



FIRST SESSION - TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

of the

**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

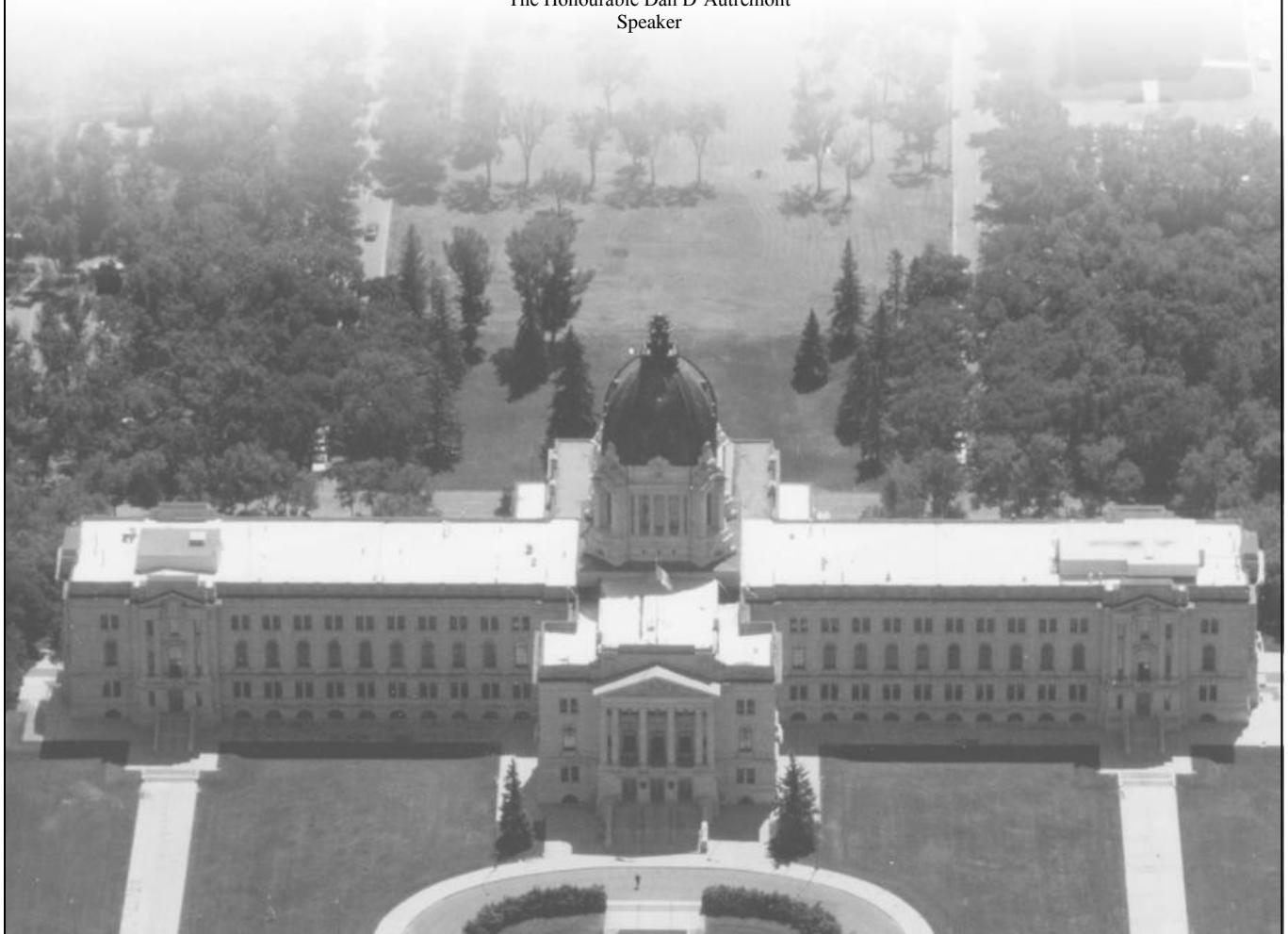
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**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS**

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(HANSARD)

Published under the  
authority of  
The Honourable Dan D'Autremont  
Speaker



## MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN

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 Leader of the Opposition — John Nilson

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Ross, Hon. Laura	SP	Regina Qu'Appelle Valley
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Steinley, Warren	SP	Regina Walsh Acres
Stewart, Lyle	SP	Thunder Creek
Tell, Christine	SP	Regina Wascana Plains
Tochor, Corey	SP	Saskatoon Eastview
Toth, Don	SP	Moosomin
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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

[The Assembly resumed at 19:00.]

### EVENING SITTING

**The Speaker:** — Order . . . [inaudible] . . . Order.

### SECOND READINGS

#### **Bill No. 18 — *The Degree Authorization Act* (continued)**

**Hon. Mr. Norris:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the opportunity to rise this evening to continue my second reading of the degree authorization speech. Where I was . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . And there's an invitation from my colleagues to begin again, and I think everyone knows in the Assembly I'm more than able to do that. I shall just continue where I left off.

Where we were is I was just explaining that the government and the ministry, we put out a call for case studies right across the province, and as a result, we heard from two individual institutions — SIAST [Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology] and Briercrest. Using this case study approach, we are working with both SIAST and Briercrest College, and we will be able to test and refine this quality assurance process that it will be ready by the time this legislation will be proclaimed.

In the first stage of the application process, the ministry will review a program proposal to determine its fit within the post-secondary system and how the proposal will benefit students. Mr. Speaker, each proposal will then go to cabinet with a recommendation to either refer it to the quality assurance body for a full quality assurance review or to deny it at the proposal stage.

Mr. Speaker, the quality assurance body will be a small arm's-length board appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council. It will have no less than three members who will have the expertise in quality assurance and have extensive experience, both academic and administratively, in post-secondary education. Through institutional self-assessments and expert panel reviews, the quality assurance body will assess the institution's capacity to offer degree-level programming, as well as the quality of the proposed and specific degree program. It will then make a recommendation to the minister as to whether to support or deny an authorization for the proposed degree program. To ensure transparency and accountability, the minister can only authorize a degree program with a positive recommendation by the quality assurance body, thereby ensuring again the high standards and traditions of quality that have been associated with Saskatchewan degrees for more than a century.

If granted, Mr. Speaker, an authorization will be only for a certain period of time, after which the institution must apply for renewal, thereby ensuring that the quality is sustained for our students, for their families, for our communities, for employers, and for the people of Saskatchewan. This will involve the institution having to undergo some or all of the quality assurance review process again.

The authorization to grant degrees may also have terms and conditions attached to it in order to ensure greater accountability. Cabinet can reject an authorization that the quality assurance council has recommended. If rejected, an appeal process has been put in place to ensure that there is fair hearing. Although funding is outside the scope of the Act, I would like to add that any institution requesting public funds must request it through the normal governmental budget processes, and it will be a legislative requirement that any private institution make financial security arrangements to ensure greater certainty for Saskatchewan students. Regulations are being prepared to legislate and put in place these financial security requirements, as well as to further expand the powers and functions of the quality assurance body.

As we work on developing the regulations and policies, we will continue to consult with our key stakeholders for the benefit of Saskatchewan's post-secondary system, and most especially for our students.

The intent, again, of this new legislation is to provide a balanced approach that affords a reasonable level of consumer protection, if you want, the quality assurance component without imposing unreasonable restrictions that might stifle innovative educational practices or create unnecessary barriers for students and their families across the province.

Regarding the universities, Mr. Speaker, we've made every effort to protect the autonomy and integrity of our two universities. As noted earlier, the university degree programs are exempt from the Act. We've consulted with both universities, and we find their response both encouraging and helpful. And we want to work with both of these institutions to help make sure that we are taking some of the lessons learned from their existing practices and applying these lessons learned into the process that's moving forward.

We have also agreed that the internal quality assurance practices of both the University of Regina and University of Saskatchewan provide sufficient oversight for their existing degree programs. Essentially what we are working to do is address a public policy gap that exists, that is, the authorization of degrees from different institutions. This in no way casts any doubt and is meant to offer reassurance to both the University of Regina and University of Saskatchewan regarding the solid work that they have sustained for decades. As a result, Mr. Speaker, partnerships they have with other institutions to offer degree programs will also not be affected by this proposed legislation.

A final and important point, Mr. Speaker, is to note that institutions authorized to grant degrees will not be granted permission to use the word university. In fact the title university involves much more than granting degrees, and we want to ensure that this term is well protected and preserved within the Saskatchewan context, again taking some lessons learned from jurisdictions across the country and well beyond.

The use of the words university and varsity are currently restricted by *The University of Regina Act*, and the restrictions focus on both the University of Saskatchewan and University of Regina. But consequential amendments to this Act will transfer

that authority from the University of Regina proper to cabinet.

And I want to be clear, a fundamental tenet of this piece of legislation is to further protect the term university. For, while this Act contemplates expanding degree options for students, for institutions, and for communities, it is intended to further protect and in fact restrict the use of the term university within Saskatchewan.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, this is important and timely legislation for students, for parents, for institutions, and for communities. Essentially it is important for us to address this public policy gap for the future of our province. It acknowledges and respects the strong foundation of our two pre-eminent universities, both considered to be in the top 10 of their respective criteria, while making sure that we are enabling our system to move forward through strengthened and more broad-based quality assurance, essentially making sure that we have that balance, that there is greater accessibility for students, Mr. Speaker, while preserving and protecting the quality of Saskatchewan's post-secondary educational system and the degree granting authority that has helped to define it. And finally, the legislation is meant to align our province with best practices both nationally and around the world.

Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of *The Degree Authorization Act*. I appreciate the opportunity to offer these remarks this evening. Thank you, sir.

**The Speaker:** — The Minister of Advanced Education, Employment and Immigration has moved second reading of Bill No. 18, *The Degree Authorization Act*. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member for Athabasca.

**Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to join the minister in looking at the Bill and certainly offering our perspectives and our comments on the Bill. And of course it says the authority to provide degree programs and the designation at the university should be protected and so on and so forth, Mr. Speaker.

One of the comments that the minister mentioned just towards the end of his comments was the fact that he had done some consultation on how we can strengthen the post-secondary institutions, the universities, and where he mentioned he looked across Canada and beyond. And certainly when he mentioned beyond, I'm assuming that beyond would mean the States as well, a few states if that's the case. Or is it further north, say, the territories? It would be nice to know what kind of consultation that the minister did do when he made the reference, across Canada and beyond. Because obviously there is certainly a genuine interest from our perspective to ensure that the grant degree programs are protected, that they remain intact because obviously there is many fly-by-night operators that come along and they offer all kinds of degrees and programs. They can do it online. They can create a virtual entity out there in cyberspace, and yet they still want to be able to grant all kinds of honorary degrees and so on and so forth and actual certification that might not exist.

So I think it's important that we look at some of the efforts of this minister to really qualify our institutions, U of R [University of Regina] and the U of S [University of

Saskatchewan] and to make sure that we don't have these fly-by-nighters that come along and pretend to be — as this government does at times — pretend to be the answer to everybody's solutions, Mr. Speaker. I think we need to set standards and I think the university, both of them, are doing a remarkable job of not only making sure that we keep their institutions alive and thriving, but they also have the standards, like as the minister mentioned. That's pretty darn important.

I take interest in the comments in reference to the board that will be actually hearing applications from some of the other institutions that may want to have the degree offer. And he mentioned that there may be three or a minimum of not less than three members. And I think that's important, Mr. Speaker, to know who these potential members are. Are they nationally recognized figures? Are they people of course that the Sask Party might want to put from their own quarters? We need to know who these people are that they are going to be putting on this board to hear all the applications and to hear why certain applications were not accepted and why others may have been, when you look at the granting of degrees.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think we need to find out how they intend to structure this board. Who would be involved in the structure of that board? Any of the groups that the minister has consulted, will they be active in that? Will the U of S have a rep? Will the U of A [University of Alberta] or the U of R have a rep? And these are some of the questions I think we need to ask, Mr. Speaker.

And I notice the members would know that the U of A has been active in our area. We look at Métis land claims and the traditional use of Métis lands, are they considered intruders in this whole process? Well that's a question that I certainly have as well, Mr. Speaker, because we know that university of Yukon and there's a number of different groups that do come to Saskatchewan and do case studies, Mr. Speaker. Are they exempt now from this Act? Are they allowed to do that? And these are some of the questions that we often have when we have Bills of this sort come forward.

So it's important to take the time, as I mentioned, with all the Bills that we've discussed in the last couple of days to see what the impact overall is.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I noticed that there have been a few members of their caucus that have claimed certain degrees, and when you look at it, really there was never that qualification of theirs. And I don't want to get into names, Mr. Speaker, but a couple of them actually put in their resumé that they're engineers when in fact they took a two-week welding course. So where exactly do we get some of these, some of these programs that give these guys the authority to claim, to claim that they have all these degrees and have all these abilities on their resumé when in fact they may have gotten a certificate from a two-week course, Mr. Speaker?

That's what's really important as well, is that if you have the university actually design the program, deliver the program, and accredit the program, that makes a big difference. So I don't think from our perspective that there's any argument of the integrity of the universities in Saskatchewan, that we certainly applaud any efforts to recommend that they be a part of the

process to make sure we don't have the fly-by-night operators coming to Saskatchewan and offering all these engineering degrees when really they aren't engineering degrees.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think this is quite important. People out there have often spoke of the incredible ability of our educators to mould new and exciting minds and create opportunity for many, many quarters of our province. So that's something that certainly I would support and I would recognize.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there's a lot of folks . . . What happens a lot of times is people tend to want to represent something that they are not. And I think it's important when we look at the degrees in general that a lot of people claim to be able to do some of these things, and yet when you look at the accreditation, when we look at the history, really there isn't that kind of ability that they would have.

And I can remember one day, Mr. Speaker, I was actually making a speech, and before I got introduced, Mr. Speaker — I took a page out of one of their candidates — and before I got introduced I told the MC [master of ceremonies] to make sure that they announced that I took a four-year business admin program at the U of S. But the problem was my brother was in the audience, got up and yelled out that it was only a two-week program.

[19:15]

But the problem we had is that it was, it was actually pretty funny at the time, but there are members out there that, on their side, that claim to have certain accreditation and certain degrees, and I hope that this Act targets those individuals and tells them to fess up — it wasn't really the U of S or U of R that awarded you this degree. That is something out there in the community college system that may have given you that title. So I think it's important that not only do we hold our institutions to account, that we have the proper process, that we don't have people on the other side saying, I've got a degree in this, when in fact they don't.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think this Bill certainly warrants a lot of attention. It certainly warrants a lot of discussion with a lot of the stakeholders and to see exactly what the minister meant when he mentioned that he looked at different provinces and beyond. Like what were some of the models that he implemented when he looked at this? And the whole concept of this body having the authority to decide who can grant degrees or not, I think it's important we look at the structure, the makeup of this board and so on and so forth. Those are really, really key points that I want to raise.

Now, Mr. Speaker, as we know, this minister had some challenges in the last session. And when we look at the community college system, there was all kinds of trouble and all kinds of cost and all kinds of concerns. And if that's par for the course with this particular minister, you want to make sure, you want to make sure that you get the people that know what they're doing as part of this process. And that's why I think the U of R and the U of S should make part of that body that he's speaking about, that there not be any kind of special deals or any special groups of people or a special educational institution that might have a seat on this board. Again, what we don't want

to see is any kind of conflict of interest or, worse, a political agenda being accomplished on the backs of our great U of R and U of S.

So, Mr. Speaker, I looked at the Bill very briefly. I know that some of my colleagues have a lot of questions on the actual Bill and some of the definitions, some of the sections, and certainly some of the work that the minister has done because we need to hold him to account as to what this Bill in its present form really means for Saskatchewan. And if there's any hidden agendas out there, we need to find that out very quickly.

So I would . . . And make sure that, again, we look at the degree authorization — very, very important. We want to make sure the people we put out there are responsible people, the people we put out there with degrees know what they're doing. They have the skill; they have the ability; they have the certification; and therefore they have the protection. I think those are things that are really important to the economy of Saskatchewan. We on this side of the Assembly understand that.

So we're not going to argue with the intent of the Bill because the intent is to make sure the right institutions have the right authority to authorize degrees and that there's no compromise of that particular principle. By the same token, if there's other institutions throughout the lands and beyond that may want to come here and do certain things in Saskatchewan, that they also have a process that would actually challenge their authority and ability to provide those kind of programs and to make sure that they're quality programs and of course very high-quality as well.

And, Mr. Speaker, again I would point out that the opportunity to be heard, as he's indicated, you know I'm not sure how long the process is to determine whether somebody has the authority or has the ability to offer a program. And it doesn't really define timelines here as well because it's about the minister considering it appropriate. There's no specific timelines as to how long the process will take to determine whether an institution can actually do this.

So these are some of the things we need to find out at the outset and make sure that we put provisions within the Act that would encourage people to come forward and make changes where necessary. And that's what I think is really important in any of these Bills, is that we have to challenge the government certainly on its consultation phase to see which groups liked this and which groups didn't and the reason why they didn't like it or did like it.

So, Mr. Speaker, overall the Bill and its, again, intent seems to be honourable in making sure that we don't have every Tom, Dick, and Harry giving degrees out there. I think that's pretty darn important. And we also want to recognize the authority of the U of S and the U of R. I think they're a great presence here in Saskatchewan, and certainly they have attributed much to the makeup of all of our province. So I think we want to protect them as well. So from the opposition's perspective, absolutely. Absolutely I think, as I mentioned, the integrity of our institutions is great. We want to build on that and we want to support that and we want to recognize that, Mr. Speaker.

So that being said, we'll take our time looking at the Act. We'll

take our time consulting with different people that we know that would have some interest in this. And we would encourage the minister to share the information as a result of some of the consultation that he's done in Canada and beyond. I think it's important to find out where that beyond is. And then we can go from there, Mr. Speaker, in terms of making sure we have the right information and that if it's not beyond his mandate to share that stuff with us because it's important to us. And quite frankly I don't think the minister went beyond Canada at all. I think he consulted with a few jurisdictions, and what happened was he came up with this model. So it's important to know who consulted, who did you consult with, and what were some of their ideas and some of their problems with this Act.

The other thing I think is also important, Mr. Speaker, is this New West Partnership. Does this affect this particular Act at all? We don't know that. I'm sure Alberta and BC [British Columbia] must have some programs out there, might have some private teaching institutions or learning institutions that might not like this. They might not like this idea. Now does that New West Partnership counter this one? Does it really . . . If this Bill is what it is intended to protect, does a New West Partnership come along and say, well we don't like that Bill because it compromises our agreement, so get rid of it. These are some of the things we need to find out, and that's some of the things that some people I know will be very interested in.

So, Mr. Speaker, again, we'll take our time looking at this, and I move that we adjourn debate on this Bill.

**The Speaker:** — The member for Athabasca has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 18, *The Degree Authorization Act*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

**Bill No. 13 — *The Constitutional Questions Act, 2011/*  
*Loi de 2011 sur les questions constitutionnelles***

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Justice and Attorney General.

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that, and I thank my colleagues for the warm reception this evening.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to move second reading of Bill 13, *The Constitutional Questions Act, 2011*. *The Constitutional Questions Act, 2011* is a new bilingual act that will repeal and replace the current constitutional questions Act. This change is part of the government's ongoing process of reviewing and updating legislation.

