



FOURTH SESSION - TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE

of the

**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

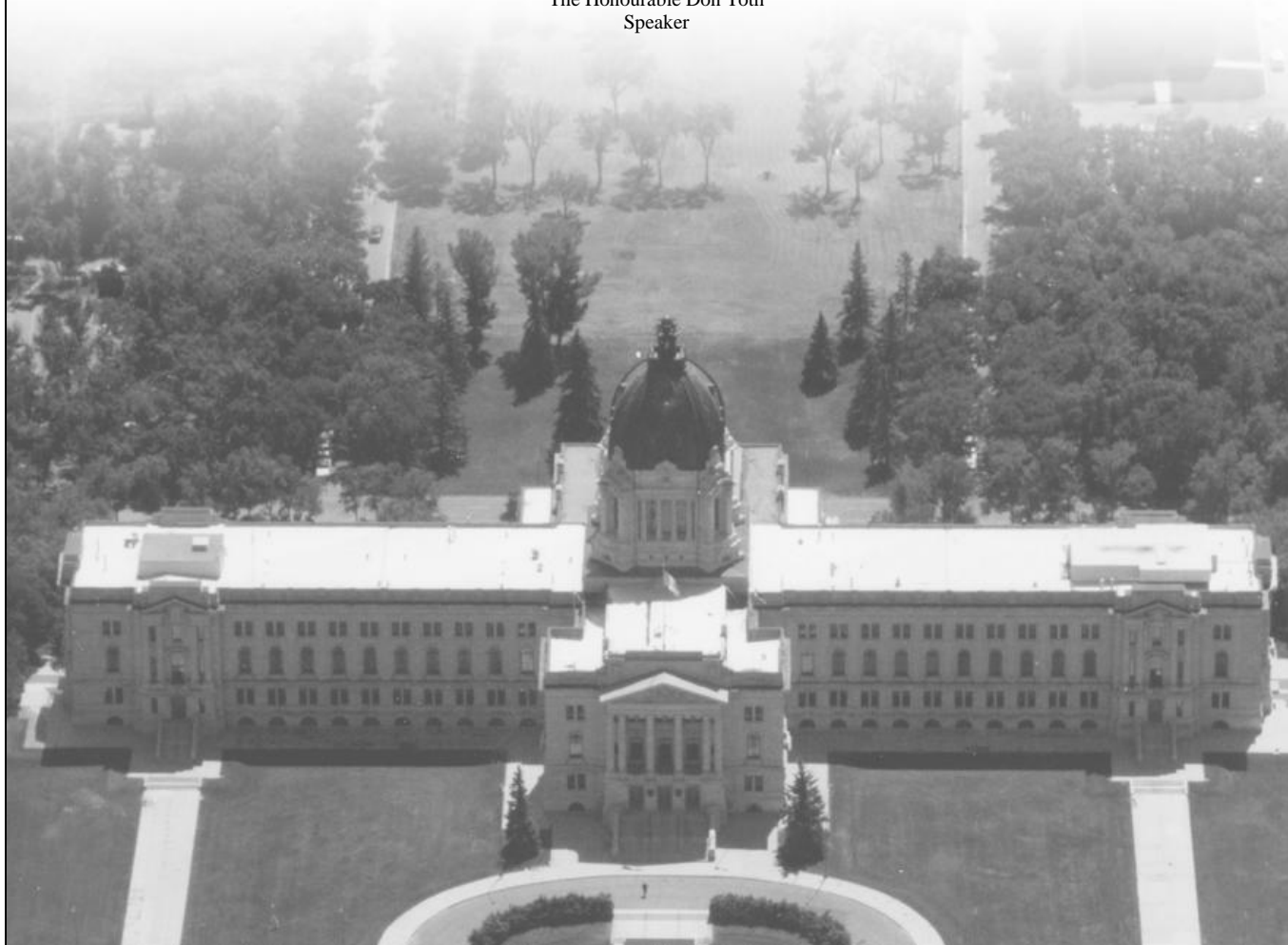
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**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS**

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(HANSARD)

Published under the  
authority of  
The Honourable Don Toth  
Speaker



**MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN**

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

<b>Name of Member</b>	<b>Political Affiliation</b>	<b>Constituency</b>
Allchurch, Denis	SP	Rosthern-Shellbrook
Atkinson, Pat	NDP	Saskatoon Nutana
Belanger, Buckley	NDP	Athabasca
Bjornerud, Hon. Bob	SP	Melville-Saltcoats
Boyd, Hon. Bill	SP	Kindersley
Bradshaw, Fred	SP	Carrot River Valley
Brkich, Greg	SP	Arm River-Watrous
Brotten, Cam	NDP	Saskatoon Massey Place
Chartier, Danielle	NDP	Saskatoon Riversdale
Cheveldayoff, Hon. Ken	SP	Saskatoon Silver Springs
Chisholm, Michael	SP	Cut Knife-Turtleford
D'Autremont, Dan	SP	Cannington
Draude, Hon. June	SP	Kelvington-Wadena
Duncan, Hon. Dustin	SP	Weyburn-Big Muddy
Eagles, Doreen	SP	Estevan
Elhard, Wayne	SP	Cypress Hills
Forbes, David	NDP	Saskatoon Centre
Furber, Darcy	NDP	Prince Albert Northcote
Gantfoer, 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 10:00.]

[Prayers]

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

**Mr. Yates:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm extremely pleased today to introduce to you and through you to all members of the House a group of students from F.W. Johnson Collegiate in my riding, Mr. Speaker. Today we have 24 students accompanied by a number of teachers and chaperones, Mr. Speaker. They have come to the Assembly today to watch the proceedings, and I will have an opportunity to meet with them in a few minutes. They're accompanied by their teachers Jill Williams, Tracey Turnbull, Russ Cushway, and two teacher aids as well, Mr. Speaker: Flo Coffey and Paul Fyckes. And, Mr. Speaker, this is a wonderful group from the great riding of Regina Dewdney, and I wish all members to join me in welcoming them to their Assembly.

### PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

**Ms. Higgins:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present a petition on behalf of Saskatchewan residents, and it speaks to the issues being faced by those residents of a combination of rising rents and low vacancy rates in many communities. And, Mr. Speaker, it also recognizes that a majority of Canadians now live in provinces with rent control guidelines, including Manitoba, British Columbia, Ontario, Quebec, and Prince Edward Island, and that the argument that the private market would deliver sufficient affordable housing in the absence of rent control has proven to be false. And the prayer reads, Mr. Speaker:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to consider enacting some form of rent control with a view to protecting Saskatchewan renters from unreasonable increases in rent.

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

Mr. Speaker, I so present on behalf of citizens mostly in Regina on these ones. Thank you very much.

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

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition in support of eliminating poverty in Saskatchewan. And we know that Saskatchewan's income gap between the rich and poor continues to grow, and now one in five children in Saskatchewan live in deepening poverty. 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 we know, for example, the challenges many families face with the rising cost of housing. And tomorrow the price of bread goes up in Saskatchewan by some 5 per cent, so this is a very important issue to many people in Saskatchewan. 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 this petition is signed by citizens of Regina and Saskatoon and many other parts of Saskatchewan. I do so present. Thank you very much.

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I stand today to present a petition on behalf of my constituents who live in the neighbourhood of Hampton Village. And it's about the need for a new school for their children.

We, the undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan, wish to bring to your attention the following: that Hampton Village is a rapidly growing community in Saskatoon with many young families; that Hampton Village residents pay a significant amount of taxes including education property taxes; that children in Hampton Village deserve to be able to attend school in their own community instead of travelling to neighbouring communities to attend schools that are typically already reaching capacity.

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan cause the provincial government to devote the necessary resources for the construction of an elementary school in Hampton Village so that children in this rapidly growing neighbourhood in Saskatoon can attend school in their own community.

Mr. Speaker, the individuals who signed this petition live in Hampton Village. I so present.

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

**Mr. Quennell:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise again today to present petitions signed by citizens of Saskatchewan concerned about the detrimental effect that Bill 160 will have on human rights law in the province of Saskatchewan if enacted. And the prayer reads as follows:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan withdraw Bill 160 from consideration by the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan and hold extensive public consultations informed by a public policy paper before any amendments to the Human Rights Code, the law that

supersedes all others in our province, are even considered.

Today the petition is signed by residents of Regina, Saskatoon, and Kindersley, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present petitions on behalf of concerned residents from across Saskatchewan as it relates to the mismanagement of our finances by the Sask Party. They allude to a record that includes the tabling of deficits and incurring and growing of our debt at times of record highs in revenues, Mr. Speaker, this year alone, at a time of unprecedented revenues, adding \$548 million to our total debt, Mr. Speaker, and a record that includes over \$1.3 billion of debt over the last three years, 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 today are signed by concerned residents of Yorkton, Melville, and Gerald. I so submit.

#### STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

#### World Autism Awareness Day

**Ms. Higgins:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this Saturday, April 2nd will mark the fourth annual World Autism Awareness Day. Created by a resolution of the United Nations General Assembly in 2007, this day aims to bring global attention to autism, a pervasive disorder affecting tens of millions of people around the world, many of whom are undiagnosed and misunderstood. It's a day, Mr. Speaker, to raise awareness about autism throughout society and to encourage early diagnosis and early intervention.

World Autism Awareness Day also provides an opportunity for us to reflect on how our society can better support those with autism, their caregivers, and their families. The developmental challenges posed by autism, Mr. Speaker, can be severe, and so families coping with the disorder are fortunate to be able to rely on support networks like Saskatchewan's own SaskFEAT [Saskatchewan Families for Effective Autism Treatment], a provincial organization of families, friends, and dedicated professionals concerned with the well-being and development of individuals with autism or within the autism spectrum.

World Autism Awareness Day carries special significance this year in our country, Mr. Speaker, since 2011 also marks the 35th anniversary of the Autism Society of Canada, which for

over three decades has worked across the country to reduce the impact of autism spectrum disorders on individuals and their families. To celebrate that anniversary, Mr. Speaker, the Autism Society is encouraging people to wear blue on World Autism Awareness Day to help celebrate the unique talents and skills of persons with autism.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join with this effort to inspire compassion, inclusion, and hope. Thank you very much.

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

#### Kidney Health Month

**Mr. Kirsch:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. March has been designated Kidney Health Month throughout the province. During this time, we all work toward improving the health of our kidneys through diet and exercise, as well, understanding the causes of kidney-related illnesses.

The kidneys are described as the master chemists of the body. Their job is to remove waste from the blood and return the clean blood back to the body. Each minute a litre of blood is filtered through our kidneys and returned to the stream. Our kidneys are also important because they regulate the amount of water in our body and produce the hormones which regulate body functions.

The Saskatchewan branch of The Kidney Foundation of Canada is an important resource for the people of this province. They provide a well-integrated system of programs and services that emphasize information and referral, educational materials, emergency short-term financial assistance, and peer support.

As March winds down, I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the professionals across the province that are committed to educating and maintaining the health of the people of our province. Mr. Speaker, I would particularly like to send out a special mention to the Kidney Foundation and hope their message was heard during Kidney Health Month. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### 2011 SaskTel Tankard

**Mr. Taylor:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Battlefords was host to the very successful 2011 SaskTel Tankard featuring 64 of Saskatchewan's best men curlers. I'd like to take a minute to recognize and thank the local organization that ensured the curlers, the officials, the public, and the volunteers were taken care of and who made this one of the most successful in the history of the event. The 14-member host committee co-chaired by Doug Horn and Doug Fehr worked extremely hard to ensure everything was as expected and, Mr. Speaker, they did just that. This was a wonderful event.

We of course have to congratulate the winner of the Tankard, the Pat Simmons rink from the Regina Tartan Curling Club. Let's not forget to thank the sponsors, without whom this event would not have been possible, especially, Mr. Speaker, the title sponsor SaskTel. This shows everyone how valuable our Crown corporations are in this province. SaskTel serves its customers

well, but at the same time donates time and money to provincial and community events right across Saskatchewan. You have to acknowledge, Mr. Speaker, that without strong Crowns and their commitment to Saskatchewan communities, events like the Tankard that let us celebrate the best and the brightest this province has to offer would not be possible.

Our congratulations to SaskTel, The Battlefords host committee, the volunteers, and the curlers for all that they have done this year to promote and celebrate men's curling in the province of Saskatchewan.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Last Mountain-Touchwood.

