



SECOND SESSION - TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

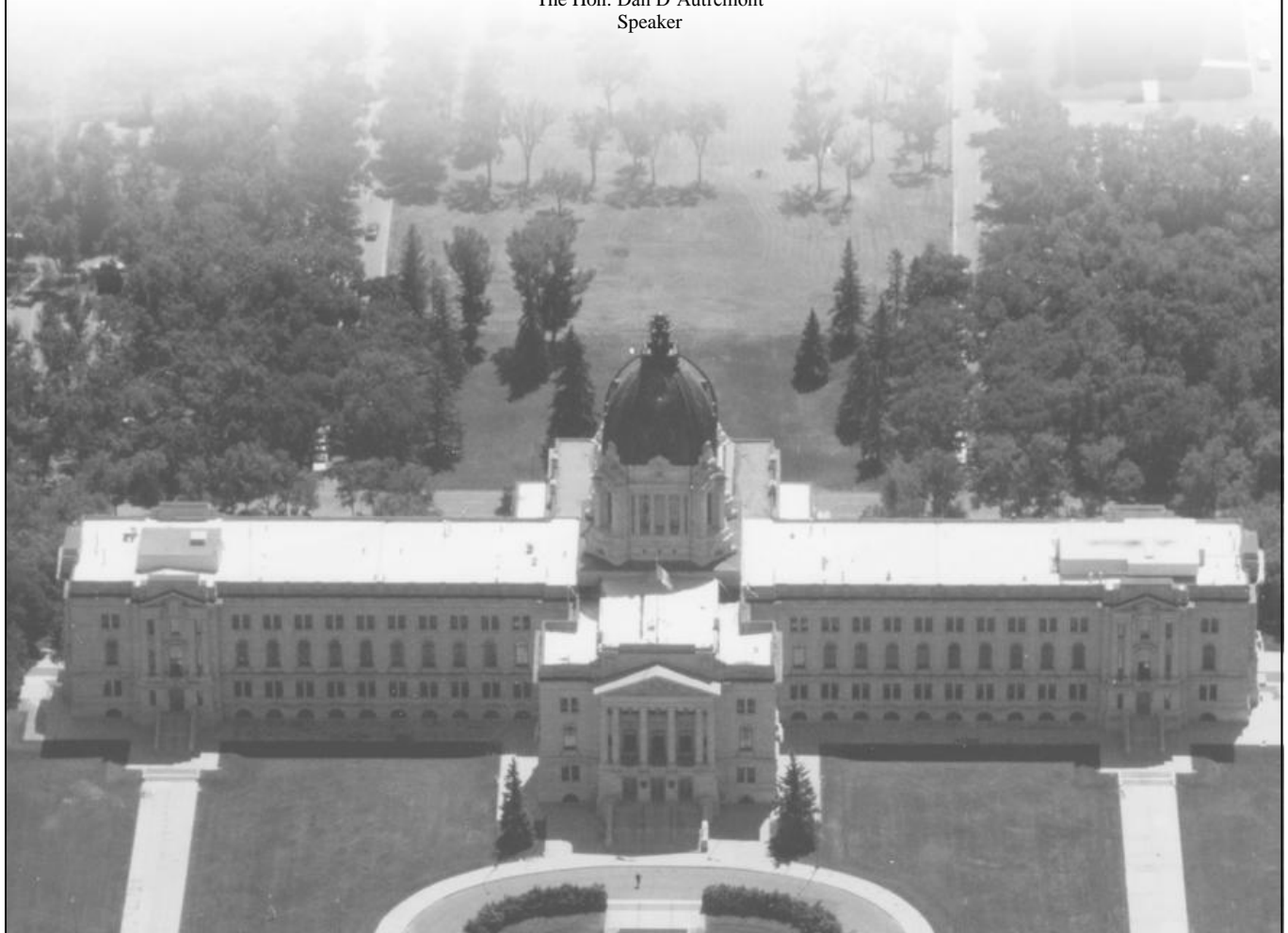
of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(HANSARD)

Published under the
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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

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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
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Draude, Hon. June	SP	Kelvington-Wadena
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Michelson, Warren	SP	Moose Jaw North
Moe, Scott	SP	Rosthern-Shellbrook
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Norris, Rob	SP	Saskatoon Greystone
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Phillips, Kevin	SP	Melfort
Reiter, Hon. Jim	SP	Rosetown-Elrose
Ross, Laura	SP	Regina Qu'Appelle Valley
Sproule, Cathy	NDP	Saskatoon Nutana
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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 met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Yorkton.

Mr. Ottenbreit: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to all the members of the Assembly, I would like to introduce two separate groups of people. Firstly my first guest that I'd like to introduce is someone who is responsible for me being here, literally, is my mother, Pat Ottenbreit. Just give us a wave, Mom. With her are my godparents, Ange and Arnold Bieber from Regina. Also among the guests there today is my mom's other cousin, my second cousin, Gloria Plabiak. So I would ask all members to welcome them to their Assembly.

And while I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, another significant group of people, constituents of mine from Yorkton. They are representatives of the Yorkton Regional High School robotics club who recently returned from São Paulo, Brazil with some great news. I'll be talking more about that in a few minutes.

In your gallery, Mr. Speaker, is Mr. Kevin Chiasson. He's the expert and trainer. Kevin, just give us a wave. His son Bo Chiasson is one of the roboteers, I guess I would describe him as. With them is Jayden Leister from Yorkton, the other competitor.

And along with them is Adrian and LeeAnne Leister, two very good friends of mine from Yorkton. I would say Adrian's probably one of my advisers. We have coffee probably two, three times a week, and he's always happy to give me insight on what we're doing in this place. He's also the general manager of Rilling Bus lines and operates that company with his wife, LeeAnne. So I'd ask all members to welcome these robotics people and parents to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Ms. Ross: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you to the rest of the members of the House, I'd like to introduce 24 grade 7 and 8 students from MacNeill School here in Regina. Accompanying these grade 7 and 8 students is their teacher Scott Bansley. So welcome to the Legislative Assembly. We will be getting together later and having . . .

An Hon. Member: — Dilly Bars.

Ms. Ross: — No, stop that. We will be having juice and an opportunity to get together, and they can ask some questions about the Legislative Assembly. So thank you very much for coming and attending, and I look forward to getting together with you. So thank you.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, seated in your gallery, it's my pleasure to introduce one of Saskatchewan and Canada's best curlers, Ms. Nicole Lang, who's joined us here today. Nicole is also a constituent and a fourth-year business student, a graduate of Martin Collegiate. She was recently on Team Saskatchewan in the mixed nationals in Montreal, finishing fifth, and she plays for Team Hartung. What's up next for Nicole is the women's playdowns for the Scotties. She also has a pretty famous mom here in this Assembly, Ms. Iris Lang, who works in the Clerk's office.

I'd also like to introduce her friend that's joining her here today, Ms. Ellen Glaze, a friend who studies commerce at the University of Saskatchewan and is originally from Riceton.

So I ask all members to join with me in introducing these two young leaders in their province and wishing Nicole all the best in the rest of her curling here this year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Marchuk: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Request leave for an extended introduction, please.

The Speaker: — The Minister of Education has asked for leave for an extended introduction. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Marchuk: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I have the honour of welcoming two very special young guests to our Assembly today, Mr. Daniel Peters and Alana Krug-MacLeod, up in your gallery. Give us a wave. Thank you.

This summer, Mr. Speaker, these two students participated in the Students on Ice Arctic Youth Expedition 2012. Mr. Speaker, this arctic journey explored the eastern Canadian Arctic and western Greenland. It involved 80 international high school students 14 to 18 years of age and a team of 35 world-class scientists, historians, artists, explorers, educators, leaders, innovators, and polar experts.

Mr. Speaker, the students spent time learning about the changes taking place in the Arctic and how these types of changes are linked to broader global environmental changes. The students explored natural ecosystems and were asked to consider how can they work to bring about positive change to their lives, their communities, and the world.

Mr. Speaker, already at such a young age both students are wonderful role models for our province. In 2010 Alana received the Student Nobel Prize from the University of Saskatchewan for her film titled *From One Tiny Seed*. She was also selected from over 100 applicants across Canada to receive the Leacross Foundation Scholarship, a program that awarded Alana a trip to the Antarctic on an educational expedition in January of this

year.

In addition to her remarkable accomplishments and passion for the environment, Alana also contributes to her local community garden. In her free time, Alana loves photography and film. She has won local and national competitions for two of her videos which raise awareness about the importance of our natural environment.

Mr. Speaker, these achievements only scratch the surface of what Alana has accomplished in her young life. This year she was also awarded Saskatchewan's Junior Citizen of the Year Award.

Mr. Speaker, Daniel also joins us today. He is an honours student and currently spends much of his time participating in the Scouts Canada program. His achievements include being selected to attend Encounters With Canada in Ottawa to learn about the nation's capital.

Mr. Speaker, Daniel has also achieved his Chief Scout Award in Scouts Canada and is currently working on his Duke of Edinburgh Award, an international award given in Canada. Along with the Scouts program, Daniel often participates in food drives for the food bank and fundraising to assist those who cannot afford to go to camp. Mr. Speaker, Daniel helps to organize Scout camps and aids in teaching camping skills to younger members. He has obtained his boating and snowmobile licence, firearms licence, first aid and CPR [cardiopulmonary resuscitation] certificate, all of which assist him with his outdoor initiatives.

Mr. Speaker, even though Daniel has faced a number of health challenges, nothing has stopped him from achieving his goals. In fact Daniel believes that life is even better when you can make life better for others. Mr. Speaker, during the expedition to the Arctic, Daniel collected soil samples to assist the Canadian Light Source synchrotron, Canada's national synchrotron research facility, in performing acid rain research here in our province.