A number of issues in the current Act require clarification. Without this clarification, these issues may themselves become the subject of separate judicial proceedings. This would be an expensive and time-consuming distraction from the timely consideration of important constitutional issues that the Act was intended to facilitate. These types of disputes can be minimized by amendments to the Act.

The current Act gives the Lieutenant Governor in Council the power to refer any constitutional or legal issue to the Saskatchewan Court of Appeal for its opinion. The opinion of the Court of Appeal is considered to be a judgment for purposes of an appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada.

The current Act requires that notice be given to the attorneys general of Canada and Saskatchewan when the constitutional validity or applicability of a law or regulation is challenged, or an application is made to obtain a remedy under the Charter.

Finally, the current Act provides that questions arising under federal-provincial taxation agreements can be referred to the Court of Appeal.

Mr. Speaker, the current Act fails to adequately address a number of issues, leaving them to the interpretation of the public, the parties, or the court. This Bill maintains all of the provisions contained in the current Act, but also adds new provisions to make the legislative intent of the Act as clear as possible to avoid any future potential conflicts.

Mr. Speaker, the Bill will address standing to participate in a reference and specify who is a party to a reference and who is an intervenor. The Bill will specify that the Attorney General for Saskatchewan is a party to a reference, to a chambers application pursuant to a reference, or any appeal of a reference. The Bill will specify that if the Attorney General of Canada gives written notice, then he or she is also a party. In contrast, the Bill will not grant party status to governments of other provinces or territories or to other interested persons who are granted leave to intervene.

The Bill will clarify the right of appeal. If the Lieutenant Governor in Council includes in the terms of reference that a decision of the Court of Appeal is deemed to be a judgment, then it may be appealed by a party to the Supreme Court of Canada. Conversely if the decision of the Court of Appeal is not deemed a judgment, the opinion and reasons of Saskatchewan's highest court will be final.

Mr. Speaker, the Bill will include provisions that allow a Court of Appeal judge sitting in chambers to hear and dispose of the matters incidental to the reference. This will ensure that there is a mechanism by which parties can deal with procedural disagreements. A new provision is also included that will allow the Court of Appeal to make rules for the purpose of hearing a reference.

This Bill will also clarify the service provisions by setting out who can accept service on behalf of the Attorney General for Saskatchewan and the Attorney General of Canada.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill will ensure that references and constitutional questions or challenges are able to proceed with certainty and that unnecessary delays caused by confusion over incidental matters can be avoided while still maintaining and upholding the current process to address constitutional issues before our court.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to move second reading of Bill No. 13, *The Constitutional Questions Act, 2011*.

**The Speaker:** — The Minister of Justice and Attorney General has moved second reading of Bill No. 13, *The Constitutional Questions Act, 2011*. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member for Athabasca.

**Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Again as I mentioned at the outset at every one of these Bills, I am pleased to stand on behalf of the opposition to offer our initial comments on any Bill that this particular government may throw our way. And certainly from our comments here, Mr. Speaker, the constitutional question and challenge is to make sure the regulations and consequential amendments to *The Court of Appeal Act, 2000* is certainly a very . . . It's a document that has a lot of questions in relation to the relationship between the provincial government and the federal government, Mr. Speaker. And what we tell folks out there that certainly aren't aware of some of the legal jargon and the language attached to this particular Bill, that this is the purpose of the opposition, is to make sure that we take the time to digest the information, to see where this impacts Saskatchewan overall.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I know that there is a lot of discussion here in terms of what the minister is trying to achieve, in terms of whether there is procedural challenges or the ways that we make the system work better. And I go back to some of the earlier comments in terms of the relationship within the federal and provincial government, is that it's so complicated and so complex in many ways that people need to take the time to understand what is being proposed by this Bill.

Now, Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned at the outset, I'm not a lawyer. I'm just a hockey player. So that's one of the reasons why, that's one of the reasons why I think it's important that we take the time to understand the Bill and have our own legal team and have our own legal association come along and say, well this is what this actually means to the people of Saskatchewan.

And what prompts me to get up to speak to this Bill, Mr. Speaker, is the fact that this is exactly what I mean when people ask the role the opposition, the role of different associations out there, is to try and make sense of what this government may try and do when it comes to legal matters.

So I think without question that this Bill does have some impact on Saskatchewan. They talk a lot about the relationship and the procedural challenges and certainly trying to make sure we have some good, good proper language when we talk to each other in terms of the Supreme Court of Canada or the Saskatchewan government. And that's kind of where this is headed.

So, Mr. Speaker, I want to make sure that people are invited to participate in analyzing this Bill, that the legal team that we have in place, our legal supporters, have the opportunity to explain this very quickly and to also identify the challenges attached with this.

Now does this create problems for Saskatchewan? Does it hinder Saskatchewan in any way to challenge the federal government on a number of constitutional issues, whether it be the whole notion of the Aboriginal people, whether it be on land settlements, on whether it be any of the federal-provincial

points that we often find ourselves at odds with?

And that's one of the important things, is that while the issues are out there and generally people understand what they're about, does this affect the procedure of having fairness afforded to those issues? And that's the real question that we have on this particular Bill, Mr. Speaker. And that's why we need to take the time to go through it and to see what this is totally going to do to try and either sidetrack those issues or to try and put some procedural problem that would stop us from discussing those major issues.

As you know, at one time this provincial government challenged the federal government and something like an \$800 million lawsuit. Would that have been . . . Was that case, could that somehow be impacted by this Bill?

[19:30]

And these are some of the questions that we need to find. And at all times when you have legal discussion and legal terminology in place, it's always important to know that there is some significant difference of words and interpretation of those words, and that has an impact on many people's lives.

So I point out that even in some of the Acts that we have, the opportunity to use the words "shall" or "will," there is a significant difference between those two words, and people understand them. And from the political perspective there's totally, a total different understanding from the layman's use of those words.

So that's why it's important that we take the time to understand these Bills and to ask for legal advice to make sure that some of the points that we're raising in this Bill, while procedural in nature, may have some change in intent or certainly change in terminology that we should be concerned about. And that's why we will take the time, Mr. Speaker. So I hereby adjourn the debate on Bill No. 13.

**The Speaker:** — The member for Athabasca has moved adjournment of *The Constitutional Questions Act, 2011*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

#### Bill No. 14 — *The Securities Amendment Act, 2011*

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Justice and Attorney General.

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise again today to move second reading of Bill 14, *The Securities Amendment Act, 2011*. This legislation will introduce a number of updates that are necessary to enhance Saskatchewan's capital markets and protect participants in those markets.

Firstly these amendments will permit financial advisers to conduct their business through a professional corporation. This is a privilege that is enjoyed by many other professions in this province, Mr. Speaker, and it will allow those people to make

better succession and tax planning decisions. Saskatchewan has taken a lead role by introducing this legislation. Several other provinces are considering similar amendments.

These amendments will also grant certain powers to audit oversight organizations such as the Canadian Public Accountability Board. Auditor oversight organizations perform a key role in the financial services sector as they ensure that information made available to investors and the general public by publicly traded companies is reliable and of high quality.

These amendments will also provide these organizations with the statutory power to compel disclosure of documents and records from accounting firms that audit publicly traded companies. This ensures that the audit process is accurate and independent. All other provinces are planning to implement similar amendments if they have not already done so.

In addition these amendments ensure that officials of auditor oversight organizations cannot be subpoenaed or otherwise compelled to disclose privileged and or confidential information in third party proceedings. Additionally these amendments will allow for the regulatory oversight of credit rating organizations.

Credit rating organizations provide opinions on the credit worthiness, issued security, and financial obligations of a particular company. The importance of these opinions to investors and other market participants and the influence of these opinions on the securities markets have increased significantly over the past decade. This is due in part to the increased number of issuers in the advent of new and complex financial products such as asset-backed securities and credit derivatives. Mr. Speaker, these ratings are very important to investors, to managers of investments and retirement portfolios since they are intended to reflect the risk associated with a particular investment.

After the stock markets suffered severe losses in 2008, international and Canadian officials conducted an analysis which determined that poor quality credit ratings were contributing factors that lead to the market turnaround. For example many investors purchased asset-backed securities and other investments that were tied to US [United States] subprime mortgages that were extremely unstable. Many of these investments were made on the basis of favourable credit ratings that were issued prior to the market crisis. There are now concerns that credit rating organizations have in the past relied on flawed methodologies to determine many ratings. Unfortunately many of these investments failed. This had a negative and lasting impact on hard-earned retirement savings, pensions, and other long-term investments.

These amendments will require credit rating organizations to comply with a code of conduct that will impose tighter controls on the quality and integrity of the credit rating process. The code of conduct will require the credit rating organizations to maintain a high level of independence in order to avoid conflicts of interest. These measures have already been or will soon be adopted in most other provinces as part of a harmonized national effort to improve the quality of credit ratings, Mr. Speaker.

These amendments will also remove the \$100,000 limit on the

amount of financial compensation that the Saskatchewan Financial Services Commission may order to be paid to an individual who has suffered financial loss due to a contravention of securities legislation. The Financial Services Commission may hold a hearing into an allegation of contravention or wrongdoing, and an order, if they decide the contravention actually caused the financial loss. The hearing is a formal proceeding that hears and reviews evidence, quantifies the amount of the financial loss, and ultimately rules on whether the contravention caused the financial loss in whole or in part.

Where losses are proven to have exceeded the current \$100,000 limit, Mr. Speaker, the claimant must go before the Court of Queen's Bench to prove and recover those additional losses. This unnecessarily burdens both the claimant and the court with further proceedings and associated costs. Mr. Speaker, this amendment will ensure that where claimants have suffered financial loss because of unlawful activity, the entire amount of the loss may be recovered through one proceeding before the Financial Services Commission.

