government is to be able to effect change, but effect positive change so that that change in the long run benefits the people of this great province of ours. And that I suppose is a measuring stick by which we, the opposition, will measure the results of our consultations and the discussions with the industry around this particular Bill. But I think that's also the measuring stick that the people of Saskatchewan will use when they're measuring this government as to has this government been able to achieve those goals, to be able to achieve effective change, positive change. But positive change has had positive effect on Saskatchewan people, not only today and not just a small group of people but the masses, the population of this great province. But not just those changes today, but for those changes into the future for future generations who will benefit from those changes.

So I think it's . . . You know, any time we make a change, Mr. Speaker, we have to know what we're doing. We have to make sure that those changes are the right ones.

Now it's very important today to help the industry move forward because as we see a reduction, and we're seeing that

reduction in the oil production from 2007 and . . . I find that interesting, Mr. Speaker, because at a time the world economy is growing, the demand for oil is growing, and yet what we're seeing in Saskatchewan here for the last number of years under this government, we're seeing the production of oil from Saskatchewan actually decline, actually going down. And that of course immediately, immediately brings up the question of why. Why are we seeing a decline in drilling? Why are we seeing a decline in oil production in this province at a time when the international economy, the world economy, is demanding more and more energy?

And one would have to think once again, Mr. Speaker, it has to be the responsibility of the government to step up to the plate to identify what changes need to take place to ensure that the industry in this province grows, the industry in this province remains strong, and that the benefits, the benefits from that industry and the growth of that industry for the people of our great province.

Mr. Speaker, we see the reduction in the amount of wells being drilled in our province since 2007. Once again, Mr. Speaker, I do know that we have a good supply of oil in this province. Some of it is, as I understand it, is called sweet crude oil. It's the lighter oil, easier to extract, more cost-efficient to withdraw. We also have some heavy oil, which is more costly but still, Mr. Speaker, well within the profitable level and certainly well within the desire of the industries to be able to extract those oils, that product and to do so in a way that is profitable to them. And we need to make sure that these changes don't, you know, don't have a negative effect on the industry, these changes don't have a negative effect on the stakeholders within the industry. Changes should be, should be supportive of the industry and supportive of growth of the industry.

It's interesting, Mr. Speaker, when we look at the economy of our great province of ours and we look at the oil and gas aspect of that economy and the impact oil and gas has on Saskatchewan, which is quite significant. Quite significant impact.

We see that over the last number of years we were seeing a reduction or a contraction of our economy from, year over year, of about 3.9 or, rounding figures, 4 per cent, which is quite substantial, Mr. Speaker. It's quite substantial when you're seeing an economy going backwards. When you're seeing your economy is shrinking at a rate of 4 per cent, that certainly has a negative effect on jobs. It has a negative effect on small businesses. It has a negative effect on disposable incomes that are spent in this province, and that is of course the engine that drives our economy, Mr. Speaker.

What is, I think, readily proven is that the engines that drive our economy are the pocketbooks of ordinary people — the people who are raising a family, the people who are investing in their homes, the people who are growing this economy by having jobs, quality jobs that provides them enough money each and every month that will meet their monthly requirements, their monthly bills, pay their mortgage and pay their power bill and their heat bill, etc., but also be able to have disposable incomes that they can go out and purchase items that are required by them and their family, and services that are required by them and their family. And that money causes the economy to roll.

That is the money that causes the economy to grow, Mr. Speaker.

So, Mr. Speaker, when we see a contraction of our economy, we have to be concerned. We have to be concerned at any time that the economy shrinks. Because when the economy shrinks, it means that we don't have the engines of our economy working at full potential. We don't have disposable incomes in the hands of the families who spend the money in our communities.

And they don't spend, Mr. Speaker, they don't spend the money in Calgary. They don't spend their money in New York or Toronto or Dallas. They spend their money right here, right in the communities of our great province — Regina, Saskatoon, or the smaller communities. It's those folks out there who when they have a disposable income, have an income that meets the needs to meet their daily needs but have enough left over so they can participate in the economy by enjoying some of the prosperity of the economy. Then we all benefit. We all benefit, Mr. Speaker.

So what we really have to be concerned about is when we see an economy not growing, not growing over time. We're seeing an economy that actually shrinks year over year. That, Mr. Speaker, has to be a concern.

Mr. Speaker, it's a situation where *Sask Trends* says that Saskatchewan really has not enjoyed economic growth since the change of government. Mr. Speaker, since 2007, since the government has changed, *Sask Trends* is on record of saying that Saskatchewan has really not enjoyed any economic growth. What we've seen, the improvements in 2008, were simply the results of the inflation factor, the inflationary costs on items that consumers had to pay for. So the growth, Mr. Speaker, that we see from 2007 to 2008, well not real growth. It's really nothing more than the inflationary factor being taken into consideration.

And that, Mr. Speaker, is not a foundation that you want to build your economy on. That's certainly not a foundation that you want to be able to rely on in the future. That is not, Mr. Speaker, a growing economy that's going to benefit the people of Saskatchewan not just today, but benefit the people of Saskatchewan into the future. It's not a strong economy that the future generations will be able to rely on, future generations will be able to benefit from because we laid a strong economy here, a strong foundation and a positive economy.

Mr. Speaker, that has got to be a concern. It's got to be a concern with anyone who is holding down elected office. Certainly we on the opposition benches here are concerned about it, and I would hope, Mr. Speaker, some of that concern would be shared by the members opposite.