Daniel's a remarkable young man and, for his many accomplishments, he has also been awarded Saskatchewan's Junior Citizen of the Year Award.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask that all members join me today in welcoming Alana Krug-MacLeod from Aden Bowman Collegiate in Saskatoon and Daniel Peters from Centennial Collegiate in Saskatoon and their families to their Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to join with the minister opposite and welcome these two remarkable young people to their legislature, along with their families. What accomplishments and experiences these two young people have had to date.

As I was listening to the many experiences that these young people have had, I thought of what sort of future these young people might have within our province, within our country, and within our world. This experience in the Arctic displays in

many ways some of what's best about experiential learning. And I'm sure we all sat here thinking, what a remarkable experience this must have been in discovering some of this vast land and some of the environmental science that's going to be so important to us as we move forward.

So on behalf of the official opposition I'd like to welcome these two young leaders and look forward to their contributions to their province, their country, and to our world. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to introduce a group of individuals seated in your gallery. Nine individuals are affiliated with the Parkland Christian Centre in Canora, and of course that centre is also affiliated with the Saskatchewan House of Prayer. So I'd ask for a wave when I introduce them. I'd first like to introduce Pastor Mavis Watson; the Bradleys, Jason and Laila Bradley and son Jonathan; Paul and Carmen Born and their son Logan; Elaine Desrochers; Richard Stadnyk; and of course from the Saskatchewan House of Prayer, Richard and Joanne Lepp and Patricia Fraser, who need no introduction. I'd ask all members to join me in welcoming this group to their Legislative Assembly.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition on cell service for underserved areas of Saskatchewan. And the prayer reads as follows, Mr. Speaker:

Undertake, as soon as possible, to ensure SaskTel delivers cellular service to the northern hamlet of Dore Lake, which is located in northwestern Saskatchewan.

And, Mr. Speaker, the people that have signed this petition are from Dore Lake, Beauré Creek, and Big River. And I so present.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise to present petitions on behalf of residents from across Saskatchewan as it relates to our provincial finances. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly call on the Sask Party government to provide Saskatchewan people with the fair, true state of our finances by providing appropriate summary financial accounting and reporting that is in line with the rest of Canada in compliance with public sector accounting standards and following the independent Provincial Auditor's recommendations; and also to begin to provide responsible, sustainable, and trustworthy financial management as deserved by Saskatchewan people, organizations, municipalities, institutions, taxpayers, and businesses.

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

These petitions today are signed by concerned residents of Success and Regina Beach. I so submit.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women

Ms. Campeau: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The United Nations General Assembly has designated November 25th as the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women.

Mr. Speaker, violence against women takes many forms — physical, sexual, psychological, and economic. These forms of violence are interrelated and affect women across all age ranges. Violence against women and girls is not confined to any particular political or economic system, but it is prevalent in every society in the world. It cuts across boundaries of wealth, race, and culture.

Six hundred and three million women live in countries where domestic violence is not yet considered a crime. Worldwide, up to 50 per cent of sexual assaults are committed against girls under the age of 16. As many as 1 in 4 women experience physical or sexual violence during pregnancy and, Mr. Speaker, up to 70 per cent of women in the world report having experienced physical and/or sexual violence at some point in their lifetime.

The United Nations International Day of the Elimination of Violence Against Women calls on national government, civil society, non-governmental organizations, and the international community to join forces in addressing this global pandemic.

Mr. Speaker, eliminating violence against women will take a concerted effort from all of us. Violence against women can no longer be tolerated. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition Whip.

Northern Economic Summit

Mr. Vermette: — Mr. Speaker, on Friday, November 23rd, I had an honour of attending the second Northern Economic Summit in La Ronge. The summit had over 100 participants: community leaders, First Nations and Métis leaders, small- and medium-sized business. Large corporations were also represented.

At last year's summit, several committees were organized to conduct activities under the key priority areas that were identified by summit participants. This year the committees presented updates on those projects that were completed or are continuing. One example of a successful project is the development of a northern business directory and database.

The main challenge at this year's summit was to identify

interest in developing tools and structures to support economic development in the North. With funding cuts last year for the enterprise regions, addressing the key priority areas have proven extremely difficult as there is no administration support to organize activities. The organizers will receive the summit report in a few weeks, which will lay out the different options that participants have suggested to continue the work of supporting northern economic development. The organization will also determine what the next steps will be to carry on this work.

Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the summit organizers and participants in coming together to develop a northern solution to address economic development issues. I look forward to reviewing the initiatives put forward by this year's summit. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Women of Distinction Award

Ms. Jurgens: — Mr. Speaker, last Thursday evening five of Prince Albert's finest citizens were formally recognized for their contributions to our community. An inspiration to all of us, these five women of distinction did not ask for accolades, rather they saw a need, then took action. These women recognized how their strengths, passions, and unique skills could be given freely to help others.

Prince Albert's five women of distinction for 2012 are Lynda Monahan for arts, culture, and heritage; Leslie Blacklock for business, entrepreneurship, and leadership; Marilyn Young for education; Whitney Darchuk for young women's leadership; Valarie Dewhurst for lifetime achievement. Mr. Speaker, I wish there was more time to highlight each of these women.

Ashley Mclean, Chair of the Women of Distinction committee would be the first to say that the YWCA [Young Women's Christian Association] was looking for outstanding women to honour and highlight how they contributed to their community. However, this year's women of distinction would be the first to tell us of people that inspired them, then go on to credit others for their awards. Through their passions in creative writing, design, education, business, and research, these amazing leaders contributed to making our community of Prince Albert a great place to live, work, and play. Although these five women of distinction were formally recognized with awards, it is our community that reaps the rewards.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members of this Assembly to help me recognize the contributions made by these five women of distinction. Thank you.

[13:45]

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

New Project for Broadway Business Improvement District

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, the Broadway Business Improvement District in the heart of Saskatoon Nutana was

formed in 1986 to encourage good community relations through yearly programming, popular activities, and bringing local concerns to municipal government. The themed street with lampposts, cobblestones, and park benches creates Broadway's unique community character. And with Nutana's small town appeal, the revitalization of the commercial district, and a short walk to downtown and the University of Saskatchewan, the Broadway Business Improvement District has created one of the city's most desirable neighbourhoods.

Today there are more than 160 businesses that belong to the Broadway BID [business improvement district]. The BID blends trendsetting culture and history. The Broadway BID is proud to be part of an exciting new project. Shawn Storry, who is a cultural heritage mapping student at the University of Saskatchewan, is working on an innovative project that links cultural heritage, learning, and technology together.

Appealing to smart phone users, the BBID has come up with a great way to engage these users and invite them to learn about Broadway. As you tour the street, many shop windows have installed QR codes, an acronym for quick response codes. Using your smart phone as your tour guide, you can scan these codes as you stroll, shop, eat, or listen to live music, and be linked instantly to great information about the coded building with photographs, interviews, past businesses, owners, and the stories that tie the past into the present. Congratulations to the Broadway Business Improvement District and Shawn Storry for putting together this great project.

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

Saskatchewan Philanthropists Honoured

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise in the House today to recognize two remarkable Saskatchewan philanthropists, Grant and Liza Kook of Saskatoon. The members from Saskatoon Southeast, Saskatoon Northwest and I had the opportunity on November 22nd to attend the Saskatoon United Way 2012 Gold Hearts Gala honouring Grant and Liza Kook for their outstanding dedication to community service. This amazing couple was recognized for their embodiment of the true spirit of the United Way, building community and motivating others to make a difference.

Mr. Speaker, close to 800 people packed TCU Place in Saskatoon to honour this couple, and a United Way record amount of money was raised. Grant and Liza have a long history of giving back to the community for their work: their work with the Children's Hospital Foundation for example, the Vanier Cup, SaskTel, community councils and committees, and various other community children's programs.

Mr. Speaker, Grant and Liza have generously contributed their time and energy to our province. They have shown exceptional leadership and are passionate about the work they do to strengthen not only the city of Saskatoon, but indeed the province of Saskatchewan as a whole.

So, Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join with me in congratulating the Kooks on receiving the 2012 United Way Golden Heart. And I ask all members to join me in thanking them for making Saskatoon and Saskatchewan a better place.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government Whip.

Yorkton Regional High School Robotics Team

Mr. Ottenbreit: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my honour to bring to the attention of this Assembly an amazing accomplishment and rise in the House today to congratulate the Yorkton Regional High School robotics team on their very recent first place finish at the WorldSkills Americas 2012 competition.

WorldSkills Americas takes place every two years and brings together the world's brightest youth in skilled trades and technology from countries and regions within the Americas. Mr. Speaker, Bo Chiasson and Jayden Leister represented the team and travelled to São Paulo, Brazil accompanied by their trainer and coach, Mr. Kevin Chiasson, to compete in the robotics division for team Canada, winning first place in the division with a score of 91 out of 100 total points.

Kevin started the extracurricular robotics club three years ago with three students. In the second year they grew to 12 students. In the third year they doubled to 24 students, Mr. Speaker. Ever since they started building robots, the YRHS [Yorkton Regional High School] robotics club have been making their mark. In fact the Yorkton Regional High School club has gone undefeated in 2012, including first place at the Canadian provincials, first place at the Canadian nationals, first place at the WorldSkills Americas competition. And, Mr. Speaker, this summer they will be competing in the WorldSkills International in Leipzig, Germany from July 2nd to the 7th.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in congratulating the Yorkton Regional High School robotics team on their past success and wish them good luck in their coming competitions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Tisdale Hero

Mr. Bradshaw: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to acknowledge a brave young man from Tisdale. Grade 6 student Chase Armstrong attends Tisdale Middle & Secondary School. He's an active player in soccer, bowling, and is learning to play the alto saxophone. He is outgoing and well-liked, and after a recent incident, Mr. Speaker, he is also a hero.