Lastly, Mr. Speaker, these amendments will introduce a small number of housekeeping measures that keep Saskatchewan's regulatory framework up to date and harmonized with other provinces.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to move second reading of Bill 13, *The Securities Amendment Act, 2011*.

**The Speaker:** — The Minister of Justice and Attorney General has moved second reading of Bill No. 14, *The Securities Amendment Act, 2011*. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member for Athabasca.

**Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise on behalf of the official opposition to offer our early insight into this particular Bill, which is *An Act to amend The Securities Act, 1988*.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there's a couple of points I certainly want to touch on when the proposal in the Bill spoke about things like credit rating improvements and determining credit worthiness and to make sure that different people are protected out there in case there's some bad advice. There is no question that there's other jurisdictions that are looking at this. I think overall that the people of the States certainly taught us a lesson in Canada in terms of what you need to do to avoid major problems. And anything that we can do to strengthen certainly the people that are involved with this industry and the people that are impacted by this, certainly the opposition wants to look at this.

Now, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the credit rating improvement, I want to make sure that when you look at how that is certainly being monitored today, we are going to ask the question of, what improvements are put in place now? What is the difference between the credit rating worthiness of the States versus Canada or Ontario versus Saskatchewan? Like there's obviously a different style in different places, so we need to know what kind of standard that will be put in when it comes to the credit rating process that different places use.

Now, Mr. Speaker, obviously we want to see Saskatchewan investment happen. We want to see the different groups out



there that may have ways and means to improve that particular industry. And why not? Because it's something that the people of Saskatchewan should have — make sure that people that are investing, people that are involved with markets, and people that are able to work in this industry are held to account.

Now the minister also made reference to a, that in event that there is some bad advice that people may have had losses, that they should get their money back. And the question that I instinctively ask is, where would they get this money from? Is there a process? Is there a fund? People ought to know that kind of information as well.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I think when you look at the giving certain powers to auditors' oversights, as we all know, the auditors are people that have the incredible skill to tear apart a business plan. They also can find out the problems instinctively as to what is necessary to improve a business or a government. And a lot of times their advice is very, very well taken.

So you look at this Bill, Mr. Speaker. There is three or four areas that we certainly want to investigate further. Rather it's the credit rating improvements that the minister spoke about. If there's some people have gotten bad advice, they get some of their money back, and where is that money coming from. Like all these different questions that we have on this particular Bill, that we have to take the time to understand it.

Now I want to pay a bit of attention to the notion that the minister talked about certain powers to auditor oversight. He mentioned a couple organizations, if I'm not wrong. And the people ask me, like certainly, what is an audit? And I'm actually quoting from a book here, Mr. Speaker, and I'll find the name of the book. And the auditors, they detail look at the accounts, ". . . the risks associated with them, the controls that the executive put in place to reduce risks, an assessment of those adequacy of the controls and how they are operated, as well detailed testing of those controls." And there's a list of things that the auditor must do, Mr. Speaker.

So it's fairly, it's fairly complex, and there's no question that there are ways that you could become a very quick and efficient armchair auditor. And that's kind of the things that we encourage people to do when you look at this particular Bill. How is the auditor oversight process going to be fixed up, and how can the average person understand what is being done with this particular Bill?

So, Mr. Speaker, whether we want to enhance Saskatchewan investment, whether we want to provide certain powers to an auditor oversight player, whether we want to look at how they're doing the credit rating improvements and how we can improve credit worthiness in the whole notion of where the money is coming from in the event you have some bad advice — these are some of the initial questions we have on this particular Bill. So we need to reach out to different folks that understand the Bill and are able to give us some very good information on how we could strengthen the Bill because obviously much advice on this particular front is very, very necessary.

So, Mr. Speaker, the Bill is straightforward in terms of the explanation. But as always we want to take a second look, a

third look, a fourth look as to what is being proposed, and we want to make sure that the people of Saskatchewan are afforded that opportunity.

So therefore, given the time frame that we have to look at this over the next several months, I move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 14, *An Act to amend The Securities Act, 1988*.

**The Speaker:** — The member for Athabasca has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 14, *The Securities Amendment Act, 2011*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

## ADJOURNED DEBATES

### SECOND READINGS

#### Bill No. 1

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 1 — *The Queen's Bench Amendment Act, 2011/Loi de 2011 modifiant la Loi de 1998 sur la Cour du Banc de la Reine*** be now read a second time.]

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

**Ms. Sproule:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to enter into this debate on Bill No. 1. First of all . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — We're really happy that you are too, because it's not Buckley.

**Ms. Sproule:** — Thank you.

**The Speaker:** — Order.

**Ms. Sproule:** — First of all I just want to speak a little bit to the comments that the Minister of Justice made in relation to this Bill. He indicated that there seems to be a fairly straightforward piece of legislation that's being tabled here, and particularly the goal of this particular amendment to *The Queen's Bench Act of 1998* is to keep the number of judges the same. But they're making a slight change to have 32 judges including the Chief Justice — which is the current makeup of the court — but to delegate an additional role within one of the other judges as the Associate Chief Justice. Of course the Chief Justice of the court is responsible for all the functions of the administration of the court, including scheduling matters, and apparently that takes a lot of time. The Chief Justice, according to the Minister of Justice, is spending most of his time on administration and not actually hearing decisions in the court, which is something that is unfortunate because the reason he's Chief Justice is because of his legal abilities as a judge.

So I guess the idea of this Bill is to share the administrator responsibilities with someone identified as the Associate Chief Justice. There's other amendments that will allow the Associate

Chief Justice to also take on the duties and responsibilities of the Chief Justice if in fact the Chief Justice is not able to attend to his duties. So it seems to be allowing for basically a subbing in of an Associate Chief Justice in the event that the Chief Justice is unable or absent, unable to act or is absent. And the goal as stated by the Minister of Justice is to ensure the seamless operation of the court.

The Minister of Justice made an interesting comment that this is one of those provisions that the government hopes it never needs but it is best to have in place just in case. It seems a bit odd that we have a government here that is putting in place things that they hope they never need, when indeed it appears to me that there are things that this government should be doing that are needed but are not in place. So it seems a bit odd to be focusing on this kind of provision where there's a number of legislative needs in the province that aren't being addressed at all, Mr. Speaker.

[19:45]

And again I'm not sure, you know, that this is a hugely necessary piece. Already the Act has provisions within it for the Chief Justice to be able to assign duties, although it's not explicitly provided for. And it seems that the reason we're doing this is because there are several provinces that do it. Again, it's not clear to me why it's absolutely needed, but this is something that I think we would need to take a close look at and consult with our colleagues and the resources that we have at our hand.

It does appear to be a housekeeping type of legislation, as I said. And right now, as you know, the Queen's Bench court has the family law division and the general law division. And apparently in Quebec, as the minister pointed out, there are two associate chief justices for the general division and the family law division.

What concerns me, Mr. Speaker, is that there may be unintended consequences that we have not had an opportunity to identify at this point in time, and why we need to have measured debate on these types of housekeeping Bills as well as other pieces of legislation. For example, it's not clear to us what kind of remuneration would be involved or any additional costs to the taxpayer to implement this position.

*The Queen's Bench Act, 1998* makes very scant reference to the role of the Chief Justice, and it's not clear to me exactly what the Chief Justice is expected to do. In part 4 of *The Queen's Bench Act, 1998*, section 14 reads that:

The chief justice shall co-ordinate and apportion the business of the court and assign the judges to hold court and chambers at any times and places that the chief justice considers appropriate.

And in section 15 — it's called the meeting of judges section:

At least twice in each year, on a day and at a place fixed by the chief justice, the judges shall meet to consider any issue affecting the performance of their judicial duties.

Other than that, Mr. Speaker, there's very little mention of the

role of the Chief Justice in *The Queen's Bench Act, 1998* except perhaps in section 19, which indicates that the judge of the Court of Appeal and a judge of the Queen's Bench court shall sit in chambers on days and times that the Chief Justice of Saskatchewan and the Chief Justice agree on.

So that's really basically the duties, additional duties of the Chief Justice, in addition to hearing decisions. So as I said, Mr. Speaker, the mention of the Chief Justice in *The Queen's Bench Act* is very scant. It appears that this type of administrative assistance is something that may already be available to the Chief Justice. Certainly he's been managing quite well to date. But if the true intention of this Bill is to provide the Chief Justice more time to actually hear decisions in the court, it may be a good piece of legislation. But we need time to consider it, and we need to take due diligence to ensure that this is in the best interests of the people of Saskatchewan.

So I'd like to say in conclusion, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and of course many of my colleagues here on the loyal opposition will also want to comment. So as such, I would like to move to adjourn this Bill for further debate.

**The Speaker:** — The member for Saskatoon Nutana has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 1, *The Queen's Bench Amendment Act, 2011*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

## Bill No. 2

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 2 — *The Miscellaneous Statutes (Collaborative Law) Amendment Act, 2011/Loi corrective (droit collaboratif) de 2011*** be now read a second time.]

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

**Ms. Chartier:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to enter debate on Bill No. 2, *An Act to amend certain Statutes with respect to matters concerning Collaborative Law*.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill, the minister outlined yesterday, it's amending a few different Acts. One of them is *The Children's Law Act* and it will be requiring now, Mr. Speaker, that lawyers will be required to inform their clients about available mediation as well as collaborative law services that may be of assistance in resolving their matters. So the addition of collaborative law services is the change there, Mr. Speaker.

It's also going to be amending *The Family Maintenance Act* in the same way. Both these Acts are from 1997 where negotiation and mediation were deemed to be cutting edge. But collaborative law is a new tool now, Mr. Speaker, in lawyers' tool kits for resolving disputes when relationships end, Mr. Speaker. So this Bill will also be, will be amending *The Family Maintenance Act* to ensure that lawyers will be required to inform their clients about the available mediation and

collaborative law services once again, Mr. Speaker.