### **Cupar Canucks Win Bantam C Championship**

**Mr. Hart:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, last Friday the Cupar Canuck bantam hockey team journeyed to St. Brieux for the final game of the Bantam C provincial finals. First game a week earlier, Mr. Speaker, ended in a 5-all tie. The series was a two-game total point, so therefore the last game turned out to be a sudden-death final.

The score after the first period, Mr. Speaker, was 1-all. It was 2-all after the second period. And I'm happy to report, Mr. Speaker that the Cupar Canuck Bantams prevailed and ended up winning the series 4-3. It was a well-played game as the first game was, Mr. Speaker, and the record crowd at both games were treated to two great hockey games, Mr. Speaker.

In order to reach the provincial finals, the Canucks had to defeat teams, bantam teams from Lampman, Assiniboia, Lanigan, and Gull Lake. It was a long, hard-fought series. Gull Lake put up a good fight, but they did not prevail, Mr. Speaker. The boys from Cupar, Southey, and Lestock were much too strong for them.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to congratulate all the players on the team and the coaches, Lee Mielke, Tyler Gerrard, Lyle Sandercock, and manager Kristen Hart. I'd also like to acknowledge a couple of players on the team, Deanna Gerrard and no. 14, Owen Hart. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### **Dress-Sharing Program**

**Mr. Furber:** — Mr. Speaker, Westmore School in P.A. [Prince Albert] Northcote has a unique graduation dress-sharing program. This program allows students to purchase their grad dress for \$25. Mr. Speaker, many of the students at Westmore would otherwise not be able to afford to purchase a dress. This program was created last year by two teachers, Kathy Nagy and Janis Sawa.

Last year the school added another component. It held a fashion show showing off some of its finest dresses. New dresses were donated by Craft Haven and Treasures in White. Each are fine businesses in Prince Albert. Other dresses were donated by generous people throughout our community. Local dry cleaners cleaned the used dresses at no charge, and two male students

who accompanied the models last night received free suits from Ted Matheson Men's Wear.

The staff at Westmore believe that the dress-sharing program is very beneficial to the students. It helps ease concern and stress of having to spend more money on a dress than they would be able to afford. The dress-sharing program was well utilized last year and will no doubt be well subscribed again this year.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members join with me in congratulating Westmore School, its staff, and most of all its students for providing unique solutions to unique circumstances. I would also ask that all members join with me in congratulating the business community in Prince Albert for their tremendous support of the Westmore fashion show. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[10:15]

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

### **Affordable Housing**

**Ms. Heppner:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP's [New Democratic Party] answer for affordable housing in Saskatchewan is the continued call for draconian rent controls. A *StarPhoenix* editorial had this to say, and I quote:

... legislated rent control only will exacerbate an already serious problem.

Economists are pretty well united in pointing out the downside of rent control, saying it degrades the market in the long term and reduces the supply of private sector rental units.

Mr. Speaker, we believe that there are better answers. Our government proposed a \$252 million strategy that will increase the supply of available housing and help families mitigate the costs of housing controls or housing rents. While the NDP have admitted that our strategy will increase housing units, the member for Saskatoon Fairview has said that a housing strategy is "serving no purpose" and that "There is no need for those houses."

Mr. Speaker, he went on to lament and I quote, "What will that really do to the prices?" He's concerned about driving down housing prices in the rest of the province, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the NDP has completely lost touch with reality when their only criticism of an affordable housing strategy is that it will create affordable homes.

Mr. Speaker, so there it is. Too much affordable housing; that's the NDP's complaint, that it's going to create too much and keep housing prices down. Mr. Speaker, they are stuck in the past with their old ideas. We are moving Saskatchewan forward and helping families move with us, Mr. Speaker.

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

### Fossil Fools Day

**Ms. Morin:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow is April Fool's Day, a traditional day for jokes and pranks, but it's also Fossil Fools Day, a day for serious action on the environment and climate change.

It's serious because no one's laughing, Mr. Speaker, at the damage done to Canada's international reputation for refusing to adapt to the realities of human-caused climate change. Last year in Cancun, Mr. Speaker, the Harper government earned Canada a Fossil Award from more than 500 leading international organizations who singled out the governments doing the most to disrupt or undermine the UN [United Nations] climate talks.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, Stephen Harper's partner in folly is this Sask Party government, which has refused to take serious action on climate change here at home just as the Harper government has refused to act on the national and international levels. Mr. Speaker, they have refused to legislate clear reduction targets for CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, and their major initiative on carbon capture and sequestration, the cross-border Montana project, amounted to no more than a photo op in the rotunda — proof, Mr. Speaker, that this government has no plan to work with the federal government or other national, international partners to seriously reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, even though we have the highest per capita emissions in Canada and will be one of the regions most affected by the adverse effect of human-caused climate change.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan people concerned about the environment have one thing to say to this government and all the fossil fools out there: on this April 1st, it's time to wise up. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

### QUESTION PERIOD

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

#### Mother Baby Unit

**Ms. Junor:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On March 20th, 2011, Cambria Tammie Leigh Shuba passed away at the General Hospital, less than one day after she was born. Cambria's mother, father, and their families feel that Cambria's death could have been prevented. In a statement made earlier today, Amanda, Cambria's mother, said:

The night of Cambria's death, every nurse that we talked to told us that besides having the nursery removed to continually monitor the baby some four months earlier, the nursing crew was severely short-staffed.

Mr. Speaker, to the minister: was the unit fully staffed during that particular shift when Cambria died?

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

**Hon. Mr. McMorris:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, first of all I want to start by extending our deep condolences to the family that's here today, on behalf of the

government as well as myself, the Minister of Health, and all working within the ministry. I can't imagine anything tougher in a person's life than to lose one of their own children.

Mr. Speaker, this is a very unfortunate situation. We have critical incident regulations that govern health regions when there is a critical incident. Mr. Speaker, I'll report that the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region is following along with that critical incident guidelines. They've notified the ministry. Now they do an in-depth review, Mr. Speaker, of this incident, anything leading up to, that may be a root cause of the incident. Mr. Speaker, they then make recommendations to the ministry to ensure that something like this will never happen again, Mr. Speaker. That review is happening as we speak. It would not be appropriate for me at this time to comment on any one particular situation, Mr. Speaker. But I can report that that review is undergoing right now.

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

**Ms. Junor:** — Mr. Speaker, I went through the General Hospital mother and baby unit last week, and what I saw was a nursery that had limited access. Only under exceptional circumstances is a newborn baby admitted to the nursery. Amanda and her family questioned why the nursery was inaccessible to them.

Mr. Speaker, to the minister: what is the criteria for a newborn baby to be placed in this nursery?

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

**Hon. Mr. McMorris:** — Mr. Speaker, the mother baby unit in the Regina General Hospital is a state of the art unit. It follows along with guidelines from Health Canada that were implemented in 2000. The design of this particular unit was designed in 2002. Construction started a number of years later. It was funded generally in 2008 and came into fully operational in 2010.

Since that time I've been notified by the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region that it has been fully staffed, Mr. Speaker. It follows along with all of the guidelines set out by Health Canada. Mr. Speaker, it has been reviewed by people that work on the floors to make sure that it is appropriate care, Mr. Speaker. And to my knowledge — as I said, I can't speak on any particular incident — but to my knowledge, according to the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region, it has been fully staffed since its opening in 2010.

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

**Ms. Junor:** — Mr. Speaker, according to Amanda and her families, nurses on the unit warned of the possibility of the death of a baby as a result of the inaccessibility of the nursery. Amanda states:

The nurses told us that they fought hard to have the nursery remain in the hospital to ensure the safety of the infants on the ward. They were told they were just being whiny nurses and they will get used to it.

A baby died because nobody listened to the front-line nurses who provide the care. Mr. Speaker, to the minister: it is his responsibility to find out why the warnings of the nurses were not listened to. What is he going to do to make sure that another family doesn't have to suffer through what Amanda and her family are going through?

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

**Hon. Mr. McMorris:** — Mr. Speaker, as I said, this is a critical incident that is being reviewed by the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region. We'll let that review do its work and follow through with any recommendations that it may come out with after an in-depth review.

I will say though, Mr. Speaker, that this is a state of the art unit. It has just been remodelled, new equipment, Mr. Speaker, extra training for staff. It is a state of the art unit, Mr. Speaker. I was there for the opening. The Premier was there for the opening. The opposition was there for the opening. In fact, the opposition made a statement right after the opening of what a beautiful unit this is; that it is state of the art, one of the best in Canada.

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

**Ms. Junor:** — Mr. Speaker, state of the art has failed. This is a painful experience for everyone involved. Amanda and Mike and their families are suffering because the system failed them. State of the art is not working.

According to Amanda:

The scenario of being understaffed and without peace of mind of having a nursery to monitor babies around the clock has added undue stress to the nursing staff in the General Hospital mother baby unit. Since Cambria's death, the nurses have moved babies into the hallway in a makeshift nursery to avoid any other complications or deaths.

The situation has become so stressful and nurses are so worried that they're putting newborn babies in the hall. Mr. Speaker, to the minister: what is he doing to ensure that newborn babies are not in the halls because of limited access to the nursery? And he has to do it now, not wait until the report is over.

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

**Hon. Mr. McMorris:** — Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned at the outset, any time that there is a fatality and especially an infant in our facilities, you know, deep condolences go out to the family. It is hard, it is hard on all — no one harder than on the family themselves. I realize that or we realize that.

Having said that though, Mr. Speaker, we can only go, as a government, on the guidelines that are set out by those that know the health care business the best. Health Canada has set out guidelines. We followed along with those guidelines. We've taken the very best advice from people involved in health care. When the facility was designed under the previous government, Mr. Speaker, we can only go with the best advice that people can give us.

Mr. Speaker, I believe we have done that. We have funded it fully. Mr. Speaker, \$28.2 million has gone into this mother baby unit in the Regina General Hospital, Mr. Speaker. We're conducting a review to see what went wrong and how it can be corrected, Mr. Speaker. To make rash changes on my order would not be appropriate, Mr. Speaker. We'll let the appropriate professionals review this, look into this to ensure that it never happens again.

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

**Ms. Junor:** — Mr. Speaker, the minister has ignored the best advice he could get. The nurses have told him and told the district over and over again that this could happen, and they were ignored. In fact they were dismissed as being whiny.

Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party has underfunded the health regions across this province and regions have been forced to cut programs, health delivery, and staff to make up for the shortfalls. Amanda and her family are questioning why the government has the money to give the Regina Health Region CEO [chief executive officer] a \$70,000 pay increase, but not enough money to properly staff the mother and baby unit at the General Hospital. To quote Amanda:

We wonder what the government's agenda is with all of these cuts to services and staff. The possibility that people are dying to promote these cuts and implement these types of reforms seems criminal to us.

Mr. Speaker, to the minister: will he finally admit that his failure to properly fund the health regions has resulted in cuts in health delivery that are endangering the lives of Saskatchewan people?

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

**Hon. Mr. McMorris:** — Mr. Speaker, when the mother baby unit was opened in 2010, a nurse advisory committee looked into it to see that, what it would take for proper staffing levels, Mr. Speaker, workload, and all of that.

An independent assessment committee was to make recommendations as to what was needed as far as more than what we had already had put in place, Mr. Speaker. And according to the collective agreement, those recommendations would have had to have been followed through on.

In fall of 2010, that independent committee convened, Mr. Speaker, and I'm here to report that they made no recommendations on top of what was already being done. That was an independent advisory committee into the mother baby unit itself, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, you know, again I have been told that the staffing levels have been appropriate. I can say that if there is one thing that we have worked extremely hard on, on many different levels, that it was making sure that we have the proper complement of health care professionals in this province. I'm proud to say that according to the SRNA [Saskatchewan Registered Nurses' Association] earlier this week, that for the first time in this province we have over 10,000 nurses working,

Mr. Speaker, a far cry from where we were just three short years ago.

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

**Ms. Junor:** — Mr. Speaker, the independent assessment process that the minister refers to was done on the hospital unit — the old one, not on the new one. There are new complaints being registered with the nurses there and I will let the nurses' union speak to that.

Mr. Speaker, the rooming-in model is being used not just in Regina. Right across this province, mothers and babies are being treated this way. According to Amanda, nurses warned that a baby could die as a result of the model and nobody listened to them. And they were right. The worst thing happened and a newborn baby did die.

Mr. Speaker, to the minister: one newborn baby's death is too many. Is the minister going to immediately call for a review of the maternal child policy before another newborn baby dies and another family suffers?