Chase was walking home from school with his siblings and his best friend, Parker. After realizing that a vehicle was about to strike his friend, Chase pushed Parker out of the way and was struck by the vehicle. The impact threw him into a nearby snowbank. With the help of his siblings, he made it the three blocks home and the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] were contacted. Fortunately Chase was released from the hospital that evening with no broken bones but did receive some injuries to the right side of his body due to the impact.

Chase risked his own health to put the safety of his friend before his own. At 11 years of age, Chase embodies the type of person we should all strive to be. Mr. Speaker, I would ask all

members to join with me in commending Chase's actions and congratulating him on his act of bravery. Thank you.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Health Care for Refugees

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last week in question period, I raised the case of a man who was denied cancer care because of the federal Conservatives' decision to eliminate health care for refugees here in Canada. The case highlighted the mean-spirited nature of the cuts by the federal government, and it also underscored the confusion that exists within provinces, Mr. Speaker, as ministries, health providers, and refugees don't know what is covered and what isn't covered.

I'd like to compliment the Premier for his harsh words about the decisions the federal government made, and I'd like to thank the Health minister for providing coverage for the man's anti-nausea medications. I believe both of these actions were the right thing to do.

On this issue, my question to the Health minister: beyond the events of last week, what actions are currently under way in order to pressure the federal government to reinstate coverage for refugees here in Saskatchewan?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank the member for his question and his comments. Certainly this case that came up in the House last week highlighted really a significant issue and a problem that not only the province of Saskatchewan but other provinces have with the decision of the federal government. Certainly Health ministers raised this issue with the federal Health minister this summer.

As well I can tell the House that members of the Ministry of Health have had a number of teleconferences with federal officials to try to determine what exactly is intended by the changes and what will be covered going forward. Those conversations continue. As well I am writing to the Minister of Immigration seeking clarification and a review of the decision that was made by the federal government.

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

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very, very pleased that the man who needs cancer care is receiving the treatment that he needs. That's a positive thing. But in order for that to happen, Mr. Speaker, the man needed a strong advocate in the role of Sister Carol. Questions had to be asked in question period and there was considerable media attention. It was through those steps, Mr. Speaker, that the right care has been put in place. After those steps occurred, Mr. Speaker, we know that there are . . . Change was realized for this individual and that's good.

We know there are other individuals, other refugees, Mr. Speaker, who may not have an advocate that we've seen for this man, Mr. Speaker, and may not have the attention to their case. My question to the minister: can he guarantee that there are not other refugees here in the province who are falling through the cracks with respect to receiving necessary medical care?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And to the member, I want to thank him for that question.

Mr. Speaker, I can tell the member and members of this House that the deputy minister of Health has had a conference call with CEOs [chief executive officer] of all the health regions to outline the position of the provincial government while we work through this process of having the federal government review the changes that were made and the impacts that it has on the province.

The message which was reinforced at that time, Mr. Speaker, which I think was reinforced in this House last week, is that going, Mr. Speaker . . . is that the provincial government will ensure that emergent and urgent care as defined by CIHI [Canadian Institute of Health Information] will be provided to refugees, Mr. Speaker, that fall outside of the health program provided by the federal government as well as imminent events, Mr. Speaker, whether that be childbirth or Caesarean section for women that are expecting in this province.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, there is a lot of confusion in the province with respect to what is covered and what is not covered, and the minister detailed some of that information now.

Last week the minister himself talked about the confusion that is present:

But, Mr. Speaker, to this point there is certainly still a lot of confusion between the federal government and provincial Health ministries in terms of what exactly is being covered because it's not exactly clear which categories are not being covered with supplementary benefits. [Last week from the minister.]

We can imagine, Mr. Speaker, if the ministry, if health region CEOs are confused about what is covered and what is not covered, we can imagine how confusing it would be for health care providers that are delivering care, not to mention refugees who may not have a perfect command of English, as one example. We know, Mr. Speaker, when confusion reigns, there is a tendency, Mr. Speaker, for people to fall through the cracks if they don't know the information.

I recognize some initial steps may be taken, Mr. Speaker, but last week the minister said he wanted to handle these cases on a case-by-case basis and not make a change in policy. My question to the minister: is he content to still handle situations like this on a case-by-case basis?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we certainly want to ensure that we are putting the patient first, Mr. Speaker, particularly in regards to refugees who are in many cases if not all cases, Mr. Speaker, arriving to Canada and to Saskatchewan under extreme situations of distress and what could only be a very difficult situation for themselves.

Mr. Speaker, we want to ensure that in those situations, where they are life-threatening, where it is urgent and emergent care and treatment that is required, Mr. Speaker, that we will provide that, Mr. Speaker. That's why in fact we were providing chemotherapy to no cost of the patient, Mr. Speaker, prior to this issue being raised in this House last week. We'll continue to do so in those cases and, Mr. Speaker, we will ensure that the Ministry of Health is working with all of our health regions so that that information is provided to providers throughout the health regions to ensure that that actually takes place, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, we know when confusion reigns people do fall through the cracks. The minister is correct that the province was covering the man's chemotherapy treatments, but the man was not receiving coverage for the anti-nausea medication. And that's the problem, Mr. Speaker, in dealing with these situations case by case. Other provinces have recognized this and seen that, when there is confusion, people do fall through the cracks. Because of that, Manitoba has stepped forward and they're filling the gap, Mr. Speaker, that has been left by the federal government through their mean-spirited decision.

My question to the provincial Health minister here: recognizing that people do fall through the cracks and not receive the care that they need, as evidenced by the man who did not have his anti-nausea meds, will the provincial government also do the right thing and fill the gap that is left by the federal government in order to ensure people aren't left in a state of confusion about what is covered, what is not, resulting, Mr. Speaker, in people either not accessing care or health providers not providing care?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we are certainly going to, as the Ministry of Health, first of all continue to press the federal government to revisit the changes that they made in April and subsequent to those changes. As well, Mr. Speaker, we are going to be working with our health regions, Mr. Speaker, to ensure that that information is provided in terms of the coverage that the province will fill, making sure that, Mr. Speaker, we are going to cover those costs. We are going to cover those costs and deal with our dealings with Ottawa and the federal government at a later date, Mr. Speaker, ensuring that the patient doesn't have to worry about those.

Mr. Speaker, in this case or in any other cases, what has been communicated in our understanding was that needs that were

urgent and essential in nature would be covered. Mr. Speaker, as the case indicated last week, this was not the case. Mr. Speaker, as chemotherapy or any types of these types of life-threatening procedures would indicate, if they're not urgent or essential, Mr. Speaker, then I'm not sure what is. We'll continue to press the federal government on this matter.

[14:00]

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

Housing Needs

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, with the low vacancy rate right across Saskatchewan for places to rent, the lack of affordable housing is a Saskatchewan-made crisis. That's why it makes absolutely no sense that tenants of social housing are being called and told they must vacate the premises. Why, Mr. Speaker? Because the Sask Party government, in the midst of a cold, snowy winter, wants to boot them from their homes. They want to sell these homes because that's apparently the cornerstone of their affordable housing strategy.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the CEO of Sask Housing said the phone calls to the tenants were made in error. But why can't the minister admit the real error is the Sask Party government's lack of any of action on affordable housing?

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

Hon. Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, to the member opposite, what the member opposite should talk about is the efforts that we have made in affordable housing. We've funded over 2,000 new units for \$182 million since 2007, and we've funded over \$114 million in investments, Mr. Speaker, to repair homes.

We know, Mr. Speaker, that there are people that are living in social housing right now with incomes, some of them as much \$100,000. We know people that need social housing are making a lot less money than that, so we sent out letters to individuals advising them that within the year, there'll be opportunities for them to move into another place if their income is at the level that warrants it. There are individuals who are making a lot of money — from 4,600 to \$9,400 a year — that we do not believe belong in social housing.

Mr. Speaker, there is more work to be done, and we want to ensure that people have a place to live that's safe and warm in our province.

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

Mr. Forbes: — You know, Mr. Speaker, the error of this government to ignore the housing crisis will be one of the worst legacies of this Sask Party government. People in communities, large and small, cannot find decent, affordable housing, and the vacancy rate here in Saskatchewan, in Regina is below 1 per cent because the Sask Party hasn't made building affordable housing a priority. And there's been housing summits and forums, and still the projects are stalled.

Mr. Speaker, the planned sell-off of social housing lands

squarely on this minister's desk. It is that government who wants to force people out of their homes. Why are tenants being told they should look at their options for a new place to live when the minister clearly should know these places don't exist?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Social Services.

Hon. Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, I am well aware that the member opposite knows that we're going to be spending \$344 million on housing through this government up to the year 2015-16. Mr. Speaker, that member also knows that in its last year, they built 58 units. Mr. Speaker, we know that the social housing that we have right now has got some tenants in there that have the means to live outside of the social housing units that we have.

We're going to reinvest about \$53 million into more multi-density homes within our city, but no one is going to be asked to leave the place that they're in right now until there is someplace for them to go.

Mr. Speaker, all the savings, all the money that is invested that we receive in Regina will go back into housing in Regina. We're going to be working with tenants on a one-to-one basis and, Mr. Speaker, the families will have the opportunity to buy these homes if they qualify for a CMHC [Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation] mortgage.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Mr. Speaker, living on the street isn't an option but until there are affordable housing options for people, the risk of turning people on to the streets exists. It's unbecoming of a government who claims to support Saskatchewan people to force them out of their homes. Until the options are actually built, it's ridiculous that people will have to be told that they have to leave their homes.

Now Sask Housing said the content of the calls was in error. But they shouldn't have been making the calls in the first place, and they wouldn't have been made in the first place if the Sask Party had any ideas about housing that didn't require the sell-off of social housing units.

Mr. Speaker, until there are actually affordable housing options in our communities, where does the minister think people should live?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Social Services.

Hon. Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, I have told the member opposite that anyone that's in a social housing right now, if their income is below the \$46,000, they will not be asked to go unless there's another place for them to live. The people that have a higher income can look for other places to live.

