



FOURTH SESSION - TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE

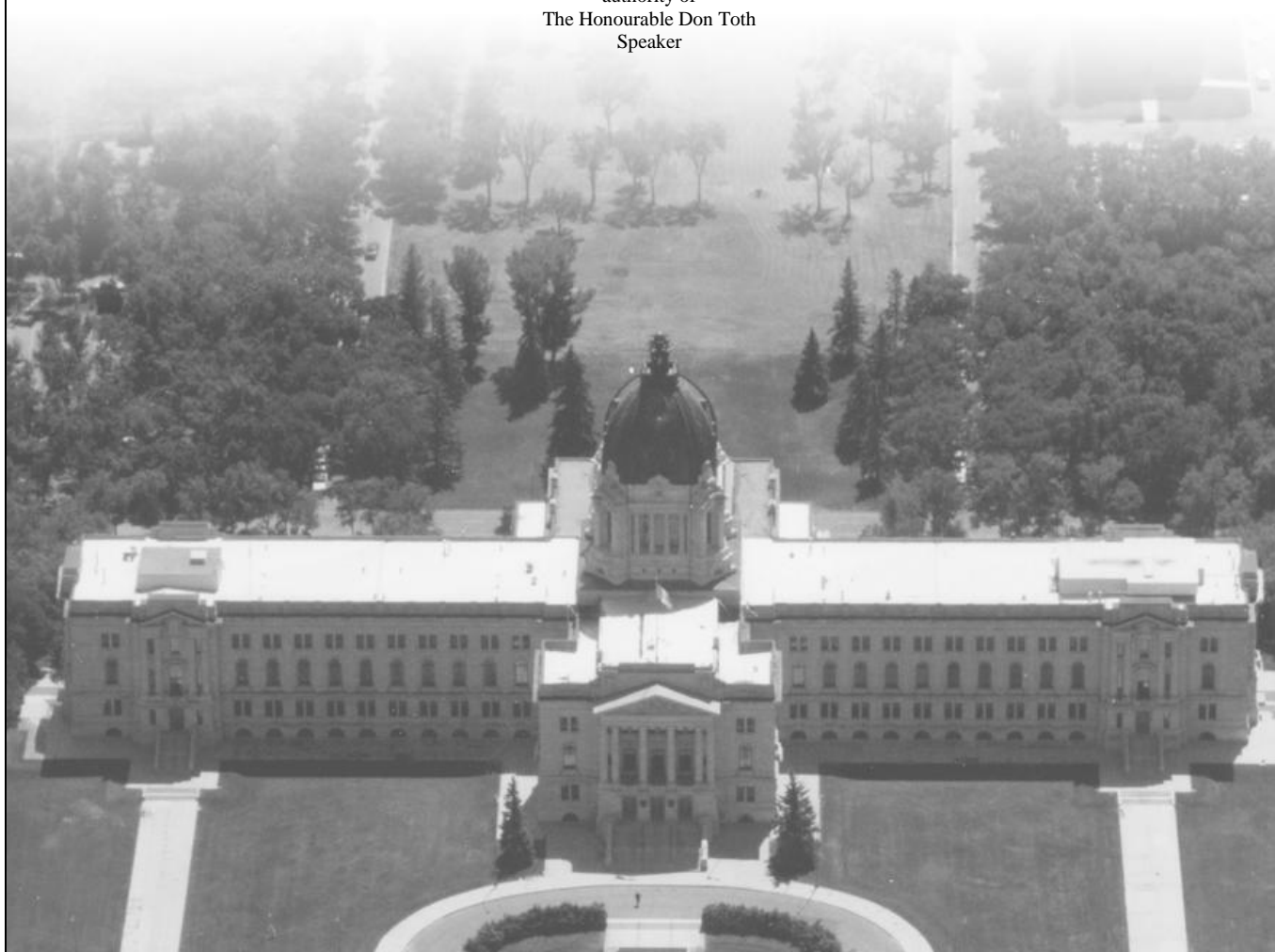
of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(HANSARD)

Published under the
authority of
The Honourable Don Toth
Speaker



MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN

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

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Wilson, Nadine	SP	Saskatchewan Rivers
Wotherspoon, Trent	NDP	Regina Rosemont
Wyant, Gordon	SP	Saskatoon Northwest
Yates, Kevin	NDP	Regina Dewdney

[The Assembly met at 10:00.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Enterprise.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to the members of the Assembly two gentlemen seated in your gallery, no strangers to many of us in this Assembly: Mr. John Hopkins, the CEO [chief executive officer] of the Regina & District Chamber of Commerce, and Mr. Victor Thomas, the president of the Regina & District Chamber of Commerce.

And I wanted to note as well, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Thomas last month received the Public Policy Forum's 2011 Emerging Leaders Award for Canada, presented by New Brunswick Premier David Alward, being the only person west of Toronto recognized at these awards. And I congratulate Mr. Thomas and welcome him and Mr. Hopkins to the Assembly today.

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

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to join the minister in welcoming our friends from the chamber of commerce, the Regina chamber, of course Victor Thomas, president — good to see you here — and also to John Hopkins, the CEO of the Regina chamber. These are important members of the business community, representing not only Regina but playing a big role in the provincial chamber as well. I want to welcome you both here today and ask you and invite you to keep up the good work on behalf of not only business but the community you represent. Thanks.