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

**Hon. Mr. McMorris:** — Mr. Speaker, I'll correct the member opposite. In fall 2010, an independent advisory committee was convened for the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region labour and birth unit. There were no recommendations regarding staffing identified by the independent assessment committee. That was of the new unit, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, again the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region, according to the critical incident regulation, is following through with an in-depth review that will look at the circumstances leading up to and during, Mr. Speaker, looking for a root cause, and will make recommendations. I can assure you and this Assembly that when those recommendations are made, this government will be following through with those recommendations, Mr. Speaker. It is too early to presume or assume what those recommendations will be. We'll let the process which has been laid out in regulation do its work, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, as I said, I can tell you that from the outset of this unit, it has been fully funded and fully staffed, according to the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region.

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

### Support for Film Industry

**Ms. Chartier:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, skilled people are leaving our province, our world-class sound stage sits empty, and despite saving more than \$6 million a year with the privatization of SCN [Saskatchewan Communications Network], the minister has a paltry \$116,000 in this budget for the beleaguered film industry.

Why did this minister waste everyone's time and money if he was just going to ignore the recommendations from his film

industry task force report commissioned by his own ministry?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport.

**Hon. Mr. Hutchinson:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. We welcome the member's question. Millions of dollars are being invested through the film employment tax credits that are being paid to film companies. Millions of dollars are going to fund programs administered by SaskFilm [Saskatchewan Film and Video Development Corporation] on behalf of the film industry in this province. And millions of dollars are going to cover the cost of the sound stage facility where a lot of the actual production takes place.

There's also funding for programs being directed by the Saskatchewan Arts Board and the Saskatchewan motion picture industry. In the past three years, Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan's government has provided nearly 60, \$60 million in direct funding and support programming to the province's film industry. And that \$60 million is a lot of money, Mr. Speaker, and I know that the sound industry, the film industry appreciate that, what we're doing.

[10:30]

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

**Ms. Chartier:** — Actually, Mr. Speaker, the film industry said, we are disappointed . . . Quote from a SMPIA [Saskatchewan Motion Picture Association] news release on budget day, "We are disappointed in the fact the recommendations put forward by the task force were not implemented in the budget year."

Mr. Speaker, between 2004 and 2008, the Saskatchewan film industry saw more than \$300 million in production. That's a lot of money too, Mr. Speaker. Five consecutive years of more than \$60 million coming into this province for production values. In 2009 it dropped by 70 per cent to a mere 17 million, and was even lower in 2010. The loss of tens of millions of dollars in industry inevitably means the loss of skilled Saskatchewan men and women. When will this minister step to the plate like Manitoba has and do what is needed to revitalize this important industry for our province and to keep our skilled young people working here?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport.

**Hon. Mr. Hutchinson:** — Mr. Speaker, I'll read directly from SMPIA's news release. They're saying:

SMPIA is pleased to announce that our advocacy efforts and work on the film industry task force has had some success. In today's budget announcement, we learned that our industry will benefit from an increase of \$116,000 to SaskFilm's allocation. This represents an increase of over 9 per cent to the money they receive in support of the film industry and television industry in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, we're also aware that New Brunswick has cancelled the entire film tax credit system there. What we're



finding out here is that our industry is saying, thank you for maintaining the funding; thank you for increasing the funding.

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

**Ms. Chartier:** — One more time, Mr. Speaker, from the rest of that news release: “We are disappointed in the fact that the recommendations put forward by the task force were not implemented in this budget year.”

If this minister took some time to stroll over to the sound stage, he would see that it sits empty. And if the minister took some time to understand the industry for which he is responsible and the recommendations of his task force, he would see the industry has some solutions to get people working again. Why is this minister ignoring his own task force recommendations and letting this world-class sound stage sit empty?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport.

**Hon. Mr. Hutchinson:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, we appreciate the questions, and we are of course familiar with the film and TV industry task force recommendations. In fact, we created the task force, Mr. Speaker, bringing together industry leaders to investigate ways to stabilize and to strengthen the industry. They’ve done excellent work. We commend them on the value of the results, and we have a more comprehensive picture of what the industry’s needs and challenges truly are.

We’re already hard at work and making progress based on the task force’s first recommendation regarding the importance of supporting Saskatchewan content, Mr. Speaker. The primary target that they identified for us was to speed up the approval process and the cheque-writing process for the film employment tax credits. We’ve actually done that, and with an in-house review, Mr. Speaker, we’ve reduced the amount of time by nearly half — 45 per cent. That’s exactly what they asked for. It was in fact their top priority.

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

**Ms. Chartier:** — Mr. Speaker, just to correct the minister here, his lean process saw a 40 per cent rate in the application process of the film employment tax credit payout, not the payout of the tax credit, which is what they were asking for — accelerate the payout of the tax credit, Mr. Minister.

A big blow to the film industry came last year when the government privatized SCN. The least the government could have done was to use the savings from no longer operating the broadcaster to assist the struggling film industry. Instead, the money’s not there for film and TV in this new budget. There’s a paltry additional \$116,000 to help this ailing industry, and this money has been earmarked for something that wasn’t even in the task force’s recommendations, not even in the recommendations. Why is this government refusing to use the money it saved with its reckless sell-off of SCN to help the people it hurt?

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

Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport.

**Hon. Mr. Hutchinson:** — Mr. Speaker, we accept SMPIA’s press release. They’re saying that they’re very pleased that their advocacy has been successful. They’re pleased that the existing funding has been maintained. They’re pleased that extra funding has been allocated. They were worried that the same kind of thing would happen in Saskatchewan that has obviously happened in New Brunswick. The funding here has not been cancelled, Mr. Speaker. It has been maintained and has been increased. They’re happy about that and we’re pleased to see their reaction.

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

### Funding for Municipalities

**Ms. Higgins:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, this government has no shortage of money coming in. They’re enjoying record revenues to the tune of \$10.8 billion, but they’ve ignored municipalities and communities that need support for infrastructure to provide necessary services to taxpayers.

Mr. Speaker, my question to the minister: how does he expect municipalities to come up with money needed to upgrade water and sewer systems or repair streets and roads when he’s ignored municipal infrastructure in this budget?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the minister responsible for municipal government.

**Hon. Mr. Hickie:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thanks to the member opposite for her question.

Mr. Speaker, I am very proud of our government’s record in funding infrastructure in this province. Along with the federal government, our government have committed together \$648 million from 2008-09 through to 2013-14 for various infrastructure programs, Mr. Speaker. We committed \$113.7 million to the Building Canada Fund-communities component which is an infrastructure program for communities under 100,000 people. So we’re doing more across the province, not just for the big cities. So with this program, we were able to fund 76 water projects, 43 waste water projects, 23 road projects, three recreation projects, two solid waste projects, one brownfield remediation project, and one regional airport project, Mr. Speaker.

So, Mr. Speaker, we have heard the municipal sector ask for those funds. We are providing those funds in partnership with the federal government and the municipalities.

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

**Ms. Higgins:** — Mr. Speaker, maybe the minister misunderstood, but I was asking about this budget and not what’s happened in past years. And when this government is seeing record revenues come into their coffers, they have ignored the municipalities’ call for a dedicated infrastructure fund. Mr. Speaker, we’re not talking about last year. We’re not talking about federal funds that this government piggybacked

onto. We're looking for a Saskatchewan solution for Saskatchewan municipalities and Saskatchewan taxpayers.

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

**Hon. Mr. Hickie:** — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again thank the member opposite for the question. On budget day, Mr. Speaker, we put in our promise to commit one full point of PST [provincial sales tax] revenue to the municipal sector. That was an additional \$50 million more this year, Mr. Speaker, \$216.8 million for revenue sharing alone, Mr. Speaker. Promise made, promise kept, Mr. Speaker.

You know what, Mr. Speaker? Our platform committed those dollars to own-source revenue sharing, something the NDP never promised, Mr. Speaker, in the election platform. Why wasn't it in their platform of 2007? I don't see it in their new policy platform either, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

**Ms. Higgins:** — Mr. Speaker, the first question he answers by talking about previous and federal programs. The next question about infrastructure he answers by speaking about the municipal operating grant, Mr. Speaker. And if the minister would look at the documents, these are in effect a transfer of funds to serve as a payment for services rendered and are specifically targeted and calculated on the operating costs of municipalities, Mr. Speaker. The minister should know that. Infrastructure is not part of the operating grant.

And to the minister: when is he going to actually take this seriously, the municipalities' concerns — and taxpayers of this province — and provide some infrastructure dollars?

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

**Hon. Mr. Hickie:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm glad the member from Moose Jaw Wakamow will allow me to tell the people of the province again what this government has done for the province and for the municipalities, Mr. Speaker.

You know, I want to start with a quote though, Mr. Speaker. This is a quote from *The Melfort Journal* dated August 31st, 2010, and I quote:

The municipal side has been fairly good, I would say, because there's been a fair bit with the Building Canada Fund and infrastructure dollars that have been out there over the last couple of years. Most municipalities are fine with that and feeling quite good about the improvements that they've been able to make.

Who said that? That's close quote. Who said that, Mr. Speaker? The member from Moose Jaw Wakamow.

Mr. Speaker, this year when we committed one full point of PST revenue to the municipalities, we made a commitment, and SUMA [Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association] and SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities]

both agree, that that is for unconditional dollars, to be used as they see fit according to regulations, Mr. Speaker. So, Mr. Speaker, that money is provided; they can do what they see fit; and they're very happy with the dollars this government's providing.

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

**Ms. Higgins:** — Mr. Speaker, if the member would look at the SUMA website, they gave a thumbs-down to the infrastructure dollars coming out of this government in this budget. Mr. Speaker, it's clear. When there's record revenues coming into this provincial coffers and this government is flush with cash, they have ignored municipalities and communities that have the responsibility of providing services on the ground to taxpayers of this province.

Mr. Speaker, this government has off-loaded time and time again onto municipalities, and they need to step up to the plate and address the concerns of municipalities. When is this minister going to put forward an infrastructure program for municipalities?

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

**Hon. Mr. Hickie:** — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again it's time to quote some interesting information from SUMA:

The 2011/12 . . . budget acknowledges the crucial role urban governments play in the economic growth in Saskatchewan. This budget provides our cities, towns and villages the resources to deliver programs that vital to our quality of life.

Quote again, Mr. Speaker:

"SUMA is pleased to see the full commitment of one point of PST for the Municipal Operating Grant has finally been met" . . . [according to] President Allan Earle.

. . . SUMA is pleased to see that the government is standing by its pledge to shift education funding from ratepayers to the provincial government.

Mr. Speaker, when you look at the one full point of PST, the level of funding, \$50 million more this year for revenue sharing alone, the EPT [education property tax] portion now the government's taking on — promise made, promise kept as well, Mr. Speaker — the municipal sector is very happy what we're doing and moving forward to see the growth of this province still is maintained.

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

**Ms. Higgins:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, on the information on the SUMA website for a dedicated pool of funding directed at urban infrastructure to be distributed on a per capita basis: outcome — no new provincial funding for infrastructure, Mr. Speaker.

And when you see a government that has downloaded the responsibility for recruitment of doctors and medical professionals in municipalities, downloaded the responsibility for municipalities to provide incentives like clinics and top-ups on salaries to recruit health professionals, now we're seeing a housing program that relies on the municipality having the initiatives and putting them forward.

Mr. Speaker, this government has downloaded too much onto taxpayers and municipalities. So, Mr. Speaker, when will they step up to the plate and provide infrastructure money for Saskatchewan municipalities?

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

**Hon. Mr. Hickie:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This government is engaging the municipal sector in a forum where they can bring forth ideas moving forward because they recognize from SUMA and SARM and the New North that this province is seeing growth like never before and will continue the sustainable proportion of that.

Mr. Speaker, just in closing, I guess in this statement I want to make a quote from my city manager, Robert Cotterill, from March 24th this year:

It means we've got substantially more money to help us with our operating costs. If they didn't give us the money, we would have had a deficit in our capital budget spending, and now we can replace that money.

Close quote, Mr. Speaker. Once again then, Mr. Speaker, we're engaging this municipal sector across the province. SUMA and SARM, the New North, everybody sees this government as working with them as partnership, not opposed to them like the NDP government was.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### Bill No. 622 — *The Workers' Compensation Amendment Act, 2011*

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

**Mr. Iwanchuk:** — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 622, *The Workers' Compensation Amendment Act, 2011* be now introduced and read the first time.

**The Speaker:** — The member from Saskatoon Fairview has moved first reading of Bill 622, *The Workers' Compensation Amendment Act, 2011*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

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

**The Speaker:** — When shall the Bill be read a second time? I

recognize the member from Saskatoon Fairview.

