



SECOND SESSION - TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

of the

**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

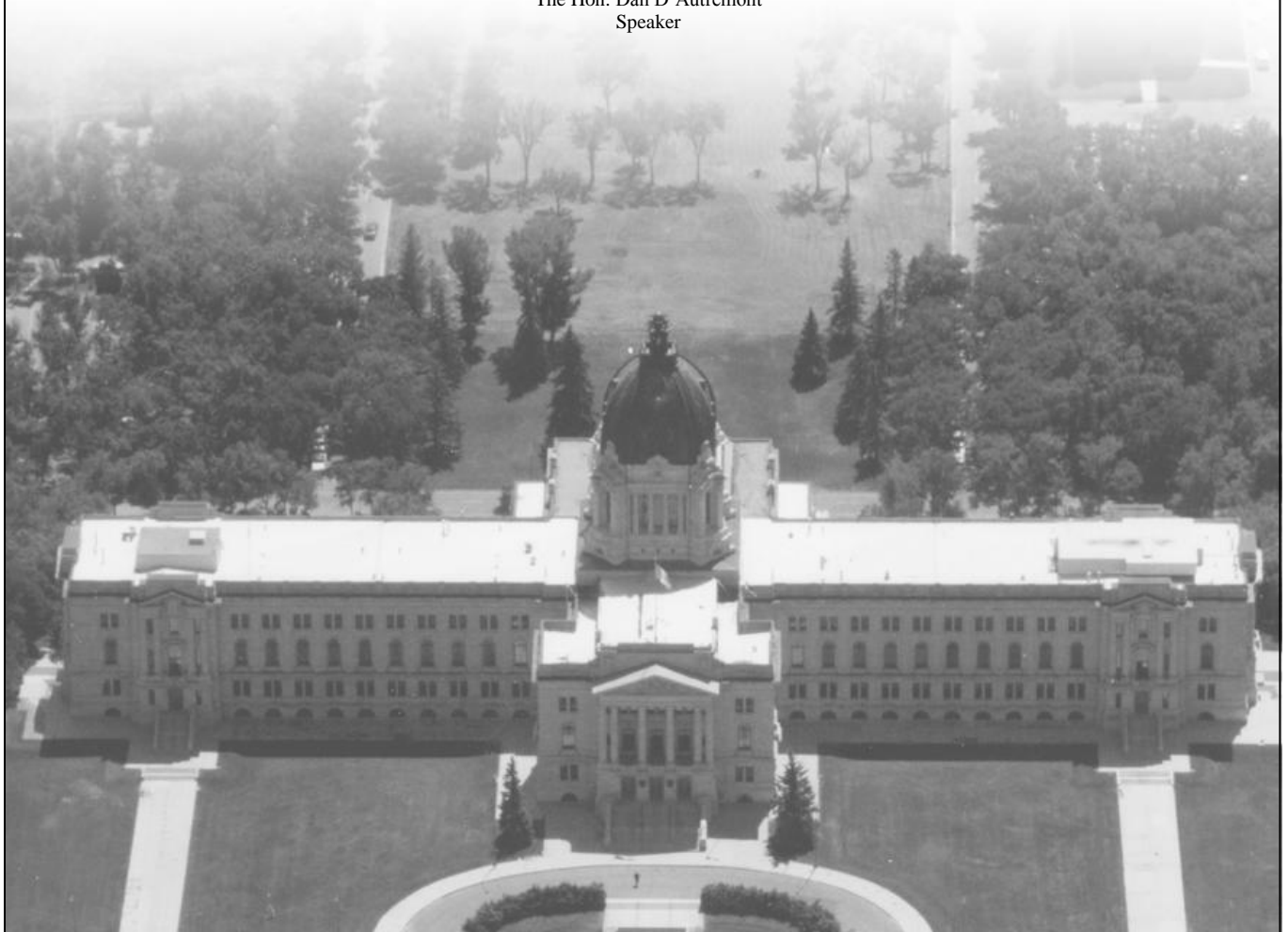
---

**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS**

---

(HANSARD)

Published under the  
authority of  
The Hon. Dan D'Autremont  
Speaker



## MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN

Speaker — Hon. Dan D'Autremont  
 Premier — Hon. Brad Wall  
 Leader of the Opposition — John Nilson

Name of Member	Political Affiliation	Constituency
Belanger, Buckley	NDP	Athabasca
Bjornerud, Bob	SP	Melville-Saltcoats
Boyd, Hon. Bill	SP	Kindersley
Bradshaw, Fred	SP	Carrot River Valley
Brkich, Greg	SP	Arm River-Watrous
Broten, Cam	NDP	Saskatoon Massey Place
Campeau, Jennifer	SP	Saskatoon Fairview
Chartier, Danielle	NDP	Saskatoon Riversdale
Cheveldayoff, Hon. Ken	SP	Saskatoon Silver Springs
Cox, Herb	SP	The Battlefords
D'Autremont, Hon. Dan	SP	Cannington
Docherty, Mark	SP	Regina Coronation Park
Doherty, Hon. Kevin	SP	Regina Northeast
Doke, Larry	SP	Cut Knife-Turtleford
Draude, Hon. June	SP	Kelvington-Wadena
Duncan, Hon. Dustin	SP	Weyburn-Big Muddy
Eagles, Doreen	SP	Estevan
Elhard, Hon. Wayne	SP	Cypress Hills
Forbes, David	NDP	Saskatoon Centre
Harpauer, Hon. Donna	SP	Humboldt
Harrison, Jeremy	SP	Meadow Lake
Hart, Glen	SP	Last Mountain-Touchwood
Heppner, Hon. Nancy	SP	Martensville
Hickie, Darryl	SP	Prince Albert Carlton
Hutchinson, Bill	SP	Regina South
Huyghebaert, D.F. (Yogi)	SP	Wood River
Jurgens, Victoria	SP	Prince Albert Northcote
Kirsch, Delbert	SP	Batoche
Krawetz, Hon. Ken	SP	Canora-Pelly
Lawrence, Greg	SP	Moose Jaw Wakamow
Makowsky, Gene	SP	Regina Dewdney
Marchuk, Hon. Russ	SP	Regina Douglas Park
McCall, Warren	NDP	Regina Elphinstone-Centre
McMillan, Hon. Tim	SP	Lloydminster
McMorris, Hon. Don	SP	Indian Head-Milestone
Merriman, Paul	SP	Saskatoon Sutherland
Michelson, Warren	SP	Moose Jaw North
Moe, Scott	SP	Rosthern-Shellbrook
Morgan, Hon. Don	SP	Saskatoon Southeast
Nilson, John	NDP	Regina Lakeview
Norris, Rob	SP	Saskatoon Greystone
Ottenbreit, Greg	SP	Yorkton
Parent, Roger	SP	Saskatoon Meewasin
Phillips, Kevin	SP	Melfort
Reiter, Hon. Jim	SP	Rosetown-Elrose
Ross, Laura	SP	Regina Qu'Appelle Valley
Sproule, Cathy	NDP	Saskatoon Nutana
Steinley, Warren	SP	Regina Walsh Acres
Stewart, Hon. Lyle	SP	Thunder Creek
Tell, Hon. Christine	SP	Regina Wascana Plains
Tochor, Corey	SP	Saskatoon Eastview
Toth, Don	SP	Moosomin
Vermette, Doyle	NDP	Cumberland
Wall, Hon. Brad	SP	Swift Current
Weekes, Hon. Randy	SP	Biggar
Wilson, Nadine	SP	Saskatchewan Rivers
Wotherspoon, Trent	NDP	Regina Rosemont
Wyant, Hon. Gordon	SP	Saskatoon Northwest

[The Assembly resumed at 19:00.]

**EVENING SITTING**

**The Deputy Speaker:** — It being 7 o'clock, I'll call the Assembly to order.

**ADJOURNED DEBATES**

**SECOND READINGS**

**Bill No. 60**

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Stewart that **Bill No. 60 — *The Animal Products Amendment Act, 2012*** be now read a second time.]

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

**Mr. Nilson:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I will continue to talk about Bill No. 60, *An Act to amend The Animal Products Act*. And effectively this bill is about food safety, about the ability of the provincial government to put in place a system whereby animal products are produced and then processed for human consumption. And the reason that this bill appears now is that the federal government has announced that they're stepping out of the field of providing inspection through the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, and so as a province it is important to put in place a process that will allow for the inspection of animal products.

And so what I intend to do is talk some more about the actual process. And I was reminded over the dinner hour about the nature of food produced in Saskatchewan when I looked at some packaging of some meat products that I purchased over the weekend that were produced in Saskatchewan, and they had very clearly on the package the Canadian Food Inspection Agency stamp as part of their marketing strategy. And so the issue becomes, in 2014, just over a year from now, what kind of stamp or what kind of certification will be there when a consumer purchases a product which is produced within Saskatchewan?

We're one of the provinces that has few if any places that are sort of federally inspected operations. I think the minister stated that there were 12 provincially registered facilities in the province when he spoke on November the 13th, but it relates to those particular places and also any new businesses that might be established. What will the process be to make sure that the product can be marketed throughout Saskatchewan and hopefully throughout Canada and other parts of the world?

And so the main purpose of this Bill is to set up the process whereby a third party can be engaged to provide the inspection services. And I spent some time already talking about that, but now I want to talk about the section in the Act which is . . . I guess I'll give you the exact section. It's section 4 of the Act, and it's talking about new sections 2.1 to 2.3. 2.1 sets out the responsibilities and powers of the minister; 2.2 sets out the animal products inspection administration agreement, which I just talked about. And then 2.3 is the clause that I now want to

talk about and I haven't talked about before.

This is the clause that's titled "**Matters arising from entering into an animal products inspection administration agreement.**" And then it talks about the specific provisions and what that means and how this agreement or this contracting out of providing the inspection will work. And it's an interesting question as to what type of agency. You know, presumably in 2014 it will be a newly created entity. Maybe it will include some of the inspectors that used to do the work for the federal government through the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, but we don't know. It may be people that will come up from the States or from another province. We don't know.

But one of the things that's set out in this section 2.3 which I think is quite interesting is that it allows for the setting, charging, and collecting of payments for the inspection services rendered. And so basically in the contract it gives the ability to create these particular fees. And it's not entirely clear what the process will be, but my question would be, what kind of contribution to that process of setting fees will the producers have? What contribution will the processors have? Will there be any ability to bargain, and what will happen in this whole thing? Because right now when the government sets the fees, there's accountability through the MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly]. There's accountability through the legislature around the fees. Will that continue even though it's probably a couple of arm's lengths away from the government, or what is going to happen?

This whole new agreement will also give the . . . This animal products inspection administration agreement will also give whoever has signed the agreement the ability to enforce collection of inspection fees. So what does that mean? Does that mean they would have their own enforcement mechanism? Would that mean that they go to collection agencies? Or will they have the ability to come back and rely on provincial government enforcement mechanisms which have traditionally been used when people do not pay fees for services that are provided by the government? It's not very clear in this enabling legislation how that's going to be done, but that's a practical matter that may be of concern to the local meat processing shop. It also doesn't really say whether this will extend to every butcher shop in Saskatchewan because they'll be provincially located, or will it only apply to the 12 facilities that are mentioned? What's the extent of the reach of this type of a process?

Now it does say that these contracts will have requirements for reports back to the minister providing information and documents, and that's a good thing. But how often will that happen? Will it be sufficient that within the Ministry of Agriculture they can monitor the quality of our food? Will these reports also be shared with the Ministry of Health and all of their public health inspectors that are located there with the regional health authorities? How does this all fit together within a whole system that protects the health and safety of the public?

And it also, this whole animal products inspection administration agreement will also have provision that allows for these contracting agencies to maintain and issue licences or certificates and to make sure that some of these, some of the

decisions around that whole process of licensing different producers will go to whoever the contracting agency is.

So there are a whole number of questions around what the process will be. And I can see why the minister suggested that he is still in the process of trying to keep the federal government in the process because we know how that process works. We have had good service over many decades from the Canadian Food Inspection Agency.

And this legislation attempts to do all of those things but in an entirely new way with all kinds of possibility of difficulties arising. So I know that there are a number of consequences of the legislation that we won't even really know what the practical aspects of it is until 2014. And we're anticipating that whatever arrangements are made will be in place before January 1, 2014 so there's continuity of our food inspections, but we don't know for sure whether that's going to happen.

Now the other side or the other aspect of this particular legislation relates to the marketing assurance fund that's in place. And it's also a new creation, and it's I think got some good goals insofar as it's been set up. But I thought it was quite interesting in looking at the legislation that the section 6, I think it is, repeals section 16 and 16.1 of the existing Act, and those sections set up something called the Livestock Patrons' Protection Fund. So effectively it was supposed to be a fund like what this new legislation is going to put in place, but what it says in the information that we received is that that fund was never used. It was there, but it was never used by the livestock industry because it was too restrictive.

And so what's been suggested is that the new version that's in the legislation now will have some more options to it, so therefore it hopefully will be used by the industry. But there doesn't appear to be any guarantee that this one will meet the needs either, and I think practically where the whole thing will either survive or not survive relates to how much it will actually cost to participate in the fund, and that's something that we have no information about at this stage.

So there's a whole number of issues as it relates to this legislation. It's important legislation for the protection of the public in Saskatchewan. It's important legislation for the livestock industry to make sure that their products are properly prepared and marketed, and I think it's important for our economy. So we very clearly want to have this all work properly.

I know some of my colleagues will have some further comments about this, and we'll be looking forward to hearing from some of the people who will be affected in addition to just the ordinary consumer. And so we'll gather those comments and further add them to the debate as we proceed. But at this point I would like to move adjournment of the debate.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — The Leader of the Opposition has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 60, *The Animal Products Amendment Act, 2012*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Carried.

### Bill No. 61

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. McMorris that **Bill No. 61 — *The Railway Amendment Act, 2012*** be now read a second time.]

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

**Ms. Chartier:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm pleased to wade into the debate on Bill No. 61, *The Railway Amendment Act, 2012*.

What this bill sets out to do, or what *The Railway Amendment Act* does, it outlines the railway abandonment process which requires railway owners to offer to sell their railway lines to interested parties before they're allowed to permanently abandon the railway.

I know in the minister's second reading comments he outlined a couple of problems that this bill aims to address. He had mentioned in his remarks that:

The abandonment process requires that a railway owner first advertise their intentions to either sell or abandon the line and invite any expressions of interest from the buyers. [But right now] Currently the Highway Traffic Board has insufficient authority to remedy a situation where either the seller or the potential buyer is negotiating in bad faith.

The other issue, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is: "In the government purchase phase, a municipal government is required to either decline or accept the offer to purchase the net salvage value within 60 days of receiving the offer, and they can only request a net salvage value after they have accepted the offer." The net salvage value is the value of a railway track that's going to be abandoned and sold as salvage. Generally this is the amount a railway could expect to receive if they paid to dismantle the railway and then sold the materials. So "As a result . . . [municipalities] are forced to make a critical decision without knowing what the exact purchase price will be."

So those are the two issues that the minister outlined in his second reading comments. And he has said that it was proposed:

. . . that *The Railway Act* be amended to adopt the following provisions. To address bad faith negotiation allegations against the seller during the sale phase . . . [this government is] proposing to give the Highway Traffic Board new powers to evaluate the disputes and, if necessary, issue an order to the parties to enter an agreement that the board believes is fair and reasonable. Alternatively if the board believes the potential buyer is negotiating in bad faith, the board has the authority to relieve the seller of their obligation to continue negotiating with the interested party.

The second piece, the second remedy that is found in this bill is:

In order to give the municipal governments more comfort in their decision to accept the offer to purchase . . . [the government is] proposing an amendment that will allow municipal governments the opportunity to request a net salvage value cost estimate before accepting the offer.

[19:15]

So those are the changes that this minister is proposing. And it's interesting when we talk about shortline or regional railway lines, did you know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that there are 13 shortline railways in Saskatchewan? And actually one you . . . I can tell that you're nodding and you most certainly do know that. The newest one actually came online, I understand, just this late summer or early fall and this is the Long Creek Railway, which is interesting.

So number 13 here just a couple of months ago and a group of investors purchased the railway from CP [Canadian Pacific]. And trains haven't run on that line in decades, and the goal is — so that's a long time, Mr. Deputy Speaker — but the goal is, although they may consider passenger travel in the future, but for right now they're only hauling bulk commodities.

The passenger travel piece is interesting to me, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I've grown up here in Saskatchewan and my grandmother actually lived in Melville. That's where my mom is from. And my grandpa actually worked for the railway. My grandma, in her almost 100 years, didn't once set foot on an airplane. Her whole travelling days were on trains. She'd come to Saskatoon on the train or she'd go to Toronto. Actually my uncle, one of her sons, lived in Toronto. So my grandma's whole travelling time was spent on the train.

And I grew up, actually until I was 19 I had never, never been on a train myself, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and it was such a huge part of my life growing up though. I had an older sister who had the opportunity to travel with my grandma, and I always felt like I was missing something by never getting to travel on a train.