And, Mr. Speaker, I would much prefer to have someone with a high income look for a house to live than someone with a low income looking for a place to live. Mr. Speaker, there are opportunities for people who have higher incomes to go looking. I would rather . . . A family that has got two children that are making less than \$20,000 a year needs government support, and that's where we are going.

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

State of Provincial Finances

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, after their spring budget of hurtful cuts to seniors, students, and the film industry, at the financial first quarter the Sask Party announced another \$55 million of new cuts, but there was no explanation and no detail. Now we're on the cusp of the mid-year financial report, and clearly the Sask Party has created a budget that's off track once again. People and communities are rightfully nervous about where the axe will fall and who will pay the price. Mr. Speaker, with the mid-term financials being released tomorrow, who is going to pay the price for the Sask Party's faulty budget?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for that question. And as he's alluded to, the mid-year will be presented tomorrow and all of the information necessary to show that this province is going to be on track, that this province is going to be, I believe, the only province who will still have a balanced budget.

Mr. Speaker, the member also knows that during the course of a year when we budget an \$11.1 billion expenditure, there are always things that don't occur by the end of the year, and normally that fall-off is about \$75 million. It involves vacancies. It involves shifting. It does not involve any program cuts, Mr. Speaker.

And I ask the member to stay tuned for tomorrow's mid-year, and as I said once before in this House, he'll be pleasantly surprised at the growth and the resiliency of Saskatchewan.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — The minister references those things that don't occur throughout a budget year. It's sort of like those promised balanced budgets over the past few years, only to see, at the end of year, three consecutive deficit budgets, Mr. Speaker.

Last year the Sask Party promised it wouldn't touch the money of SaskPower. This follows their raiding of over \$2 billion from the Crown sector in their very short tenure in government. But they broke that promise and stripped over \$120 million from SaskPower in a late, unplanned cash grab. Now we see cuts to rural service centres and a rate hike of nearly \$100 million being forced upon ratepayers, a direct hit for families and businesses.

Mr. Speaker, is the Sask Party going to pretend to balance the budget once again on the backs of ratepayers and our Crown utilities?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the only pretending that occurred was last year during the election campaign when that member and his colleagues projected a \$5 billion expenditure, Mr. Speaker. I don't know where that member keeps finding the words deficit, but you

know, it must be that NDP [New Democratic Party] calculator, Mr. Speaker, because you know, it produces a different number, it produces a different deficit every time you put in a number.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan recognize that we have lowered the debt of this province. We lowered the debt from \$6.8 billion, Mr. Speaker, down to 3.8 billion. That's phenomenal, Mr. Speaker. You know, at the same time, Mr. Speaker, since 2007 we've made significant changes to the personal income tax. Mr. Speaker, up to today, up to this year, \$450 million have been saved in the pockets of Saskatchewan taxpayers, and we still have balanced budgets.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, for that minister opposite, reporting our finances is nothing more than a game of spin, Mr. Speaker. The Sask Party's record, as verified by the Provincial Auditor of our province, is that of three consecutive deficit budgets — this in supposed good times.

And the Sask Party have created another faulty budget and now they're scrambling. They're selling off assets: ISC [Information Services Corporation of Saskatchewan], affordable homes and land, taking a costly privatized approach to infrastructure, raiding another \$200 million from our rainy day fund, and further cuts for families are looming. These are nothing more than short-sighted actions from a government scrambling to pretend that it has a balanced budget.

Mr. Speaker, when it comes to the province's finances, when will this government get its act together?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, it's pretty clear where the NDP stand on the growth of Saskatchewan. The Leader of the Opposition refers to the economy of Saskatchewan as a myth. It's a myth, Mr. Speaker. And today the member opposite stands and says, supposed growth in Saskatchewan. Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to read a quote to the member opposite and let him understand what growth does for an economy.

Mr. Speaker, this quote is this. It said:

Here is the acid test of any government: is the population growing or is it decreasing? Are we getting people to come here because there are jobs and hope and opportunity for the future? Or have we faced massive job cuts, loss, massive outflow, and exodus by the people of Saskatchewan?

Mr. Speaker, that quote was made on April 19th, 1989 by Roy Romanow.

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

Community Pastures

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On Friday, community pasture patrons met with other concerned citizens to

discuss the federal government's hasty off-loading of the management of the 62 federal community pastures.

The minister's initial plan to sell off these pastures is meeting resistance by the patrons. The minister has tried to soften resistance by offering them money to pay for consultants and business plans, but that won't help them find the money to buy. Patrons are worried they will not be able to afford continuing operations if forced to buy the land from the government. And people are concerned about reports that foreign investors have offered to pay cash outright for these pastures. If this happens, these heritage lands will be lost to the people of Saskatchewan forever.

To the minister: what is his hurry? And how will he build in safeguards and conditions in these unwelcome forced sales to prevent a land flip to foreign investors?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the member for her question. As the member knows, this is a federal initiative. The federal government is getting out of the business of operating the pastures known as the PFRA [Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration] community pastures. And because of the contents of an agreement that was signed between the provinces and the federal government in 1939, when the federal government gets out of the pasture managing business, those lands revert to the provinces that they are in, and we have this to deal with.

We're not going to operate them as a provincial government entity. We believe that the best people to operate those pastures are the patrons, the cattle producers that are actually out there on the land, Mr. Speaker, making a living on the land and have a vested interest in maintaining the environment.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, the patrons are speaking out. They know that the support from management of these pastures, from the federal government through the pasture managers and the other support staff, has been world-class. And that's what they're worried about losing.

Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, people are concerned about what the province is going to do about our provincial community pastures. In addition to the federal lands, the province also currently manages over 600,000 acres of community pastures of our own. But with the trend of privatization and valuable asset sales from this government, there's a real worry that these lands will also be put on the auction block. Is the Sask Party government also considering the sell-off of the provincial community pasture lands?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — No, we're not, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Excellent pasture managers have been on the range for decades, ensuring the lands are grazed properly and keeping them in top shape for both the cattle and the endangered species. These managers and their families are integral members of the nearby communities. Now their livelihoods are at risk, and the patrons are concerned about how they will be able to manage without them. They stand to lose a vital component of the success of these pastures, putting them at risk.

At their annual meeting on May 29th, the Stock Growers Association passed this resolution:

That the SSGA lobby on behalf of producers to see that any changes in management of the PFRA pasture system be passed on to provincial or patron management.

To the minister: with the abandonment of this essential management by the feds, will this government take the time to ensure, as the patrons are requesting, that the lands will continue to be properly managed?

[14:15]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The member knows or ought to know that the time frame for the transfer of these pastures is not one that we control. It's controlled by the federal government. We believe that farmers and ranchers are the best stewards of our agricultural land. Any pastures that are sold . . . And I repeat for I don't know how many times, they may be sold or they may be leased, and there's no, as was alleged by the member in her first question, there is no reason that any patron can't afford to be involved in one of those or the other.

Any pasture that is sold though will be complete with a no break, no drain conservation easement that will follow the land, regardless of ownership, in perpetuity. Species at risk will continue to be protected on these lands as it is on all privately or publicly owned land in Saskatchewan. Although this new-found interest in agriculture from the NDP is touching, it's ill-founded, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, the minister is well aware that the speed of the sale is entirely within his control. He can keep these lands as long as he wants. But he's the one that's in a rush to sell them. He's aware of the concerns that the patrons have. He's also aware of the concerns of the public. He has received over 8,500 emails in the last two months about this issue. The patrons and the public are saying, what is the rush? Why can't the minister slow down the process to ensure that a suitable win-win solution be found to replace the current situation?

In addition to the SSGA [Saskatchewan Stock Growers Association], SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities] also passed a resolution two weeks ago which requested this government to retain ownership of the pastures.

Mr. Speaker, with the Sask Party on full speed forward with the ill-advised plan to sell off these lands, will the minister take these resolutions seriously? Will he work to keep our province's community pastures as the vital component of our livestock sector that they are today?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — You know, Mr. Speaker, the NDP are warming my heart with their new-found interest in agriculture and rural Saskatchewan and agricultural producers. But here's an interesting quote from a long-time NDP supporter and former director of the previously compulsory Wheat Board here, Ian McCreary, where he says in *The Commonwealth*, which is the NDP's own in-house membership magazine to their membership, he says this, and I quote: "There are many reasons why progressive people in rural Saskatchewan no longer support the NDP." And the quote continues:

. . . the Romanow administration made cuts which disproportionately affected rural people. Over fifty rural hospitals were closed. We withdrew from the national farm income support program during the lowest farm income period in the grains and oilseed sector. The rural road network, taxed by a rapidly centralizing elevator system began a rapid process of decline.

And he goes on and on, Mr. Speaker.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 79 — *The Representation Act, 2012*

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

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 79, *The Representation Act, 2012* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Justice and Attorney General, first reading of Bill No. 79, *The Representation Act, 2012*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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

The Speaker: — When shall the bill be read again?

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

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 78 — *The Social Workers Amendment Act, 2012*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Social Services.

Hon. Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 78, *The Social Workers Amendment Act, 2012* now be read a second time.

Mr. Speaker, these very important amendments to *The Social Workers Act* will, amongst other things, allow qualified clinical social workers to diagnose mental health disorders. Prior to 2002, qualified social workers were allowed to diagnose mental health disorders. However, that situation changed with the proclamation of section 22 of *The Psychologists Act* in 2002 which restricted diagnosis only to qualified medical practitioners and members of the Saskatchewan College of Psychologists.

By granting qualified social workers registered with the Saskatchewan Association of Social Workers or SASW the authority to make mental health related diagnoses, we can improve client services throughout our province. These amendments can create a framework which will then allow our government to work with the SASW and other partners on regulatory bylaws and the accreditation requirements to ensure social workers who wish to diagnose are completely qualified to do so.