Mr. Speaker, the minister's second reading speech went to some length of suggesting that these changes were the result of the New West Partnership, about the moving of the rules to those similar to or equal to that of Alberta. Well, Mr. Speaker, when we see these changes being encompassed in this Bill, one has to begin to wonder what level of consultation did the government really do. Did the government get out there and carry out meaningful consultation with the industry, stakeholders within that industry to ensure that these are the changes that are

required, these are the changes that are necessary to ensure that the industry grows in a strong and positive way? Is this basically going to benefit the industry and through benefiting the industry benefit the people of Saskatchewan?

Those are some of the questions, Mr. Speaker, that I would certainly have and some of the information that I would like the government to be able to come up with and assure us that the changes . . . And when you make changes, when you make changes in the rules and regulations that bring them into alignment with other provinces or other jurisdictions, that these are the changes that the industry stakeholders in this province want, these are the changes the industry stakeholders in this province need in order to grow the industry.

Mr. Speaker, I think it's fair to say it doesn't really matter what industry you're in. In order to survive in today's world and to prosper within that industry, you need to grow. You either get bigger or you get out. That seems to be the rule of thumb in business.

And, Mr. Speaker, what we need to do is, when the government is proposing changes through amendments to a Bill, we need to know that those amendments are the amendments that the industry wants. We need to know that those are the amendments the stakeholders want. We need to know that those are the amendments the stakeholders have identified are the correct ones that will cause the industry to grow and cause them to be in a positive prosperity and play a meaningful role in that industry. And thusly meaning good wages will be paid to their employees, which will mean reasonable ability for those employees to enjoy good standards of living, at the end of the day having enough income to be able to meet their needs, meet the needs of their family, and having disposable income that will be able to trigger on and drive our economy.

So, Mr. Speaker, at any time that you move to consolidate or to amend the rules of an industry, whether they be within Alberta or Saskatchewan or any other jurisdiction, it's important to understand the impact, the impact that these changes may have. Because the impact can be both negative and positive. And we want to, Mr. Speaker, be sure that the changes lessen the negative impacts and enhance the positive impacts.

[16:15]

Basically the desire, I think, by any government is to see the economy grow, to see parts of the economy grow. The oil industry is certainly a major part of our economy in this province, and we need to make sure that changes that are being proposed by the government are changes that will be beneficial to the industry, are changes that stakeholders within that industry want, that they are the changes the stakeholders within that industry have identified are the right changes to cause the industry to grow.

And, Mr. Speaker, we haven't seen any evidence by this government that that consultation has taken place. We certainly have a lot of questions around this particular Bill and the proposed changes. Some of those questions that come to mind almost immediately is, who asked for these changes? Who asked for these changes? Was it industry that asked for these changes? Did stakeholders within the industry come forward

and say, we've identified that change needs to take place in order for our economy and our industry to grow with the changing times and, in some cases, technology and the impact that that has when it's introduced into an industry. Changes do have to take place. Changes within the regulation. Changes within the Act may have to take place to reflect a modern approach to the industry.

But who asked for these changes? We see no evidence, Mr. Speaker, we see no evidence of who asked for the changes. Was it individuals within the industry? Was it associations within the industry? Or did anybody really ask for these changes? Is this something government wants to do because they have perhaps a hidden agenda or desire to see these changes for some other reasons, Mr. Speaker?

And why was it determined that these changes needed to take place? Who made this determination? Again, Mr. Speaker, I ask, was it industry? Was it stakeholders within the industry that asked for these changes? If so, what did they identify as the reason for these changes? And how are these changes going to benefit the industry? How would these changes benefit the stakeholders within the industry?

Those are the questions, Mr. Speaker, that certainly the government has failed to be able to provide that information within this Act and within the speeches of both the minister has given so far here to try to provide the information that would support the introduction of this Bill.

Mr. Speaker, again what consultations were carried out by the government? What did the government do to consult with the industry to determine that these changes were required and that these changes are the correct changes that will have a positive benefit to the economy and have a positive benefit to the industry? Did they hold industry-wide meetings? Did they meet with individuals? Did they meet with associations? Did they meet with anybody within the industry?

And what form did those meetings take? Were they face-to-face meetings? Were they meetings that were held within the board rooms of the companies that are involved in the industry? Were these meetings that were held with individuals who are, I will say, viewed as experts within their field and are very much involved in the industry? Were the consultations simply done through perhaps a questionnaire? Or were the consultations done through perhaps an email being exchanged back and forth? What form did these consultations take, Mr. Speaker, and how in-depth were they? What did they really cover?

What were the questions asked by the government and the government officials when they were meeting with the industry and the industry officials and the stakeholders from within that industry? What were those questions? How deep did those questions go, and how was it determined that these are the correct changes, these are, the amendments to this particular Act, are the correct ones that will have a benefit to the industry, Mr. Speaker?

Once again, Mr. Speaker, who did the government consult with? Who did they meet? In their process of consulting — and we assume that they did consulting — who did they meet with? What organizations? What individuals? What groups? What

associations? How did they meet? How did they consult? What were the subject matter of the discussions that took place between the two groups? And how was it determined, Mr. Speaker, how was it determined that the government feels comfortable with the amendments that they're making here, the changes they're making here, are the correct ones — the ones that will benefit, in the long run, benefit Saskatchewan?