And a third change that will be taking place, Mr. Speaker, will be to *The Family Property Act*. In the past, Mr. Speaker, mediation and negotiation, lawyers weren't required to tell their clients about mediation and negotiation. So this is a complete addition to *The Family Property Act* now. Lawyers will be required to inform their clients of collaborative law or mediation services that may be available to assist in resolving their own matters.

Mr. Speaker, any time that parties can come together without having to go to court is a positive thing. And speaking from experience, Mr. Speaker, in my own, in my own experience, I've had the opportunity to use mediation when my marriage ended a decade ago. My husband at the time and I were in counselling and didn't know lawyers, didn't know . . . I think for the average citizen who isn't a lawyer or isn't connected to lawyers and who's never been through the end of a relationship, it's all a very foreign world. These aren't things that we like to think about, Mr. Speaker.

So having the opportunity, I was fortunate enough, Mr. Speaker, to already be in counselling, and it was our counsellor who recommended mediation. And my former husband and I were able to . . . It wasn't easy, but we were able to negotiate and go through the mediation process quite smoothly. And I think that that's proved fruitful in our ongoing relationship now as co-parents of our daughter Hennessey who is 13 years old. It's allowed us, I think, the opportunity to have that relationship, to want to continue to parent without great hostility. And I have to emphasize, Mr. Speaker, that mediation wasn't easy, but I think it built the foundation for us to carry on.

But mediation and collaborative law aren't for everybody, Mr. Speaker. Looking at a paper here actually written by Wanda Wieggers and Michaela Keet out of the U of S, they argue that with collaborative law:

. . . [its] potential impact will depend largely on how sensitive lawyers are to the existence of gendered power imbalances, on whether they screen [clients] effectively [into collaborative law and] provide timely and specific legal advice, and work at more effective communication with their clients.

So, Mr. Speaker, collaborative law isn't for everybody, and it really requires . . . So it's, I'm very glad to hear it's not being mandated, Mr. Speaker. But the fact that lawyers now are going to be required, I think, to tell their clients about other possible ways of resolving disputes is a positive thing. But we always have to remember that no relationship . . . It's not a one-size-fits-all situation, Mr. Speaker. And having the opportunity to put different tools into place is very important.

I think putting on that gendered lens when you're looking at the creation of public policy is absolutely imperative, and I think that there are definite pros and cons with respect to collaborative law. How does public policy affect men and women differently? And again, this paper entitled "Collaborative Family Law and Gender Inequalities: Balancing Risks and Opportunities" outlines some of that, that we have to think about how our policy is going to impact different groups.

So I did have a conversation on Friday with a collaborative lawyer, one of the growing numbers of lawyers here in Saskatchewan who do practice collaborative law. She was very keen on these amendments, but our job as the opposition is to talk to as many stakeholders as possible. Unintended consequences are one thing we have to be on the lookout for. Sometimes when you look at a Bill at its face, it's one thing, but when you get deeper in to it, various outcomes that you're not expecting take place.

And so our job, Mr. Speaker, is over the next while to reach out to stakeholders. I know the minister mentioned, Mr. Speaker, that the Law Society of Saskatchewan and the family law sections of the Canadian Bar Association, Saskatchewan branch, Collaborative Lawyers of Saskatchewan, and the provincial dispute resolution office were consulted, and they support these amendments.

So, Mr. Speaker, the opposition will be also reaching out to these organizations and other organizations to make sure that we fully understand the implications and ramifications of this Bill. Though on the face of it, it seems to be a positive move, Mr. Speaker, to ensuring that lawyers are informing their clients of the various services out there. But we always have to remember, Mr. Speaker, that there isn't a one-size-fits-all way of resolving disputes. So with that I will . . . I know that I have colleagues who are interested in waiting into the debate down the road here. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I move to adjourn debate.

**The Speaker:** — The member for Saskatoon Riversdale has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 2, *The Miscellaneous Statutes (Collaborative Law) Amendment Act*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

### Bill No. 3

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 3 — *The Summary Offences Procedure Amendment Act, 2011*** be now read a second time.]

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

**Mr. McCall:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And to the member from Indian Head-Milestone, thank you for the encouragement right off the top.

*The Summary Offences Procedure Amendment Act, 2011*, Bill No. 3 of this government on their exciting legislative agenda, Mr. Speaker. Some of these Bills seem to have the . . . smack a bit of housekeeping, Mr. Speaker. Not that housekeeping is a bad thing; I wouldn't be saying that, Mr. Speaker. But certainly some of these measures that they're bringing forward are less than, less than ushering us into a brave new legislative world, which is not necessarily a bad thing otherwise, Mr. Speaker.

What this Bill is consumed with or seized with is primarily

making some administrative changes to the current summary offences procedure, again trying to keep up with changes in technology and the issuance of tickets and summonses, again trying to make it a bit more time-sensitive in terms of how the administrative aspect of this law is carried out. And again, summary offences applying to a fairly wide range of provincial offences — as the minister had cited in his remarks off the top — from the minor traffic offences to more serious ones such as poaching, environmental pollution, and the unsafe transport of goods on our highways.

The thing I find interesting, Mr. Speaker, is later on in the remarks from the minister where he talks about the current maximum number of days for which an offender who defaults on payment of fines may be imprisoned. As it stands right now, Mr. Speaker, the Act provides for a 90-day limit on the amount of jail time that may be imposed on an offender who is in default of fine payment. To go on to quote from the minister's remarks:

The 90-day cap on imprisonment is insufficient to deal with those offenders who accumulate a large number of fines or an extremely high fine. In those cases, the higher maximum term of imprisonment will act as a deterrent.

So as it stands right now in the legislation, Mr. Speaker, there's a 90-day cap on the penalty that can be assessed to people in default of fine payment. There's analysis that has apparently taken place in the Ministry of Justice determining that that current penalty, that 90-day cap, is insufficient. What the minister fails to mention in his remarks but which of course is included in the legislation itself, Mr. Speaker, is that they're moving the cap from 90 days to two years less a day. So they're moving to the maximum provincial penalty that can be levied in terms of jail time, you know, two years less a day being two years less a day — one day short of federal time, Mr. Speaker — from the current cap of 90 days.

So I guess some of the questions that that would suggest, Mr. Speaker, is what is the analysis that this is based on? How did they come to the conclusion that the current 90-day cap was insufficient? And how is it that they'd move from 90 days all the way over to two years less a day? And I guess we await further information from the minister or further research that we as the official opposition will be undertaking to dig more deeply into this.

Again, *The Summary Offences Procedure Amendment Act* doesn't seem like a real screamer, but the fact that they're moving the cap, the hammer in this legislation, the fact that they're moving it from 90 days, Mr. Speaker, to two years less a day is a pretty significant jump in the severity of the penalty and something that we'll be looking into as we go about doing our due diligence and our research into this legislation.

[20:00]

Again, Mr. Speaker, there are a number of other administrative changes that are made in this legislation in terms of making better use of telecommunications, keeping up with other jurisdictions in terms of what documents can be issued in an electronic format — again, not necessarily bad things in and of themselves. And there's a reverse onus in terms of we're

making more clear that failure to appear can result in a summary conviction, Mr. Speaker, or an automatic conviction. And again these things would seem to be fairly commonsensical and straightforward, but as we've found on many fronts with this government, Mr. Speaker, sometimes the devil does indeed lie in the details. We'll be going through this legislation with a fine-tooth comb.

So to recap, Mr. Speaker, as we go about doing our due diligence, we want to know more about the analysis that was employed to move from a 90-day cap on penalties assessed for people failing to appear or those that have accumulated a large number of fines. We'd like to know about the incidence of people that have run up against that 90-day cap. We'd like to know about just what are those fines that have been levied and then not paid. Is there a character to those offences, Mr. Speaker?

We'd like to know what is the character of the people who are committing these offences in terms of, do they live in a certain place? Are they of a certain income bracket? Are they committing particular offences, Mr. Speaker, and is it perhaps something that's related more to the offence itself as opposed to the administrative aspect of this Bill?

But again, Mr. Speaker, the fact that they've moved it from a 90-day cap to two years less a day is a fairly breathtaking jump in terms of the severity of this penalty. And again it's not that two years less a day sentences aren't warranted in a great number of circumstances, Mr. Speaker, but we'd like to hear a bit more about why this jump in the severity of the penalty.

So we've got a number of questions on this piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker, questions that we'll be following up as we do our due diligence on this legislation, as we talk to professionals in the field, as we consult with legal practitioners within our own caucus, Mr. Speaker, and throughout the legal community at large. But at this time, I know that a great number of my colleagues also want to participate in this debate, and as such, Mr. Speaker, I would move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 3.

**The Speaker:** — The member for Regina Elphinstone-Centre has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 3, *The Summary Offences Procedure Amendment Act, 2011*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

#### Bill No. 4

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 4 — *The Pension Benefits Amendment Act, 2011*** be now read a second time.]

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm just very eager and keen to get on and into the debate here on Bill No. 4, *An Act to amend The Pension Benefits Act, 1992*.

It is a pleasure to enter into debate on this, Mr. Speaker, because we know that the issue of pensions, the issue of pension benefits is very important, a very often top-of-mind issue for Saskatchewan people and for all Canadians. And that's because, Mr. Speaker, we know that pensions really are a very important part to ensuring that Canadian citizens, Saskatchewan residents have a good quality of life throughout one's entire life not only on the front end, the middle end, but also in the golden years as some people phrase it, Mr. Speaker.

We know pensions and the discussion of pensions is a topic that is in the media, is in the news a lot because of the importance that it has to Canadian families. And when we think of some of the current events that have been discussed over the past year, there's been a great discussion, Mr. Speaker, on the national stage as to what is the best approach to pensions in order to deliver the stability and the quality of life for everyday Saskatchewan people and Canadians.