And I know, I know that there's many days, coming between Saskatoon and Regina, and I think about shortline travel but I also think about that opportunity — wouldn't it be nice if we had a train, a high-speed train going between Saskatoon and Regina or elsewhere? I know many of us would take advantage of that. And I think high-speed, a high-speed train would be a wonderful thing, speaking from experience, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The other thing actually, as I said I had never been on a train until I was about 19 years old, and I had an opportunity to travel to Europe. And it amazed me, actually. In London, my brother was living in London playing hockey, and to travel on the tube within London was amazing, but elsewhere as well across Europe getting on a train. And that was such an efficient and amazing way to get around. And I wish train travel was a little bit more affordable these days. Actually, it's not inexpensive now to ride the train.

So I appreciate train as a method of travel, and the short time that I did have an opportunity to spend in Europe, it was a wonderful experience to get to travel that way. But actually I

was thinking, just thinking about this little rickety train line in Switzerland riding up to a mountain called Jungfrauoch, actually. It was interesting on this . . . So they have these amazing trains, but it was like a little circus train, Mr. Deputy Speaker, going up to this, to a glacier actually. And my sister was with me and we rode this very rickety, interesting train straight up a mountain. It was beautiful and amazing, but it was kind of a scary experience as well. But getting to see this glacier and visit this was quite a tourist attraction and was kind of nice as well.

But we think about trains, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and the importance here in Saskatchewan as we look at our highways and look at the damage that big trucks often do to our highways. And I know I was thinking about a trip that I took last summer to pick up my daughter in southeast Saskatchewan on Highway 15, travelling at highway speeds — not any faster than I should have, Mr. Deputy Speaker — and I almost lost the undercarriage of my car at that point in time. And I think about the importance of supporting, the importance of supporting shortline rail, in large part to ensure that with truck traffic . . . I think producers would like the opportunity to get their commodities to market in this fashion. And I know as someone who travels on the highways, there are many people who think that train travel would be easier, much easier on our highways than some of the big trucks.

Trucks keep getting bigger and bigger, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I know that all of us here in this legislature are on the road a lot, and you see these large trucks that undoubtedly do inflict a huge amount of damage to our road — big rigs. Whether they're hauling grain or oil or any other product, logging, the reality is there is huge damage to our roads. And I know this government talks about their great investment, but anybody who's out and about on the highways in Saskatchewan know that, as this government likes to say, there is more work to do, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I remember last year actually, I can't remember what the exact phrase was, but as you head down to almost going through Lumsden, there was signs on the road that said surface failure. I can't remember the exact, exact wording, but on a really important highway that's regularly used and that had been repaired not long ago was already having some difficulties.

My brother is a civil engineer who has many, many, many years of experience, and right now he's actually in Egypt working for about six weeks for that government, working on asset management. I know he has all kinds of comments and issues and concerns with asset management here in Saskatchewan and with regard to our infrastructure and particularly our highways, that he has some huge concerns with the way that resources are being managed here in Saskatchewan.

The one thing, Mr. Deputy Speaker, too, that he has flagged — or, Mr. Speaker; it's good to see you, Mr. Speaker — the one thing that he also has flagged is some capacity . . . My brother has been an engineer in Saskatchewan for, I believe, about three decades, actually a little bit longer than that possibly, and he has flagged some concerns around capacity in the Ministry of Highways right now. So we think about train travel and supporting shortline and regional railways and the importance there, but we also think about smart investment in highways.

And I think that this government has a long way to go when it comes to making smart investments in highways.

But with respect to Bill No. 61, *The Railway Amendment Act*, I know the minister has laid out a couple of problems and a couple of solutions that he believes will resolve these issues. And I know that there's many people who worked very hard in the early days to get shortline railways going and make sure that this is a way to support producers, so we'll be reaching out in the next weeks and months to ensure that this bill does address the issues that the minister has said that it does.

So with that, I know that I do have colleagues who are interested in wading into this debate and with that, for now I would like to move to adjourn debate. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 61, *The Railway Amendment Act, 2012*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

#### Bill No. 62

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Doherty that **Bill No. 62 — *The Parks Amendment Act, 2012 (No. 2)*** 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 after supper to have the opportunity to join in on the discussion on Bill No. 62, *An Act to amend The Parks Act*.

I think it was just last week, Mr. Speaker, I had the opportunity, the enjoyable opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to make some comments about regional parks. And it's a pleasure to have the opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to talk about our provincial parks, a complementary yet unique feature of our park system here in Saskatchewan and our park system here in the country.

Provincial parks, of course, are very important to our province. And every individual, most individuals in the province have perhaps a favourite provincial park that they like going to as a family, either for holidays or maybe a family cabin nearby or at the park. And, Mr. Speaker, it's an important aspect in a number of ways.

One, it's important in an ecological sense because in provincial parks there's the opportunity to protect the environment of the area, to ensure that standards are being followed; also, Mr. Speaker, to ensure that there is adequate enforcement with respect to the guidelines and the regulations related to the park. And provincial parks are important in an ecological sense, Mr. Speaker, because they do cover the province. They go north to south, east to west. So it covers the different types of terrain and geography and ecology that we have throughout our province, Mr. Speaker.

So whether we are in the North or the South or whether we're in

a really remote area or an area that's close to cities and towns and a good amount of development, provincial parks are important in an ecological sense of protecting the environment. We also know, Mr. Speaker, that provincial parks are hugely important when it comes to serving our economy also. It's important not to overlook this fact. Yes, they're there for the protection of the area and for the citizens' enjoyment of nature but, Mr. Speaker, they're also important in an economic sense because of the activities that are associated with provincial parks.

And last week — I believe it was last week — when I spoke about regional parks, there are many examples where regional parks are a very important factor in the financial well-being of a local area, the support of a town or a community. And the same, Mr. Speaker, stands for provincial parks. Because of the quality of our provincial parks, because of the uniqueness of them, they're a big draw, a big draw for our own residents here in the province. And we also know, Mr. Speaker, they're an attraction for campers coming from other provinces or for people travelling through the province on a road trip perhaps and stopping at a regional park. We know people care about regional parks because, I believe, many members have had individuals contact them when it comes to reservations of camping spots. And people have patterns and have favourite spots that they like to go. And when that's disrupted, it is an issue.

So, Mr. Speaker, we care about provincial parks because they matter to our province in a big way. They matter in an ecological sense. They matter in an economic sense. They also matter, Mr. Speaker, in a cultural or historic sense. And we know that there have been many of the provincial parks that are long-standing also have connections to our provincial history, which I think is very important to remember. Whether it's the early settlers or whether it's the activity and the traditional areas of First Nations or Métis people, provincial parks also greatly are connected to our stories and our sense of place, the things that make people proud to be from Saskatchewan, among the things that make people to be proud from Saskatchewan, and among the things that people brag about perhaps when they go to other provinces. We talk about our lakes often, or we may talk about a favourite golf course.

So it's important because of the ecological, because of the historical and cultural, and because of the economic significance of provincial parks. It's important that we get it right and take the right steps when it comes to protecting and promoting and enhancing the existing parks but also, Mr. Speaker, when we have any sort of discussion about the addition of parks or the adjustment of park boundaries, it's important that we ask all the right questions to make sure, to make sure, Mr. Speaker, that the considerations of the environment, the considerations of our history and sense of place, and the considerations of the economy are in fact being taken into consideration as the way they need to be in order to ensure that the correct and proper decisions are being made about our provincial park system.

So the legislation, Mr. Speaker, the amendment that has been introduced by the minister, it's Bill No. 62, as I said earlier, *An Act to amend The Parks Act*. And second reading was given by the minister responsible on November 13th, 2012. And in the

minister's second reading speech, a number of items were identified. And I do, while I'm sure the minister is engaged in his file, I do compliment the people within the ministry who drafted his second reading speech and nicely crafted it in an easy-way-to-understand way.

There are four components that are identified, Mr. Speaker, with what this piece of legislation is doing. The first component, Mr. Speaker, is the creation of a new park. And the minister suggests that this new park be tentatively named the Anglin-Emma Lakes Provincial Park, Anglin-Emma because those are the two largest lakes in the area that is being proposed as a new provincial park.

[19:30]

Mr. Speaker, as a general principle, the addition of provincial parks is something that I think is good, and I'm encouraged by this step. Who wouldn't want more parks? In my opinion, I think it's a very important step. But when we're making changes and we're making additions to new provincial parks, it's important that it be done in a way that respects traditional activities in the area. It's important that it be done in a way that respects those who currently live in the area. It's important that it respects the history and the considerations for the region because with the increased protection of our provincial park and some of the implications that come from having a provincial park present in the area, local people will be affected. And so it's important to ensure that consultation has taken place.

According to the minister's remarks, a good number of people have been identified where discussions have occurred between ministry officials and the local area. So I hope that that has been as thorough as we would hope it to be, Mr. Speaker, and that the residents in the area — whether it be people involved with the RM [rural municipality] or whether it be First Nations and Métis groups — I would hope, Mr. Speaker, that there has been a good discussion that has been two-way and that their considerations have been accommodated as best they can be and that they have been respected through the process. I think that's important. The government is hit and miss when it comes to how they engage in consultation. So I hope this would be an example where things have been done properly as opposed to incidents when things have been done improperly.

There are some considerations. I see the minister suggests that a new name be used to replace the temporary name of the Anglin-Emma Lakes Provincial Park. I would be interested to have a bit more information on how that exactly will occur, whose interests will be considered in that process. I imagine the minister would likely have ultimate say in that but it would be good to know that, it would be good if that was a way to engage the communities affected in order to ensure that they know that their views have been respected and heard.

The other interesting component, Mr. Speaker, to this discussion, and actually just coming out of the news at the end of last week and through question period today is how this provincial park, which includes Anglin and Emma lakes, how this affects the Kenderdine Campus at Emma Lake. I think that's an important consideration. When we think of how the park, or we think of where the park is in the boreal forest . . . And in the minister's own remarks he talks about the

significance of that area in an ecological sense and in a historical sense as well, I suppose. We know that the Kenderdine Campus has also been playing an important role in the promotion of those ideals and the promotion of those considerations.

So with the campus essentially, well not essentially . . . It is shut down now for at least a period of a number of years and with its ultimate future really unknown, some major questions there, Mr. Speaker, with respect to how the provincial park that's being proposed will interact with the land and the property and the function of what has been the Kenderdine Campus. I think that is an important consideration as we think of the future of this very important area and when we think of the future of the very important Kenderdine Campus, what may in fact be in store for the campus and how that is connected or not connected to the proposed provincial park.

So I think that is an important point to note. And when we have future discussions and ongoing discussions on, whether it be with the provincial park or the Kenderdine Campus, it's important to keep this fact in mind, that there will be . . . Each will be affected by the other. And I would hope, Mr. Speaker, that both can have a bright future, that both can serve the goals of protecting the boreal, that both, Mr. Speaker, can serve an educational and a constructive role in promoting the area and sharing the wealth of the experience and the ecology with more people.

And that, Mr. Speaker, as Kenderdine Campus, has been a traditional spot where individuals have come to learn, to experience the area, and to promote its ecology and to learn about its ecology. Provincial park matters to that, Mr. Speaker, so it's necessary that one is not at the expense of the other. And it's necessary, Mr. Speaker, that we don't turn a blind eye to one area while the other area at this time looks like it may be turned into a provincial park based on the legislation. So that was the first area that the minister identified as an area of concern — not a concern but as an area being changed by this piece of legislation.

The second area, Mr. Speaker, that's being addressed is the Coteau Bay area. And this is in Danielson Provincial Park along Lake Diefenbaker, Mr. Speaker. And what we see here is 31 hectares of the park being taken out of protection and out of the park boundaries and to be used for development of cottages, I believe the minister's remarks said, Mr. Speaker — cottage lot development.

The minister states that this area is of low ecological value because of the process of the construction of the Gardiner dam. So in a sense of protecting native prairie or native prairie grasses, that's not as much of a concern, according to the minister's remarks. The minister's suggesting that the 31 acres will be offset by adding 65 acres of native prairie grassland. So I would be interested, Mr. Speaker, with respect to the nature of that swap, to ensure that it is appropriate and that the quality of the land being exchanged there is in fact an upgrade and that the part of the park that is being taken out of protection, Mr. Speaker, that it is in fact damaged in an ecological sense, Mr. Speaker. So I'd be interested in knowing the specific details and a bit more information about that.

But I do want to make a few remarks about the proposed purpose for the 31 hectares that are being taken out for cottage lot development. I have some questions, Mr. Speaker, with respect to what that will actually look like in terms of the type of development and who the developer will be, what has been proposed so far, what sort of work has been done up to this date — so the details around that sort of development. Is it combined with the creation of a resort or is it strictly cabin lots? Are there other plans for the area or is it simply the cottage lot development as the minister's remarks would suggest?

And I'd be interested to know, Mr. Speaker, who the main players are in that arrangement. I think for the sake of transparency and the sake of having a full understanding of what the implications of this legislation will be. I think those are important points to bring up and important questions that, perhaps in the committee process, the minister will be able to shed some more light on those issues.

So, Mr. Speaker, we want to make sure that the swap being proposed is in fact an upgrade and we want to make sure, Mr. Speaker, that the development of the area for cottage lots has been well thought out and that any questions about its future use are being addressed in a way that is transparent and a way that is in the best interest of the area.

So, Mr. Speaker, this piece of legislation, the amendment, affects four different areas. It creates the new park, the Anglin-Emma Lakes Provincial Park. It causes the swapping of some land to do with Danielson Provincial Park. And the third area, Mr. Speaker, where the amendment changes some of the rules or the guidelines for our provincial parks, has to do with the interaction between residents and nature, specifically in the sense of wildlife.

And we know people like going to parks because they are in fact in nature, and people — for those of us that live in a city or live in a developed area — we like going to parks because it's a break from the regular routine of being in the city and it gives us exposure, it gives our children exposure to the things that we love about the province. But, Mr. Speaker, whenever humans do go into creation, go into nature, there is interaction. And sometimes there are problems and sometimes our activities can cause concerns for the wildlife who make that area home.

This amendment, the third component of the legislation that is proposed by the minister, addresses the issue of bears and addresses how campgrounds can attract bears to the area. And, Mr. Speaker, from travelling and working in a number of provinces and wilderness areas, I know it is a concern when a bear wanders into camp. And once bears know where a food source is, Mr. Speaker, and have familiarity with an area and have a high level of comfort with humans, it is a problem. And in the vast majority of cases it ends poorly for the bear, Mr. Speaker, which is sad because when you see a great animal like a black bear in Saskatchewan, to have them have to be shot for safety reasons is a real tragedy and a concern. So anything that we can do to reduce the number of times that humans can interact with bears and reduce the items which may attract bears into an area where humans are, I think that's a good thing.

So this bit of legislation would allow park staff, Mr. Speaker, to deal with campsites when the campers aren't there. And so if

there's food left out or other materials, dirty pots and pans that are attracting animals to the area, it gives the park staff the authority to gather those things up, put them somewhere where they can't attract the animals, and deal with the matter by giving proper notice to the campers at the campsite and deal with it in that manner.

To me, Mr. Speaker, this does seem reasonable and I think is a good step. If it's something that makes it easier to prevent more interaction between humans and bears, I think that's a good thing and so long as the rights of and the property of the campers are respected in a reasonable manner, I think that's a fairly fair thing, Mr. Speaker.

So the first area this amendment to the Act addresses is the creation of the Anglin-Emma Provincial Park. The second area affects the boundaries with respect to land purposes in Danielson Provincial Park.

The third area allows park staff to deal with campgrounds when there's bear interaction and humans are part of the problem in the situation. And the fourth component, and the final component that's being addressed in this legislation, Mr. Speaker, is a mapping issue to deal with Steele Narrows Provincial Park whereby the descriptions of the park is being adjusted to improve mapping of the park, according to the minister. And this affects the area close to Makwa Lake.

As the minister suggests in his own second reading remarks, Mr. Speaker, he stated that the current boundary of the parks are part of the provincial park and he seeks "... to remove a sliver of land separated from the main park area by Highway 699 so it may be transferred to the Ministry of Agriculture."

The minister goes on say that his ministry "... has worked with the Ministry of Agriculture and Information Services Corporation to ensure agreement with the legal description and that mapping of Steele Narrows Provincial Park meets with their approval, and they have assisted with this amendment."

So the change, based on what the minister states here, Mr. Speaker, does not seem overly extensive or major. I'm not personally very familiar with the area so I can't speak to what this is actually doing from first-hand experience. I would hope that the minister's remarks are accurate in the sense that it is a, it would appear to be a minor change, but if it is major I would, if it's more extensive than what it would appear in his brief remarks here, I would look forward to him bringing more information to the committee process when this piece of legislation is considered in committee, or if he wanted to provide that information earlier on. But at face value, based on the limited comments I have, based on his remarks and what's been provided in the legislation, it does not seem to be as perhaps as significant as the other parts. But with my limited knowledge of the area specifically, I could be incorrect in that statement.

But with that, Mr. Speaker, I've talked about the four areas identified by the minister and raised some questions and some concerns. With respect to the creation of a new park, it's important to consider the Kenderdine Campus at Emma Lake and how that decision affects the proposed new park. It's also, Mr. Speaker, important to ensure that the proper consultation



has taken place with the many groups in the area and that's it's been done in a respectful way. And, Mr. Speaker, it's important that as the planning continues and a final name is achieved, that that be done in a way that serves the best interests of everyone. So those are some of the comments I made about that.

