



FOURTH SESSION - TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE

of the

**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

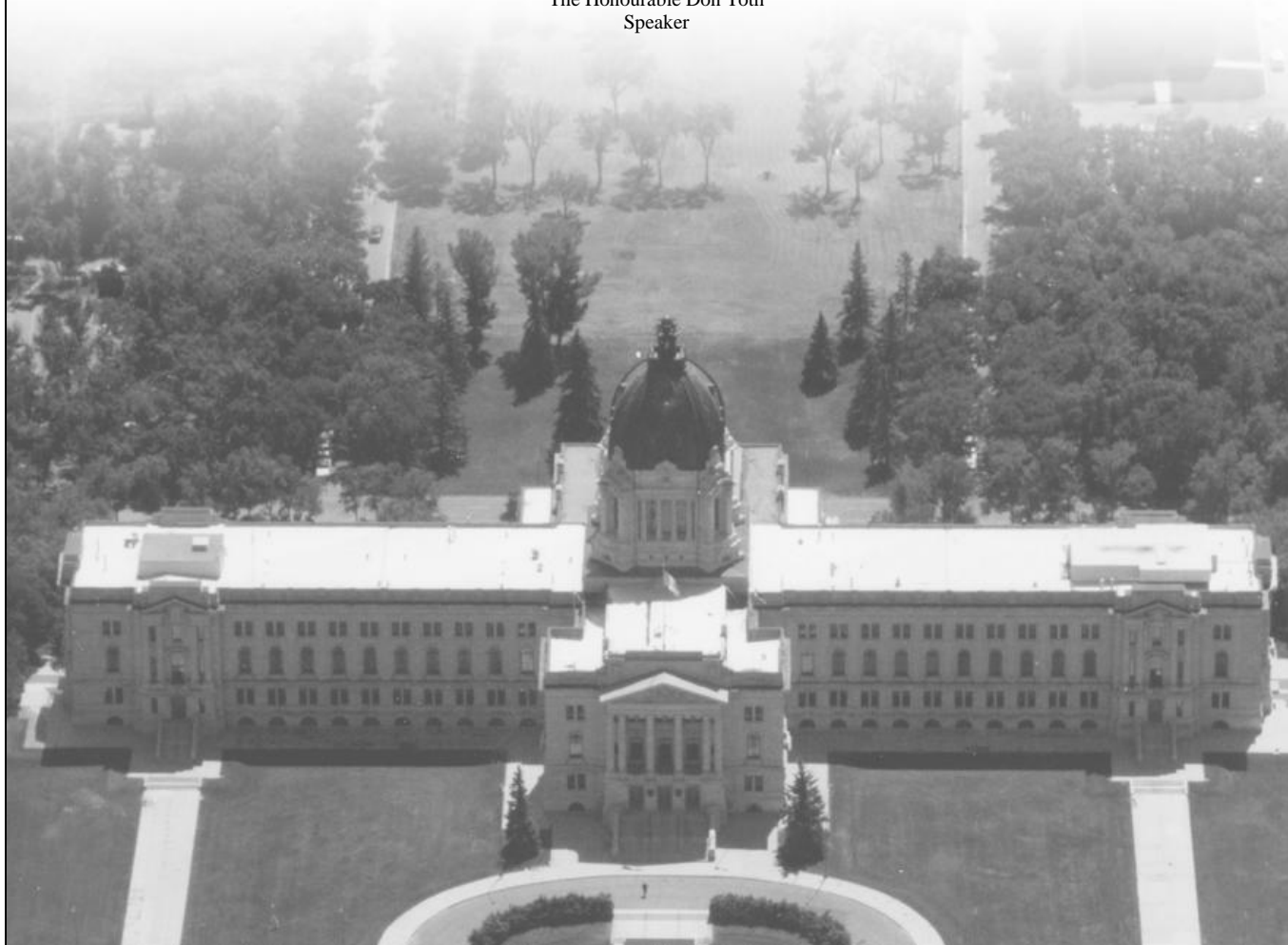
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**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS**

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(HANSARD)

Published under the  
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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
Ottenbreit, Greg	SP	Yorkton
Quennell, Frank	NDP	Saskatoon Meewasin
Reiter, Hon. Jim	SP	Rosetown-Elrose
Ross, Hon. Laura	SP	Regina Qu'Appelle Valley
Schriemer, Joceline	SP	Saskatoon Sutherland
Stewart, Lyle	SP	Thunder Creek
Taylor, Len	NDP	The Battlefords
Tell, Christine	SP	Regina Wascana Plains
Toth, Hon. Don	SP	Moosomin
Trew, Kim	NDP	Regina Coronation Park
Vermette, Doyle	NDP	Cumberland
Wall, Hon. Brad	SP	Swift Current
Weekes, Randy	SP	Biggar
Wilson, Nadine	SP	Saskatchewan Rivers
Wotherspoon, Trent	NDP	Regina Rosemont
Wyant, Gordon	SP	Saskatoon Northwest
Yates, Kevin	NDP	Regina Dewdney

[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

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

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, with leave to make a statement.

**The Speaker:** — The Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition has asked for leave to make a personal statement. Is leave granted?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition.

### STATEMENT BY A MEMBER

#### Allan Emrys Blakeney

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, it's my privilege to rise in the Chamber today to pay tribute to one of Saskatchewan's greatest citizens, Allan Emrys Blakeney, a public servant, a member of the Assembly, a friend, a distinguished cabinet minister, a great party leader, and a premier of extraordinary intelligence, principles, vision, and determination.

It was as a young man in Bridgewater, Nova Scotia that Allan Blakeney's keen intelligence began to show itself as he earned top marks at high school and then later excelled in law school at Dalhousie University in Halifax. He won his native province's Rhodes Scholarship and studies carried him to Oxford university from 1947 to 1949.

In 1950, Mr. Speaker, he came to this province to begin a career in public service that would span several decades. Beginning at the government finance office, he was part of a vibrant and progressive ferment the Douglas government had created in Saskatchewan's public service, making it the envy of Canada.

Throughout his later political career, Mr. Speaker, he would retain a clear vision of the important public role that civil servants play in the development and more importantly in the implementation of sound public policy.

He entered political life in 1960, winning the election and earning a place at the cabinet table of Tommy Douglas as his minister of Education. And later as minister of Health under Woodrow Lloyd, he played a crucial role in introducing and implementing medicare, our public health care system, which Canadians still consider one of our great national treasures.

After a period in opposition, he won the leadership of our party in 1970 and became Saskatchewan's 10th premier in the election the following year. He had campaigned, Mr. Speaker, on New Deal for People, a pragmatic social democratic policy program that was ridiculed by the government of the day when it was first introduced to the public. And Blakeney didn't seem to mind the government attacks on the policy. And he said and I quote, "When you get the government talking about the

opposition program, you're moving things right along."

As I mentioned, Mr. Speaker, the New Deal for People and all the policy initiatives of the Blakeney years were based on principled, pragmatic, sensible, social democratic values implemented with Blakeney's characteristic intelligence and determination — things like the Department of Northern Saskatchewan; a home care program which I might add, Mr. Speaker, I had the privilege of implementing as my first cabinet post under Allan Blakeney; a prescription drug plan; a children's dental plan; a new income support for seniors and affordable housing.

And one issue he showed determination in every way, Mr. Speaker, was on the issue of resource control, and in particular, that of potash. He was willing to take on not only the potash companies but also Ottawa in the struggle over who controlled that resource and who should benefit from the then-rising price of potash. As his government moved to ensure the people of the province got a fair return on their resources, potash companies ran advertisements threatening to cancel expansions. But Blakeney persevered, and in the end his cool and rational approach triumphed over that fearmongering and attack ads. And the triumph, Mr. Speaker, was not for him, but for the vision that he had for the people of Saskatchewan and their need to benefit from their resource.

Allow me, Mr. Speaker, to quote from Dennis Gruending's work on former Premier Blakeney. And I quote:

Blakeney did see the revenues accruing from potash, uranium, and other resources — the foundation for his social democratic dream. The government would play a major role in creating wealth to be redistributed in health care, in education, in social programs, and keeping people home and employed in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, that's a dream many of us still share today in our province.

Mr. Speaker, Allan Blakeney was a leading political figure not only in Saskatchewan but also on the national stage. And he played a significant role in the constitutional debate of the 1970s and 1980s, bringing his intelligence and deep understanding of Canadian traditions and institutions to bear on the most fundamental political question of the day. Here again he acted out of principle to defend the interest of Saskatchewan families, arguing before the Supreme Court that Ottawa could not act unilaterally in amending the constitution but had to consult with all provinces.

Returned to opposition in 1982, Allan Blakeney set out the work of renewing the party. And I remember that period all too well, Mr. Speaker. I'll always recall the first meeting of the party's provincial council meeting after the defeat. We all know the feeling of having to go through that. And party members from across the province came together to talk about the campaign. And of course, as always happens, it's who is to blame? Was it the campaign manager? Was it the political staff? Was it the candidates themselves? What happened in the election?

And I recall Premier Blakeney, former premier Blakeney at that moment, calmly listening to the debate and argument for about an hour — some of you may have been at that council meeting — and then quietly going to the mic. And I quote his words, he said, “Folks, we went from a majority government to eight seats. I think we have to agree that it took nothing less than a total team effort.” Allan brought the house down, and the council quickly then moved on to looking at the future and the work that needed to be done to rebuild the party for the ’86 election.

Others have said this, and I concur that those years between ’82 and ’86 were an incredible display of the real leadership of Allan Blakeney. And I remember many, many times sitting where the now deputy leader sits, and Allan Blakeney at this desk while he calmly asked tough questions about the government of the day. And the fact that the government of the day had 56 seats and we had only eight made that job particularly difficult. And day after day I would marvel at his knowledge and his dedication, his determination to provide the people of Saskatchewan the best possible representation. And he rebuilt and renewed the party so well and so quickly that by the time the election came in 1986 he surprised everyone when he won the popular vote. He elected 26 MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly] in that election and set the foundation for many years to come. And that was a tribute to Allan Blakeney’s hard work and vision.

1986 would be Allan’s final election, Mr. Speaker. After over 25 years as an elected member, 11 of them as premier, Allan Blakeney stepped down as leader in November of 1987. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow, April 19, marks the anniversary of Allan Blakeney’s first nomination as a CCF [Co-operative Commonwealth Federation] candidate in 1960. Over half a century have now passed since he first entered this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, and we can all be thankful for the life, the legacy of Allan Blakeney, and the many years of public service he devoted to the people of Saskatchewan and Canada.

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

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Mr. Speaker, I request leave to make a statement.

**The Speaker:** — The Premier has requested leave to make a personal statement. Is leave granted?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Leave has been granted. I recognize the Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Mr. Speaker, but for my own read of the history of our province and the book that he penned and released not too long ago called *An Honourable Calling*, regrettably I didn’t have the chance to know the Hon. Allan Blakeney too well, not as well as many in this Assembly. I have only my few and too-brief encounters with our 10th premier. Here still, I am honoured on behalf of the Government of Saskatchewan to offer some initial and respectful remembrances of those occasions that I had to meet with him, and a few brief comments if I may on behalf of this side of the House, on his extraordinary leadership skills and the leadership

that he demonstrated for the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, on each of my personal encounters, abbreviated as they were, I came away with the distinct and lasting impression of a man who was at once someone of brilliance and *gravitas* while still so approachable and eminently decent. Were I forced to choose a sole descriptor for my first impression, I guess it would be, class. This I have heard was not only the first impression shared by others, but the enduring and lasting memory by those who knew him longest and best.

When Premier Romanow called me on Saturday morning with the news, after a time to absorb, I reflected on the matters that I had read, that he had written in his own pen from his own story. As Health minister in the Lloyd government that extended doctor services under medicare in this province, as premier through the federal-provincial toing and froing of the ’70s — the introduction of the national energy program by Ottawa, and even the constitutional challenges of the late 1970s and early 1980s leading to the *Constitution Act*, the repatriation of our own constitution — he was our steady hand.

His leadership was in every way the manifestation of the exquisitely British World War II exhortation, stay calm and carry on. We are thankful that he was this kind of leader, Mr. Speaker. A leader who had that internal strength, that confidence of his own views, and the serenity to do just that — to carry on. For we have the medicare we have today because of that leadership, and Canada has her own constitution today in no small way due to that leadership. And Saskatchewan found her national voice because of his steady voice and the equanimity of his leadership.

We are thankful, Mr. Speaker, that he was recruited here after his gold medal performance at Dalhousie law school. And we’re thankful that he stayed though as Dennis Gruending, in the same essay referenced by the opposition leader, pointed out earlier on after his arrival, he remarked that Regina “wasn’t Paris” and that he had no intention of staying here very long.

I wonder today at what moment or during what moments he changed his mind, together I’m sure with Anne and his family. He himself has offered us a glimpse into that decision point, but as we mark his great service today in this Assembly that he loved, as we mark his decency and his leadership on this occasion, I’d like to think there was something that just told him that there was work to be done, great things to be done with the people of the province of Saskatchewan, and that was the reason that he should stay.

It matters little why he chose to stay, but greatly that he did. And the fact that he stayed says a lot about him, and I think it says a lot about the province of Saskatchewan. I cannot say today, nor would he bid me do so, that I agree with all his ardently held views, nor support all that his administration did. But based on what I have read and what others have told me about him, the fact that we may disagree would not matter so much to him as the debate itself, the debate of those competing ideas, the intellectual integrity of the arguments that advanced them, that in the end each position was advanced in the cause of helping others and of building a better Saskatchewan, and finally that those arguments were tendered respectfully and civilly.

Here was a leader who was a credit to his office, who could differ without animus, who could disagree without being disagreeable. Perhaps the best way to mark his living and honour his passing is to make that a test of our own public service in this place, the Blakeney test, that we could disagree without being disagreeable. That test may also include the provisioning of each of our political positions with examples of how our own views or policies or principles help people in the end.

In his book he wrote this: “All should seek knowledge of truth and beauty and should be sensitive to those who suffer.” And just on the next page, interestingly, Mr. Speaker, he said this:

We all cross the river Jordan, and all cross it alone. What is on the other side will remain a mystery or a product of faith. Our path on this side is ours to choose. Our choices should be guided primarily by being in the company with our fellow humans and all those whose lives we can touch.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that there’s company in the next life, too. And so on Saturday morning, the Hon. Allan Blakeney was well met indeed.

To his wife of 52 years and to Hugh and Barbara and Margaret and David and all of the family, we know this: for one to serve, a family must sacrifice. And we thank them for sharing Mr. Blakeney with us. Today and, Mr. Speaker, to Premier Allan Blakeney, on behalf of a grateful province, thank you, sir. Rest in peace.

**The Speaker:** — I thank the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition for those words of condolence, and in recognition of the exemplary work of the Hon. Allan Blakeney, not only as a member of this Legislative Assembly but as a premier of this province and his dedication to this province, I would invite the members and the guests in the gallery to stand and join with us in a moment of silence.

[The Assembly observed a moment of silence.]

**The Speaker:** — I thank the members and our guests for joining with us.

[13:45]

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

**Mr. Kirsch:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to all members of this House, I’d like to introduce two determined young ladies who have a challenge in front of them. They’re determined to bring the seat of Prince Albert Northcote to the Sask Party side of the House. So I’d introduce — and if you’d give a wave — Ms. Victoria Jurgens, candidate for Prince Albert Northcote, and Alana Ross, president of Northcote constituency. So I’d ask everyone in this House to give them a warm welcome. Thank you.

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

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I’d like to introduce to you and through you some very special guests in your gallery: Gloria Mahussier, president of the board of directors for the Saskatchewan Association of Community Living, and her son Travis — if you can give a wave, Gloria — and Shane Haddad, president of the People First of Saskatchewan.

These folks are tireless champions of people fighting for respect and dignity for all Saskatchewan citizens, and they’re here today to watch the introduction of Bill 625, *The Saskatchewan Respectful Language Act*. I ask all members in joining me in welcoming them to their House. Thank you.

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

**Hon. Mr. Norris:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to all members of the Assembly, I’d like to introduce some learners and their supporters participating in the Way to Work program. It’s a project focusing on adult basic education and essential skills that transfer into the workplace.

In no particular order, I’d like to introduce Delia Akapew, Gail Bellegarde, Gilbert Bellegarde, John Bellegarde, Monica Bellegarde, Royce Cote, Evin Dubois, Daphney McKay, Jonas McNabb, Landon Starr, as well as Nathan Star. And joining them are their instructors Sharon Gereaux and Dianne Yuzicapi. Other members that are participating in and supportive of this project: a stranger to no one in this House, Chief Perry Bellegarde, is here; Mark Deiter, Joan Bellegarde, Mechtild Morin, Michael Morin, and Kim Fraser-Saddleback from SIIT [Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies].

Mr. Speaker, these learners and their supporters are vital to the bright future that our province has. We appreciate their desire to study and succeed in Saskatchewan, making it all the better for all of us. So, Mr. Speaker, I’ll ask all members of this Assembly to join me in welcoming these learners and their supporters to this Assembly.