Because that's what the role, I think, of any government is, Mr. Speaker, is to ensure that the changes that they bring forward are the correct changes, are the changes that will affect Saskatchewan people in a positive way, so not only the industry but the entire economy of this province, Mr. Speaker. Because oil and gas is a very big part of it, a very big part of that puzzle. And those changes will have good, positive effects if they're the right changes. Same time, Mr. Speaker, they will have very negative effects if they're the wrong changes.

So we need to make sure that this government has met with the industry. But we need to know who they met with, when they met with them, what was the level of discussions, what form did the consultations take place. And how was it determined, how was it determined by the government that these changes that they propose in the Act are the correct changes? Are the changes that at the end of the day will serve the purpose, will serve the purpose of making sure Saskatchewan people benefit, benefit. Because that's the role, Mr. Speaker, of the government when it introduced changes is to modernize the industry to make sure that changes are the changes that will affect and assist the industry to grow, to prosper. At the end of the day, if that's achieved, then it will benefit Saskatchewan people.

But we have to know how the government came to the conclusion that the changes that they are proposing here are the correct changes, are the changes that industry want, are the changes that industry needs. I suppose a yardstick to measure this, Mr. Speaker, is . . . A simple yardstick is, will these changes affect Saskatchewan people in a positive way? Will Saskatchewan people be the winners at the end of the day? Will they benefit from this? Will they benefit from these changes in a way that will secure a future in this great province? Not only secure the present, Mr. Speaker, but it's important to know that the changes we make today will help secure our future for future generations in this province.

Because, Mr. Speaker, that's the role, I think that's the role of anybody, whether it be within individuals within their family, whether it be the individuals within the fine province, or the role of elected people here, Mr. Speaker. At the end of the day, we will want to make sure that with the changes we make now, the things that we do now, will improve the future, will improve the lot of those people yet to come.

Because I think that should be the goal of any of us is to be able to leave this legislature when the time comes — and they will look back on our time spent here whether it be in government or whether it be in opposition — and be able to say, you know, I believe that my participation in the process, my participation in the debates, my participation in the discussion of Bills and Acts, that we were able to set forward a framework, a structure of the economy that will make the economy stronger, make the economy better, for not only for the people who are here today, but for future generations yet to come. I think that's very

important, Mr. Speaker.

Another point, Mr. Speaker, is I would like to have the answer to — I haven't been able to get it from the Bill; I haven't been able to get it from going through the *Hansard* through the second reading speeches of the minister — is, how will these changes improve the welfare and the lives of Saskatchewan people? How will these changes improve things for Saskatchewan people? That certainly hasn't been indicated here.

We certainly have no suggestion from this government as to how these changes will have a positive effect on the people of this great province, whether they be involved in the industry themselves. And I'm certain we need to know that. We need to know how the people, the stakeholders within that industry, and how they will be affected and how these changes will improve their lot.

But we also have to know that the people of Saskatchewan, people of Saskatchewan are going to be able to get a fair deal out of this and the people of Saskatchewan are going to benefit. And it doesn't . . . And not those, Mr. Speaker, who are just involved in the oil and gas industry, but those people of Saskatchewan who are not involved directly in the oil and gas industry but are citizens of this great province of ours and who deserve to have an economy that is strong, is prosperous, and that they are able to provide for themselves and their families in a very positive and fruitful way.

So, Mr. Speaker, there are a lot, there are a lot of questions left up in the air that certainly this government has failed to answer so far. And those are the questions, I suppose, that the opposition's going to have to flesh out through our process of consulting with the industry and talking with stakeholders within the industry and trying to identify if the suggested changes here that the government is suggesting, proposing in amendments to this Act, are the right ones.

Are they the ones that's going to have a positive effect on the industry, have a positive effect on the stakeholders within that industry so the industry can grow, the industry can grow to support a growing economy? So that a growing economy will create a province of prosperity, a province where future generations will not only be able to live here, will want to come here and raise their families here, Mr. Speaker, because this will be a province where they can rely on a good, solid foundation of a solid economy, built on industries such as the oil and gas industry because the regulations and the changes within the Act are those that benefit the industry and benefit the stakeholders, Mr. Speaker.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I know that a number of my colleagues will also have comments they will wish to make on this particular Bill. And there is a need to address this in a very detailed way, a very detailed way. So time will be required, Mr. Speaker, for the opposition to be able to carry out that consultation process and be able to ensure that the feedback we get from the industry and the stakeholders within that industry match with the suggestions that the government is making with their suggestions of the amendments to the Bill.

So, Mr. Speaker, it will take time and we will require that time.

So in order to ensure that my colleagues have ample opportunity to be able to express their thoughts and their wishes on this particular Bill and to make sure that we as the opposition have the opportunity to consult with the industry, consult with the stakeholders so we can make sure that when those changes are made, that they are the correct changes that will benefit the industry, will benefit the stakeholders within that industry so that the industry can grow and support a strong and growing economy in this province, so to do that, Mr. Speaker, we will need some time. And in order to have that time, I will now move adjournment of debate.

The Speaker: — The member from Regina Northeast has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 157. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Agreed. Carried.

Bill No. 144

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Duncan that **Bill No. 144 — *The Litter Control Amendment Act, 2010*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to join in on debate here today with respect to Bill 144, *The Litter Control Amendment Act*, Mr. Speaker. And this is an interesting piece of legislation, and certainly we listened to the minister's presentation as to why this piece of legislation is required, Mr. Speaker. We listened to the merits that were laid out, Mr. Speaker, and we have concern with specific aspects of why this piece of legislation has been put in place, Mr. Speaker.