Mr. Speaker, this is just one example of how our government is working with our many partners to improve capacity across the board. So I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, that we're not making this change for the sake of change itself. Currently there are only 78 psychologists and 36 psychiatrists working in the Saskatchewan mental health outpatient services.

The Saskatchewan Association of Social Workers has told us that they're up to 50 social workers who may currently qualify to perform diagnoses. Permitting these individuals to diagnose will increase the capacity of the system. Alberta and British Columbia allow qualified social workers to diagnose, and their model works very well. Ontario also permits diagnostic privileges as defined and managed by that province's legislation.

Mr. Speaker, in mental health at child and youth services alone, 70 per cent of clients have behavioural disorders that could be diagnosed by qualified social workers if this privilege is granted. As the most common professional group, the ability of social workers to diagnose is necessary if we want clients to receive the help they need, when they need it.

The Minister of Health has informed me that the wait times to see a psychiatrist in one of the regional health authorities can be as high as three to six months. As a government we are committed to lowering wait times throughout the health care system, throughout government actually. This initiative is another example of our commitment to lowering the amount of time citizens of this province have to wait for very important services.

The advantages of the amendments are many. They include

earlier access to treatment, greater flexibility in how providers can be used to diagnose treatment of mental health disorders while ensuring the highest ethical and safety standards are met.

Ministry of Health officials, the Saskatchewan Association of Social Workers, and the Saskatchewan College of Psychologists all agree the current situation is hindering access to mental health services, particularly in smaller health regions and rural and remote areas of the province where there are no psychologists on staff. Authorizing qualified clinical social workers to diagnose conditions such as depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, intellectual disabilities, or autism spectrum disorder will help people in these regions to get the mental health services they need much faster.

Accreditation or endorsement requirements will be established within the SASW's regulatory bylaws. This will ensure that social workers giving diagnostic responsibilities are completely qualified to do so.

These amendments will also make sure that the SASW is fully accountable for the monitoring and enforcement of diagnosis within the social work profession. Mr. Speaker, most clients who enter the mental health system never actually see a psychiatrist or a psychologist. In these cases the responsibility for diagnosing, treating, and referring those people could be undertaken by social workers who are authorized to diagnose. As I mentioned, there are 114 psychologists and psychiatrists working in the mental health sector.

Mr. Speaker, 114 people is not enough to meet the growing demand for diagnostic services in a growing province. That's why we've introduced these amendments to add up to 50 qualified social workers to increase capacity. As you can see, the amendments will improve our mental health services system and, most importantly, improve the lives of our most vulnerable citizens. These people deserve the best services and treatment options we can find, Mr. Speaker, and these amendments will go a long way to ensuring we do just that.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to move the Bill 78, *The Social Workers Amendment Act, 2012* be read a second time.

The Speaker: — The Minister of Social Services has moved second reading of Bill No. 78, *The Social Workers Amendment Act, 2012*. Is it the pleasure . . . I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I am very pleased to have the opportunity to respond on behalf of the official opposition after seeing the bill. And obviously, if I could follow the minister's comments in the intent behind the bill, as how she wants to allow some of the social workers the ability to change, in all the regulations, the ability to diagnose some of the mental health conditions that may occur from time to time when they're exposed to different families, different people — the social workers are — that they're able to diagnose some of the challenges that they may have, whether it's a mental illness or whether it's an addiction problem or other issues that she made reference to that the social workers might be able to get involved.

Now, Mr. Speaker, obviously it's important to note that the

social workers play a very important role in the chain of service and support toward those families that do need our assistance. As you know, Mr. Speaker, coming from an area where there is a lot of exposure to the social income support programs in northern Saskatchewan, to be able to see some of the changes that the minister is alluding to at the outset, one might think that this is going to be of help, Mr. Speaker.

But the real problem, the crux of the problem, I think quite frankly, is going to be the after care, Mr. Speaker. Because what we're seeing time and time again, Mr. Speaker, is that when you have bills of this sort that are coming forward — Bill 78 allowing social workers to look at identifying and certainly diagnosing some mental health conditions that some of their client base might have — now, Mr. Speaker, the client base itself, the problem that we have within the NDP opposition is that as you have more ability to diagnose, Mr. Speaker, then obviously you're going to uncover more and more problems.

And we can see from the actions of this particular government, the Sask Party government, that their intent is to not provide those services even after diagnosis. So when the minister talks about improving service and improving opportunity and improving the ability to respond to some of these cases, Mr. Speaker, my only argument I would point out is I want to make sure that people out there know that if you have the ability to diagnose, what happens following diagnosis, Mr. Speaker? The logical step is going to be for treatment, Mr. Speaker.

So when the minister talks about treatment after the fact and then you see some of the evidence of the Sask Party government where they have actually cut back a lot of programs. They have cut back. They have let go of a lot of social workers. They have taken a lot of the support mechanisms away from some of the social workers, Mr. Speaker. And I look at some of the comments of the social workers' association. And obviously, you know, the social workers that work for the government aren't going to be very or highly critical because they're professional people. Their job is to not get into politics obviously, Mr. Speaker. So they will do their very best to avoid making any controversial comments, Mr. Speaker.

But the point I would make here, Mr. Speaker, is that the social workers, the Saskatchewan Association of Social Workers president, Joanne Schenn, said in a news release the group is, and I quote:

“. . . very pleased and challenged by the trust” placed in it by Draude [of course I'm doing the quote here, Mr. Speaker] “by proposing the extension of diagnostic privilege to the profession of social work.”

Now, Mr. Speaker, I look at that statement and Ms. Schenn, being the president of the Saskatchewan Association of Social Workers, really quite frankly hit the nail on the head. She's pleased that they have the confidence and the trust being placed in the social workers that she represents as the president. But, Mr. Speaker, she's also challenged by the trust. And that's really what's really, really important, Mr. Speaker, because you've obviously got to be able to respond to a huge issue of trust when they're giving the trust to the social workers and all of a sudden they have the ability to diagnose.

There's only about 50 of them that I've heard the minister speak about. There's only about 50 of these social workers that have the diagnostic ability and that she wants to remove any impediments for these social workers to be able to diagnose freely. Now, Mr. Speaker, obviously it's a credit to the social workers that are out there, that have spent many hours on the road, that have counselled many families. They have the additional duties now of being able to or should be able to diagnose some of mental health conditions that may be happening with some of their client base.

[14:30]

Now, Mr. Speaker, it's a lot of extra work. It's a lot of extra responsibility. But I believe the hidden message made by Ms. Schenn is that the trust placed in it is a huge, huge undertaking by the social workers. Because obviously I think that the social workers out there will tell you that this Sask Party government is cutting programs. They're cutting vacancies within the social workers that are out in the province. They're cutting program support to the client base that the social workers are supposed to work with. Now you have the added responsibility of diagnosing some mental illnesses, but really there's no services available after diagnosis, Mr. Speaker.

So I look at the comment made by Ms. Schenn. And from my vantage point, what I interpret when she says, there's the trust placed in us, a trust that people will certainly look to the social workers for answers and for solutions when, Mr. Speaker, they can diagnose. But many social workers will know there isn't the support services at all that the minister was speaking about when she said, when once the diagnosis is done, we'll try and — as the words that she pointed out — improve the lives of those being diagnosed, when we in the opposition know that's absolutely false. They will not do anything, Mr. Speaker, to help those people that have been diagnosed.

And I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, there's a lot of people out there that really have some mental health issues and some challenges out there. And it's great to be able to finally diagnose some of those problems, but there's no services and no supports out there to address them and, as the minister so callously said, to try and improve the lives of these people that have some mental illness or some mental challenges, Mr. Speaker.

And I want to give you a good example, Mr. Speaker, of what I mean, of what I mean, the fallacy of this particular minister and this government, Mr. Speaker. And this bill, Bill 78 relies on the professionalism and the integrity of the social workers that work for the government throughout our system, Mr. Speaker. And rightfully so you should, you should really support the integrity and the professionalism of social workers. These are ladies and gentlemen that have worked for many, many years. They are trained, Mr. Speaker, to be able to do a wide variety of things, and the training is pretty dramatic at times.

And certainly I think, Mr. Speaker, when I say dramatic, I mean there is family breakups. There's children being involved. There's safety issues. But these social workers are indeed trained for those circumstances, and they go through a great deal of rigour through their training methods. And that's the important point that I would make, that it's not an easy program to graduate from, and it's not a very easy job to be good at.

So the social workers themselves have a tremendous challenge in front of them. And I think the worry that they have is they have the ability to now diagnose illnesses, as the minister spoke about. There's only about 50 of them. But the worry that they have: once we diagnose a problem, where's the aftercare? Where's the support mechanisms? Where's the respect for some of the work that we're doing in diagnosing these patients to make sure that they get the proper treatment, Mr. Speaker? And I can tell you that when the minister uses the words, to improve the lives of those people that have been diagnosed, we in the opposition know, Mr. Speaker, that that's not going to be the case at all.

And I want to give you a good example, Mr. Speaker, a really good example: Wesley Smith. Mr. Smith is a gentleman from the Meadow Lake area. And, Mr. Speaker, from November 20th, 2012, last week in the *Northern Pride*, it shows on the first page Mr. Smith being evicted from his home. He's being evicted from his home, Mr. Speaker. Why? Because his mother moved into a lodge and his two sisters that he was living with in this home — there's four of them living in this home, I'm assuming — that they have been moved to a group home. And now Mr. Smith who, according to the newspaper, Mr. Speaker, "Wesley is 51 years of age and has intellectual disabilities." That was a quote in the *Northern Pride*, Mr. Speaker.

So I can almost guarantee you that some social worker in Meadow Lake may have identified Mr. Smith as having certain challenges, and income being one of them, and having a home is another. And what does she now do? What do the social workers do in the case of Mr. Smith, Mr. Speaker? This is a very public document, the *Northern Pride*. It's a newspaper that is delivered around the Meadow Lake area. And Mr. Smith now doesn't have a home. And the headline, Mr. Speaker, says "Falling through the cracks." "Meadow Lake man forced from his home." That's the subtitle, Mr. Speaker.