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

Ms. Schriemer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to all members of the House, I'd like to introduce a friend, Lori Pulai, seated in your gallery. Lori is a social worker. And when we had the absentee assessment team project going, Lori was the coordinator of that project which identified and worked with families of children who were not attending school on a regular basis due to many social reasons. And statistically the program did very well. And I'd like to welcome her to her Assembly. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Kelvington-Wadena, the Minister Responsible for Social Services.

Hon. Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you I'd like to introduce a very special group of grade 4 students from Wadena. They have with them today their teachers, Lindsey Harvey, Stephanie Ochitwa, and chaperones, Korey Murray, Dwight Pomedli, and Lisa McMartin.

Mr. Speaker, I had an opportunity to speak with them for a few minutes before we came into the House, and I have said I will go back after the pictures are developed and bring some back to the school so they can ask me more questions.

I'd ask all my colleagues to welcome these young students to their legislature.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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 here in Saskatchewan.

And we know that freedom from poverty is an enshrined human right by the United Nations and that all citizens are entitled to social and economic security. And we know Saskatchewan's income gap between the rich and the poor continues to grow, and now one in five children in Saskatchewan live in deepening poverty. And we know citizens living in poverty have long identified affordable solutions.

Recent national and provincial initiatives including the Saskatoon health disparities report and the Canada Without Poverty, Dignity for All campaign all call for a comprehensive poverty elimination strategy. I'd like to read the prayer:

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I do so present. Thank you very much.

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

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I stand to present a petition on behalf of my constituents who live in the neighbourhood of Hampton Village. And the petition reads:

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 tax; 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 Hampton Village. I so present.

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

Mr. Furber: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise again today to present a petition in support of a potash royalty review because the people of Saskatchewan are owners of a 1,000-year strategic resource, and as the owners of that resource they deserve to receive the maximum benefit. Additionally, Mr. Speaker, the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan CEO has said that there's a new norm for potash moving forward in the world today, and that was proven by the \$732 million first quarter profits that they recently reported. Mr. Speaker, the prayer reads as follows:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the following action: cause the government to begin a comprehensive, transparent, and public review of Saskatchewan's potash royalty system with a view to maximizing the return from this strategic resource for its owners, the people of Saskatchewan, who wish to use these additional potash royalty revenues for needed investments in health care, child care, education, affordable housing, infrastructure, and other social programs as well as public initiatives such as debt repayment.

Mr. Speaker, today's petition is signed by good folks from the city of Prince Albert. I so present.

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

Ms. Morin: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise to present a petition today to protect tenants from unreasonable rent increases through rent control. Since 2007 far too many Saskatchewan tenants have suffered monthly rent increases of hundreds of dollars, with average rent increases of over 35 per cent in Saskatoon and Regina. The majority of Canadians now live in provinces with rent control guidelines, including Manitoba, British Columbia, Ontario, Quebec, and Prince Edward Island. In rent-controlled Winnipeg, they generated more housing units from 2007 through 2009 than Regina and Saskatoon. And the petition reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to immediately address the deepening housing crisis in Saskatchewan evidenced by the soaring, unaffordable increases in rent which have placed the cost of shelter out of reach for far too many Saskatchewan residents, and make known that Saskatchewan's housing crisis has worsened by the extremely low vacancy rates in Saskatchewan's urban centres, which has resulted in drastically reduced options for renters; and in so doing, bring to the government's attention that the leave it to the

market approach has proven to fail Saskatchewan renters and now, at this time, Saskatchewan renters need protection from their government to prevent further large rent increases.

And accordingly, Saskatchewan people would be best protected by enacting rent control without delay to ensure that the basic human need of shelter is put within reach of Saskatchewan's renters, thereby making Saskatchewan once again an affordable place to live, work, and raise a family.

Mr. Speaker, these petitions are signed by the residents of Regina. I so present.

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

Mr. Quennell: — Mr. Speaker, I rise again, one more time in this sitting of the legislature, to present a petition signed by hundreds of Saskatchewan residents requesting public consultations on human rights law before a Bill like Bill 160 is enacted into law. It's probably the last day that I will rise on this petition, Mr. Speaker, given today's agenda. And the prayer reads as follows:

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

And today the petition is signed by dozens and dozens of residents from North Battleford, Moose Jaw, Regina, Tantallon, Carnduff, Carlyle, Carievale, Arcola, Yorkton, Esterhazy, Maple Creek, Rouleau, Saskatoon, Battleford, Conquest, Maple Creek, and Prince Albert. I so present.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, I rise once again 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 record of the Sask Party that includes the running of deficits and increasing of debt at times of record highs in revenues, Mr. Speaker, three consecutive years of loading debt to the tune of well over \$1.3 billion — this year alone adding \$548 million to the people's public books, Mr. Speaker — and of course being out of line with public sector accounting standards and the rest of Canada, 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 citizens and good folks from Arcola, Oxbow, Kenosee Lake, Conquest, Regina, and Saskatoon. I so submit.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

National Nursing Week

Ms. Junor: — Mr. Speaker, I want to quote today from an open letter from Judith Shamian, Canadian Nurses Association president:

May 9-15 is National Nursing Week, a time when Canadians can honour and celebrate the outstanding contributions nurses make to our society. Every day, nurses apply their extensive knowledge, experience and skills to ensure the well-being of individuals, families and communities across the country and around the world. Nursing research advances the frontiers of nursing science and provides the evidence on which we base clinical decisions, best practices and health policies.