First of all from a practical perspective, it's important that we understand what this piece of legislation actually proposes to do, and that is that . . . Right now the existing legislation allows government to increase or decrease both environmental handling charges and the refundable deposits, Mr. Speaker. And this proposed Bill lays out a schedule of fees, Mr. Speaker, makes a change to the ability to increase or decrease both the handling fees or the refundable deposits.

[16:30]

And it changes that environment, the new handling environment's prescribed fees and lays out a schedule, Mr. Speaker. And this relates to a variety of containers and takes away the government's ability to set environmental handling charges outside the legislature. But it does, however, allow the government to continue to set the refundable deposit by cabinet order, Mr. Speaker. So that's one of the very practical pieces of what occurs through this piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker.

And the minister laid out certain justifications as to why this legislation may be required, Mr. Speaker, and we've listened to that. But what is fundamental to this piece of legislation, and where we really think the crux of the debate should be at with this piece of legislation, is the changes to retroactivity within

this piece of legislation.

At the same time that it introduces provisions to prevent anyone from suing the government to recover environmental handling charges paid after April 1st, 1998, Mr. Speaker, so it prevents that recovery, Mr. Speaker, moving back to 1998. And the minister indicated that these charges are intended to address a current lawsuit and to prevent the province from being liable for up to \$1 million or more in other potential legal actions, Mr. Speaker.

So it's a very, very interesting piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker, at a fundamental question of making changes to legislation that go back and seem to, by the primary motive, to retroactively change property and civil rights of Saskatchewan people, Mr. Speaker, by expunging of property and civil rights, Mr. Speaker. So this is an interesting discussion and debate within this Assembly.

It's an interesting piece of legislation put forward by this government, Mr. Speaker, a government that is introducing legislation to prevent a potential lawsuit for somebody who may have been treated improperly by government in years past, Mr. Speaker, specifically as it relates to the charges that they've paid or the taxes that they've paid as it relates to environmental handling fees, Mr. Speaker.

Now of course this piece of legislation responds to pressures from a legal perspective on this government, Mr. Speaker. It's also reflective of a Supreme Court of Canada decision in the 1990s, as I understand, that made very specific that the service fees collected for purposes, these purposes, could not exceed the actual cost of the program, Mr. Speaker. And this was laid out in the 1990s and by doing so, Mr. Speaker, if in fact an individual or a business had paid more, Mr. Speaker, than the program or the service costs, Mr. Speaker, then the government could be liable. And that's what we see in this circumstance where an individual apparently has made claim that that has been the case.

So here we have a government that is reaching back 13 years, Mr. Speaker, and putting forward legislation that retroactively takes away the rights and affects the rights of Saskatchewan people. It's an interesting piece of legislation. And I think we want to very, very sensitively and delicately consider the implications of this sort of reach from government into individuals' lives and into reaching back in a retroactive fashion and to change a circumstance when there's been a lawsuit filed against this government, Mr. Speaker. It's pretty convenient for this government to simply change laws as individuals or groups that have been possibly wronged by this administration, by a previous administration. But the question is, is that fair, Mr. Speaker?

And as we look at this Bill as a whole, I think those are some of the contemplations that we have. Will this Bill fix the problem identified by the Sask Party? So I think that that's a fair question. If in fact, as is laid out by the minister, and we talked about the different complications, will this Bill in fact fix the problems laid out by the Sask Party?

And those are good considerations to have and I think, you know, we have lots of reason to be concerned that this

government often misses the mark when it puts together legislation as it relates to its objective and then the unintended consequences that are subsequent to that, Mr. Speaker, and they haven't done their due diligence in consultation and in deriving that legislation to make sure in fact it meets the objectives, Mr. Speaker, that they're setting out to do.

So that's a fair, fair question. Does this legislation . . . Is it set in fact to provide the fix that the Sask Party is intending for it to provide, Mr. Speaker? That's part one of the questions and I think the second question, and shouldn't be dismissed in any small way, Mr. Speaker, is it fair?

The Speaker: — Why is the member on his feet?

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for permission with members of the House to take leave for the introduction of a guest.

The Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Greystone has asked for leave to introduce a guest. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to all members of the House I'm delighted to introduce Rob Harasymchuk. He's from St. Pete's College in Muenster. He's one of the leaders in that academic community, and certainly right across the province is recognized for his good efforts. And I just wonder if all members of the House would join me in welcoming Rob to his Assembly.

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

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 144 — *The Litter Control Amendment Act, 2010* (continued)

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and we would certainly welcome . . . I'd like to welcome Rob Harasymchuk, I believe, from Muenster as well, representing our academic community, and able to observe an interesting discussion here this afternoon, Mr. Speaker, as it relates to Bill 144, *The Litter Control Amendment Act*.

And this really speaks about the reach of government, Mr. Speaker. And it's an interesting discussion here because basically this government found itself in a potential, a potential liability that they were having a lawsuit for an individual or an organization who had felt that they had been overcharged as it relates to environmental handling fees. And this government, to erase that problem, retroactively puts forward legislation that retroactively takes away the civil and property rights of an

individual, Mr. Speaker.

Now this is very far-reaching if we think about it from a perspective of whether or not this is fair. And this, you know, we need to put this in context, Mr. Speaker, and we have to watch whether or not this is a trend under the Sask Party government. Is this a willingness and a new direction of government wanting to reach well beyond its potential rightful jurisdiction and to actually expunge the property and civil rights of individuals here in Saskatchewan? It seems to be a little bit of a worrying trend, Mr. Speaker . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . And the member from Cannington is heckling here right now. And I suspect he's behind this legislation in a significant way, Mr. Speaker, that reaches out and takes away rights, Mr. Speaker, of individuals here in Saskatchewan.

