



FIRST SESSION - TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

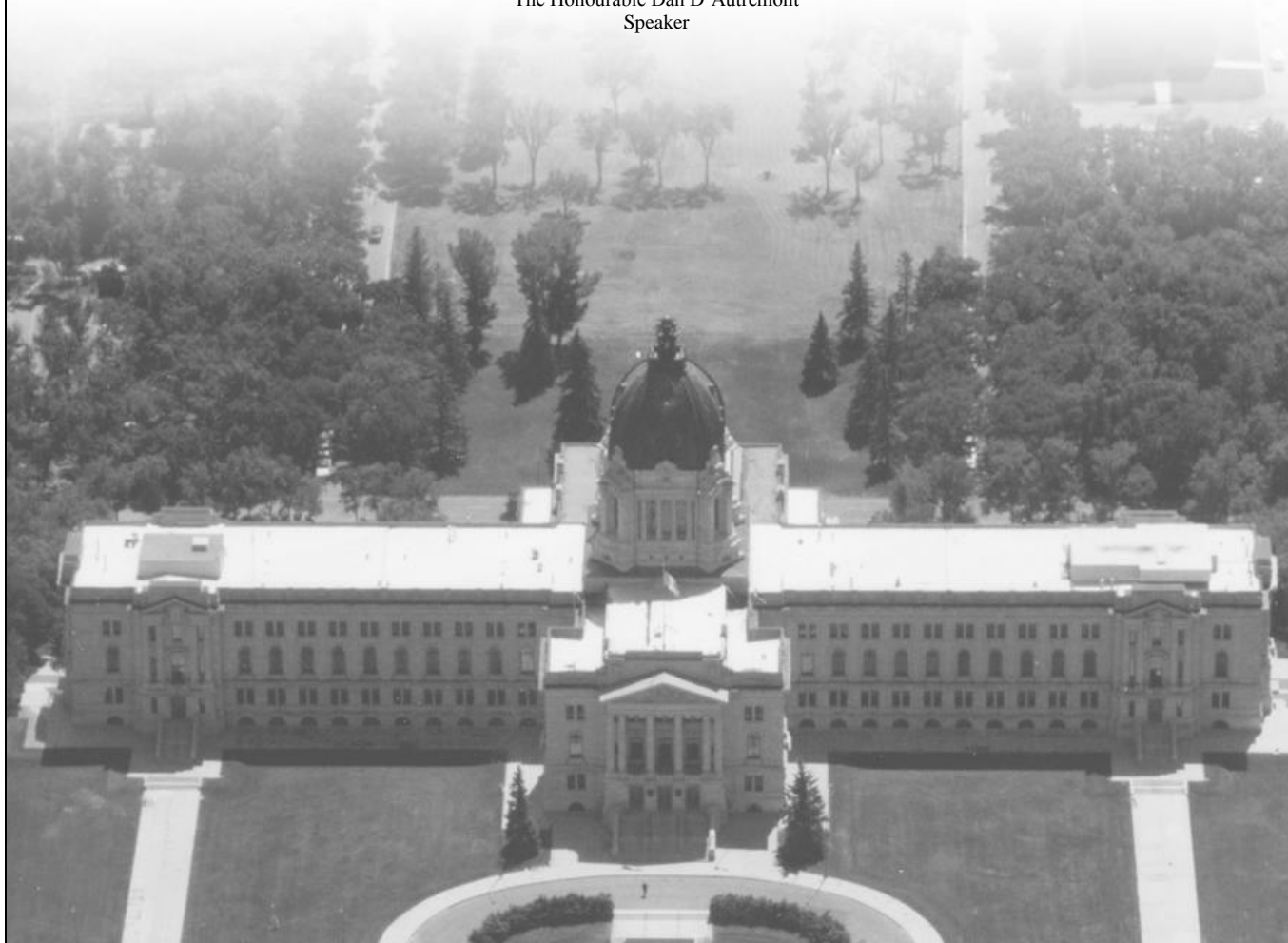
of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(HANSARD)

Published under the
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The Honourable Dan D'Autremont
Speaker



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[The Assembly resumed at 19:00.]

EVENING SITTING

The Speaker: — The time now being 7 o'clock, the House is resumed. I recognize the member for Regina Elphinstone-Centre.

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

**Bill No. 15 — *The Uniform Building and Accessibility Standards Amendment Act, 2011*
(continued)**

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's great to rise once again in the debate for Bill No. 15, *The Uniform Building and Accessibility Standards Amendment Act*. Having participated just before the adjournment on it at some length, and others on this side having said their peace about it, it's the considered opinion of the opposition at this point, Mr. Speaker, that we're ready to move this Bill to committee and give it the more considered approach that committee invites. So at this time in the second adjournment debate of Bill No. 15, *The Uniform Building and Accessibility Standards Amendment Act, 2011*, I would move that we send it on to committee.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the motion by the Minister Responsible for Corrections, Public Safety and Policing that Bill No. 15, *The Uniform Building and Accessibility Standards Amendment Act* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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

The Speaker: — To which committee shall this Bill be referred?

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

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

Bill No. 16

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert that **Bill No. 16 — *The Correctional Services Act, 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'm pleased to wade into the discussion and debate tonight about Bill No. 16, *The Correctional Services Act, 2011*. This Bill, Mr.

Speaker, is not just some amendments to a previous Act, but it's basically a total repeal and replacement of a previous Act.

Mr. Speaker, there are some things that I'd like to point out in this Bill that are of some concern. I know that the minister in his remarks had talked about many, many organizations with whom the government had consulted, but he didn't actually point out what the results of the consultation were. This has some implications and ramifications for those in correctional facilities. And organizations like the John Howard Society or Elizabeth Fry are organizations that do their work to ensure that inmates have an opportunity to have some of their rights protected but also the opportunity to come out of their time after they have served their debt to society for crimes that they have committed, to come out and lead better, more exemplary lives, Mr. Speaker.

So some of my concerns again are just wondering not only with whom the minister consulted but what was the outcome of those consultations. There's no reference in those remarks at all to the kind of feedback the minister received. He mentioned that he did consult, but what was the feedback? Were all of the groups with whom he consulted in favour of this legislation? I would have been interested in hearing in the minister's remarks, certainly the number of groups that he mentioned. I could be mistaken, but I suspect that there was probably some concern flagged with some of these changes.

So as always, anytime, consultation just isn't about sending out a letter or saying what do you think about it. It's about the work that's done before a piece of legislation is drafted. It's about connecting with these organizations beforehand, before the legislation is actually drafted to ensure that the legislation is meeting the needs that you think it is.

This Bill actually, the minister pointed out Bill No. 16, *The Correctional Services Act, 2011* actually came out of a report called *The Road Ahead* which came out of some escapes that happened, I believe, in 2008. And this report where this legislation is said to come out of was a result of, as I said, those escapes. And the minister at the time actually had . . . I wasn't in this Legislative Assembly, Mr. Speaker. As a matter of fact, I think I was at home with my one-year-old when all this transpired. But I remember in the news hearing that the minister of Corrections at the time didn't even realize that there was a problem with gangs in our correctional facilities. I don't work in correctional facilities, but my daughter's dad was a corrections worker and is a police officer. I didn't work in a correctional facility, but I was very well aware myself that there was, living in the community in which I do, you can't help but know that there are issues with gangs in not only our corrections facilities but elsewhere, Mr. Speaker.

The one thing the minister also mentioned, which is incredibly timely, he points out that the inmate numbers in our corrections facilities are the highest levels that they've been for many, many years. Well the reality is, after the passing of the Conservative crime Bill last night, those numbers are about to get even higher. And we don't have a good sense of what that cost is going to look like here in Saskatchewan for us as taxpayers. And I'm of the belief that yes, we definitely have to get the punishment side of the equation wrong but we also need

to ensure that we are being proactive and preventive.

I'm the daughter of a police officer who served the City of Saskatoon for almost 30 years, Mr. Speaker. I'm a big believer in community policing and proactive prevention of crime in the first place. I would much rather spend money on the upstream side of things to keep people out of corrections facilities in the first place, and that involves education. That involves housing. That involves investment in child care, all kinds of services, Mr. Speaker, on that front end will ensure that we don't have the vast need for the number of correction facilities.

I'd also point out too that we need to think about who is vastly overrepresented in our corrections facilities right now. And I don't have the number off the top of my head, but I do know that our Aboriginal population is grossly overrepresented in the number of people in our corrections facilities.

And again going back to that education piece and the proactive prevention piece, we had an opportunity today, Mr. Speaker, in this legislature to come down as opposition and government on the same page to say that we commit to ensuring that Aboriginal outcomes . . . that there shouldn't be the inequity that our First Nations students on reserve currently face. My child goes to the Saskatoon French school, is getting more money per capita than a child living on a First Nations reserve.

So we had an opportunity to speak as a unanimous united voice here calling to the federal government to ensure that these outcomes, that . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . I can hear the Minister of Finance heckling across the way saying that this is in fact the federal government, the federal government responsibility.

But we could have spoken with a unanimous voice here as a provincial government, as a provincial, as a provincial government. We could have spoken with a unanimous voice. We could have spoken with a unanimous voice saying that it's absolutely imperative that we level the playing field for our kids so our kids all have the opportunities to start at the same place, which is currently not what is happening right now, Mr. Speaker. My child who goes to a school in Saskatoon has vastly more resources than a child who goes to school on a First Nations reserve, which is absolutely unacceptable, Mr. Speaker.

And I know the members opposite talk about it and can say it off the record, but it would have been very fabulous today, Mr. Speaker, like in the House of Commons, we would have had the opportunity, we would have had the opportunity here to speak with a united voice. So anyway this goes again back to that piece around prevention and being proactive versus addressing crime on the end that has hurt many, many people, Mr. Speaker.

And I'm speaking from, again, a place of experience. I firmly believe that we do need to address those who have perpetrated crimes. I've been the victim, Mr. Speaker, of a crime in the mid-1990s with my family hiking in California and was brutally attacked. And I saw the effects, Mr. Speaker, of an overcrowded correctional facility or correctional facilities and what happens when those facilities don't have the space and governments don't have the money to service those facilities.

My family and I were attacked while hiking, and the fellow

who attacked us, less than a year later, Mr. Speaker, he had been found incompetent to stand trial, ended up in a facility to deal with some of his mental health issues. But less than a year after that, Mr. Speaker, nobody knew where he was in the system. He was no longer in the system because they didn't have the resources. They did not have the resources to keep this individual, to provide him with what he needed. He had mental health issues, Mr. Speaker. He had mental health issues, Mr. Speaker, and he needed some help and support to be able to go back into the community as a healthy individual. He didn't get that, nor did he get any of the . . . He did not serve a reasonable length of time, less than a year after the incident, Mr. Speaker. And that was primarily to do with overcrowding of correctional facilities in the state of California. So I've seen that first-hand and I can tell you, as a victim of a crime, that it is incredibly disturbing to not know where the individual has gone because the system couldn't manage him, Mr. Speaker.

There's another piece of this legislation that I know creates some difficulties for an already vulnerable and marginalized population. We talk about the need to be able to . . . When you're in a correctional facility, the end goal is to come out of that correctional facility with the capacity to not reoffend, first of all. That's absolutely imperative. But it shouldn't just be about not reoffending; it should be about being able to become the best possible person that you could become. We should all have the opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to be contributing citizens, that we all are born with that gift to be able to contribute in our own ways to our communities.

And one of the things that will have an impact undoubtedly on individuals in correctional facilities is the emergency involuntary transfers. This would be particularly onerous for people who perhaps live in remote communities. It is hard enough, I am sure, to try to maintain familial ties and relationships when you're in a correctional facility. Sometimes that's all some of these folks have is someone on the outside who is there for them and who will be there when they get out and to help them stay on the straight and narrow, Mr. Speaker. And with an emergency involuntary transfer, how far away is this individual going to be further from his or her support network? So we do have some concerns about that, Mr. Speaker.

Again I think the big thing for me is the focus on prevention. This government has an opportunity to make an investment in keeping people out of correctional facilities. We can talk about Housing First and that need to ensure that people have a roof over their head to deal with some of the issues that might land them in a correctional facility at some point in time.

Housing First is an amazing model that the great socialist state of Alberta is using. I'm being facetious there, Mr. Speaker. But Housing First, Housing First has proved to be an incredibly, incredibly positive tool for dealing with homelessness and helping ensure people have the supports they need to pull their lives together.

And not everybody starts from the same place, Mr. Speaker, and we all have different struggles and challenges that we deal with. But one of the most important things for someone to be able to deal with these challenges is to have a good roof over their head, and then you put the services around them.

And in Alberta, Mr. Speaker, many business people and community organizations proposed this idea, and the government hopped in front of the parade because they saw that it worked and it had many champions. And they've seen a reduction. They have seen a reduction in homelessness, Mr. Speaker, in Alberta, which should be our end goal. Our end goal as a government and as a society should be to ensure that people have the opportunity to be contributing citizens to our great province.

And unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, with educational opportunities, with housing crises, there's all kinds of things that lead people to commit crimes, Mr. Speaker. Desperation, racism, poverty, all of these things, Mr. Speaker, are some of the things that lead to people ending up in correctional facilities.

[19:15]

So again, Mr. Speaker, we have some concerns about Bill 16, *The Correctional Services Act*, as I said, which is a total rewrite or replacement of a previous Bill. We would like to think that the government would spend as much time and energy and resources on the preventive, proactive piece. This is a fairly lengthy Bill, Mr. Speaker, and the minister spoke at great lengths about this. I would love and we would love on this side of the House to see the government invest that much time and energy in something like housing, Mr. Speaker.

So with that, I know that I have colleagues who are interested in entering the debate, not only on this Bill but other Bills that are before us. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I would like to move adjournment of the debate.

The Speaker: — The member has moved adjournment of Bill No. 16, the correction services amendment Act, 2011. Does the Assembly adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 17

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Harpauer that **Bill No. 17 — *The Child Care 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. It's a pleasure to join in on the discussion on Bill No. 17, *An Act to amend The Child Care Act*.

And, Mr. Speaker, this is after a busy day in the legislature with a number of things going on, and through question period and through condolence motions and through adjourned debates in this afternoon. But in all that we do, Mr. Speaker, I think the focus of our activity here in the legislature really should be and comes down to the issue that this piece of legislation discusses, and that's the children of this province, something that everyone in this Assembly speaks positively about as, Mr.

Speaker, children are our most precious little ones that we have in our lives, whether it's in our own families or in our communities, wherever the situation may be. There's nothing like the presence of a child that can brighten one's day and remind one why exactly we do what we do here in the Assembly, as it is for future generations.

So with that opening, Mr. Speaker, it does give me or I am happy to have the opportunity to be able to speak to this piece of legislation because I think it does address the very important issue of child care. And while the issues that the minister is putting forward in this amendment to the legislation are somewhat of a housekeeping nature and aren't necessarily a complete reform, to say the least, or overhaul of what is occurring in child care in Saskatchewan, they still of course are very important because of the issue that the reforms are addressing, and that is the care of our children in our various communities.