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I’d like to join with the minister in welcoming these guests to the Assembly. Both sides of the House know that adult basic education is so vitally important to the future of our province, and to have these individuals here today is a true honour. And I hope that the debates and the experiences that they have today will benefit them as they carry forward the good work they’re doing as learners or involved in the leadership of the program, Mr. Speaker. So I would join with the minister in welcoming these individuals to their Assembly.

And while I’m on my feet, Mr. Speaker, I would like to also introduce two guests seated in the west gallery, Mr. Speaker: Kent Peterson and Paige Kezima, president- and vice-president-elect of the University of Regina Students’ Union. And they’ve come to the Assembly today, as I

understand, to sign the book of condolence of Premier Blakeney, recognizing the tremendous contribution he has made to learning here in the province. So I'd ask members to welcome Kent and Paige to the Assembly. Thank you.

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

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to join with the Advanced Education minister and the member from Massey Place in particularly welcoming Chief Perry Bellegarde, who is chief of Little Bear, I believe, in the province of Saskatchewan.

Perry and I had an opportunity to work together at Crown Investments Corporation after his work as the grand chief here in Saskatchewan, and Perry did a fabulous job at CIC, ensuring that Crowns start thinking about two things: hiring First Nations and Métis people and also sourcing First Nations and Métis companies for goods and services in the Crown.

I want to thank Perry for the work that he did at CIC and as a public servant and wish him well in his elected position as chief of Little Bear, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much.

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

**Mr. Hart:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to join with the member opposite in welcoming Chief Perry Bellegarde, chief of Little Black Bear located near Goodeve, Saskatchewan, within my constituency.

As the member opposite outlined a number of Perry's accomplishments, we are all familiar with the great work he's done on behalf of First Nations people. But there's one thing that perhaps not many people in this Assembly know about, and that's the talented singer that Perry is. I had the opportunity to hear and see him perform at the Goodeve homecoming this past summer. And I must tell you, Mr. Speaker, he is an accomplished entertainer. And I would certainly like to welcome him to his Assembly. Thank you.

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

**Mr. Vermette:** — Mr. Speaker, to you and through you I'd like to take an opportunity to talk about and welcome . . . The Northern Trappers Association from northern Saskatchewan are here. There's quite a few of them. And I would like to just acknowledge Clifford Ray from Sandy Bay. He is the president of the organization. Vice-president is Jonas Bird. He's an elder with La Ronge band, also a very good friend of mine. I would like to welcome him here. Secretary Janet Roberts from Stanley Mission.

We also have regional board of directors. Paul Sylvestre from Birch Narrows is also here. Rose Hegland, north central region from La Ronge, is here as well. Also we have Elder Albert Ross from Hall Lake, is an elder with Lac La Ronge Indian Band and works with this group and gives them advice and leadership. I wanted to acknowledge him and thank him.

Fur block 9 is in the Stanley Mission area. And actually the

chairman of that is Adam O. Charles. Adam O. is from Stanley Mission. He lives a traditional lifestyle. He truly traps; he fishes. And I just want to acknowledge the wisdom he has for the young people in his community and throughout. He shares his wisdom, his knowledge. He makes sure that people understand. And I just want to take time to acknowledge that.

They're here today. They want to bring their concerns about the fur industry, and they want to make sure that the government hears the issues that they're facing, their industry and their culture.

But I also want to acknowledge they've had support from Prince Albert Grand Council. The vice-chief, Brian Hardlotte, is here as well. Brian. Also with him is some of his staff: Robin McLeod, who accompanies him and works with him closely. And also Leonard Hardlotte, I would like to acknowledge, works with him and keeps his, I guess, agenda going. So I'd just like to say he does consulting work with him. I just want to acknowledge him there. And also Brian Lindskog from La Ronge is here accompanying them. He wanted to, from the North, wanted to come with them and support them. And it's good to see them here.

I would just like to, at this time, thank them for being here and showing their concern. And I want them to know this is your House. This is your Assembly. This is your voice, and you're here making sure people hear your voice and your issues and things that, I guess, affect the northern Saskatchewan and the trapping industry. And I just want to acknowledge you and say thank you and welcome to your legislature. I'd ask all members to join me and welcome them to their Legislative Assembly. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Weyburn-Big Muddy, the Minister Responsible for the Environment.

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I just want to join with my colleague across the way in welcoming our visitors to the Legislative Assembly. I know many of them have come from a long distance. And I've had the opportunity to meet with some of them already prior, a few months ago, and I'm looking forward to meeting with them this afternoon with a couple of my colleagues. So I'd ask all members to again welcome our visitors to their Assembly.

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

**Mr. McCall:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to join with my colleagues in welcoming and saying ta wow to the Legislative Assembly for all the trappers who have travelled very far to come here and the leadership, of course, from the Prince Albert Grand Council.

Also I want to introduce Vice-chief E. Dutch Lerat from the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations. Good to see you here in your Assembly, vice-chief.

And I also want to add a word of greeting to Chief Perry Bellegarde. Chief Bellegarde is quite a runner. While we're telling all the things about Chief Bellegarde, he's quite a long-distance runner. And in politics, of course, sometimes we

compare campaigns to marathons. And I had the privilege, along with some other colleagues, of witnessing Chief Bellegarde go through that long marathon for the Assembly of First Nations and then following that marathon up, Mr. Speaker, with a sprint marathon of a 24-hour-plus election day with the Assembly of First Nations. It was a very thrilling campaign to watch, and Chief Bellegarde carried himself with dignity and pride throughout that. But I want to add my voice to those welcoming the First Nations guests to their Legislative Assembly.

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

**Mr. Bradshaw:** — Mr. Speaker, to you and through you I would like to, in your gallery, welcome Joe Hordyski, who is from La Ronge. And he moved up to La Ronge 25 years ago to build a house. He's a carpenter by trade and loved it up there so much, he decided to stay after building about 50 more houses.

And he's been a very instrumental part and a very good person for the community of La Ronge. He's sat on the town council for 18 years, and 12 of them as mayor of La Ronge, Mr. Speaker. He is also on the board of the Mamawetan Churchill Health Region. He's been involved with the SaskWater Board, the Elks Club, and a variety of other local boards including the La Ronge Regional Waste Management, Fire, Water, Parks and Recreation, Library.

So he has a great love of the North, Mr. Speaker. And he is also the Saskatchewan Party candidate for the Cumberland community. Anyway I wanted all of this association to . . . or I want all of this Assembly to please welcome Joe to his Legislative Assembly.

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

**Mr. Vermette:** — Mr. Speaker, to you and through you I'd like to also welcome Joe Hordyski, who's from La Ronge and obviously is here being introduced as the candidate for the Sask Party. I'd like to welcome him to the legislative, and we'll be working hard to keep him there. Thank you.

[14:00]

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

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to introduce to you and through you to the Assembly a number of people representing CLASSIC. That is the acronym for Community Legal Services for the Saskatoon Inner City. They are here to meet with me and the Ministry of Justice staff.

CLASSIC operates in partnership with the University of Saskatchewan College of Law and private law firms. They provide two programs: firstly, a walk-in advisory clinic where law students under the supervision of staff lawyers assist clients with legal issues; and secondly, a legal advice clinic that provides free half-hour consultations with lawyers for low-income people.

Mr. Speaker, joining us today are Lori Johnstone-Clark, a board

member and a lawyer; Glen Luther and Tim Quigley, also lawyers who represent the College of Law, professors as well; Dorion Brady, executive director; a lawyer, Haidah Amirzadeh; and law students, Gillian Gough and Christopher Terepocki. And from the Ministry of Justice, they are also joined by Ken Acton, assistant deputy minister.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask that all members join with me in welcoming them to their Legislative Assembly and to thank them for their very good work that they're continuing to do on a volunteer basis. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Quennell:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the official opposition, I want to join in welcoming the guests from CLASSIC to your gallery today. I had the text of the minister's remarks, and I thank him for that. And I noted to him before we began today that he showed remarkable restraint in not taking the opportunity to comment on the lack of appropriate federal funding for legal aid in the province of Saskatchewan which has been the case since 1995. And I make that comment, Mr. Speaker, in this introduction because context is everything.

There are invaluable services that legal aid provides in this province, but not nearly the services it should be able to provide. And that is why I was persuaded when I was Minister of Justice to have the Government of Saskatchewan join with the College of Law and the legal community in the founding of CLASSIC, which provides and takes advantage of the College of Law and its brilliant student body to provide those needed services at least in the city of Saskatoon, and they are invaluable. And I wish to join with the minister in thanking the people here for that invaluable service they provide to the people of Saskatoon who need it the most. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Yates:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly a group of wonderful students, 14 of them in total, from F.W. Johnson Collegiate in the constituency of Regina Dewdney, Mr. Speaker. Now these are grade 12 students that are here to visit their Assembly, watch the proceedings today. And you had the opportunity to come on a very unique day, and I'm sure you will enjoy the remainder of the proceedings. And we'll have an opportunity to talk about today a little later on when we have a visit.

But I'd like to introduce them to you, Mr. Speaker, and to all members of the Assembly, and they are teachers Mrs. Mandy Gullickson and Mr. Mike Leier. Thank you.

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

**Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I am going to ask for leave for somewhat of an extended introduction of guests. I want to do the introduction in my own language of Cree and attempt the language of Dene, so I would ask for leave for an extended introduction of guests.

**The Speaker:** — The member from Athabasca has asked for leave for an extended introduction. Is leave granted?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Leave has been granted. I recognize the member from Athabasca.

**Mr. Belanger:** — [The hon. member spoke for a time in Cree.]

Mr. Speaker, I wanted to say that I'm really glad that they're here to fight for the trapping industry, to fight for their cause, but to also teach other groups in northern Saskatchewan not to be afraid to come here and tell the Sask Party what they're doing wrong and tell any government what they're doing wrong. I think those are two lessons, Mr. Speaker, that are very, very important.

The other language I want to speak, Mr. Speaker, is . . . We've heard people speak Cree here. I think Lawrence Yew was the first man to speak Cree in the Assembly. I think Keith Goulet was the second, and I believe I was the third. But I was the first member to speak Dene, and that's one of the things I want to hold to my fame. So I want to say, Mr. Speaker:

[The hon. member spoke for a time in Dene.]

So, Mr. Speaker, I thank the Assembly for the opportunity to not only speak in Cree but to speak in Dene. And I welcome and ask all members to welcome this fantastic group of northern trappers to their Legislative Assembly. Thank you.

### 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 residents of the province of Saskatchewan that wish to draw facts to the attention of this Assembly that rental increases across the province are simply making living in Saskatchewan unaffordable. Mr. Speaker, it also draws a comparison between the new rental unit starts in Regina and Saskatoon between 2007 and 2009, which was fewer than 300, Mr. Speaker. And during the same period of time in Winnipeg, that currently has rent controls, they generated over 1,500 new rental units. Mr. Speaker, it raises the concerns of many citizens that we're hearing across the province. And the prayer reads:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that Legislative of Saskatchewan take the following action: to cause the government to immediately enact rent control legislation that protects Saskatchewan tenants from unreasonable increases in rent.

Mr. Speaker, these petitions are signed on behalf of citizens in Indian Head, Carlyle, Regina, Cudworth, Yorkton, Esterhazy, and Moose Jaw. I so present.

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

**Ms. Junor:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition of people who are in support of maintaining quality health care services, and they want the Government of Saskatchewan:

To recognize the need for timely access to comprehensive and quality health care services for all communities within the province, including Wakaw and surrounding areas, and that the disruption of emergency services and in-patient services at Wakaw Hospital will not serve the needs of the residents in this community and surrounding areas; and

That cuts in access to timely and accurate diagnostic and laboratory tests within the community of Wakaw and surrounding areas will also not serve the needs of residents.

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to commit to maintain quality health care services through the commitment of necessary funding to address critical retention and recruitment issues.

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

The signatures on these petitions, Mr. Speaker, are from Wakaw, Birch Hills, Tisdale, Prince Albert, Cudworth, Tway, and Middle Lake. I so present.

**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. 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 that Saskatchewan's income gap between the rich and the poor continues to grow, and now one in five children in Saskatchewan live in deepening poverty. I'd like to read the prayer:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to act as quickly as possible to develop an effective and sustainable poverty elimination strategy for the benefit of all Saskatchewan citizens.

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

I do so present. Thank you.

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

**Mr. Vermette:** — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition on behalf of the Northern Trappers Association Co-operative. The fur industry has so much potential for our northern trappers. It is a way to educate and empower our northern youth and to connect them with their culture. The prayer reads as follows:



Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the Sask Party government to recognize that Northern Saskatchewan Trappers Association Co-operative maintains the traditional values of hunting, trapping and also brings in millions of dollars to the provincial economy every year from the proceeds of fur harvesting combined with the economic spinoff to the tourism sector and to the local economy;

And in so doing, to cause the Sask Party government to immediately show their support for the Northern Trappers Association Co-operative by providing additional funding to assist in developing a value-added and marketing strategy that will enhance the current income level available to its members.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

It is signed by the good people of Stanley Mission, Ile-a-la-Crosse, and La Ronge. I so present.

**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 Hampton Village 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 are residents of Saskatoon. I so present.

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

**Mr. Furber:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a number of petitions in support of the National School of Dental Therapy because for 30 years the National School of Dental Therapy has been educating largely Saskatchewan residents who provide services in our communities, that the school is scheduled to close in June of this year, and that this program is educating primarily Saskatchewan residents who stay and work in Prince Albert and area, Mr. Speaker.

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the following action:

Cause the government to provide funding for the National School of Dental Therapy. In doing so, allow the students, teachers, and citizens of Saskatchewan to benefit from this institution. That the majority of the patients the school serves are children and young adults from lower income families, elderly on restricted budgets, and people living in rural and northern Saskatchewan with no private dental insurance.

The programming provides oral health care and education to six Prince Albert community schools. It provides care to 3,000 active patients who have no other oral health alternatives. Additionally, the school has 570 odd names on their waiting list, Mr. Speaker. It is believed that not funding this institution will cost the taxpayers more money for worse health outcomes than not funding the program.

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

Mr. Speaker, there are literally thousands of names on these petitions today, somewhere close to 4,000. The petition I read specifically has people who come from the cities of The Battlefords, Regina, and Prince Albert, as well as Shellbrook, Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, I so present.

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

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

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request 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 Saskatoon, Osler, and Delisle, Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. I so present.

[14:15]

**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 specifically to the fact that the Sask Party, despite record highs in revenues, has increased debt and run deficits all to the detriment of Saskatchewan people. That record of increasing debt over the past three years has increased debt by more than \$1.3 billion,

and this year alone increasing our public debt by \$548 million, of course having consequences now but also well into the future, 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 Ituna and Melville. I so submit.

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

**Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And I also want to present a petition:

And wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the provincial government to recognize that the Northern Trappers Association maintains the traditional values of hunting and trapping and also brings in millions of dollars to the provincial economy every year from the proceeds of fur harvesting combined with the economic spinoffs to the tourism sector and the local economy.

And as in so doing, to cause this government to stop turning their backs on the northern trappers, but all the people who live and work in northern Saskatchewan; and in so doing, to cause the provincial government to immediately reinstate the funding to the Saskatchewan Northern Trappers Association.

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

And, Mr. Speaker, this petition was signed by hundreds of northern Saskatchewan trappers and hundreds of supporters. And the petitions that were signed, this particular one, Mr. Speaker, are from the fantastic community of Stanley Mission. And I so present, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order. Order. The last petition that was read sounded so much similar to the member from Prince Albert Northcote, I'm going to take a look at it and review it based on the rules that we are governed by in the presentation of petitions.

#### STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

#### Tribute to Serge LeClerc

**Mr. Ottenbreit:** — Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege, but with sadness that I rise in this Assembly today to speak about the passing of an individual who at times seemed bigger than life — humanitarian, motivational speaker, author, former MLA for

Saskatoon Northwest, but firstly my friend, Mr. Serge LeClerc.

His life of hardship and at times survival through crime is well documented in his autobiography, *Untwisted*. Born of a young Aboriginal girl who was a victim of rape, he stood little chance for a productive life. Years of physical abuse, a risky lifestyle, incarceration should have left him dead many times. But through an eventual encounter with a Christian pastor who asked Serge some difficult questions, he was renewed through faith in Jesus Christ. He turned his back on his old life. He strived to offset the wrongs of his past. He used his story to educate young people of the pitfalls and repercussions of drugs and crime, but was very careful not to glorify it. He would often say, my testimony is a powerful one, but it is not a good one.

Serge was instrumental in bringing the highly successful Teen Challenge program to Saskatchewan before retiring from that organization and being elected to this Assembly in 2007. He became ill almost one year ago and was diagnosed with a cancer sometime after and passed away April 16th in Trenton, Ontario. A celebration of his life will be held there on May 7th.