Very interesting piece of legislation. Interesting in the context, Mr. Speaker, where yesterday in question period the member from Prince Albert Northcote laid out the case and stood up for an individual, Mr. Speaker, who in fact was having some of their land expropriated in essence, Mr. Speaker, by this government.

So it's an interesting circumstance where yesterday, we have a farmer in here yesterday, a hard-working individual within this province who had land expropriated by this Sask Party government, actually taken away from him, or that was the proposition by the Minister of Agriculture as I understand it, Mr. Speaker, and by this Premier of course, Mr. Speaker. But now we see at this point in time a piece of legislation that in fact sets about expungement of the civil and property rights of an individual. A very interesting question.

So I think we have to look at this legislation through a couple different lenses. And I was laying this out before because the minister laid out that they have some problems, and this legislation is in fact of course a solution to those problems. So what we need to make sure we understand is does this legislation provide the fix? Does it provide the fix required?

Because what we've seen, Mr. Speaker, on more cases than not, Mr. Speaker, is that in fact the policy derived, the legislation derived by this government isn't in fact done so in a way that in fact will allow it to meet the objectives that they are trying to set out to achieve, Mr. Speaker. Sometimes they've actually set out in honourable pursuits, Mr. Speaker. Sometimes not. But they haven't done the thoughtful consideration. They haven't done the thoughtful consultation, Mr. Speaker, that allows them to then arrive to a point where their legislation will in fact address the problem that they're trying to solve.

So this is sort of the first part of these questions. Is this legislation like many other pieces of legislation, Mr. Speaker, that in fact will not provide the fix required and to what the minister laid out as the problem that was trying to be addressed, Mr. Speaker? And we're not certain of that; that's for sure, Mr. Speaker. That's the first part that needs to be considered when we're looking at Bill 144.

But I think the most important part of this piece of legislation is, is the fix fair, Mr. Speaker? And this is a wider ranging debate, and certainly it will go on in other forums as well and certainly though committee structures and within this Assembly.

I know many individuals who care about civil and property rights, Mr. Speaker, will be observing this Bill very closely. And I think it shouldn't just be a passing glance that we look at what this government is doing; the reach within the personal lives of individuals, Mr. Speaker, and the willingness of this Sask Party government to expunge individuals of personal and civil rights, Mr. Speaker. And as we said yesterday, where in fact this Sask Party government, it would appear, is in movement to expropriate land from a hard-working farmer within this province, Mr. Speaker.

And it speaks to very interesting questions. It speaks to what role should government play in the lives of individuals, about boundaries, Mr. Speaker. And I find it interesting that the member from Cannington supports this piece of legislation that really reaches, reaches well beyond the traditional reach of government, Mr. Speaker, in fact retroactively going back 13 years to 1998 and removing civil and property rights from individuals, Mr. Speaker.

I know many individuals from the constituency that that member represents in fact would favour themselves to be more independent of government than that. And they likely wouldn't appreciate the hand of government coming in and playing the role that this government, that member, and this Premier have allowed it to do. And in fact I shouldn't say allowed that, that legislation that they've created to reach well beyond the reach of government when we're talking about civil liberties and rights of individuals.

So these are the interesting questions. And I know it's going to stoke hot debate, Mr. Speaker, across many communities and many groups, likely beyond our borders, that will be focusing in on this piece of legislation. Not so much, Mr. Speaker, about the actual Bill itself. Not even so much about how it relates to what it's affecting on a practical level, but certainly in a level of what it does with civil and property rights of individuals, Mr. Speaker, and whether or not that's the right decision for a government to make. And I think we need to be hugely thoughtful of this.

And I don't know if this Bill's been debated within their caucus and discussed within their caucus. I don't know if all members of that caucus were aware of the implications of this Bill and the kind of the step outside of the role of respecting the civil liberties of individuals — the rights, Mr. Speaker, of individuals, the rights to hold property, and to understand the impact of expunging of those rights, Mr. Speaker.

And I think we have to be very cautious, Mr. Speaker. And if there's a word that I would provide here, is that we want to exercise caution when looking at this piece of legislation and its motive, which is to basically deal with a problem where this government's been on the hook for a potential wrongdoing — dollars owed to an individual where they've possibly been overcharged for a program, Mr. Speaker. And now this government by legislation is basically saying, well you're not entitled to those dollars. You're not going to have any . . . that circumstance dealt with. You're not going to have those dollars, that could be by case argued rightfully theirs, provided back to them.

So it's a very interesting piece of legislation. And of course this

is only one example when we talk about the one lawsuit. Of course there's many different individuals who may find themselves in a similar circumstance. And now to have their rights circumvented or expunged through this piece of legislation . . .

I think this is an interesting discussion. Goes well beyond sort of environmental handling fees and recycling programs, Mr. Speaker. Those are worthy discussions as well, and important discussions, important programs for us to make sure we are maintaining and in fact enriching, Mr. Speaker.

And on that front we need to make sure that the consultation on this side from a very practical side has also gone on with the retailers, Mr. Speaker, with the recyclers, with Sarcen, with the different . . . right across the entire sector, Mr. Speaker, with the hoteliers, anyone that's directly impacted by this legislation, to make sure that practically . . . Even if one were to believe that this piece of legislation were fair, and if one were to support it as this government is, Mr. Speaker, then is the fix that they're putting forward going to be able to be effective in solving the problem that they've identified, Mr. Speaker?