Mr. Speaker, there's no question that child care is something that we often hear about as a priority and a concern among Saskatchewan people. And I know that is a common, common sentiment we hear from constituents, whether we live in the north of Saskatchewan or the South, whether we are in a large community or a small community, in an urban environment or a rural environment, whether we're in one of the smaller or medium sized cities in Saskatoon — or in Saskatchewan, pardon me — we know that child care is an issue.

And I've been elected since 2007 and since that time have had the opportunity to visit a few different child care facilities in different places and different communities. And it's always encouraging to see the good work that child care providers perform in Saskatchewan and the huge relevance and importance that that has for families. But at the same time, Mr. Speaker, when seeing the facilities and from talking with families, we know that the need is very, very great. And something we've often talked about on this side of the Assembly is the need for a comprehensive approach and strategy when it comes to child care in the province and a plan as to determine what is the best way to get from where we are now to where we need to be and ought to be.

I actually think of, Mr. Speaker, some travels that I had recently. I was with the member from Athabasca and we were travelling up in his constituency in the Northwest. And the visits that we were doing were primarily about health care, with a number of stops at health care facilities and talking to health care providers in the North and talking to community leaders in different communities. We stopped in Ile-a-la-Crosse. We were in Beauval. We went to La Loche. We went to Buffalo Narrows. And it was good to hear what people's concerns and comments were on the issue of health care.

But the visit and the tour wasn't only about health care. It was also about child care as it is connected to education. And we stopped at the regional college in Buffalo Narrows, at the campus there, and had a good meeting with instructors there but, more importantly, wonderful conversations and discussions with many of the students who were pursuing, who are pursuing their education upgrading skills. We met with one class that was focusing on pre-trades training and we saw a wonderful facility, but also the partnership with SIAST

[Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology] and the supply of materials and teaching equipment.

And we visited some individuals pursuing grade 12 education, young men and women who were looking at upgrading their skills with the hope of getting into health care programs, whether it be an RN [registered nurse] or an LPN [licensed practical nurse] or a care aid course. And it was so encouraging to meet these students, to see these individuals who were receiving education, pursuing their education, hoping to better their lives and play an active role in the local economy.

And I give that preamble to say that when I met with these students, a good number of them, Mr. Speaker, were women who were also mothers, were also parents. And well some of them were, many of them of course were men who were also parents. But the issue of child care was most present with the discussions that I had with some of the mothers who were there. And they talked to me about how access to child care has been, in some situations when it is available, has been a huge help to their studies and pursuing their long-term goals, but in other instances it's been a real stumbling block to success as they've sought to re-enter education and think about long-term career plans.

And so that's one story, one interaction that really stands out in my mind, Mr. Speaker, from time in Buffalo Narrows and hearing from the people. And I remember two of the people we spoke to, they actually were from La Loche and they were down during the week for studies in Buffalo Narrows, one with their family, and the other individual actually left her children with other family in La Loche while she was in Buffalo Narrows during the week pursuing her studies.

I say that because it highlights the importance and the relevance for what the province pursues when it comes to education, especially education in the North. And we can't isolate these issues. So we know that child care has huge relevance to our approach to education and in situations . . . I guess the issue of Aboriginal employment numbers and participation in the workforce has been a hot topic over the past number of months, and I think as I raise concerns about the government's approach and strategy when it comes to employment and job opportunities for First Nations and Métis people, I think it's important to keep the issue of child care in perspective.

In my own community, Mr. Speaker, in the constituency of Saskatoon Massey Place, of course it's actually a similar story that I have heard from young families, families looking for child care opportunities. And in situations where they are able to find the child care facilities, cost can also be a huge issue for families. And it's a vital area of importance because we all of course love our children and want the very best for them. And as a dad and someone with a young daughter and a growing family, child care is a huge issue and it's something that each couple or each family needs to work out and figure out what is the best approach.

And we know, Mr. Speaker, that the provision of licensed and regulated and subsidized child care spaces is so vital and important to families in Saskatchewan because it means that families can pursue the education that they need in many situations. It means that they can participate in the economy in

the ways that we want all people to be able to participate. And I think that's important when we are looking at changes here which are, as I said, not a complete overhaul of child care in Saskatchewan. It's important to remember that the issue we're dealing with here is of huge significance and of huge importance to many, many people.

Another piece of evidence that would indicate that it's of great relevance, this morning and this afternoon I had a chance, with colleagues from both sides of the House, to meet with some of the young university students who are here as part of the Women in the Legislature initiative that has been started by students. And it was very interesting to hear the comments that they were talking about and the questions that they had for elected officials and non-elected officials about . . . I guess a common question that I heard over and over was about balance, about family balance, about how individuals pursue and achieve their professional goals and how to be successful in the professional realm but also to have success and a high quality of life in the area of family. And individuals want that type of balance and they expect that kind of balance. And I mean the discussion today was about how that works into the context of the legislature, but it's the same discussion that people have, whether an individual happens to be a plumber or a teacher or a tradesperson of any type or working in retail or in any number of professions.

Our families are important to us. They are the lifeblood of our communities. They are why, I think, if we polled members of the Assembly and we talked about why we do what we do, most people would point to children — either our own children or our grandchildren or even our neighbours' children.

So looking at this piece of legislation, which is Bill No. 17, and, Mr. Speaker, the minister provided a second reading statement or speech on December 13th, 2011. It's on page 169 of *Hansard* from that day. And the minister's remarks aren't especially lengthy, but they do highlight what the proposed changes through the amendment are about.

After a preamble and some of the normal comments one would expect a minister to make, there are some comments stating the goals. And the first area that these amendments seek to do is to eliminate a board to do with appeals or complaints that licensed child care providers may have or when . . . Pardon me. Let me start again. When a licensed child care provider has a complaint, when they have a concern about licensing, as the legislation suggests according to 1990, there has been a board where that appeal can be heard. As the minister stated in her second reading speech, since 1990 there have been seven occasions when there has been some type of appeal, and in reality a board hasn't heard the appeal. It has been heard and ruled on by the deputy minister. So what this piece of legislation is asking is that the provision for that board to oversee the appeal could in fact be, would be eliminated so that it would no longer be about an appeal to a board, but it would be through the deputy minister.

Now as the minister stated, this has happened seven times since 1990, so it's not like the frequency of the appeals is high. We know that it's a fairly rare occurrence, based on the fact that it's happened just seven times since 1990. But I provided those lengthy introductory comments, Mr. Speaker, because I wanted

to highlight and I wanted to emphasize the important role that child care plays in society and for Saskatchewan people — as I said, for the security of families, for individuals to pursue their educational dreams, and for people to realize their professional accomplishments. So even though this proposed change in eliminating the board to review appeals may seem minor, I think because of the subject content — that being our children and how they are provided for, how they are cared for — I think it is still of great significance and still of great importance.

As the minister stated, I will state what she provided in her speech so that listeners at home who weren't tuned in on December 13th might have an opportunity to hear what the minister views as what this piece of legislation will accomplish first. And she stated that:

The current legislation with the proposed removal of the family services board gives the ministry ample ability to effectively deal with requests we receive. This change will in no way interfere with any person's right to an impartial and timely review of a licensing decision.

So, Mr. Speaker, I will take the minister at her word that the reviews will still be done on a basis of impartiality and of fairness, and that will be the general orientation that will guide the deputy minister in reviewing and making a decision. And it is my sincere hope that that is in fact the case and what will occur.

[19:30]

I will talk about the second point that this piece of legislation, of what it accomplishes, but I do want to skip towards the end of the minister's remarks as it is relevant to the first bit of information that she identified and because the minister clearly stated on the record that:

Discussions have taken place with the Saskatchewan Early Childhood Association and the Saskatchewan Association of Child Care Homes Inc. on the proposed amendments and they are supportive.

So I think that is important to clearly state that and I thank the minister for being very clear that consultation with these groups occurred and that it not only occurred but that they are in fact supportive. I think that is important to put down in concrete terms. It is important that it is in *Hansard* and that serves as a reference that if there is ever a discrepancy in the future about this change, it is the position of the minister and of the Sask Party government that consultation occurred and that the most relevant groups are in fact in favour.

So again, the first change, Mr. Speaker, that this amendment is making, is that the appeal process would not be done through a separate board that would be created but in fact that it would be done by the DM, the deputy minister, and that this would occur on an ongoing basis.

The second component, Mr. Speaker, which is somewhat of a housekeeping or a housekeeping/streamlining rationale, I would suppose, is changes to do with the subsidy that is provided to licensed facilities. And what the minister is hoping to do here

through the amendment is that, over the course of budget cycles, as the subsidy is increased according to the budget, that is not necessarily, that funding decision is not in sync with the other calendars that determine the funding for an organization. So what this legislation here is proposing to do is allow for regulations to do with that subsidy in the amount the child care facility has received, to allow those regulations to be changed retroactively so that the funding can flow once a decision is made about a change in funding levels.

As the minister stated in her remarks, it has been the practice that the funding, when there is changes, has been provided to the licensed facilities, but it has been done through order in councils, which is an additional step as opposed to allowing for the changes to occur within the ministry and allow the dollars to flow through that means, as I understand it according to the minister's second reading speech. If I don't quite have all that straight, I welcome to be corrected on that issue.

But as it is about a subsidy, as it is about occasions when increased funding is provided to a licensed provider, I see, Mr. Speaker, why the relevant associations would be in favour of such a change as it allows the dollars to flow in a timely manner. And that is the second purpose of this amendment, Mr. Speaker. And once again I will restate, as I did about the first point, that the minister clearly states on the record that the relevant associations have been consulted and that they are in agreement with these changes, and I will obviously trust the minister in that remark. And I'm glad that it is down in *Hansard* forever, Mr. Speaker.

So in my remarks on this piece of legislation, Bill No. 17, I've done a few things, Mr. Speaker. I opened up and began my remarks about the importance of child care in Saskatchewan, licensed child care facilities, the provision of child care, subsidized spots for individuals in the province, and how the need is great, whether we're in the North or the South, rural or urban, whatever our background may be. When parents go off to work, participate in the economy as we want people to do, parents want the assurance that our children are taken care of, that our children are safe, that our children are receiving the type of personal development that they need to be wonderful little people in our lives and our families and in our communities, and growing up to be wonderful adults as well.

I talked about, Mr. Speaker, how the changes here proposed by the minister, the first one has to do with when there are complaints and a review is requested by a licensed provider, how the legislation since 1990 has talked about the need for a board to do this. In practice there have been very few, about seven, and the DM has normally done this job. And the minister suggests that this be the standard course of practice and that reference to a review board would be eliminated.

And the second change proposed by this amendment, Mr. Speaker, is that when there are adjustments to funding through the budget, that that process would be streamlined to eliminate the need for OCs [order in council] and to simply allow retroactive changes to be made so that the funding can flow appropriately. And the minister has clearly stated that she consulted with the relevant organizations as I listed them and that they are in support.

So, Mr. Speaker, I have enjoyed the opportunity to speak a little bit about child care because it is important. We love our children. And, Mr. Speaker, I know that other members on our side want to also talk about how important child care is to their families and to their constituencies, and on that note I will move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 17. Thank you.

The Speaker: — The member has moved adjournment of Bill No. 17, *The Child Care Amendment Act, 2011*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 18

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Norris that **Bill No. 18** — *The Degree Authorization Act* be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's with great interest that I rise in the debate this evening on Bill No. 18, *The Degree Authorization Act*. And it's a pretty intriguing piece of legislation; I'll be honest with you, Mr. Speaker. Apparently everybody else finds it intriguing as well or perhaps not, Mr. Speaker. Usually there's a bit more chit-chat. It sort of stopped me in my tracks there, Mr. Speaker . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . I thank the member from Canora-Pelly for his encouragement. So it's very kind of him.

Anyway, but degree authorization, I guess first off I'd probably want to state my bona fides in this discussion, Mr. Speaker. I come to this as somebody who's got a bachelor's degree from the University of Regina. I'm currently enrolled in the master's in public administration program in the Johnson-Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy, a joint program between the University of Regina and University of Saskatchewan.

I have taken a class at SIAST, Mr. Speaker. My father was a tradesman and my mother is a graduate of Briercrest Bible College, as was my younger brother who graduated from Briercrest Bible College. I have also had the pleasure of doing a public policy review on questions of affordability and accessibility in post-secondary education and served a stint as the minister for Advanced Education and Employment. So from a number of perspectives, Mr. Speaker, I come with a great degree of interest in this debate.

I think some of the essential questions involved in this, you know, again, how do you bolster accessibility but at the same time retaining quality assurance? And then it's reflected in what are identified as the three key tenets of the legislation. The minister, in the second reading speech, identified accessibility, quality assurance or, as the Minister of Advanced Education stated, a robust quality assurance process — certainly we're all in favour of robust quality assurance processes on this side of the House as well, Mr. Speaker — and thirdly, to protect the long-standing reputations of the University of Regina and Saskatchewan, University of Saskatchewan.

And I guess, Mr. Speaker, it's an interesting process by which the provincial government has arrived at this proposed piece of legislation because there was a study conducted, a public engagement process conducted by a Mr. Alex Usher of Higher Education Strategy Associates. Those who know him from his work at the Millennium Scholarship Foundation and in other movies know that he's a fairly well-engaged individual when it comes to higher education policy throughout Canada.

And you know, some of it, there's some points that Mr. Usher has made in the past around questions of tuition fee levels, for example, that I myself might not agree with. But certainly he has bona fides as one who has long been engaged in questions of post-secondary public policy, and I think has done an interesting and admirable piece of work here in terms of engaging the sector and in terms of trying to square off a number of circles. I think one of the things that's interesting about what is proposed here is that it seems to strike a middle ground in terms of the . . . I think it does a good job of trying to learn from the experiences in other jurisdictions as they have sought to expand their degree offerings while at the same time again retaining quality assurance.

So as to the degree offerings, Mr. Speaker, you've got everything in Canadian jurisdictions. In Canada, of course, post-secondary education is a provincial jurisdiction. You've got everything from the University of Quebec system in Quebec where you've got different campuses of the University of Quebec: University of Quebec at Montreal, University of Quebec at Trois-Rivières, University of Quebec at Quebec. You know, there are a number of campuses of that somewhat modelled on the regent system of what I think has been offered in California in the UC [University of California] system.

So again all those institutions being brought forward or being brought into law and having drawn their authority from the University of Quebec legislation with some changes within, and then what had been done for quality assurance for each of those individual institutions, having that brought under the University of Quebec legislation. Or you look at Nova Scotia, Mr. Speaker, where there is a profusion of universities certainly. And I'm not certain, but I think that each of them possess their own legislation.

Or you look at a recent experience in the province of British Columbia, Mr. Speaker, where a great number of community colleges have been rolled over into becoming new universities, and I think of the different program offerings that are available there. I think of the law school of Thompson Rivers. I know that the Leader of the Opposition, the member from Lakeview, carries a great interest in University of the islands, is it? . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . University of Vancouver Island, the former Malaspina College, I believe.

But the idea that a number of colleges in the province of British Columbia that have been rolled over into universities, also the long-standing role that Trinity Western has played in that province, you know, there is some public policy experience to be drawn on from there, or the different sort of technical institutions that have gone to degree granting offerings.