**Mr. Iwanchuk:** — Next sitting of the House, Mr. Speaker.

[10:45]

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### SPECIAL ORDER

### ADJOURNED DEBATE

### MOTION FOR APPROVAL OF BUDGETARY POLICY (BUDGET DEBATE)

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Krawetz that the Assembly approves in general the budgetary policy of the government, and the proposed amendment to the main motion moved by Mr. Wotherspoon.]

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

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity. And thank you to all members of the Assembly for giving me an opportunity to stand and debate the budget, one that I'll say right from the get-go that I intend to vote against. There is an amendment standing in front of that that tries to make the budget more meaningful that I'll be voting in favour of.

But, Mr. Speaker, before I get into my comments on the budget, I just want to say a big thank you to a number of people who have made my political life much easier in the last little while. First of all, to the membership and supporters in Douglas Park who, as all members will realize, without your volunteers and your executive and your election planning committee, you can't be very positive or very productive in this building or as a member of the legislature. So I want to say a very big thank you to all the volunteers.

Also to the members of our team, our MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly], the NDP MLAs, and now many candidates across the province who are working hard to get the message of progress and our policy document out to the people of Saskatchewan, the big ideas that we have for the future of the province in terms of economy, health care. We hear many issues around health care coming forward, lack of ambulance service in the rural area. Our policy is full of big ideas, Mr. Speaker, that we intend to campaign on proudly with all the candidates across the province in order to get that message out. And I just want to say a big thank you to all of the nominated individuals.

And I might say to some of the members opposite, you should be interested in who the candidates are, discussing the budget out in the different areas. The member from Regina South might be interested in a young lawyer there, Yens Pedersen, who's doing one credible job of campaigning. He was interested last night in listening to the member opposite's speech from Regina South. And you might want to listen to that because, if that's the campaign speech of the member opposite, it makes our job a little bit easier. But we shouldn't take it for

granted. This is going to be a tough campaign and one that, as Leader of the Opposition, I'm very proud to lead this team into the next election, and I believe it will be a winning campaign on November 7th.

I also want to thank the members from my team, the member from Coronation Park and his sidekick, the member from Regina Northeast. They have a very interesting time. I have as much trouble keeping them in order in caucus, Mr. Speaker, as you do here in the House. I don't know what they talk about, but they talk all the time to each other. And I just say to both of them congratulations on a very, very excellent career to both of you. I've known you for many years, and we've had many road trips out to the rural area and campaigning in Regina. And I just say to both of you, thanks for all the work that you've done for your constituencies and for the people of this province.

And of course to the member from Nutana who gave an excellent speech on the budget two nights ago, her speech was thought out, it was well-founded in the issue around deficit of this government and the previous Conservative government, the billions of dollars that were run up. The member from Nutana has spent 25 years, given 25 years of her life to the people of this province, and I know she is one of the most respected members that has graduated from this school of politics. And I just wanted to say to the member from Nutana and her family, congratulations on a job well done.

I want to say as well to my family, and on behalf of all members of the Assembly to really all families of MLAs, that this is not the easiest life for families and for spouses and for children of MLAs or politicians. In fact it can be a very gruelling and difficult life. I just want to say that on behalf of my spouse Rubiela and my children, I want to thank them very, very much for putting up with me and allowing me the time to be an MLA and Leader of the Opposition.

And it's a long, long trek, the act of being an MLA. Tonight for example, we're up to Meadow Lake. And I love to go up to that community because we have a very exciting nomination going on there tonight, exciting because we have two excellent candidates, Helen Ben and Tim McKay. They have a great team. I think it's going to be one of our largest nominations so far. I think we've had about 45 nominations, but the one in Meadow Lake tonight I think will take the cake. I think it's going to be the largest one, even larger than Nutana's. We'll see. There's a bit of competition going on.

But I can tell you both candidates, either the best woman winning or the best man winning out of that team, will mean a lot to the people of Meadow Lake. And I think we'll get back to good representation. And I hear the member from Meadow Lake, the member from Meadow Lake yipping from his seat. And he often says in this House, Mr. Speaker, when he gets under pressure, I'm a lawyer, in terms of defence of himself. When he doesn't have anything to explain what he's doing here, he will shout out from his seat, I'm a lawyer. Well, Mr. Speaker, after the nomination tonight and the election on the 7th of November, he can go be a lawyer. And that's our commitment.

And I say that in a jocular way because of course the member from Meadow Lake is a good person. I don't think that he has

... or any member goes into politics with thoughts of doing something that isn't credible for their community. We may disagree in many ways on philosophy or policy, but I'm sure that all members get nominated and do their work because they want to do the best for their community including the member from Meadow Lake. And I wanted to give him credit for that.

The reason we're going to win the constituency of Meadow Lake is because we're going to have better policy. We're going to have big ideas about what to do for the future of the province of Saskatchewan.

And now I want to move to the budget because my view of the budget — and this is told to me by many other people — is that it lacks ... [inaudible interjection] ... Well, the member from Kindersley, the last ... I want to tell you a story about the member from Kindersley because he keeps talking from his seat. But when I was in Calgary working for Nexen, he used to phone me about once a month. And he would say, Link, can you get me a job? Can you get me a job? And then he would phone and say, can you get me a contract? Can you get me a contract? He would say that ... [inaudible interjection] ... Yes. No, you did. Yes, you did. I can prove it. I can prove it. And I can prove it.

He can ask ... I told other people when he called me. I would phone other people and tell them. And he would say ... I would give him the way to get a contract. I would send him, I would tell him who to interview, but he had to tender. And he would say, Link, I don't want to go through the tendering process; I just want a contract. And do you know what, Mr. Speaker? That's the approach he takes in other parts of his business as well.

So the member from Kindersley can talk about government and his interest in good government, but I can tell you this. Any individual who's out \$3 billion on potash revenue in his estimate needs to take a lesson not only in welding to be an engineer, but some economics as well. I can tell you that.

Mr. Speaker, I want to talk about this budget being lacking, lacking in vision. Of all the budgets I've heard in this Legislative Assembly, I'm not sure what I was expecting, but I was expecting a budget with vision to be a beacon of light for Canada, and I found it flat. Now maybe I'm just biased, but I found it flat. And I'll tell you this too. So did the media and so did the public because on the day of the budget, the day after, there were three stories coming out of the Legislative Assembly the day after budget. There was the fact that the government hadn't protected medical records of thousands of citizens in this province. And the lead story the day after the budget was medical records in a dumpster along Albert Street. That was the lead story; it was a national story.

The second story was a \$1,000 membership to an elite organization that the Sask Party had set up. And it was very similar to a club that the Devine government had. It was called, I think, the Metro Club. You remember the Metro Club where people put in money. It was a secret group of people. And they've got another one going. But they're not the old Tories; they're the new, improved brand. Their membership is different. The \$1,000 membership gets them access to ministers and MLAs that somebody on minimum wage I don't think

would have, I don't think they would have.

So I found the budget to be flat. So did the media. Normally the day after the budget, the press is full of glowing reports about everybody's budget, even ours. And I remember as a young MLA in 1978 when Blakeney had a budget and the first five days of glowing reports and then it started to have little nicks. But usually five days the government gets, before the negative press starts to happen.

Well this one didn't get any press. It just was like a balloon that the air went out of it as the minister was reading it. It just sort of floated away, and nobody even knows there was a budget.

Now we can say that this budget should have had many things, and I want to go into just a few of them. This budget, when it comes to agriculture, and I want to talk about that for a moment because it's my area and where I'm the critic or the proponent of new plans and new ideas. But agriculture was, I don't know if it got one or two lines, but it was almost silent. Our main industry, our main renewable industry and economy in this province is agriculture, but it got next to no, no attention.

And many, many people in this province are doing very well in agriculture. The member from Kindersley will know that, that there are many of us who, in various parts of the province, who had wonderful crops last year and the price has gone up, are doing extremely well. But agriculture is really a tale of two cities this year. There are those of us who had — and I'm sure the member from Kindersley is part of that — but had good crops. The price is good, and we're doing very well.

But there's another group, there's another group, that 10 million acres that didn't get seeded last year, where there is huge, huge difficulty and families are sweating it out because they were flooded out last year. And if you drive around that same country, they're going to be flooded again this spring. If I drive south of Regina, if I drive to Yorkton, we have the potential of a disaster waiting for many tens of thousand of farmers. And there's nothing in the budget. Twenty-two million dollars, that wouldn't take care of one community if this flood occurs that we're looking at. There's no plan, no plan to deal with the disaster that's waiting and started last year.

Now there was something in the budget to deal with the flooding, and it was called an increase in crop insurance rates. Now the average across the province was 22 per cent increase in crop insurance premiums. But in the area where the flood occurred, the area where the flood occurred, it's double that. That's the helping hand that farmers in that area have received from this government.

I was in Yorkton the other day and met with a group of farmers. There were probably 10 or 15, and they were showing me their crop insurance statements that they have just received. Some of their increases were as much as 50 per cent. Not in the area where we got the big crops; ours didn't go up very much. But in the area where the damage was done, theirs went up by 50 per cent. That is not the way government should work.

And the former minister of Finance knows that. He knows full well that when people are having difficulty on the farm, it's a responsibility of the government to protect families, not to as

they're starting to get up off their knees to hit them over the head with a baseball bat, which is what you're doing with these crop insurance premiums. And many of these members on the other side know that, Mr. Speaker. And we need to do something about that. And so we'll be talking about that in the weeks to come.

And also we will be talking about spot loss hail because that was a commitment. They did their study after the election in '07. The recommendation came back that they should reimplement it, and they haven't got around to that. And many people were disappointed in this budget that they didn't take up on their own recommendation. And they've got so many studies out there. They've got more studies out there than Carter has pills, but none of them get implemented.

[11:00]

We saw it on the ambulance yesterday: big recommendations, 19 recommendations, not one of them implemented. We saw it on crop insurance. We saw it on the film industry. Over and over again, tens of thousand, hundreds of thousands of dollars on studies, recommendations coming, but none of them, none of them implemented. Somebody mentions even a domed stadium. I think there's been a million dollars spent on studies around a domed stadium, but nothing happening.

But that leads me back to the failed budget that we're talking about, which is that this government had a vision. They talked about many big ideas two years ago, three years ago — ideas like isotope reactors, ideas like domed stadiums, ideas like the Montana-Saskatchewan CO<sub>2</sub> exchange, clean coal, and all of them are laying on the floor in ashes.

And this budget has given up. It's a government that lacks in hope, ideas, and I would say, approaches to a government. I don't know what they're fearful of, but it's a government that is in bunker mentality and can't get out of that. It reminds me of the Harper government. Now they're out on the campaign trail. And there's a reason why the polls are changing federally is because when the leaders get out and you really get to see who they are, then things start to change. And that's going to happen over the next six months, I can guarantee that.

Mr. Speaker, on health care, I'm not going spend much time because I don't have very much time, but you will know and we had experienced yesterday with the ambulance paramedics coming to the Assembly telling us that in Saskatoon, one of our major cities, that for 40 minutes every day if you call for an ambulance, there's no ambulance available. That's sad in a province as wealthy and rich as we are. I'm not sure what the government, the Sask Party government, expects a family to do, to plan their heart attack so that there's an ambulance available or car accidents are only supposed to happen in certain times of the day.

But Mr. Speaker, this is not acceptable that ambulances are not available 24 hours a day, every minute of the day, just as police or nurses or doctors in the hospital are available all the time. And we need to make sure that in the area of health care, that we do a much better job on recruitment and retention. Nothing could be more obvious than where we should be going with recruitment and retention is to our university, where we're

training a record number of doctors, but 50 per cent of them plan to leave because this government's treatment and no contract for our interns and residents in the province of Saskatchewan. We have the situation of hospital closures on a regular basis on weekends in towns like Shaunavon, Leader, Wakaw, across the province because they lack money.

So in health care, there needs to be a better job done of recruitment and retention, getting those waiting lists down. And our party, over the next weeks and months, is going to be bringing forth a full-fledged health policy debate and structure that will take us into the next election and into the next phase of medicare in the province of Saskatchewan. And I can guarantee you it won't include privatization like this government is doing in health care.

I want to talk a bit about housing, although it's been talked about a lot in the Assembly. But I do want to add my voice to those who were worried about and complaining about the fact that there's no money in the budget. Well there is. There's \$2 million of new money for housing. And \$2 million we shouldn't ignore, but when you compare it with the reduction in price of beer at \$5 million, that's the money that's included in this budget.