[16:45]

Or is it like so many other pieces of legislation, Mr. Speaker, brought before this Assembly by the Sask Party government that have been derived in vacuum without the support of consultation and with those that understand their respective industries and sectors, Mr. Speaker? And has this legislation, or is this legislation going to have the same sort of impacts of those pieces of legislation that have been put together, Mr. Speaker, in a fashion that doesn't support best public policy, Mr. Speaker? It doesn't support it being successful in achieving the objective as laid out by this government, Mr. Speaker.

So it's a discussion that we need to explore further. Of course we understand that this piece of legislation is partly in response to the Supreme Court of Canada's ruling from the 1990s, Mr. Speaker, that as it relates to environmental handling fees, Mr. Speaker — and I'm sure that you would know this — that they can't exceed the cost of the program or the service, Mr. Speaker. And if they exceed the cost of the program, they're then seen as a tax, Mr. Speaker, and in fact an inappropriate tax.

And so I suspect, Mr. Speaker, that that would be the justification for this piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker. And the changes, Mr. Speaker, is that an individual or a business must have put together a case that was supported, Mr. Speaker, that in fact detailed or put forward a argument that they hadn't been treated properly and that they had in fact been charged too much, Mr. Speaker. And I think we have to be very cautious if someone has been wronged by government, someone has been wronged by government, that they get compensated and treated properly and at least fairly and equitably, Mr. Speaker.

And to see a government go and change the rules, change legislation to expunge property and civil rights, Mr. Speaker, to avoid a potential payout where an individual's been wronged, Mr. Speaker, seems to us to be reckless, Mr. Speaker. But to be going far beyond the practical piece of trying to save \$1 million and setting a rather historic precedent, Mr. Speaker, inciting a willingness of this Sask Party government to reach into the lives

of individuals, Mr. Speaker, and to do so in a way that really threatens what they own and threaten what they have, threaten what they know, Mr. Speaker, and threaten the civil rights that they've grown accustomed to, Mr. Speaker.

And it's a sad day in Saskatchewan in many ways when you have individuals that are worried about whether or not their government is in fact reaching too far in and expunging them of rights and civil liberties, Mr. Speaker — the freedom to own property, Mr. Speaker. And it's a sad circumstance that we have individuals that raise these problems such as an individual, a farmer in the Shellbrook area that came to our Assembly here just yesterday, Mr. Speaker, and who had been — through an act of this government, a mistake of this government, admitted by this government — had been wronged, Mr. Speaker, who had purchased some land, Mr. Speaker.

The response of this government to deal with the problem was to expropriate, Mr. Speaker. To bully the individual. To expunge and look beyond property rights and civil rights of an individual, Mr. Speaker, and to take his farm back, Mr. Speaker. To take his farm land back, Mr. Speaker. And I know many individuals, the number of individuals, that are going to be concerned about this, Mr. Speaker . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . And I see the member's heckling back from Cypress Hills, Mr. Speaker. And he's defending the expunging of property and civil rights I suspect, Mr. Speaker, by doing so because he's trying to intervene in this debate here, Mr. Speaker. And this is incredibly important.

And here we have a government that's set itself in a wilful fashion, Mr. Speaker, and put forward legislation that reaches well beyond the tip of the scope of government and in fact expunges property and civil rights. And then by very specific action, Mr. Speaker, we see a farmer from the Shellbrook area . . . and this may be just one example, Mr. Speaker, where this government is in fact, because of their own mistake, going to go and expropriate the land that has been purchased by this farmer, Mr. Speaker. This is cause for concern, Mr. Speaker. And I hear members on our side of the Assembly talking about other individuals that are calling their offices now as it relates to these kinds of behaviours, Mr. Speaker. And it's a good discussion for us to have, Mr. Speaker.

And we know where the members opposite line up. They think that they can overstep and take away property from individuals and expunge individuals of civil and property rights, Mr. Speaker. We see that by legislation here in Bill 144, Mr. Speaker. That's their position, Mr. Speaker. We see that through action, Mr. Speaker, when they make a mistake and land is sold to an individual and their remedy to that is to expropriate that land from that individual, Mr. Speaker.

Well I can assure the Assembly, Mr. Speaker, and I can assure the people of Saskatchewan that New Democrats are concerned by this kind of behaviour, this kind of knee-jerk bullying, this kind of overreach into the civil liberties and property rights of individuals, Mr. Speaker.

And we cast concern and caution over this piece of legislation that in fact serves as significant precedent if this piece of legislation passes. Where does it stop, is the question. Where does it stop? Today it's as it relates to overcharging individuals,

individuals who are arguably entitled to dollars that they're owed by government through a program or that they potentially have been overcharged. That's what I understand they are putting forward through their lawsuit. And this government, to deal with that lawsuit, expunges them of the right to collect the dollars that they're arguing that they're rightfully owed by government.

Well let's compare that then to yesterday, Mr. Speaker, where a case is highlighted and one of our hardworking producers, farmers, in this province has to come to this Assembly to stand up for his land, Mr. Speaker, to stand up for his land as a result of this government making a mistake, Mr. Speaker. It wasn't his mistake. It wasn't some private mistake. It was a mistake of this government. And the knee-jerk bullying response of this government is to look beyond the civil and property rights of that individual and to expropriate his land, Mr. Speaker.