Serge was not perfect, Mr. Speaker. None of us are. To some he seemed stubborn, abrasive, and blunt. And believe me, I know he could be. But he did it always with the best of intentions from a passionate heart. I believe we should measure a man not only by where he is and what he's accomplished, but how far he has come. I've never met anyone that has gone such a distance and touched so many in such a positive way as Serge LeClerc has.

May God bless his family, and Godspeed, my friend. Rest in peace.

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

#### Conscience of the Land

**Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The trappers of Saskatchewan are the conscience of the land. They have hands-on experience and knowledge that can be taught in the classroom, but not learned overnight. They are the hands-on measuring stick for Saskatchewan's vast environmental regions. Mr. Speaker, the trappers are our last line of defence in the outright takeover of the land from those who would extract all that we're blessed with and give nothing back.

Mr. Speaker, governments can sell water to the US [United States], minerals to the mining companies, or timber the world over. But we must exist here and survive and raise our families here. Now that trappers' existence in this very land that they helped nurture is at risk, the trappers' fight for survival is one of purity and speaks to the basic fundamental principles that help found this great country of ours.

Mr. Speaker, the men and women in the trapping industry are not rich economically. However, they're rich in history. They're rich in culture. They're rich in the language of the land and rich in tradition. It was the trapping industry that built this country and allowed us to flourish as a nation. Mr. Speaker, in our national anthem it says, God keep our land. I truly believe that God entrusted our trappers to keep our land beautiful and pristine. Mr. Speaker, we must fight with them to keep it that

way. The great author James Fenimore Cooper said:

The air, the water, and the ground are free gifts to man and no one has the power to portion them out in parcels. Man must drink and breathe and walk, and therefore each man has a right to his share of each.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### **Biggar Central School Student Awarded Scholarship**

**Mr. Weekes:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Doors have opened for one Biggar Central School 2000 student, as she was one of 15 selected for a national scholarship. Julianna Tan is still basking in the glow of having her post-secondary future assured with the awarding of the W. Garfield Weston Loran Award scholarship worth a staggering \$75,000. That \$75,000 opens more options for Julianna, the prestigious Dalhousie University being one of them.

At Nova Scotia's Dalhousie, Julianna will be going into medicine, undergraduating in kinesiology. The W. Garfield Weston Loran Award scholarship, administered by the Canadian Merit Scholarship Foundation, is designed to recognize outstanding college-bound students who show a strong commitment to their fields of study and are interested in making positive contributions to the communities.

"She's one awesome student," explained Natalie Chupik of Biggar Central 2000 School. "She is the one you want everybody like in your class. She's very dedicated, very hardworking." Julianna is student representative council president, involved in sports, all aspects of student life at BCS [Biggar Central School]. She's not afraid about doing something different to show her school spirit. Congratulations and good luck to you, Julianna.

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

#### **Regina and District Association for Community Living Spring Fling**

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, it was my honour, joined by my wife Stephanie, to attend the 2011 Spring Fling this past Saturday, along with the members from Regina Dewdney and Qu'Appelle, and NDP candidates for Regina Wascana Plains, Northeast, and South.

Spring Fling is an annual fundraiser for the Regina and District Association for Community Living. Its vision is that citizens are valued and contribute to life in our community and that neighbourhoods, businesses, and organizations are enriched when they are open and welcoming of all people.

His Honour, the Honourable Dr. Gordon L. Barnhart, Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan, brought fine words of support to the crowd that evening. The masters of ceremony were Ms. Elizabeth Popowich and Mr. Nick Popowich, mother and son. They did a wonderful job. The crowd was entertained by 'round midnight with the impressive Bev Zizzy on vocals.

I would like to thank the entire Spring Fling committee and the organization leaders such as Ms. Iris Miller-Dennis, Ms. Voula Danakas, Ms. Faith Savarese to name just a few. Mr. Speaker, it was my honour and it is my honour to thank the RDACL [Regina and District Association for Community Living], the organizers and supporters of Spring Fling 2011, and all of those who support the goal of creating a society that is open and welcoming of all, irrespective of cognitive and physical abilities.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join with me in doing so. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### **World Hemophilia Day**

**Ms. Schriemer:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Since 1989 patient groups in treatment centres have been coming together on April 17th to celebrate World Hemophilia Day. Over the past 20 years, World Hemophilia Day has become a unique opportunity to increase awareness about hemophilia and other bleeding disorders. April 17th was chosen to honour the birth of Frank Schnabel, a hemophiliac and founder of the Canadian Hemophilia Society and the World Federation of Hemophilia.

The theme for 2011's World Hemophilia celebrates supporting positive change for people with bleeding disorders and encouraging others to do the same. By working together and inspiring each other for a brighter future, we can achieve treatment for all. Hemophilia's the most common disease of all inherited bleeding disorders. It affects up to 1 per cent of the population, affecting both men and women.

Mr. Speaker, hemophiliacs often require transfusions of blood that can help prevent or stop bleeding. Canada is one of the few countries with a federally coordinated blood transfusion surveillance program. Mr. Speaker, together we can bring bleeding disorders issues into the light and ease the suffering for many people, especially those suffering from bleeding disorders right here in Saskatchewan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### **Using Respectful Language**

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, people are calling for the end of the R word. Obama did it last fall, and we can do it here now. The campaign against the R word also known in its various forms as mental retardation was boosted by a full house when on April 8th People First hosted the Saskatchewan premiere of the film, *The R Word*. I want to quote Gloria Mahussier, president of the Saskatchewan Association for Community Living, as she said that night, "The R word — it's vicious and it's ignorant."

She told the audience about Rosa's Law, which requires American laws that use the words mental retardation to now say intellectual disability. Gloria talked about Rosa's brother, Nick, who said it best:

What you call people is how you treat them. If you change the words, maybe it will be the start of a new attitude towards people with disabilities. Rosa's Law is about families fighting for the respect and dignity of their loved ones.

They are making headway in the US, and Gloria thinks we have the same opportunity to build a strong campaign to end the use of the R word here in our province and in Canada for good.

Mr. Speaker, today I will be moving first reading of the respectful language Act, a Bill intended to remove the last traces of the R word from our statutes. I also call on the government to look through their print and online materials to change any negative references to more respectful language as soon as possible. Let's support People First and SACL [Saskatchewan Association for Community Living] and work together towards the day all people in Saskatchewan are treated fully with respect and dignity. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### **Regina and District Association for Community Living Spring Fling**

**Hon. Ms. Ross:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on Saturday I had the honour and privilege of attending the Regina and District Association for Community Living Spring Fling. Mr. Speaker, this annual fundraising gala raises tens of thousands of dollars to help fund ongoing programs to provide support to and advocate on behalf of people living with intellectual challenges and their families in and around Regina. The organizers have held this event for more than 20 years and have dedicated many years to improving the lives of those who live every day with intellectual disabilities. Mr. Speaker, every one of us deserves to be treated with dignity and respect and to have equal access to services.

The Regina Association for Community Living makes it their mandate to ensure that individuals with disabilities can participate fully as valued citizens of our community. Congratulations to Iris Miller-Dennis and her committee for organizing this wonderful event. And I would like to commend Nick Popowich and his mom, Elizabeth, for emceeding this fun-filled event, even though Nick has shared with us that he's looking for a new partner in emceeding. I ask all my colleagues to join me in recognizing the committee and dedication of the board of directors and the staff of Regina and District Association for Community Living for a wonderful event. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — Before we move on to oral questions, I just want to remind members of the rules regarding the presentation of petitions. Rule 16(3)(d): "No more than one petition on a subject may be presented during the period." I have taken a quick review of the two petitions, the one from the member from P.A. Northcote and the one from Athabasca. They're basically similar petitions. I would ask the members to be mindful of the rules and make their . . . remember that in presenting petitions in the future.

#### **QUESTION PERIOD**

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

#### **Remuneration of Health Care Employees**

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, on Friday last week, or I guess it was late on Thursday, the Prince Albert Parkland Health Region announced that the pay for their CEO [chief executive officer] would increase by 60 per cent, retroactive to April of 2010. Mr. Speaker, the news release that was issued stated, and I quote, "The salary is based on the approved ministerial directive."

Mr. Speaker, in light of the fact that many of the health care workers in this province were told not even a year ago that there was no money and they had to expect and be lowering their expectations to an increase of about one, one-and-a-half per cent . . . Now those workers, 80 per cent are women and they're delivering quality health care throughout the province. How does the double standard work where the CEO gets a 60 per cent increase and the people doing the heavy lifting in health care are required to take one and a half per cent? What's fair about that, Mr. Speaker?

[14:30]

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

**Hon. Mr. McMorris:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, our government is focused on quality improvement, Mr. Speaker, making sure we put the patient first in everything we do. The health care system is a very complicated system, from CEO, Mr. Speaker, all the way through all the health care providers.

Mr. Speaker, when you look at the out-of-scope personnel that we have in the health care system who are very important to make sure that the system works properly, when we look at the out-of-scope personnel, they hadn't received an increase or a market adjustment for a number of years, Mr. Speaker. This brings them up to the 65th percentile of comparable jobs across Western Canada. How the compensation was determined was looking at comparable jobs across Western Canada, and the CEOs have moved up to the 65th percentile. Mr. Speaker, I don't know if there is a health care worker right now on the floor that is at that level. All are at 90 to 110 per cent of that Western average, Mr. Speaker. We pay our health care . . . We value our health care workers very, very much and pay them accordingly to the Western standard just as we have the CEOs at their rate at 65 per cent.

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

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, there are very few health care workers who would agree that there is fairness where the health care workers on the front line — whether they're giving home care to our seniors, parents, handicapped people, or working in nursing homes or hospitals — getting a one and a half per cent increase and the CEOs getting 60 per cent increase and retroactive for a year. Now the minister can say that that's fair all he wants, but the fact is that the public in Saskatchewan feel that there is a real unfairness where the booming economy

is not working for the working people. And that's what this question's about.

In fact the CEO has a number of issues that she's getting the increase for: the idea that closing down the health centre, the wellness centre in Prince Albert; letting 18 people go who were giving home care in that health region; cutting back on acute care beds and long-term care beds. And that person is being rewarded with a 60 per cent increase.

How is it that American style of compensating managers for cutbacks works in this province where they get 60 per cent increase and the people doing the heavy lifting are required to take one and a half? This is not fair. And how does he justify it?

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

**Hon. Mr. McMorris:** — Mr. Speaker, what I would say to that member is that the average increase to the out-of-scope workers, Mr. Speaker, CEOs all the way through, the average increase is 5 per cent increase, Mr. Speaker. When you look at when the last increase happened, Mr. . . .

[Interjections]

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

**Hon. Mr. McMorris:** — Mr. Speaker, we feel that that's a fair compensation, 5 per cent increase on average across the board. We realize that all the health care workers, be it in scope or out of scope, are extremely important. I would say though, Mr. Speaker, the health system today is far better than it ever was under 16 years of NDP [New Democratic Party] government.

CEOs . . . In fact, Mr. Speaker, this past year will see every health region in Saskatchewan at a break-even basis, Mr. Speaker. We just have to go back a few years under the NDP when it was deficit after deficit after deficit. We have extremely competent CEOs, management, within the health care system. An increase of 5 per cent, we think, is appropriate when we look at the Western average.

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

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, the CEO in Prince Albert, Parkland Prince Albert, received an increase of 60 per cent. But that's not the only CEO of the health regions who got an increase. The Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region paid a \$71,000 increase to their CEO, and in fact Saskatoon Health Region, there the CEO got an increase of \$100,000 in one year — now is being paid over \$400,000 a year. In fact what we are seeing here is that CEOs are being paid by how little health care service they give and being rewarded for cutting back health care.

How does it work in a medicare system where the less you do and the less service you give, the more you get paid? How is that proper and reasonable, that the more service you take away, the higher your pay; and the more service you give, the less you get? How is that fair to the people who do the work in the health care system?

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

**Hon. Mr. McMorris:** — Mr. Speaker, as I said in my previous answer, we've seen health care workers across the province . . . One contract left to settle, but all health care workers, Mr. Speaker, have settled, some as high as a 95 per cent ratification, Mr. Speaker.

When we look at the out-of-scope, they hadn't received an increase for about five years, Mr. Speaker. This brings them up to the 65th percentile of the Western average, Mr. Speaker. Now I don't think, I don't know if the opposition is arguing that our CEOs, our management, should not be paid at the 65th percentile of the Western average. Do they think it should be down around 30 or 40? What do they think they should be paid, Mr. Speaker? Because, Mr. Speaker, we're in a competitive market and, Mr. Speaker, we want to make sure that our executive, that our out-of-scope employees are paid accordingly. That's what we're doing, Mr. Speaker.

And I can tell you that over the last two or three years, when we see a reduction in the people waiting 18 months and longer by over 60 per cent, Mr. Speaker, great work is being done by CEOs across this province.

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

### Support for Trapping Industry

**Mr. Vermette:** — Mr. Speaker, trapping is a profession and a tradition that is hundreds of years old here in Saskatchewan, but especially in northern Saskatchewan. Yet despite this profession's heritage, trappers in Saskatchewan are now hurting for one reason: the lack of respect shown to them by their government. This government has made a decision to slash the funding for Northern Trappers Association and their co-operative, keeping the industry from thriving.

To the minister: why is this government trying to destroy this centuries-old industry in Saskatchewan?

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

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank the member for his question, and I look forward to discussing this further with the representatives from the trappers association, the Northern Trappers Association.

Mr. Speaker, in this budget, in the '11-12 budget, the Ministry of Environment continues to provide dollars for trapping education, for new . . .

[Interjections]

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order. I would expect that members would allow the minister to respond so at least the members in the gallery would have an opportunity to hear the response. I recognize the Minister of the Environment.

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As I was saying, in this budget, the '11-12 budget, the Ministry of Environment will continue to provide dollars for the northern

trapping association, for trapper education for new trappers. As well, Mr. Speaker, we will provide it based on the association holding training workshops.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, we know that this is a very valuable organization in this province, Mr. Speaker, as are all trappers in the province, and that is why we have eliminated the fur royalties that trappers pay in the province of the Saskatchewan to the treasury.

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

**Mr. Vermette:** — Yes well, Mr. Speaker, that's why they had to come here to Regina to lobby. But anyway, Mr. Speaker, the trapping industry in northern Saskatchewan could be thriving right now. Aboriginal unemployment in Saskatchewan is extremely high, and expert Eric Howe has said that this government is directly, directly at fault.

To the minister: at a time when unemployment of Aboriginal people in Saskatchewan is alarmingly high, why won't this government do something to assist the industry that could provide solid employment for many of Saskatchewan Aboriginal people?

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

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, thank you for the question. Mr. Speaker, we know that this is a valuable industry in our province, and it is one that has not only built this province but built this country, Mr. Speaker. And we know that work needs to be done to ensure that it continues beyond future generations.

That's why we are providing in this budget additional funding, continuing to provide funding for workshops that are put on by the Northern Trappers Association to encourage young trappers, new trappers to take up the craft. Mr. Speaker . . .

[Interjections]

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order. Order. There's three or four members on the backbench of the opposition that are making it difficult for the rest to hear the response. I recognize the Minister of the Environment.

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Mr. Speaker, that's why we have taken the step in this budget year to eliminate all royalties that trappers will pay to the treasury, thereby keeping more dollars in their pockets. Mr. Speaker, we know that prices are low, and so this will help them keep money in their own pockets.

As well, Mr. Speaker, that's why we've taken the step when it comes to traditional resource use cabins which many trappers use in northern Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, they used to pay an annual permit and have a one-year lease, a year-to-year lease. That's why we've extended that to a 21-year lease so that to give them more stability as they continue to trap in the province.

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

**Mr. Vermette:** — Trapping in northern Saskatchewan is not just a business; it's a way of life. Currently many Aboriginal youth find themselves at risk. At the same time, the customs, the traditions of Saskatchewan Aboriginal people are at risk of being lost forever.

Recently the northern trappers proposed to the government a plan that would have taught trapping to at-risk youth, keeping them out of trouble, teaching them good skills, and passing on the cultural traditions. Instead of supporting this plan, the government rejected it right out, losing a great opportunity to help young people and Aboriginal culture.

To the minister: why is this government not ensuring a better life for northern people by supporting their good ideas?

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

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Well in fact, Mr. Speaker, we are providing dollars for the association to hold training workshops to encourage young people to take up trapping in their futures, Mr. Speaker. Those dollars still exist. As well, Mr. Speaker, as I've said, we are also extending the lease, is a year-to-year lease for northern trappers that have traditional resource use cabins, Mr. Speaker, we are extending that to a 21-year lease, Mr. Speaker, to give them more stability and provide more certainty for their operations.

Mr. Speaker, we know that this an important industry in our province, and I'm looking forward to meeting with these individuals once again today, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Vermette:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, that's why they're here. Very clearly they've got concerns, and here's what they want to know today. To the minister: with members of the industry here in the gallery, will the minister agree to immediately reinstate the trappers association funding that was withdrawn?