There's been discussions about whether the Canadian pension plan should be expanded as is, whether there should be other options. We've seen an approach, Mr. Speaker, that the federal Conservatives have taken, and there's been a good amount of debate around that and whether or not that is the proper approach.

This is a bit of a tangent from the Bill at hand, Mr. Speaker, but I wanted to start with those comments because it shows the importance of pensions to Saskatchewan people and to Canadians in general.

When we look at this particular Bill, we know that it is a very important one. While it could be termed as housekeeping or not of the, perhaps, the garnering the greatest attention or having the brightest light shone on it, I think it is important to look at it.

I think, Mr. Speaker, of some of my experiences over the past year, past few months in door knocking, and actually pensions are something that's brought up. Pensions are something that is brought up on a fairly regular basis. Often, Mr. Speaker, it's constituents thinking that politicians have golden pensions, and I know that's a discussion that I'm sure members on both sides of the House have more than once. But, Mr. Speaker, I think that when we look at the issue of pensions, we need to ensure that the decisions that we're taking, the decisions that we're making around any sort of changes to pension law, pension regulations, especially when we look at different jurisdictions, we need to make sure that we're acting on the best interests of all Canadian people and of all Saskatchewan people, especially from a perspective here of the provincial legislature.

Mr. Speaker, as I understand it based on the minister's second reading remarks on this piece of legislation, this piece of legislation is intended to provide the legal authority for the provincial government to enter into a new national agreement with respect to multi-jurisdictional plans. I'm not an expert on pensions, Mr. Speaker, but as I understand it, a multi-jurisdictional plan is a plan which would be registered in one jurisdiction, one province of the country, but may have members from different provinces. It may be offered to people across the country. So whether that . . . Most often I would assume this would be in a situation where you have a company

that may be based in one province where the plan is registered but would have members belonging to the plan in a variety of provinces in different places.

Based on the minister's remarks, a bit of information about the relevance or the prevalence of these plans, Mr. Speaker, in a Canadian context: we know that there are about 3,000 multi-jurisdictional plans in Canada covering 2.5 million people. So it's certainly a large amount of people. We know here in the Saskatchewan context, there are about 50,000 people that would fall under these multi-jurisdictional plans, or MJPs as it can be abbreviated to. We know, Mr. Speaker, that in 1968 there was an agreement that provided some of the framework for these multi-jurisdictional plans.

As I understand though from the minister's remarks in his speech, the problem that we've seen is that with the multi-jurisdictional plans, they may be registered in one province, but the way that it was structured is that the laws would apply where the plan was registered as well as where the participants in the plan may be living. So you can come into a situation or a situation can arise where it's impractical or impossible to have the dual laws applying to this plan because of the conflict that may exist. And there have been cases, as suggested by the minister in his speech, where there has been a conflict between the jurisdictions over the details of the plan. And court cases have come about, Mr. Speaker, and as a result, there needs to be greater clarity and a better approach to ensure that people's interests are protected and that plans can meet the needs of their members, even when the multi-jurisdictional reality is there.

I think, Mr. Speaker, when we look at this multi-jurisdictional plan and we look at this national agreement — there was a reference in the minister's remarks how some provinces have come on board already and other provinces are in the works of making the legislative changes in order to allow for sign-on to the agreement — I think it's important, Mr. Speaker, to ensure that the decisions we're making here in Saskatchewan are in fact in the interest of Saskatchewan people. We want to make sure that when changes occur through a national agreement that this doesn't in any way erode the benefits or the protection for Saskatchewan people.

And also, Mr. Speaker, when we're dealing with pensions we know that the aspect of risk is a very important one, and who is assuming the burden of risk, and who is put in a perhaps vulnerable position with any sort of changes that may take place with the rulings. And we want to make sure that for Saskatchewan people, for our constituents, that they're not put in a situation where they are assuming risk that is not reasonable or that is not appropriate.

When dealing with pensions, as I said in my remarks off the top, we know that it's very important to get it right because people really do rely and depend on pensions for many years. They need them to meet their basic needs and enjoy some of the luxuries in life that people like pursuing when they have the benefit of being able to retire and enjoy some pursuits that they can't do during their normal working career. So we need to make sure that any sort of changes that we have are sound ones, are positive ones.

In the minister's remarks I see that he stated that a significant amount of consultation has occurred on this, and I hope that is in fact the case. And I hope, Mr. Speaker, that the consultation with various stakeholders, whatever group that may be, I hope that the consultation has been genuine and that the ministry listened well to what was said. And I hope that there is a general consensus, Mr. Speaker, that this is the appropriate approach, a well-thought-out approach for Saskatchewan people, for Saskatchewan people, the 50,000 people enrolled in these multi-jurisdictional plans. If that hasn't occurred, Mr. Speaker, I think that's a problem because we know that those 50,000 people are in fact relying on the plans.

We know, Mr. Speaker, just as in our own individual lives, things don't always go as planned or as we might expect or predict, and the same can be said, Mr. Speaker, for pension plans. Sometimes when individuals rely on a plan, they expect it to be there over the long term. They expect it to be there in the future, and it is not there. We know that it has horrible effects on their lives. I can think of a conversation I had with a constituent, Mr. Speaker, a member who was — a Saskatchewan resident — part of a plan based in Ontario that had problems and some of the negative consequences it's had on her life as she's tried to make the best of retirement. So we know we have to get it right.

I understand in the minister's remarks that the changes being proposed here or the changes, the legislative change that would occur here allowing the government to engage in the national agreement, would improve the scenario or improve the ability of government to deal with the situation when a plan ends or a plan splits. This ties into the comments I made, Mr. Speaker, about life not always going as we think it may. So when a pension plan is not there, when changes occur between companies or providers of plans, Mr. Speaker, it's important to know that the right regulatory framework is in place to ensure that Saskatchewan people are protected as best as they possibly can be.

So, Mr. Speaker, I do appreciate the opportunity to have shared a few thoughts and views that I have on Bill No. 4, *An Act to amend The Pension Benefits Act*, Mr. Speaker, as I understand it, to recap that this legislation is to allow the government to participate in a new national agreement that would provide the framework for multi-jurisdictional plans, pension plans. And I hope, Mr. Speaker, that the consultation that the minister says he has engaged in, the ministry has engaged in, I hope that consultation has been sound and, Mr. Speaker, I hope that there are no surprises in this legislation. But as is only appropriate when we are looking at legislation that deals with important things, especially important things like pension plans, it's important to make sure we get it right.

So I know there are more people that we want to speak to within the province on this important piece of legislation, and we look forward to doing that as an opposition in the coming months and providing the opportunity for people to share their views with us. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I would conclude my remarks on Bill No. 4, *An Act to amend The Pension Benefits Act*, and I would move to adjourn the debate on this piece of legislation at this time. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** — The member for Saskatoon Massey Place has

moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 4, *The Pension Benefits Amendment Act, 2011*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

[20:15]

### Bill No. 5

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 5 — *The Credit Union Amendment Act, 2011*** be now read a second time.]

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Thank Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to join in discussion here tonight and in debate as it relates to Bill No. 5, *The Credit Union Amendment Act, 2011*.

Certainly this Act as it sets out is making some changes by way of regulation and oversight of financial industry here in Saskatchewan and of credit unions. Any time we are dealing with legislation that deals with credit unions, we're touching on something that's truly Saskatchewan, and something that arose out of a challenge in our economy as it relates to credit unions and addressed local needs in a really significant way back in the 1930s and earlier, but predominantly in the 1930s, at a time of economic calamity and a time where eastern big banks had shut down lending in a significant way to our province and to our farm families and to businesses and to people. The local solution that were credit unions were a very meaningful response to these challenges and to provide for the getting by in some difficult and challenging circumstances and the opportunity to really flourish and capitalize as times improved here in Saskatchewan.

So when we're talking about credit unions, we're speaking about institutions that have an incredibly proud history in our province and institutions that have certainly been there for those difficult economic times and certainly enabled the prosperity and good economic times in Saskatchewan and certainly allowing that to translate back to Saskatchewan people, producers, businesses in this province.

I know we have the new member to the Assembly on this side of the House — the member from Nutana that's here — and I believe the first chartered rural credit union was in fact in her home community of Lafleche. And these are proud pieces of local history and part of our shared history as a province.

Now these aren't just parts of history in Saskatchewan, but they're also part and should be part of our bright economic future and continuing to fulfil the roles that are required in our modern economy. And I'm certain that given the opportunity and the proper regulation, proper tools, that credit unions will be able to continue to deliver to Saskatchewan people in meaningful ways.

And I think of the fact that we have well over 300 locations

right now in Saskatchewan, 61 credit unions, I believe, Mr. Speaker, and over 500,000 members — I think over 520,000 members. And when you think about that, Mr. Speaker, when you have a population of 1 million people, this is incredibly well-subscribed, a very well-subscribed business to Saskatchewan people, and therefore touches the lives of Saskatchewan people and businesses and producers in a meaningful way to this day and to those local communities for whom they serve and provide employment and the economic activity in each of those communities.

So when we're looking at regulation as it relates to credit unions, we need to keep in mind not only that great, proud, rich history but the relevance to Saskatchewan communities across our province and certainly to our future.

So this legislation here right now proposes to address two different circumstances as laid out by the minister. And we look forward to the consultation that we'll have with a broad set of stakeholders and certainly the financial industry as a whole, but also Saskatchewan people and credit unions on this front are financial stakeholders. And it'll be important from that to derive the impact and consequences of this legislation.

Certainly the minister's set out to lay out some consequences or intended objectives of this legislation. What we want to make sure that we've done is that we bring forward the meaningful consultation that must occur to drive good public policy to make sure that we understand fully the unintended consequences as well, Mr. Speaker, as it relates to this legislation or potential unintended consequences. So we look forward to that consultation process with Saskatchewan people.