And that's exactly the point that I'm trying to make in reference to this particular bill. It's fine to be able to afford some of the social workers who I spoke about earlier that have years of experience and went to school specifically for their jobs. It's a very daunting challenge to be a social worker in this day and age. They go to school for that. They have some professional ethic, and they have years of service, many of them. They know what they're doing.

And now when you have the added responsibility of diagnosing some of your client base, and there's only 50 of these social workers, Mr. Speaker, that have the proper skill level and the proper skill set to be able to diagnose, the question that I think they would want to ask this minister, this government, this Premier, this Sask Party government is, following the diagnosis, how do we ensure that the proper services and the proper support mechanisms are in place for some of the client bases that we have diagnosed as having some intellectual challenges? That's the real question, Mr. Speaker.

And I think when social workers assume this responsibility, instinctively they want to be able to respond to some of the challenges that some of the people that they've diagnosed, that these challenges are being met. Instinctively they want to be able to do that. But, Mr. Speaker, they can't do that because they know and we know that this current government is not

going to put the proper and necessary service supports in place for many of the people that may have been diagnosed with a number of potential mental illnesses, Mr. Speaker.

Now I look at this example of Wesley Smith, Mr. Speaker, 51 years old, and according to one of the spokespersons, he has some intellectual challenges. And now Mr. Smith has no home, Mr. Speaker. He has no home to go to. And was this any of his fault? Was this Mr. Smith's fault that the home that he was living in is being taken away? When you're 51 years old and you have certain challenges and all of a sudden you're being forced to move from your house and you don't understand why, well, Mr. Speaker, that's our point here in opposition.

And I think that's a subtle point in some of the comments of the social workers' association president when she said, we're challenged by the trust placed in us. And to me I interpret that as saying it is fine to provide the diagnostic ability for some of the social workers that have the skill set and the mindset to do so, but the aftercare and the programs following that diagnosis is where this government is failing these people on a huge basis, Mr. Speaker. It is a huge problem for them, and the social workers know that. The opposition know that, and most of the people of Saskatchewan know that.

And that's exactly why some of the comments and the question by my colleague from Saskatoon Centre today that spoke of another example of how some of the people that are being forced out of their social housing units for a number of reasons that we can't seem to understand as opposition, and they don't understand, Mr. Speaker. That is where they have lived for a long time. That is their home. That's the roof over their head. And all of a sudden you get a call saying you have to leave this particular home after a certain date, Mr. Speaker. I think that's very callous, and it totally disregards the value of a human person, of a human life, Mr. Speaker.

And that's exactly I think the point made by the president when she talked about the issue of being challenged by the trust placed in them because they know that trust is something that the social workers take very seriously. They're very professional in how they do their work. They're very confidential in how to deal with claims and with the client base, Mr. Speaker. And then you see examples of Mr. Smith here, who has clearly identified a need for help. And, Mr. Speaker, all he gets is a notice to vacate his home. There is no follow-up or follow-through to Mr. Smith's circumstances. There's no respect for the fact that he's being evicted from his home, and the other example that my colleague mentioned this morning.

So the whole notion, and my whole argument here today on this particular bill, Bill 78, is, how do you provide social workers with the ability to do further diagnostic work on identifying mental illnesses within their client base, knowing full well that you have no intention whatsoever to provide the supports for those people once they have been diagnosed? And that's the crux of the issue, Mr. Speaker. And that is one of the most important things that we in the opposition want to point out, that the weaknesses behind what this Sask Party does. They do a little bit of gerrymandering in the electoral process. They throw in a few little rules and regulations, Mr. Speaker. They dress up some of the bills like Bill 78 to try and make them appear like they're doing something to help those with

intellectual challenges. But in fact, Mr. Speaker, they have no desire and they have no wish and nor will they have any intention of dealing with some of these issues that many of these people face once they have been diagnosed.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we know that there are other organizations that are involved with this particular bill. And as the opposition caucus, we want to make sure, we want to make sure that we hear from some of those people, from some of these groups, and that we encourage advocates to come forward to say what weaknesses exist in this bill; what should we do better to strengthen this bill?

We are concerned as an NDP opposition that the aftercare, the support mechanisms, and all the work that needs to be done with these individuals after they have been diagnosed by the social worker, that there is proper care, that there's proper supports, and that there is a matrix of ongoing supports to make sure that this person, whatever the diagnosis may be, has the proper supports and is able to function well within society, Mr. Speaker.

And that's the point that the minister very, very quickly brushed over when she talked about trying to improve the lives of some of these people. Well the question we have is, upon diagnosis, what specific measures, what specific programs, what specific funding are you putting in place to complement what you're trying to do through Bill 78? And from what we see from our vantage point, Mr. Speaker, there is nothing on all three of those fronts.

So the question we have to ask the minister is, why are you allowing 50 social workers the diagnostic ability to identify some mental illnesses of some of their client base when you know very well there's no supports planned to address some of those challenges upon diagnosis? And that, Mr. Speaker, is what we call on this side of the House a crying shame and the fact that, why do this when you're not going to do the proper follow-up and follow-through in the aftercare, Mr. Speaker?

So I would point out Bill 78 is rife with problems. It glosses over the challenge, Mr. Speaker. And some of the social workers that are going to be given the diagnostic ability or have the skill set to do so, are they going to be compensated for doing this? And what happens if there's a problem with a missed diagnosis or a misdiagnosis, Mr. Speaker? What's the follow-up and follow-through on that front?

And we noticed from the press release, Mr. Speaker, that there's another group that's involved. The registered psychiatric nursing association did not support the changes when consulted about it. So, Mr. Speaker, the Registered Psychiatric Nurses Association said, well we don't like it either because it appears that this is something that infringes upon their traditional area in terms of being able to provide some of that aftercare and certainly the diagnostic services. And there are many psychiatrists and many support groups and many professional people that are involved in this particular process. Well they want to be able to work very closely as a group of people that know this industry well or this business or their field well — I shouldn't use the word business — but their field well, that they've gone for training for this.

Well how does that dynamic now affect their profession, Mr. Speaker? How does the registered psychiatric nursing association establish a relationship with the social worker union to be able to work their way through this? Well that answer is not in any part of the bill, Mr. Speaker. So when the psychiatric nursing association was consulted about this bill, the first question they said, well we weren't consulted and nor was our issues taken seriously. So as a result of that, they did not support any of the changes.

So there's a huge host of problems with this particular bill as once again we see the Sask Party getting up and talking about the changes to a bill that's supposed to be able to support people on the social assistance more by giving the social workers diagnostic ability when really, Mr. Speaker, there is no action plan following that. Because people out there are going to say what? The 50 people that do have the diagnostic ability, are they going to be compensated fairly? Is there going to be protection in case there's a missed diagnosis or a misdiagnosis? What is their relationship with, social workers' relationship now to the psychiatric nursing association? Do they have an ongoing dialogue?

[14:45]

Now once they have the client diagnosed, what kind of support mechanisms are in place? And that's exactly my point, Mr. Speaker, about gentlemen like Wesley Smith here. Front page, the *Northern Pride* out of Meadow Lake, "Man forced from his home." And, Mr. Speaker, it's been identified in this article that he was forced from his home even though he has some intellectual challenges, Mr. Speaker. And that's exactly why the Sask Party government, people are beginning to really wonder where exactly their intent is when it comes to the social agenda of our province. It seems they brag about a lot of money that they may have in highways or the economy, Mr. Speaker, but people out there are being left behind. There's a great amount of people being left behind, and Wesley Smith is a good example of that, Mr. Speaker.

So again I go back to my earlier point. Fifty social workers have the ability to diagnose people that may have some intellectual challenges. Whether those challenges may be addictions and maybe mental health challenges, there's all kinds of different areas that one could go to. And again, Mr. Speaker, there are some issues that we have to be very aware of.

So on that note, on Bill 78, my colleagues have a lot more to say about this. We are going to ask groups that are out there to join us as the opposition caucus by giving us confidential information. We don't have to use your name or anything of that sort, that for protection for your purposes, whether you're a social worker or a family going through this, that if you'd like us to simply ask the question, we can certainly do so. But what this bill is doing in a nutshell, it is now allowing social workers to be able to diagnose certain mental health problems that some of their clients may have.

And we are arguing in the opposition for five points, the main point being, upon diagnosing a mental health illness from one of the client base, does the social worker have the confidence that this government is putting in the necessary supports to address their illness? And, Mr. Speaker, from where we sit, we

know that there's absolutely no intent of the Sask Party to deal with those issues whatsoever.

And the second point is that there are real human faces, like Mr. Smith out of Meadow Lake, front page of the Meadow Lake *Northern Pride*, "forced from his home." And that's exactly our point, is that how could you turn around and talk about improving diagnoses, and then when you turn around and you boot some of these people out of their home that they've lived in for many, many years, as the example of Mr. Smith here, Mr. Speaker?

Secondly the social workers' association, how do they establish a relationship with different groups that may be involved with this particular field? And a good example is the association of psychiatric nurses. They want to be able to speak their mind as well in terms of what these changes may have on their particular field of expertise. And then you create some friction between the two groups, Mr. Speaker. So there's all kinds of problems with this particular bill.

And I remind people out there that you've got to be very careful of what the Sask Party appears to be doing because their intent, Mr. Speaker, is far from helping anybody that has any particular challenges, as they've identified in the client base of some of the social worker people, that in the end they have no intent of trying to fix those problems up.

So, Mr. Speaker, my colleagues have a lot more to say on this particular bill. We will certainly continue to solicit information from different groups. And I can tell you that we have a lot more to say on this bill as we sit in the spring sitting. That information will be forthcoming. And, Mr. Speaker, there are problems with this bill that we will certainly identify over that time.