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

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to correct the member. The funding wasn't withdrawn. The contract expired at the end of the 2009-2010 budget year, Mr. Speaker. While that contract did expire, we kept in place the dollars that would allow the trappers . . .

[Interjections]

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

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Mr. Speaker, while that contract expired, we did keep the funding in place for the association to run workshops to bring in new people into the industry, Mr. Speaker. As well we took the unprecedented step in this budget year to eliminate all royalties paid by trappers in the province, thereby keeping more dollars in their pockets rather than going to the treasury.

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

[Applause]

### Funding for National School of Dental Therapy

**Mr. Furber:** — I'm pleased at the reception, Mr. Speaker, but I'm not sure the members opposite will be. The National School of Dental Therapy is in Prince Albert, and it's about four blocks from where I grew up. There are people in the gallery today who are here to explain to the government the importance of the program both to the city and to the region.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this program has done field clinics of dental therapy in Stanley Mission and Hatchet Lake just this year. And while it was originally funded by the federal government, the federal government has withdrawn the education portion of the funding for the program. Now the Saskatchewan Party government has an opportunity to fund the program and they've backed away from their responsibility to do so.

So my question to the minister is simple: will he commit to finding the money today to keep the National School of Dental Therapy open in Prince Albert, doing the good work that it's doing, or will he allow this valuable institution to perish?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Advanced Education, Employment and Immigration.

**Hon. Mr. Norris:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the National School of Dental Therapy has been funded by the federal government for nearly 30 years, and, Mr. Speaker, undoubtedly it has done valuable work. Mr. Speaker, there have been a number of efforts that have been ongoing over the course of the last year. These have included working with Mayor Scarrow, obviously, in Prince Albert. We've also had interventions made from Chief Guy Lonechild as well as Vice-chief Lerat, Mr. Speaker.

What we know, Mr. Speaker, is that there have been no federal dollars committed to sustaining this program, Mr. Speaker. In addition, Mr. Speaker, what we have done is we have then consulted other jurisdictions because the students come from a variety of jurisdictions right across the country, and we have had no pickup, no interest, Mr. Speaker, as far as shared funding. We have then gone back to the federal government; we've asked about transitional funding. The answer again has been no, Mr. Speaker. And so, Mr. Speaker, what we continue to do is encourage our partners to continue to press the federal government — as we do, Mr. Speaker — to sustain the funding for this federal program.

[14:45]

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

**Mr. Furber:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, the member is wrong on this as he's wrong on so many things. The federal government has offered a portion of the funding to the provincial government in order to keep the program going. Why doesn't he know that is beyond me, Mr. Speaker.

Not only is the National School of Dental Therapy an important educational institution; it's also vital to health outcomes for people in central and northern Saskatchewan. Dana King, an instructor at the school, wrote, "Our school has provided dental care free of charge to several community schools, young adults just entering the workforce, and elderly patients who cannot afford private dental care. We have over 3,000 active patient charts and a long waiting list."

Dental health is obviously important for the individuals of Saskatchewan in their overall health, and that can't be forgotten in the questions today and the answers today, Mr. Speaker. I'm told that not funding this program will actually cost the taxpayers more for worse health outcomes in the same way that chiropractic care did.

So my question to the minister is simply this: will he and is he willing to put at risk and why is he willing to put at risk the health of Saskatchewan people, the health of so many Saskatchewan people, and why won't he do something to save the National School of Dental Therapy?

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

**Hon. Mr. Norris:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Again I'll reiterate: this is a national program, Mr. Speaker; it's been funded for nearly 30 years. Mr. Speaker, importantly what we have are students from right across the country. We have those, including those from other countries. We have those from New Brunswick, from Quebec, from British Columbia, from Ontario, from Newfoundland, from Nunavut, from the Yukon, Northwest Territories, from Alberta and Manitoba as well as Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

In addition to pressing the federal government to continue its funding, Mr. Speaker — and we've done that, not unilaterally, but we've done that with the mayor of Prince Albert and we've done that in co-operation with Chief Lonechild and others, Mr. Speaker — we have also canvassed and invited other jurisdictions, other provincial and territorial jurisdictions to come forward, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to date there has been no uptake in this.

This is a federal program, Mr. Speaker. We encouraged the federal government and continue to encourage, Mr. Speaker, these federal dollars to be sustained within the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. At the end, Mr. Speaker, this is a federal initiative; it has been. And we continue to press the federal government to maintain its investment in the students of this province.

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

**Mr. Furber:** — I hope at some point this member's blame thrower runs out of gas because it's getting to be a sad story in Saskatchewan where all he does in this Assembly is blame somebody else for the problems that fall on his doorstep. Now he can try, the member can try all he wants to fob this off on the federal government, but he has a responsibility.

Education of Saskatchewan students is a provincial

responsibility. The federal government is willing to put in a portion not related to the education of Saskatchewan students. But instead here we have today again a government whose priorities are misaligned with the priorities of Saskatchewan people.

The minister was able to funnel \$9 million into a private college for a failed merger attempt, and he found another \$400,000 to pay accountants to look into the mess of that failed merger. And he claims he doesn't have enough money to fund this vital program. Now, Mr. Speaker, why is spending nine and a half million dollars on projects involving private schools a higher priority for this government than keeping alive the National School of Dental Therapy, a one-of-a-kind institution in the province of Saskatchewan in the city of Prince Albert?

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

**Hon. Mr. Norris:** — Mr. Speaker, the member opposite has a very curious line of questioning. That is, he's making reference to the knowledge infrastructure program, which was a federal initiative, Mr. Speaker. So what we know is there were more than \$117 million invested . . .

[Interjections]

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order.

I recognize the Minister Responsible for Advanced Education.

**Hon. Mr. Norris:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So that's the knowledge infrastructure program. It offered benefits to about 21 different projects, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, what we hear now is, no, the federal government shouldn't be involved. Mr. Speaker, the very reference is, the federal government needs to be involved, has been involved for 30 years, Mr. Speaker, is involved in a number of initiatives across this province, Mr. Speaker.

We continue to press forward, Mr. Speaker, to ensure that those federal dollars continue to come into this program, Mr. Speaker. We do this in conjunction, in co-operation with the mayor of Prince Albert and with Chief Guy Lonechild and others, Mr. Speaker.

[Interjections]

**The Speaker:** — The Minister Responsible for Advanced Education.

**Hon. Mr. Norris:** — We do this, Mr. Speaker, because there are fiduciary responsibilities that the federal government has, Mr. Speaker. As we go through, knowing that there are students from New Brunswick, Quebec, British Columbia, Ontario, Newfoundland, Nunavut, the Yukon, Northwest Territories, as well as the Prairie provinces, Mr. Speaker, the voice is clear. The federal government ought to maintain its funding for this initiative, Mr. Speaker.

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

## Response to Flooding

**Mr. Quennell:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question's for the Minister of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety. Mr. Speaker, tension and anxiety levels are running as high as the water levels in the province. Municipalities and communities across the province are bracing for a disaster. Cowessess First Nation's declared a state of emergency and have evacuated 150 people. Radville, Laurier, Estevan, Abernethy, and most recently Lumsden have declared states of emergency and are preparing to evacuate families.

To the minister: is there a plan to put emergency services personnel in place to help with evacuations and flooding preparations, and if there is, when will the minister be putting it into action?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Corrections and Public Safety.

**Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert:** — Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Speaker, last year was an unprecedented year for rains and flooding in this province, as we all know. This year it's starting very much again.

I think the member opposite should realize that our government put in \$22 million in mitigation funds — unprecedented in the province's history to put in \$22 million for mitigation. Mr. Speaker, that mitigation funding has been out to the communities that have applied for it.

We have gone forward from CPSP — which is Corrections, Public Safety and Policing, for the member opposite — we have put money together to have mobile trailers where we can take equipment. Our trailers are equipped with pumps, generators, sandbags, sandbagging equipment. We have, we have tubes that we can use to fill with water to mitigate flooding. Mr. Speaker, this has been unprecedented in the province's history. And we're very proud at the way we're going, and we know that this mitigation money will go a long way to slowing down the PDAP [provincial disaster assistance program] response later on.

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

**Mr. Quennell:** — Mr. Speaker, the minister has my sincere apologies for misnaming his ministry. I assure the minister, through you, Mr. Speaker, that it was unintentional.

The money that the government has set aside for flooding is clearly nowhere near enough to help families and municipalities get through what they are going to be going through this spring and summer. Municipalities and communities have spent hundreds of thousands of dollars last year repairing flooded roads, bridges, and culverts.

Businesses were damaged, and almost 10 million acres of farm land were flooded. Hundreds of families were displaced from their homes. Many of these families are still waiting for their claims to be settled. The cost to RMs [rural municipality], communities, and families is going to be in the millions of dollars. The municipality of Three Lakes says it could cost



them over \$10 million alone over the next couple of years.

To the minister: will the government provide the funds actually needed to help Saskatchewan families and communities?

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

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for his question. I also . . .

[Interjections]

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order. Order. I would . . . Order. I would hope, I would hope the members would like to have or hear the response, or the member who presented it would like to hear the response. I recognize the Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the minister and his officials for the unprecedented improvements to the provincial disaster assistance program. We've reduced the deductibles down to 5 per cent, Mr. Speaker. The minister has increased the values for which people can be compensated and added resources so the program can actually deliver help immediately after an incident, at least interim assistance, \$22 million for mitigation for this year's flood as a result of the ministry's leadership.

And I can tell the House . . . This is important if members are interested. I can tell, I can tell members of this House that earlier this day I had a discussion with the minister. The minister has been carefully inventorying the money that's available and the money that's needed. He has indicated to us that more resources may well be . . .

[Interjections]

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order. Order. Order. I would ask members to allow the Premier to respond to the question from the member from Saskatoon Meewasin. I recognize the Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Mr. Speaker, I can assure members opposite: for communities that are facing a flood, this isn't a joke. It's not a laughing matter. I can also tell members of this House that the Minister of Corrections, Public Safety and Policing has already identified the need probably for more resources on top of the unprecedented \$22 million we've already set aside for flood mitigation.

We had said as a government to that minister and to his team, just get the job done. Work with First Nations. Work with all the ministries of government. Work with municipalities. Get the materials we need, the new sandbagging equipment, the new water dikes, Mr. Speaker, the new structures that are in place, literally saving communities like my hometown. We've said to them, get that job done. We'll do the accounting later. We have \$700 million in our rainy day account. It's wet in the province today. We are going to be there for the people of Saskatchewan right now, Mr. Speaker.

#### MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

[Interjections]

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order. Order. I would ask the members to come to order so we can hear the calling out of introduction of Bills. Order. I believe the minister has a ministerial statement. I recognize the Minister Responsible for Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport.

#### Creation of New Provincial Parks

**Hon. Mr. Hutchinson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in the House today to bring you and the members of this Assembly some exciting news about Saskatchewan's parks.

On Friday my ministry announced that we are beginning consultations regarding the creation of two new provincial parks. One of the proposed parks is north of Prince Albert and includes the existing Emma Lake and Anglin Lake recreation sites, as well as some adjacent Crown land. Now the second proposed location is south of Hudson Bay. It includes the McBride Lake, Pepaw Lake, Parr Hill Lake, and Saginas Lake areas, the Woody River recreation site, and some adjacent Crown land as well.

These particular areas were selected because they have great potential to protect important environmental assets and to enhance outdoor recreation opportunities in our beautiful province. Mr. Speaker, the consultations are getting under way now, and the first open houses are scheduled in May.

Our government is committed to adding more parks to our provincial park system, but it is important to note that we'll approach this goal with all proper consideration and consultation with involved parties. Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport will consult with the public and other stakeholders including municipal governments, tourism operators, outfitters, and other local businesses. We will talk to First Nations and Métis communities, property owners, the provincial and regional organizations such as Tourism Saskatchewan.

The ministry will be looking for feedback on the proposed park boundaries, on current uses of the proposed park area, future infrastructure recommendations, and possible future recreation opportunities. The proposed new parks will help protect important environmental assets and improve outdoor recreation opportunities for Saskatchewan citizens and visitors alike.

Mr. Speaker, our provincial parks play a major role in conserving Saskatchewan's ecosystems. They also contribute to economic development in nearby communities and help create jobs. Adding new provincial parks is part of our commitment to enhance our already enviable quality of life and to keep Saskatchewan moving forward on the road ahead. The ministry hopes to have a decision regarding the proposed new parks by the fall of this year.

Mr. Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to inform the Assembly of the upcoming consultations. I look forward to updating members at a later date on the outcome of this important process.

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

**Ms. Chartier:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, thank

you to the minister for sending over a copy of his remarks shortly after 1. I appreciated that.

It's always good to hear, Mr. Speaker, when the government is looking at further protecting our rich environmental assets. We've got many here in this province and much to be proud of, whether it's the Grasslands National Park, all the way up to Lake Athabasca and the sand dunes.

So my first question would be, why these two specific areas? And I know the minister mentioned the opportunity for protecting the environment and also increased recreational opportunities. But what has been the government's way of deciding, why these areas over other areas like the Churchill River basin, for example? So why these two areas over something like the Churchill River basin?

[15:00]

I know from first-hand experience that the area, Emma Lake and Anglin recreational sites are incredibly highly utilized. I actually have two brothers who have cabins at Emma Lake, so I know there will be much public interest in this consultation process.

Establishing a new provincial park is about striking the balance between creating opportunities for residents and visitors to enjoy our wonderful natural assets while learning about and developing a strong appreciation for those natural assets, all the while ensuring our delicate ecosystems are kept in healthy balance, Mr. Speaker.

I know from first-hand experience too that it's great to get people out to some of these special and pristine areas. Because when we see something first-hand, we can read about it in a book or see about it on a TV show, but when you experience it, you tend to have a greater appreciation and say, yes that is something we really need to foster and preserve.

So this opposition welcomes this move to developing two new provincial parks. But I would be remiss if I didn't point out in the minister's remarks that he says these sites have been selected because they have "great potential to protect important environmental assets."

So this is the government that removed 3 million acres from protection last year. All the while not only did they remove these 3 million acres, sensitive acres, from protection but they had a terrible consultation process.

So the minister here talks about consultations. He's beginning consultations on this process to determine the next two provincial parks. So the opposition will be working hard to ensure that this is a fulsome process and that the government makes a genuine effort to hear from all those, including the general public and stakeholder organizations that will be impacted by this. My colleagues and I will be working very hard to ensure that these voices who need to be heard are heard in this government process.

I also want to point out too that as we welcome a new provincial park, it's important for the government to ensure that it's managing what it already has. For example this government

last year had a report on Blackstrap Provincial Park that wrapped up last summer, but we've yet to see the recommendations on that provincial park. So I'd encourage this government, yes it's important to establish new provincial parks, but it's equally important to maintain and enhance what we already have.

So again the opposition supports this move to add two provincial parks. We question why these two areas in particular are the focus. And we want to encourage the government to do real and meaningful consultation with all who need to have a voice in this process and ensure that all those who want to participate in consultations do. We'll be working hard to make sure that happens. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### Bill No. 170 — *The Corporation Capital Tax Amendment Act, 2011*

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

**Hon. Mr. Krawetz:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 170, *The Corporation Capital Tax Amendment Act, 2011* be now introduced and read a first time.

**The Speaker:** — The Minister of Finance has moved first reading of Bill No. 170, *The Corporation Capital Tax 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 this Bill be considered a second time? I recognize the Minister of Finance.

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

**The Speaker:** — Next sitting.

### Bill No. 171 — *The Income Tax Amendment Act, 2011 (No. 2)*

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

**Hon. Mr. Krawetz:** — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 171, *The Income Tax Amendment Act, 2011 (No. 2)* be now introduced and read a first time.

**The Speaker:** — The Minister of Finance has moved first reading of Bill 171, *The Income Tax Amendment Act, 2011 (No. 2)*. 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 this Bill be considered a second time? I recognize the Minister of Finance.

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

**The Speaker:** — Next sitting.

**Bill No. 625 — *The Saskatchewan Respectful Language Act***

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

**Mr. Forbes:** — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 625, *The Saskatchewan Respectful Language Act* be now introduced and read a first time.

**The Speaker:** — The member from Saskatoon Centre has moved first reading of Bill No. 625, *The Saskatchewan Respectful Language Act*. 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 considered a second time? I recognize the member from Saskatoon Centre.

**Mr. Forbes:** — Next sitting of the House.

**The Speaker:** — Next sitting.

#### TABLING OF REPORTS

**The Speaker:** — Before I call orders of the day, I lay on the Table the report of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan on the 2010 financial statements of CIC, Crown corps and related entities, section 14(1) of *The Provincial Auditor Act*.

I recognize the Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thought there for a moment I got a promotion. Mr. Speaker, by leave of the Assembly, I wonder if I could move a motion of transmittal of the words spoken by the Premier and myself earlier.