The second component, Mr. Speaker, with respect to Danielson Provincial Park and the swapping of some land in order to allow for cabin development, the questions about the ecological nature of the two areas in order to ensure that the remarks made by the minister are accurate, I would be interested in that and more transparency with respect to the proposed development. Who has been engaged? Who will be engaged? What are the timelines? Who is to benefit through the process and what is the proposed benefit to the area? I think those are fair and reasonable questions.

The third component, Mr. Speaker, that I addressed with respect to bears and the power of park officers to remove dangerous wildlife attractants as it is stated seems like common sense to me and I would, in my own opinion, generally support those measures.

And the fourth component seems like more or less an administrative step with respect to changing some of the mapping to reflect one specific area. If it is more extensive than that, I look forward to the minister's remarks in committee to suggest that it is greater than that or to hear from people from the area, which would be appreciated as well.

So, Mr. Speaker, those are a few remarks I've made concerning Bill No. 62, *An Act to amend The Parks Act*. As I said, parks are important. Last week I enjoyed talking about regional parks, and today I enjoyed talking about provincial parks. But I know other colleagues would like to speak about it, so with that I would move to adjourn debate. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 62, *The Parks Amendment Act, 2012 (No. 2)*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

[19:45]

### Bill No. 63

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Doherty that **Bill No. 63** — *The Regional Parks Act, 2012* be now read a second time.]

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

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to join in the debate on Bill No. 63, *An Act Respecting Regional Parks and making consequential amendments to other Acts*, a very important Act because it deals with a very important issue in our communities right across this province of regional parks. And I have a fair bit to say. I know that many will want to talk about this, but I think this is one of the unsung heroes or undiscovered things in our province that is truly

something that we value. And you know, it's the strength of many communities, the local regional park, and I want to spend some time talking about this because this is a very thorough overhaul of the regional parks and I'm not sure what the consultation is. But I do want to talk a little bit about some of the background of what happened this summer that sort of caused regional parks to come forward in the news and made everyone sort of sit up and say, what's going on here?

You know, we've seen different kinds of levels of consultation from the Sask Party government. And we've raised concerns here, whether it be the new labour legislation, the overhaul there and the lack of public consultation there, and talking to people in a public forum. But with the regional parks, the one at LeRoy really hit a low when the Leisureland Regional Park sale fiasco happened this summer.

So I do want to take some time for the folks at home because they may have been on holidays when this all happened. And it was quite a furor; quite a lot of concern was raised. And I do want to say that this highlights how important consultation is so that we have confidence in our provincial government to oversee what happens throughout Saskatchewan, to make sure it's done in a fair and transparent and accountable manner. I mean, this is what the Sask Party talks about being elected on — being fair, being transparent, being accountable. And I clearly . . . What happened in August hit a new low, hit a new low.

And this is a true story. I mean this what *The StarPhoenix* had reported. This is what happened on August, the end of August. And I'd like to actually review this so it gets into the record for people at home because they may not know what's going on and we don't want to have this in secrecy, in a cloak of secrecy. And I think that it's important that we get it on the record.

This is an article that was published August 21st, 2012 by Jason Warick from *The StarPhoenix* and the headline was, "Regional park sale raises . . . [furor]." And he starts by saying:

Concerns are being raised about the unprecedented sale of a Saskatchewan regional park. A group of Vancouver investors has been lined up by the local park board to buy LeRoy Leisureland Regional Park, located a few kilometres from BHP Billiton's proposed Jansen potash mine project.

Now I quote. I want to make sure that people understand this is not me saying this. This is what the park manager, Maggie Hamilton, had to say. She said, "This stinks. A lot of this has been a secret, but the public should have known about this." This is what the local person was saying, the regional park manager.

Now, maybe some of the members opposite disagree or know more. They probably do know more because they're in on the secret. They're in on the secret. But other people weren't in on the secret and had a lot of concerns. So here we had:

A public meeting on the subject takes place on Wednesday evening in LeRoy, located about 130 kilometres east of Saskatoon. Hamilton and others plan to attend and ask the park's eight-member board to

reconsider.

To rethink it, rethink it, and make sure that they let everyone know, not just those who were on the inside. And this is what Maggie says. She continues by saying, “We’re hoping there’ll be enough people there making enough of a stink that they’ll have to take another look at this.”

Now this park apparently was opened in the late 1960s, has a nine-hole golf course, camping, swimming pool, and other features. And she believes, the park manager and others say the park is a busy, valuable community asset.

But she goes on, and this is what the reporter says, “The general public was not informed or asked for input on the months-long negotiations . . .” So this negotiation wasn’t something that was done over a weekend, but actually took months, took several months, it appears, to make this happen in secrecy because it only had come out in August. Why is this happening, all right?

Now it talks about someone in the government said, officials with local RMs, towns, and the provincial government consented to a non-disclosure agreement. So everybody was in, and this is the way they were going to move forward.

Darlene Friesen, the executive director of the Saskatchewan Regional Parks Association, called it, and I quote, “a very unusual development. This is the first time for this. It is what it is.”

So this is what Ms. Friesen calls the situation, and clearly there’s a concern — first time, first time for this kind of thing to happen. It’s highly unusual. Now she goes on to talk about “Many years ago, a couple of parks closed due to lack of volunteers or resources. This is the first time such a sale has been negotiated.” So there you go.

And this is what the park board’s treasurer, Leona Wakelan, had to say, that she “. . . confirmed the park has been ‘sold,’ but said it will remain open . . . [but] the park’s future is unclear.” She calls it a good news story, but she wouldn’t give the details until the Wednesday meeting.

And so, “The provincial government’s director of park management services, Bob McEachern, said the government agreed to the ‘dissolution’ of the park,” and it’s several months to go on.

So I think it’s important that we get this on the record because many people don’t know what actually happened, or what is happening today, because we don’t know whether this is actually concluded. We don’t know whether this sale is complete. And this is very important that when you have this . . . when you operate in a cloak of secrecy, what really are the facts? We can only go by what the public record is, and this in this case, this is *The StarPhoenix* on August 21st. So the government evaluated the park’s value and what the plan was: “. . . proximity of other comparable services, the dispersal of park assets and other factors.”

So in the end, the minister agreed to let the board, the local board proceed. That’s what he was going to do. All right. And then he says, the minister says, the regional park . . . or Bob

McEachern says this, not the minister: “The regional park as we know it would not be a regional park.”

And he goes on to say, “. . . there is nothing in provincial legislation requiring the public to be notified before a park is sold or shut down.” So here we have before us some legislation and we have to make sure that’s in there. Is the public going to be notified when there are changes like a park being sold or shut down? So we have that question.

All right, now it talks about there’s “. . . been no other dissolution applications filed by any of the [other] boards of Saskatchewan’s nearly 100 regional parks.” So we have these Vancouver investors, or go on that it says:

. . . are also interested in purchasing land adjacent to the park and in other parts of the region, according to people involved in the process.

The area could be home to BHP’s Jansen potash mine, which, if approved by the BHP board, would be the world’s largest.

And that’s a matter of public record that that’s what they’re out there saying. So clearly if you’re investing in that area, it’s not a bad idea, and buying a regional park would be a good idea.

You know, the writer, the reporter, Jason Warick, wants to create some context. He talks about the:

Regional parks were created decades ago to give outdoor recreation options to Saskatchewan communities.

Some are owned by park boards, while others are owned by municipalities or leased. Once designated a regional park . . . [the] control shifts to the park’s volunteer board.

Talks about how, and Ms. Friesen goes on to say the provincial minister does have the power to intervene, but that’s never really happened. So and then she goes on talk about how as for funding, most of the parks generate significant revenue, and capital improvements were cost-shared. And there’s a lot of revenue that happens in these parks and I’ve wanted to talk a little bit about that.

I want to go on. And then this is the news story that posted August 22nd and updated August 23rd. And this is from Sarah Mills of CKOM on August 23. She goes:

People in Leroy, Saskatchewan are seeing something the province had never seen before — a sold sign across Leroy Leisureland, a regional park east of Saskatoon.”

So the park is being sold to a Vancouver private investor, but many locals are not happy about this. But we know that there was that public meeting, and they went on.

This is the background to all of this, this idea that the Sask Party yet again . . . You know, and I really appreciate that sometimes they talk about how they won’t take lessons from us on consulting. But if this is their style of consulting — completely in secrecy about a public asset, about a public asset — then I think there’s some real . . . We won’t take any lessons

from them, Mr. Speaker. We won't take any lessons from them.

This is really something that when the history books are written, and we talk and we look under C for consultations and what the Sask Party government has done in terms of consultations with the people of Saskatchewan, whether it's the wildlife habitat Act, now Leisureland, there's some real lessons to be learned from the future generations about how not to do, how not to do public consultations.

If you want to have the trust and the confidence of people across the province, this is not what you do. You do not allow negotiations to go on for months in secrecy. This is not how you . . . On one hand, they campaigned to say they're going to be accountable and transparent . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . And the member from Moose Jaw, the member from Moose Jaw, he's woken up. The member from Moose Jaw has woken up. He has to know, he has to know . . . Maybe he hasn't read their campaign literature. They campaign on being transparent and accountable, and yet he hollers across, he hollers across. That's not what they want to do. That's not what they want to do. When they're elected they get to do whatever they want, whatever they want. And right away they do these kind of deals with Vancouver investors in secret, in secret. And the member from Moose Jaw thinks that's quite A-okay, that's quite A-okay.

But, Mr. Speaker, I do want to go back and say that clearly this is an important Act because the regional parks are an important component of our communities here in Saskatchewan. And they do really, really good work. And the regional parks association is an outstanding organization that I've had the pleasure to get to know many of the people involved. And they are deeply committed, deeply committed to providing the best services possible at the local level to ensure their park system is strong and viable and sustainable. It's really important that they are because they are such an important part of our communities right across the province.

And as we know, there's nearly 100 of these and they have a lot of challenges. It's not easy to run a regional park. There's high expectations, high expectations in terms of the quality of services that you provide. That whether it's camping or whether it's a golf course, cross-country skiing, swimming pools — swimming pools are critical when we get those hot days in Saskatchewan — that clearly they play an important role. And the wonderful thing is about it because they are locally operated and they have a really strong sense of purpose and they do an outstanding job. And what happens is that they do work that really reflects the needs of the communities. The communities identify whether it's a golf course they want, whether it's a swimming pool they want, or whether it's cross-country skiing or snowmobiling, whatever the particular area feels would fit their needs in terms of recreation. They can really establish the get her done, the go-forward plan.

[20:00]

But quite often that isn't the case. They've had challenges to make ends meet. They've had challenges around particularly accessing infrastructure dollars on a regular basis because quite often they're seen as an add-on and if the government is doing well, then they will get funding but if they're not doing well,

then it's a challenge, you know.

And this information sheet that many of us received in response to the bill coming forward talks about some of the challenges that they have. Part of the issue is how to work with local municipalities to make sure that they get access to some of the infrastructure dollars that are out there. And she talks about how sometimes that is a challenge for municipalities because municipalities themselves have challenges to meet in terms of where to spend infrastructure dollars because they are limited.

And I know my colleague from Saskatoon Riversdale raised the issue around asset management. And this is clearly a case of when you have municipalities across the province identifying what's in their local areas, what do they value, what do they need to support, it's important that they recognize the regional parks.

I just want to quote from this information bulletin. It says there are a few regional parks receiving funding from their municipalities, but the majority of the funding seems to be supporting the swimming pools that are located in these parks. Most municipalities are contributing less to their regional park financially. There's some anomalies and there's some in-kind assistance, but the original contribution level is not being seen any longer by the majority of regional parks. So this leaves the regional park raising funding they need to operate and renew infrastructure on their own in many cases.

It goes on to say many people believe the municipalities share extra resources of revenue that they've been given with the regional parks, and other than a few cases, this also doesn't happen. And these municipalities have many projects that need funding as well.

Number 4, regional parks are seldom allowed to participate in federal-provincial infrastructure programs that are offered to municipalities. The password for these programs is sent out to municipalities, and it's usually a closed system unless a municipality does not have the need for funding and allows the regional park to use the application.

So what do they need? They need awareness, because clearly this is an important issue for them because they have a lot of costs.

One of the things they wanted to talk about is that dollars invested by — and this is for just the past year, I believe — dollars invested by regional parks in the province was \$7.9 million. That's huge. Huge. Return on investment for every public dollar they spend, about three and a half dollars. So that's really, really critical. They've completed 719 major infrastructure projects which include new campsites, campgrounds, picnic tables, barbecues, fire pits, washroom upgrades, shower upgrades, water systems, 19 golf course upgrades, 12 ball diamonds, playgrounds, computer software for booking, snow-making line upgrades, and the list goes on. Swimming pool upgrades, 33; new buildings, 127; equipment of course for mowers, trucks, maintenance equipment, concession equipment, 153 of those pieces or projects were bought; 19 golf carts. And the list goes on. Clearly, clearly an important issue for these folks.

So they're anticipating for the projected projects that are coming up, computers again for reservation systems, again new buildings, quite a few. New equipment, that type of thing. So about 201 new projects they want to see. So this will be very important that we support them, that we support them.

They're anticipating, I think, getting about \$1 million from funding through the various government levels; 61 parks will be participating. The total project value of the capital projects will be 4.3 million. So this is quite a return that if we invest \$1 of public money, they will invest another \$4.2. So it's clearly a good deal for us, and it really does, really does meet the need.

So I want to take a minute here, Mr. Speaker, to review what the minister said when he talked about why he thinks this is an important Act. And I think it's important that we take a look. Every time a minister makes comments, their second reading speech, it's important to review this because then that sets the context, sets the stage for the legislation because if we don't really review that and we don't understand it, then we'll maybe miss some significant parts. And the next time we get to hear from the minister is actually in committee, and that could be quite a while. Because I think there may be groups who will want to talk about this and ask some questions or want some clarification about this.

So he rose and spoke about this and talked about the "... new legislation is being proposed to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of regional parks governance and to provide additional clarity to the regional park authorities that rely on this legislation and the subsequent regulations to guide their operations." So clearly that's an important thing.

He acknowledges that this is, these parks offer "... a wide range of outdoor recreational services and facilities, which fulfill a need for local tourism and recreation opportunities." And clearly they do. We know many people plan their summer holidays. They plan winter outings, whether it's snowmobiling or cross-country skiing because these folks really, really do care about their parks.

Now he talks about how the Act hasn't really been upgraded since 1970s or even the '60s and that he will want to really focus on five critical areas, and that will send a signal to our municipal, non-profit partners that they are working together. Maybe in secrecy they're working together, but the public needs to know as well.

"The first area of improvement ... is to provide a much clearer description of the minister's powers with regard to the regional parks ... [system]." So he wants to lay out what they can do or what they can't do as a minister, and I think that's important and critical because there's too many questions, particularly when we saw the LeRoy Leisureland situation where there's too many questions about this minister and his Act.

The second critical area of improvement, Mr. Speaker, talks about "... the authority to delegate certain minister's powers to the Saskatchewan Regional Parks Association via a formal administration agreement."

So again recognize the important role of the SRPA [Saskatchewan Regional Parks Association] and how they play

a pivotal role in the administration of programs that are in the parks right across the province and how they serve, not only for a voice for the regional parks, but also providing important services like accreditation, marketing, provision of advice, and so on. Because you know, when you have these boards — and there's some nearly 100 boards, I understand — if there's 100 parks, clearly there's a lot of work and there's a lot of capacity building. You can't have people working on boards, it's not a good situation if you're asking people to assume responsibilities and you're not providing training, you're not developing them in terms of capacity to do the kind of things that people are expecting. And more and more people are expecting higher, higher standards from parks or any tourist service. We expect to be treated in a safe and hospitable and enjoyable manner. And how do you do that? It's not just an easy thing that comes naturally. It takes a bit of work.

And as well, how are you going to deal with the provincial or federal capital funding for infrastructure? It has to be done in a fair manner. It has to be done in a way that makes sense. And again I think it's important that when we talk about asset management — and clearly we need to talk about regional parks in that manner, that they are a significant asset in a province like Saskatchewan — that we don't take things for granted and say that things will continue on forevermore, that we actually have to have some strategic plans to support the kind of developments that we want to see in the regional parks.

And he talks about how the role of the SRPA has grown significantly since the 1990s and how it's important for them to develop structures and methods of how you move forward. And whether that's peer-developed and -reviewed criteria in terms of funding, that's very, very important.

So it talks about how they've worked together with the Saskatchewan Regional Parks Association to develop this legislation. I think that's very important and clearly we need to know more about that. And I hope that the SRPA will be letting us know if there's any errors or omissions, because we know that when you work with a group, the group may be expecting that everything they've said is in the legislation, and lo and behold, some key, key pieces are missing and then you have unintended consequences. It may make a lot of sense to the provincial government and to the minister, but to the people on the ground, they have a big question mark and they're not sure. They're not sure why things have been left out.