This year's theme, *Nursing - the health of our nation*, reflects the positive impacts our nurses and our profession have on the lives of every citizen, and the cumulative effects of those impacts towards building a healthy society. It also speaks to the important advocacy work that nurses carry out in the public interest: spearheading action on patient safety and disease prevention, promoting healthy lifestyles, and working to address health and social inequities.

May 12th is an especially significant day as it not only marks the birthday of Florence Nightingale, but is also International Nurses Day. *Closing the gap: Increasing access and equity*, the theme for 2011, underscores the commitment of nurses globally to promote social justice and health equity and to address social, environmental and economic determinants of health. Let us join our nursing colleagues from around the world in celebrating this important occasion.

Thank you to Ms. Shamian for a very eloquently put statement. And I hope we all agree that nurses contribute a wonderful amount of work and benefit to our society.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cypress Hills.

Cystic Fibrosis Awareness Month

Mr. Elhard: — Mr. Speaker, May is Cystic Fibrosis Awareness Month in Canada. Cystic fibrosis is the most common fatal genetic disease affecting Canadian children and young adults. In Canada, two children are diagnosed with cystic fibrosis and one person dies each week from the disease.

Mr. Speaker, there is no known cure for cystic fibrosis. CF [cystic fibrosis] is a multi-organ disease, primarily affecting the

lungs and the digestive system. A buildup of thick mucus in the lungs causes severe breathing problems, making it difficult to clear bacteria from the lungs, leading to cycles of infection and inflammation, inflicting damage to delicate lung tissues.

With early detection of cystic fibrosis, comprehensive treatment programs have dramatically extended the lives of people with CF. Today half of all Canadians with CF are expected to live into their 40s and beyond. Saskatchewan is one of the few provinces that includes cystic fibrosis as part of its newborn screening program. The earlier the detection, the sooner the treatment program can begin.

Mr. Speaker, although there is no known cure for cystic fibrosis, research inspires real hope. Cystic Fibrosis Canada funds CF research and provides supplementary support for CF treatment programs at 41 Canadian clinics and five transplant centres.

Please consider making a pledge to CF Canada this month to ensure that Cystic Fibrosis Canada will be able to continue the research and find a cure for this disabling disease. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

[10:15]

Fibromyalgia Awareness Day

Mr. Quennell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise in the Assembly to recognize May 12th as Fibromyalgia Awareness Day. May 12th was chosen because it coincides with the birthdate of Florence Nightingale, the English army nurse who inspired the founding of the International Red Cross.

Fibromyalgia is a complex and common chronic pain disorder that affects people physically, mentally, and socially. It's a syndrome rather than a disease. Unlike a disease, which is a medical condition with a specific cause or causes and recognizable signs and symptoms, a syndrome is a collection of signs, symptoms, and medical problems that tend to occur together but are not related to a specific, single, identifiable cause.

Fibromyalgia has a devastating effect and impact on people's lives, people's work, and their families. It affects about 2 per cent of the population, and it occurs in people of all ages, even children, but mostly women. Roughly a quarter of people with it are work-disabled.

Fibromyalgia was widely misunderstood when it first came to the public's attention, just as multiple sclerosis was labelled hysterical paralysis before medical understanding and public awareness caught up with the disease. Unfortunately treatment options for sufferers have suffered from this delay in diagnosis. Fibromyalgia requires the visionary support from health professionals, researchers, and our Ministry of Health. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

New Legislation

Mr. Hart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the past, criminals who stole cars and injured themselves in collisions could get away with more than a vehicle. They could also get away with pocketing benefits from the province's Auto Fund. That's because this province's legislation used to require the Auto Fund to pay benefits to criminals who stole cars and injured themselves in crashes. That's right, Mr. Speaker: insurance premiums from law-abiding Saskatchewan people were being used to pay benefits to car thieves.

Mr. Speaker, this government changed that with the passage of Bill 173. Our government's new legislation makes sure that criminals who crash stolen cars can't get away with insurance benefits paid for by premiums from law-abiding drivers. This is another example of initiatives we're implementing to make our communities safer and hold criminals accountable for their actions. Additionally this legislation will ensure a more efficient use of SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance] car insurance premiums.

We know that there's more work to be done, and we're going to keep working hard to keep Saskatchewan moving forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Battlefords Journalists Receive Awards

Mr. Taylor: — The newspaper business in Saskatchewan has always been an exciting place to work. From the early days of the *Northwest Herald*, published in pioneer Battleford, to the recent pages of *The Battlefords News-Optimist* and the *Battleford Regional Optimist*, the stories of Saskatchewan people have been told in words and pictures. I'm pleased today to inform the members of the Legislative Assembly that the telling of these stories is continuing to win awards for the fine people who work in print journalism in The Battlefords.