**The Speaker:** — The opposition leader has asked for leave to move a motion of transmittal. Is leave granted?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

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

#### MOTIONS

##### Motion of Transmittal

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, I move:

That notwithstanding rule 8(2) of the *Rules and Procedures of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan*, an audio-video record of the oral tributes together with *Hansard* transcript be communicated in memory of the former Premier Allan Blakeney to the bereaved families on behalf of the Assembly by Mr. Speaker.

I so move.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the Leader of the Opposition that by leave of this Assembly:

That notwithstanding rule 8(2) of the *Rules and Procedures of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan*, an audio-video record of the oral tributes together with *Hansard* transcript be communicated in memory of the former Premier Allan Blakeney to the bereaved families on behalf of the Assembly by Mr. Speaker.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried. Why is the member from Saskatoon Fairview on his feet?

#### BILL WITHDRAWN

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

**Mr. Iwanchuk:** — Mr. Speaker, by leave, I would ask that Bill No. 622, *The Workers' Compensation Amendment Act, 2011* be withdrawn from the order paper.

**The Speaker:** — The member has asked for leave to withdraw Bill 622. Is leave granted?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Leave has been granted. The Bill that is Bill No. 622 has been withdrawn from the order paper.

#### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### GOVERNMENT ORDERS

#### ADJOURNED DEBATES

#### SECOND READINGS

##### Bill No. 164

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert that **Bill No. 164 — *The Police Amendment Act, 2011*** be now read a second time.]

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

**Mr. Quennell:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise to briefly address Bill No. 164, *An Act to amend The Police Act, 1990*. As would it become apparent from the second reading

debate and the remarks of a number of my colleagues, the opposition had, if not a concern, at least a question arising from the proposed Bill. And that is a question that I took to the police associations and the Saskatchewan police federation, and that was the section that on the face of it would allow municipalities with cabinet approval to move from a municipal police force to the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police].

Now, Mr. Speaker, I've been provided with a draft of a proposed amendment, which I won't go into. The government is seeking to clarify that the municipalities currently having municipal police forces are grandfathered and that the section now would apply to municipalities currently receiving services through contract with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and desiring to maintain those services even after growing to a certain population, which may or may not have been the intent of the government originally, but certainly addresses a significant question that the Bill as originally drafted proposed.

And although I appreciate that sometimes the words due diligence and consultation when spoken by members of the opposition on Bill after Bill after Bill start to take on sort of the ring of the wine-dark sea in *Odysseus* — just a phrase that is used without much thought and as a descriptor of our general approach to legislation of the government and to our role as opposition. But here is certainly a case where I believe diligence on the part of the opposition and consultation with those affected or potentially affected by the changes has resulted in certainly a different or will result certainly in a different Bill than the one that was put forward by the minister in the legislature in the first instance.

I think that the Bill, even with the amendment that I expect that we will see in committee, still raises some questions as to the reasons behind the desired change, prospective change, if I can use that term, Mr. Speaker. But those are questions now that I think can be addressed in committee, and we will allow it to proceed to that stage, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Question.

**The Speaker:** — The question before the Assembly is the motion by the Minister of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety that Bill No. 164, *The Police Amendment Act, 2011* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

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

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

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — To the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — The Bill stands referred to the Standing

Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

### Bill No. 169

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 169** — *The Saskatchewan Financial Services Commission Amendment Act, 2011* be now read a second time.]

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

**Mr. Quennell:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to briefly address Bill 169, the Saskatchewan Financial Services Commission. There was a brief discussion in estimates, as a matter of fact, on this Bill, Mr. Speaker, and whether cost drivers were at all involved in the changes being proposed in *The Saskatchewan Financial Services Commission Act*. I believe the minister said no, but I expect the same question might arise in committee.

This is a small reorganization of government, Mr. Speaker. We have now reached a stage once this Bill is enacted, if it indeed it is enacted and proclaimed, we will have reached the stage where once was the Department of Consumer Affairs, and had as part of that department a financial services responsibility for insurance and pensions and securities trading in the province, we will have now reached the stage where there will be, if this becomes law, Mr. Speaker, where the Financial Services Commission will have as part of its responsibilities the consumer protection legislation that would formerly have been administered by an entire department but later subsumed by the Ministry of Justice and now by the Saskatchewan Financial Services Commission.

I suppose, Mr. Speaker, and to a certain extent it reflects the changing nature of our society, the complexity around retirement and . . . [inaudible] . . . issues and the relatively, relatively simpler issues around consumer protection and warranty that this development would have taken place over the last number of decades.

It is a matter of government reorganization. It isn't even a matter of reorganization of departments, but of responsibilities within the ministry. And I guess I should say that guardedly too, Mr. Speaker, because inherent within the legislation and I think within the minister's and the government's intention is a more independent, stand-alone Financial Services Commission, more distinctly independent from the Ministry of Justice. And the desirability of that and the actual accomplishment and progress towards that, I suppose, will also be a matter of discussion within the committee as well as will be issues surrounding the Financial Services Commission, particularly some cases that are now before our highest court in respect to securities regulation.

So all that is heavy work but more a matter of discussion, I think, than debate. So again, as with the previous Bill, Mr. Speaker, we would allow this now to proceed to committee.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Question.

**The Speaker:** — The question before the Assembly is the motion by the Minister of Justice that Bill No. 169, *The Saskatchewan Financial Services Commission Amendment Act, 2011* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

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

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

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — To the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

**The Speaker:** — The Bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

[15:15]

### Bill No. 167

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Reiter that **Bill No. 167** — *The Saskatchewan Grain Car Corporation Amendment Act, 2011* be now read a second time.]

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

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to be able to enter into the discussion and debate regarding the amendments that the government has introduced to *The Saskatchewan Grain Car Corporation Act*. I have some observations that I hope the government will take into account when they decide to implement this legislation.

Fundamentally, Mr. Speaker, what this legislation that the government has introduced into the House allows for, it allows that the Saskatchewan Grain Car Corporation can purchase assets which are to benefit the rail industry, and they can provide financial assistance to railways for acquisitions of assets, Mr. Speaker. Now this is a government that said that they weren't going to take us back to the past, that they were going to be fiscally responsible, and that they were going to be wise managers of the public purse. But there's a couple of observations.

You know, Mr. Speaker, we have a government that just agreed through order in council and in the budget to loan guarantee immigrant investor funds in the province to the sum of over 230 million. They have an order in council. And that money that they're loan guaranteeing is going to be lent to the real estate industry or the housing developer industry in the province. That's a problem because what we're doing is, we're going back to the past.

Because if you look at Donald Gass and his report in . . . When we came to government in the early 1990s, he suggested that

this was not a prudent way to proceed. And now we have a Bill that the Sask Party has entered in to this House where they are going to, according to the Bill that they have put in to this House, they are going to start to provide loan guarantees to the rail industry in the province of Saskatchewan. And that is problematic. And I want to read it into the record. What they are going to do is:

provide financial assistance by way of grant, loan, guarantee or other similar means to persons for the purpose of allowing those persons to acquire railway rolling stock, plant, equipment, or other assets that will benefit the rail industry.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we are now moving back to the past. And I would remind the members opposite that in 1991, under the recommendations from Donald Gass, we wrote off \$36 million in debt that had been accrued by the Saskatchewan Grain Car Corporation. And my colleagues have talked about the history of the Grain Car Corporation. It was not unlike Alberta did, Manitoba, as well as the Government of Canada, to get enough cars on the track to get grain to market.

And, Mr. Speaker, we are concerned, or I certainly am concerned, that we're going, we're moving back to the past where an NDP government will take over at some date in the future and will once again have to write off a bunch of debt that's been accumulated by the Saskatchewan Grain Car Corporation because this government just can't stay away — and I'm talking about conservative governments — just can't stay away from loan guarantees, grants, and so on and so forth. So we're going to be watching this very, very carefully, Mr. Speaker.

As I said earlier, what this legislation allows the government to do is to provide financial assistance to railways to acquire assets. It also allows the government to purchase assets for the benefit of the rail industry — not for the benefit of Saskatchewan citizens but for benefits of the rail industry — which really does send a sharp signal to farmers who have relied upon these assets to get their grain to Vancouver or to Thunder Bay, Mr. Speaker.

So I would say to the members opposite that this legislation appears to take us back to the past. It appears as though the government is now moving in a direction that we fought hard to eliminate in the 1990s, where loan guarantees were provided to, you know, who knows who. And what ended up happening is this province had a debt of over \$15 billion that we have slowly and carefully whittled away at reducing, Mr. Speaker.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I will be interested to see what the minister of transportation has to say about this in committee. It is an interesting set of amendments to the legislation. It's quite clear that the government is going to use this Grain Car Corporation that returns about \$1 million a year to the people of the province, but they're going to use the Grain Car Corporation to start handing out loans and grants to heaven knows who. And this is simply taking us back to where we were in 1991. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to adjourn debate.

**The Speaker:** — The member from Saskatoon Nutana has

moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 167. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion? Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — I would ask members if, in responses to the questions, to speak up so the Speaker can hear. It's been agreed. Carried.

### Bill No. 168

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Harpauer that **Bill No. 168 — *The Teachers Superannuation and Disability Benefits Amendment Act, 2011*** be now read a second time.]

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure this afternoon to join in on the discussion on Bill No. 168, *An Act to amend The Teachers Superannuation and Disability Benefits Act*.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill is not especially long in its length, but it does, Mr. Speaker, have some great relevance because of the matter that it deals with. And that has to do, Mr. Speaker, with the benefits that are paid to teachers in our province. As members would know, the STF [Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation] bargains with the provincial government as well as with the members of the SSBA [Saskatchewan School Boards Association] to establish a contract. And this occurs on a regular basis.

Mr. Speaker, this ensures, through the bargaining process, that teachers in our province who do such important work in educating our young people and instilling the values that are so very important in a healthy democracy, this bargaining ensures that those teachers are properly paid and recognized for the important work that they do in our province for all Saskatchewan people. And I think that's a very important thing to remember whenever we're talking about the benefits that teachers receive here in Saskatchewan.

In reading the minister's second reading speech, it would appear, Mr. Speaker, that this piece of legislation has been brought in in order to address an oversight that occurred with the last bargaining agreement that occurred in 2007, and that agreement received Royal Assent on May 14th, 2008. So this piece of legislation is being put in place now, Mr. Speaker, to address a shortcoming or an oversight that occurred a few years back.

And, Mr. Speaker, I think that's an appropriate and an important thing to do. When there are changes that occur or where there are agreements that are reached, it's important, Mr. Speaker, that the correct legislation that needs to be in place in order to address those changes and respond to those changes, it's important to ensure that that legislation is in fact in order and everything is above board and is moving along as it ought to.

In this situation, Mr. Speaker, it was recognized that there were some changes that needed to occur. So this piece of legislation is making those changes in order to ensure that the bargained agreement that was agreed to by both sides is in fact fully in order and everything, from a legal perspective, from a legislative perspective is proper. And I think that's a good thing to do, and it's an appropriate thing to do.

I do read in the minister's second reading speech that any of the financial responsibilities that the government had in relation to the previous agreement, I read that those financial responsibilities and obligations have been met on an ongoing basis. And that's an appropriate and a good thing as well. And what this piece of legislation is doing is ensuring that, from a legislative perspective, everything is in order.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that this is more of a housekeeping matter in order to ensure that the legislation is in place to respond to the previous agreement. It's also important to note, Mr. Speaker, that bargaining for the next agreement, as the previous one has expired which we're now passing legislation for, bargaining for the next agreement right now is not going so well, that negotiations have broken down, and as I understand it, Mr. Speaker, the teachers in this province have taken a strike vote.

And so I think, Mr. Speaker, I would hope that in this next round of bargaining that is not going so well right now but needs to occur, I would hope that the ministry, and through the minister's oversight, that the correct steps would be taken in this next round so that if there is an oversight, if there is an error in something that needs to be changed and hasn't been, that that would be dealt with in a timely manner so we wouldn't be placed in a situation where retroactively we have to correct a mistake that occurred or an oversight that was made.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I think there's been a few speakers who've had the chance to speak to this, and the individuals who have spoken have identified that this does appear to be a piece of legislation that is retroactively correcting something that was missed out. I think that's a proper thing to do. I'm glad that the oversight has been caught. And my hope would be, Mr. Speaker, that as the ministry moves forward with this next round of bargaining, that such oversights would not occur so that we do not have to retroactively introduce legislation to address an agreement that is already expired.

And so with that, Mr. Speaker, I would thank members for the time to speak to this piece of legislation, and the opposition at this time, Mr. Speaker, would be happy to move this Bill to committee.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Question.

**The Speaker:** — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the Minister of Education that Bill No. 168, *The Teachers Superannuation and Disability Benefits Amendment Act, 2011* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

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

**The Speaker:** — To which committee does the Bill stand referred? I recognize the Deputy Government House Leader.

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — To the Standing Committee on Human Services.

**The Speaker:** — The Bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Human Services.

### Bill No. 155

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Duncan that **Bill No. 155 — *The Natural Resources Amendment Act, 2010*** be now read a second time.]

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

**Ms. Higgins:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise and add comments to the Bill before the House, No. 155, *The Natural Resources Act*.

Mr. Speaker, it's been an interesting process to go through this Act and have a look at the changes that are being proposed. And I think when many people would have a look at it, they may just kind of shrug their shoulders and say, well it looks pretty mild, not a lot of drastic changes. But, Mr. Speaker, it needs to have some scrutiny for a number of reasons.

Mr. Speaker, I think first and foremost, I don't think there's anyone in this House that doesn't recognize the value of hunting and fishing, outfitting, and many of the wildlife organizations and nature organizations that are very active in this province. Hunting and fishing alone is estimated to have a \$100 million economic impact on our province. And for some people that may be a bit of a surprise, Mr. Speaker. But all you have to do is go to an airport in Regina or Saskatoon at the beginning of fishing season or hunting season, and you will see an amazing number of people who have come to our province, many from quite a ways away, to partake in either hunting or fishing activities in this province.

[15:30]

Saskatchewan is well-known for the hunting and fishing opportunities, and we need to make sure that that is able to continue and move forward. And I guess there's a number of questions as to what the impacts from this Bill will be as we go forward and in the years ahead. And as I said, Mr. Speaker, the Bill appears to be pretty minor in the changes that it makes.

And I think one thing that we have to do is question about the potential implications of the changes that are proposed to the Fish and Wildlife Development Fund, and in particular the role played by the advisory council. So, Mr. Speaker, when we look at the Bill itself and the explanatory notes that go along with it, Mr. Speaker, we see that some of the definitions are changing.

And really it's just bringing in line and removing department, any reference to department, and putting in place ministry, which is basically considered housekeeping, Mr. Speaker. And that goes on through a number of clauses.

But, Mr. Speaker, there is also a number of pages — and I have to find my spot here, Mr. Speaker, I apologize. Besides the housekeeping that takes place, Mr. Speaker, there is a new clause in the initial section that officially identifies the current steering committee for the Fish and Wildlife Development Fund as the fish and wildlife development advisory council. So the steering committee is now turning into an advisory council, which as it says in the explanatory notes, it will raise "... the profile and importance of the steering committee in providing advice to the government." And, Mr. Speaker, when I read the legislation itself, it seems to go quite a ways beyond providing advice to the government, in fact that this advisory council will take over responsibility for the Fish and Wildlife Development Fund.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this fund has been put in place, I believe it was in the 1970s. And I think it's estimated that about 30 per cent of hunting and fishing licences go towards this fund, the Fish and Wildlife Development Fund. And I think the last amount that I've seen in a budget, it runs about three, three and a half million dollars annually.

So, Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure whether it's the habitat certificates that are purchased with hunting and fishing licence that contribute to this or whether it is across the board all of each of the individual hunting licence and fishing licences. But, Mr. Speaker, it is a substantial amount of money, and it was begun to be able to promote programs and have a pool of money that could be used in the area to really maintain the opportunities here in the province for hunting, angling, and trapping licences and make sure that those are viable into the future.

So, Mr. Speaker, I do know that over the years there has been a number of programs that have been devolved out of the Fish and Wildlife fund to, say, different organizations like the Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation — they do a number of fish projects — and there are others that have been moved out under the jurisdiction of the government and the ministry, Mr. Speaker.

And when I look at many of these projects, while they've been very successful, we have to I think take into consideration where does the responsibility start and end of the Government of Saskatchewan, and who provides an overarching view and connect to all of the other government ministries. And, Mr. Speaker, without a doubt, when we look at wildlife habitat or the fish and game fund, Fish and Wildlife Development Fund, Mr. Speaker, we know that it isn't done in isolation.

Now, Mr. Speaker, ever since this government's been elected, they have talked about a new way of doing things and making sure that the government doesn't operate in silos. Now, Mr. Speaker, this isn't a new idea. Previous governments have worked towards interdepartmental co-operation and making sure that various programs are coordinated through departments and across government instead of just operating within their silos. And, Mr. Speaker, I know various government members

have spoken on this topic ever since this session of the legislature and since they've been elected government, Mr. Speaker.