So on that note, Mr. Speaker, I move that we adjourn debate on Bill 78.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Athabasca has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 78, *The Social Workers Amendment Act, 2012*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 72 — *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2012*

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Crown Investments.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to move the second reading of *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2012*.

The Traffic Safety Act administered by SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance] is the framework for the laws and regulations involving driver's licence and the use of vehicles in Saskatchewan. It is designed to help keep motorists safe on our roads.

The first piece of these amendments, Mr. Speaker, speaks to our government's commitment to increasing the safety of highway workers in Saskatchewan after a work zone collision this summer cost a young flag person, Ashley Dawn Richards, her life.

Our government takes the safety of both workers and motorists in construction zones very seriously, which is why SGI has been working with the ministries of Justice and Highways and Infrastructure to develop ways to make these areas safer.

Recently, Mr. Speaker, the Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure made changes that will see rumble strips being used in prioritized work zones, and gates that narrow the approach to work zones being installed. These measures are intended to ensure motorists are aware they are nearing a work zone and to help slow traffic to 60 kilometres per hour in work zones when highway workers are present.

In addition to those changes, SGI worked with the Ministry of Justice to increase the fines for speeding when passing a highway worker to triple the base fine for speeding. These increases make Saskatchewan's fines for speeding in construction zones among the highest in the country and will be a deterrent to motorists speeding in areas where highway workers are present.

Mr. Speaker, we know that the number of injury collisions in work zones are increasing. Speeding, while not the only factor in work zone collisions, is an offence that law enforcement officers say they see all too often in these areas.

Mr. Speaker, the amendment that we are proposing will allow for the use of photo radar, only in work zones where highway workers are present, to charge drivers exceeding 60 kilometres per hour when passing a highway worker. This will build on the measures already implemented and will allow for increased enforcement of these traffic laws. The ability for law enforcement to use photo radar will likely increase the perceived risk of being ticketed, which can increase compliance levels and reduce the speed of traffic in those areas. This of course is our primary goal.

With the record amount of investment this government has put into highway infrastructure over the past five years, Mr. Speaker, there is more highway construction going on across the province than ever before, and these changes will help keep those workers safe.

In addition to the amendment concerning photo radar, Mr. Speaker, we are also proposing changes to section 280 of *The Traffic Safety Act*. Section 280 currently gives law enforcement the ability to seize any vehicle, if the officer believes it is being driven unlawfully or poses a danger to other drivers. Mr. Speaker, the intent was for this section to be used only in rare or extenuating circumstances when offences are urgent or dangerous or when the owner of the vehicle is not available and the vehicle poses a threat to other drivers. However, vehicle seizures under the section of this Act have increased significantly since 2005. Often these seizures are related to impaired or distracted driving offences.

Mr. Speaker, there are already other sections of the Act which

were developed through the public consultation and legislative processes that specifically address those offences. These amendments will still allow law enforcement to seize vehicles in cases where parked vehicles pose a hazard or threat to others and in other very specific instances which will be determined through the regulatory process. But, Mr. Speaker, we want to ensure that vehicle owners are charged with provisions in the Act that are specific to their offence and that the offence is then accurately reflected in the driver's safety rating and insurance premiums.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, these amendments will remove the licence plate sticker requirement for Saskatchewan vehicles. This is a housekeeping change designed to reflect SGI's current practices and standards. As law enforcement no longer relies on licence plate stickers alone to validate vehicle registration, this change will help to eliminate redundancies, save costs, and streamline the renewal process for both SGI and its customers.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to move that Bill No. 72, *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2012* be read for the second time.

The Deputy Speaker: — The Minister of Crown Investments has moved that Bill No. 72, *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2012* be now read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to stand on behalf of the official opposition to offer some comments on Bill 72. And, Mr. Speaker, the minister spoke about the challenges that many of the construction industry faces when we want to ensure that there are safe areas around construction zones.

And there's no question, as you are aware, Mr. Speaker, that there was a loss of life this past summer. And it's a very tragic loss, a very tragic loss. A young lady obviously was killed in the construction area. And, Mr. Speaker, we obviously, within the opposition caucus, want to make sure that workers and the public aren't in any danger. And every measure that we can undertake to ensure that we can reduce that danger down to an absolute minimum, we of course in the opposition would applaud that, Mr. Speaker.

It's really, really important to also identify that as we move forward on this front that the opposition will do what they can to not only add to the agenda but to add to the comments to be able to strengthen that protection for workers and for the public overall. I think, Mr. Speaker, in the construction zones, I think a lot of people are still in this mode that they're allowed to travel as quickly as they want through construction zones. And it's obvious that this message needs to get through. And of course the best way to do that is to ensure that the fines are heavy enough that people simply don't forget, and the next time they go through a construction zone, they know if they're speeding that there could be a huge financial cost to them.

So I think, Mr. Speaker, that from the perspective of improving safety in the construction zones and safety all throughout our highway system, Mr. Speaker, I would say that the opposition obviously wants to do that. We obviously want to make sure that the right measures are put in place because, Mr. Speaker,

this is something that needs our ongoing attention and our utmost co-operation.

I think one of the things that's really, really important is that there was a lot of media this past summer as a result of the loss of a young lady's life. And not getting into any of the detail, I just know that I heard her boyfriend at the time — I don't believe it is her husband — he was speaking about safety on the radio and certainly going through his loss. It's something that really, I think, woke up a lot of people in Saskatchewan when he spoke about being safe and paying attention and so on and so forth. Because it's a life that was needlessly lost, Mr. Speaker. And we need to do all we can, as I said at the outset, to improve safety rules and regulations and, of course, fines around construction areas and all throughout our highway system in general, Mr. Speaker.

We know that in terms of the minister's very weak effort at trying to qualify her government's commitment to highways, Mr. Speaker, where she talks about unprecedented highway work. Mr. Speaker, we know that as we look through some of the work that has been done, it isn't unprecedented. There's been construction happening in Saskatchewan over the many, many years. And we're actually seeing a lull in some of the activities on highway construction.

And we also know that there's a huge problem in construction in general because a lot of the people that are involved with construction are beginning to give the Sask Party a lot of grief because they know, as an example, that some of the construction subcontractors that are working on our highways aren't being paid on a timely basis, that there's a lot of problems there. They're asking questions about how much more money is being left or being held back from some of our construction industry.

But all these issues are certainly coming to the forefront because many of them really want to get some good answers to some of the questions that the minister was talking about in some of her opening comments on Bill 72, that the whole effort to once again brag about their record spending on highways, Mr. Speaker. We know in opposition that there's a lull in that construction and that we're going to see a decrease under the Sask Party's watch because, quite frankly, they're starting to become broke.

And that's one of the things that's really important, Mr. Speaker, is that we needn't try and push their political agenda through bills of this sort. We in the opposition are taking it very seriously, that we don't look at this opportunity to improve safety in the construction zone as an opportunity to brag about the Sask Party's construction work. Because quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to highways, they're lagging far behind many of our Western Canadian provinces, and that much, much, much more work needs to be done to not only support and defend the construction industry of our highways system, that they've got to start spending what they're telling people they're spending. Because people are starting to wonder exactly where the money is going and how much are they actually truly spending on highway construction, Mr. Speaker.

[15:00]

Now one of the things that I see as one of the fundamental points that we would want to ensure that people out there know is that there is an . . . Any evidence that some of the areas of our highway system is in quick need of some very safety orientated work, that you should let the opposition know. Let the opposition know because we know that when it comes to safety on our highways, the number one fundamental principle is that the highways themselves should be in good driving condition, the best driving condition as possible.

And I'm talking about the integrity and the strength of the road, Mr. Speaker, because I travel quite a bit as an MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly]. My riding and my hometown is probably the furthest from any other MLA in the Assembly. And I do that trip on a pretty regular basis, Mr. Speaker, because Ile a la Crosse, northwestern Saskatchewan's my home. That's where my family is and my friends, and I am planning on living there forever. But the problem is, Mr. Speaker, as you head further north, some of the road conditions do become quite treacherous, and there's a lot of problems with highways in general all throughout the province, Mr. Speaker. And I made reference to that on numerous occasions.

So what the minister should do that's alluding to the bill is that the Minister Responsible for SGI should just simply do two things on this bill. Let's have focus on safety in a construction zone, which I think it's important that we do. And number two, that she not take the opportunity to brag about her government's highway commitments when that's something that's furthest from the truth, Mr. Speaker. Because there's a lot of highways that still need to be fixed, and we're seeing a lot of the construction companies getting more and more frustrated with this government because there's a lot of games being played with how the money's being allocated, and what amount of money's being held back as a result of some of the work that has been done, Mr. Speaker.

I can remember the twinning between Prince Albert and Saskatoon being announced by then the Hon. Eldon Lautermilch who was a minister of Highways then. And that was a great opportunity because I think it was the NDP that just finished twinning the North Battleford to Lloydminster highway. And of course the next highway we started working on was the Prince Albert-Saskatoon twinning. And I can tell you that a lot of people are pretty happy with that. And I remember Mr. Lautermilch speaking about the safety issues and that this was the best way to spend our money was to ensure that we had double-laning. And that really improved the quality of the road and really improved the safety.

So I think one of the things that I want to speak about is that Mr. Lautermilch, when he was Minister of Highways, didn't brag in the Assembly for days on end here like the Sask Party does. He simply identified that it was an economic issue, it was a safety issue, so let's twin the road between P.A. [Prince Albert] and Saskatoon. And guess what, Mr. Speaker, that work of course has continued under the Sask Party because it's the right thing to do. And I'm glad that they followed the leadership of Mr. Lautermilch because the vision that he had in relation to that twinning project was exactly the whole basis of this particular bill, Bill 72, was the safety of the people of Saskatchewan, the driving public. And I think we want to make sure that we continue sending out that message.