Late last month the Saskatchewan Weekly Newspapers Association's annual awards program gave three first place honours and five runner-up awards to the North Battleford *News-Optimist* and *Regional Optimist*. The first place honours were recorded as follows: best sports story by Trent Cey; best research story by Tara Scaglione; and best tourism series put together by Jayne Foster, John Cairns, and Trent Cey. Runner-up awards included Michelle Berg for the best colour photo, Jayne Foster for the best research story and best editorial coverage, Tara Scaglione for best agriculture story, and Becky Doig for best black and white photo. In responding to the awards, editor Becky Doig said all those nominated were proud to be acknowledged as amongst the finest in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in congratulating the fine people who have dedicated their working lives to journalistic endeavours in The Battlefords, and who by their award-winning efforts have made the residents of The Battlefords better informed and more knowledgeable about important matters going on around them.

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

Saskatchewan Unemployment Rate Lowest in Canada

Mr. Bradshaw: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan people are working. Saskatchewan's April unemployment rate of 5 per cent was the lowest in the country, well below the national rate of 7.6 per cent, according to Statistics Canada's March labour force survey released on May 6th.

There were 518,700 people working in Saskatchewan in April of 2011, the second highest on record for the month of April. Regina, Moose Jaw, and Prince Albert all saw a strong year over year employment growth. The labour force survey follows a report from the Conference Board of Canada which indicates Saskatoon and Regina will have the first and third highest economic growth rates in the country in 2011.

Employers in our largest cities and across Saskatchewan are expressing confidence in their future and in the economic future of our province. As a result, Saskatchewan is and will continue to be the best place in Canada for skilled workers looking for new opportunities. Additionally the number of unemployed in Saskatchewan dropped by 1,800 year over year, and the unemployment rate for youth is the second lowest in Canada at 11.1 per cent.

April was also another strong month for saskjobs.ca where Saskatchewan employers posted 11,410 jobs. The site also has more than 8,000 jobs available right now in communities across the province.

As you can see, Mr. Speaker, people are working. It's the Saskatchewan advantage. Thank you.

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

George Reed Golf Tournament

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Some athletes come and go. Others are iconic, and the mere mention of their name is immediately identifiable with Saskatchewan. George Reed is one of those people.

Yesterday a media conference was held at the Wascana Place to announce the 2011 George Reed Golf Tournament for Saskatchewan Special Olympics. The second annual George Reed Golf Tournament will go on Monday, June 27, 2011 at the Wascana Country Club. You can sign up as an individual or with a foursome, but for sure it will be a fun-filled afternoon that you will not want to miss.

George Reed has lent his name and volunteer efforts to Saskatchewan Special Olympics almost from its inception in 1969. He's also worked with countless other organizations over the years. In 1978, Reed was awarded Canada's highest civilian honour, the Order of Canada. The presentation had everything to do with Reed's accomplishments away from the football field.

The mission of Special Olympics Saskatchewan is to provide individuals with intellectual disabilities the opportunity to achieve their maximum potential through training and

competitive sport experiences. At the core of Special Olympics is a belief that it is a fundamental right for everyone to participate fully in life and to be valued for who they are.

Mr. Speaker, I call on all members to support George Reed and, more importantly, the Saskatchewan Special Olympics, working with others to achieve common goals. Thank you.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Rent Controls

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, my question deals with the housing crisis in Saskatchewan that is not limited to Regina and Saskatoon, but really is a crisis across the province, and especially for those families who rent. And the fact is that rents are going up by 10, 20, even as much as 100 per cent. And the Premier has said that the solution to this problem is housing, but the housing also is so expensive. Average house is over \$300,000.

In light of the fact that rent is going up far faster than the rate of inflation and especially faster than wages are being increased and especially by this government, can the minister tell the people of Saskatchewan why in the world we can't look at a form of rent control similar to the other provinces that have it that have achieved two things: a cap on rent and a better record of construction of rental units than the province of Saskatchewan? Why can't we at least look and discuss that and move quickly to put a cap on rent in the province?

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

Hon. Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, I know that housing is an important issue to everyone in this province. I know the members opposite are talking about rent control, and our government has a five-point plan dealing with the housing shortage. We are investing \$252 million on 4,600 new rental or rental units in this province.

Mr. Speaker, we're working with municipalities. We're working with developers. We're going to increase the supply of housing, and that in turn is going to decrease pressure on the rental units in this province. Mr. Speaker, the average rent increases in Saskatoon has declined from 21 per cent under the NDP [New Democratic Party] to 4 per cent today. There's more work to do, Mr. Speaker, and we're working on it. We're rolling up our sleeves and making sure there are homes in this province.

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

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, I know the minister is impressed that they've had housing conferences, but the fact is that rent is going up at a rate that families in this province just can't, can't afford. And I have a letter here from Maureen McKenzie who lives in downtown Regina on Lorne Street, and I quote from the letter. She indicates, and I quote, "I'm a senior on a rapidly diminishing income, a renter in an old downtown Regina apartment block for 20 years. My rent will be increasing

from 610 to \$800 per month as of October, with notice that it will be going up to \$1,000 within the next year."