So now we see this Fish and Wildlife Development Fund being hived off and moved out, separate from government, from government oversight. And, Mr. Speaker, I don't need to question, I don't think, the financial accountability of the process. But what does seem unusual is that here we are hiving off and keeping compartmentalized, separate, individual initiatives.

And I would question, Mr. Speaker, if there isn't an issue and a good rationale for having the Fish and Wildlife Development Fund still connected, still integrated into government to ensure that programs are in fact integrated and we are looking at the big picture. So I guess my main question is, where does responsibility for this fund begin and end with this new piece of legislation?

Now, Mr. Speaker, I do know also that organizations like the Wildlife Federation have lobbied for not necessarily greater access to the fund but a better use of the fund to be able to support other projects and to be able to augment the programs that are already being done by a variety of wildlife organization and nature organizations across the province. So you know, there's always that balance, Mr. Speaker.

And I still question where does the responsibility of the government end or where does it start? Where does it end? And who provides kind of the integration to the broader view that should be taken provincially when we are talking about whether it's wildlife lands or the Fish and Wildlife Development Fund or any number of other operations, organizations, initiatives that are out there and have been put in place over the years?

Mr. Speaker, they aren't put in place just for the fun of it, to create more paperwork and to create more work for someone, Mr. Speaker, or to charge hunters and fishermen more money on their licence or to take a portion of that money. Mr. Speaker, they're always . . . They have been set up for a reason, a reason that was important enough for the government in the 1970s to decide that this needed to be done and that the funding needed to be designated in certain areas.

So, Mr. Speaker, I have to ask, well why is this government so bound and determined to move a number of these operations outside of government to advisory committees or independent panels? You know, you kind of wonder, Mr. Speaker, if it's just to reach their goal of reducing the civil service by the 4 per cent per year. They're not actually reducing any jobs; they are just moving them outside of government proper so that they aren't counted in FTEs [full-time equivalent] for the government. Could be part of that, Mr. Speaker, but no. Some people may call me a bit of a cynic looking for what may be wrong with this legislation instead of solely looking at what's right about it.

But, Mr. Speaker, I don't think there's any criticism of the organizations that receive support through the Fish and Wildlife Development Fund. They do some very valuable work in the terms of retaining fish and wildlife habitat. And this is work that they have done for many years, as I've said, and I know we in the opposition support that work. However, we are concerned

about the implications of the government's decision to expand the scope of activities funded and that the Fish and Wildlife, while it receives as I said a portion of proceeds from every fishing and hunting licence, the amount of money in the fund is dependent upon the level of angling and hunting activity in the province.

Now some people may say that, well that will never go down, so we never have to worry about the amount of money that's in the fund. But, Mr. Speaker, I do know for a fact that there have been some major changes in this sector, not necessarily provincial changes but there has been major changes.

And I guess the first one that comes to mind is I think we saw a drastic reduction in bird and waterfowl hunting when the changes were made to stainless steel shot — going from a lead shot to a stainless steel shot in shotgun shells. Mr. Speaker, that was done a number of years ago, and I know many of the hunters that I know quit at that point in time. They just said it was too expensive. By the time you paid for your gas, you bought your licences, you bought shells with the stainless steel shot, it increased the price substantially. It may be — and I'm sure it is, Mr. Speaker — more environmentally sound not putting lead pellets all over the environment, but it did raise the cost considerably. And for many people what was a hobby and a passion, they actually stepped back from it because it had just got to be one more thing, one more cost that was associated with spending a day out hunting that just kind of put . . . It was the tipping point, Mr. Speaker, for many people.

And, Mr. Speaker, another issue I think that's been kind of front and centre, and maybe this is why last year when *The Wildlife Habitat Protection Act* was changed with the millions of acres across the province being . . . changing designation, possibility of changing designation, Mr. Speaker, and some of that land — we're not sure how much — being offered for sale to producers across the province. Mr. Speaker, many people rely on wildlife habitat lands for hunting in the fall. Many people have again stepped back from hunting because in some areas — and, Mr. Speaker, I know there are all kinds of reasons why it could have happened — that there is posted land. So if you can't hunt or you're very restricted where you can hunt, that also been cause for many hunters to step back from pursuing this hobby or sport that they have done, many for all of their lives.

So, Mr. Speaker, when we look at more changes coming in this piece of legislation, we have to ask, what do they do? What impact will they have? And will it be an improvement for the Fish and Wildlife Development Fund, or will it be a step backwards? And that's what we need to know. So, Mr. Speaker, we know the funding can change because if it is solely funded by the 30 per cent of hunting and fishing licences, there are things that can affect the amount of licences that are sold and what kind of an uptake there is on the licences that are offered, Mr. Speaker. So it's not a guaranteed amount of money. I'm sure it's been fairly stable over the years, but it's in no way guaranteed, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, so that's also a concern; how the fund is used, how it will be designated.

And, Mr. Speaker, looking through part of the explanatory notes, there was another area that raised a number of concerns, and it has to do with section 21 . . . no, 22(6), and I believe it is



(b), (d), (e), and (h) that were changed. And it designates what the minister may use the assets of the fund for. Mr. Speaker, so while there is some very specific issues that the fund can be used from, in the new legislation there is an expansion, and it says quite clearly in the explanatory notes that:

Amendments to this section broaden the scope of activities that are covered under the Fund to include restoration of fish or game populations or habitat necessary for fish or game species.

But also:

The amendments to this section also include the addition of two new subsections to allow the Fund and the Advisory Council to contract services that are deemed necessary for the management of the Fund.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure when they talk about the management of the fund whether it's management, financial management of the fund, or whether it is contracting services that currently, Mr. Speaker, the government in effect has contracted with the Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation to do a number of fish projects or other projects that are out there. So now we are moving it one step farther away from government. And it says:

These services could include contracting expertise from groups such as the Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation, the Nature Conservancy of Canada or Ducks Unlimited Canada for management of land within the Fund.

[15:45]

So, Mr. Speaker, a little more clarity is needed when we look at the changes being proposed to the fish and wildlife development Act and the actual, what will now turn into an advisory council, Mr. Speaker: what the makeup will be, what the impact will be, and if in fact . . . I guess my biggest worry, Mr. Speaker, is I truly believe that government does have a role in these types of organizations because there has to be a responsibility on an organization that has the ability to have an overall view of the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, you can't keep contracting out services to a variety of organizations and expect to have that overall view. The people of the province are expecting the government to maintain that balance in the province, whether it's through the Fish and Wildlife Development Fund, whether it's through *The Wildlife Habitat Protection Act*, that the lands that are protected across this province, whether it's in land leases for oil and gas exploration, whether it's in other mining operations or agricultural operations or something as close to many of us, I guess, as planning and development in our communities.

Mr. Speaker, these issues cannot be done in isolation. The government needs to maintain oversight. They need to maintain a connect, so that what we end up with and what we continue to have is a balance in the province of Saskatchewan so that all initiatives builds a greater whole of the province and contribute to a greater package in what we call the province of Saskatchewan.

So, Mr. Speaker, this Bill may seem pretty mild but, Mr. Speaker, I do believe that it needs more scrutiny because there is a number of concerns about this government's growing propensity, I guess, to reduce accountability on how government funds are spent. I mean we can point to any number of examples through estimates over this past little while where future commitments for long-term care facilities don't show up in budget documents. They're not carried as debt anywhere. But, Mr. Speaker, you cannot partially fund something and not account for 100 per cent of the money. So we question a lot of these entries. We question a lot of, kind of, the incomplete estimates that are being rolled out for scrutiny and, Mr. Speaker, it does raise concern.

So this Bill too falls into that category. I know there are people that are asking for greater access to the fish and wildlife fund. Mr. Speaker, I know there are lots of good uses that it could be put to, but we also have to ensure that there is that oversight by the government, a responsibility and a requirement by the government to have an overview of all of these programs to make sure they are interconnected, they're augmenting each other, complementing each other, and providing a better balance for people to live in the province of Saskatchewan — not just this generation, Mr. Speaker, but for generations to come.

So, Mr. Speaker, I know there are a couple of other of my colleagues that are looking forward to making comments on this Bill and, Mr. Speaker, at this point in time I would adjourn debate on Bill 155, *The Natural Resources Amendment Act*. Thank you very much.

**The Speaker:** — The member from Moose Jaw Wakamow has adjourned debate, moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 155. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

### Bill No. 161

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 161** — *The Election Amendment Act, 2010* be now read a second time.]

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

**Mr. McCall:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm proud to rise and participate in the debate on this piece of legislation today, and in some ways it connects to the fundamental issues that brought me to this Assembly, Mr. Speaker. Bill No. 161, of course, deals with *The Election Act*, and I want to say that — had the chance to talk about this previously and expand on that a bit in my remarks today — but electoral process, the democratic process, our parliamentary form of government, these things are certainly evolutionary, Mr. Speaker. And certainly we should be continuing to strive as the province of Saskatchewan to . . . What are the ways that we can make our system more democratic, more accessible, and of course more reliable, Mr. Speaker?

And certainly in Canada or throughout, as long as elections have been held and there have been ballot boxes to count the contents thereof, sometimes these things have gone well, Mr. Speaker, sometimes they have gone less well. Sometimes they've been outright scandalous; sometimes illegal activities have taken place; sometimes what has taken place is outrageous and offensive to the very spirit of democracy. But if you're going to have a democratic process, if you're going to have an electoral process that allows people to come out and make their mark at the ballot box, make their democratic choice known, certainly the process around that again has to strike that balance between what is accessible, Mr. Speaker, and what is secure.

And over the years in the province of Saskatchewan, one of the key sort of mechanisms by which we go back and look at elections to see if, you know, things were done poorly or well, is the mechanism of the all-party committee that convenes after the election concludes, and they go through the entrails of what has taken place and make recommendations on how the procedure by which we govern the electoral process has functioned.

And, you know, be it the hours of polling or the availability of the ballot box, and maybe it's regards to the polling divisions themselves, the provisions under law by which we once came to allow time out of the workday for working people to come and cast their ballot, ranging off into electoral finance and the kind of restrictions or prohibitions that have been put in place and the kind of guidelines that are there, the kind of law that is there to govern the electoral finance, there have been a great number of things that have come about over the years in response sometimes to problems that have been identified, sometimes to respond to best practice as identified in other regions, and sometimes as a desire to correct or remedy scandal that has taken place or behaviour that has taken place that is offensive to the spirit of democracy.

And like I was saying, Mr. Deputy Speaker, now, one of the key mechanisms by which things have been brought forward previously in a fairly open and democratic way — which helps if you're looking to construct a democratic process, Mr. Speaker, or to ride herd on that process — has been the all-party committee.

The chief provision in this legislation is the introduction of photo voter identification being a requirement of being sworn in at the polling station and thereby gaining access to the ballot and thereby being able to make your choices known on election day, Mr. Deputy Speaker. As far as we can tell, the origin or the genesis of this was the Throne Speech that was brought forward by this government in the fall of 2010.

And one of the places this measure did not originate of course was in the report provided by the all-party committee that examined the conduct of the last election and made a number of recommendations on improving or correcting different of the practice that was examined there. So this recommendation came forward out of, you know, it was very much an initiative out of that government caucus or that government cabinet, and it did not come out of the all-party committee that convenes after the election. And of course I'm sure you're probably thinking, you know, big deal. You know, they're the government. They've got the opportunity to introduce legislation as they see fit, and

why wouldn't they do that?

Well I'll tell you, Mr. Speaker, one of the things that's significant about this legislation and different from another piece of electoral reform legislation that was brought in by this government, the fixed election date legislation or the fixed election legislation as it was then introduced in the Chamber by the Minister of Justice — I'm not sure if Freud is involved in that, Mr. Speaker — but anyway the piece of legislation dealing with fixed election dates that was part of the now government's party platform, they were upfront with the people of Saskatchewan about it. Fair ball. This is something that they brought forward.

But other changes that are made to electoral practice have generally gone through this other channel that I'm talking about in terms of problems that are identified or situations that need correction or remedy through the all-party committee process. So it wasn't in the platform. It wasn't identified by the all-party committee that reported after the election, examined the conduct of the election. As far as we can tell, Mr. Speaker, this is a remedy in response to a problem that has not been experienced to date in the electoral practice of this province, certainly not in my experience of the past 10 years of elections, Mr. Speaker, and certainly not identified by the all-party committee as has been the practice in years previous.

So where does this come from? As far as we can tell, this comes from the doings of the federal Conservative government. And of course the introduction of a photo identification requirement, Mr. Deputy Speaker, again is something that we've seen the federal Conservative government introduce in a way that seems to be more about making the electoral process more difficult or more frustrating for people that want to get to the ballot box than it is about facilitating the casting of the ballot or the making known of your democratic choice.

And again we all recognize, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that there's a balance to be struck in terms of accessibility and security of who is involved in the election. And certainly there have been . . . That's been an evolutionary process, and it's something that demands vigilance and watchfulness. But again the problem that this measure seeks to correct was not identified by the all-party committee. There was no reporting of this in any substantial way at the time of the last election or the election before that and again within my recent memory of the conduct of provincial elections, Mr. Speaker. So you have to wonder, what is this about?

Well the requirement for photo identification, they've cited other jurisdictions that have brought this in, chiefly the federal Conservatives that, you know, there are well-known connections between that cabinet and that caucus and the federal Conservatives. But why would they bring in photo identification in the province of Saskatchewan? Or to ask it another way, Mr. Speaker, who doesn't have photo identification in the province of Saskatchewan?

Well there tends to be a high correlation between people that are First Nations, that are Métis, that don't have photo identification. Low-income people tend not to have photo identification, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and seniors tend to be a group that there tends to be a lesser amount of photo

identification for.

And again, one of the chief means of photo identification is the driver's licence. And that would seem to be one of the things indicated as a photo identification or which satisfies the requirement for a photo identification, but this leads into another problem of this legislation that I'll get to momentarily. But just to finish the point, Mr. Deputy Speaker, why would you want to make it more difficult for those groups to get to the ballot box to make known their democratic choice?

And as with the federal Conservatives, there tends to be a correlation between the groups that this makes it more difficult for them to get to the ballot box and groups that traditionally have not been big supporters of that government opposite. So again you look and see where did this suggestion come from. What is the problem that this legislation seeks to remedy? Well it wasn't identified by the all-party committee, you know, which has been a fair and broadly based practice by which people can seek to identify problems that take place in the elections and then give them redress. It didn't happen out of that process, Mr. Deputy Speaker. What it comes out of is the federal Conservatives.

[16:00]

And in terms of the federal Conservatives, that's a government that's famous for their how to game the parliamentary committee process, Mr. Speaker. That's a government that is famous for their how to disrupt the House tactics manual that they handed out to the members of their caucus. That's a government that laughed off the finding of contempt as somehow just a mere procedural matter or a petty partisan matter and trying to deny the fact that was the first time that a federal government has been found in contempt of the very rules by which we're supposed to govern our parliamentary procedures. So again, that they would look to that government for measures that are helpful to our democratic practice and to our electoral process, we find highly suspect on this side of the House, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I guess the broader sort of, one of the broader questions that this legislation raises is that there's a fair amount of, you know . . . Again the very premise of it we find to be suspect, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But the way that certain things are not accounted for in the legislation, but are instead punted to regulations is another thing that we find less than helpful if you're going to be an open and accountable and transparent government generally. But we find it offensive when it comes to using that practice on the very election Act that conducts our democratic process here in the province of Saskatchewan.

Again, there have been all-party mechanisms that have built up over the years to try and make this a broad, fair, open process. And when you've got something that's not just sort of coming in out of what seems to be a fairly suspect set of motivations, but then on top of that the government can't even be straight about what's going to be in the legislation, they instead forgo things and punt it off to regulations, that tends to double down on the suspicion with which we regard this measure from this side of the House, Mr. Speaker, and the suspicion with which this measure is regarded by a fair number of the people of this province.

But again one of the things that I find interesting about this measure, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and the fact that we're having this debate when we are, is of course not long on the heels of the passing of the Honourable Allan Emrys Blakeney. And I of course take great pride in representing the seat of Regina Elphinstone-Centre, which of course is where the Mr. Blakeney once represented the people. And certainly one of the ways that I came to be involved in active electoral politics was the fact that in the 1971 election my father volunteered for Allan Blakeney as his then NDP candidate.

Now my father had come off the farm with my grandma in the '50s. And they had certainly grown up with supporting the CCF and Tommy Douglas and seen him speak off the back of a hay wagon and things like that. But one of the things that got my father active, got him active and engaged to the point where he wanted to go knock on doors and take an engaged, active role in the election was the fact that in 1967, Regina Centre came into being as a riding. Up until then you'd have Regina East and Regina West, and these were multi-member seats where the two members in Regina East that got the most votes would represent the seat; two members in Regina West the same thing.