This causes concern for us as New Democrats. It causes huge concern for Saskatchewan people, and I don't think it represents the Saskatchewan that we believe in, Mr. Speaker, one where individuals can work hard to make gains, to build businesses, to build farms, all to simply be taken away from them by this Sask Party Premier and this government, Mr. Speaker, in many cases because of their own wrongdoing, because of their own mistakes, this government's own mistake.

So the question is what next piece of legislation is going to be brought forward? How far? This year reaches back 13 years retroactively, takes away the rights of an individual or business, Mr. Speaker. The question is what's next? How far back are we going to reach, Mr. Speaker? What other areas is this government going to reach back, and what rights are they going to expunge Saskatchewan people of, Mr. Speaker?

It's of huge concern when it affects, Mr. Speaker, the livelihood, the business practice, Mr. Speaker, of individuals, the ability to own property, Mr. Speaker. And we see this government recklessly playing with these pretty crucial values to our society, Mr. Speaker — the ability that if you set out, work hard, buy some land, go about your business, and if you're out some money, that you can collect on that; the ability that if you go and buy some land and you've worked hard and you grow your farm, that you should be able to farm it, Mr. Speaker; and in the case of a mistake, Mr. Speaker, a mistake of this government's own making, that it shouldn't come at your loss, at your hurt, and your detriment, Mr. Speaker.

That this government . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . The member again is heckling, from Cypress Hills. He's shouting from his chair, Mr. Speaker. I'd urge him to take his feet in this debate, Mr. Speaker. And I'm surprised, Mr. Speaker, that the member from Cypress Hills is so willing, so willing to support a piece of legislation which I guess I would understand he's a full part of here, Mr. Speaker, that takes away civil and property rights of individuals here in this province, Mr. Speaker.

And I think what the member from Cypress Hills here and his willingness to support this legislation, Mr. Speaker, will likely face across his constituency are questions of what's next, Mr. Member? What's next, Mr. Premier? Is it my herd? Is it my land? Is it my home? Is it my business? What do you think, Mr. Minister, that you can next reach into and take? Something that

individuals and businesses have worked hard to build in many cases, Mr. Speaker. We're talking about businesses and farms in this province. We're talking about individuals and families, Mr. Speaker, families that in many cases have passed along businesses by the generation and in the same case on the family farm, Mr. Speaker.

And we all have a different story that connects back to the homesteading time in this province and the family farm, Mr. Speaker. We can share the stories of different family businesses, Mr. Speaker, that are passed along through generations, that wealth of knowledge and the histories and the way of life, Mr. Speaker, that are fundamental, and the hard work, Mr. Speaker, to build those assets, to build that property base, Mr. Speaker, to build a business that is successful.

And all of a sudden we have a government that believes they can run roughshod over what an individual is owed, Mr. Speaker. So if a business or an individual is rightfully owed money by government out of government's mistake, they should have access to collecting those dollars, Mr. Speaker. It's not fair just to change legislation that reaches back 13 years, retroactively taking away critical rights of what makes us proud and independent as Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, something that goes back and significantly impacts our heritage, our proud traditions, Mr. Speaker, reaching back into businesses in many cases or farms, Mr. Speaker, that have been built and have been passed along and have been worked for by Saskatchewan people, Mr. Speaker. Well I think this hand of government that this Premier and this Sask Party government . . . seems to all too willingly to reach well beyond the scope, of a rightful scope, Mr. Speaker, is of concern. The fact that they're willing to go after individuals who are owed money by this government, changing legislation, expunging of property and civil rights, Mr. Speaker, should be of concern to all of us, Mr. Speaker, should be of concern to all of us.

And if I were the member from Cypress Hills, I would get ready to explain. Instead of heckling in the Assembly to support this far-reaching legislation, I would get ready to explain to the ranchers, to the farm families in his constituency, the business owners, Mr. Speaker, about why he thinks he should be able to reach back in, Mr. Speaker, and take away the assets, the business that they've worked so hard to develop, Mr. Speaker.

What's next? Farm machinery? Livestock, Mr. Speaker? Horses? You know, this is the question, Mr. Speaker, because this is just politically expedient for this government to deal, to deal, Mr. Speaker, with a problem that comes out . . . a lawsuit from an individual who finds that they're owed by government, that they've been not treated properly, Mr. Speaker, and in fact they're owed dollars by government.

Well does this government deal with them fairly? Do they deal directly with them? Do they deal with our judiciary through this process? No, Mr. Speaker. They expunge them of their civil rights, Mr. Speaker. This is a government, Mr. Speaker, that's reaching well beyond where it should, that's reaching into the independence of individuals and businesses, Mr. Speaker, that's taking away the very rights that are important to people across Saskatchewan.

And we're not going to simply pass, Mr. Speaker, a piece of

legislation, Mr. Speaker, that has this sort of reach, that has this sort of reach. We're going to pass . . . raise caution, Mr. Speaker, and we're going to say, is this right? Because what we know is when these guys put together legislation, Mr. Speaker, they get it wrong on one front because they don't consult. They don't go about it in an even-handed fashion. They create it in a vacuum. And in fact they fail in the sense of they set an objective, and their legislation very, very rarely actually will allow them to achieve that objective, Mr. Speaker.

But the bigger question on this — because that's the first question — will this fix the problem that they're trying to fix? Will this fix this, provide the solution? The bigger question, Mr. Speaker, is, is it right? Is it right? Is it fair, Mr. Speaker? And this is where we're going pause and say we need to push back when we see government overstepping boundaries, Mr. Speaker, when we see a government that seems so willing to take away land from individuals, when we see a government that's willing to take and expunge the property and civil rights of individuals, Mr. Speaker, and we don't see . . . We have huge concern, Mr. Speaker, with that aspect of this Bill.