The third area that the minister wanted to address and highlight is the formal recognition of community and non-profit organizations in the establishment and operations of the regional park authorities, where previously only municipalities had this form of recognition. And so that leaves us with some questions about does he know, are there on the horizon some non-profit organizations that would like to form regional park authorities? Or are there some community groups that are out there? What kind of groups are these? Would they be service clubs like Kinsmen or a Lions group that are looking at this type of thing? Or is it environmental groups?

So we have some questions about that because clearly when it was left up to the municipality there was some local accountability process in place, but moving this over to non-profit organizations, hopefully there's still a line of

communication so that the local municipality knows what's going on. Because it's important, as we see in the Leisureland fiasco, when people don't know because there is a secrecy or there's a need-to-know-only basis, people are left out of the loop and miscommunication can happen.

It's clearly a situation where surprises can happen. And I know this government does have a lot of . . . It seems to operate by the surprise factor. That seems to be their mode of operating. They feel it's quite all right to make big announcements that weren't a part of their campaigns. We find that odd. We think that you should be upfront; you should be transparent and accountable.

This is the oddest way we've seen of a government to operate, with the kind of surprises they put forward, whether it be the three more MLAs, or whether it be the labour legislation that this government did not campaign on. Clearly we think that it's important that this government rethink this surprise approach to governance. We think that it doesn't fit well with their accountability, transparency mantra that they've often talked about but don't seem to care much about. Maybe it's something they should do a little reading on, about how to do proper consultations.

But clearly this is an area that we need to talk a little bit about and we have some questions about, you know. And I mean the minister talks about the ". . . changing demographics in rural Saskatchewan and the critical role that community organizations have come to play in supporting municipal partners in the management and operation of regional park authorities." So we'll be asking him to expand on what that really means in terms of the changing demographics and that link with community organizations and how that's different than it was 20, 30, or 40 years ago. So very, very interesting to know more about that.

Of course we always want to have our legislation updated and any redundant references removed and make it more clear, and if that's the case, then that's good. He talks about how the original piece of legislation was written in 1960 and how that several pieces have been moved to regulation, policy, or simply deleted. So if this an overhaul . . . And we need to know. We want to make sure there's no unintended consequences because things have been left out or just ignored.

So I think this is relatively straightforward in terms of that there'll be lots of questions. But I do want to take a minute or two now to review the bill itself. We've got the framework for the minister. We know the context of what happened this summer, whether that's the driving force of this, where the minister needs to get some more legislative powers or clarity around that because of some of the things that happened this summer, some of the challenges that have arisen from that. We're not sure. We're not sure what happened, what the end of that, what the final outcome of the sale is, but we know that he's put it in a framework of five, five main reasons for driving this forward to do the overhaul of the regional parks overhaul, as I've said.

And we have before us this new piece of legislation. And of course we want to talk about, we're looking, we're going to be carefully scrutinizing this so we don't have any unintended

consequences.

[20:15]

So as we go through it, it's always interesting to take a look and talk about the definitions. And they're relatively straightforward, but there are some that are missing. And I'll come back to one that I don't see in the interpretation, the definitions, and I think that we need to spend a little bit of time on that.

But clearly what I do like about this piece of legislation is the purposes of the Act is clear. There are three main purposes. One, 3(a):

(a) to encourage the appreciation and use of . . . cultural and recreational resources throughout Saskatchewan;

(b) to assist municipalities, local government agencies and organizations in establishing and operating regional parks with a view to making the natural, cultural and recreational resources of Saskatchewan available to the public;

(c) to facilitate the establishment and location of regional parks in such a way that the majority of Saskatchewan residents will be within a reasonable driving distance of a regional park.

So I think that's a laudable goal. It'd be interesting to know what we mean by a reasonable driving distance, as has changed in the last 30 or 40 years. But I think if that's the goal, and these are the purposes of the Act, that's a good thing.

I am curious to know if they are anticipating more regional parks coming on stream, that there has been many people come forward to say, I'd like to . . . or if there's been municipalities or community groups say, if it's at all possible, could we be setting up more regional parks? That would be of interest to know, and we'll have that question for sure.

And then of course this talks about the administration of the Act and the clarity around responsibilities and powers of the minister, regional parks administration, where it talks about entering into administration agreements and how this may be done. And that's all very well straightforward.

I want to go to page 5 though, and this is one that really caught my eye. And I think this is a key point, and I do want to spend some time on this, Mr. Speaker. In fact we'll be talking a lot about this in committee because I do have some questions about this. Part III, Regional Park Authorities, section 8(1):

**Constitution of regional park authority and establishment of regional park**

**8(1)** On receipt of an application pursuant to section 7 and if the minister is satisfied that it is in the public interest to do so, the minister may, by order:

(a) constitute the regional park authority; and

(b) establish the regional park to consist of the land

described in the application.

The key word, Mr. Speaker, that I have and I'd like to explore further, is around the public interest. Now we all have in our own minds, what does public interest mean? We can all think about that, and we think we're all on the same page and, you know, or what they could have maybe used, that if it makes common sense to do so, then to have the park. We all think we have an idea of what common sense is. But I was looking for the definition of what is public interest. If it is in the public interest to do so, then he will create the authority and grant the park to happen.

I looked in the definitions area, and there's no definition of what public interest is. So there's no set of benchmarks about what public interest is. So we could've used any phrase. As I said, we could've used common sense. If it makes common sense to do so, the minister might do this and that. So I have a real concern about what does public interest mean.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the government is not silent on what public interest is. In fact, I find this more and more of interest in this area because as I've been the Municipal Affairs critic, I've come to appreciate the work that's been done around statements of provincial interest.

Now, Mr. Speaker, and other members and folks at home, this is something that . . . Municipal relations, it's on their website, and it's very, very important because this really speaks about what is public interest. They call it statements of provincial interest, though. And I think when we get into the committee, I will want to know why aren't they using statements of provincial interest, or if it's in the provincial interest to do so, they will create the park authority and establish a regional park to consist of land described by the application.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to describe for the folks at home, and maybe for some of the folks here in the House who aren't clear of what the statements of provincial interests are. And it's really easy to google; you can just google Saskatchewan provincial interests, and up it comes. And it's a very . . . I have to say this is a very forward-thinking document of talking about how do we, how do we say, how do we state what is in the best interest for our province, the people, the land. What is our best interests here?

So now some folks may say, you know, the member is going out on a limb here because it's only used for planning. But I think everything we do here in this House really reflects and is connected to planning. So I want to just reflect on what this is. This comes from the community land use and subdivision section of Municipal relations.

#### Statements of Provincial Interest

Municipalities are authorized under The Planning and Development Act, 2007 to set policies governing the development of their communities . . .

Now if you're making regional parks, I think that could fit under development of communities by preparing and adopting official community plans and district plans containing policies to guide land use and community development, zoning bylaws

and subdivision bylaws.

These planning documents express community priorities and goals, and allow developers, business owners and homeowners to make informed decisions about purchasing and developing property in their community.

Now there sounds like a case for those folks who bought Leisureland. They may want to make an informed decision about what they've just . . . if they purchase Leisureland.

The Statements of Provincial Interest Regulations provide guidance to municipalities on a complex series of land use and development issues for municipalities, enabling them to facilitate the development of vibrant, safe, self-reliant, and sustainable municipalities.

This is what the Municipal Affairs municipalities relations website says.

And so, Mr. Speaker, the provincial oversight to ensure consistencies with these occur through official community plans and so forth. The 14 key areas of common planning interest to the province and municipalities are, how about agriculture? Talk about biodiversity, First Nations and Métis engagement, heritage and culture, intermunicipal co-operation, mineral resource and exploration, public safety, public works, recreation and tourism, residential development, sand and gravel, shore land and water bodies, source water protection, and transportation.

Mr. Speaker, if there was ever a good statement of what the public interest is, it's these that are called statements of provincial interest. And so I'm wondering why this legislation uses an archaic term like public interest when they should be using the provincial interest. And the minister should be measuring against these 14. Now some aren't necessarily going to be relevant, but clearly some of them are when you're talking about regional park authorities. When you're talking about developing new regional parks or selling or transferring regional parks, it's really important that the minister has some sort of lens other than this archaic term of public interest that's not defined in the Act. Now maybe he has a sense, or the next minister will have a sense of what means. But we do have, we have identified what the provincial interests are. And why can't they use these in determining when a regional park authority can be constituted and a new park be developed?

Now, Mr. Speaker, I do want to talk a little bit about, go into some detail about what these provincial interests are all about. And I think it's important. What I'm reading from are the regulations that were updated effective March 29th, 2012, so not that long ago. So clearly this government has been working on these and updating these. And this, I think, is a very . . . If we're talking about new regional parks or how we're going to work with regional parks and we're updating things to modernize the language, then clearly they should coordinate with their municipal relations and their land use planning folks because they are the ones who can bring a lot of skills and expertise to the table. And if we're going to just let that idly sit by and, as I say, use the public interest connotation which, undefined, leaves it up to anybody to decide what that means.

They talk about the introduction and I just want to read from the introduction so people at home get a sense of what this is all about. It comes from *The Planning And Development Act, 2007*.

Land use planning facilitates the orderly development of land, resources, infrastructure and services, with a view to securing the economic, environmental, social and cultural well-being of urban and rural communities. The driving force in planning is often the need for change, the need for improved management or the need for a different pattern of land use, dictated by changing investment circumstances.

And it goes on, talks about:

These Statements of Provincial Interest link provincial and municipal objectives for land use planning and, as a result, directly affect the use of land and impact community development, economic growth and environmental stewardship. These Statements of Provincial Interest reflect the diversity of issues affecting Saskatchewan's communities and regions, recognizing that wise management of development involves facilitating, promoting and sustaining growth, based on cooperative planning principles.

So, Mr. Speaker, clearly these would make a lot of sense when you're talking about regional parks and how regional parks should be using all the skills available to make the best possible wise choices. And in fact the minister even alluded to how can we help regional parks and help the Regional Parks Association develop capacity on the boards. And clearly there's a link with this.

So I want to talk about what the planning principles are, Mr. Speaker, because I think that clearly if we're going to talk about the public interest and we're moving forward, this is the time to get it right. If we don't get it right, then we have a problem.

Talking about the planning principles:

Both local decisions that meet the interests of the province and the planning process and principles that guide the decisions affecting land use and development are important in planning. The following principles provide a context for decision-making, are relevant to the design of . . . plans . . .

And so forth and so on.

(a) They should be comprehensive and sustainable; (b) they should be responsive and sensitive; (c) they should be respectful and balanced; efficient and effective; informed and innovative; and co-operative.

Now I just think that makes a lot of sense. That makes a lot of sense when we're talking about, how do we help people in their communities make the most of their local community and that they work co-operatively; they're informed; they're innovative; they're efficient, effective, respectful, and balanced. I think this makes a lot of sense.

So again this is why I think that when the minister talked about

the public interest, we should be talking about provincial interests and talking about the statement so people have something to connect with and say this a very, very important piece to go on.

[20:30]

So I want to talk a little bit about what these statements of principles are. And the first one of course in rural Saskatchewan, this is key. The first statement of provincial interest is regarding agriculture and value-added agribusiness: "The province has an interest in supporting and promoting a sustainable and dynamic agricultural sector that optimizes the use of agricultural land for growth opportunities and diversification in primary agricultural production and value-added agribusiness."

So we have to take a look. Does that one meet the test of working with regional parks? I'm not sure, but I think we always have to think about that when we're talking about rural Saskatchewan. What is the connection with agriculture?

Number two, biodiversity and natural ecosystems. And the statement is, "The province has an interest in conserving Saskatchewan's biodiversity, unique landscapes and ecosystems for present and future generations."

So, Mr. Speaker, clearly, clearly this is one where we would think it would make a lot of sense for the minister to take a look at.

So in the provincial interest we know that we should be thinking about biodiversity and natural ecosystems. Is that minister going to take that into account when he talks about public interest? We don't know. They're using that archaic term, and I think they should replace it because we know that part of the provincial interest is biodiversity and natural ecosystems. This is clearly, clearly an important part when we come to regional parks.

It goes on to talk about:

To assist in meeting the province's interests and biodiversity and natural ecosystems, planning documents and decisions shall, insofar as is practical:

Consider the ecological value, integrity and management of wetlands . . .

And so on and so forth. How to minimize, mitigate, or avoid developments that hurt the ecological integrity of wetlands; it really spells it out. So I think it's important. "Consider dedication of critical or threatened habitat . . ." areas, and recognize the Crown rights and responsibilities and so forth. So this is very important.

Here is another one that the Act is silent on and that is the third statement of interest regarding First Nations and Métis engagement. "The province has an interest in enhancing the participation of First Nations and Métis communities in land use planning and development processes."

The Act is silent on that. Doesn't have to be because if it

referred to the provincial statement of interest, that would be part of it. I think that's critical when we're talking about parks, that we acknowledge that we need as part of our mindset to be thinking about First Nations and Métis and the engagement, if there needs to be a full consultation, that it's there. And that's so, so critical.

The fourth one, heritage and culture. Clearly, clearly, Mr. Speaker, this is one that should be thought of when we're talking about regional parks. They can do so much to help with heritage and culture. In fact that's what the minister's alluded to several times in his speech, but he's silent when it comes to the legislation. And it doesn't have to be that way. But I do want to make sure we understand that the province has an interest in ensuring that Saskatchewan's culture and heritage resources are protected, conserved, and responsibly used. And clearly, Mr. Speaker, we cannot be silent on that, and yet in this piece of legislation the bill should not be silent either.

Intermunicipal co-operation: "The province has an interest in promoting inter-municipal cooperation that facilitates strong partnerships, joint infrastructure and coordinated local development." So, Mr. Speaker, here we have a case and, you know, sometimes we hear that we have too many RMs and this type of thing, but really what we need to do is make sure the RMs are co-operating. And we have a provincial interest to do what we can to facilitate that co-operation. We know we're all in this province here together and if we can co-operate and make this province a little bit better, particularly in rural areas, then that's a key goal that we need to do.

The next one talks about planning documents and decisions to make sure that where you have strong planning . . . We also talked about mineral resource exploration. Clearly, you know, this is, this probably speaks to LeRoy directly when it talks about mineral resource exploration and development. How do you have development in rural Saskatchewan? And you need to . . . And I think LeRoy's a prime example of where we may be seeing the largest, the world's largest potash mine. And how do we make sure that development happens in a way that is sustainable and transparent and everybody is supportive? So it's very important that we have that kind of happen, that thing happen in an orderly, thoughtful way and that there is an interest. The province has an interest in ensuring that happens.

The seventh one talks about public safety and clearly, you know, in a province unfortunately like Saskatchewan where we do have a high record of accidents, and you know, this is one that we cannot take lightly or treat lightly, but it's one that really . . . More than ever we see issues around public safety, and whether that's the safety and security of individuals, communities, and property from natural or human-induced threats. And I think that when you have regional parks, the issues around snowmobiling, the issues around water — all of those are critically important.

And so this is an interest in terms of public safety. You know, we talked about the foresters' Act just a couple of days ago. And I know the government's thinking about public safety but we should not be silent when we talk about regional parks. We don't want to see issues around public safety when we talk about recreation. We want recreational activities happen in a safe, safe manner. We don't want to see hazards and issues

around that be left unaddressed. You cannot leave them unaddressed. You must deal with the issues and whether it's snowmobiling or whether it's water safety or whatever, you know, or whether it's forest fires, grass fires, whatever, we need to make sure the issue around public safety . . .

So again an important consideration when we talk about the provincial statement of interest, a much better phrase than the public interest because the public interest, if it's undefined, really has no meaning at all. And I think when you have a statement that the government has worked on and is continually working on — we see it's been updated just as recently as this March — clearly we need to make use of it.

The eighth one talks about the public works and clearly this is one that the regional park folks are thinking a lot about because they're concerned about funding. How do we make sure that regional parks have safe, healthy, reliable, and cost-effective public works? And this is important. This is in interest of the province. How do we make sure that happens in an organized, strategic, systematic way throughout the province? And clearly there is a way of planning for that and making appropriate decisions. So I think that again it's just a few words, but why not use the tools and why is the government silent when it comes to provincial statements of interest when it should just be part of the Act that's before us regarding regional park authorities?

The ninth one, recreation and tourism. Now there's one that relates to the regional parks, and the statement of interest says — I'll read it: "The province has an interest in supporting a high quality of life for Saskatchewan's citizens and visitors by providing and actively promoting recreation and tourism opportunities."

It talks about what we need in planning and how you make some of the decisions about that. It seems to me to make common sense that we should be talking about that when we're talking about regional parks, and yet we're not using that, the tools that we have to connect the dots. So that's what we need to do, Mr. Speaker, is connect the dots because clearly the folks who really are committed to regional parks, who see this as a lifestyle in Saskatchewan, that's an important component of who we are. But let's do it in an effective, efficient manner, and I just think that connecting the dots here is hugely, hugely important. So I am curious to know why the minister is silent on talking about provincial interests and would rather use the archaic term of public interest. I have no, I really have no idea and I wish that when we get to committee and we'll be asking about, would this be more appropriate language to be using.