In 1967 they were carved out as discrete ridings all by themselves. And that was the first election where Regina Centre, which was the forebear of what became in 1975, Regina Elphinstone came into existence. Well in advance of the 1971 election, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the then Thatcher and Liberal government, the free enterprise flavour of the decade, came forward with such a vicious gerrymander that it was so obviously offensive to so many people that this is one of the things that propelled my father in deciding that, you know, this is not fair. This is something that I want to fight and do so with every means possible to me.

And what happened in the 1971 election, Mr. Speaker, which Allan Blakeney contested and ultimately won as the premier, won the premiership of Saskatchewan and led the then NDP government in the 1971 election, brought the New Deal for People platform into the halls of government and began implementing that policy.

That election in Regina Centre, we had an enumeration, after a boundary redistribution, we had an enumeration of about 19,600 people — 19,600 people. And meanwhile in Regina South, which at that point had a tradition of voting Liberal, they carved out a very distinct riding for the Liberals at that time, that had less than 5,000 people. And when you think about that, Mr. Speaker, you know, the 4 to 1 sort of ratio involved in the trying to cut the knees out from under the voting power of the people that were then put into the riding of Regina Centre, that's offensive to democracy. That's offensive to the very reason by which we're supposed to be here in this legislature.

So one of the measures, one of the remedies that was brought forward in that election in 1971 was the whole notion of an independent Boundaries Commission. And in lesser or greater ways that mechanism, that electoral institution has carried forward to this day. And the idea that you'd sit in the back office of the Premier's offices and cut up a map and in places like Regina to gerrymander it so that you've got nearly 20,000 voters in an NDP-leaning riding and less than 5,000 voters in a Liberal riding, that's no longer possible under the legislation.

But of course these things evolve. And, you know, as measures come forward, countermeasures that developed, so what is it about this legislation that we find offensive? Well, what we find offensive about this legislation is that it seems to set out a series of hoops for people to jump through that also happen to, you know — I'm sure not by coincidence, Mr. Speaker — line up with supporting the New Democratic Party and not supporting the government of the day.

And again, Mr. Speaker, as has been said, I'm forgetting the speaker, but the price of democracy, the price of freedom is eternal vigilance. And as you try to set up these democratic institutions and these democratic practices, there will be those that come along to try to abuse the process.

And certainly that abuse of the process in 1971 was something that led to the inclusion of the independent Boundaries Commission in the New Deal for People, it is one of the things that led my father to get out and knock on doors for Allan Blakeney. And it was one of the things that I think of, or I thought of when we heard the news of Mr. Blakeney's passing.

And if you don't have a democracy that's worth the practices, that's worth the procedures that it sets out by which it's supposed to engage people in the voting process, then the rest of it tends to be not worth a whole lot. And in terms of what the disclosure is around the spending of public money, what the groups that have been consulted with in terms of different measures being brought forward, these are all things that should be going to open and transparent practice in our public affairs.

But there's nothing much more fundamental to the conduct of the provincial government, Mr. Deputy Speaker, then how it approaches the very rules of the game. If this, you know, were in the playoffs here for hockey, if the ref and if the rules are not fair and above board, and if there's one team that's trying to game the rules or game the ref, then people are outraged. Well if you've got the same kind of thing going on in your democracy, Mr. Speaker, well people should be outraged as well.

And again in terms of those bipartisan, broadly open processes by which we've examined our electoral practice in past, another recent example, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is the appointment of the Chief Electoral Officer. And in the past, that has been subject to a recommendation of the Board of Internal Economy, which has representation from the parties that make up the legislature on it. They interview the candidates, they weigh their merits, and then they make a recommendation which, in past, has been taken on by the government and appointed as the electoral officer.

But of course, we don't have an electoral officer right now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have an Acting Chief Electoral Officer. And that's because that individual was put forward, went through the interview process, knew enough about the system and knew enough about the conduct of fair and open elections to put his resumé forward. It was weighed according to its merits by the Board of Internal Economy, which again has representation from both sides of the House, and the Board of Internal Economy decided that this was the preferred candidate. This is the person that should be in charge of conducting fair and open elections in this province. The recommendation was

made and then of course what happens, Mr. Deputy Speaker? Well the government caucus got its fingers into it and turned back the appointment of the, you know, what should be the head referee for our democratic practice.

So what happened there, Mr. Deputy Speaker? Well what I think we saw was a government that did something because they could do it. Whether they should do it or not goes against, again, what have been bipartisan, broadly open practices in this legislature that make sure that you have that give and take, that say from both sides, and then a decision that should be removed from political jousting or the politics as they are conducted on the floor of this legislature.

So again you see what's the electoral reform of this government to date. You've got the measure around the election dates, you know. Fair enough. That seems to be straight up. It was campaigned on by that government; it was in their platform. Fair enough to bring that forward. But where you've got the appointment of the Chief Electoral Officer, the head referee of our democratic practice in this province, the means by which people make their choice known at the ballot box and by which the government is decided, what happens then, Mr. Speaker? Well that government got their fingers into it, and instead of having the electoral officer in place, we've got somebody who's in an acting position and this will carry on till the election I imagine, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's hardly a satisfactory state of affairs.

So again in this debate, Mr. Speaker, coming back to the elections Act, when you've got for, one, a remedy that seeks to solve a problem that hasn't been identified by the bipartisan, broadly open practices that have built up to ensure that we've got a fair and open democracy and a democratic practice in this province, when you've got a remedy that comes forward and there's not a problem to be solved, that raises a fair level of alarm and suspicion on the part of the government. When you've got a government that takes what have been previously bipartisan practices and completely ignores those and gets their fingers into them in terms of the appointment of the electoral officer, the Chief Electoral Officer, that increases the suspicion and the worry on the side of this House.

And when you've got a government that won't even bring the measures forward and identify them clearly within the legislation, but instead punts them to regulations which will be, you know, drafted behind closed doors by those members, and then the people won't have any chance to have their oversight and their input into what those are, on those grounds, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think that this is a fairly alarming piece of legislation being brought forward.

And I think that it, I think that this speaks to the character of that government when it comes to what should be the fair rules, the rules of engagement that govern how people get to the ballot box. And if you can't, if you can't be trusted with such a fundamental, critical aspect of our parliamentary democracy, Mr. Deputy Speaker, then I think people are going to take notice, and I think that they're going to take notice and put paid to that kind of behaviour when they get the chance.

So in that regard, Mr. Speaker, I think I'll move to concluding my remarks. I know that there are others of my colleagues that

want to participate in this debate, very much so. And as such, I will conclude my remarks on Bill No. 161.

[16:15]

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

**Ms. Junor:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm happy today to continue comments on Bill 161, the Act to amend *The Election Act*. And as my colleague from Rosemont just was talking about -- Rosemont? Sorry, Elphinstone; sorry — was talking about the impact that this type of legislation will have on people's lives. People do have a problem, Mr. Deputy Speaker, with the integrity of the government who, a government who brings forward something that will decrease people's ability to vote. And what does that say about a commitment to democracy?

And I think basically I think I've said some of these things before in other remarks I've had to different Bills because it does speak to the lack of integrity of the government who does not have a commitment to democracy. And this is only another example of that lack of integrity and lack of commitment.

When the government vetoed the selection of the Chief Electoral Officer, that selection being made by an all-party committee, it certainly spoke to a lack of transparency, a lack of accountability, and a lack of commitment to the democratic process within this legislature. That committee was a committee of the legislature that chose and that recommended the Chief Electoral Officer's appointment. We now have an Acting Chief Electoral Officer which will take us into the next election.

But this Bill can severely inhibit many people's ability to vote. And the minister in his remarks has said this is nothing new, which then begs the question of, why do it? And since most people are starting to look with a bit of suspicion at some of the things the government is doing, you do have to examine what the motives then could be. And basically many people who will be affected by this will be seniors or Aboriginal people or homeless people or students, people who don't have access to photo ID [identification], and it will be those people who are not traditionally Sask Party supporters who will not be able to, it will not be easy for them to vote.

And so you have to ask yourselves if the Sask Party is picking on those people to disenfranchise and to make it more difficult for them to vote. You do wonder about the government, the Sask Party government's commitment to democracy and the democratic process. It should be something that any government is interested in actually increasing citizen participation in democracy, not putting in roadblocks that would make it more difficult.

And I think that anybody who has heard about needing photo ID has immediately pushed back and said, why? What does that do? What about people who don't have photo ID? Are you going to have somewhere, some place that goes into all seniors' homes and gives them photo ID? And is it going to be free?

And what about any information on education? How will people know the long list of things that the minister has

indicated can be brought along instead of a photo ID? Every kind of phone bill, utility bill, anything with your address on it, which then begs the question, Mr. Deputy Speaker, what about people who are homeless? And there are thousands of people who are homeless. Has the Sask Party government just written them off? They're not prospective voters? They don't have utility bills. They don't have anything that has an address on it. They are homeless so they will not have the ability to vote.

So basically the government has said they don't care about that. They don't care about providing a home for them. They don't care about doing anything about affordable rents and affordable housing and yet here again we're looking at another way to disenfranchise them from society, and that's take away their ability to vote.

I think the Sask Party has basically said well, we don't care if they vote. We don't care if they vote. We don't care if seniors vote because they don't usually vote for us. The Sask Party doesn't care about seniors because they don't usually vote for the Sask Party. And seniors are looking at certainly things that have happened in this province that has not been to their advantage. There isn't affordable housing. There isn't rent control. Many seniors are having a great deal of difficulty managing their lives. They are not being able to afford sometimes their utilities. I've had seniors talk to me about selling their grave plots; some of them who have come and said they're taking their medications every second day — they're cutting the tablets in half. Some of them aren't turning on their electricity or their power, so they're not cooking.

I mean these are things that are facing everyday seniors on low or fixed incomes. And now they're looking at again having to decide how are they going to get to vote. How are they going to come and . . . And seniors are great. They turn out in great numbers to vote. They understand their rights. They understand about democracy. And they certainly don't think this is a step forward in the democratic process, and it seems like it is targeting them.

So a lot of seniors, and I do have a lot of seniors in my riding of Eastview, they're not happy about this. They're not happy that this is yet another way . . . And last election, there was a lot of confusion about who had bills to bring to say their address. Many seniors were turned away at the polls and can't themselves back to the polls. They don't have a way to come back. It's sometimes very difficult for them to get there in the first place. And yet to turn around and have to go home and collect yet another piece of ID or a different kind of piece of ID, that has discouraged many of them at that time to vote at all.

So I think this is something that many of them do not see as a positive step forward in the democratic process and certainly don't think that the Sask Party has given any indication that this is something that's necessary or that will move the democratic process forward and encourage more people to come and participate.

Students again too, there's students who will be struggling to find the proper ID. Many of them sleep on couches someplace, and a lot of them are now telling us that they can't afford their rent. Meeting with young people in my riding, the biggest issue

for them is housing. It isn't tuition. It's housing. Tuition is second, but housing is first. And so if many of them are staying in places with friends and sleeping on their couches, they will not have those types of ID either. And our First Nations people, they are also not in . . . They're not engaged in the democratic process fully. And yet this is no way to encourage that engagement.

There are many things, Mr. Speaker, in this Bill that even the media have pointed out. And the articles that talk about it have said that this is not more inclusive; this is more exclusive, and that people who say, when you go to the polls, that you have to go to such an extensive process, it might be discouraging to some people. And it's also very concerning that people who are at the polls are very clear about what they're asking from for people who come to vote. It's, like I said, turning away people because they didn't have the right ID or had what the polling clerk or the DRO [deputy returning officer] thought should be the right ID. It has been difficult in the past and has had some people very angry about their inability to vote.

And it isn't something that the minister was clear about in his remarks, his second reading speech, about what actually triggered this, what brought forward the need to have it. As far as anybody can see, there was no specific incident, but he said it's to enhance the integrity of the system. Well that's an odd statement coming from somebody, a government, who refused to hire or name the Chief Electoral Officer. It speaks a great deal to the integrity of the government who actually overturned that decision. And now we have an Acting Chief Electoral Officer to take us into the November election.

And the minister said he doesn't think this will disenfranchise voters but he said, interesting, if you plan your affairs you should have no difficulty voting. So if you plan ahead and gather all your information, you should have no difficulty voting. But if you think you're going to go out five minutes before election time without anything, well then you will have some problems and you're not going to be able to vote.

Well I'm not sure exactly if our electorate has got all those plans in place, Mr. Deputy Speaker. A lot of people do tend to go out to vote after supper; sometimes it is a spur-of-the-moment decision. And certainly this isn't going to encourage those people to actually make that decision and actually go to vote and go to the polling station, especially people who are on fixed incomes, who are working poor, who are very poor. There are all kinds of things that they're going to have to need.

And this business about one person can vouch for you and one person can only vouch for one person, I'm thinking of group homes where people live and have one caregiver and would need to have more than . . . If there's four people in that home, four different people will have to go and vouch for them. That seems onerous as well. Why can't the caregiver in the home take all four residents and vouch for all four of them? This doesn't seem to be an inclusive way of encouraging people to get themselves engaged in the democratic process.

And if people have to prepare in advance and get everything, including a photograph of themselves on a driver's licence or a passport . . . I don't know how many people have passports

either, Mr. Speaker. I think that's really moving it a little bit too far into the onus on people to get themselves prepared.

They've certainly made it, as I said, very hard for people to vote. And I think this message is clear. These are the people who the government doesn't care about if they vote. And it is overzealous definitely when you put in something that isn't necessary. No special incident triggered this. And it's just something that I really don't understand why we would seem to have this be necessary, a necessary change, which then obviously does raise my suspicions because the minister was quite anxious to tell all of us that there's always all these other options that people can have. And so why this? Why would this . . . He mentioned other provinces who are moving this way. I was just reading in my notes about the push back in BC [British Columbia] for people who are homeless and who are taking this to the BC courts, that this is a violation of their human rights to present a photo ID. So that court case will be ongoing. So there is . . . It does seem like a strange thing to actually put in place.

And we're also looking at renters who change addresses quite often. So if you need a phone bill or a telephone bill or a utility bill to verify your address, if your address has changed . . . And if you have a cancelled cheque. People don't often have bank accounts if they're homeless. So it certainly is going to be difficult for many, many people.

And I don't actually think that, given that the minister had no real basis to share with us about why he thought this was a necessary change to the Act, I don't think . . . I certainly can't see it, and I don't think people are actually understanding why it has to be. And they don't actually, I don't think they support it at all.

And it is something, like I said, to put this in place when people voting, the number of people voting decreases over and over and over after each election. We look at very disturbing and very disappointing voter turnout numbers. You'd think that the government would be paying more attention to ways to encourage people to vote, to reach out to people who are more interested in the new technology now to look at online voting, to look at things that would move us positively forward and encouraging more people to vote rather than put more roadblocks in place for people who traditionally do vote, like seniors, and put roadblocks in front of them so they can't vote.

You do wonder then about intent and motive when you see something like that. And I've heard nothing from this government about looking at new ways of encouraging more, encouraging people to come out to vote. This doesn't speak to encouraging anybody to come out to vote, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So I think that it's certainly something that people have asked me, why do we need this change? And I really don't think that there has been anything, like I said, that has shown me that this is something we need.

It's interesting that in some of the other notes that I have, requiring voter ID may be considered a violation of one's Charter rights, and similar legislation has been struck down in some US states. So I'm wondering why we would step into that when it's going to cause, or it already has in BC, legal challenges. Why do we think that that's necessary? How does photo ID improve the voting turnout? How does it improve the

integrity of the system? I don't think anybody has said that there has been fraud in the polling booths. I certainly haven't heard it and I don't think anybody else has heard it either.

So when the government puts amendments like this forward, you wonder how people will access photo ID. Like I said, will there be free photo ID? Will there be roving photographers going into seniors' homes? Will there be some way to make sure that people have access to these photo ID in places that are accessible to them before the election in November?

And the minister talked about, in his press release or a news release in November, that the list of other allowable forms of identification will be extensive. Which again, as I've said, Mr. Speaker, you wonder, if the list just keeps growing, what is the point of actually doing this?

And the minister said the changes for adding to this list of exemptions or allowable forms of identification will be in regulation rather than in the Act itself. So regulation, for people who are watching, means no one will be able to see the changes until after it's done. So that again, Mr. Speaker, makes me very suspicious of motive. If you can change things in regulation and then people don't have the ability to have scrutiny, nor do we as members of the Legislative Assembly have the right to scrutinize or the opportunity to scrutinize until it's a *fait accompli* where it does no good — all you do is be notified of it — then that does to me also sound, it does sound ominous and it does raise my curiosity factor.

[16:30]

So I think also the minister was talking about further consultation and he's going to be consulting people after the Bill is passed. Well it's not going to do any good to talk about further exemptions when everything has been already passed.

And I think the big thing that people really should be aware of and should be concerned about is the fact that we don't have a Chief Electoral Officer appointed. And the process for that was the democratic process of this legislature. And the committee, the Board of Internal Economy, vetted the applicants and made a recommendation to the legislature. Somehow that process was derailed by the Premier and cabinet and caucus. Somehow, we don't know, but it has been derailed.