And the province of Manitoba, for example, with authorizing Red River College to provide a bachelor's degree in

construction management as referenced in the work of Mr. Usher. That's of interest.

But again, alongside that, how do you maintain quality assurance? And certainly the autonomy and the regulation of the university in Saskatchewan, *The University of Saskatchewan Act*, or *The University of Regina Act*, and then their attendant federated colleges within those systems, it's a fairly well-defined process. And it has a great number of safeguards built into it for providing quality assurance, Mr. Speaker, but even there we have, you know, there have been problems throughout the recent and not-too-recent past in terms of, again, squaring those circles of autonomy while at the same time requiring quality assurance.

So what this Act sets out to do, in terms of providing sort of an initial sort of case study approach to expanding the authorization of degrees and seizing upon a request for case studies from SIAST on the one hand and Briercrest Bible College and Seminary on the other, we find that very interesting and how this rolls out in Saskatchewan and again, at the same time, how that should not take away from the prestige or the excellence that is inherent in the degrees at the University of Regina or the University of Saskatchewan. We'll be interested to see how this mechanism being proposed to provide the quality assurance works or does not work, Mr. Speaker.

[19:45]

Certainly the fact that we've got two universities in this province to begin with is, in and of itself, an evolution. And we just on Monday had the condolence motion for Allan Blakeney. And certainly that was an individual that played a key role in establishing what had been the University of Saskatchewan, Regina Campus, establishing that institution as the University of Regina — full stop, period — complete with its own legislation and its own bicameral system of governance and quality assurance.

So we'll be interested to see. We're not historically as a party, Mr. Speaker, we're not against the way that these institutions can evolve. And we're very interested to see how this actually works out and to hear more from different folks on the various pros and cons of this proposal.

It does seem to hold a fairly significant role for cabinet in providing an oversight of the different things that will be attached to this. That in and of itself is, again, it's an attempt at striking a mid-ground between providing fairly close supervision as to the new offerings that I think would usher forth in this era, Mr. Speaker, and at the same time not trying to encroach on the powers invested in the University of Regina and University of Saskatchewan in their respective pieces of legislation.

But again, the legislation is its own sort of protection for those two institutions. And I know from very definite experience, Mr. Speaker, that that autonomy inherent and involved in those pieces of legislation is something that is jealously guarded by the universities. And there's an important discussion to be had about how you balance off the arm's-length nature, the independent, autonomous nature of the universities and the role of the people's representatives in their legislature and in

Executive Council to propose and implement changes to those pieces of legislation.

And I guess in this circumstance, in the mechanism that's being proposed under *The Degree Authorization Act* specifically, I'd just like to touch on this in my remarks, Mr. Speaker. The quality assurance body that is proposed, this is from the minister's second reading speech of December 13th, to quote:

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 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.

So in that case, Mr. Speaker, the tribunal that is set up, or the three-member quality assurance body, a lot of this of course depends on who is appointed to that body and on whose shoulders that authority and that responsibility will rest. But again it bears noting that these individuals, though there's the language around expertise and quality assurance and extensive experience both academic and administratively in post-secondary education, the proof will be in the pudding, Mr. Speaker.

So we'll see who winds up on that critical body, but one thing that is known for certain is that that creature is a creature of cabinet and will be appointed as such through order in council appointments. And again that will bear some definite scrutiny, Mr. Speaker, in terms of who is appointed there and what kind of agenda they might bring to the table and what they might be interested in doing in that circumstance.

Something else interesting, Mr. Speaker, is again from the second reading speech where the minister stated:

If granted, 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.

So what that time limit specifically will be, Mr. Speaker, we're most interested in that. Again these things will be evolved.

And the importance of regulations is always there in legislation, Mr. Speaker, but I would submit, all the more so in the case of this piece of legislation. And again in terms of trying to square

these things off and not get overcommitted to a certain program, time limiting, I think, is not in and of itself a bad thing. And allowing for that checkup on where things are at with the, you know, whether or not the quality assurance clearance to begin with was warranted and whether it continues to be merited, it seems to be a fair enough mechanism. But again, we'll see. We'll see how this fares out.

And we'd also do well, Mr. Speaker, to remember that how important it is to get this right from the first time. Certainly the ability to check these things up after a later date . . . You know, say something did go wrong under this, and you did get students that spent years of their lives and tens of thousands of dollars getting degrees, only to have a quality assurance review process kick in later on and cast some doubt upon the worth of their degree. It's very hard for those individuals to then say, you know, we'd like our money back or give me my four years back or I thought that this was a reputable degree and where are we now.

So I state that just by way of underlining, Mr. Speaker, how important, how critical it is to get this right in the first place and to recognize the impact that it could have on people's lives if this is not gotten right to begin with.

I guess a couple other endeavours under the heading of accessibility that I'm interested in, Mr. Speaker, at least in this context. I note with interest the work that has been done in Manitoba under the University College of the North system and the way that that has brought greater accessibility and opportunity in the post-secondary sense to the people of the North in Manitoba.

There are different things that have been done over the years in Saskatchewan. I think of the NORTEP [northern teacher education program], NORPAC [Northern Professional Access College] concentration in La Ronge that my colleague from Cumberland is very familiar with, or the work that Northlands College has done generally throughout the North. And I think of the different efforts that have been made out of both the University of Regina and the University of Saskatchewan to provide sort of distance programming for students in the North.

It occurs to me that we'd do well in the public policy debate around accessibility for post-secondary education to be continually looking at other jurisdictions and what are those best practices, and is that something where we've got the critical mass of interested students and the critical mass in terms of post-secondary infrastructure to bring together to provide an enhanced offering vis-à-vis something like the University College of the North in Manitoba?

And I know that it's been looked at in different respects, and certainly those kind of inquiries led to things like the founding of NORTEP, NORPAC to begin with and certain distance offerings of other educational institutions in the North. But that is one in particular that it occurs to me that, if this is a piece of legislation or, you know, a couple of items out of a series of recommendations on increasing accessibility, an exercise that is concerned with increasing accessibility for post-secondary education in Saskatchewan, if that is in fact the case here, then I'm also interested to know where we are at in addressing the needs in the North.

And I often think of work that I was doing as, at the time, the Corrections minister and also doing work on accessibility and affordability review for post-secondary education. And the ways that it seemed that there was a much better job to be done in terms of deploying opportunities and deploying learning opportunities for northerners so that if you . . . There were different jobs as it stood at the time within the sphere of corrections; there was a potential labour force there. And I think what was needed was that educational opportunity to thread the needle, to give people the tools so they could get the job done. And again in terms of northerners serving northern needs it made, I think, good sense from a number of directions.

Too often, I think, the answer has been to the North, that to get opportunity they should leave the North, or that northern needs should be served by people coming from outside the North to the North. And again, it's a big province and it's a place of beauty and opportunity and there should be some better balance, I think, to be struck in terms of making full use of that potential labour force in the North and providing those educational opportunities to do the jobs in the North and, as far as I can understand, Mr. Speaker, there will plenty of opportunities for southerners into the bargain. But again that's something that governments would do well to be watchful of, and how they are either succeeding or failing in that regard. And again, for a piece of legislation that one of its concerns is the question of accessibility, that is something that we'd like to hear more on — not just the measures contained in this legislation, but what is being done to, you know, learn from the example of something like our own indigenous northern institutions and the example in other jurisdictions, such as the experience with the University College of the North in Manitoba.

Another area that I think about this particular endeavour, Mr. Speaker, another sort of lens that I consider it through or view it through is the experience with SaskCAT [Saskatchewan Council for Admissions and Transfer] or with the whole question of credit transfer. And certainly one of the more important initiatives that I think is out there in terms of providing greater accessibility to post-secondary education across the province is the work that has been done with different of our regional colleges and other institutions in the province to provide university classes that are on a first- or second-year basis, but still serving in partnership with the two main universities or the work that is done with Gabriel Dumont technical or through SIIT [Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies] and First Nations University in working with First Nations populations, working with Métis populations, but providing those institutions that overcome the barriers.

[20:00]

And as regards SaskCAT in particular, Mr. Speaker, it's something that has very much, in my experience of it, worked to strike that balance between quality assurance but providing the accessibility through distance learning opportunities that overcomes one of the greatest barriers in the province of Saskatchewan to access to post-secondary education, which is distance. We've got, quite frankly, a lot of geography in this province, Mr. Speaker. And I am seated beside the member from Cumberland and, let's see, I'm behind the member from Athabasca. And therein you have two constituencies alone, Mr.

Speaker, where you could fit greater parts of Western Europe within their boundaries, Mr. Speaker.

But I think about students that I had the opportunity to talk to that were taking up offerings at Great Plains College out and around Swift Current, or the folks in Weyburn, or in Parkland College up Yorkton way, and different people that were availing themselves of university offerings through distance education, but also through the work of coordinating credit transfer through SaskCAT.

So I think that is something else that we want to hear more about, is where is the government at in terms of coordinating the important work of credit transfer, whereas I think sometimes the approach of . . . And again, the universities are rightfully jealous of their degree-granting authority and the association of that with excellence. But again, striking that balance between accessibility and quality assurance, and is there better work that can be done with SaskCAT to ensure that those opportunities are there throughout the province — we are interested in that, Mr. Speaker.

So I guess, I know that other of my colleagues are definitely interested in this debate and certainly as it pertains to again the stated goals of increasing accessibility, the provision of quality assurance, and the safeguarding of the reputations of the universities of Regina and University of Saskatchewan in the way that this legislation proposes to protect the utilization of the word “university,” and who can grant what degree and a sort of a case-by-case process that is proposed under the quality assurance body.

But we’re very interested to see how this works out on the case-by-case level. We’re very interested to see how the regulations match up to the state of intent of this legislation. We’re very interested to see the individuals that might be put forward for this body. We’re very interested in that relationship between the quality assurance body and cabinet, Mr. Speaker, and whether or not, how that impacts the agendas of these people. We’re interested to see how you can actually operationalize something like the time limit on the approval provided by the quality assurance review process and again, Mr. Speaker, the consequences of that or the importance of that needing to go right, and the consequences of that, if it goes wrong, for people as they seek to improve their post-secondary education in this province.

I guess with that, Mr. Speaker, I would conclude my remarks on Bill No. 18, *The Degree Authorization Act* and move to adjourn debate.

The Speaker: — The member has moved adjournment of debate of 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. 19

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Hickie that **Bill No. 19** — *The*

Assessment Appraisers Amendment Act, 2011 be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It’s a pleasure to stand tonight and enter into the debate on Bill No. 19. It’s got quite a title: *An Act to amend The Assessment Appraisers Act, to make a related amendment to The Agrologists Act, 1994 and to make a consequential amendment to The Assessment Management Agency Act*.

So it’s quite an important Act, I mean, and I think it’s one that, you know, we often don’t think about the people who do this kind of work, the appraisers, the assessment appraisers and how this all fits together. And critically important when we talk about our taxes and the value of our property, and we want to make sure we have the very best people and they have the knowledge and the experience, the training. And this really speaks to the requirements that’s needed to ensure that we can have faith in the people who are doing this kind of work. And so as I’ve read through it and I’ve read through the minister’s comments, and we’ve reached out and canvassed the people who we should be talking to and we feel that many of our questions at a general level, that we feel confident that we could see this move forward.

But I do want to make some comments into the record tonight and review the minister’s comments because I think it’s important that the folks at home who may be watching this tonight have a sense of what we’re talking about. And it’s one that again it’s about confidence in the system and confidence in the association and confidence in those people who go out and do the appraisals and work with SAMA [Saskatchewan Assessment Management Agency] to make sure the numbers are right and fair. And fair is the key word in many ways, because people can get quite — and rightly so — upset if they’re feeling that they’re not being treated in a fair manner.

So the minister did raise this issue and he talks about how it, *The Assessment Appraisers Act*, provides a legal framework for a regulated occupation of the assessment appraisers who do the, they value property for municipal property tax purposes, and that this Act in fact first came into regulation on November 1st, 2002.

And so he talks about how this Act has really three purposes. He lays it out fairly straightforwardly. One, first to clarify the Saskatchewan Assessment Appraisers’ Association, also known as the SAAA or S triple A, has a role in certifying and licensing all the assessment appraisers involved in valuing property for the municipal property tax purposes and what that means, whether they’re members or not, but it will ensure that their credentials are verified. And as I said, that’s hugely important that people know that when they’re doing this kind of work that their credentials are important.

And it goes on to say, which is interesting because it removes requirements — this is the second group — the amendments are, that there are amendments needed to remove requirements related to their residency, employment, and membership, and in fact including one that’s in *The Agrologists Act, 1994*, but in fact moves it over to being much more of a knowledge base,

skills base, education base, and experience base so that this is more in line with other jurisdictions in terms of labour mobility. And I know in terms of professional associations this is very important, that if you are working in Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba that you can practise your profession across the board. And this is really important. So we take this has some value to look at further.

And also in this . . . I have some experience in terms of this. I mean I know we've done some amendments around *The Social Workers Act* a few years ago, and many more professional associations' Acts that have come forward as we really professionalize many of the groups over the last 5, 10, 20 years. That really talks about the regulations around practices, especially in terms of professional development and their role vis-à-vis the public, particularly around discipline hearings, that type of thing — that the public has an ability to launch or lodge a complaint with the association about a member or one that the association has verified to have the proper credentials. And I think this is an important thing. So we see how we've seen many of these pieces of legislation come forward, and I think this is an important thing.

One group I have to say that the government has in front of it, a piece of legislation around *The Residential Tenancies Act* and the landlords group. I'd like to see that maybe fall more in a line with this. But that's another debate for another time. But I would like to see more attention to that because when you have a professional group and it's professional work that impacts on the public, there should be care taken to make sure that we have standards. And I know at one point I will be able to talk to *The Residential Tenancies Act*.

But it's critical that this kind of expectation by the public is right across the board, that when you have a professional organization . . . And I know we all kind of like to use that word, professional. We sure like to use it and it doesn't matter what we do; we're a professional this, we're professional that. But it's important that we truly are professionals and that there is some backup to that.

I know of my own profession as a teacher, I know we take a lot of pride in terms of who can say that they are teacher and having a teacher's licence. I've got into an interesting discussion vis-à-vis teacher and educator. You need to have a licence to be a teacher in this province actually, and I am very proud of that fact.

But, Mr. Speaker, I think this is key when we talk about professional organizations or those who put themselves out to be professional and the impact it has on the public and the public confidence. And who's responsible? Who are the stewards for that public confidence but ourselves, the provincial legislature. Because we're the ones who set the regulations and who make those demands, those expectations known to the professional organization. And it's a whole range. You know, as I said, whether it's social workers, teachers, computer, we had people who . . . the computer designers, technologists, computer technologists. I remember that day when we passed that legislation a few years ago.

But it's important. And it's hugely important because in this world, you know . . . And I heard the minister earlier talking

about how he was defending the right or the idea, the concept of not including people younger than 18 in *The Constituency Boundaries Act* because people move about. Well in fact, young people move about, older people move about and so that talks about the labour mobility.