So this is the practical nature, Mr. Speaker, of, you know, is this handling, you know, environmental handling fees and whatnot properly? Does this work with the recycling sector, Mr. Speaker? Those are important questions from a practical nature.

But a bigger one, Mr. Speaker, and one that I have huge concern for is that this oversteps, potentially in a major way, Mr. Speaker, the role of government in overstepping its bounds and expunging property and civil rights and affecting families and businesses and farms across this province and their ability to retain assets and own land, Mr. Speaker — something that just doesn't sit well with me, Mr. Speaker. It doesn't sit well with New Democrats, Mr. Speaker.

We're going to continue to raise questions on this front because the question is where does it stop? Because once this precedent is set, Mr. Speaker, the expunging of civil and property rights, Mr. Speaker, what's next, Mr. Speaker? What are they going after next? They might be asking the member from Greystone, Mr. Speaker, what are you coming after? And they're the business people or landowners, Mr. Speaker.

But at this point in time, with many questions yet to be asked, Mr. Speaker, on a Bill that should be thoughtfully considered from the question of fairness, Mr. Speaker, I will at this point in time adjourn debate, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much.

The Speaker: — The member from Regina Rosemont has moved adjournment of debate. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. Being now 5 p.m., this Assembly stands adjourned until tomorrow morning at 10 a.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 17:00.]

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLING OF REPORTS

The Speaker.....	6309
------------------	------

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker.....	6309
Wall.....	6309
Yates.....	6309
Lingenfelter.....	6309
Ottenbreit.....	6309
Forbes.....	6309
Norris.....	6336

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Junor.....	6310
Forbes.....	6310
Brotten.....	6310
Morin.....	6310
Wotherspoon.....	6310

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

World AIDS Day	
Wyant.....	6311
Aboriginal AIDS Awareness Week	
McCall.....	6311
Girl Guides Celebrate Their 100th Anniversary	
Wilson.....	6311
Extraordinary Examples of Leadership	
Chartier.....	6312
One of Canada's Most Powerful Women	
Ross.....	6312
Dismantling the Medicare System	
Junor.....	6312
Cadet Squadrons Honoured	
Chisholm.....	6312

QUESTION PERIOD

Management of Health Care System	
Lingenfelter.....	6313
Wall.....	6313
Arrangements for a Long-Term Care Facility	
Atkinson.....	6314
McMorris.....	6314
Children in Care	
Forbes.....	6315
Draude.....	6315
Combatting AIDS	
Junor.....	6316
McMorris.....	6316

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 161 — <i>The Election Amendment Act, 2010</i>	
Morgan.....	6317
Higgins.....	6318
Bill No. 162 — <i>The Local Government Election Amendment Act, 2010</i>	
Hickie.....	6320
Taylor.....	6322

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 159 — <i>The University of Regina Amendment Act, 2010</i>	
McCall.....	6327
Bill No. 160 — <i>The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code Amendment Act, 2010</i>	
Chartier.....	6327
Bill No. 158 — <i>The Correctional Services Amendment Act, 2010</i>	
Yates.....	6330
Harrison (referral to committee).....	6331

Bill No. 157 — *The Oil and Gas Conservation Amendment Act, 2010*
 Harper6332
Bill No. 144 — *The Litter Control Amendment Act, 2010*
 Wotherspoon6335

GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN

CABINET MINISTERS

Hon. Brad Wall
Premier of Saskatchewan
President of the Executive Council

Hon. Bob Bjornerud
Minister of Agriculture
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Crop Insurance Corporation

Hon. Bill Boyd
Minister of Energy and Resources
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Telecommunications

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff
Minister of First Nations and Métis Relations
Minister Responsible for Northern Affairs
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Gaming Corporation

Hon. June Draude
Minister of Social Services
Minister Responsible for the Status of Women
Minister Responsible for the Public Service Commission

Hon. Dustin Duncan
Minister of Environment
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Water Corporation
Minister Responsible for SaskEnergy Incorporated

Hon. Donna Harpauer
Minister of Education
Provincial Secretary

Hon. Jeremy Harrison
Minister of Enterprise
Minister Responsible for Trade

Hon. Darryl Hickie
Minister of Municipal Affairs

Hon. Bill Hutchinson
Minister of Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport
Minister Responsible for the Provincial
Capital Commission

Hon. D.F. (Yogi) Huyghebaert
Minister of Corrections, Public Safety and Policing

Hon. Ken Krawetz
Deputy Premier
Minister of Finance

Hon. Tim McMillan
Minister Responsible for Crown
Investments Corporation
Minister Responsible for Information
Technology Office
Minister Responsible for Information
Services Corporation
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Government Insurance
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan Liquor and
Gaming Authority

Hon. Don McMorris
Minister of Health

Hon. Don Morgan
Minister of Justice and Attorney General
Minister of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety
Minister Responsible for the Saskatchewan Workers'
Compensation Board

Hon. Rob Norris
Minister of Advanced Education,
Employment and Immigration
Minister Responsible for Innovation
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Power Corporation
Minister Responsible for Uranium
Development Partnership

Hon. Jim Reiter
Minister of Highways and Infrastructure
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Transportation Company
Minister Responsible for The Global
Transportation Hub Authority

Hon. Laura Ross
Minister of Government Services