Two million for housing while we have a housing crisis, and 5 million to lower the price of beer. That's not performance. And I think the government, in reaction to that, after the press and people in the communities were saying, what's the deal here? How can \$2 million . . . They dusted off a press release from last year that they never implemented during the year and said, oh well, we're going to have this plan for \$200 million of Immigrant Investor Fund that the taxpayers of the province have to backstop, and we're going to build some \$300,000 condominiums and that'll solve the problem. That's their policy.

But for sure, people who are on minimum wage and have their wages frozen by this government for two years . . . Imagine that. In the richest province in Saskatchewan, the poorest of the poor have had their wages frozen for two years. Those above them, nurses and . . . are doing a bit better. Health care workers on the front line in home care got a 1 per cent increase. CEOs get 20 per cent, and the head of the Potash Corporation, nobody can count how many dollars he receives, how many houses he has. Oh I know he's got a \$300,000 condo in Saskatoon, but I don't think he leaves his home in Chicago worth 10 or 12 million to spend very many nights in Saskatoon. I don't think so. But he's told the Premier he now lives in Saskatoon and he has this home, and the Premier believes him.

But I want to say that when it comes to housing, we have a lot of work to do. We need rent control like 80 per cent of Canadians have rent control. And *The StarPhoenix*, if they would look beyond and where the investors come from in many of the places where the investors come from in *The StarPhoenix*, they have rent control — Ontario, Quebec, Manitoba, British Columbia. In fact 80 per cent of Canadians at this time have rent control or some form of rent control. So this is not an unusual protection that governments give to families at this kind of opportunity. Manitoba for example, they had record numbers of new construction. They also had rent control that capped rent last year, 2010, at 1 per cent. So they accomplished

both. And we're going to do that here.

When we form government we're going to implement rent control. It will have exclusions, like number of new construction will be given an exemption from rent control for a period of time. We're figuring it out. We have experts working with us. We'll exclude some of the mom-and-pop operations. If you have one or two rental units, they won't be captured in the rent control. If you're doing major renovations, you'll be able to make an application to the board and we'll figure it out. But we're going to have a form of rent control, and it will use the Manitoba model and other models across Canada.

The members opposite say, this is going back. Look, this is common practice across Canada that you protect your families with rent control.

And then we're going to have a massive program of affordable housing — not \$300,000 condominiums, but housing that people can afford. What we're going to have is a housing program that means something to families in this province. And we'll lay out the detail of that platform item as we get closer to the election.

People say, well how are you going to pay for all of the promises: the increase in daycare, the seniors' care, keeping the nursing home open in Wawota and the other hospitals in Leader and Wakaw? Well there's one source of revenue that this Premier and this government won't look at, and that's potash. And I want to say, we're going to have a potash review. We're going to look at the fact that the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan in the last two years, in 2010 and 2009, made a gross profit of \$2.8 billion.

Now we got a little bit, about a nickel of every dollar of potash production. That's what we got. That's what we got in the province of Saskatchewan. Now the Premier and the members opposite say we can't get a penny more out of that. That's it. Well I can tell you governments all over the world are looking at royalty structures. Any country that has resources is looking at capturing some of the record profits that companies are making and the windfall profits coming from the demand for resources.

Now let's say the Potash Corporation, that if by magic they had not made 2.8 billion in gross profit but had made 1.4, would they be happy? No I don't think I'd get a hug from Bill Doyle for doing that. I wouldn't think that I would get kudos from the Premier, from the Premier. But I can tell you this: Danny Williams, when he was dealing with Chevron, wasn't getting any hugs from Chevron. That's for sure. He was tough. And what he did, what he did with Chevron, with the Hebron field, he said, I want 5 per cent of the company that's doing the deal. He wanted ownership for the people of his province and he wanted more royalty.

**An Hon. Member:** — Did he get it?

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Well not right away he didn't get it because they threatened to leave, and they did. They left for all of 10 months. And you know what they did after? Back hat in hand, where we should we sign, Mr. Premier? And Danny Williams got for his people 5 per cent of the Hebron field

directly and a higher rate of royalties. That's how you do deals.

And I'm not out to make Bill Doyle happy. That's not the point of being the leader of this province. He's got lots of help already. He doesn't need the Premier over advocating for his income and his salary. The Premier of this province should be advocating for the people of the province and that's not being done.

Now would the Potash Corporation pack their bags and leave if they were only making 1.4 billion? I don't think so. I've worked in corporations and when you can make 1.4 billion, it's not as good as 2.8 and I'm not going to be as happy because my bonus isn't going to be as great and my share options aren't going to be as great, but I would take 1.4 billion. I wouldn't leave. And what are they going to leave with? If they leave, are they going to take the potash with them? I don't think so. That's what Danny Williams said. He said, look, come if you want. It's our oil, but you're going to come on our terms.

And my view is that this Premier that we have is not standing up for the people of Saskatchewan and getting enough for the resources that we have in this province, and that's what we have to do.

My final comment is on the issue of the economy and deficit. Now the Sask Party continues to talk about paying down the debt, and they did with the money they found in the till when they became government. I'll give them that credit. If you look at their chart on page 61 of their budget document, you'll find that, yes, in 2008 they paid down some debt. But he has to admit, the Premier has to admit that the money was in the till.

It's a little bit like finding a wallet along the highway and then pretending you're a hero because you have some money. It doesn't work that way. You can buy lunch for your friends but you have to admit you found the wallet.

Now we did pay debt down, but look at this chart. Look at that chart. Paid down in the year with NDP money and then a continual growth every year, every year in the deficit of the province out as far as the chart goes.

Now look, this is the best of times for Saskatchewan because of resources, but we're not doing . . . There's no vision for a dream of what's going to happen. There's no paying down of the debt. There's no future fund for future generations. This is why this deficit that we're building here will create the same situation over time, and especially in the Crowns. Because in the Crowns, the debt in 2009, 3 billion; in 2015, 6 billion. Can you imagine that?

Here's the situation, and here's how I get there. They told the Crowns they can't grow. Like this, hands tied. But the debt is increasing, doubling over that period of time. Now think if that was your farm and you weren't growing your farm, in fact you were selling bits and pieces — which they're doing of our Crowns — but the debt on your farm over that period of time doubled. That is a recipe, and the member from Kindersley knows that, of the end of those companies. It's called bankruptcy. That's where it's going.

And when the Premier talks about the fact, talks about the fact

that there's no extra money in potash, I want to tell him that it's like our farm. Let's take our farm, for example, where you rent it out and the price of grain is \$3. Let's say price of grain is \$3 a bushel. And you rent it out at 2,000 a quarter, and the price of grain goes up by 400 per cent. Let's say the price of grain goes to \$12. What farmer in their right mind is going to say, I can't change the rent? That doesn't even make sense.

Potash has more than tripled since we made the original arrangement with him. Why should all the increase in profit go to the shareholders that don't even live here? It doesn't make any sense.

Mr. Speaker, I want to close by saying where I started. I'm going to be voting for the amendment and against the budget, because this budget doesn't deal with the flooding that we're facing in this province in 2011, and it didn't deal with the flooding in 2010. There's not enough money for health care. We all know that. In child care and early learning, we are now bottom of the class in Canada on the issue of child care by many studies and analyses that are going on.

I'm voting against it because there's no help for those farmers who are seeing increase in their premium of up to 50 per cent in the flood area. There's no money for the contract for teachers who are now in . . . I guess they're not in negotiations. The negotiations have broken down.

And finally, I am voting against this budget because there's no review of potash and there's no meaningful housing program. Mr. Speaker, I urge all members of the Assembly to vote in favour of the amendment, and failing that, to vote against the budget presented by the government.

[11:15]

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

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much. Mr. Speaker, it's an honour to be able to enter the debate today on the budget presented by the Deputy Premier and the Minister of Finance, the member for Canora.

Mr. Speaker, I want to first say thank you to my constituents. I, like every member in this House, have the unqualified honour of being able to represent their views and hopefully advocate on their behalf and be an effective representative for them when it comes to provincial government matters and so, Mr. Speaker, I just want to say that I'm very . . . I am grateful to them.

[Interjections]

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order. Order. The members should be aware of the rules. When the Speaker's . . .

[Interjections]

**The Speaker:** — Order. The members should be aware of the rules and when the Speaker's on his feet, the Speaker's supposed to . . . is allowed to speak without interruption. I recognize the Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want

to thank my constituents again for the chance to serve them in this way. I want to be, I want to also get on the record a thank you to my family for their ongoing support so that I could do these jobs, do this job, Mr. Speaker, as well. And I want to thank my colleagues in this Legislative Assembly.

[Interjections]

**The Speaker:** — Order. Is the member from Regina Rosemont questioning the Speaker? I recognize the Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Mr. Speaker, I also want to acknowledge my colleagues. And we are a team on this side of the House and we work together to try to represent the best interests of the province. And I want to thank them again, as I enter this debate, for all of their support and for the team that we have over on this side of the House.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to the budget, there is only one budget in all of Canada that is balanced from a General Revenue Fund standpoint and a summary financial standpoint. There is only one budget in Canada that actually posts a surplus from a General Revenue Fund standpoint and a summary financial statement viewpoint. There's only one budget in the nation that accomplishes that while paying off more general debt of the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. There is only one budget in Canada that achieves both of those things, balanced and debt reduction, and also provides tax relief to absolutely everyone in the province of Saskatchewan — tax relief to property owners, Mr. Speaker, on the farm and in our communities. Mr. Speaker, income tax relief as well for every family right across this province. Small-business tax relief as well, Mr. Speaker, where we've cut the small-business tax rate by more than half, Mr. Speaker, and also small-business tax property tax reduction where we have reduced that middle tier of the EPT, Mr. Speaker.

All of that while also achieving a significant increase in investment in Saskatchewan people — an increase for health regions right across this province, an increase for education, Mr. Speaker, an increase for a number of very important social issues and challenges that we face in this province because of growth, challenges that we welcome compared to the old challenges of out-migration and of economic atrophy, but challenges nonetheless. And, Mr. Speaker, this budget also represents significant investment in a lot of those social issues.

I want to say by way of highlight before we get into what I want to offer up as a bit of an analysis on choices this budget represents, I do want to get into some highlights of the budget. Here's the specifics, Mr. Speaker. The spousal exemption and the exemption for children have increased effective January 1 past, January 1, 2011. So a family of four pays no tax on their first \$45,550 of income. That's just quite simply the very best in Canada, Mr. Speaker. And as a result of this budget cumulatively combined with the budget from a couple of years ago, 114,000 low-income earners are no longer on the tax rolls of the province of Saskatchewan.

I know the Minister of Labour is talking today about minimum wage, as he should be, as our government looks towards indexation and different formulas that will achieve that. Mr. Speaker, it's an interesting difference between this side and that

side when it comes to how we're working to make sure low-income people can have a . . . take a little bit more home at the end of the day. The NDP model was always to have ad hoc minimum wage hikes. And sometimes they kept up with inflation and sometimes they didn't, but they had these ad hoc minimum wage increases. But they never changed the basic exemption, Mr. Speaker, not meaningfully. So what was happening is they'd make the small-business sector pay a higher minimum wage, and they as government would claw more back in higher taxes for low-income people. That's part of the old Saskatchewan and has no place in the new Saskatchewan.

Phase 2 of education property tax reform happened in this budget, Mr. Speaker — lower taxes for farm families and homeowners right across this province. Mr. Speaker, on an average farm they're looking at saving approximately 80 per cent in their education tax since this government came to power, since this government said, it's time to stop talking about education property tax, which is what we got from members opposite, and it's time to start doing something about education property tax. Mr. Speaker, though, our plan also includes the residences in municipalities, in towns and villages and cities across the province, representing a 32 per cent reduction in their education property tax.

And, Mr. Speaker, if past conduct is an indication of future behaviour, as the caucus Chair on this side, the member for Estevan, also often points out, the people of this province will know, property owners will know that with a Saskatchewan Party going forward, there will be more education property tax relief as it's affordable by the treasury, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I remember in the campaign in 2007 when this was debated a lot, this issue of property tax, it was a big issue then. The government had brought in some rebate programs, sort of an interim, band-aid fix, and they were better than, Mr. Speaker, it was better than nothing. And we recognized that when the NDP government of the day brought them in. They had these rebates, and they were sort of an interim fix. And so each party in that '07 campaign offered a longer term solution for the problem. We on this side of the House said the longer term solution must include property tax relief for all people. That was our vision.