Mr. Speaker, that's a rent increase for an individual, a senior, someone who's helped build the economy of this province, an increase of 65 per cent. Now in the letter, she also indicates, and I quote, "the five-point plan that Premier Wall promotes is geared toward homeownership which is not an option for me."

Mr. Speaker, in light of these kind of letters — and we are getting them from all over the province from families who can't afford their rent — can the minister again explain to Maureen how it is that they are supposed to afford a 65 per cent increase in their rent, over the next year, when they're on a limited and fixed income?

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

Hon. Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, to the members opposite, I am aware that there are people who are facing hardship because of the issues of rentals in this province. And I do know that the reason why we are building more units is to make sure that people who have the ability to own a home can actually go out and buy one. And they'll leave more rental spaces for people who are absolutely . . . [inaudible] . . . spaces for people. Mr. Speaker, there'll be 4,600 more spaces available to people in the province.

And I do know that there's seniors that are on fixed incomes . . . have opportunities for things like the seniors' income plan and for a rental supplement. There's more work to do, and I assure you, Mr. Speaker, everyone in this province is important to us, and we'll continue to talk to them.

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

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, my question's to the Premier. And in light of the fact that when we raised this issue before about another building where rents were going up by as much as 100 per cent, the Premier said this was unacceptable. And in light of the fact that he has also written a letter back to Maureen explaining how the housing program would work for her and she has indicated it doesn't work, can the Premier explain to people in this province and especially seniors who are on fixed income . . . who have no opportunity to buy a home, which he is promoting, because at 70 or 80, it's very difficult to go to a bank and get a mortgage, as he well knows, if you have no large treasure chest of money that you've been able to accumulate over your life. What are these people supposed to do? Can the Premier explain why we can't have protection of rent control for Maureen and other Saskatchewan residents?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The government's plan for housing is very much to focus on the supply of housing. Mr. Speaker, we know that if there is increased homeownership in the province, there will be greater vacancies in rental accommodations. We know, Mr. Speaker, if there are more student housing opportunities in the province, that will also ease the rental markets in the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order. Order. Order. I would ask the members to now allow the Premier to respond as the members give the Opposition Leader the opportunity to express the question. The Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — The NDP looked carefully at the issue of rent control on a couple of occasions. One was quite some time ago, when they actually decided to cancel rent control in the province of Saskatchewan. But then very recently, very recently when vacancy rates were actually lower than they are today, in 2007, Mr. Speaker, I can tell you that the current member for Eastview was asked by the then leader to do a study including rent control, and they came to the conclusion that, notwithstanding the fact it might have political appeal, it's not proper, effective housing policy, Mr. Speaker.

We're not going to play politics with the issue. We're going to pursue policies we believe that will work, that have been tested, that will work for the province of Saskatchewan. And for seniors, for example, Mr. Speaker, we'll work to improve their status, their ability to afford things in this province by increasing the income assistance for seniors, Mr. Speaker, by dropping 114,000 low-income people from the tax rolls, and by, Mr. Speaker, pursuing a very effective five-point plan for housing in Saskatchewan.

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

Security of Health Information

Mr. Yates: — Mr. Speaker, in March over 100,000 personal health records were found in a dumpster in Regina, Mr. Speaker. Since then there've been at least four similar breaches where health records have been found in garbage dumpsters in the city of Regina and around the province, Mr. Speaker.

Clearly the government isn't doing enough to protect people's personal health records. Mr. Speaker, will the government agree today to setting up and operating a provincial repository for health records for the people of Saskatchewan?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We've discussed this certainly a lot, and we still remain with the same opinion that personal records being found in recycle bins is absolutely unacceptable. That's why the SMA [Saskatchewan Medical Association] has sent a letter out to physicians around the province. I too have sent a registered letter out to physicians around the province.

Mr. Speaker, I think if you did a survey across Canada, in fact I know that if you did a survey across Canada, there isn't one other province that has a repository, a provincially run repository. There are places for physicians to dispose of their records. There are companies that do this type of work, Mr. Speaker. What we need to do is make sure that the physicians know the regulations, know the legislation. We are, though, Mr.

Speaker, in turn talking to the SMA and the College of Physicians and Surgeons, along with the Ministry of Health, to deal with this issue as we move forward.

[10:30]

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

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It is the government's responsibility to ensure the protection of people's personal health information, Mr. Speaker. People look, people look to the government for leadership. Mr. Speaker, the law requires doctors keep health records for seven years after they quit practising medicine or they leave the province, Mr. Speaker. So doctors by law in this province are required to keep those records for seven years, Mr. Speaker.

Last week a former head of the Saskatchewan Medical Association, Dr. Joe Pfeifer, suggested a health repository, a health records repository, Mr. Speaker, a logical solution to a problem where you're required to keep records for seven years after you practise medicine or leave the province.