So we are now faced with an interference in the democratic process of this legislature, which speaks to me of many things. There is a disregard and an actual contempt for democracy in this House. And it's not actually limited to one issue. This government has a contempt for democracy. We see it in many things, including the failure to consult on Bills that have been, in some cases they say they've consulted on and it turns out they have not. And that's the wildlife protection Act of last year. We were very aware of that lack of consultation. So people I don't think are very, they're not reassured that any changes to regulation, which is what I gather from the minister's comments in his news release, changes to regulation will be done with consultation. I think people are a little leery about that as well.

I think at this point in the term of this government for a three and a half years in or just about three and a half years in, people

have seen the pattern. They have seen the pattern of disregarding seniors' needs. They've seen the pattern of disregarding renters' needs. They've seen the pattern of disregarding Aboriginal needs, for sure. No mention of anything like that, any help for people in those situations.

And I think the actual, just the absolute disregard for the democratic process is what worries me a lot. It signifies when we're looking at, when we look at citizens who have . . . They've almost given up on trusting governments to do what is best for them, and they've become quite cynical. And then we see a government acting in this way. It only adds to that cynicism. It adds to the fact that people don't trust politicians any more.

And I find that hard, Mr. Speaker, because I think many of us are here to try and do the right thing. And I think when people say, well but we don't trust politicians, and then the government does something like this to only add to that, it hurts all of us. It hurts all of our credibility. It hurts each one of us in our constituency's eyes. It hurts each one of us in our day-to-day ability to do the work of this House that we have been elected to do.

And many times I think that that disregard for process in the House, disregard for rules of the House, disrespect for the democratic process of the House, that's a signal of not a good government, not a people's government, and not a democratic government. I think that signals a real danger to our democracy here in Saskatchewan and I don't think it's only particular to Saskatchewan. I think Stephen Harper has much of the same attitude.

So I'm thinking . . . Someone told me it's in the genes. And I'm talking about not your Levis. I'm talking about in your genes, your genetic makeup. And I think that people, the person that was saying it to me said that the actions of a conservative government, they can't help themselves; it's in their genes. And as I watch and see some of the things that happen and some of the things that this government is, our government in Saskatchewan is following along, I think they're right. I think it is almost genetic because it isn't something that appears to be, seems to be in a policy direction written down someplace because we know that Sask Party conventions don't have policy direction or have policy discussions. So where does this come from? And the only explanation would be then it comes from, sort of, just intrinsic genetic makeup.

And I'm glad to say I don't see that in the New Democratic Party or New Democratic members of this Legislative Assembly. And I think that as an opposition it's incumbent upon us to make sure that we do stand up for assaults on the democratic process. And I can see several of them which I've mentioned, but I think this one — asking for photo ID and changes to *The Election Act* — does demonstrate an actual willingness of this government to erode the democratic process and to actually disenfranchise many, many of the voters in the province.

So I think it's something that people should be concerned about. I think they should listen to the debate. I think we should spread the word far and wide that this isn't something that a government who is committed to democracy and committed to

a democratic government, committed to transparency and accountability, which was all over many of the Sask Party government's publications and budgets . . . They talk about the most transparent and most accountable government. Well no one's seen any of that in anything that's ever happened in the last three and a half years.

So meeting with people who have had the Sask Party government's policies affect them directly, and the most recent ones are people in the health sector of course like in communities who have lost their health services, they don't have a lot of faith in the government to be working for the betterment of their community or their family or themselves in particular. They don't have a lot of confidence. And so when people look at changes to *The Election Act* and look at what it means to them and their right to vote . . . Because their right to vote actually is their only way of getting rid of somebody or a government who doesn't reflect their needs or the best interests of their communities or themselves or their families.

And I think people who I've mentioned aren't in a position right at this moment to be benefiting from the Sask Party government's policies and funding choices, like seniors, like Aboriginal, First Nations people, Métis people, like students, like low-income, poor people, poor working people, homeless people, none of these people are benefiting from any of the boom that we're seeing in our economy, all the good times that are in Saskatchewan. When you ask people, so how are you doing, those type of people are not doing well.

And their way of saying that, I don't like this; I don't want this for myself, is at the polls on election day, November 7th. That's the only way they can speak out and say so. And so to take this away from them or make it extremely difficult for them to get to the polls is again I think a real assault on democracy.

And I think people are starting to understand that. I don't think people are confused, and they're certainly not, they're not turning a blind eye to it. They're actually noticing it and they're not happy with it. And I think that unhappiness is starting to come through in many ways. People are coming to this legislature in droves, coming to talk about their issues because they think this is where they will have an impact. They're talking to their elected officials, if they can get them on the phone or get them to return a phone call. I understand from Kamsack, the Deputy Premier's office isn't returning calls about people in Kamsack concerned about the closure of their hospital. But people do see the legislature as a place to have their issues resolved.

And they see the people that sit here in the legislature as people that they have chosen. And if they don't have the right to choose, if it's so difficult to get to the polling booth to mark your X on that ballot, then you have taken away their ability to choose what happens in their lives and to choose a government that will best reflect their values, the values of their families, and the values of their communities.

And I think people are starting to see that they are just chipping away, chipping, chipping away at the democratic process, especially when you look at what happens in this House. And the Chief Electoral Officer fiasco I think is a real benchmark for how low the government has sunk about trying to manipulate

the democratic process.

We see it often in the House. We see it often in the disregard for processes. We see it in the arrogance that's coming through in committees and in the House and in the answers of the ministers to our questions, the questions that people actually ask. We see that arrogance coming through daily and ministers who laugh at issues that people bring forward. And people are sitting in the gallery watching. They're actually here when their questions are being posed, and they see the minister who is supposed to be answering the question laughing about their issues.

Well then they need the right to come on November 7th and mark an X and say, I don't want that person here any more. I don't want that person representing me. I don't think that person is doing a good job. So we need to make it easier for people to come and vote.

There has not been any fraud. There's not been any incident that says, we need to have this because there has been a cause. We haven't heard any of that. All we have heard is that somehow this will make it better.

Well nobody's actually into believing that sort of stuff any more from this government — just trust me. That doesn't work. I think the trust factor is pretty much gone and people are starting to look at the government and the government's decisions with a bit of a jaundiced eye. There is a fair amount of cynicism that comes from a government who gets angry or gets arrogant and doesn't want to answer questions of the people.

And yes, they do get angry when questions are asked of them and they don't think they need to answer those questions. And that arrogance . . . I mean it's a good thing to be up on a high horse. I like to see the ministers up on their high horse because it's a long way to fall. And they are going to fall because people aren't turning a blind eye to the things they're doing.

They're actually seeing what's happening and they notice that when things like this election Act change comes and it's trying to make things more difficult for them as voters, they understand what that means. That means that this government is interfering in the democratic process and interfering in their rights to exercise their democratic right to vote.

And they don't see this as something that's progressive or positive or necessary. They're wondering why. And there is no answer in the minister's remarks in the second reading speech, in the news release; there's no answers to that. There's no good answer for why this is being done. So you have to say then, well the answer obviously is the government wants to decrease the ability for people to vote, especially in targeted groups who don't particularly support the Sask Party. That's pretty stark, Mr. Speaker, when those groups are obviously the targets, because that's the groups that will be affected the most by these things. So it does speak to integrity. It does speak to transparency. It does speak to accountability.

And I don't think . . . People certainly don't seem to like the idea that the government is trying to make it more difficult for them to vote. And I don't think there's anything in any of the



remarks I've seen that there has been a need for this. People that . . . The minister said, as I said before earlier in my remarks, that there are some constituencies like British Columbia, Ontario, and Quebec who are doing this already and so we should be following their lead. And I think that there is also a clear indication in BC, before the courts, where there's several people, homeless people, who are launching a suit against this as an infringement on their civil rights.

So I'm not exactly sure why we have to follow that direction when there seems to be no indication from the minister in any of his remarks, as I've said, that makes this, that there seems to be a good reason for this Bill, that there seems to be a way that this Bill is fixing some problem. There doesn't seem to be anything in any of this that actually does any of that.

And I think that many people, as I said, who are feeling like they're outside of the democratic process, and I'm thinking of young people who don't come out very much to vote anymore. There's a whole group of people who are disenfranchised just from not having any faith in government, so why would we make it harder for them to come out? Why would we make it harder for people who do vote who are seniors, why would we make it harder for them to come out? The only reason I could think of is that you don't want them to come out. And then you look at who do they usually vote for? And then you wonder, well this is really a manipulation of a very, very, very ominous degree. And I think people are going to see that too.

So when this Bill is coming forward, it does speak to a fundamental assault on democracy, when you try and take away someone's right to vote. So I don't think there's anything in any of the material I have seen that would suggest that we should be seeing this as a Bill that would be important to pass or that somebody should support and have it into our rules in Saskatchewan.

And even saying that we want to have, go to some direction that other provinces are going, we don't seem to follow that direction in other areas. When we talk about rent control, and 80 per cent of people in the country are under some form of rent control, no one seems to care about following that example. Somehow or other this seems to be a selling feature of these changes, but it doesn't . . . It's very much picking and choosing what you want to support that other provinces are doing. And this doesn't seem to be one that would definitely, would definitely do any good for anybody, especially people with disabilities, seniors, renters, and certainly people who are homeless.

[16:45]

And that's definitely what's happening in BC. People in BC who don't have a fixed address, who don't have any ability to have a telephone bill or a utility bill or a driver's licence are saying that this type of thing is definitely going to disenfranchise them. And it's just almost like writing off a whole section of our society when saying, well it doesn't matter if they can't vote, if they can't come to the polls, if they can't get there with their photo ID. It doesn't matter because they're not the ones we're actually targeting. They're not, they're basically not the Sask Party supporters.

So lots of people are going to find it difficult to comply with this legislation. And if you're going to make some fundamental changes to what people have to bring to the polling station with them on election day, and if you're going to make those fairly rigorous, you first of all have to make sure that everybody understands and everybody has a very, very high level of education on what they have to do. Because there was a lot of very unhappy people who got turned away in the last election. And I think that people who had that experience — and I'm talking about seniors who mostly had that experience, who were told to go home and get another piece of ID or a different piece of ID — they couldn't come back. And so there was a whole bunch of people, voters, who made the effort to come out and vote, who had come to exercise their democratic right and were turned away because they didn't meet some requirement that they didn't know of ahead of time or didn't understand.

So I think that if we're going to see something that comes in that disenfranchises so many people, how on earth are you going to make sure they all know that you've changed the rules, and that the rules that you've changed are going to be so onerous that they are likely not going to come?

So there's a whole bunch of questions about how you make sure people have the ability to follow your rules which I don't see anything in here about that either. There's nothing about how you're going to make sure that people have all kinds of information so that you have, after November 7th, when you look at the election turnout or the electoral turnout on November 8th, you can say in Saskatchewan the new rules made this the best voter turnout in many, many elections.

I don't think that's going to happen, Mr. Speaker. I think this is going to see a decrease in number of people who are going to be able to come out simply because you've added a whole other level of requirement onto them. You've added a whole other level of confusion, and you've added a whole other level of disrespect for their circumstances.

You haven't actually looked at what do people need to get to the polls, not what do people need from your point of view. You need photo ID for what reason? Why does the government think that they should require that? You should be looking at what does a senior need to get to the poll? What does a disabled person need to get to a poll? What does a First Nations person need to get to a poll? What do the homeless people need to get to the poll and actually engage themselves in the democratic process?

I don't see any of that conversation taking place when the minister makes his remarks. He doesn't have any connection with those types of people. He has no reason to put this sort of Bill in place, these changes to *The Elections Act*, no sound reason that would suggest that we absolutely need this change in Saskatchewan or somehow or other our electoral process will be compromised. Nothing has come forward to suggest that that has happened before, and nothing has come forward to suggest it will happen.

So the minister has acted on some, I'm not sure, some incentive of his own or the party's own or the government's own initiative that somehow sees this as a way to, I'm not sure what. I think basically what it says to me is to make sure that certain

segments of the population who are not their traditional supporters don't get a chance to vote. And that is a very serious problem in a democracy. If you do this, Mr. Speaker, this is a serious problem in democracy. And it does speak to a level of arrogance and a level of disregard that is very scary actually. And I think people should be very worried about a government who actually puts something like this in place and tries to tell people that it's somehow innocuous — it's not going to matter or it's for their own good or it's for the good of the democratic process. I don't think anybody's going to actually believe that. I think this is a serious problem with a government who somehow thinks that the people that this will affect the most don't matter and that their ability to vote doesn't matter.

And I think if we look at the turnout on November 8th, we're not going to see a huge improvement because we've made it easier for people to vote. We're going to have, I'm pretty sure, Mr. Speaker, we're going to have fewer people vote with this type of regulation or this type of legislation in place. I don't think it's going to make it any easier for anybody to vote. We should be looking at ways to improve our turnout. We should be looking at ways to improve people's trust in democracy and people's commitment to democracy. There are countries where people stand in line to vote and are shot when they're in line. And we're trying to make it more difficult for people to get out. And which way are we going?

People in other countries, in Third World countries, look at us and say, anybody can come and vote. It's easy to come and vote. You're free to come and vote. You're encouraged to come and vote. People are dying to get the right to vote. And in our country, we're looking at ways to stop them from coming to the polling station and mark their ballot. I don't think that's the way a country with Canada's reputation and Canada's history should be looking at the voting process and looking at the rights of voters. I think we're going backwards, Mr. Speaker, when other countries are trying so hard to encourage people to come to vote and people are committing themselves, their very lives, to stand in line and vote, and we're trying to put roadblocks in front of our citizens so that they can't come and vote.

I don't think this is, this is not progressive. And it's certainly not, it's not a commitment to democracy. It's a very sad statement of a government's intention and a government's philosophy and a government's policy and a government's belief that this is the way that they think this province should go. I think that's a sad commentary on a government when I see countries that on the news where people trying to vote are shot or beat up or otherwise discouraged. I think we have such a good country where we're free to vote, where we're free to come and exercise our democratic right. I don't think this speaks to any of that. I think this is a step backwards in the democratic process. And I think people will see it for what it is. And I don't think anybody in our caucus would ever think that this is a good idea. I think many of my colleagues still have yet to speak on this, and I look forward to the opportunity to hear what they have to say . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . You want me to adjourn? Yes, Mr. Speaker, I can go for another four or five minutes.

I think basically what I was saying, Mr. Speaker, in other countries that look at Canada to model a democracy after, when you have roadblocks like this put in place and legislation like

this put forward with no actual reason or any good reason for it, I think those countries would wonder and shake their heads at where are we going. We're sliding backwards in the democratic process.

They are trying so hard to struggle to get their citizens the right to vote, the freedom to vote without fear of dying in line to vote, and yet we have people now who we're going to disenfranchise, that won't be able to come because they don't have the proper identification. They don't have the ability to get photo ID. Why are we doing this? We don't have a good reason. And I think it demonstrates, to not only the province but the rest of the country, that we're not interested in being inclusive. We're interested in being exclusive.

So I don't think that this is something that people will like as a Bill. I think they would not see this as something that their families and that their communities or they themselves will benefit from. I think it's definitely something that they will look at and think, why? Why would we be doing this? What good will this do to me? What will I have to do on voting day on November 7th? What will it mean to me? How am I going to get there? And if they don't know ahead of time, if there's not enough education ahead of time and they come to the polls on November 7th and are turned away, this is again a black mark.

We should not be putting barriers in place for people to come to vote. We should be looking at ways that are more in tune with who we should be reaching out to. We should make every effort to make sure that students vote, that seniors vote, that homeless people vote, that Aboriginal people vote. We should be making every effort to make sure that they have every available opportunity to get to the polling booth and mark their ballots so that truly the government that sits in these seats is representative of their issues and that they have confidence in the people that sit in this seat to actually put their views forward, and they have also the assurance that if they don't have that confidence, if they have lost that confidence, then they have a way to actually change that. And that is to go and vote on the election day.

And we want to make sure that they have every opportunity to do that. We've encouraged every single citizen of Saskatchewan to vote. Instead of putting up barriers and putting in blocks, we should be looking at ways to encourage people to vote, to actually make every effort on the part of a government and an opposition to make sure that people have that opportunity that they can exercise their democratic right.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think that, like I said, there's many people who still want to comment on this, and I think that there will be opportunity for them to do it. I have certainly I think summarized all the remarks that I want to make because I'm not in favour of this. I don't see any reason. No one has given me any idea that this is a good thing, a necessary thing. And so, Mr. Speaker, I will now adjourn debate.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the government Deputy House Leader.

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — Mr. Speaker, to facilitate the work of committees, I move that this House do now adjourn.

**The Speaker:** — The Deputy Government House Leader has moved the Assembly adjourn to facilitate the work of committees. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried. This Assembly stands adjourned until tomorrow afternoon at 1:30 p.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 16:57.]

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