The 10th one talks about residential development, and more and more we're seeing people move into cottage country, and of course that speaks to the public works; that speaks to the public safety. It talks about all of these components of our statement of interest. But clearly this is important, you know, and it talks about, "The province has an interest in citizens having access to a range of housing options to meet their needs and promote independence, security, health and dignity for individuals, enhancing the economic and social well being of communities."

Now quite often we often think of social housing, affordable housing, but in this case it is living in cottage country. Clearly



though, those folks have as much interest in being served well by good planning, whatever resources the province or the federal government can bring to the table, so clearly we need to pay attention to this — another check mark that should be looked after. The next one, sand and gravel, may not be so much but I think that we have to be aware that that is something that we think a lot about. You never really know what the impacts are for that.

The 12th one, shore lands and water bodies. And this is an interesting one because clearly most regional parks like to have some water body within the park boundaries, and it's important that we think about this in a meaningful, meaningful way.

The statement of interest is, "The province has an interest in environmental stewardship, responsible development and public access to provincial water bodies and shore lands." So here you have it clearly articulated that we do have an interest in what's happening with our provincial water system. And I know the Minister of Environment has brought forward a water security Act, formerly the watershed authority Act. We've come a long way in understanding the importance of water in terms of the importance of life on earth, in our province, and how we cannot take that for granted. And this statement of interest articulates that and what happens along the riparian edges, shore lands and, you know, this is clearly, clearly important.

And you know, we see the federal government actually moving a bit backward in this recently when it comes to Bill C-45, when they've talked about the changes to the navigable waters Act and the impact it will have. But we should be vigilant on this, Mr. Speaker. Clearly this is important. And regional parks is completely relevant to them because most regional parks value having a source of water that, in some form or shape, that brings a special component to their park. And source water protection — that we have an important commitment to protecting source, water sources that provide safe drinking water. And clearly in rural Saskatchewan and in parts that are more removed from where providing safe drinking water is a bit of a challenge, that is clearly a challenge. And we need to be thinking about that because we just assume, we assume that we will have safe drinking water in most places, and we want to do as much of that as we can.

So, Mr. Speaker, you know, I went on at length but I really do feel that these statements of provincial interest are very important. And I know that the minister talked about in his opening remarks that they had consulted across government with different departments, different ministries. So I am curious about why that was left out. It just seems to make a lot of sense to be using a tool that we already have in municipal relations that people have taken some time to develop.

And it's not a stranger, it's not a strange one to the municipalities or to the RMs, I hope. And clearly they speak to lofty goals that we should all be aspiring to and what makes this province great and can make it even better. And clearly, when we think about our park systems — whether it's provincial parks, federal parks, or regional parks or municipal parks, but tonight we're talking about regional parks — they are something that we really value and makes our province so special.

And so I think that we have some real concerns, clearly. I hope the minister will be thinking about what does he really mean about public interest. Why doesn't he use statements of provincial interest instead? That would make a lot of sense to people and then we could all know what does he means by that. There are 14 benchmarks that are enunciated, clearly enunciated, whereas public interest is becoming kind of an archaic term. And it's one that's kind of odd that he would choose to use that term when he talks about modernizing language but he chooses a phrase that takes us back several decades. And I don't know if it has meaning; maybe it does. And that's what we'll find out when we go to committee.

[20:45]

But I really think that we have an opportunity that we can make sure that we see these parks be as sustainable as they can be. And that in fact it's a pleasure to be part of a board: you're working in a co-operative manner; you're feeling like you're really, you know, contributing to your community that you've got the capacity to do all the things; and you have a sense that, you know, you've met all the benchmarks that the province has. And I think it's important that they are updated. Clearly, they were updated as recently as March of this year and I don't understand why that would be a problem.

So we'll have lots of questions about the remainder parts of the Act. I know I would like to go on even further about the land acquired for regional parks. We know a few years ago we had quite a debate. We had a good debate about *The Wildlife Habitat Protection Act* and how many acres are in these regional parks and is there come connection that we could talk about biodiversity and protecting biodiversity. I see that we don't really have, under the lands contributing to the RAN [representative area network]. Regional parks aren't part of that necessarily. Now they may be if they're a Crown land, but I think that that's not part of the discussion. But we'll have that conversation later.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I think that while the minister has talked about the five reasons that he would like to see this move forward, I think there's a lot of good reasons for it. I know that the folks at the Regional Parks Association, particularly Darlene, they do phenomenal work, phenomenal work, and they work to make every dollar count. And as they've pointed out, in fact it's a multiplier effect, a significant multiplier effect. So they're huge contributors to our communities.

But we could even make this Act better if there aren't those little gaps. And as I said, I just saw that public interest, and it just threw up big red flags for me. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I would now like to adjourn the debate on Bill No. 63, *An Act respecting Regional Parks and making consequential amendments to other Acts*. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 63, *The Regional Parks Act, 2012*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

**Bill No. 64**

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Doherty that **Bill No. 64 — *The Regional Parks Consequential Amendments Act, 2012/Loi de 2012 portant modifications corrélatives à la loi intitulée The Regional Parks Act, 2012*** be now read a second time.]

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

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It is a pleasure indeed to speak tonight on Bill No. 64, *The Regional Parks Consequential Amendments Act*. And I think it's an important piece of legislation. Of course it's always interesting to read the amendments because really it focuses on the alcohol — there's three parts — *The Alcohol and Gaming Regulation Act* and talks about the impact of the authority not considering:

. . . any application for any type of permit, other than a permit allowing the sale and consumption of beverage alcohol at a special occasion, for . . . premises located in a municipality that has passed a bylaw . . . [etc., etc.]

But I think this is an interesting one. And I remember, as the minister of Environment, dealing with alcohol issues in certain weekends related to parks. And so I don't know if this is related to that, but when I saw this, I thought, oh yes, I remember this. And so it's clearly important to have all, as I said, I said it's important to have all the i's dotted and all the t's crossed, and lessons learned in other parts can be brought forward into the new legislation. So this is an interesting one; I'm not sure if that's the case. But we'll be asking questions about the issues of alcohol and talking about alcohol bans and campgrounds and what that's all related to. So I think this is a relatively straightforward piece.

But then it talks about the fines and clearly this is . . . When we've talked about alcohol in parks, that it is one that we make sure we do the right thing. Clearly people want to enjoy their camping experience, and we know that in this day and age there's always new challenges, new thoughts around using alcohol, and what does that mean in terms of our campgrounds. So we'll have a lot of questions about what this really means. But we want to make sure everybody has an enjoyable experience when they come to the regional parks in Saskatchewan.

It will be interesting to know more background around this particular Act because, and maybe we'll get that from the Regional Parks Association, because clearly they will have had a lot of experience with this and the impact that it has on the regional parks system because it's a very different system in some ways than the provincial parks. But they have their unique challenges, and I'm sure that we'll hear if this helps or hinders them in making sure that their camping experiences are as pleasurable as possible and that it meets the needs.

And yet again if I may say, Mr. Speaker, this speaks to the provincial statement of interest. Because if there was ever a case for public safety, it's around this issue and that was the case that was made around the May long weekend discussions. So clearly just to tie this all together . . . And again I would ask the minister to take a look at those statements of provincial

interest because they do speak to public safety.

And if this is the concern here, then that's what we really need to talk about because not only are we talking about several of those interests — and whether that's the tourism and making sure people want to come, they are felt welcomed and that they can have an enjoyable time — but also the whole issue about public safety and that we all need to be able to have a good time at a park and that there aren't the long weekend fiascos that we had experienced a few years ago, and that's come to an end.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I think that I know many of my colleagues have a few comments they want to say tonight about some of the other bills. But with that, I would now move adjournment of Bill No. 64, *The Regional Parks Consequential Amendments Act, 2012*. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 64, *The Regional Parks Consequential Amendments Act, 2012*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

**Bill No. 65**

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 65 — *The Securities Amendment Act, 2012 (No. 2)*** be now read a second time.]

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to have the opportunity to make a few remarks on Bill No. 65, *An Act to amend The Securities Act, 1988 and to make consequential amendments to other Acts*.

Mr. Speaker, this piece of legislation mostly addresses one area identified by the minister in his remarks but also has a couple of other areas where the legislation makes some changes as it relates to *The Securities Act*. Prior to getting into the details of the three specific areas that are being addressed in this piece of legislation, it's of course important to say that when we're dealing with financial products it's important that we ensure the appropriate protections are in place for investors. We know that individuals are encouraged to invest. That's a good thing, Mr. Speaker, when people have a high level of financial literacy and they're able to make decisions about their future.

Last week I had the chance to talk about changes to the municipal pension plan, I believe it's called, Mr. Speaker, and made some other comments about the need for individuals to have a high degree of confidence when they're making financial decisions about their retirement and about their investments. It's important, Mr. Speaker, for individuals to know that there's a system there to protect them and a system to look out for them, Mr. Speaker, because with investments, of course, there is an aspect of risk. That's normal and that's expected. But, Mr. Speaker, individuals should have as many safeguards as

possible and have a clear understanding of what they are entering into when they consider different investment options.

So when we're dealing with securities, Mr. Speaker, it's not simply the realm of Saskatchewan, of course. This affects and has a huge interaction with what occurs nationally and what also occurs internationally, as we are not an island and we invest in markets that are around the world.

So it's important, Mr. Speaker, that when we're making decisions, when we're looking at legislation, that we have the big view and the more narrow view to the province, Mr. Speaker. On a large level, we need to ensure that our actions are consistent with what is happening nationally and responding to what is happening internationally. But at the end of the day, we're the Saskatchewan legislature and we have to take the interests of our constituents, the interest of Saskatchewan residents very much to heart and ensure that our actions are in fact in their best interest.

Mr. Speaker, this piece of legislation, the main purpose as identified by the minister has to do with, it's to introduce a regulatory framework for financial products known as over-the-counter derivatives. And the minister goes on to say in his speech:

An over-the-counter or OTC derivative is an agreement where the price, value, delivery, or payment obligation is derived from an underlying interest. OTC derivatives are used to transfer the financial risk that an underlying interest poses to a company, an institution, or an individual to another entity that is willing to accept that risk.

And the minister goes on to state, and this is an important differentiation to note, is that this legislation which is mostly addressing this issue of OTCs, Mr. Speaker, is different than derivatives that are traded on an exchange. So there is an important distinction there that listeners at home should not be confused about.

An over-the-counter derivative, as the minister states, "Over-the-counter derivative trades, however, are not standardized or cleared in this manner. They are executed only through bilateral negotiation." And the need for this legislation, it goes on to say, is because of the opaque nature of the OTC derivatives market. So, Mr. Speaker, I compliment those that drafted the speech because opaque does not show up in every second reading speech, and it's nice to have that description as a reason for why this needs to occur.

The piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker, this is really Saskatchewan's response to what is happening nationally. So it's not the province acting in isolation on this particular issue as I understand it, but it's Saskatchewan interacting with other provinces, ensuring that what's happening in this province is consistent with what's happening in other provinces. So there's the need for it to be transferable across jurisdictions is important.

And as the minister points out, with changes happening internationally and specifically within G20 [Group of 20] countries, it's appropriate that Canada responds in such a way that the needs of potential investors here are being addressed

and the necessary protections are in place as Canadian investors interact with or would enter into an OTC with another jurisdiction, which is important, Mr. Speaker.

So it's an important point, and it does have to do with, Mr. Speaker, how we do regulation here in the province and how we fit into the national scene. I would hope that the necessary discussions have occurred between the provincial level and the other jurisdictions. It is fairly complicated. It's a fairly complicated issue. It's not something that the average person would deal with on a regular basis but because it is not as common is no reason of course to not have the proper examination, proper legislation in place. And I apologize for the very awkward construction of that statement I just made, Mr. Speaker. What I'm trying to say is that even though this may not affect people on an everyday basis, it's still important that we get right. That's important that we do that.

So I would hope, Mr. Speaker, that the minister has had the correct negotiations with national counterparts in other provinces so that what's happening with OTCs here in Saskatchewan, from this perspective of legislation, that it would be consistent and appropriate with respect to our interaction with other provinces, our interaction at the national level, and our interaction with other jurisdictions abroad. So that is the main area of the legislation, Mr. Speaker, that the minister is proposing this discussion of OTCs.

The second area, Mr. Speaker, which isn't as lengthy as the first one, as the minister describes in his statement:

... this bill also provides that certain confidential records and information gathered by officials with the Financial and Consumer Affairs Authority may not be publicly disclosed. These include records relating to examination of market participants and self-regulatory organizations, review of reporting issuers, continuous disclosure records, investigations into alleged contravention of securities law, and enforcement proceedings.

And the minister goes on to state, "Protecting the confidentiality of these records is critical to ensure the effective enforcement of securities legislation . . ."

[21:00]

So, Mr. Speaker, it's identifying instances when certain records are withheld in order to allow the enforcement agencies to do their work. Different but not completely unrelated to or dissimilar to some of the legislation we looked at this afternoon that I spoke to with respect to when information can be withheld with respect to *The Seizure of Criminal Property Amendment Act*. It's the idea that there are instances where information should not be shared in order to facilitate the enforcement aspect, and that is an important thing, Mr. Speaker. Of course we still need to operate within an overall framework of transparency and openness and accountability to the public, so I would hope that this proposed change would strike that balance and would not needlessly tread on the principles of openness and transparency. So that may be something the minister may care to address when we get to the committee stage in providing a bit more information on that.

The final component, Mr. Speaker, that this piece of legislation addresses, the amendment seeks to make, is to allow the fine collection branch with the Ministry of Justice, giving it authority to enforce and collect financial compensation orders. Basically, Mr. Speaker, the ability of the branch to obtain penalties from those that committed a wrongdoing in order for the victims of the crime to receive some sort of compensation for what has occurred.

And of course, Mr. Speaker, in the spirit of the first component of the legislation, the idea that we want a financial system that is predictable, that has high standards, provides accountability, transparency but also ensures that the right safeguards are in place. Because we've seen in instances, Mr. Speaker, over the course of time and in recent years where individuals who have invested their dollars, have trusted someone, have been taken advantage of. And often this happens, Mr. Speaker, with those that are vulnerable. It can happen with many different types of people. No one is immune to that sort of activity. But it's important that we as legislators have the correct framework in place in order to allow this to happen as seldom as possible. And so I think that is a very important point.

So, Mr. Speaker, if this third component that allows the collection branch of the Ministry of Justice to do its work, I hope that work can be done, Mr. Speaker, so that the interests of Saskatchewan people can be first and foremost, especially for those who have been taken advantage of or have found themselves in a situation that has hurt their financial well-being. That's a situation that none of us would wish on anyone of course.

So those are my remarks, Mr. Speaker, on Bill No. 65, covering three main areas. As I said, the primary area had to do with over-the-counter derivatives or OTCs. The second component, Mr. Speaker, was a bit more brief, addressing the particular issue of the Financial and Consumer Affairs Authority withholding information in appropriate cases. And the third component, Mr. Speaker, was allowing the collection branch of the Ministry of Justice to do its work in order to go after dollars that may have been obtained fraudulently or illegally. So with that I will conclude my remarks, Mr. Speaker, on Bill No. 65, and move to adjourn debate. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 65, *The Securities Amendment Act, 2012* (No. 2). Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

### Bill No. 45

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. McMorris that **Bill No. 45** — *The Miscellaneous Statutes (Saskatchewan Telecommunications) Amendment Act, 2012* be now read a second time.]

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

**Mr. McCall:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm glad to rise this evening to join in debate on Bill No. 45, *The*

*Miscellaneous Statutes (Saskatchewan Telecommunications) Amendment Act, 2012.*

Two particular pieces of legislation involved in this item, Mr. Speaker: *The Saskatchewan Telecommunications Act* and *The Saskatchewan Telecommunications Holding Corporation Act*. And why I mention that, Mr. Speaker, is that it will become apparent in terms of the discussion of the explanatory notes, but two main provisions would seem to be presented in this piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker. One is the reporting requirements as relates to the purchase of property by the corporation wherein under one of the pieces of legislation, the threshold for reporting is \$100,000. Under the holding company legislation, Mr. Speaker, that threshold is \$200,000, but wherein those thresholds will be removed and then set at the pleasure of the order in council provisions made by that government. The second of course, Mr. Speaker, is to change the borrowing limit for bonds available to SaskTel to 30 years.

And again, Mr. Speaker, I guess it's interesting in these two provisions, for a government that has talked a lot about the need to be transparent . . . And I think their claim from the 2007 platform was the drive to be the most transparent government in the history of the province. We hear a lot about accountability. We hear a lot about clarity. Well, Mr. Speaker, it's very interesting in these two measures, and again with one sort of variation for the holding company legislation and another for the SaskTel legislation, pure and simple, and then again, Mr. Speaker, in terms of expanding the time limit on bonds available to borrowing for SaskTel to 30 years, 30 years, Mr. Speaker — three-quarters of my, you know, current lifetime — it's again, Mr. Speaker, two measures that I don't think have a lot to do with transparency, Mr. Speaker. I don't think they have a lot to do with that constant sort of stewardship and the vigilance that needs to take place in terms of making sure that the corporation is responsive to current times. You know, that's certainly part of the task of ensuring proper management of the corporations. And certainly there's some lip service paid to that in the second reading speech from the minister, Mr. Speaker.