So I think this is important. And I know the minister in his remarks said that, and I want to quote him, says:

Mr. Speaker, I want to emphasize here that the amendments contained in the Bill, along with the companion amendments to *The Assessment Appraisers Regulations* relating to qualification requirements, still ensure that only the qualified individuals will be able to be certified and licensed to assess land for property tax purposes. This includes agricultural land valuation.

So it's still really key. He's saying that only those folks will be able to do that work, and I think this is really key.

It is good to see that the SAAA [Saskatchewan Assessment Appraisers' Association] group were included in this development of these amendments. As I went through the explanations, explanatory notes, it became clear that they were instrumental in this. And I know that any profession, and I think their group would be part of this, who want to be consulted and actually involved in the development of the amendments.

So while there are some that are interesting and, you know, we might have a good discussion in committee about, for example, I saw one that changed the dates from when the list of the members would be from February 1 to January 1. I mean those are all interesting things and we'll probably go through that in committee. I know it talks about the definition of the business day, so that's important. And these folks are pretty specific — meticulous is a good word — because nothing gets by them. And that's a good thing. It's quite a piece of work here, and I think this is important that we take some time to review this.

[20:15]

And so with that I think that we've had a chance — and I know a few of my colleagues have had an opportunity to speak to this — I think that with this that we are ready to move this to committee. I think that I've had enough of the comments I wanted to raise. And with that, Mr. Speaker, I move that we move Bill No. 19, *The Assessment Appraisers Amendment Act, 2011* to committee. Thank you very much.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the Minister of Municipal Affairs that Bill No. 19, *The Assessment Appraisers Amendment Act, 2011* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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

The Speaker: — To which committee shall this Bill be referred?

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I designate that Bill No. 19, *The Assessment Appraisers Amendment Act, 2011* be referred to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

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

Bill No. 20

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Hickie that **Bill No. 20 — *The Planning and Development Amendment Act, 2011*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise in the debate. I can only presume that the minister from Regina South is teched up and ready to go, very interested in the debate.

But it's a pleasure to rise tonight on *The Planning and Development Act, 2007*, or the Act to amend it. But again, planning, development — all very important subjects, Mr. Speaker. Because again, if you get the framework wrong, as is cited in the second reading remarks from the current minister:

The framework provides municipalities with clear, consistent, and effective tools for land use planning, to promote economic growth, environmental stewardship, social and cultural development, and co-operative partnerships with other municipalities, governments, First Nations, Métis entrepreneurs, and interested stakeholders.

All very important things, Mr. Speaker. So I guess one of the things we find very interesting is — and certainly that we've heard back from the sector — is the extensive planning that has gone into *The Planning and Development Amendment Act*. The fact that stakeholder consultations have taken place from 2009 on through 2010 on through 2011, it's interesting that it's taken that long to get to this place, Mr. Speaker. But we're glad that it could show up for consideration and are hopeful that this does in fact improve the planning and development regime in the province of Saskatchewan. Although we'll see how that works out, Mr. Speaker, because certainly there are different developments in the province that we can't help but wonder what's gone wrong in some of the planning aspects already in place.

But back to the second reading remarks of the speaker, or of the minister, Mr. Speaker, from December 14th, again there was a fairly extensive stakeholder consultation process cited going through the years 2009, 2010, 2011, consultations with municipal business community stakeholders. They're looking to improve the transparency of fees, better describe the range of eligible items for fees and levies to be collected, the servicing arrangements between municipalities, the application of architectural controls to development, and the dispute

resolution for district planning commissions.

They're also setting out to:

respond to pressures arising from intermunicipal disputes, the need to improve the options for intermunicipal co-operation, the complexities of decision making in large planning districts, and regional infrastructure and servicing challenges.

And again, Mr. Speaker, and I know certainly in the city of Regina and district, work that has been done — the sort of planning and development aspect of things like the Global Transportation Hub or the different sort of vagaries of what has happened in the RM [rural municipality] of Edenwold, or the way that suburban and exurban regions — the different sort of planning and development challenges around those.

I know there's the mayor of White City in describing one of the joint processes that White City and Pilot Butte and others of their neighbours had gone through. I believe Mayor Tim Sterzer, what he had said at that time was, instead of trying to push the elephant, they were going to ride it. Instead of doing things in an unorganized, uncooperative fashion, bringing those different municipalities and RMs together to do a better job of the very kind of things that are outlined in this legislation or in this proposed amendment to legislation, I can't help but wonder how that process would have been improved and how it would have made the job easier for those folks and whether or not that will be the case going forward.

So returning to the consultation process from the government, Mr. Speaker, it enumerates municipal governments and associations, industry sector groups, agricultural and environmental agencies, the heritage sector, planning districts, transportation sector, professional associations, and provincial ministries. Again that's a fairly extensive list.

But what we don't see in the legislation, Mr. Speaker, is any particular involvement of First Nations. There is certainly the involvement of one First Nation cited under WaterWolf in the minister's remarks, but in terms of the specific involvement of individual First Nations or, say, trying to engage the lands and resource committee of the FSIN [Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations] or individual tribal councils or groups — individual First Nations such as the Whitecap Dakota First Nation and the kind of challenges that they have been having on servicing agreements and sort of the exchange of population that we know they are having and we know that have been mentioned or pointed to by this government — we don't know that those insights have found their way into this legislation and again how this impacts different things such as the joint use around different industrial projects or mining endeavours. We're very interested to see how those are countenanced in the consultations as well and how that involves or doesn't involve First Nations.

I guess the joint partnerships, joint initiatives, inter-municipal planning, again these are all fine thing. But the proof's in the pudding, and we will see how these things work in conjunction with things like *The Cities Act* and the current municipalities Act, and again whether they strike the balance between properly involving community and those who should be

involved and at the same time providing relative ease of access and navigability for the regulatory regime.

I guess one last thing I'd like to cite, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the way that this provides opportunity for district planning authority status, we'll be interested to see how the district planning authorities, or the DPAs — which again are explained in the speeches being corporate bodies authorized by their member councils to make planning districts on official community plans and zoning bylaws, administering the planning process and issuing development permit — again we'll be interested to see how this works for providing better ease of access and, you know, easing complexity while at the same time balancing off community engagement and community oversight through the existing terrain as regards municipalities, rural municipalities, and on.

So we have a lot of interest in this legislation. We'll see how it actually works to facilitate planning and development in this province, Mr. Speaker. We're interested to see that First Nations aren't explicitly mentioned as having been involved in this, which we'll look to get more clarification on that as this debate goes on. But I know for a fact that others of my colleagues are interested in this debate and I will, at this time, in the interest of letting that debate continue and ensuring the participation of other of my colleagues in providing oversight, I would move to adjourn debate on the Bill No. 20, *An Act to amend the Planning and Development Act, 2007*.

The Speaker: — The member has moved adjournment of Bill No. 20, *The Planning and Development Amendment Act*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 21

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 21 — *The Commissioners for Oaths Act, 2011*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Nilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This Bill No. 21, *An Act respecting Commissioners to administer Oaths and making consequential amendments to other Acts* applies to every single member of the legislature because this is the piece of legislation that allows for each one of us to be a Commissioner for Oaths when required at the constituency office or in other places where you're asked to do that.

I think what's interesting about this legislation is that it comes forward from the Department of Justice after they identified some issues. I think last year they took a harder look at the legislation itself and realized that it was time to do a complete review of the legislation relating to commissioners. And so what we have this year is a piece of legislation that tries to provide a 21st century perspective on commissioners. And it was interesting to note that the first legislation like this was from the 1940s, and then this legislation has not really been

changed very much for just about over 20 years.

And what's the effect of this? I think the most telling effect will be to eliminate different kinds of recording of how the commissioner prepares the commission between if you're in the province or if you're outside of the province. And this follows the legislation in a few other provinces. And I think it does make sense to have something very straightforward, simple that allows for the people who are named to do this work to do it without much fuss.

And so, Mr. Speaker, there are a number of conditions around the appointment of a person to be a Commissioner for Oaths. It is interesting that many times the appointment is by virtue of the job that you hold. And one of the comments made by the minister, which I agree with, is that one thing that that facilitates is that people are not able to take the ability to commission oaths after they've left the job where they've had that particular right as part of the job. And so this will allow for a little more control on the people who are doing this particular work.

[20:30]

Now the process for appointment for people who are not in a job which whereby they become commissioners directly has been simplified. That makes sense as well, Mr. Speaker, because this work is relatively straightforward, and it is of service to the public to have people available quite widely within the community. But there's also powers for the minister or effectively the staff within the Ministry of Justice to revoke appointments where there are difficulties. And clearly these relate to failing to comply with the Act or being convicted of an offence against the Act or misrepresentation or fraud or where a person has not told the whole truth when they have applied to be a commissioner.

It also adds a discretionary clause which is clause or section 7(2)(e), where the minister can revoke the appointment if he considers it appropriate to do so. So I think that's probably called a whim clause, but primarily it's to deal with that weird circumstance where somebody has done something which doesn't come under any of these other breach clauses but it's very clear that you don't want that person commissioning oaths any more for whatever reason. I'll leave it to the minister's imagination to figure out which of those clauses or which of those kinds of situations you will use that in but it is, I think, an appropriate place for discretion.

So the other parts of this legislation set out the people who become commissioners by virtue of their office or status, and I think that's the part probably that most people would be curious about. And there are some definitions, but effectively the people who are commissioners by virtue of their office or status are as follows: Provincial Court judges, lawyers, members of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, officers in the Canadian Armed Forces, court officials, police officers, government officials, and any other person prescribed in the regulations.

And once again there's some ministerial discretion which would clearly be defined in the regulations at some point. And so effectively it's a broad range of people that one would expect

to be commissioners with . . . Obviously the key point is that you can find these people, and if they've commissioned something inappropriately, there are methods of discipline in each of the kinds of positions that people hold. And the importance for that obviously is that we want there to be a sense that, if an oath is commissioned, it's done so appropriately.

Now the legislation then goes on further to set out the areas where the Premier and cabinet can make regulations, and those appear to be all relatively straightforward and effective to facilitate the whole system of providing commissioners for the community.

After a thorough review of all the legislation, there are a couple of pieces of legislation that need to be amended to have those pieces of legislation in compliance with this legislation. And it's interesting to note that they are *The Meewasin Valley Authority Act* and *The Wakamow Valley Authority Act*. So I have no objections there, and basically agree that that's entirely appropriate to make those amendments. So, Mr. Speaker, when I look at this legislation, it's a 21st century revision of legislation which is very useful in the community. It appears to have been done in a straightforward manner that deals with all of the issues that are of concern.

And I don't have any further comments here in the legislature and will look forward to asking any other questions about any other issues that may arise in this legislation. So I would like to move this Bill 21 to the committee. Thank you.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the Minister of Justice that Bill No. 21, *The Commissioners for Oaths Act, 2011* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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

The Speaker: — To which committee shall this Bill be referred?

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

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

Bill No. 22

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 22** — *The Commissioners for Oaths Consequential Amendment Act, 2011/Loi de 2011 portant modification corrélative à la loi intitulée The Commissioners for Oaths Act, 2011* be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Nilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This Bill No. 22, *The Commissioners for Oaths Consequential Amendment Act, 2011*, effectively amends the bilingual version of this Act or introduces that, and also makes some changes to *The Evidence Act* so that it's in compliance with legislation to recognize that we no longer have commissioners who operate in and for Saskatchewan and without Saskatchewan. It doesn't have any further consequence than to make those simple changes, but does it in both French and English in *The Evidence Act*.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I think that this matter can, this Bill No. 22 can be dealt with without much difficulty when we get to the committee. It may be possible that we will have to look at *The Evidence Act* to see what the consequences are in *The Evidence Act*, so that what is done ends up making sure that we're completely modernized in those particular pieces of legislation. But I know that when we are in committee that we will be able to answer any of the questions or concerns that we have about Bill No. 22. So, Mr. Speaker, I suggest that we move this to the committee as well.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the Minister of Justice that Bill No. 22, *The Commissioners for Oaths Consequential Amendment Act, 2011* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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

The Speaker: — To which committee shall this Bill be referred?

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — I designate that Bill No. 22, *The Commissioners for Oaths Consequential Amendment Act, 2011* be referred to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

The Speaker: — This Bill shall be referred to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

Bill No. 23

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 23** — *The Occupational Health and Safety Amendment Act, 2011* be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's with pleasure that I rise to speak to the Act to amend *The Occupational Health and Safety Act* from 1993. Obviously this Bill is, or the Act is almost 20 years old and I understand that there's been a considerable amount of work put together to come up with this particular Bill and the changes to *The Occupational Health and Safety Act* from 1993.

The minister stated that these amendments were aimed at improving workplace health and safety in the province by supporting the goal of eliminating all work-related illnesses and injuries. The minister indicated in his introductory remarks that he wanted to thank the Occupational Health and Safety Council and I understand there was a considerable amount of work going into that council and a large number of stakeholders, business and labour stakeholders who participated in the consultations for the changes.

I know that we have done some consultation ourselves with stakeholders and I understand that, by and large, the changes that are being proposed here are acceptable. There's some exceptions to that and I hope to speak to them in the next little while. But to begin with, I think my original plan is to just speak to the changes themselves.

So if you look at the Act to amend, Bill No. 23, we could see that there are some new definitions and changes to the definition clause. So the definition clause — which is always found at basically clause 2 of any Act — right now there is a clarification that biological substance in the Act also includes infectious micro-organisms, which seems to be a good addition to that particular clause. There's a new definition for competent which means possessing knowledge, experience, and training to perform a specific duty. Sometimes it's curious as to what words get additionally defined in definition sections, and this is one of those because it basically states the dictionary definition of competent. So I'm not sure why that was necessary in this Bill, and there is no explanation for that. The, I guess, significant definition changes, the change to compliance undertaking — because that is something very new to the Act in section 30 which I'll speak to later — but that is a fairly important definitional change and one that will have consequences for occupational health and safety committees as they go about doing their work in workplaces.

A number of other fairly inconsequential changes — ministries replacing department where appropriate, and there's a new phrase, notice of contravention, which has also been added. And that is again a somewhat new change or a change of approach that we find in this amendment to the original Act. For some reason, a new definition of train has been put into the Act, that means giving “information and explanation to a worker with respect to a particular subject matter and to require a practical demonstration that the worker has acquired knowledge or skill related to the subject matter”. And then again we have an additional definition to the word worker, and in particular that is describing a worker as “a prescribed person or a member of a prescribed category of persons.”

I spoke to this the other day, Mr. Speaker, where we see a lot of meaning and authority in Acts being devolved to the regulation section. And that's a habit — more than a habit I guess — but it is of necessity in complicated Acts where we actually move work or meaning or interpretation to the regulatory sphere. And it is something I will speak about from time to time when it comes up because I know it's a concern to legislators because we don't really know the full impact of the Act until the regulations are completed. So this is one of those examples.

[20:45]

Notably a worker does not include an inmate or someone who is in a correctional facility. I'm not sure why that's there and why those people aren't being included in the definition of worker. I assume there are other rules and regulations that apply to inmates and people in the correctional facilities.

There's a new subsection added after subsection 2(2), and it's allowing an employer or a contractor to be responsible only if they ought reasonably to know. So those are the important words in that section, whether they ought reasonably to know the provisions that the Act. I'm not sure which contractors shouldn't reasonably know the provisions of the Act, but presumably the minister thinks there are certain circumstances where there are people, contractors who don't need to know the provisions of the Act.