Mr. Speaker, it's time to quit talking about the problems and saying it's significant. It's time to put practical solutions in place. Will the minister agree today to implement a health records repository in the province of Saskatchewan?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, as I said at the general assembly of the SMA last week, when asked that question in the general assembly, I said that, back to the doctors, we don't have a central repository for lawyers. We don't have a central repository for accountants. We don't have a central repository for banks, Mr. Speaker. Those professions are responsible for the disposal of those records, as are physicians, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the member opposite said it's time to stop this talking. Mr. Speaker, we have done something, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we have sent a registered letter to every physician, and, Mr. Speaker . . . well they're catcalling. Mr. Speaker, let me quote what the Leader of the Opposition had to say at the end of Premier estimates on this very issue. Mr. Speaker . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order. Order. Order. Allow the minister to finish his comments.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, here's what the Leader of the Opposition had to say on May 3rd at the end of Premier's estimates: "I just want to say to the Premier that that approach to the health records is a huge improvement, and one that I think the public will very much appreciate." That's what the Leader of the Opposition said.

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

Mr. Yates: — Mr. Speaker, it was an improvement that the minister finally did something. He sent a letter after doing

nothing. But, Mr. Speaker, the difference is with other professions is this. Under the HIPA [*The Health Information Protection Act*] legislation, the province of Saskatchewan, the government, is ultimately the trustee. In the legislation, ultimately the government has the responsibility. There have been five breaches in just over a month. The minister has allowed others to access health information through health foundations and claimed that the Privacy Commissioner had been consulted. We found that to be untrue, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, today we're bringing forward a Bill that has a practical solution to a serious problem of the people of the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. We've been able, through co-operation, to pass Bills in less than a day, Mr. Speaker. This is an occasion where the government can agree that there is a problem that we can fix and we should fix, Mr. Speaker. Will the minister today co-operate and pass our legislation?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, there has been much work done on this file, much more work to be done. I know the SMA are very aware, as are the physicians of the province are very aware of what has been done. As I said, a letter has been sent, a registered letter, to all physicians. And, Mr. Speaker . . . Well the Leader of the Opposition is kind of laughing at it. I don't know; a week ago he thought it was just absolutely wonderful. In fact, Mr. Speaker, last week the Leader of the Opposition had to say, "I just want to say to the Premier that that approach to the health records is a huge improvement . . ." Where are you today, Mr. Speaker? Where is he today? If there's a huge improvement a week ago, it's a huge improvement today, more work to do.

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

Accounting Practices

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, there's a story being told today by the Sask Party government to the Saskatchewan people with respect to our public finances. Sadly this is simply just a story. It's not fact. It's fiction. It's a tall tale. And while this government is telling Saskatchewan people that they're decreasing debt, the real answer is located right within their own budget book on page 61. That page shows that this government is massively increasing the province's debt to \$8.9 billion and has increased debt for the last three consecutive years. It's not going down at all, contrary to the government's claims and contrary to the statements in their caucus television ads — publicly funded television ads — that simply aren't accurate.

Why is this government not telling Saskatchewan people the story they deserve, the true state of our province's finances?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we follow a practice in this province where we have both the budget based on the General Revenue Fund, and we have a budget based on summary financial statements. And,

Mr. Speaker, it's been a practice that was followed by the NDP when they were the government. It's a practice that we follow now.

And, Mr. Speaker, the last Provincial Auditor's statement, and I quote directly from that statement of June 4th, 2010, says: "In my opinion, these financial statements present fairly in all material respects the financial position of the Government of Saskatchewan." Mr. Speaker, that is an independent officer of this Legislative Assembly who's doing the job that he is entrusted to do. He's doing it very, very well, Mr. Speaker. And in Canada, Saskatchewan is recognized as having one of the best transparent accounting systems in all of Canada.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, it's entirely insincere for that minister to misrepresent the position of the Provincial Auditor which he's doing here today. In the report of the Provincial Auditor, the outstanding recommendations continue to be made. I reference the 2010 volume 2 report where it's highlighted again continued use of inappropriate accounting policies and highlights very specifically what we're speaking of here today, Mr. Speaker. And Saskatchewan people deserve to have the straight goods as it relates to our finance.

This government is not using generally accepted accounting standards as it relates to the public sector. They're not reporting from a primary focus from a summary perspective, and the Sask Party's simply not telling the entire story.

Since this government doesn't use accepted accounting methods, I will be introducing a private member's Bill here today in just a few minutes that would ensure compliance and bring us not only into compliance but in line with the rest of Canada — every other province, territory, and the federal government. This government thinks it's more important to show a debt reduction that's not really happening instead of using proper accounting methods. Will they support the legislation and help us fix this today?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Mr. Speaker, we rely on the auditor for an accurate assessment of the province's financial positions. We've relied on that as residents of the province of Saskatchewan under the NDP government. We relied on that, Mr. Speaker, and we believe that the Provincial Auditor produces an accurate financial statement.

Mr. Speaker, it's interesting how the member is referencing the fact that somehow the material that we have presented is inaccurate. I want to quote, Mr. Speaker, from *Hansard* of May 5th. You know and, Mr. Speaker, the most, the highest level of scrutiny has been done by this individual. This individual, Mr. Speaker, quotes in *Hansard* on May 5th on page 7545, and it says this. I quote, "... it's not as if we're in a deficit, Mr. Speaker. It's not as if our debt is growing, Mr. Speaker." Mr. Speaker, that quote is from the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Speaker, for days, literally for days on days on days, I've listened to the member opposite talk about the fact that, oh Mr.