But again when you square these measures around (a) moving from a statutory reporting obligation in terms of the assembling of property on the part of SaskTel and the moving to a 30-year bond limit, Mr. Speaker, term limit, in the time involved in the maturation of those bonds, you've got two sets of measures that don't add to accountability. They decrease accountability. They don't provide for greater transparency, Mr. Speaker. They provide for less transparency. And I guess in the instance of the threshold matter, Mr. Speaker, again \$100,000 in one piece of legislation and \$200,000 in another.

There are a few different talking points brought forward by the Minister of SaskTel when this legislation was provided in the House. One has to do with that minister saying that in terms of the increased expense involved in the assemblage of land for the purchase of cell tower locations, well if we're going to be responsible as a corporation, the minister seems to argue, we need to remove this accountability provision.

And again, Mr. Speaker, the accountability provision as it is isn't raised to \$300,000 or \$200,000 being brought across in both pieces of legislation. There's nothing akin to that, Mr. Speaker. What is done is that it's removed altogether, and then

says, cabinet will now police itself on this. And again, Mr. Speaker, we find that very interesting because these measures were there for a reason. And certainly if they're not keeping up with the times, that's one thing. But there's not a rationale being put forward in terms of what is a more appropriate threshold. What is being put forward is that we're doing away with this altogether.

And again, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the arguments marshalled by the minister in the legislation, I don't think it really cuts it, Mr. Speaker. And it certainly doesn't square with what we've heard on the record previously about the claimed intent on the part of members opposite to be the most, most transparent government in the history of Saskatchewan. Well when we see measures like this, Mr. Speaker, we think something diametrically opposed to that is afoot.

In terms of the 30-year change, Mr. Speaker, in terms of borrowing for terms of 30 years, again they lay it at the feet of the Department of Finance in terms of this being a changing standard being promoted by the Department of Finance. And see now there's . . . You know, what can they do but follow the directive of the Department of Finance?

But it's interesting, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the legislation that is affected. Part of it has to do with the financial administration bill, Mr. Speaker, or statute that was brought forward in 1993, in the early '90s in this province, and that was in response to the Gass Commission. And the Gass Commission, of course, was struck after the '91 election to open the books and get a very clear picture of where the finances were at and to try and rein in some of the practices that brought this province to the brink of ruin, Mr. Speaker.

And in terms of these accountability provisions, like you know, \$100,000 reporting threshold and how that relates to significant transactions and how they're supposed to be registered with the Crown and Central Agencies Committee and how it relates to things like borrowing with a 30-year term limit, Mr. Speaker, that regime that was set in place after the disastrous sort of managing of the province's finances in the '80s, and how that came to light after '91, how that was examined by the Gass Commission in '93, and how pieces of legislation like *The Financial Administration Act* were brought in to try and close off those or remove the sort of rotten practices that had permeated a lot of the province's books — and again, Mr. Speaker, that wasn't the last word on things. And there are improvements to be made from thereafter.

But that we would go take a step backwards like this, Mr. Speaker, with no, you know, increase the term limit but no sort of attendant improvements in the accountability provisions, and then in the case of the thresholds, Mr. Speaker, to remove them altogether and say that cabinet will do as it will, again, Mr. Speaker, this isn't a measure, this isn't a piece of legislation brought forward that helps accountability. This is a piece of legislation brought forward that hurts accountability.

Again, Mr. Speaker, one of the . . . You know, it's not very long ago that we've had some pretty amazing problems brought forward to the public's attention that had a disastrous sort of impact on not just the North American economy but on the global economy, Mr. Speaker. And I'm speaking of what

happened around some prime mortgages. And one of the problems with those mortgages, Mr. Speaker, was the fact that instead of the normal sort of 10, 15, 20 years was the way that they extended out into the future.

And one of the reasons why I am sure it appeals to this government opposite, Mr. Speaker, is that if you can go to 30-year borrowing, again you can amortize it over a much longer period of time and so it makes your current year financial statement look that much better. You can then go forth and cut ribbons on things. But how that jives with the amortization of the assets and the way that those depreciate, Mr. Speaker, well we'll be interested to see how that plays out.

But we'll also be interested to see, Mr. Speaker, what sort of legacy is being left for not just the next generation but the generation after that. Because when you're making 30-year financial commitments on behalf of the province, Mr. Speaker, it's not just about your kids but it's about your grandkids that will be on the hook for this.

And again, Mr. Speaker, in terms of what happened in the '80s in this province and the way that in the main that had to be paid for in the '90s, and in some ways it's still being paid for today, Mr. Speaker, you know, those kind of practices . . . And the Gass Commission in particular came forward to bring the kind of safeguards to bear that would hopefully put an end to that.

[21:15]

But in this case here, Mr. Speaker, we see backsliding. We see a return to practices that in a lot of ways didn't foster the transparency that people demand, that didn't provide the accountability that provides people with that ongoing sort of information where they can sit back and say, you know, I don't know what kind of shell game you're playing with the finances, but you'd better cut it out because it's not just my well-being that you're messing around with. It's my children's well-being and it's my children's children's well-being.

And, Mr. Speaker, when you get into this government's, you know, moving forward with 30-year borrowing provisions, I don't think it's a stretch to say, you know, you'd think we'd have learned that lesson in the immediate history of this province. But you know, I pray to God we don't get into a situation where we have to learn the kind of lessons, the kind of hard decisions that were necessitated, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the way that the finances of this province got so badly screwed up by many of the members opposite, Mr. Speaker, that we thought we'd never be going back there again. But here we are with a measure that removes accountability, and here we are with a measure that not just, you know, for the next 5, 10, 15, 20 years down the road, Mr. Speaker, but sets that borrowing out to 30 years.

So when we look at this legislation, we're going to be asking those questions, Mr. Speaker, about, what are the motivations? How does this jive with the financial health of the people's books altogether? And again, Mr. Speaker, I think it's, you know, it's presented in fairly benign terms in terms of the second reading speech. But if you judge it against the history of this province and you judge it against the way that measures like this in the past have been used to get the people's finances

into such a screwed-up situation that it takes literally decades to pay for it, when you see a 30-year borrowing horizon like this being stretched out in front of the province, Mr. Speaker, it can't help but be cause for alarm.

I know that many of my other colleagues desire to participate in this debate. And so at this time, Mr. Speaker, I will move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 45, *An Act to amend The Saskatchewan Telecommunications Act and The Saskatchewan Telecommunications Holding Corporation Act*.

**The Speaker:** — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 45, *The Miscellaneous Statutes (Saskatchewan Telecommunications) Amendment Act, 2012*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

### Bill No. 46

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Krawetz that **Bill No. 46 — *The Municipal Employees' Pension Amendment Act, 2012*** be now read a second time.]

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

**Mr. McCall:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm glad to rise again in debate this evening on Bill No. 46, *The Municipal Employees' Pension Amendment Act, 2012*. Again, Mr. Speaker, some of these measures in this province are questions of shared responsibility and shared activity between different sectors of not just levels of government but particularly in the case of the Municipal Employees' Pension Commission, Mr. Speaker, dealing with employees from school divisions, from urban and rural municipalities, regional colleges, regional public libraries, and other local authorities within the province of Saskatchewan.

MEPP or the municipal employees' pension plan, Mr. Speaker, the membership consists of over 16,000 members and 4,000 pensioners. And again, Mr. Speaker, there's that shared work that goes between the different levels of government. And the fact that the legislation overall is seated with the province is not terribly surprising, Mr. Speaker. But again there are different capacities involved and there are different stakeholders at that table, certainly.

Now this is a defined pension plan, Mr. Speaker, or defined benefit pension plan as opposed to a defined contribution pension plan, but and again, Mr. Speaker, the subject of some debate these days in terms of the difference between the defined contributions, defined benefits, and certainly in the city of Regina, Mr. Speaker, when the Minister of Finance, in introducing this piece of legislation, talked about the importance of two key issues around pensions, those being solvency and the fairness of pension plans.

Certainly we know that here in the city of Regina there's some work that needs to be done to ensure that those pensionable benefits and income levels are there as they have been

bargained, Mr. Speaker, as they have been paid for by the dollars coming forward from the organizations and the workers, Mr. Speaker. We know that there's a fair amount of concern and, you know, there's some deft work need be done around the solving of the pension problem, primarily in the city of Regina, but something that has impact throughout some other sectors as well. But something which, I am sure, the amendment contained in Bill No. 46 is of great interest to those individuals that are slugging it out trying to get a solution to that problem.

Now again, Mr. Speaker, the actual provisions of the Act itself, perhaps not terribly revolutionary certainly. There's a five-year review entailed in the legislation, the current sort of iteration have been passed in 1992 for *The Pension Benefits Act*. And in that five-year review, Mr. Speaker, there's certainly some good work that comes forward. Certainly if you want to work to improve things, you should ask the people that are tasked with working on it and being responsible for it day to day. The review was last undertaken in late 2010, extending into 2011. And there are some interesting measures in that legislation or in the way that this legislation is rolled forward, both from that review and I'm sure from observation and investigation of other pieces of pension legislation around the country and in other provincial jurisdictions.

First, Mr. Speaker, there's the commission review that has influenced changes and the other sort of need to align *The Municipal Employees' Pension Act* along with *The Pension Benefits Act*.

First off, Mr. Speaker, there's a proposed amendment that the legislation "will allow the commission to extend the terms of the Chairperson and the Vice-Chairperson at times when leadership continuity is vital and their original terms are nearing an end," to quote the Finance minister's second reading speech, Mr. Speaker.

Again a one-year extension of those terms not exactly revolutionary. We'll be interested to see what more immediate justification is brought forward for those amendments but, you know, on the face of it, it would seem to be fairly reasonable. In aid of clarity, there are measures in the Act that will modify the existing legislation, and I quote, "to note that a simple majority of commission members is required for all decisions made by the commission."

So again, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the impact that has on standing in legal actions, it'll be very . . . There are some interesting remarks from our leader on this side, the member from Lakeview, and certainly an individual that has a long and interesting career as it relates to law, but also to matters such as this, Mr. Speaker. And perhaps that more fulsome discussion of this awaits the move to committee. But for now I guess we just sort of noticed that we're interested in what was the impetus for that change to the, again, modifying the Act "to note that a simple majority of commission members is required for all decisions made by the commission" as opposed to unanimous, Mr. Speaker, decisions or otherwise.

The legislation, again in the minister's second reading speech, claims that "It will align the Act with provincial pension legislation, provide for a lifetime pension benefit to be paid to an eligible surviving spouse where the member dies prior to

retirement, and it will eliminate ambiguity.”

Again, Mr. Speaker, that would seem to be a fairly laudable goal. And further, “The Act will be modified to clearly state that a spousal waiver to a pension benefit is revocable.” Again, Mr. Speaker, I’m sure building on some more immediate case law in the not too distant past, and I’m sure there are actions presently undergoing, but we await a more precise discussion of the grounds for which these measures will be brought forward.

Again, Mr. Speaker, it’ll be interesting to see how this jives with the work of the commission of review. It will be interesting to see how municipal stakeholders perceive this legislation, either responding or not to different things that they’ve raised with this government. Certainly we know that in terms of talking to educators, talking to health care professionals, talking to people that work in our libraries, people that work as firefighters, Mr. Speaker, police officers, the different people that are subject to or will be either directly or indirectly impacted by this piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker, there are a number of groups that we will be looking to consult in the days and weeks ahead to make sure that we’ve got their concerns firmly in mind as we approach this legislation.

And so in aid of that work of further consultation, Mr. Speaker, and because I know I’ve got other colleagues that are quite anxious to participate in this debate, I would move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 46, *The Municipal Employees’ Pension Amendment Act, 2012*.

**The Speaker:** — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 46, *The Municipal Employees’ Pension Amendment Act, 2012*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

#### Bill No. 47

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff that **Bill No. 47 — *The Saskatchewan Watershed Authority Amendment Act, 2012*** be now read a second time.]

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

**Mr. Nilson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise to speak about *The Saskatchewan Watershed Authority Act, 2005* amendment Act.

This is effectively legislation that doesn’t do very much in the legislation. It has a name change from changing the Watershed Authority to the Water Security Agency, but other than that, there’s not much that happens in this particular legislation. But it’s absolutely crucial to look at what the intention of the government seems to be with this legislation.

Now practically, the information that’s been provided by the Minister of Environment and officially from the departmental officials who have prepared information goes right to the heart of the point when they talk about the role of this agency “. . . is

to ensure protection of water quality, maintenance of aquatic habitats, and sustainable water supplies.” And so effectively what it does is it brings together many of the various aspects around the protection of water into one piece of legislation.

[21:30]

Now this sounds like a laudable activity, but one of the concerns that I have, and I know many people in the community have, is that the traditional way that we managed our water in Saskatchewan through the use of a watershed authority which had the protection aspects and the Water Corporation which had many of the commercial aspects and then the public health protection of water quality being done in the Department of Health and also some of the rules around the protection of water that were in the Ministry of Agriculture, having various perspectives look at different aspects of the protection of water sometimes I think has a better protection in a broad way because you don’t end up with a central control around the water.

And, Mr. Speaker, one of the challenges for us in Saskatchewan is to make sure that we have a sufficient quantity of water, especially in the southern part of the province, and sufficient quality of water. We all know that Saskatchewan is well-known worldwide for water quality improvement equipment, and that directly relates to the fact that much of the water in southern Saskatchewan was not usable without being properly treated. So we have that kind of knowledge and that technology that’s been developed here and used worldwide.

But, Mr. Speaker, we do have some major issues around the long-term supply of water. And one of the things that this bill seems to do, even though it’s really talking just about changes in the name, is that it eliminates some of the counterbalance of the environmental protection over and against the commercial use of water. And so the question becomes, within this particular water security agency, if there is a conflict between the use of water for a community and for people and the use of water in a potash mine or in some other mining activity or in an agriculture venture, how will some of these particular issues be dealt with? Will there be a public discussion that everybody will be involved with? Or will it all happen within this particular agency without much — or any — scrutiny by the community?

Now this is an interesting question which we know will be absolutely important for the province of Saskatchewan and actually for the whole prairie water basin which effectively includes the Saskatchewan Nelson River system, parts of the Missouri Mississippi system, and obviously parts of the Mackenzie River system that flows to the North. All of these water areas, watershed areas are crucial to the long-term viability of Saskatchewan and of the Prairie provinces.

Now sometimes when you look at this kind of legislation, you end up having a fairly narrow perspective. But I was reminded of some of the longer term effects of this particular legislation being done in the year 2012-2013 that it’s also a reflection back to the discussion about Saskatchewan and prairie water in the 1950s. And I say this because we’re now at a point where Canada is renegotiating the Columbia River Treaty with the United States, and one of the top issue on the negotiation list is

dealing with the First Nations rights around the use of the water, around fishing, around many of those things which were not taken into account when the original treaty was drafted. But there are few people in Saskatchewan that know how important this particular issue was in Saskatchewan during the 1950s. And I'll tell you a little bit that I know about this so far, but I've been doing some more research on this.

What we know is that there was a strong push from Premier Tommy Douglas towards the prime minister around making sure there was a clause in the Columbia River Treaty which would allow for the diversion of water over the Rocky Mountains into the Saskatchewan River system, both in the North Saskatchewan and into the Bow River, which then would flow into the South Saskatchewan River. And this discussion took place.

And there were a number of prominent individuals who were involved in this discussion. They include Mr. Jim MacNeill who subsequently was a major water policy person in the federal government, in the OECD [Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development] in Paris. And he's probably most well-known as the Secretary General of the Brundtland Commission working on worldwide environmental issues. He also was in part of the discussion.

It had Barry Strayer who was a federal government lawyer or a federal lawyer here in Saskatchewan; Mr. Cass-Beggs who at one point was the CEO [chief executive officer] and president of SaskPower; and Mr. Tommy Shoyama who at that point, I think, was the deputy minister of Finance. All of these people were involved in this discussion because there was a long-term concern about the melting of the glaciers in the Rocky Mountains which provide for a major source of water for the South Saskatchewan and the North Saskatchewan River. Often these glaciers are called the water towers of the prairie water system. And, for that matter, the Mackenzie and the Columbia River system, because that's where there's water that's stored.

So what happened was that these people here in Saskatchewan wanted to make sure or tried to make sure, but they ultimately weren't successful 60 years ago, to get a clause which would allow for Canadian water, which was located in the Columbia River system, to be available in case there was another long-term drought on the Prairies. And you think about it, the '50s were only 20 years after the long, dry years of the '30s. So people were speaking from experience about what happened on the Prairies when there wasn't water available. And so when you talk about water security and this particular bill, you are talking about the long-term history of the Prairies.