So that's pretty much it for the definition section, Mr. Speaker. The next clause that's of interest is clause 3 and it's actually being repealed in total and a new subsection is being added, subsection (b). And this clause describes the general duties of employers and the new clause is that they are obliged, every employer shall, in this case, make a reasonable attempt to resolve concerns raised by an occupational health committee.

I think that's a very good addition to the Bill, that employers are responsible to make reasonable attempts to resolve. Because too often I think occupational health and safety committees get together, they make good suggestions, or they identify serious concerns in the workplace, and there's no obligation on the employer to act on it or resolve it. Then it can just be shelved. And I think this is an important addition to the Bill is that the employer shall make a reasonable attempt to resolve concerns raised by an occupational health committee or occupational and health safety representative.

An additional clause to the general duties of employers is found in clause (f), and that's also very important. The employers shall now ensure that the workers “are trained in all matters that are necessary to protect their health, safety and welfare” and that “all work at the place of employment is sufficiently and competently supervised.”

And the final change in that section is in clause (g) where the employer is required to designate an occupational health and safety representative for a place of employment, they should ensure that all written records of meetings are, that all records of meetings are written and that records are kept and readily available at the place of employment.

Clause 3.1 is new, and it describes the new duties of supervisors. And again, this is a list of things that the supervisors are responsible for. As soon as possible, they have to ensure that the health and safety of all workers are looked after. They have to ensure that workers comply with the Act. They ensure, as far as possible, that all workers are not exposed to harassment at the place of employment. And again, this ties into my earlier comments today about the importance of the Human Rights Commission in Saskatchewan for vulnerable workers who are exposed to harassment at the place of employment. And that is another venue for those workers when the supervisor or the employer are not complying with this particular clause in the Act. And they need to co-operate and comply. So basically, those additions to the Bill are very

reasonable and seem to further the work of occupational health and safety in the workplace.

There's a new section, section 6.1, and this is one that is quite useful for workplaces where there are multiple employers. And the Bill basically here designates that there has to be a prime contractor. So in the case where there are multiple employers, there has to be one person designated as the prime contractor and they are responsible for the occupational health and safety at the workplace.

Again there's another subsection here which describes designated activities and, in this case, it means "prescribed activities or operations." So once again that goes back to my comment about devolving meaning within the Act to the regulatory side. So we'll have to wait and see what those prescribed activities are before we know exactly what designated activities means.

A fairly lengthy section, and it goes on to describe the responsibilities of the prime contractor who's been identified where there's more than, there are multiple employers at a workplace. And I guess the whole idea of this is that the prime contractor, whoever that is, is going to need to coordinate all the employers. And I think that is a very wise addition to this occupational health and safety Act because there is one person responsible and then nobody falls through the cracks. So they're responsible for gathering names of all the individuals that are working at the work site. They have to prepare a written plan — and the plan has to address how the requirements of this clause are being met — and deliver the plan to all employers and self-employed persons before they or their workers commence working at the work site. So it's a very good way to make sure that all the activity that's going on at the workplace and all the potential occupational health and safety concerns are being monitored and supervised by one supervisor — the prime contractor in this case.

I think dryness is an occupational health cause in this building. I'm not sure.

Next clause is change to clause 8, and the big change here is that they've removed biological or chemical from the description of substance. So it's a very minor housekeeping type of phrase, and I'm not sure why it was there in the first place. It makes more sense now to not have that specificity in that particular phrase.

Section 9 is also amended and 9(2) is amended by striking out "provide all required information" and to say that the employer is now responsible to "keep readily available all required information and provide . . ." So it's not only give it to them, but keep it available readily. The employer needs to have that information in place.

Section sub 7 11(1) is minor housekeeping changes there; same with section 12(1) and 12(3). There's a new section in 12(4), and that says that "Nothing in this section is to be interpreted as limiting or replacing the duties or requirements imposed on employers and workers by this Act or the regulations, including any duties related to occupational health committees or . . . representatives". And that is clause 12(4). So there aren't a lot of changes in that subsection other than . . . It's not limiting

anything else in the Act.

So it's 12(4). Just one moment. Oh, that's 15. Okay. Just trying to follow both sides of this document, Mr. Speaker. I'll get there. There we go.

Section 13 has also been amended. And it is a new subsection after the end of the original section. And what it does is it gives the director now of *The Occupational Health and Safety Act* the authority to order an employer or prime contractor to establish a program at a place of employment. So this is something that's new, and I think it would be welcomed by all the people that were consulted because if the employer or the prime contractor is not in compliance with the Act, then the director can order them to come into compliance. And as we know, it's important to have health and safety programs for everyone in the workplace, so I think that is a positive addition to the Bill.

Section 14 is now changed. And basically what the change is to this particular section is to have . . . The prevention plan has to clarify the existing duty or minimize the risk of violence in the workplace. This is a difficult part of occupational health and safety, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to violent situations in the workplace. And we know that sometimes things happen in the workplace of a violent nature that are . . . it's very difficult to have foreseen them, and indeed often acts of violence are very random and unexpected. But this clause attempts to have at least the employer put their mind to the situation when violent acts could occur, or in case they have occurred, that there be a plan in place to deal with those types of situations when they arise again.

So not only is the employer required to have a written policy statement, but he is also required to have a prevention plan in place to deal with potentially violent situations. As an employer I think that can be something very difficult to do because you can imagine all sorts of situations where violence can erupt, and it would be difficult to have a plan for them all, but I suppose, as much as possible, they would have to have a safety plan. I guess you could think of something like a bank where robberies can be expected. That might be something where an actual plan would be more easy to develop. But in terms of random violence, I think it is a very difficult clause for employers to adequately address simply because of the randomness of the violence that can occur.

Subsection 15(4) is really not changed a whole lot, although there is a clause here which says you can't be designated as a member of a committee who represents workers unless you've been elected for that purpose by the workers or appointed in accordance with a constitution or bylaws of a trade union. So the only change there is that it's referred to the constitution or bylaws, and I think that's reflective of how some places are organized. Often you are organized by bylaws and may not have an actual constitution. That is certainly the case with some of the non-profit corporations that I've been involved with, Mr. Speaker.

There is a new subsection 15.1. This one is a little bit controversial, based on what I've read and from the response of the unions, Mr. Speaker, because what it does is allows the director to order new committees. And we do have some response from unions, which I have looked at briefly, which

indicate that this could undermine the work of the initial occupational health and safety committee. So there's some concern there, where the director has the ability to impose a subsequent occupational health committee, and I can't find anything in this section that says why or when the director would do that.

Indeed section 15.1(1)(a) says that he can add, "an additional occupational health committee if, in the opinion of the director, the place of employment would be better served by more than one committee."

There's a lot of vague language there, Mr. Speaker, and I'm not sure where the director would exercise that authority because it's definitely only in the opinion of the director whether it would be better served. And those are fairly vague words that cause me some concern because it's not sure when the director would step in to do that. And if there was a dispute between the work of the occupational health committee and the employer, the director could step in and overrule the work of the occupational health safety.

And this order of course has to be in writing, and the director should . . . There is some criteria that the director is directed to look at in making that order: the nature of the work performed; a request to establish an occupational health committee made by an employer, a prime contractor, or worker, or trade union representing workers at the place of employment. So again it's not sure when the director, if at the request of an employer was to create a second health committee, why that would ever be necessary. So I think there are some concerns about that ability of the director to act in that manner. So that's clause 15.1.

The next change to the Act is in section 19. And there's a new clause that's added at the end of that class section which basically, Section 19 deals basically with the duties of the committee, so outlines the duties of the occupational health committee. And there's a new subsection that's saying that the employer or the contractor has to ensure that the duties of the committee are not diminished by any other committee. So there's no explanation in the minister's introduction to this Bill about the reason for that particular change. I don't get a sense one way or the other if this is detrimental to the work of the committee or detrimental in any other way, but it's not clear to me why it's necessary.

The big, big change, I think for many in terms of this Act, is the amendment to sections 30. And what happens in section 30 originally is that the health officer could serve a notice of contravention on a person if they are in the opinion that they're contravening the Act or that the contravention will continue. The amendment establishes in legislation a compliance undertaking, which is an additional tool for occupational health officers to use when they have encountered non-compliance.

[21:00]

The explanatory notes explain this is an agreement entered into by the parties to take steps to ensure compliance with the legislation in a prescribed manner within a prescribed time period. And the way the section is set up, Mr. Speaker, is that there's now a new level or a new ability for the officer to issue a compliance undertaking or a notice of contravention.

Again, I've read this through and I know it's late in the evening, but I'm not sure why the two are there and what the distinction is. The compliance undertaking requires a signature by the person who is not in compliance. So that is one obvious distinction. And there's nothing in here that tells me what happens if one's served or the other, but I think a lot of that is its embedded language and I think it requires careful, very careful reading. And I know my colleagues will be examining this clause in great detail to ensure that we are all in the understanding of what it's intended to read.

Basically the compliance undertaking has the person sign their commitment to comply. I think it gives it a little bit more teeth, but there's no direction in the section as to whether the officer should issue one or the other. The only guidance and that is subsection (4) where:

an occupational health officer should not allow a person to enter into a compliance undertaking if a provision in this Act requires that a notice of contravention be issued.

So the notice of contravention seems to be a lesser form of admonishment, and I think is giving the directors some tools or the officers some tools to look at when deciding how to deal with contravention in the Act.

Sections 34 and 35 have been repealed and there's new clauses in place. And basically the only changes there are where the word "compliance undertaking" is added to the notice of contravention. So it gives both, again, both options for the committee or the representative. So that's just some consequential amendments really to the additions to section 30.

Then we're into section 43. And a lot of these now are very much housekeeping changes — section 43, 48 — some inconsequential changes in section 50.

And then there are some interesting changes to sections 56 and 56.1 which deal with the appeals to the Court of Queen's Bench. And I guess I should point out to you that section 44 is the power of Lieutenant Governor in Council to make regulations. There have been a few changes to that. Additional powers of the Lieutenant Governor in Council to make regulations, and again my concern here is that the prescriptive nature of that is allowing lesser scrutiny by this House and more activity at the executive level which then requires us, as legislators, to go back after the regulations are passed. It is difficult to comment on the entire impact of the Bill without knowing what the regulations will be. So that's the regulatory clause in clause 44.

And then we're going on to 56, which is the changes to appeal to the Court of Queen's Bench. And in that case, the new changes clarify that only a person directly affected by the decision of the adjudicator can appeal to the court. So it limits the ability of who can actually make the appeal. It changes also, it shortens the time frame for appeal. I am not sure why these changes were necessary. It certainly narrows the scope of who can appeal in the length of time that they have to make their decision.

Sections 56(3), (4), and (5), which are new subclauses in section 56, have been added to establish provisions respecting

the appeal process. So these are procedural clauses which seem to reflect normal procedures in court.

Section 58 is amended. The fines are being increased which is always, I think, a consequence of modernization of legislation because fines increase accordingly. So those seem to be appropriate. And there is a number of other sort of consequential changes to the clause.

So at this point I think, Mr. Speaker, going back to the minister's comments about this Bill, the attempts here are to improve safety practice standards in all sectors to reduce workplace injuries and increase workplace productivity. What I see in this Bill is some fairly administrative-type changes. I'll watch with interest to see whether in fact it does improve safety practices standards. I guess the idea of notices of contravention and the changes to that clause will give directors and officers more authority. And I think some of the tightening up of the language is certainly going to be helpful for the people involved in these occupational health and safety committees.

The addition of the directors' ability to impose a second occupational and health committee, not certain that that's a good thing. And I think we'll watch carefully to see what the impact of that is on the workplace because it's not clear from the comments of the minister why that addition has been made. And there are some comments from our research that indicate that may be of concern and take away some of the autonomy or power, I guess, of the existing occupational health and safety committees that are established.

But certainly, I think overall, the reviews and the comments we have received on the changes to the Bill are positive. And I think, in the interests of time and having my other colleagues speak to this Bill, I would just at this point move to adjourn. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Nutana has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 23, *The Occupational Health and Safety Amendment Act, 2011*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 24

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 24** — *The Advocate for Children and Youth Act* be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I am pleased to enter tonight into the debate on Bill No. 24, *The Advocate for Children and Youth Act*. Mr. Deputy Speaker, what this Act basically does — it has a sister Act in Bill No. 25 which is a Bill regarding the Ombudsman's office — but what this Bill is, it takes the content of the Ombudsman and child advocate Act and split it into two pieces, such as Bill No. 24

and the sister Bill No. 25. As the office of the Children's Advocate was modelled on that of the Ombudsman, the two Bills create offices very similar in structure.

So some of the key changes in this legislation, Mr. Deputy Speaker, one of them is actually the modernization around language, recognizing not just children but the term youth. And children, for those of us are parents, that term child is, I think, all-encompassing. I know at the age of 41, you're always your parents' child. So it's interesting the messages that language say. So it's not that a young person was excluded from this Act, but the feeling was that, say, a 14-year-old didn't see themselves reflected in the word child, so I thought perhaps that the services offered weren't reflective of their needs.

I have learned in my own life and my own experiences that language very much is everything. So one of, as I said, one of the pieces of this Act is adding the word children and youth, but the second piece is using gender-neutral terms, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And there was a time in my life actually when I started my career as a reporter in my early 20s where gender-neutral language, I thought, oh pshaw, what does that matter whether you use him or her? And I really didn't think it was a big deal, and carried that with me — language, what's the big deal?

But actually it was when I became a mom, and you'll hear me often in this Legislative Assembly talking about my experience of being a parent and becoming a mother because it's very much a big part of who I am. And I believe, I'm a legislator, but I also am a woman and a mother and it's a big part of who I am. And I was an at-home mom actually when my first daughter was born, for several years. And it always, language always used to intrigue me, actually used to make me very upset when people would say, oh, so what do you do? And I'd say, oh well I'm a mom. I'm at home with my kids. And people would say, oh so you don't work. And I think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, language is everything. Or you refer to mothers and parents who work outside of the home as working parents, but the reality is whether you are a parent at home with children or a parent who is in paid employment, you are a working parent.

So it was at that point in my life where I really started to see that first-hand in my own experience that language really does matter. And subsequently through my own education taking a social work degree, you talk more and more about what language means and sort of the embedded cultural meanings that language sends and tells us all. Language can send a message to all of us about whether you are included or excluded. So I think that this particular change is a very good one, adding the term youth and as well moving to gender-neutral terms. Because language does matter, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

One of the other things that this piece of legislation is doing, it adds clear jurisdictional definitions to include the advocate's authority over health agencies and entities. So as the minister pointed out in his remarks, so now it more clearly defines the advocate's authority to include regional health authorities, health care organizations and affiliates, and the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is a very good thing. I think the opportunity to have agencies that are publicly funded to ensure

that there is a process by which people who are dissatisfied can have their voice heard, I think is a very good thing.