Speaker, we're somehow not disclosing that this is a deficit budget, Mr. Speaker. The member opposite stands only a few days ago and says there is no deficit, Mr. Speaker; the debt is not going up.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, no answer with respect to whether they'd support that piece of legislation, which is disappointing for Saskatchewan people, Mr. Speaker.

And Saskatchewan people truly do deserve to get the full story as it relates to our finances from a trusted source — no disrespect to the member from Athabasca. With that in mind, I will also be tabling a Bill that will create an independent budget office. The independent budget officer will be charged with regularly giving Saskatchewan people a report of the true status of the government's finances. This position would be independent of government as an expert authority providing openness and legitimacy.

This government continues to report a view of our finances that is incomplete and that manipulates the current system simply for political purposes, highlighting the need for an independent budget officer. Will this minister support the role, a role that would serve the best interests of all Saskatchewan people, and support legislation today to enact and empower a budget officer for the people of Saskatchewan?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, we have that budget officer, and he is the Provincial Auditor. And we're going to rely on him, Mr. Speaker. But we're going also rely on the fact that the budget that we have produced this year is balanced not only from a point of the General Revenue Fund, Mr. Speaker, but it's balanced also from the point of summary financial statements, which we also do, Mr. Speaker.

But you know, Mr. Speaker, the ironic thing . . . and the member opposite doesn't want to talk about the unique position of Saskatchewan, the unique position of Saskatchewan and Newfoundland, Mr. Speaker. We now have all of the provincial budgets from across Canada. Mr. Speaker, the only provinces to have a balanced budget that is with a surplus are the provinces of Saskatchewan and Newfoundland, Mr. Speaker. We said that this budget would be unique, that it would be unusual in all of Canada because, Mr. Speaker, this is a budget that's balanced, that's balanced on both the General Revenue Fund side and the summary financial side, Mr. Speaker. And the people of the province of Saskatchewan are proud of this budget.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Not only does the Finance minister misrepresent the position of the Provincial Auditor, he also continues to refer to that individual as a he. Well I'll enlighten the minister. Our Provincial Auditor is Ms. Bonnie Lysyk, the first ever female Provincial Auditor in our province's history.

Saskatchewan people deserve to understand the true state of our

finances. That's why we're introducing these two private members' Bills here today, because complete and proper accounting of our government's finances is what's best for Saskatchewan people, ensuring sustainability of budgets and planning for the long view.

Earlier this week this government showed a willingness to co-operate with a piece of legislation. We ask for them to do so with these two pieces of legislation as well. In the spirit of co-operation, will this government take the two pieces of legislation which are good for Saskatchewan people and either turn them into government Bills or work with us to make sure that these are passed by the end of this legislative session? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Mr. Speaker, very quickly for the member opposite, since the Provincial Auditor has taken office on April 1st, I've had a chance to meet with her. We had a great discussion about how she's going to move forward with the provincial audit, Mr. Speaker, and I'm looking forward to that plan. Thank you very much.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, here we are at the end of a term where we've seen this government, at a time of record highs in revenues, manipulate our books, Mr. Speaker, drain huge revenues from our Crown corporations — almost \$2 billion, \$2 billion from our rainy day fund — at times of the so-called unlimited prosperity in this province. This is a time where we should both be moving Saskatchewan forward fiscally and readying ourselves for the future.

It's not only the management of our finances but the reporting of our finances. I simply look to this minister again. He has a record that's a shameful record as it relates to our finances. Will the Sask Party government support these two pieces of legislation that are simply good for the people of this province?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Mr. Speaker, we're going to continue to rely on the Provincial Auditor, Mr. Speaker, and we're going to continue to rely on the member from Athabasca who says “. . . it's not as if we're in a deficit, Mr. Speaker. It's not as if our debt is growing. Mr. Speaker.” What a tribute to be paid to our budget from the member from Athabasca.

[10:45]

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, the minister should know that the member from Athabasca actually failed high school accounting, Mr. Speaker. And he has many strengths, but that aspect isn't the one we rely on, Mr. Speaker.

But the facts are the fact, Mr. Speaker. And this Sask Party government has authorized and paid for with public money ads

that suggest that we paid down massive dollars of public debt, which isn't true, Mr. Speaker. And they're using public dollars to do so.

It's time, Mr. Speaker, for us to come in line with the rest of Canada, all other provinces, all territories, and the federal government, Mr. Speaker, and allow the Saskatchewan people to see the full view of their finances to comply with public sector accounting standards. It's a matter of transparency. It's a matter of accountability. We call on this government to do the right thing here today, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Mr. Speaker, I don't know whether in fact the member from Athabasca failed an accounting class but, Mr. Speaker, I know that he could probably give more accurate accounting descriptions to the member opposite.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, we see it with this government in so many ways — the use of public money to put forward a picture that's simply not true, Mr. Speaker. We see it in the caucus ads they run right now — where we see them when you're watching the evening news — that aren't true, Mr. Speaker. And that's unfortunate.