Remember what the NDP said, Mr. Speaker? What the NDP said then and what they say now, apparently, is that education property tax relief ought not to be extended to farmers, where the problem is most acute in the first place. There's another difference, Mr. Speaker, a choice that this budget highlights for the people of the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, as I've already highlighted, this budget lowers the debt by \$325 million. Mr. Speaker, this measure will bring down total government debt to its lowest levels since the late 1980s — \$3.81 billion. Three billion dollars in debt reduction.

The budget features improvements in health care, funding up to \$259 million or 4.7 per cent in this budget and \$40 million more to reduce surgical wait times, Mr. Speaker, as a part of the budget. This is going to allow us to meet the goal we've set. We're a government that works hard to set goals and objectives and then works to meet them. We've set a goal, and we've said to the people of the province that within four years you ought



not to wait more than three months for surgery. That will be . . . By the way, Mr. Speaker, we're making progress in this regard. We will meet this target, and that will very much be a feature of the brand new Saskatchewan versus the longest wait times in the country under the NDP in the old Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, \$12.6 million more for Saskatchewan Cancer Agency; \$5 million for this province to have an emergency helicopter air ambulance service.

Mr. Speaker, the member from Meewasin's shaking his head. And we ought not to be surprised because, while I wasn't here for it, I've certainly seen in *Hansard* and been told by members about the ridicule that was heaped on the STARS [shock trauma air rescue service] program by members opposite who were critical, not just critical of the program, but basically ridiculing it.

I also know the member for Estevan was able to add a little light to the debate and highlight for those members opposite who may not understand the realities for ambulatory care outside our major centres, who may not understand the realities of a growing economy where workers each and every day are in oil fields and in mines and out in rural Saskatchewan where they are susceptible to accidents and where, Mr. Speaker, they need to know that after the closure of 52 hospitals by members opposite, that they will have timely care. That's what STARS will bring to the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, \$2 million to revitalize the kidney transplant program. That's also a part of the budget.

And of course, Mr. Speaker, we'll get into housing in a moment. But there's a number of initiatives related to the budget and announced subsequent to the budget that are going to help us deal with the housing plan. By the way, Mr. Speaker, a housing plan that has been lauded by both the major daily papers in the province and welcomed by the mayors, and the cause of a lot of depression on that side of the House, Mr. Speaker, because this was one of their issues they thought that they were going to be able to raise and play a little politics with, Mr. Speaker. And you needn't look any further than the comments of the member for Saskatoon Fairview — well there they are right here — when he was . . . in his budget debate . . . This, Mr. Speaker, highlights what the NDP concern was on housing. Was it actually a concern for affordable housing needs in the province or was it about politics?

Mr. Speaker, when the Minister of Housing announced the plan to the province, when the mayors supported it, when SUMA supported it, Mr. Speaker, when the major dailies weighed in and said this is a comprehensive plan and much better than old-fashioned rent control, which hasn't worked anywhere, Mr. Speaker, including in Winnipeg where new units are not a part of that initiative, Mr. Speaker, what happened to the NDP's comment in the budget debate on housing? Well the minister or the member for Saskatoon Fairview said, first of all, that the Saskatoon mayor wasn't happy. That's what he said. And you know what, Mr. Speaker? I understand he responded to this last night at the North Saskatoon Business Association, and he invited the member for Fairview to consider not speaking for the mayor of Saskatoon, just as the mayor of Saskatoon would never want to speak for the member for Saskatoon Fairview.

So the NDP's attack, the NDP's attack on our plan, Mr. Speaker, according to the member for Fairview and now maybe the member for Lakeview who's chirping from his seat — maybe he agrees — they said this, Mr. Speaker. Basically I'll get into the quotes, but the summary of his remarks in the budget debate speech was, there will be far too many houses built in this housing plan. That's unbelievable. For months they've been saying, we need more units. We need a bigger inventory.

On this side of the House, we know that means more student housing. That's up 1,000 per cent. The first student housing at the U of S [University of Saskatchewan] since 1976, Mr. Speaker. It means more help for those who rent, and so we've indexed rental allowances for those who are most vulnerable, Mr. Speaker. It means more units through Sask Housing: 850 opened, 1,000 more under construction, Mr. Speaker.

It means also providing a higher inventory of affordable homes for the first-time homebuyer. This is the objection of the member for Fairview because he said this. The only thing that . . . And I'm reading a direct quote, Mr. Speaker, so some of it is . . . Well I'll just read the direct quote.

The only thing that is, might, so is after there are now . . . if we can:

. . . go back to those 50 MLS listings in this area, in Hampton Village, if those young people that bought those homes will now see an extra 50 houses . . . there . . . what will that do [he says]? What will that really do to the prices?

Well, Mr. Speaker, I think it might, it'll probably lower housing prices down a little bit. That's what happens when you increase the supply of housing, which is what the NDP have been calling for, for about six months, Mr. Speaker. Oh, that's his point. So he's against it. So you're against, in terms of the continuum of housing, one of them being new housing, new houses for first-time couples, your concern is you don't want those new houses available. Then you would oppose the city of Saskatoon proposal, Mr. Speaker, which we're matching. You'd oppose other municipal initiatives aimed at first-time homeowners.

Mr. Speaker, our vision in this budget is to deal with the whole continuum: student housing, Mr. Speaker, brand new houses for those who want to buy that first one, but can't afford \$300,000, and new rental of properties, Mr. Speaker.

And the NDP's point three days ago was we need more housing. And now their point is that's way too much housing, Mr. Speaker. I don't think the London School of Economics is going to be sending any applications over there any time soon, Mr. Speaker, or to the Finance critic. And we'll get to his great wisdom about taxation and how he believes an economy can be grown, along with the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Speaker.

[11:30]

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, another very important feature of the budget — and incredibly it was raised in question period today — is how we fund the municipal sector in this province, Mr. Speaker. The Municipal Affairs critic for the opposition raised

issues in the House today. Mr. Speaker, for well over a decade the municipal sector has been waiting for somebody, either the NDP when they were in power or now this government, to deal with revenue sharing in Saskatchewan. It was removed from them by the NDP government in the 1990s. You know, the hon. member who asked questions today in the House — and she's an able member and knows her files generally, and that's why I was surprised — seemed to completely forget about the history of this issue.

The history is this: the NDP government year after year after year downloaded onto the municipal sector, and they'd give an ad hoc amount here and an ad hoc amount there. Now, Mr. Speaker, what happened? What happened when we campaigned in '07 is this: we said, this province needs a permanent solution. This province needs revenue sharing that the municipal sector can bank on. Mr. Speaker, we campaigned on it, and in three budgets, it is now fully implemented in the province. And that's why the municipal sector, while they'll always say well we'd like a little more here and there, that's why they are pleased with the Government of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, there are a number of issues that we should be dealing with in this particular budget debate because it frames an important debate to come later this year. There's going to be a provincial election in Saskatchewan later this year, and we're going to be able to have a choice put before the people of the province. We'll need to have a choice put between the people of the province about what it is they prefer. This budget sets that choice up for both sides because obviously the New Democrats don't support lower taxes for families. They didn't support lowering the debt. They don't support a balanced budget. I think they actually deep down do support it, but they're just very frustrated by the fact that this is the budget they're going to have campaign against in the fall.

Still, Mr. Speaker, it sets up some interesting choices. Let's consider for example, Mr. Speaker, a choice in agriculture. And I noted that the Leader of the Opposition weighed in to the agriculture subject when he was up on his feet in the budget. Mr. Speaker, under this government, under this government, both in good times financially in '08 and this year and also in tight times in 2009 when the budget was tight, under this government on every occasion when asked, that Minister of Agriculture and this government have been there for producers.

Mr. Speaker, you can consider the record which is sort of the culmination of which is evidence in this budget. The record is we now have the AgriStability suite of programs being administered, and administered more efficiently and from a Saskatchewan perspective right there in Melville, Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

There was a loan program for the stock growers of this province, for cattle producers when they needed it. There was a cash program for cattle producers when they needed it. Mr. Speaker, there was help for those that were devastated by flooding this spring when they needed it. There was long-awaited improvements to crop insurance also represented here. And, Mr. Speaker, in this budget as in every Saskatchewan Party budget, the agriculture programs of this province aren't on a wing and an NDP prayer. They are fully funded in the budget, Mr. Speaker.

And the member for Regina Walsh Acres chirps from her seat, Mr. Speaker. She ought to check with her leader. She ought to ask the veterans over on that side of the House, why is it that rural Saskatchewan rejects our party? The reason, Mr. Speaker, is twofold. Number one, rural Saskatchewan rejects that party because that party has rejected rural Saskatchewan. And the member for Walsh Acres ought to know that the second reason why they do so terribly in rural Saskatchewan is that this government has represented and served the interests of rural Saskatchewan. That's what this budget's about, Mr. Speaker.

The NDP leader, in his remarks on the budget just moments ago, talked about a potential disaster looming in agriculture. There is no greater disaster for farmers in this province that would loom over them than that leader and that party, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, and so we can move forward and so . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Well the hon. member is asking what happened to hope beat fear. Here's an update. Hope beat fear in '07 and it's beating it every day since, Mr. Speaker. But I want to welcome her interventions. But I want to welcome her interventions because they're timely and they help make the case.

Mr. Speaker, the question that this budget poses for agriculture is, do we want to continue to move forward with a plan that supports agriculture, forward with a vision for innovation in agriculture, in biotechnology, in being there at the farm gate, or do we want to go back to the days when farm programs were ripped up and the property tax issue ignored, Mr. Speaker? We on this side of the House will vote for the budget. We choose forward, Mr. Speaker.

What about highways? What about highways? Mr. Speaker, in this budget again there is a significant investment in highways in the province. There is, just before the budget, an additional significant investment in rural roads in the province of Saskatchewan. The cumulative effect of this budget on all of the other budgets means this: historic investments to fix the highways infrastructure deficit left behind by our friends on the other side, Mr. Speaker.

In fact it wasn't very long ago when that Leader of the Opposition was the deputy premier. And he spelled out the highways program for the NDP. Mr. Speaker, compared to this budget, here's what a news article from *The StarPhoenix* said in June 8th of 2000 about highways budgeting, Mr. Speaker, on point: "Pothole patrol catches on: Deputy premier [that would be the current Leader of the Opposition, deputy premier] proposes turning more roads over to volunteers."

It's quite a plan. The article goes on, and I'm quoting, Mr. Speaker, "Val Marie's pothole patching volunteers may have stumbled upon the solution to fixing Saskatchewan's crumbling . . ."

[Interjections]

**The Speaker:** — Order, order, order. Order. I believe there's been one member's been recognized to speak, and I recognize the Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Quoting, Mr. Speaker:

Val Marie's pothole patching volunteers may have stumbled upon the solution to fixing Saskatchewan's crumbling rural roads [I would parenthetically add this is under the NDP] and giving citizens a sense of empowerment to boot, deputy premier Dwain Lingenfelter said on Wednesday.

I remember that, Mr. Speaker, when the deputy premier of the province of Saskatchewan, confronted with the worst highways infrastructure deficit maybe on earth, said to the people of the province, said to the member for Cypress Hills, fix your own roads, Mr. Speaker. That was the NDP plan in 2000.

Mr. Speaker, consider this budget. Consider historic investments in highways. We have the radical notion that goes something like this: if you pay taxes to the province of Saskatchewan, it should probably be the province of Saskatchewan that fixes the roads, Mr. Speaker.

So now the infrastructure deficit we inherited from the member for Regina Rosemont is big. It's about \$1 billion, according to the CAA [Canadian Automobile Association], just in highways alone. So it's going to take some while for us to catch up. We can't fix all the roads overnight but, Mr. Speaker, we are making progress. I think that fair-minded people across this province agree and municipal groups are agreeing with that as well, Mr. Speaker.

So we're going to have a choice in the next election: forward with a five-year — by the way, first time in the history of the province — a five-year rolling plan, transparent plan, and money to fix the roads, or backwards to a time when the Leader of the Opposition said in government, fix your own highways. We'll support the budget. We'll choose forward, Mr. Speaker.

What about education, Mr. Speaker? What about education? In the last . . .

[Interjections]

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order. Order. Order. Order. Over time, the Speakers have recognized that an appropriate heckle certainly has been part of debate, but an ongoing dialogue from members who have already spoken is unacceptable. I recognize the Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would also want to say that in education, over three years and in this budget again, there has never been the amount of capital investment in education in the recent history of our province, Mr. Speaker. Here again, we inherited a huge deficit.