Just one thing to note. The one thing that is missing from this Act that I believe the Children's Advocate would have been interested in having, is having school boards falling under this Act as well. And that is not a piece that's included in this. And I believe, looking at the stats I think in 2010, there were 40 complaints received specific to the Ministry of Education. So that might have been something to consider in this Act as well, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

What else does this piece of legislation do? It expands the mandate to become involved in advocacy and conduct research relating to the rights of children and youth. This obviously is the children and youth advocate. A big part of advocacy, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is research. How can you possibly advocate for something if you're not doing the research, looking at best practices, looking at what's going on elsewhere in the world specifically to the rights of children and youth? So that expanded mandate to conduct research relating to the rights of children and youth I think is a good, positive step, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And it's a very complicated area, human rights and the rights of children and youth.

I think the other thing this Act does, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Bill No. 24, *The Advocate for Children and Youth Act*, it provides the opportunity, it gives explicit permission for government ministries and agencies to share information voluntarily with the advocate to resolve complaints in a non-adversarial and timely manner. Well we all know that when you've come up against a situation that isn't good — I think most of us will see this in our offices, casework when you're trying to get an issue resolved for someone who lives in your constituency — that any time someone has a problem with a government agency, being able to handle it in a non-adversarial way is probably the best way to be able to handle things, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and in a timely manner too. There's nothing worse than feeling like you've been wronged or that part of the system isn't working and that the problem can't be addressed in a timely fashion. So that is a positive step, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I think the other thing that this Act will do, it expands the rights for children and youth living in care or custody to be made aware of and have access and have privileged communications with the advocate. And I've never lived in a care home, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but it would be very difficult. I can imagine if you are having trouble with the group home, the foster home, or the facility that you're living in and you feel like you have nowhere to turn or you're . . . So I think . . . I'm not sure how this will roll out, Mr. Deputy Speaker, what this looks like, ensuring the children and youth have the greatest possible access to the advocate. I don't know what that's going to look like and I'd be interested to see how, as they say, the rubber hits the road in a foster home or in a group home, how we make sure that the children know that they have recourse for things that are happening in their life, real or perceived things that they would like to have addressed. So this is positive as well, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

[21:15]

Like my colleague before me, one of the hazards of this job is

definitely being a little bit dry, so I might just see if one of my colleagues . . . just, sorry. Thank you very much. Thank you. Sorry. It's a hard time of year, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that it's incredibly dry in here. And as my colleague before me had said, that is definitely one of the hazards of the job — being on your feet and speaking and running out of water.

I think one of the things my colleague from Saskatoon Centre had pointed out to me, I am the relatively new Social Services critic and trying to get a handle on lots of the issues that come up. And my colleague had the opportunity, from Saskatoon Centre, had served in that position for some time and he had pointed out to me that often we've got the children's advocates and now it will be the children's and youth advocates and the Ombudsman's office. But sometimes there seems to be a bit of a place where people can fall through, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So you have children and youth going to the children's advocates and you have adults, often individuals, going to the Ombudsman, but families who are facing difficulties sometimes, they'll go to the Children's Advocate and they'll be referred to the Ombudsman, and then the Ombudsman will say, well that's a children's issue, and they'll refer you to the Children's Advocate. So I haven't experienced this yet in my time as the Social Services critic, but I know my colleague from Saskatoon Centre has seen that on a number of occasions.

And the reality is, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that it's very important to talk about children and youth, but the reality is our children live in the context of a family. So making sure . . . We don't want anybody ever to fall through the cracks. And we want to make sure that everybody has the opportunity to ensure their voice and their concerns are heard. So that is one of the things that my colleague from Saskatoon Centre has flagged.

Some of the other concerns that . . . In the annual report of 2008, the child advocate proposed a series of amendments to the legislation, and I've mentioned a couple of them, but still a few of them will remain unresolved. I know this piece of legislation does not acknowledge the UN [United Nations] Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Children's Advocate, the children's and youth advocate, after this legislation is passed, would prefer this legislation to be interpreted and applied with regard to this convention. The advocate had also flagged that it does not apply to local school boards, which I had mentioned earlier, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and pointed out the 40 complaints in 2010 specific to the Ministry of Education.

So this overall, I think, is a good piece of legislation and I know both the children's advocates and the Ombudsman had been consulted and were active players in putting this legislation together and making sure that the needs of Saskatchewan families and individuals were addressed. So this might be a good example of fine consultation, Mr. Deputy Speaker, which is something I often speak about in this Chamber as well. So this sounds like this piece of work was done in conjunction with people who actually know what's happening on the ground. Although there are still a few things, there are still a few gaps that I know the current Children's Advocate and previous children's advocates haven't seen addressed.

So with that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know that there are other

people, my colleagues, who are interested in also speaking to Bill No. 24, and so with that I would like to move to adjourn debate.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Riversdale has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 24, *The Advocate for Children and Youth Act*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 25

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 25** — *The Ombudsman Act, 2011* be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It is a pleasure tonight to enter into the debate on Bill No. 25, *An Act respecting the Ombudsman*, and has just been previously raised by my colleague from Saskatoon Riversdale. This is the sister legislation that goes along with Bill No. 24 regarding the Children's Advocate and how, as legislation evolves, that the Children's Advocate framework was part of the Ombudsman legislation, and now we've come to a point where we're creating two separate entities: the Ombudsman and the Children's Advocate. And so tonight I'll just make a few comments on the Ombudsman.

And the Ombudsman is an office that we've come to appreciate in its work ensuring fairness and access to services. And I can tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I've really come to appreciate the good work of the Ombudsman and the staff there and how they really have come to mean an awful lot to the citizens of Saskatchewan.

And the ombudsman, right across the country, is something that we saw became the thing for governments to have, particularly in the 1970s. And it was interesting that yesterday we talked about Allan Blakeney and some of the new initiatives he brought forward. And of course the Ombudsman was an office that his government created. And it was just a visionary thing that moved us forward to the modern era, and I am really glad that we have it. And it's now the opportunity to split it and to make some improvements. And I think that's very worthy of some conversation and discourse in this House tonight because I think it's important that we reflect on the Ombudsman as an officer of the legislature and how, as one of the five officers . . . We have the privacy, the conflict of interest, the Children's Advocate, Chief Electoral Officer, and the Ombudsman, that it's very, very important — and the auditor — very important that we take some time and reflect on this.

And I think of some of the things that the auditor or the Ombudsman has done in terms of simply solving some issues for people in a quiet, matter-of-fact way, either through mediation or just asking the ministry to rethink some of its ways that it's done, or perhaps even a simple phone call, and

things are resolved. Because sometimes we wish that we lived in a perfect world and there were no problems and everybody understood regulations and policies and procedures all in the same way, but they don't. And sometimes, whether it's a civil servant who's a little overzealous, reading it quite not the same way as maybe its intent or working together to make a solution, he's tackled . . . And I could probably go on for many examples tonight but I want to reflect on a couple.

One is of course the overcrowding in prisons. The document had talked about the sad state of affairs in Saskatchewan prisons a few years ago, that he wrote. And it's very important that people who are marginalized, who have a difficult time, and difficult time even articulating their issues because they have so many, so many issues that they are dealing with, whether it's addictions or education or just the inability to articulate what the problem is . . . And I know, whether that's through anger or frustration, some of us have moments where we wish we could say things better. And the Ombudsman can add clarity to resolving the issue. And so I really have come to appreciate him.

The other one, and we talked a bit . . . I raise this issue around one of my issues that face people in my riding quite often — we think it's a minor one — is around identification. And the Ombudsman identified how inappropriate it was for SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance] to hold back photo ID [identification]. They could hold back the driver's licence if the person had tickets or were in arrears in payments to SGI for insurance or whatever, but they could not hold back the photo ID. If they were . . . If it was being paid for, then the person had the right to do that. And that followed a ruling in Alberta.

And that cleared up a lot of issues for many people who have come back, come and say, listen, I understand fully I don't have the right to get my driver's licence because I owe fines, but I need my ID. And in society, we do need something as basic as that and that shouldn't be withheld when there are other penalties in place. And so the Ombudsman had worked through that and had done some very good work, and SGI had accepted that. And I think that's a very, very important idea.

You could probably go through the whole list and, of course, the Ombudsman . . . I always enjoy reading the annual report that the Ombudsman puts forward because he, I think, sets a direction for government, for ministries, for the opposition, for the government backbenchers even, to think about where can, how can we improve government. What are the big things and little things that we can do to make this province a better place in terms of delivering services? What are the barriers? What are the problems that we have?

And I have as well even raised issues with him in terms of some of the concerns I've had about government services and he's been very helpful. We wish we could have taken it to another level, but he's been able to help me understand some of the challenges that are out there, and until we have somebody actually complaining about it, it can't move forward. I know that there is an issue, but there is nobody complaining; then I guess everything is okay. And I can't make somebody complain. So what are you going to do? Things must be okay.

So it's a whole range of issues and I know where there . . .

Sometimes Social Services gets under the limelight of the Ombudsman, and rightfully so, because they are a vulnerable group of people who access services for Social Services and we need to make sure that those people have the support to say, hey, what about fairness, what about fairness — and that's hugely important.

One of the issues I really have enjoyed about the Ombudsman in terms of, and we will talk a little bit about public education, but also internal education to government agencies and ones around the fair practices office. We see that with workers' comp, that not only is it important that people have an avenue or a way to issue, to lodge a complaint about an outcome, but sometimes they haven't been treated fairly or the processes haven't been treated fairly. And we see SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance] now has a fair practices office; workers' comp has a fair practices office; many groups are looking at that. This is a way to say, has the process been fair along the way? No comments about the outcome but about the process. And I actually would like to see Social Services actually do that. I think that would go a long way in terms of aiding with a lot of the issues that come into play.

So I'm excited to see this. I do think that it would have been an interesting process if we had an opportunity to have public hearings on this because I know when you have the Department of Justice bringing this forward — and I think they do good work in working with the Ombudsman and clearly they do good work — and so you would think two good groups, obviously it's got to be a positive experience. But I think this would have been a really interesting opportunity because here we have an Act that repeals the old Act and replaces it with a brand new one, that this would have been a time to engage the public in saying, so what do we think about the Ombudsman here in Saskatchewan? I think we'd hear a lot of good things, but I think too often this government has not taken the opportunity to go forward and solicit from the public. Here we're rewriting significant legislation, and not just tweaking it but doing some major changes. And what does the public think?

[21:30]

And I would bet they would probably say a lot of positive things, a lot of positive things. But I think it's always important to have that opportunity for the public to say, what about this, what about that, and what are the different concerns. And for example, my colleague from Saskatoon Riversdale highlighted the concerns that we've had in terms of . . . And we know we are going through some tumultuous times over the children in care. And there was a major report written by the Children's Advocate a few years ago, broken trust. And I think that the issue at that point was we have children who are being looked after by the Children's Advocate, but where were the families? Where could the families, the adults, the parents, who was helping them? And of course many of them were dealing with issues that were not popular in society; many of them dealing with addiction issues, abuse, that type of thing. But who was their advocate?

And so we talked about a matrix between the advocate and the Ombudsman. And sometimes it was strong and sometimes it wasn't so strong. But those people really need . . . They're like anybody else in our province. They have a right to have

somebody on their side. And regardless of how unpopular some of the things they were doing, they still need to have some support. And so we raised this with the Ombudsman, and I think many ways the issue was addressed.

But I think that it speaks to even in all systems, anything we set up, there's always some room for improvement. And I think that it would have been a very interesting opportunity for ordinary people to have some input into this legislation. And I'm not actually seeing any deficiencies, and I'm glad that it's all there. And so I'm not looking to create more work, but I think that when we create that confidence of moving forward, it's a wonderful thing that we can celebrate the passage of these two pieces of legislation and knowing that everybody's had an opportunity to have some input. And maybe there wouldn't be very much, but I would have some questions for both the advocate and the Ombudsman. Have they selected, have they gone out, and how do they measure in the public? How do they get at some feedback? How do they know they're doing a good job? And that would be a worthwhile thing to ask, and hopefully we'll be able to have that conversation before we pass this legislation.

But I think in many ways this covers it very well and I just want to reflect, you know, it goes through . . . There's six parts to the Bill in preliminary matters: part II is the office and appointment of the Ombudsman, and that's straightforward; part III, powers and duties, and I think this is the critical piece because it talks about powers and duties of Ombudsman from an individual point of view, from a citizen's perspective; special requests to review certain matters, we've seen that in the legislature. In fact I know that in my past career as a cabinet minister some people thought some of the things I was doing should've been referred to the Ombudsman. That was a stormy week in the legislature when that happened, but things worked out a different way. And referrals to the Ombudsman by the Legislative Assembly. Then jurisdiction procedures. I think that's laid out very well. I was reading the refusal to investigate, that section. You know we can't solve every problem and so sometimes there has to be some limitations about what we can do and what we can't do, and so that's important. And then the general section, in repeal of the last section, so I think that's important.

And I think that when we take a look at the powers, I just want to take a minute to review the part III, powers and duties. And this is really the gist of the matter: what can the Ombudsman do? Well he can look at, has the power to investigate any "matter of administration affecting any person or body of persons in their personal capacity," a "decision or recommendation, including any recommendation made to a minister," and it goes through all those things, that "aggrieves or may aggrieve any person" or "any act that was done or omitted to be done in or by a ministry . . ." So it's quite full in that, aggrieves or may aggrieve a person. So this is quite well set out. And I think this really speaks to the issue of fairness. And this is very important that the Ombudsman really makes sure that the work of the government is fair for everyone and that he has the power or she has the power to look into this.

And that "The Ombudsman may require that a complaint pursuant to subsection (3) [it talks about investigations there] be in writing" and that also it may try to resolve "any problem raised in a complaint through the use of negotiation,

conciliation, mediation or other non-adversarial approaches.” So that’s a very important step as well, that we’re not talking about an oppositional process but one that really speaks to using a collegial manner to get to results. And I think this is also, and this part is new, I understand: “The Ombudsman may become involved in public education for the purpose of informing the public about fairness and the powers and duties of the Ombudsman.” And I think that’s the critical word, fairness. And to all of us, that’s what we try to do. You know, I think that it’s key that the legislation speaks to fairness. Sometimes, you know, as a teacher we used to get the word equity or being treated equal and fair. They’re not necessarily the same but I think this is a very important part.

I just want to refer a bit to the minister’s remarks on this. I think they’re critical to understanding the purpose of the legislation. And he rose in the House to introduce the second reading of this. And it talks about the Act applies only if the Ombudsman . . . and updates this important legislation in six important ways. He adds that it really now talks about, clarifies the Ombudsman’s jurisdiction over health care services in this province and expands the Ombudsman authority to provide public education, particularly on fairness which I just referenced just a minute ago. So that’s very important. And I know the whole issue around health care is emerging as a critical issue that people and policies of this government be appropriate and be fair and that it treats everyone in an appropriate manner. So this is very, very important.

It goes on to, talks about how it may work with organizations, third party organizations. This is very good. It talks about how the Ombudsman always had jurisdiction over health care services provided by the government but wasn’t necessarily clearly stated, and now it will. It clearly defines publicly funded health entities, which include regional health authorities, health care agencies, affiliates, and the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency. So this is, this is very clear that now we can deal with health issues in a more full manner. And as I said, the public education is a key piece because this is how we move people along in our province. And hopefully, you know, in the long run we would like to see that there are fewer complaints, fewer issues, but in fact if people have a sense of public education, this is a very important thing.