Now what we know since the '50s is that our water scientists, that our biologists, our geologists, people who study the prairies have been able to reconstruct our climate on the prairies back now almost a thousand years by taking cores of trees that are still alive. There are some trees that are, I think, six, 700 years old. There are also logs that were used in building houses that were able to be dated back quite a long time. But most importantly they've been able to take core samples in the mud of lakes across the prairies and across up into the boreal forest. And what they've been able to show is that even though it was very dry in Saskatchewan in the '30s, that was a very short drought and that there were actually quite a bit longer droughts

within the last thousand years, and that one of the issues that we, as legislators in this particular legislature, need to worry about when we look at water security issues such as is mentioned in this particular legislation is that we have to do the preparation. We have to do the adaptation for a possible 60-year drought.

And what does that mean for the kinds of use of water that this new legislation maybe allows without having the ability to balance off that particular use? And I know that right now our Canadian government and the lawyers hired by the government are renegotiating the continuation of the Columbia River Treaty. And I think this particular issue about inter-basin transfer of water over the mountains probably should be back on the agenda for the long-term health of Saskatchewan. Now it has many issues around biological material that's transferred between water basins, but ultimately if we are in a situation where we have a warmer climate on the prairies which we've been seeing, but no water, it's going to make it very difficult to live here.

So does this water security legislation address some of those kinds of issues? I'm not certain. I think that it has some very vulnerable spots in it when it seems to collapse the ability of some other parts of the system providing a counterbalance on the commercial use of water. And if in fact this legislation has been drafted in a way to facilitate the commercial use of water without taking into account some of these long-term activities and without taking into account the necessary use of water by the people of Saskatchewan, then it's on the wrong track.

And, Mr. Speaker, we have an obligation to present generations, but more importantly to future generations, to get this right. So I, as you can tell, I have some concerns about this very short Act which effectively is just a name change because of some of the conceptual pieces that seem to be missing in the plans for the use of water. And they talk about a 25-year water security plan when the people who actually are talking about water are thinking in centuries, because that's the kind of plan that we need in Saskatchewan. So, Mr. Speaker, I have some concerns about what has been set out here. And I know that these things have to be dealt with and I'm not sure they're dealt with in what's been presented to us if they're only talking about 25 years.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I will adjourn debate on this matter, but I think we have many more days and months of discussion as we move forward on this particular topic. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 47, *The Saskatchewan Watershed Authority Amendment Act, 2012*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

#### Bill No. 48

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff that **Bill No. 48** — *The Management and Reduction of Greenhouse Gases*



*Amendment Act, 2012* 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 this evening to enter in on the discussion on Bill No. 48, *An Act to amend The Management and Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Act*.

Mr. Speaker, when we're looking at this piece of legislation, this issue in general, it's important, Mr. Speaker, I think to recognize that the concern about greenhouse gases is not something that's looked at in isolation, but it's tied to the larger issue, Mr. Speaker, of climate change and the response that we in this province and in other jurisdictions are doing to the . . . in light of and with the awareness of the reality of climate change.

Mr. Speaker, we just came through a Throne Speech not too long ago that was virtually silent on the issue with respect to climate change. There wasn't a recognition that this is a concern for the province and something that our own jurisdiction and other jurisdictions are indeed having to face. And I think that's because, Mr. Speaker, on the opposite side, there is still a fairly high level of disbelief about climate change and the reality that it is. And I think that's reflected in the lack of attention that we saw to it in the Throne Speech. But more importantly it's a concern, Mr. Speaker, when we look at the government's response to legislation and the level to which they take this as a serious issue and the level to which it is a priority for the government.

The vast majority, Mr. Speaker, of the scientific community and other jurisdictions recognize that climate change is an issue. It is real and it's a concern. I think of my own experience, Mr. Speaker, of tree planting many years in northern British Columbia and the number of times that I sat on a mountainside, looked down a valley, and instead of seeing all green would see huge swaths of red, which were dead pine trees, Mr. Speaker, because of the advance of mountain pine beetles and the spreading of mountain pine beetles because of the changing climate with the winters not being as cold as they once were, allowing pine beetles to spread from BC [British Columbia] across into Alberta and spreading to other parts of the country as well, as one example of an anecdotal nature of the reality, the implications that this has on industries.

[21:45]

I think also, Mr. Speaker, with some of the . . . Here in the legislature, we've had different opportunities where we have interest groups or advocacy groups come into the Assembly and talk about the reality of climate change. One would be the insurance industry, Mr. Speaker, who is required to insure properties when it comes to storms. And what we hear clearly from them, Mr. Speaker, on different instances, is that with climate change there's a higher degree of and frequency of storms to a greater extent. This has huge implications for jurisdictions across the country. I think of, in my own constituency in Saskatoon Massey Place, the neighbourhood of Dundonald who has had a number of, over the course of a few summers, some really heavy storms that the experts characterized as the 1 in 100 year storms but were happening at

a higher frequency, and the huge effect that this has for municipal infrastructure and then the implications for homeowners as there's flooding and different concerns.

So this is something that other jurisdictions recognize. It's something that the insurance industry recognizes, Mr. Speaker, but I don't feel as though it's something that the Sask Party government takes seriously.

In looking at this piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker, Bill No. 48, the purpose of this bill is to amend *The Management and Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Act* which was passed in May of 2010. I understand "The amendment mirrors the key requirement of the *Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999* which gives any citizen the right to request the Minister of Environment to undertake an investigation of an alleged offence under *The Management and Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Act* and to be kept informed of the progress of the investigation." I believe, Mr. Speaker, that it is good that citizens can raise concerns and be kept informed about the progress of the investigation into those concerns. So that process in itself, Mr. Speaker, I think is a positive one.

Now I understand that this amendment is required in order to allow the provincial government to negotiate a Canada-Saskatchewan equivalency agreement on the federal coal-fired electricity regulations that were just released in September 2012. And much of this was alluded to, Mr. Speaker, in the minister's second reading remarks.

We know that the governments of Nova Scotia and Canada have already released details of such an equivalency agreement. That deal gives Nova Scotia credit for its greenhouse gas and renewable energy targets. This allows the province to use its own regulatory approach instead of forcing it to follow the new federal regulations.

We know that there are many similarities between Nova Scotia and Saskatchewan when it comes to electricity generation. Both have had to deal with the challenge of providing electricity to relatively small and broadly dispersed populations, and both have a history of reliance on coal-fired generation based on local coal supplies. We know the experience here in the province, Mr. Speaker, with that.

But there's been a pretty big difference between Nova Scotia and Saskatchewan. You see, in Nova Scotia back in 2007, the Progressive Conservative government announced that Nova Scotia would move to 20 per cent renewable power by 2013, and it introduced the *Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act* which was intended to ensure that Nova Scotia has ". . . one of the cleanest and most sustainable environments in the world by the year 2020." Included among the 21 commitments within that legislation was a requirement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 10 per cent below 1990 levels by 2020. That legislation passed with unanimous support in the Legislative Assembly on April 12th, 2007 — not too long ago.

In early 2009, the Progressive Conservative government further strengthened their climate change action plan by putting in place firm emission reduction targets for Nova Scotia Power. Nova Scotia Power produces 46 per cent of the province's

greenhouse gas emissions. Mr. Speaker, it's important to point out that all of those steps happened under Progressive Conservatives.

And then in June 2009, the Nova Scotia New Democrats were elected and they accelerated the renewable energy targets established earlier that year by their predecessors. The NDP [New Democratic Party] government expected 25 per cent of electricity to come from renewable sources by 2015 — five years earlier than the initial target, Mr. Speaker.

So you see, good things are happening in Nova Scotia on the renewable electricity front, and it started happening under Progressive Conservatives and it's been accelerated under New Democrats. In the equivalency agreement between the governments of Canada and Nova Scotia, it gives credit to that province for their stringent greenhouse gas and renewable energy targets.

So back to the situation here in the province, Mr. Speaker, in Saskatchewan. We've certainly seen the reverse of what has happened in Nova Scotia. We had some pretty good things happening on this front during the Calvert administration, but instead of accelerating those things, the Sask Party significantly weakened them. It's good that we're a leader in carbon capture and storage, but it's a shame, Mr. Speaker, that we're not focusing very much on increase in our renewable portfolio or in having appropriate greenhouse gas emission targets.

In fact, the minister's speech at second reading didn't even talk about renewables in the context of this equivalency agreement. It only talked about carbon capture and storage, and that's worth noting, Mr. Speaker. We need to be supporting innovation on all fronts: conservation, efficiency, renewables, and carbon capture and storage. As the government finalizes the details of its equivalency agreement with the feds, I would hope that they would begin to lay out a plan that doesn't focus solely on carbon capture and storage but seeks to also support innovation in the areas of conservation, efficiency, and renewables as well.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that if members opposite had a greater appreciation for climate change and the issues that we as a province will be confronted with, that this legislation, Mr. Speaker, would have a different approach. It would have a more comprehensive approach, and it would have an approach that would in fact put us as leaders within the country in addressing the reduction of greenhouse gases.

Mr. Speaker, I've appreciated the opportunity to make a few remarks on Bill No. 48, *An Act to amend The Management and Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Act*. With that I would move to adjourn debate.

**The Speaker:** — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 48, *The Management and Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Amendment Act, 2012*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

## Bill No. 49

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff that **Bill No. 49 — *The Forestry Professions Amendment Act, 2012*** be now read a second time.]

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

**Ms. Chartier:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to wade into the discussion on Bill No. 49, *An Act to amend The Forestry Professions Act*. In looking at the minister's comments, Mr. Speaker, what he has said, generally what he has said this bill is setting out to do is establishing "a legislated right to practice for professional foresters and forest technologists in Saskatchewan, elevating the forestry profession to the same level as other provinces do in Canada with similar legislation."

So I know this bill . . . As it is our role in opposition is to take a look at bills and to look at them at first blush and take it out to organizations and individuals who are impacted by that legislation, so that's something that we will do, Mr. Speaker, because we know often the minister's comments provide us with lots of information but not always all the information we need about a bill.

So the one thing with regard to our forests, obviously they're part of our natural heritage and part of our long-term future here in Saskatchewan. And so it's obviously important that professional standards for those who manage and work in the forestry sector are strong. I'm always interested myself, as a registered social worker, in designations and what makes professionalism, or what makes a profession more professional or those who work in that profession more professional. As a social worker, you don't just need a Bachelor of Social Work or a Master's of Social Work. You need to be registered by the provincial association of social workers. And under that body, we're governed by a code of ethics where there's the mandate, or the requirement, to participate in ongoing professional development. So those kinds of things are very important when you need to be taken seriously as a profession.

So with respect to this particular bill, exactly what it does . . . One of the things in walking through the bill, in enhancing or strengthening professional forestry designation, it also takes some of those out of that designation. And in here, in section 2(m) "professional practice of forestry," what ends up being removed is subclauses including teaching and research and the definition of the professional practice of forestry. It is considered that forestry experts practising these activities are not offering professional forestry services in Saskatchewan, but are engaged in the broader science of forestry.

So I would like to know, and this is a question that we'll have, Mr. Speaker, how do those educators and researchers feel about being taken out of the designation as professional foresters? I know that in the minister's second reading comments, he does say that these changes are "fully supported by the Association of Saskatchewan Forestry Professionals and its membership, which come from [he says] industry, consulting academia, and government."

But we've heard things in ministers' second reading speeches before that haven't always reflected what exactly has been done. We can look back to *The Wildlife Habitat Protection Act* where the minister actually did talk about the consultation that she did, and we later learned that some of those groups with whom she said she'd consulted had in fact not been consulted. So I know, as I said, the minister here in this case has said that all the necessary people have been consulted with. But I know that in our role as the opposition, we will be going to the educators and the researchers to find out how exactly, or what exactly, they feel about being removed from this designation.

There was actually something else that jumped out, not specifically about the Act, but that the minister commented about in his second reading speech as he says here, "As is noted in *The Saskatchewan Plan for Growth: Vision 2020 and Beyond*, forestry was the hardest hit industry in Saskatchewan during the worldwide economic downturn." That may be the case, Mr. Speaker, I don't have the numbers to confirm or negate that.

But what I do know is the film industry, Mr. Speaker, in 2008, actually five years leading up to 2008-2009, had production over \$60 million and had peaked actually in that '08-09 year, including the economic meltdown, and that peaked at 64 million. So five years in a row with production values over 60 million spent directly on production here in Saskatchewan, but the first year following the meltdown, production values dropped by 74 per cent to 17 million, Mr. Speaker. So I would argue that forestry wasn't the only one, was not the only industry hard hit by the economic meltdown in 2008. But unfortunately in the case of the film industry, we have not seen a government to step up to recognize and acknowledge the importance of that creative industry in our economy and what that can mean to the people of Saskatchewan.

So again, I'm glad that the government is acknowledging forestry as being . . . verbally acknowledging the importance of forestry here in Saskatchewan, but there are many other industries that are important here. And actually one of our best renewable resources I would say, I would argue, would be our people and in this case, this renewable resource are our creative people, Mr. Speaker. So I think that this industry also would have required and could have benefited from some support from the government. So there's still many questions to ask.

I don't have any direct experience in forestry but I do actually . . . my sister is an urban forester in Saskatoon and has been for about 25 years. And there's many designations that are required municipally or if you are an urban forester, what you need to do. For example, you need to become a member of the international association of arboriculturists. I'm having trouble once again, Mr. Speaker, with speaking here. But so that this is something that I do know well, the urban forestry side of things. And I know the minister talks about the need for public safety. He talks about pesticides and herbicides. And I know, on the municipal side, that those are things that are very important to those . . . spraying licence, all the requirements that you need to be able to do your job well and do your job safely.

With that, I know, that there's many things, as I said, we will be going to the stakeholders or people who should definitely have been consulted on this bill and to ensure that they in fact did

receive the dialogue or participated in the dialogue that was necessary to ensure that this legislation is where it should be and is solving the problems or concerns that this legislation sets out to do.

[22:00]

As I've said here, in the past this government hasn't always . . . its strong suit has not been consultation, Mr. Speaker. So it's incumbent on us to make sure that this government is doing what it needs to do to make sure that those who are impacted by policy are in fact included in the shaping of that policy through real and meaningful dialogue, Mr. Speaker. So in terms of Bill No. 49, an Act to amend the forestry Act, I had mentioned earlier that this bill will remove teachers and researchers from the definition of the professional practice of forestry.

The other thing that I haven't mentioned yet actually is there's a new provision being added. So, much like social work, you can't call yourself a social worker even if you've got a Bachelor of Social Work degree or Master of Social Work degree. You're not allowed to call yourself a social worker unless you're registered as a social worker. And this is much the same as you're not . . . the previous bill or the bill that's being amended, you couldn't call yourself a forester but you could still practise professional forestry.

And this bill is actually changing that so it recognizes individuals. They're adding a new provision that will prohibit persons not registered as a member of the association from engaging in the professional practice of forestry. So not only can you not call yourself a forester but you can't practise, which is not the case with social work. There's many people who . . . social work is a vast field — everything from counselling to community development to policy, Mr. Speaker — and you can still participate in those things even if you don't call yourself a social worker, but this bill is changing this around forestry.

But with that, Mr. Speaker, I know that I do have colleagues who will be interested in discussing this bill further. And, as I said, as we go along here we will be talking to impacted organizations and individuals to see what they have to say to ensure that the government has in fact connected with academia and everyone else involved. Because academia here is the one who really is impacted. But with that I would like to move to adjourn debate. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 49, *The Forestry Professions Amendment Act, 2012*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

### Bill No. 50

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Duncan that **Bill No. 50 — *The Medical Profession Amendment Act, 2012*** 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 tonight to rise and enter into the discussion, the debate around Bill No. 50, *An Act to amend The Medical Profession Act, 1981*. It seems relatively straightforward, but again, you know, it just speaks to some of the surprises this government does. And I'll get more into that after I talk a little bit about the minister's remarks.

You know, it seems relatively straightforward. The minister rose, and I think the day it was November 5th so it's been a while ago, since he rose in the second reading debate and gave his speech on Bill No. 50, *The Medical Profession Amendment Act, 2012*. And he talked about how the Ministry of Health is committed to working with self-regulating health professionals to ensure patient safety, and I guess that's a very laudable goal. And of course we would agree with that. And we acknowledge of course that health professionals have the right within legislation to be self-regulating, and they've been working, they've been working with these health stakeholders to update the medical professional Act, which has been in force for several decades now, since 1981.

Now these amendments were requested by the physicians and surgeons of the province here in Saskatchewan to support safe patient care and update its bylaw-making authority — two very laudable goals. And I think that's very important. But we have to think and we have to dig deeper into this, Mr. Speaker. He talks about the Ministry of Health, I understand, supports physician and registered nurse engagement in the full scope of practice of medicine and nursing respectively. That makes sense. They also permit the college to respond more quickly to the anticipated national changes of categories of licensure of health professionals. This all seems relatively straightforward. So how could this be anything in terms of a surprise? It's in the details. But it's also sort of how this government speaks out of both sides of its mouth.

And I will talk about this in a minute, but I do want you to stay tuned about this because it's important, all right? He talks about how the amendments will . . . “help keep patients' personal health information more secure. The college will now have a greater ability to maintain current address and contact information for physicians.” Clearly, that's a good idea. We want to know where our doctors are in our communities and where you can reach them if there are concerns. If there are complaints, how do you contact these doctors? That's very, very important. I am surprised actually, Mr. Speaker, that they haven't been kept up to date and this is actually coming now forward as a piece of legislation.