And this budget, with nine new schools, building on previous budgets, with capital investments and also in terms of the maintenance investments that were neglected so long under the NDP — block funding as they're called, Mr. Speaker — we have I think over \$450 million in capital investment in three years in education and more to come with operating funds for school boards also. We'll choose forward investing in education versus backwards when the NDP downloaded onto the local sector, Mr. Speaker.

In social services, Mr. Speaker, there are a number of very, very important issues that aren't, as the critic would say, a child care thing. They are important child care issues that we know we have to deal with better in this province. They've been around for a long time, including under our government.

And, Mr. Speaker, the child in care issue has been a top priority of the minister and all ministers and MLAs in this government. The budget represents our priority in this regard, Mr. Speaker, as it adds more people, more staff to intervene on behalf of kids in care, kids who are vulnerable in the province, with more to come, Mr. Speaker.

And also it continues with a very significant development that our party started, the previous Social Services minister initiated and now continued under the current minister, which is this: there is a wait-list for people who have intellectual disabilities who would like the dignity of a home and have wanted one for a long time. And the wait-list, I think when we started was over 450 or 440. Well, Mr. Speaker, I can tell you that we announced a plan to eliminate that wait-list in four years. And I can tell you this: we are on track to achieve that goal, Mr. Speaker. In some parts of the province, including in the Southwest, wait-lists have gone from 25 for some regions to zero in three years, with more work to be done, Mr. Speaker.

So with all due respect to members opposite, we are going to choose forward dealing with the issue rather than the way it used to be, backwards when they just talked about some of these issues, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, there are a number of other choices that this budget frames in terms of the coming election when it comes to the economy. First of all, Mr. Speaker, we're going to need balanced budgets going forward if we're going to continue the Saskatchewan advantage. This budget speaks to that. As well it takes a longer term view. We brought back four-year planning to the government, something eliminated by the NDP, so people could see the sustainability of our finances in the longer term.

Mr. Speaker, compare that with what is going to be the choice on the other side, where they have already admitted to what we think is about a billion four in new spending in their policy document, about a billion four. When asked how will you pay for that, the Leader of the Opposition said, well they're going to do a couple of things: one, they're going to jack up royalty rates — more on that in a moment — and also they're going to get \$800 million from the federal government. That's their plan. They have an \$800 million hole in their plan, 800 million in deficit and higher taxes, and they're going to deal with it by getting money, getting blood from a stone, Mr. Speaker. They're going to deal with it even though there is not a federal party today including their federal party that has said they're going to deal with the equalization issue.

It's fantasy, Mr. Speaker. They're going to risk the future of this province and our economy on a money tree, instead of stable budgeting you'll see from this side of the House, Mr. Speaker. As far as I know, the money trees don't exist, Mr. Speaker. Eight hundred million dollar hole right through the member of Regina Walsh Acres' plan for this province. That means higher taxes and bigger debt, higher taxes, bigger spending. We'll choose forward with a growing economy that

can afford sustainable growth in public service, reduced debt versus irresponsibility you'll get going backwards with the NDP, Mr. Speaker.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, let me just say, here's the other risk. In this budget, a feature of this budget is royalty stability. Lower taxes for small business and royalty stability. Mr. Speaker, we have the highest potash taxes in the country. Let me say it again: the highest . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Sorry, you're right, the hon. minister has corrected me. The highest potash taxes on earth — that's what we have today. Twice the rate of the next highest, which is Jordan.

There are three pages . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Well there's also New Brunswick, does the hon. member think New Brunswick's a pretty safe place? Mr. Speaker, there are three, there are three pages, three pages of projects around the world on the drawing boards for potash expansion.

The previous premier, and maybe the current deputy leader of the NDP agreed at the time, the previous premier had the foresight to say we may not be able to change the overall potash tax rates, but we better put in some temporary incentives so that when expansions are planned they don't happen in Chile, or Jordan, or New Brunswick but that they would happen in Delisle, that they would happen in the Regina area, that they would happen in the Saskatoon area, that they might be built in Humboldt, Mr. Speaker.

Today the largest potash mine proposed in the world is currently being worked on for the Humboldt area, for Jansen Lake. Mr. Speaker, it's pretty clear that the entire project would be risked if that party ever got to be in power, jacked up the royalty rates. The 12 billion in expansions and thousands of jobs are gone. The new mine at Jansen Lake are gone, and the economy is poorer for it. That is not an economic plan; it's a recipe for another NDP disaster on a larger scale even than SPUDCO [Saskatchewan Potato Utility Development Company], if you can imagine that, Mr. Speaker.

[11:45]

And the member for Lakeview knows he's got a big problem with this issue, Mr. Speaker. The member for Lakeview knows that the Leader of the Opposition's gone further than potash. He's also said he'll jack up uranium rates. It was in their caucus-paid ad. Mr. Speaker, in uranium we have a pretty sensitive industry right now.

We have, Mr. Speaker, the largest uranium mining company on earth located in Saskatoon. I think 44 per cent of their workforce are First Nations, are Aboriginal people, Mr. Speaker. And what that company needs now more than ever is stable royalty rates. And we would say to the member for Cumberland and the member for Athabasca to stand up to his party's position, his leader's position that he will risk northern jobs, First Nations jobs in the uranium industry by jacking up royalty rates, Mr. Speaker. We'll go forward with stability and avoid backwards with economic disaster for northern Saskatchewan and for First Nations.

One final point, Mr. Speaker, and one final point with respect to royalties. The Leader of the Opposition has also openly talked

about increasing oil royalties, even though when he was a junior executive at Nexen, he participated in the Alberta oil royalty review. And we've got the debt. We've got the slide show. And Nexen went to that slide show in Alberta and said, what Alberta ought not to do is mess with royalties. And you know what? Nexen was right. If he had anything to do with it, he was right at the time.

But now he's back, and he's saying, Mr. Speaker, on December 13th, 2010 — the member for Wakamow should pay attention so she can maybe correct the Leader of the Opposition — he said this, "If I become Premier in November of 2011, I would institute a review of oil royalties in the province, whether it's potash, uranium, oil, or gas." It's right here. That's what it says.

Mr. Speaker, there is . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Well now the member says, so what's wrong with reviewing them? Mr. Speaker, are the NDP even faintly aware of what happened in Alberta over the last two years, Mr. Speaker? Are they aware of what's happening in Britain today? The British government . . . And the Leader of the Opposition has used this as an example, unbelievably, has said, we're going to jack up oil royalties in the UK [United Kingdom]. Do you know what Nexen, his former company, said, that has a play offshore of the UK, do you know what they've said? They may review, they may back off from their plans to invest in that country and create jobs because of royalty instability.

Mr. Speaker, we look forward to the debate that this budget frames. It frames a question of, do you want to move forward in the fastest growing province in the country, the fastest growing jurisdiction in Canada today that is, one by one, dealing with the challenges we have in rural and urban and northern Saskatchewan, because we have the economic capacity to finally deal with them? That is meeting health care recruitment targets, that's reducing wait times, Mr. Speaker?

Do you want to move forward with a budget and a party that's saying we need to continue to support agriculture, to invest in both our cities and in the country? Do you want to move forward with a budget, Mr. Speaker, and an overall plan for the economy that says our vision is to grow the innovation sector?

And as the Finance minister rose and spoke on budget day very eloquently of our plan for the next economy, Mr. Speaker, the question is clear. The question couldn't be clearer. On this budget and the vote we're about to have and on the future of this province and what will happen on the 7th of November later this year, do you want to move forward, building the best place in Canada, built by not a government but by the best people in Canada?

Or do you want to go backwards to a time when the headlines said people were leaving the province in droves, Mr. Speaker, when we had the worst job creation record in the country, Mr. Speaker, to a time when our economy was underperforming and we couldn't afford health care and we couldn't afford social services to the extent we can?

Mr. Speaker, I would say the vast majority of the people of the province, and I think the consensus of members on this side of the House, is quite simply this: we choose the Saskatchewan advantage. We choose forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order. Order. Order. I must remind members that the Minister of Finance is standing to close debate. If anyone else wishes to enter the debate, they must do so now. I recognize the Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Mr. Krawetz:** — Thank you very much. Mr. Speaker, it's indeed an honour to rise in this Assembly and close debate on what I have listened to as . . . have been some great comments, especially from this side of the House. You know, Mr. Speaker, I will make some comments about some of the material that I heard from members opposite to ensure that the correct message, the accurate message is in fact on the record, Mr. Speaker.

But before I do that, I just want to quickly thank my colleagues, but especially the members from Kelvington-Wadena, Martensville, Humboldt, Thunder Creek, and Saskatoon Greystone. Mr. Speaker, the members that represent those five constituencies are on Treasury Board with me. And I must tell you that, as a new member, it was indeed a great privilege to work with these five individuals to ensure that we listened to our ministers, that we listened to all the ministries present their material, and thus be able to develop a budget for cabinet.

I also want to express my appreciation to my chief of staff who has joined me back on November 1st of 2010. You know she has fitted in very well and is doing just a great job, and a thank you to Dianne Ford.

I also want to thank the many people over in Finance. The development of a budget takes, you know, literally the entire year, and we're working on that already. So I want to extend my appreciation to the dozens of individuals in Finance.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to begin by quoting from a very useful document, one that I'm sure the opposition should look at more often. Mr. Speaker, it's on page 79 of the document, and it's the auditor's report, Mr. Speaker. It's the auditor's report, the Acting Provincial Auditor, Brian Atkinson, and he says this: "I have audited the summary statement of financial position of the Government of Saskatchewan as at March 31, 2010."

Next paragraph his opening line is, "I conducted my audit in accordance with Canadian generally-accepted auditing standards." And his final statement, Mr. Speaker, is this:

In my opinion, these financial statements present fairly in all material respects the financial position of the Government of Saskatchewan as at March 31, 2010 and the results of its operations, the changes in its net debt, and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian generally-accepted accounting principles.

Mr. Speaker, then on the day of the budget I was interested to see the release from the New Democratic Party. The New Democratic Party release, and I quote directly from the release. It's a quote from the Leader of the Opposition, and it says this:

The Finance minister's claim that this budget is balanced on a summary basis would be accepted nowhere else in Canada. It has deliberately not followed generally-accepted accounting principles to achieve this deception.

Mr. Speaker, can you imagine the Leader of the Opposition would say, you know, Mr. Atkinson, you have conducted the audit for years and you're going to do the same thing on the same budget as we have done as we have in the past, Mr. Speaker. And oh by the way, I know better than you, Mr. Auditor. You're not following generally accepted accounting principles. How ridiculous, Mr. Speaker. How ridiculous.

And then, Mr. Speaker, I listened to the remarks of the critic, the member for Regina Rosemont. And he says this, and I'm quoting from page 6879 on March 23rd:

We have a government that reports from an outdated, improper set of accounting rules [Mr. Speaker]. By public sector accounting standards followed by every other province, every territory, and the federal government, this budget is a summary deficit [Mr. Speaker].

Absolutely wrong. Absolutely wrong.

I'm even going to go back a little further, Mr. Speaker. When the members opposite were in government, and in fact we developed the summary financial basis, this is the message from former auditor Fred Wendel. It's a report of 1996 and it says this: "The government's summary financial statements are first class."

Mr. Speaker, we followed the exact same principles for the last number of years introduced in this year's budget exactly the same way. And members opposite stand up and say, you're not following generally accepted accounting principles. We know better, Mr. Speaker. The former auditor, Fred Wendel, didn't know what he was talking about. Mr. Speaker, the current Leader of the Opposition says this is not a summary budget. You know, this is absolutely wrong.

Mr. Speaker, so for the members opposite to suggest to the public of the province of Saskatchewan that suddenly the General Revenue Fund, Mr. Speaker, which will have a surplus of \$115 million, the summary financial statements, Mr. Speaker, the summary financial statements which will have a surplus of \$54 million, Mr. Speaker . . . But the member for Regina Rosemont says, you're not following proper accounting principles because I know better. Mr. Speaker, absolutely ludicrous. Absolutely.

Mr. Speaker, one of the other comments that has been made about the budget and whether or not it has a summary comes from the member of, from . . . representing North Battleford. And he talks about Crown, Crown dividends. The fact, Mr. Speaker, that last year . . . And the minister responsible for Crowns, I think, made this pretty clear in answers to questions this week. The member from North Battleford says, you're stripping 100 per cent of Crown dividends and as a result they have to borrow.

And I quote, I quote from The Battlefords *News-Optimist* and it says this: "I think it's important for the public to realize that the Sask. Party government is balancing its budget by stripping 100 per cent of the Crown corporation profits and are now forcing our Crown corporations into debt, said Taylor."