The other issue that’s important is that it talks about enhanced requirements that will assist individuals in contacting the Ombudsman in a private setting. And particularly this is, I think, very important, particularly with vulnerable citizens, many of whom I have, you know, worked through with my office. And I think this is really critical and so this is very, very important.

I wanted to talk about this other new, I think this is a newer section. This Bill enables the Ombudsman to provide assistance in appropriate circumstances to organizations outside the Ombudsman’s usual jurisdiction. And the government anticipates that municipalities, school boards, self governing professions may contract on a fee-for-service basis. And I think this is going to be a very good area for the Ombudsman to move into.

So I think that was helpful. I know when we’ve contacted the Ombudsman and, of course, they’re very positive about this

prospect of a stand-alone Ombudsman Act. I think that in fact he says that he’s pretty excited about it and I think that they think that the timing is right in moving this forward with the Children’s Advocate office, I think, is very important.

So he talks about the language in the new Bill. It’s been updated to include gender neutral language and complies with the new legislative drafting conventions, and this is important. In the substantive amendments to the Bill are, one, the expansion to the definition of agency of government, so that can add more clarity around the publicly funded health entity and particularly around the new roles, new expectations of much more work in the public health area.

It talks about the ability to conduct investigations where requested by non-governmental bodies — I’ve just talked about that, whether it’s RMs or municipalities — and have the ability and authority to conduct investigations under certain circumstances when requested by a non-governmental agency. And this will be, as he says, a value-added ability to provide services with our fairness expertise and complaint handling.

Expansion, and I think this is an important one, expansion of privileged communications, privileged communications. The Ombudsman in Saskatchewan will now include letters written on behalf of persons in custody or confined to an institution. These institutions that confine persons will now have to establish procedures that permit a restricted complainant to communicate with the Ombudsman, and inform the person that they have a right to communicate with the Ombudsman. So that’s very important. If there’s a concern, the person in the institution does not have to worry about retribution because of somebody reading letters that probably should have not been read. But in fact now they have privileged communication so this is really important.

It goes on to talk about the ability to obtain information from government agencies on a voluntary basis, and this is important. He said actually they have a good track record of co-operation, but there was no legislative authority that allowed this process to happen, and now it’s recognized through legislation. I think that really in many ways this is a great piece of legislation. As I’ve said, there’s some things that I wish would have been maybe more helpful, but clearly the Bill is before us now, and I think this is good.

And we’ve always admired and felt the work of the Ombudsman has been really outstanding and has contributed so much to the role of government in Saskatchewan. I also think, you know, it’s interesting as we go through the debate and we think about this decision, this contribution, that contribution. His work around the different tribunals and how effective they are, comparing the different tribunals of the government, I think, has been outstanding work.

But it is time to always to reflect on the legislation and say, is this the best legislation we have, or can we do better? And clearly the work before us is of that nature that I think that I know many more of my colleagues will want to speak to it. But I think that on a general level, we’ll have a good discussion when the time comes to have it later in the committee. But right now, I know many more will want to speak to it on the floor. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I move that we adjourn debate on Bill

No. 25. Thank you.

[21:45]

The Speaker: — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 25, *The Ombudsman Act, 2011*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 26

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 26** — *The Miscellaneous Statutes Repeal Act, 2011* be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I've got a number of miscellaneous remarks to throw on to the mix on *The Miscellaneous Statutes Repeal Act, 2011*, Bill No. 26 of course.

It's a bit of a grab bag of course, Mr. Speaker, as you might expect from a miscellaneous statutes repeal Act. Again it runs the gamut here between *The Collective Bargaining Agreement Expiry Date Exception Act*, *The Communications Network Corporation Act*, *The On-farm Quality Assurance Programs Act*, *The Soil Drifting Control Act*, *The Special Payment (Dependent Spouses) Act*, and a great number . . . well some interesting measures from around the legislative history of this province, Mr. Speaker.

Again it's interesting to rise just in considering the first piece of legislation up for repeal, *The Collective Bargaining Agreement Expiry Date Exception Act*. Again I was actually in the House when this was passed, Mr. Speaker, the idea at the time being to exempt from *The Trade Union Act* — specifically section 33(3) of *The Trade Union Act* — two collective agreements that had been bargained between IPSCO, interprovincial pipe, and the United Steelworkers of America, Local 5890, and Shaw Pipe Protection Ltd. and the Construction and General Workers' Union, Local 180. And again the effort at that time was to pass or to enable collective agreements that were larger than the standard three years which was prescribed in the legislation, where it had been specifically bargained.

It would seem that that was the exception that proved the rule, as the changes in 2008 which were brought forward to *The Trade Union Act* which eliminated the limit on . . . or the three-year limit, or the three-year prescription for the length of collective agreements and opening it up to longer collective agreements. Again the idea, I think, Mr. Speaker, was to have something in *The Trade Union Act* that offered protection or provided for a meaningful interval for workers to go back and adjust their collective agreements, in accordance with negotiations with their employers, to get an agreement that better reflected the current circumstance, again three years being what had been deemed to be a meaningful period.

I think that's still pretty much the rule, Mr. Speaker, or I'd be interested to see evidence otherwise. It certainly wasn't touched upon in this latest round of remarks from the minister as this piece of legislation was introduced. But it's again, how many are sticking around that three-year standard? How many are going four years, five years, possibly more? We'll see where we're at in terms of the latest trends in collective bargaining.

We do know that of course the essential services legislation was taken to the Saskatchewan Queen's court, or was taken to court, and that Justice Dennis Ball has ruled that the provisions in Bill 5, the essential services Act, effectively derogate or effectively destroy the ability to collective bargain and the ability of working people to withhold their labour in the pursuit of a collective bargaining agreement, and that is now being appealed up the line by the provincial government.

And it's interesting, Mr. Speaker. When that measure was brought forward, of course it was ballyhooed by the then minister of Labour as being fair and balanced — of course, fair and balanced being the tag line for Bill O'Reilly and Fox News. So it's, I guess, to borrow a phrase, Mr. Speaker, it's straight like a corkscrew, I think would be one way to describe that use of fair and balanced.

So *The Collective Bargaining Agreement Expiry Date Exception Act* has one part of the changes to labour legislation that this government has brought forward. Again we look forward to better analysis and a more fulsome discussion of just what impact has resulted from changes in 2008, and the way that that has rippled forward in collective bargaining as effected under the repeal of subsection 33(3) of *The Trade Union Act* in the years since it was passed in 2008.

The next Act repealed by the Bill is *The Communications Network Corporation Act*. As discussed by the minister when this was brought forward, the Act that established the Saskatchewan Communications Network Corporation or SCN, carrying on in quotation:

Mr. Speaker, as everyone is aware, SCN was sold to Bluepoint Investments Incorporated on June 30th, 2010. The corporation was officially dissolved on March 31st, 2011. Repealing this Act is the last technical step in the winding down of SCN as a government-owned corporation.

And again, Mr. Speaker, there's various of the issues that certainly we were concerned about as the official opposition at the time of that announcement to sell SCN, which very much seemed to be less than well thought out in terms of disposing of a government asset but also what that meant in a broader sense, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the role that SCN [Saskatchewan Communications Network] played in the film and video industry in the province of Saskatchewan as well as the ability of SCN to tell Saskatchewan stories to Saskatchewan people.

Of course Bluepoint had seemed to be something of an expedient stopgap, and that in turn has proven to be less than satisfactory and itself being bought out. And what's happening there, Mr. Speaker, we'll see where it winds up. But the educational licence that had been afforded to SCN under the

CRTC [Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission] and what happens to that, the role that SCN had provided or that it had filled in the provision of distance learning, let alone the way that it had served as an anchor institution in the film and television industry throughout Saskatchewan, those questions are evolving. But we do know this, that one of the key sort of tools that we had in terms of using public policy to foster and facilitate economic growth, and growth and success in the film and television industry, it's the loss of a valuable tool that had a much greater sort of multiplier effect in terms of the investment at hand.

And we'll see — just as that was announced in the budget of 2010, Mr. Speaker — we'll see what the budget of 2012 brings for other fundamental aspects of the film and television industry in Saskatchewan. Will there be a Saskatchewan film employment tax credit after this budget? Will they be making improvements to the administration of that film employment tax credit to better cash flow industries that then in turn use that to pay back a multiplier effect into the economy and to attract other dollars into the province? Will we see improvements made to the competitiveness of that tax credit regime or improvements made to the means by which it is processed and made more expeditious and more sensitive to the needs of the productions?

Or will we see that tax credit and that regime done away with altogether by a government that is quite happy to go for photo ops with *Corner Gas* down at the sound stage but has, in a very alarming sense, presided over a fairly dramatic diminution of the film and television industry in Saskatchewan — which has been something of a success and something of a point of pride in past, and has been something of an anchor for a lot of creative people that bring talents, bring productivity, bring innovation to an economy that, you think, would all be things that a government would be interested in. We'll see what comes of that. We'll see what comes of the kind of the Saskatchewan sound stage. We'll see what use is made in an ongoing sense of that anchor institution for the film and television industry. We'll see what happens with the Saskatchewan Film and Video Development Corporation.

Again, Mr. Speaker, this concerning the legislation that is repealing the authorizing legislation for SCN or *The Communications Network Corporation Act*. We'll see where this all winds up. But the past is indeed prologue. There are some concerning things that have happened on this front previously, and we see a pretty harsh reminder of it in this legislation repealing *The Communications Network Corporation Act*.

Other measures being repealed in, or other statutes being repealed in the legislation. There's *The On-farm Quality Assurance Programs Act* being repealed, having come into effect in 1998 to provide a way for on-farm food safety programs to be recognized in Saskatchewan, having been designed to enhance the safety and quality of Saskatchewan agricultural products, recognizing producer organizations and designated delivery agents that implemented on-farm quality assurance programs. Again trying to strike that balance between ease of management, ease of administration, while at the same time providing quality assurance. And again that had taken place before the Canadian Food Inspection Agency agreed to

having the goal of on-farm food safety or OFFS. So the change in the scope of the practice for the CFIA or the Canadian Food Inspection Agency and their development of policies and protocol for national producer-led OFFS programs, it has passed the need for *The On-farm Quality Assurance Programs Act* behind, left it behind, and as such is no longer required. So again I'm interested to hear other arguments around that particular piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker. But again, if you're surpassed by the federal regime and it's no longer required, fair enough.

An Hon. Member: — I can't hear a word you're saying.

Mr. McCall: — I'm being encouraged on by, I think, the member from Kelvington-Wadena.

An Hon. Member: — A little better. Speak up.

Mr. McCall: — She's asking me to speak up. Apparently, you know, I'm not sure, Mr. Speaker, I'll try to help her out. But perhaps we could send an earpiece across to the minister. I'm sure all these budgetary meetings have got her hearing tested to the max. So we'll see. Hopefully she'll be able to keep up, Mr. Speaker.

The next statute up for repeal is *The Soil Drifting Control Act*. Again this is definitely an old piece of legislation, having come into force in 1941, and having given rural municipalities the authority to pass a soil drifting bylaw on receipt of a petition signed by at least 40 ratepayers.

And again, Mr. Speaker, when you think of 1941, you think of the institutions like the *Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act*. You think about the land management practices at the time that exacerbated the dust bowl. It was created by the drought, the way that the dirty thirties had left a lasting impact on so many lives and minds and certainly in Saskatchewan, the way the images are scarred and marked by the Depression and by the dirty thirties.

[22:00]

One of those dominant images from that time was the dust that would drift and slowly take over farms and represented that degradation of livelihoods and lives. And there are some terrible images from that time. And if you talk to our seniors, the pioneers, Mr. Speaker, certainly they can tell you about the way the dust would blow and get into everything . . . [inaudible].

Again times have changed somewhat, not just in land use practice or land management practice, but the rise to prominence of zero till and minimum till and the way that that has helped the situation. You think about the different hedgerows or windrows that in many, many circumstances date back to that time having been planted, that they're now in full effect, Mr. Speaker. Again so many of these things date to the dirty thirties. And you know, this is the province of *Who Has Seen the Wind*, and if you've seen the wind, Mr. Speaker, you'll know that it can whip that dust up something fierce.

So we're interested to see that this fairly old piece of legislation is being deemed to be outdated and no longer required and that

again the producers practise helping out the situation around soil conservation and making sure that the land practices are keeping up good stewardship and what is the best practice and what is helpful as opposed to making the situation worse as we saw different events conspire to bring together, most noticeably in the dirty thirties. We're interested to see that end.

We're particularly interested to see it on a day like today, March 13th, Mr. Speaker, where we've got a very warm temperature. And you know, maybe it's only in a province like Saskatchewan where you could have the, you know, flooding one year and then we'll see what the summer brings to come, Mr. Speaker. But certainly we watch with concern as to what's happening around moisture levels and what this summer might bring.

And again I think it's incumbent on us as good Saskatchewan people to hope for the best and keep an eye out and plan for the worst, Mr. Speaker. But again I think this for me flags just the way that mother nature and events can conspire to provide some pretty awesome displays of the power of mother nature, and we'll see what, we'll see what the season will bring.

The final statute being repealed under this Act is *The Special Payment (Dependent Spouses) Act*, having been enacted in 1999. It provided for an *ex gratia* payment to widows whose workers' compensation benefit were terminated due to remarriage prior to September 1st of 1985. To receive the payment, a widow had to apply within a two-year period following enactment of the legislation and to then sign a waiver. The minister has stated in the remarks, "Given the limitation on application of the benefits, there is no further need for the legislation. Furthermore, two court challenges to the Act have been dismissed." Again, Mr. Speaker, I'd be interested to know if any of the individuals that were affected by this legislation are in fact still alive, and if there is any sort of accommodation for them under this Act. Perhaps that is information that the minister will be able to provide at a committee level in consideration of this Bill.

So, Mr. Speaker, *The Miscellaneous Statutes Repeal Act, 2011*, Bill No. 26, dealing with *The Collective Bargaining Agreement Expiry Date Exception Act*, *The Communications Network Corporation Act*, *The On-farm Quality Assurance Programs Act*, *The Soil Drifting Control Act* and *The Special Payment (Dependent Spouses) Act*, that these legislation, different legislation from again throughout the history of this province and interesting sort of points of consideration for the way public policy has evolved in this province and different historical times, some much less recent and much more engaged and evolving, some of them much more firmly in the past, but an interesting piece of legislation, notwithstanding.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I would move on Bill No. 26, *The Miscellaneous Statutes Repeal Act, 2011*, I would move to adjourn debate.

The Speaker: — The member has moved adjournment of debate of Bill No. 26, *The Miscellaneous Statutes Repeal Act, 2011*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 27

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Harpauer that **Bill No. 27** — *The Education Amendment Act, 2011/Loi de 2011 modifiant la Loi de 1995 sur l'éducation* be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A pleasure this evening to join in on discussion of Bill No. 27, *The Education Amendment Act, 2011*, Mr. Speaker. And the topic of this piece of legislation, as the name would suggest for those that are following at home, is education and how it operates in the province: some of the dates associated with when individuals go to school, start the school year; and then additional issues, Mr. Speaker, about how school divisions in the province function; some of the guidelines as they relate to the province; and also additional topics about financing on how education is funded and delivered throughout Saskatchewan.