It's sometimes odd what is the difference between regulation and legislation and just good practice. You would think this would be just a best practice issue, not requiring legislation to know where the doctors are actually living and making sure that they have that ability. And you know, it's interesting the choice of word, of ability versus requirement, because this still seems to imply that there's no obligation. I hope that it is within the Act that there is the obligation.

So the college will be able to better communicate with doctors and keep information up to date when they join or leave a

practice. Clearly that makes sense, and that is only reasonable, that when we're talking about concerns or complaints around doctors, that you have good contact information. You know, where the doctors are practising and when they've left a practice and they've joined a new one, how do you get a hold of them? It is interesting because doctors do move around.

Actually, you know, it was interesting, Mr. Speaker. I had a reason to write my own doctor just a few months ago. I was concerned about the situation, having to wait in a waiting room. And so the current doctor says, well why don't you write the doctor a letter? So how do I find out where the doctor is? Actually, you know what I did? Just a little search on the Internet. Found out that's he's actually living in Calgary. And I hope I wrote the right doctor a letter, but I think I did. There's not that many doctors of that last name out there. But we do have reasons every once in a while to get a hold of doctors and where they are, particularly because many of these practices are owners of their practices, and how do you contact them? In some way, Mr. Speaker, I'm just reminded it almost sounds like a consumer advocate's or a consumer issue as well. So I think this is important.

And of course that “. . . will support proper and secure storage, disposal, and transfer of patient files and improve disaster planning processes.” And of course patient files, that just reminds me of that incident about a year ago that was a picture on the front of the *Leader-Post* of the dumpster and patient files there. And of course this is very . . . It was a horrible situation that arose because here is something that we all dread to see — personal information files spread out in a dumpster on the front page of the local paper. That is absolutely something that should not, should not be happening.

So, Mr. Speaker, this is something that we can say is straightforward. He says he talked to, he:

. . . consulted extensively with professional health provider organizations about the changes. And I'd like to thank the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Saskatchewan, the Saskatchewan Registered Nurses' Association, the Saskatchewan Medical Association, the Saskatchewan Association of Licensed Practical Nurses, the Saskatchewan College of Pharmacists, the Registered Psychiatric Nurses Association . . . and all of our . . . health authorities.

I wonder did the Ministry of Health consult with the Privacy Commissioner? If they didn't consult with the Privacy Commissioner, then that's a huge oversight, particularly when we talk about having proper and secure storage and disposal and transfer of patient files. And it appears, by the minister's own words, he didn't consult with the Privacy Commissioner. Mr. Speaker, this is a huge gap. This is a huge gap. And so clearly we need to hear . . . In fact actually I think this is something we'll do tomorrow is call the Privacy Commissioner about this bill, about No. 50.

It says, by the minister's own comments, that he's not consulted with the Privacy Commissioner. And here we have something that deals with that very thing, that he was in the picture in the front of the *Leader-Post* a year ago, and they have neglected to consult him. Here again just the, you know . . . I just shake my

head. I shake my head about their . . . They need a checklist of who they consult with.

First of all, you should make sure you consult with the officers of the legislature. They might have something to say about this. They might not. But who knows? When you're talking about supporting proper and secure storage, disposal, and transfer of patient files, you might think, you might think it's common sense or in the public interest — in the public interest; they love that word — might be in the public interest to consult with the Privacy Commissioner but . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — How about the public?

**Mr. Forbes:** — Yes. But here you have a glaring omission, a glaring omission. And they expect us to think, well this Act basically should just go straight forward. I have some severe, grave concerns about this because, as you read through the list of who they thank with their consultations, one big glaring omission, the Privacy Commissioner.

So I'd be curious, I'd be very curious to know if they have anything to say about this because I think there is some real, real concerns here. And I'm actually quite amazed because usually there's better work, better work done here. And I don't know whether it was poor writing of the minister's speech or poor work in terms of consultation or poor work in terms of the actual bill.

But speaking of public consultations reminds me of what's happening within our own area of the lack of consultation with people in this province in terms of their workplaces. And whether you're a doctor or a nurse or a teacher or a firefighter or somebody who works at the co-op, we're seeing now this government launching one of their biggest overhauls of labour legislation in Saskatchewan. They are putting together some 15 pieces of legislation about the workplace.

Now it's interesting that the Health folks have gone ahead and done work around *The Medical Profession Act*. And you know, last May, in fact it was May 2nd when the Minister of Labour launched a public consultation, a so-called consultation . . . We in fact called it a sham of a consultation, but it had some 180 questions. And there were some sections in the . . . Well it caught everybody off guard. Everybody wondered, where did this come from? What was this all about? But there were some professions in that document that were really surprised they were being included in the discussion paper. And I'm talking about the teachers under their legislation. Why were they included? The firefighters, why were they included? And then I look at this, and I see this bill coming forward about nurses and doctors. So here you have a government that's all over the map when it comes to professionals.

In this same session we're going to be dealing with the employment code which may or may not have anything to do with teachers or firefighters. The minister threw out those questions, and he just says, hey I'm just asking. I don't really mean all these questions. I'm just asking. But it definitely got a lot of people upset. I know when we met with the teachers, they were wondering, what did we do? Why are we part of this conversation? We have our own legislation. We are our own profession. And of course they, you know, they're very

supportive of fair, equitable, and safe workplaces. Like they don't want to be mistaken here, but they're saying, our system is working well enough. Our system's working well enough. Why are you throwing us in with this whole idea of changing the labour laws in Saskatchewan? Firefighters were the same. They're wondering, why are they being thrown in? Things are working well in terms of how their workplaces are operating.

[22:15]

Of course there are the day-to-day challenges and of course when it comes to bargaining for new contracts, and that happens the same whether you're a doctor, a nurse, a teacher, a firefighter, a police officer, except for when you're a police officer in Weyburn. I understand that police officers in Weyburn have severe concerns right now, and they're looking at some job action. We don't know what's going to happen there. But clearly, Mr. Speaker, the inconsistency of this government about how they are approaching professionals in Saskatchewan is something to be amazed at.

And I know here we have a piece of legislation in front of us that's moving forward as if the status quo in the . . . And you know, I think the way that we've normally done things were to treat the professionals with respect that were due them and to consult with them and work to update their legislation. But not all professions are being treated equally or treated fairly. Some are being asked to really re-examine what they're all about, the teachers and the firefighters. Now I don't know why the Minister of Labour decided that it would be those two groups that need to be thrown into the mix, why they had to be put through a rationalization process where they're being asked by the government to support or to give reasons why they should have their own unique legislation. Of course, that's been well established for many years. And here we have a situation with doctors and nurses and a, you know . . . And as they talked about whether it's the psychiatric nurses, the practical nurses, the registered nurses — because there's many different types that you have to recognize the unique abilities, capabilities of each — why is it that there's this inconsistency this fall with this government about how it's dealing with professionals in their workplace?

And so, Mr. Speaker, I think this is a real question when it comes to what this government talks about when it talks about the public interest. How does this better serve the public interest when we have this inconsistent way of relating to professionals in Saskatchewan? You know, we just had the arborists, the discussion around professional foresters, and now we're having this discussion around *The Medical Profession Amendment Act*. So there's some real inconsistencies

And you know, I think this comes from how this government approached labour law. You know, back in the election, they made no promises that they were going to do this massive overhaul of labour legislation here in Saskatchewan. And then all of a sudden on May 2nd, they say shazam, here we have 15 pieces of labour legislation that's going to be hammered together into this new employment code, which nobody knew the reason why and nobody knows where we're going to see it. But you know, we have only nine more days — eight more days. We're into the dying moments of the ninth last government business day before Christmas. Nobody knows

when we're actually going to see it, but we're having bits of it sort of being leaked out and that's really unfair.

That's very unfair, Mr. Speaker, that we see this way of approaching working people in this province. And whether they're the professionals such as teachers or firefighters or nurses or doctors, those that would be covered under *The Medical Profession Act*, they all deserve to be treated with respect. And they all deserve to be treated with fairness and they all deserve to be treated with a relationship that's based on some sound principles of open and fair dialogue. And I don't see that in this Act and with this government as they move forward with how they relate to the working men and women here in Saskatchewan.

So, Mr. Speaker, when we talk about this amendment Act, as I said, on one hand it seems relatively straightforward but I do have some questions and we will have many, many questions. And I just want to review this because again, if the minister has not heard this and the folks in TV land or over in department land, I do think it's a glaring omission that when, as the minister said — and I'll read this again — he talks about these, and I will quote this: "Mr. Speaker, these amendments will also help keep patients' personal health information more secure."

Then he goes on to say, "This, Mr. Speaker, will support proper and secure storage, disposal, and transfer of patient files and improve disaster planning processes." So he talks about, "will support proper and secure storage, disposal, and transfer of patient files." And we've got big questions about that, Mr. Speaker, because he's neglected to really consult our officer of the legislature, the Privacy Commissioner, who has seen this first-hand.

Now I don't have the recommendations from him in front of me, but I'm sure he's written about this extensively, and I think we need to get that. And I said, we'll be calling tomorrow and saying, listen, do you know this Bill 50? What do you think about this? Because clearly this government is raising it high upon the flagpole and saying, let's all salute it; it's a good job done. But you know, I think some of it may be made out of whole cloth when it comes to not consulting with the folks that really, really matter.

And of course, you know, not only not consulting with the Privacy Commissioner but just even having some public consultations about this. What does this matter? What do these things matter? Well we know, and I believe it to be true but I could be corrected, but on many professional boards there are members representing the public interest on them. There's one or two members of the public who are placed on the board to keep an eye, to represent the public interest — not the provincial interest.

I want to make sure we separate the two, because I have talked at length tonight about the provincial interest. But the public interest, has the public been aware of what these changes mean and have they gone out and done any kind of surveying, taking of some polls just to get some feedback about what are the priorities when it comes around the medical professions, when it comes to nurses and physicians? What are the public's concerns when it comes to these professions? Are these addressing those concerns, I mean, or is this just an internal

thing?

Because, you know, clearly as we all can understand, the issues around health care is very much a public issue. And many of us have opinions about doctors and nurses, and how do we make sure that if we have any concerns, do we know how to access the college and do we know how to lodge complaints? Do we know how to send . . . When things are going well, many of us had very positive experiences, and how do we share that kind of information?

So, Mr. Speaker, I think that I'd be curious to know, has there been any sort of external research done in terms of what are the public's views about how we can improve the professional aspect here? So I think that I would be very interested in hearing those kinds of insights. I too think that they would be valuable insights, and we need to hear from them. And if we're improving our health system . . . And this is what the minister says is what we want to do. He says:

I believe these amendments are a positive step forward for our health system. They support our efforts to provide the safest possible health care environments for patients and health providers.

So has he talked to the patients? What do patients think about these? What should we be doing to make sure patients feel like they've been listened to, that they've been the first group that we've been talking to? That's critical. That's very critical.

So, Mr. Speaker, you know, I know that time is getting late here, but I do want to just sum up a couple of concerns that I have. I want to say and reiterate the concerns I have about the inconsistency of how this government has been approaching the professional men and women here in Saskatchewan, and the whole impact of this new employment code and how we're waiting to hear what that means. And we think it will be any day. Unfortunately I bet it will be in some time in early December when we really don't get a chance to debate it. We'll hear over the next week or two bits and pieces through the media as the government tries out some trial balloons.

I was interested to hear that the minister said today that he would entertain some common sense House amendments to that bill, but, Mr. Speaker, that clearly that we have some real concerns about the inconsistencies with that. We have some real concerns about the fact that the ministry has not consulted with the Privacy Commissioner or the minister has not alluded to it in this speech. We think that's a priority that we will be raising.

We also have a concern about whether or not patients were consulted, the public being consulted. The minister did not make any reference to any kind of public consultation. Of course it would be amazing if they had a public meeting about it. They would not have a public meeting. I mean it's like, it's Dracula; it's like Dracula and daylight — these guys and a public meeting, you know. So I'm not surprised that there's been no public meetings, but that does not mean they still can . . . It's still a reality that they can talk to the public. They can talk to the patient about, what do you think about the professions? What can we do to make sure public health is delivered even better? Do patients have an idea about that type of thing?

So, Mr. Speaker, it seems like a relatively straightforward piece of legislation, but as I've said tonight that there are some concerns, and of course we will raise those concerns and we will continue to raise those concerns because clearly, as you have a provincial budget with so much of it going towards health care, we make sure this has got to be done right.

We do not want to see, we absolutely don't want to see what we saw and in front of the *Leader-Post* just last year with a dumpster full of public health records across the ground. That cannot happen again. That absolutely cannot happen again. And so if this bill goes to that to achieve that, then that's the right thing. But excluding the Privacy Commissioner is just no way of starting to get that right.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think in many ways we've seen either a flawed minister's speech or a flawed bill. I don't know what it is, but we will determine over the next couple of weeks what really is at the root of this.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, it's been a pleasure to talk about Bill No. 50, *An Act to amend The Medical Profession Act, 1981*, but I think it's important that we now adjourn the debate on Bill No. 50. Thank you very much.

**The Speaker:** — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 50, the medical professions Act, 2012. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

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

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

**The Speaker:** — The Government House Leader has moved that the House do now adjourn. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion? I gather we're carrying on.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

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

[The Assembly adjourned at 22:30.]





## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### EVENING SITTING ADJOURNED DEBATES SECOND READINGS

<b>Bill No. 60 — <i>The Animal Products Amendment Act, 2012</i></b>	
Nilson .....	2013
<b>Bill No. 61 — <i>The Railway Amendment Act, 2012</i></b>	
Chartier .....	2014
<b>Bill No. 62 — <i>The Parks Amendment Act, 2012 (No. 2)</i></b>	
Brotten .....	2016
<b>Bill No. 63 — <i>The Regional Parks Act, 2012</i></b>	
Forbes .....	2019
<b>Bill No. 64 — <i>The Regional Parks Consequential Amendments Act, 2012</i></b>	
<b><i>Loi de 2012 portant modifications corrélatives à la loi intitulée The Regional Parks Act, 2012</i></b>	
Forbes .....	2028
<b>Bill No. 65 — <i>The Securities Amendment Act, 2012 (No. 2)</i></b>	
Brotten .....	2028
<b>Bill No. 45 — <i>The Miscellaneous Statutes (Saskatchewan Telecommunications) Amendment Act, 2012</i></b>	
McCall .....	2030
<b>Bill No. 46 — <i>The Municipal Employees' Pension Amendment Act, 2012</i></b>	
McCall .....	2032
<b>Bill No. 47 — <i>The Saskatchewan Watershed Authority Amendment Act, 2012</i> be now read a second time.]</b>	
Nilson .....	2033
<b>Bill No. 48 — <i>The Management and Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Amendment Act, 2012</i></b>	
Brotten .....	2035
<b>Bill No. 49 — <i>The Forestry Professions Amendment Act, 2012</i></b>	
Chartier .....	2036
<b>Bill No. 50 — <i>The Medical Profession Amendment Act, 2012</i></b>	
Forbes .....	2038

# GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN

## CABINET MINISTERS

---

**Hon. Brad Wall**  
**Premier**

**President of the Executive Council**  
**Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs**

**Hon. Bill Boyd**

Minister of the Economy  
Minister Responsible for The Global  
Transportation Hub Authority  
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan  
Power Corporation

**Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff**

Minister of Environment  
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan  
Water Security Agency  
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan  
Water Corporation

**Hon. Kevin Doherty**

Minister of Parks, Culture and Sport  
Minister Responsible for the Provincial  
Capital Commission

**Hon. June Draude**

Minister of Social Services  
Minister Responsible for the Status of Women

**Hon. Dustin Duncan**

Minister of Health

**Hon. Donna Harpauer**

Minister of Crown Investments  
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan  
Government Insurance  
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan  
Liquor and Gaming Authority

**Hon. Nancy Heppner**

Minister of Central Services  
Minister Responsible for the Public Service Commission  
Minister Responsible for the Lean Initiative

**Hon. Ken Krawetz**

Deputy Premier  
Minister of Finance

**Hon. Russ Marchuk**

Minister of Education

**Hon. Tim McMillan**

Minister Responsible for Energy and Resources  
Minister Responsible for Tourism Saskatchewan  
Minister Responsible for Trade  
Minister Responsible for SaskEnergy Incorporated

**Hon. Don McMorris**

Minister of Highways and Infrastructure  
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan  
Telecommunications  
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan  
Transportation Company  
Minister Responsible for Information  
Services Corporation  
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan  
Gaming Corporation  
Minister Responsible for SaskBuilds

**Hon. Don Morgan**

Minister of Advanced Education  
Minister of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety  
Minister Responsible for the Saskatchewan  
Workers' Compensation Board

**Hon. Jim Reiter**

Minister of Government Relations  
Minister Responsible for First Nations,  
Métis and Northern Affairs

**Hon. Lyle Stewart**

Minister of Agriculture  
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan Crop  
Insurance Corporation

**Hon. Christine Tell**

Minister Responsible for Corrections and Policing

**Hon. Randy Weekes**

Minister Responsible for Rural and Remote Health

**Hon. Gordon Wyant**

Minister of Justice and Attorney General