I know the minister highlighted a couple pieces within his speech. He did speak to aspects of this providing SaskCentral the ability to continue under federal legislation and the federal Act. We want to ensure that we fully understand what that means, that the minister fully understands what that means, and to make sure that the credit unions and the financial, our financial stakeholders have understood all of the potential consequences of these changes.

I know, as it relates to the continuance under the federal legislation, the minister references that this, and I quote, "allows credit unions to remain competitive." We need to understand exactly how this allows them to remain competitive. Certainly being vital to our future is something very important to members of this side of the House in serving Saskatchewan people. But we need to understand just entirely what, I quote, "remain competitive" means to that minister and that government, Mr. Speaker, who sometimes has its priorities upside down and backwards, Mr. Speaker.

So we need to understand, as it relates to remaining competitive, what changes are going to be brought forward, what impacts exist, Mr. Speaker, and certainly what analysis has been done by this government and by credit unions and the financial industry to understand the implications of this policy.

And certainly these sorts of analyses and as well the broad consultation is how you derive good public policy. And unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, we've learned as an opposition that with this government, Mr. Speaker, we need to engage in that

process fully to make sure that meaningful process has occurred. And it's part of our responsibility, and we're more than up for the task of doing so.

I do have some concern, by way of a reference in this message and within this Act, that we'll reduce accountability or reporting to government by way of SaskCentral, Mr. Speaker. I'm not sure that I understand what's being presented right now, but what I do know is that we should be really cautious as it relates to the financial industry and requiring less accountability. We've seen consequences bear out around the globe and certainly to our neighbours in the United States where deregulation caused many circumstances and certainly many unintended consequences for far too many across that country and for the country itself, Mr. Speaker. So we're going to understand why this government is bringing forward legislation that in fact will eliminate by way of legislation reporting back to that government of their financial circumstance.

What we believe, Mr. Speaker, is we should be very careful on these fronts in understanding the important role for oversight, the important role for regulation, of accountability, and then of course how that translates into protection of people, and in this case, the well over 520,000 members that are members of credit unions and that are reliant on those services by way of individual households or farm families, producers, or businesses here in this province. So we'll undertake that study, that analysis. We'll certainly look forward to further processes to engage in this Assembly, and certainly through committee process to engage the minister and seek clarity to this reduction in reporting that is going to be a consequence of this Act and seek clarity from officials as to questions that may arise as we continue our consultation with the broad set of stakeholders for whom this legislation is relevant. And of course when I talk about for whom this is relevant, that includes Saskatchewan people in a broad way. And we'll be engaging in that thoughtful dialogue.

This Act as well, I understand, intends to make some changes to the accreditation or qualifications of individuals who serve on the Credit Union Deposit Guarantee Corporation, a corporation that plays a very valuable and instrumental role of protection to the public.

Now as I read this Act and as I interpret the minister's statements, I understand that these changes are in fact going to enhance qualifications that are required and in fact bring them in line with the changes that many credit union boards have brought online. And this will be representative of those changes. And on that front, at first blush that would seem to be something that we would supportive of, making sure that the Credit Union Deposit Guarantee Corporation continues to play the vital role it should and must in protecting the interests and assets of Saskatchewan people, producers, and businesses, Mr. Speaker.

So as it relates, as I've said, to changes to the financial industry, as it relates to a financial regulation, we need to look at the global context and times that we're living in. We need to understand the consequences of deregulation in the 1980s in the United States and the impact that that had for so many families and individuals across the United States, and making sure that

we're not making Saskatchewan people vulnerable to similar circumstances here.

So that will be some of the discussion and consultation we carry forward. And it's a matter of making sure that these proud institutions, credit unions, have a vital and strong and rich part of our bright future here in this province and that quite simply that Saskatchewan people, the 520,000 plus members who subscribe to credit unions and utilize their financial services, that they're protected, Mr. Speaker, because that's our role and responsibility. And it's a role the government should never abdicate itself of or a role that government should reduce, that ability to have effective oversight, meaningful regulation, and with the interest of making sure that proud institutions like credit unions are in strong positions but also that we're addressing the needs of Saskatchewan people.

At this point in time, there is certainly more consultation that we'll do as a caucus, and I know that many other members of the nimble nine are looking forward to weighing in on discussion as it relates to *The Credit Union Amendment Act*, and those consultations and discussions will occur in the days and weeks ahead. Certainly for the many individuals that are watching at home here today and stakeholders, we welcome their dialogue, their input on these fronts as we always do, and we look forward to seeking the kind of clarity and protection that Saskatchewan people deserve through these processes and certainly at that committee table from that minister, Mr. Speaker, in making sure that this process has been sincere and consultations have been broad and that the legislation is in the best interests of Saskatchewan people.

So those are some of the questions that we will be going through, some of the processes that we will be going through. And at this point in time, Mr. Speaker, I will simply adjourn debate as it relates to Bill No. 5, *The Credit Union Amendment Act, 2011*.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Tell):** — The member for Regina Rosemont has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 5, *The Credit Union Amendment Act, 2011*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

### Bill No. 9

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Hutchinson that **Bill No. 9 — *The Saskatchewan Gaming Corporation Amendment Act, 2011*** be now read a second time.]

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Tell):** — Can you please advise me where you're from?

**An Hon. Member:** — Cumberland.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Tell):** — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

**Mr. Vermette:** — Thank you, Ms. Deputy Speaker. And I guess to join the debate on Bill No. 9, *The Saskatchewan Gaming Corporation Amendment Act, 2011*, and just to give a, I

guess, a response to it on behalf of the official opposition, to give a few words, comments about it.

The Community Initiatives Fund was created to take some of the profits from the Casino Regina and Moose Jaw and to allow it to benefit communities. And some of these are community-based organizations. We're heard of different ones that have applied, and there is a board that oversees those funds to make sure that the funds are utilized in a proper way. There is rules, legislation that gives the board the powers or limits the powers, and at this time it looks like the amendments are going to give some strength to the board in a way, I guess, to make sure that they can operate.

And, you know, they make it very clear. The board, it's managed arm's length, and that's an interesting thing when you say arm's length and what legislation you're going to give them. What powers will you give the board to make sure they do the job that the government asks them to do?

But having said that, I'm going to go back to some of my comments because it's interesting seeing the powers the minister will then have with this new board and the powers he's given them, but he's going to also receive some powers. So we're going to have to watch this and make sure it's very clear. We're going to have to do a lot of work to make sure that whatever powers are given to the board, we have to make sure that we review this. We're going to ask some of our colleagues, some people with the interest in legislation like this and amendments that are being made, and how it impacts them and the fund.

And I say that I know the fund does provide some good services to individuals. Organizations out there apply for these funds, and they are supposed to benefit the communities and all communities in our beautiful province. And I hope that happens. But we'll make sure we monitor that, make sure that it happens.

We know that we have a lot of community volunteers and some of them, you know, are willing to volunteer for certain boards. And they get on these boards and the opportunity to manage the funds that I guess they are asked to manage have a little bit of strength. And it looks like they are providing them the opportunity to hire some staff to be able to operate and make sure that they oversee, I guess, their staff as well, and liability. They're talking about liability, whether it's insurance so that the board is protected, but also the employees are protected. And sometimes I guess we assume that's a good thing, depend where it's going and what's the reason.

[20:30]

And I don't know who they've consulted. And I've noticed that in part of the minister's comments he says that he did consult with the board, CIF [Community Initiatives Fund] board, to make sure that the provisions and the amendments that are being provided to them, that they've had an opportunity to give their input. And it sounds like the minister says that they have agreed to the recommendations and the amendments, and we're going to have to find that out, and, you know, if it's a positive thing. We'll look into that stuff.



I guess at the end of the day the liability protection . . . everybody, whether it's a board, an employee, people volunteering, they want to be protected and they should be protected, whether it's legislation, whether it's insurance that they have to have, whether it's bonding to protect them. If they're done due diligence, if they're done the job that's been asked of them, and they've made sure that they've done, I guess, everything in their power to protect the assets of the Community Initiatives Fund, then you have to wonder, should we have provisions to protect them?

And at this point, I think we have to look at it. What's the reason? And if there are any concerns out there that have come to light why this legislation is being . . . Every time you bring something forward, and I think we have to question ourselves when we're making amendments, changing. The official opposition, I think the province, people in our province expect the official opposition, they expect even the government to make sure legislation, amendments that we are passing or bringing forward are truly going to improve our province, improve the opportunity for people in this province.

So there are some changes going on, and it looks like they might have some employees. That's interesting to see where that's going now. They're going to have power over employees, so will there be liability? Should they have issues with their employees, will they be protected? So we're going to question that a little bit. And I know we have a lot of questions that we will ask. We've got to look into this. We just wanted to get into, I guess, a little bit of discussion: where are we going with this?

And if you look at, I guess, the letter, we talk about the powers of the minister. The powers of the minister was designed, or he was given those powers with an MOU [memorandum of understanding]. And I think now they're going to pass it where he's going to, it's going to be strengthened, where the minister will have certain powers. Now we're going to question those powers and wondering, you know, the ministry, you know. If you look at the powers . . . And I guess to look at this, the minister will be provided the power and clearly the authority to establish reporting, performance, and management expectations — very clear expectations will be. And I don't know how he's going to develop that with the ministry, how they will ensure that the board lives up to the expectations of the minister or what they've been provided with. So there's going to be some challenges there.

They also talk about the amendment. We looked at modernization of the wording, gathering and granting provisions to make sure that Saskatchewan people — those that are applying for the Community Initiatives Fund, the grants — have access to that, to make sure that we make it easier for them to access, to make sure that they're comfortable with accessing. Because sometimes some of these grants, the wording of it causes some of the organizations grief if they're not familiar with the process, and sometimes that has happened. We've heard that. So maybe this is going to clear it up. We don't know that, but we'll look at the wording if they're talking about that. So it's going to be interesting to see if that's going to clear it up for them.