Of course, Mr. Speaker, I guess there's a flow in some of the discussions or a bit of continuity between some of the discussions in adjourned debates that I've had the opportunity to speak on today in an earlier speech on the topic of child care. And some of the introductory remarks I made on that piece of legislation had to do with the huge relevance and importance that the provision of child care has in our province. And of course, while we as parents and as families want good child care for our families and for children, we also want a good education system.

We often speak of in this Assembly how education is the basis and the foundation for a strong society from a civil society perspective. It's important to have students who are fully engaged, know about . . . have a good basis in all of the academic fields and have a good understanding of what is their civic duty and how they function and operate. And, Mr. Speaker, it's our hope and our desire as legislators on both sides of the House that the educational system achieves the goals and prepares our young people to be full participants in society, whether it's from an economic perspective or whether it's from a social perspective or whether it is instilling the values that are so important to allow students and individuals to orientate themselves throughout the rest of their life.

This piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker, was introduced by the minister in the fall sitting of the legislature, and the minister provided her second reading remarks on December 14th, 2011. And for individuals or researchers who want to see what exactly the minister said in her second reading remarks, they can go to *Saskatchewan Hansard* on page 220, December 14th and see for themselves.

So I do thank the minister for the earlier remarks as a means to provide some understanding about what she wants to accomplish through the proposed amendments in this legislation. And I would also thank the ministry officials who played a role in crafting the remarks and providing some clarity for individuals as, Mr. Speaker, the second reading speech is an

important speech in this legislative process because it does provide an opportunity for the minister to clearly articulate and clearly state what is the purpose of the legislation that he or she brings forward, how it will affect the province and why the minister thinks the piece of legislation is a positive thing. We hope, Mr. Speaker, that it is in fact a positive thing with some pieces. And I would say most pieces of legislation that is brought forward in this Assembly, it is of a positive nature. Many of the changes are agreed to by both, by members on both sides of the House.

But, Mr. Speaker, from time to time, and with members opposite it actually happens quite frequently, there are some significant problems with the pieces of legislation that they are bringing forward. And the problems can be of a variety of types. Sometimes it's an oversight and, Mr. Speaker, oversights happen. People are human. Mistakes happen. I can understand how oversights can occur. Sometimes, Mr. Speaker, though, the intent in the legislation is not what is clearly stated in the minister's second reading speech. And it's in those instances when I have some concerns because when there are consequences that are different from what's clearly articulated in the second reading speech, and if those consequences are intended, that's a problem. If they're unintended consequences, that's also a problem and may indicate that the minister has not clearly thought out what in fact he or she is proposing.

So when we look at *The Education Amendment Act*, it addresses and touches on a number of different topics. Some have been discussed fairly widely in the province, either through election campaigns or through related topics of discussion, and some of the topics that the minister identifies in this second reading speech and that is proposed in Bill No. 27 are less discussed. And this can be for a few reasons. One, they haven't been in the public eye in a way that a lot of people are paying attention or would think that they should care right off the bat. And sometimes, Mr. Speaker, the changes that are proposed are of a more housekeeping routine business nature and aren't that controversial. And that is fine.

So, Mr. Speaker, looking at Bill 27, there are a number of components to this legislation. And I would say the different components have fit into different categories that I just identified, some being routine and more of a housekeeping nature, and others being of more significance and perhaps a bit more controversial or at least a bit more deserving of debate and examination.

The first topic, Mr. Speaker, addresses the changes that members opposite promised with respect to the start of the school year. It was clear, Mr. Speaker, through the election process that members opposite want the school year to start after Labour Day, and for this to be consistent throughout the province. And so, Mr. Speaker, that's what this legislation is doing. It's saying that the start of the school date will be after Labour Day and it maintains that the school year would be 200 days or less.

It's interesting, Mr. Speaker, in reading the piece of legislation, actually reading the legislation and then also looking at the minister's remarks, I got a bit of a kick out of the minister's closing few sentences. And it says:

It will also allow us to go to our education partners — teachers, schools, and boards — to start the conversation on important topics like holidays, vacation, length of the school day, and variations in the length of the school year. I am pleased to move therefore that Bill No. 27 . . . [and so on.]

The figure of speech and the expression here “to start the conversation,” it sounds so kind and sounds so well-intended. And, Mr. Speaker, it does stand out at me because when it comes to the issue of education, I wouldn't say consultation and I wouldn't say proper discussion with individuals has in fact been the preferred approach by members opposite. And it's within a government's prerogative to make changes like this. That's understandable, but it is important to have the proper discussions.

[22:15]

And I couldn't help but think back to a different piece of legislation that we were discussing in adjourned debates. I forget the actual title, but it had to do with the planning and development of municipalities and cities. It was changes that were being made with respect to how municipalities are able to charge or provide a fee to developers. And what there was, it was reported in the minister's remarks that there was a discussion about whether or not, whether or not it would be appropriate to allow municipalities to put a fee on developers to help pay for some of the local infrastructure that's required with new zoning and development. And the legislation or the minister's remarks said that well, there was disagreement. There wasn't agreement on this change, and therefore we're just parking it for now and maybe some other day we'll look at it.

Well, Mr. Speaker, that kind of discussion and that kind of consultation isn't what we see in the area of education, or it hasn't been to date if we look at the actions that members opposite have taken over the course of their last term and more recently as well.

So the first section of this piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker, it does talk about the start of the school year and it makes the changes. It's taking out a number of sections of the Act and I believe moving some aspects into regulations. But it's been talked about, Mr. Speaker. Different organizations in the province have said whether or not they agree with it. Some people have been happy; some people not as happy. And it's pretty consistent with what members opposite have been talking about. So no real surprises there, I would say. So that's the one section in the initial part of the proposed changes through the amendment Act.

There are, however, some additional changes which I will now move on to. There's another section, as identified in the minister's remarks and as obviously stated in the proposed legislation, that talks about a number of different areas. The minister identifies three areas that are involved.

The one area, Mr. Speaker, has to do with — this is more what appears to me, at least at first glance — more of a housekeeping nature and that's repealing some obsolete provisions and making some changes with respect to different groups that

meet. And one example is given is the education council which the minister in her remarks says has been dormant for some time, so it's removing that. There's also another change that involves the merger of the teacher's certification and the certification board into one. And the rationale that the minister provided as to why this was a good thing is that there was considerable overlap, and therefore it's appropriate to move it into one board, one organization or body. If, Mr. Speaker, there is in fact overlap, if there is a bit of redundancy there, it does of course make sense to do such a change. And that's why I say this is more of a housekeeping nature.

There is, however . . . Oh, another housekeeping aspect has to do with the *Copyright Act* and ensuring that the school boards are in compliance and agreement with federal legislation, the federal copyright Act. And that of course is a routine type of business. It's important that our school divisions are following the letter of the law. And I don't imagine there's much controversy around that, at least according to my reading and understanding of it.

So in this second section after addressing the issue of the start of the school year, there is one section here that is talking about repealing obsolete provisions and some other changes based on efficiency and based on some common sense. I hope that is the case. As I've said before, I hope the members opposite say that is what they are doing, that it is in fact the case. Most of the time, often it is in fact the case, but from time to time we see some actions opposite that don't exactly match up with what they said they wanted to do.

Now another component, Mr. Speaker, of this next section has to do with educational funding. And this component is important, I think, Mr. Speaker. And it is the result of changes that members opposite chose to make with the provincial tax system, again changes that they were entitled to make and that they made. And, Mr. Speaker, this is the ramifications or the necessary outcome of some of those changes.

The one has to do with the tabling of documents in the legislature. This is an important point, though, that I would emphasize to those that are listening because it signifies a change with respect to the funding of education in the province. With the removal of the ability of local school boards to tax and collect revenue, the provincial government now controls all the purse strings for education. And it has — as is stated in other legislation — because of that reality of the province providing all the funding for education, it's now necessary for school divisions to table financial reports in the legislature. So it's a recognition here — this is important — it's a recognition that the province holds the purse string, and it's up to the province to fund education. And consequently there needs to be the appropriate oversight, the appropriate examination of financial records because the resources are coming from the province.

I think it's an important issue. And it's important to highlight to individuals that the provincial government is fully responsible for the funding of education. And that's why, Mr. Speaker, as members opposite know, I often present a petition for my constituents who live in the neighbourhood of Hampton Village and Dundonald about the need for a new school because it's up to members opposite to provide that new school. I think that is an important thing to point out. It's also important, Mr.

Speaker, when looking at the issue of funding, to touch on what sort of implications that has for school divisions and for boards. Since the province is now the body that delivers the cheques and determines what the cheques will be, this has affected the autonomy and this has affected the ability of school boards to do many of their duties and to do many of the jobs that they have traditionally done. And as I said, members opposite are within their right, of course, to change the way the taxation occurs. Governments can do that.

But it's important for them to be upfront and open and honest and clear with Saskatchewan people about what that means for different bodies, and one here would be school boards and school divisions. I am told, Mr. Speaker, in some discussions now that if there's any sort of decision that a school board makes that has financial implications, that now needs to be approved by the ministry.

So there's areas of activity that school boards once did, and no longer do they have the ability to simply make decisions based on their expertise and based on their knowledge. The one example that I've been told of by a number of different school boards, Mr. Speaker, had to do with something simple like moving portables. Most people, I think, would assume that it's within a school board's expertise and experience and the role that they have traditionally done, that school boards do things like determine where portables should be moved in different buildings. That's the kind of responsiveness that school boards need to be able to do as attendance levels will change.

Now, Mr. Speaker, in order for school boards to make those types of decisions, if they want to move portables, they need to get approval from the ministry. And that is . . . I've been told that by different school boards. If that's not the case, the members opposite can correct me on that, but that's what I've heard straight from school board trustees and officials about how it operates. I think it also, Mr. Speaker, is appropriate to emphasize and show how that can be, how the members opposite can meddle or influence or have a role in decisions that school boards make that aren't necessarily in the public's best interest, that aren't necessarily constructive.

The one example I would talk about, and it comes to mind, is also on the issue of relocatables or portable classrooms. The current Minister of Finance and former Ed minister is pleased that I use the term relocatables as opposed to portables. But I think most members at home understood what I was talking about. But the point being here, Mr. Speaker, ministry officials, ministry officials were very firm with school divisions that if they wanted new relocatables or portable classrooms, that they were supposed to get them, Mr. Speaker, through a provider in Swift Current. And the price, Mr. Speaker, and the associated logistics with transferring these relocatable, portable classrooms from Swift Current to different school divisions further north, Mr. Speaker, simply didn't make sense to a lot of school divisions. And it didn't make sense because of the logistic problems with moving them from Swift Current to different communities. That was one problem. But beyond that, Mr. Speaker, it didn't make sense to them because it was a lot more expensive than them doing them in-house by themselves, the type of work that they have always done.

So you can understand, Mr. Speaker, how some divisions

would have a bit of a problem when the type of work that they've normally done like determining where relocatables go, how many they need, and how they want to build them and at what expense, when the ministry is now telling them — as what has occurred here in the province — that they needed to go to Swift Current to buy these relocatables and then transport them further north a considerable distance, and then, Mr. Speaker, actually pay more than if they just built them on their own, based on their own expertise. You can see why more than a school division said, no thanks; we'll do our own.

Why, Mr. Speaker, they were promoting portable classrooms from Swift Current to be moved hundreds of kilometres north, that's a very good question, one that we've talked about here in the Assembly. And perhaps members opposite want to comment on that as well; I don't know. But to me, Mr. Speaker, it doesn't make sense. It proves the point though, Mr. Speaker, that while there are changes here, while there's changes in the legislation that may appear to be one thing, there are implications. And there's implications for our school divisions and there's implications for members' ability opposite to get their fingers into things and to be doing things that aren't in the public's best interest, such as promoting the purchase of portables from Swift Current instead of allowing school divisions to simply build their own portables at a lower cost. It doesn't make much sense.

The third point, Mr. Speaker, in this following section that the minister identifies, has to do with the change in rules to do with funding. And what this is doing, Mr. Speaker, is changing some of the rules for school divisions as to how they would finance projects. It's interesting. In the remarks here by the minister, it talks about an investment in infrastructure and all these projects on the go. It's interesting though.

The one project of the many that are listed is the new school in Willowgrove. And off the top of my head — I don't have the news release in front of me — I think that was announced in 2010. Is that correct — 2010, was Willowgrove announced? Somewhere around then? It was approved, Mr. Speaker, in principle and there was some initial funding provided for the planning.

The last report I had, and maybe it's changed in the last few weeks, is that the plans for Willowgrove — it's now 2012 — the plans for Willowgrove have not been approved and funding has not flowed for the construction of the Willowgrove school even though it was announced in 2010. So I think it's also important for members opposite to be totally clear with what has occurred here, and it causes me great concerns for communities like mine in Hampton Village to see when in fact some of these changes will occur.

Mr. Speaker, the changes here in . . . Well the minister here is accusing the Saskatoon public school of sitting on it. That was the direct words that the minister said. And we'll see if Saskatoon public schools agrees that they're sitting on Willowgrove, and whether or not the holdup is on the ministry side of things or whether the holdup is on the public school division. To me, Mr. Speaker, I think public trustees are pretty aware of what the needs are in Willowgrove and want to move the project along, I would assume.

My question, Mr. Speaker, here is on the third component identified in the minister's remarks. This has to do with the ability that they are providing in here for school boards to go to financial institutions to receive money to provide their share. With the change, Mr. Speaker, that members opposite made, with school boards no longer setting the mill rate and collecting taxes, that would make changes. As I've already covered, it meant that resources had to come from the province, solely from the province. With what I see here occurring, Mr. Speaker, in this third portion here, is a shift and a change and a desire in members opposite. And I've had different colleagues on our side have talked to this issue and raised some concerns. And it has to do with, our concern has to do with transparency of members opposite in being completely upfront with issues like borrowing, with issues like debt, and clearly stating what the true cost and implications are for Saskatchewan people.

Mr. Speaker, just as I stated earlier on with the school divisions now having to table their reports here in the legislature, the schools boards having to indicate, have their books audited, and the reports coming to the legislature, it's pretty clear, Mr. Speaker, that when it comes to issues of debt, when it comes to issues of the expenditures in divisions, it's within the public's interest to have a full and complete picture of what are the debt loads in the different areas.

I think, Mr. Speaker, some of the concerns that we've raised around this issue is how the expenses associated with this approach may in fact be greater than other alternatives available to the government. It would not be wise, Mr. Speaker, if there were options available to the government to allow for borrowing at a lower level for school divisions and not, and not, Mr. Speaker, to be upfront with Saskatchewan people about what are the true implications for the province. Is my hope, it is my true hope, Mr. Speaker, that members opposite . . .

The Speaker: — It now being after the hour of adjournment, this House stands adjourned to 1:30 tomorrow afternoon.

[The Assembly adjourned at 22:30.]

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