Mr. Speaker, for that to have any validity, people would have to

forget this fact. People would have to forget this very important fact that in 2010, in the annual reports of all of the Crown Corporations, and I'm sure members — well no, they probably didn't read them — they would recognize that SaskPower earnings in 2010 were \$159.5 million, million dollars earnings. Dividend taken from SaskPower, zero. Zero, Mr. Speaker. And in the projections, and in the projections for 2011, the anticipated earnings from SaskPower are again going to be over \$100 million, well over \$100 million. The projection for the dividends taken from SaskPower, zero.

So the member from North Battleford prints in the paper that — and you know, he's a respected MLA; he's been a Member of Parliament — he prints in the paper and says the government is taking 100 per cent of everything. Wrong. Absolutely wrong, Mr. Speaker.

We know, we know who took more than 100 per cent in times . . . Well lets go back to 1999, Mr. Speaker, sorry, 1998 dividend taken, \$200 million, 114 per cent, Mr. Speaker, of earnings; 2001, 200 million taken in dividends, 181 per cent, Mr. Speaker; 2002, Mr. Speaker, dividend taken, \$300 million, 114 per cent, Mr. Speaker. So, Mr. Speaker, again wrong information, Mr. Speaker, wrong information in the record that we need to correct.

Mr. Speaker, one of the other comments made by the Leader of the Opposition was around child care. And he said this: I think the shortage at the University of Saskatchewan is over 500 families waiting for daycare at the university. They need to be dealt with.

Five hundred families, Mr. Speaker. Reality? We'll get to that. The Ministry of Education tracks all of the requests across the province, and there are two requests from the area of the University of Saskatchewan, two organizations. The request is 174 spaces, Mr. Speaker, 174.

[12:00]

Now the interesting thing is one of these submissions has been made since 2007. And each and every year when the ministry allocates the number of child care spaces, the answer has been, when the Saskatoon regional office contacts them, the response to this is, we're not ready, and they declined them.

So, Mr. Speaker, for the member opposite to suggest that there are 500 families in Saskatoon at the university waiting for child care when in fact there's only 174 applications . . . And we were pretty proud, Mr. Speaker, to be able to meet a challenge — and it is a challenge — when we added additional dollars, we added additional dollars to ensure that we added 500 new child care spaces. Mr. Speaker, 500 new child care spaces will mean that since we have become government, 12,700 child care spaces in the province of Saskatchewan — 3,000 more than when the NDP were in power, Mr. Speaker, 3,000 more.

Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to get into the specifics of all of the ministry's budget because such a terrific job has been done by all speakers. All the MLAs on this side of the House have highlighted how there will be tremendous benefits in this budget. There'll be benefits in health care, Mr. Speaker. There'll be benefits in education. There'll be benefits in

advanced education. You can go on and on and on about all of the positive things that this budget is introducing.

What I'm going to comment on, Mr. Speaker, for a few minutes is some of the reaction by others. What has happened, what has happened to this province, Mr. Speaker, over the last three years? What has happened as a reaction to positive budgets that we've introduced in the past, and then of course, continued positive responses from people today?

We're going to go back, Mr. Speaker. We're going to go back a little bit because we have to realize what is happening in this province regarding growth, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in 2009 . . . For the first time, Mr. Speaker, since 2009 . . . And this is a very important statistic. Members opposite have to understand this because they planned for decline. Throughout their 16 years they planned for a declining province. We're planning for growth. And you know why we have to plan for growth, Mr. Speaker? In the year 2009, 14,536 babies were born in the province of Saskatchewan — first time, Mr. Speaker, that we had over 14,000 births since 1992, first time.

Now let's move forward to the year 2010, Mr. Speaker. Back in '09 of course I was pretty excited as the former Education minister because that means students in our classrooms. But in 2010, Mr. Speaker, the number of births that occurred, 14,978 — 22 short of 15,000. Now let's take those two years, Mr. Speaker, well over 14,500, first time since 1992. In our school systems, Mr. Speaker, across the province we have about 11,500 students that range in each of our grades: grade 2, grade 3, grade 4, grade 5 — about 11,500 and now we're having births of 14,500.

But you know, Mr. Speaker, the difference when we look ahead, when we have that vision of what we need in the future . . . In the past of course, the only time that there was 14,000 births was way back in '92 and you know, I think they're 20-plus years old or 19 years old. They're already through the school system. But we only have 11,000 in our schools now. Why? Well you know what, Mr. Speaker? Families, families 15 years ago, 10 years ago under the NDP, couldn't find work, couldn't have opportunities, and they moved. They moved, Mr. Speaker. They left. Now in some instance, a particular individual decided to return. He didn't bring any extra children back with him, but he returned.

But, Mr. Speaker, now we have a situation where because of the job creation in this province, because of the fact that we're moving forward, there's a high likelihood that in five years time the school systems are going to be seeing 14,000 students in the school. They know that the grades that are going to be leaving are 11,000, and they're going to be replacing them with 14,000. That's a positive growth. That's a Saskatchewan advantage, Mr. Speaker.

One of the other statistics that the members opposite never want to hear is, of course, a growth in population. In fact a number of years ago . . . And I'm going to repeat what one of our members or probably even more than one of our members have said. You know, there was comments by the NDP when they were on this side of the House. They said, you can't grow at the national average. How ludicrous could we be in the opposition at that time to suggest that the province could grow at a 1 per cent

rate? It was just not . . . it was impossible.

Mr. Speaker, the statistics are out last week that show that the province of Saskatchewan, the population is 1,052,000 people — the largest ever population in the province of Saskatchewan.

So, Mr. Speaker, there are many, many, many things that have occurred in this province. We're seeing it all over the province. We're seeing communities, Mr. Speaker, that haven't built new lots or haven't improved lots for the construction of homes for decades, Mr. Speaker, and now they're taking advantage of government programs to ensure that they develop those kinds of situations.

We're seeing the growth of businesses, Mr. Speaker. The fact that we lead the nation in so many things, we're either number one or number two in growth in population, in retail sales of vehicles, Mr. Speaker. We're leading manufacturing, we're leading in so many components.

And the result is, as I've been involved in travelling across this great nation, people are looking at Saskatchewan in a different way. They are looking at Saskatchewan as a place of opportunity, Mr. Speaker. They know that since we've made so many changes — and the Premier summarized many of them along with others — the fact that we have reduced the small business tax to 2 per cent, Mr. Speaker, very, very positive because, you know, in this province we know that business, especially small businesses create our jobs, Mr. Speaker. They create our jobs. We want to be competitive, Mr. Speaker, and I think there's evidence of that.

I want to make one comment about agriculture because I had — no, I didn't have to, but I did — I listened to the member opposite, the Leader of the Opposition, talk about agriculture. And I know the Minister of Agriculture on this side of the House has made it pretty clear about how we have improved agriculture. And I listened to him talk about, about the fact that, you know, we weren't really there for farmers. There's nothing in this budget. Mr. Speaker, \$321 million in agricultural budget. Mr. Speaker, a 13 per cent increase fully funding AgriStability, AgriInvest, crop insurance, Mr. Speaker.

And you know what he said? Oh, there's going to be a big flood, going to be a big flood. You know what, Mr. Speaker? When my dad was alive, and he farmed for just about 50 years, he used to always say you never lose a crop in April. You never lose a crop in April, Mr. Speaker. And as a result of that, as a result of that, you know, farmers are, they're optimistic, Mr. Speaker. Yes, weather could change that. And you know, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture, in co-operation with the federal government last year, made available \$360 million more than what was in last year's budget.

I think it's pretty clear who's there for the agriculture community, Mr. Speaker. All you have to do is look at farmers and ask them what's their tax assessment, what their taxable assessment is. And you can take any number, Mr. Speaker, because people know what their taxable assessments are because years ago we used to have a tax revolt in this province. People knew that they could not pay the kind of tax that the former NDP government was forcing upon them because they were unfunding education, Mr. Speaker. They were not funding

it properly. Mr. Speaker, that kind of development has changed. We know that agricultural land will receive an 80 per cent tax break, Mr. Speaker, 80 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, this has been a great five days for the people of Saskatchewan because we've presented a budget to the people of Saskatchewan. It's an opportunity for people to take a look at the budget, to understand that everything from the personal income tax cut to the business tax cut to the fact that now we are being able to improve our highways.

Two hundred and fifty million dollars in health care, additional \$250 million in health care, 9 per cent increase. There are tremendous things that are going to happen, Mr. Speaker. And as I said in my speech, opening speech, we're going to see improved colorectal cancer screening programs. We're going to see improvements at the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency, Mr. Speaker. Those are all very positive things. And I look forward to everyone in this House voting for the budget because it's the budget for the people of Saskatchewan.

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order. The question before the Assembly is the amendment presented by the member from Regina Rosemont:

That the motion be amended by removing all words following the word "Assembly" and adding:

condemns this government for a budget that ignores Saskatchewan people and families; and furthermore,

That this government no longer has the confidence of this Assembly and of the people of Saskatchewan because, despite a record level of revenue, this budget is doing nothing to help people and families deal with the rising costs of housing. It does nothing to implement rent control. It does not help struggling families that deal with the growing cost of living. It does nothing to improve the province's education system. It fails to get a fair potash royalty deal for Saskatchewan people. And it is not telling Saskatchewan people this government is actually increasing the province's debt.

Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**Some Hon. Members:** — No.

**The Speaker:** — Those in favour of the motion, all those in favour say aye.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Aye.

**The Speaker:** — Those opposed say nay.

**Some Hon. Members:** — No.

**The Speaker:** — I believe the nays have it. Call in the members.

[The division bells rang from 12:12 until 12:14.]

**The Speaker:** — I call members to order. And I'd ask members to allow the vote to proceed without interruption. Those in favour of the amendment, please rise.

[Yeas — 19]

Lingenfelter	McCall	Belanger
Harper	Trew	Higgins
Atkinson	Nilson	Forbes
Vermette	Brotten	Furber
Morin	Yates	Iwanchuk
Taylor	Quennell	Wotherspoon
Chartier		

[12:15]

**The Speaker:** — Those opposed to the amendment, please rise.

[Nays — 37]

Wall	Morgan	Bjornerud
Norris	Draude	Krawetz
Boyd	Eagles	McMorris
Cheveldayoff	Duncan	Huyghebaert
McMillan	Harpauer	D'Autremont
Harrison	Hickie	Reiter
Hutchinson	Brkich	Elhard
Hart	Schriemer	Stewart
Allchurch	Weekes	Ross
Wilson	Gantfoer	Michelson
Wyant	Ottenbreit	Chisholm
Kirsch	Bradshaw	Tell
Heppner		

**Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel:** — Those for, 19; those opposed, 37.

**The Speaker:** — The amendment is defeated.

The question before the Assembly is the motion presented by the member from Canora-Pelly, the Minister of Finance, seconded by the member from Martensville:

That the Assembly approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**Some Hon. Members:** — No.

**The Speaker:** — Those in favour say aye.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Aye.

**The Speaker:** — Those opposed say nay.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Nay.

**The Speaker:** — I believe the ayes have it. Call in the members.

[The division bells rang from 12:17 until 12:18.]

**The Speaker:** — Order. I'd ask the members allow the vote on the main motion to proceed without interference. Those in favour of the motion, please rise.

[Yeas — 37]

Wall	Morgan	Bjornerud
Norris	Draude	Krawetz
Boyd	Eagles	McMorris
Cheveldayoff	Duncan	Huyghebaert
McMillan	Harpauer	D'Autremont
Harrison	Hickie	Reiter
Hutchinson	Brkich	Elhard
Hart	Schriemer	Stewart
Allchurch	Weekes	Ross
Wilson	Gantfoer	Michelson
Wyant	Ottenbreit	Chisholm
Kirsch	Bradshaw	Tell
Heppner		

**The Speaker:** — Those opposed to the motion please rise.

[Nays — 20]

Lingenfelter	McCall	Belanger
Harper	Trew	Higgins
Junor	Atkinson	Nilson
Forbes	Vermette	Brotten
Furber	Morin	Yates
Iwanchuk	Taylor	Quennell
Wotherspoon	Chartier	

**Clerk:** — Mr. Speaker, those in favour of the motion, 37; those opposed, 20.

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

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you Mr. Speaker. I move that the House do now adjourn.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Agreed. Carried. This Assembly stands adjourned until Monday afternoon at 1:30 p.m. Enjoy your weekend.

[The Assembly adjourned at 12:21.]



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# GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN

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