What we're calling for today, Mr. Speaker, we're calling for Bills that provide openness. We're calling for Bills that provide legitimacy. We're calling for accountability. We're counting for transparency, and we're asking for this government to quit looking at things in a very short political view but to plan for the long term, Mr. Speaker. I call on this Minister of Finance to support these two pieces of legislation or somehow describe to the people of Saskatchewan how he doesn't support this principled position, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Mr. Speaker, there's no question we're looking to the long term, Mr. Speaker. This government has reduced debt from over \$6 billion inherited from the NDP, Mr. Speaker, and we've reduced it down to \$3.8 billion. Mr. Speaker, that debt load is the lowest since 1982, Mr. Speaker. We're proud of that record, Mr. Speaker. We're proud of the fact that this province is growing. Our population is over 1.052 million. We're now having nearly 15,000 births in this province on an annual basis. Mr. Speaker, these are exciting times for the province of Saskatchewan, and I encourage the member opposite to keep talking to the member from Athabasca.

The Speaker: — Order. I'd ask all members to come to order. Order. I'd ask all members to come to order.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 626 — *The Wildlife Habitat Protection Amendment Act, 2011*

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

Ms. Morin: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill 626, *The Wildlife Habitat Protection Amendment Act* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — The member from Regina Walsh Acres has moved first reading of Bill 626, *The Wildlife Habitat Protection Amendment Act, 2011*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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

The Speaker: — When shall the Bill be considered a second time? I recognize the member from Regina Walsh Acres.

Ms. Morin: — Next sitting of the House, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

Bill No. 627 — *The Oil Sands Environmental Impact Financial Compensation Act*

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

Ms. Morin: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 627, *The Oil Sands Environmental Impact Financial Compensation Act* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — The member from Regina Walsh Acres has moved first reading of Bill No. 627, *The Oil Sands Environmental Impact Financial Compensation 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 Regina Walsh Acres.

Ms. Morin: — Next sitting of the House, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

Bill No. 628 — *The Financial Administration Amendment Act, 2011*

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 628, *The Financial Administration Amendment Act, 2011* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — The member from Regina Rosemont has

moved first reading of Bill No. 628, *The Financial Administration Amendment Act, 2011*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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

The Speaker: — When shall the Bill be considered a second time? I recognize the member from Regina Rosemont.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Next sitting of the House, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

Bill No. 629 — *The Independent Budget Officer Act*

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 629, *The Independent Budget Officer Act* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — The member from Regina Rosemont has moved first reading of Bill No. 629, *The Independent Budget Officer 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 this Bill be considered a second time? I recognize the member from Regina Rosemont.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Next sitting of the House, Mr. Speaker.

Bill No. 630 — *The Health Document Storage Act*

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

Ms. Junor: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 630, *The Health Document Storage Act* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Eastview has moved first reading of Bill No. 630, *The Health Document Storage 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 Eastview.

Ms. Junor: — Next sitting of the House, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Next sitting. Why is the Government House Leader on his feet?

Mr. D'Autremont: — Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — The Government House Leader has a point of order. I would ask the Government House Leader to state his point of order.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, during question period, the member from Rosemont stated in one of his questions that the Deputy Premier was, and I quote, "misrepresenting the statements of the Provincial Auditor."

Mr. Speaker, it's a long-held tradition in this Assembly that a member should not impugn the honour of another member or accuse them of lying, Mr. Speaker. I would ask that the member withdraw those remarks and apologize.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I withdraw and apologize.

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

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

The Speaker: — I recognize the Chair of Human Services Committee.

Standing Committee on Human Services

Mr. Ottenbreit: — Mr. Speaker, I'm instructed by the Standing Committee on Human Services to report Bill No. 168, *The Teachers Superannuation and Disability Benefits Amendment Act, 2011* without amendment.

The Speaker: — When shall this Bill be considered in Committee of the Whole? I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, I request leave to waive consideration of Committee on the Whole on this Bill and that the Bill be now read for the third time.

The Speaker: — The Minister of Education has requested leave that Bill No. 168, *The Teachers Superannuation and Disability Benefits Amendment Act, 2011* be now read the third time. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — The minister may proceed to third reading.

THIRD READINGS

Bill No. 168 — *The Teachers Superannuation and Disability Benefits Amendment Act, 2011*

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, I move that this Bill be now read the third time and passed under its title.

The Speaker: — The Minister of Education has moved that Bill No. 168, *The Teachers Superannuation and Disability Benefits Amendment Act, 2011* be now read the third time. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government House Leader.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. By agreement with the official opposition, I move that this House do now adjourn to go to committees.

The Speaker: — The Government House Leader has moved that this Assembly do now adjourn to move to the work, in order to allow the committee work to proceed. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

[The Assembly adjourned at 10:54.]

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GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN

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President of the Executive Council

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Minister of Agriculture
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Crop Insurance Corporation

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

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

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

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

Hon. Donna Harpauer
Minister of Education
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Hon. Jeremy Harrison
Minister of Enterprise
Minister Responsible for Trade

Hon. Darryl Hickie
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Hon. Bill Hutchinson
Minister of Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport
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Capital Commission

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

Hon. Ken Krawetz
Deputy Premier
Minister of Finance

Hon. Tim McMillan
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Investments Corporation
Minister Responsible for Information
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Minister of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety
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Minister Responsible for The Global
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