They talk about giving the ability to the board to manage the fund and to give them certain powers to be more effective, to

reach out to the community. That will be . . . And I guess there's different communities, organizers that will apply for this funding. We want to make sure that the changes that are being proposed are going to help Saskatchewan people who apply to this fund, are going to give the powers.

It is a lot of money — we know that — that our casinos generate. It's good revenue. There are challenges sometimes, people will say, with casinos, gambling and all that. But at the end of the day, the monies that are provided to the board, to the CIF board, to go ahead and use as, I guess, a grant, provide whether it's sports, culture.

There's different people who will apply, different organizations that apply for this funding. And we hope that at the end of the day, the board in its wisdom has the regulations and the rules set down by the ministry and outlined. And maybe these clear up some of those or it gives them strength, to the board, gives some strength to the minister.

We just want to make sure, I guess, and that's why we're debating the Bill, to make sure the changes, when we're proposing changes, that we're doing our job to make sure, are they the best changes? Is there any suggestions we can give? And we will, sometimes we will provide suggestions as official opposition, provide some suggestions, opportunities for the ministry to do some positive changes.

And we've heard from the Premier that he's open to those ideas and those suggestions, and we'll see at the end of the day how open as we bring suggestions forward on some of the Bills and some of the legislation that's being, amendments that are being brought forward before the House, before all of us, and the work that's been asked of all of us to do. And we're going to work forward.

I know that my colleagues have a lot of questions yet. And we're going to have to get some background information on some of the legislation, and we'll consult with different people, organizations. We'll get to ask, are people in support of this legislation, the changes that are being proposed, amendments? And we'll do what we need to do to make sure we hold the government to account, to make sure that if it's changes that are positive, great. That will benefit Saskatchewan people. That is a good thing. If not, we'll bring it to light. And at this time, you know, Mr. Speaker, I'm ready to deal with this and ready to move forward on adjournment of debate.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Tell):** — The member for Cumberland has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 9, *The Saskatchewan Gaming Corporation Amendment Act, 2011*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Tell):** — Carried.

#### Bill No. 10

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Hutchinson that **Bill No. 10** — *The Parks Amendment Act, 2011* be now read a second time.]

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Tell):** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Centre.

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I appreciate the opportunity . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Here you go. Ma'am.

[Interjections]

**Mr. Forbes:** — [Inaudible] . . . I'd like to enter the debate on Bill No. 10, *An Act to amend The Parks Act*. And it's a very important Bill that we have before us. I know it's getting late in the evening and we all need to take time and focus a little more. And I will do my part to keep my speech focused.

I think this is an important piece of legislation. I appreciate the opportunity to enter into the debate. Of course, as a former minister responsible for the parks, I find this very interesting and I will have to get myself up to speed more on the implications of this piece of legislation before us. The minister did speak about it and talked about the three pieces, the three reasons why the legislation is before us. And they look relatively straightforward. But my colleague, the member from Athabasca, who was also a minister responsible for the parks and knew the file quite well, raised some concerns. And I share some of those concerns.

And of course it's our obligation as the opposition is to make sure there's appropriate and sufficient review of the legislation before us and so that there are no unintended consequences and we are clear what the legislation does, what it's intended to do, and nothing more. And that's what good legislation does. It doesn't get into a lot of grey areas that may or may not impact this or may or may not impact that. So it's important for us to ask these questions.

And of course we know the parks have gone through a lot of changes. And I did find it interesting that the minister referred to the four years of record success for the parks, and that's good news. We all love our parks here in Saskatchewan. They are something that we all take a lot of pride in. And I would be curious to know . . . I think that parks now and the park system are about 80 years old or 81 years old now.

**An Hon. Member:** — 80.

**Mr. Forbes:** — 80 years old. And I know we celebrated 75 a couple of years ago. It seemed like just a couple of years ago, but clearly it was five years ago. And they really are important. And when you think about the heritage of the parks, and some like Moose Mountain are significant. And we've all had, all our families, all of us have had something to do with the parks, and whether they were recreation parks, wilderness parks, they're important.

But some of the questions we have about the parks from this side, particularly in the last four or five years, is the transition from the parks from the Ministry of Environment when clearly the idea there is an ethic of conservation. And we still hope that ethic of conservation exists within the parks department. In fact I'm confident because I know many of the people who work within the department — I knew them when I was a minister — and I have a lot of confidence in their work to continue on.

But now they are moved over to Tourism, Culture, and that's a bit of a worry because it's not quite the same. It's not quite the same conservation ethic. And we know the highest level of protection that any natural area can have is when it's designated as a park. And so it's clearly an important piece of legislation, and I think there will be lots of interest in this over the months ahead. What does this really mean?

The other piece that I think is important is that we would really want to see what this means in terms of the impacts, in terms of the two new parks that are proposed and that are under consultation right now. We don't know what stage that is, but I'm sure we'll hear in the new year. And of course, one is around Emma-Anglin Lake area, and the other one is around the Hudson Bay area. We don't know if there's any direct implications. Maybe there's no implications at all. But of course we're always anxious to see what's the driving force for this legislation. Why this? Why now? But it seems relatively straightforward.

And one of the things we'll be asking for — and I hope the minister will be able to provide us, particularly when it comes to the issues around the new land descriptions — we're very concerned to make sure that there is no land loss. I mean the minister was very clear in his comments that there was some land in the Moose Mountain Provincial Park that would be sold to the village of Kenosee Lake, and that seems relatively straightforward. But we'd like to see these things, particularly in a more visual form. You know, Mr. Speaker, when you get a list of land descriptions — and a long list — what does this mean? What does this mean? And it has been I think a bit of a tradition that when you have these kind of things, that if it can be provided in a map form, or some more of an appropriate visual form, it sure is appreciated and makes life a lot easier.

So I think that when the minister . . . He highlighted three areas that *The Parks Act* is to be amended. The first talks about invested capital in reference to dispositions in parks, meaning invested private capital, not government investment. It does say that cottages are not included in this.

I have some flags go up; I'm not sure what all of this means. And so we're going to have some real clear questions because when we see private investments in parks, I think there is a role for that but we have to make sure we understand what that is. And I'm looking forward to hearing more about this, particularly from people who may have some interest in this. You know, the parks are a pretty special place, and of course there's a lot of competition to be in there in some parks, and some parks maybe not so much. So this is really around, you know, more of a business role in the parks. And so we have some questions, and I think my colleague over here actually went to quite a length talking about privatization. I'm not sure how far this plays into that, but we do want to make sure that we understand this fully as we move ahead.

I find it interesting, as I just looked through the minister's remarks in *Hansard*, I think there are about six lines referring to this, this one section in terms of the private capital. He didn't go into this in any detail, didn't give any examples. And so that's why we probably have many more questions about what does this really mean because we need to understand this fully.

[20:45]

And of course, as I said, flags go up and not only with us but many people in the province will want to know. So what's exactly on the government's agenda? What's in this ministry? What are they looking for? Because parks are going through a big, big change. And it is important that they keep current, but at the same time there's some core values that we have around our parks that we do not want to see, do not want to see lost.

Now the other area, and the minister went in quite detailed about this, was around park enforcement and allowing officers more . . . a stronger ability to deal with individuals who shouldn't be in our parks, and particularly over long weekends, and the ability to expel or get them out of the park, evict them out and get them out from 48 hours to 72 hours, seems to make a lot of sense.

And so I know, Mr. Speaker, we've had a lot of discussions about long weekends in parks and we go back a long ways talking about that, and so this is an important area. People want to feel safe in their parks, and they want to feel like it's a good, good time for families and for young people and seniors. Parks mean, as I said, so much to so many people that it's important.

So I think this makes a lot of sense. And it makes a lot of sense too that, you know, that we take a look back and say are the fines keeping up with the time? You know, like he refers to the fact that the maximum fine for summary convictions at the current level of \$1,000 was established in 1986. And I would almost think the minister at the time might have been Colin Maxwell. And he was quite a strong advocate for conservation for the government at the time. And I know that it's been 25 years have come and gone, and we should really be taking a look at that. So that's an important part.

It does talk about some of the impacts that are happening, whether it's bulldozing trails, major park encroachments without proper approvals. Very, very important that we take a good look at this. And it's interesting to see that Alberta and BC have higher fines than we do, and so we take a look at this. It is interesting though that it seems like we're having a lot of things to do with crime and punishment in this legislative agenda, and it's right across the board. But I think this is an important one, and as well Manitoba's stepping up their game on this as well.

And as I said, the third one around the legal descriptions, I always get nervous about this. Because while they seem to say it's just corrections, and I know our ministry officials do the very, very best job they can, and as we're getting more computerized and the data's getting much stronger, that we're seeing errors that may not have been caught earlier. But as I said, if we could have maps or any kind of way to help us along with this it would be, it would be very important.

So with that, I think that it's very important that we hear from the people, the stakeholders, and people who have been talking about the parks. And it would be interesting to hear particularly around the two new parks that are coming on stream and what their plans are and what the implications are for this. This will be very important for us to take a look at that and also make sure that we don't lose any ground in terms of what we have in terms of keeping our parks pretty special.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I don't have any more to contribute tonight except, you know, as I know many of my colleagues will want to speak to this after our consultations. And I'm very much looking forward to hearing them speak and to learn more about this Bill because I think it's important. We love our parks. And I think Saskatchewan has the best parks in Canada, I think. They truly do. And anybody who is associated with the parks in any form is truly honoured.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I move adjournment of Bill No. 10.

**The Speaker:** — The member for Saskatoon Centre has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 10, *The Parks Amendment Act, 2011*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

I recognize the Government House Leader.

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — Thank you Mr. Speaker. I move that this House do now adjourn.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

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

[The Assembly adjourned at 20:50.]



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