So, Mr. Speaker, by and large Bill 72, if it's meant to strengthen safety within the construction zone, to remind people to slow down when you're going through what they call the orange zone and to be very, very careful out there because it is sometimes very treacherous — treacherous in terms of the winter driving conditions and some of the road conditions. And, Mr. Speaker, if you're speeding through some of the areas that you shouldn't be, like construction zones, you are adding to the safety risk of the workers and public in general.

Now last night when I arrived in the city here, Mr. Speaker, I was . . . I think it was just before Davidson, but we hit some . . . There was two vehicles on the side of the road, Mr. Speaker. I don't know what they were doing but they these vehicles were not clearly marked. They were two bigger trucks and one of them didn't have taillights at the back vehicle. And certainly, you know, if one wasn't paying careful attention you could easily see how an accident could occur because there's no markings that these vehicles were stopped there. There's no safety feature to show that they're pulled over to the side, and it was just simply paying very close attention to the driving conditions that we were able to, you know, to avoid an accident last night.

So I think you got to be able to follow some of the rules very clearly. And if vehicles are parked in the construction zone, like I went to last night, Mr. Speaker, then obviously if the construction zone is clearly marked, people know it should be down to 60 and you pay very close attention.

And the other issue, Mr. Speaker, is at night, you know, when you do have construction zones, how are they marked? Are they clearly marked? Those are some of the things that we want to find out whether this bill involves some of those issues. And that's why we're going to take the time to look at that bill.

So there's a lot of different ways that we can improve safety on the highway, Mr. Speaker. And I would suggest that a good start is making sure that there is all these features and there's always information available when you're travelling through construction zones. Because we should not take safety for granted because obviously this past summer we've seen that unfortunate death.

So, Mr. Speaker, we have a few more things we want to say on this particular bill. But in the future, we would remind the Sask Party to stop bragging about some of the work that was announced 10 years ago. And if you want to take highway safety seriously, then, you know, put your money where your mouth is instead of simply spouting off a number that you do from time to time. Because we know, quite frankly, that that money's not being spent on our highways and that a lot of the people that are working and constructing some of these highways are starting to speak up and send us information and that the public of Saskatchewan will not be pleased about once they hear that information.

And secondly, Mr. Speaker, is that there are many, many highways that offer terrible driving conditions and pose a huge threat to the safety of Saskatchewan residents, and yet the Sask Party doesn't seem to say anything about those highways, Mr. Speaker.

So on that note, I've quite a few more things to say on this particular bill, and I move that we adjourn debate on Bill 72.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Athabasca has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 72, *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2012*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 77 — *The Horse Racing Regulation Amendment Act, 2012*

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Minister for Crown Investments.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my privilege to rise and introduce for second reading, Bill No. 77, *An Act to amend The Horse Racing Regulation Act and to make consequential amendments to The Revenue and Financial Services Act and The Revenue Collection Administration Regulations*.

Mr. Speaker, this past October I announced that the provincial government would eliminate the parimutuel tax it collects on horse racing wagers, effective March 31st, 2013. The amendments I am introducing today will implement this change. Under *The Horse Racing Regulation Act*, the province collects a 10 per cent parimutuel tax from each wager placed on horse racing in the province. The tax is also applied to wagers made in Saskatchewan teletheatres on horse races conducted outside of the province.

Operators of horse racing tracks have been responsible to collect and remit the tax. Traditionally the revenue collected from this tax has been returned to the industry in the form of grants to track operators to support track operations and purses for the participants. The amount of tax collected depends on the amount wagered. In 2011 the total parimutuel tax collected was 857,000, all of which was returned to the industry.

Mr. Speaker, this past summer members of the Saskatchewan horse racing industry sought to have the parimutuel tax repealed. We considered their arguments for repealing the tax and we are now acting on this consultation. Our government remains committed to fiscal responsibility and I believe the repeal of the parimutuel tax is a win-win for both government and the horse racing industry. Eliminating the parimutuel tax will allow the horse racing industry to determine how to use the funds for the benefit of the industry.

Mr. Speaker, this change is another example of our government's commitment to create a positive economic environment by reducing taxes when it's fiscally responsible to do so. This change will provide the necessary business environment for horse racing to continue to operate in Saskatchewan. By supporting the continuation of horse racing in Saskatchewan, these changes will also support employment opportunities for those individuals involved in the horse racing industry such as groomers and trainers.

Together with the amendments to *The Horse Racing Regulation Act*, this bill also contains consequential amendments to *The Revenue and Financial Services Act* and *The Revenue Collection Administration Regulations*. *The Revenue and Financial Services Act* and *The Revenue Collection Administration Regulations* both contain provisions regarding the enforcement and the collection of parimutuel taxes by the province. Because the parimutuel tax is being repealed, amendments are necessary to both pieces of legislation to remove those provisions.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I will conclude my remarks and move second reading of Bill No. 77, *An Act to amend The Horse Racing Regulation Act and to make consequential amendments to The Revenue and Financial Services Act and The Revenue Collection Administration Regulations*.

The Deputy Speaker: — The Minister of Crown Investments has moved that Bill No. 77, *The Horse Racing Regulation Amendment Act, 2012* be now read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Again I am pleased to stand today to talk about the Bill 77. And the gist or the primary focus of Bill 77, as the minister alluded to, was the fact that the parimutuel tax Act — basically the taxes that they collect from some of the betting on horse racing — was one of the issues that she wants to eliminate as a result of what the industry wanted, is what she basically indicated to the Assembly.

Now, Mr. Speaker, she mentioned the figure of 700-and-some thousand that they would collect from some of these wagers that people would have on horse racing. Now the big question that we would have in the Assembly is that what part of the industry, what part of the 700-plus thousand dollars that the industry used to be able to get as a result of this tax, how much has the Sask Party backfilled that money? Have they backfilled it all, or none of it?

These are some of the questions that we think we know the answers to. But, Mr. Speaker, a lot of people are trying to find out exactly what the intent of the Sask Party is on this front because we know that the 700-and-some thousand dollars that they did collect from the taxes on horse racing bets, that none of the industry got any of the money. I believe they basically eliminated the tax on the horse racing and turned their backs against the industry.

Now I know that the industry themselves will continue working with the Sask Party to try and find some solution. But what we would say on this side of the Assembly is that before you create an action such as losing a revenue base for an industry, even if it's horse racing, that you ought to have a plan in place to be able to backfill that money so that the industry that uses that money isn't put into this situation where they don't have the necessary means to continue operating their industry.

Now we think that's pretty simple and straightforward from the opposition's perspective. So the question that we would have for the minister on Bill 77: what concessions did you give the industry to ensure that the revenues that they lost as a result of

this tax being eliminated on horse betting? What did they ask for and what did you give them to ensure that this wasn't going to be a problem for their industry in general?

And those questions, Mr. Speaker, we need to certainly ask the minister and at the appropriate time, through Committee of Finance, we will certainly ask those questions at that time. But we also want to be able to talk to the industry and those people that are actually making bets because right now I think there's a lot of confusion within the horse racing industry. I think it's a very important part of what people like to do. I think horse racing has been around, betting on horse races has been around Saskatchewan for years, Mr. Speaker.

So that's some of the things that we want to be able to look at in terms of getting the right information to the public of Saskatchewan so that they could figure out whether this government is doing anything good or anything bad to that particular horse racing industry. And I can tell you that information needs to come forward to the opposition and we will certainly be making our contacts as well.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this cash grab that the minister spoke about — the parimutuel tax that they used to collect and give to the industry — now is there another revenue stream that the government is collecting as a result of them taking the parimutuel tax, as she indicated, taking that tax and eliminating it? Is there some backdoor taxation that they're putting in place that they're pocketing from this particular industry? We don't know that information, Mr. Speaker, and that's one of the reasons why we would like to ask these questions during Committee of Finance.

[15:15]

One of the things that I think is important is that when you look at the parimutuel tax, the elimination of this tax on horse racing, which actual group asked for it? Like what was the breakdown in the industry itself? Was there a certain sector of the industry that liked this versus other sectors that may not have liked this? What is the breakdown of who was impacted the worst and who was impacted the best? You know, these are some of the things that we need to find out as an opposition because obviously, if you're a horse trainer or if you're a jockey or if you're involved with the actual on-field activity of this industry, does it hurt you in any way, shape, or form, losing that kind of revenue for your industry?

And I think that's obviously got to hurt because if you go 7, \$800,000 loss of revenues in any one year, it's of course going to hurt a lot of organizations and a lot of fledgling businesses as well. So I wouldn't really chalk up the horse racing industry as fledgling, but I'd certainly say that I don't think they can take hits of this sort on a continual basis. Because obviously, Mr. Speaker, you don't want to see this industry go away because some people really enjoy their time as adults, and this is an adult entertainment service in terms of being able to bet on horses. And I think a lot of them certainly would like to continue doing that.

That being said, Mr. Speaker, there is a lot of questions that we would ask. How many different organizations are impacted by this? I think the people of Saskatchewan and certainly the

opposition want to know how many operations are out there. How many people are employed by this industry? Who are some of the bigger players? What their season involves. And these are some of the issues I think are very valuable to the Assembly, if we can get those answers from the minister during Committee of Finance because we need to get those questions in front of the people of Saskatchewan.

Bill 79 I think has a lot of different issues that we can speak about at length, and we want to be able to take that time to be able to share as much of the information so the public out there can also join the debate and join the information flow to the NDP so they can certainly argue some better points and stronger points in the Assembly as it relates to the horse racing industry.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I think what's the biggest thing is that, that as I look at the horse racing industry itself, this industry has been operating for a long time. It's been, like I mentioned at the outset, there's been a lot of people that have been involved with this industry over the years. And what prompted the changes? Because obviously if there are changes to the tax that the government collects, is there any other revenues that the government has received from this industry? And if so, the minister needs to identify that as well because you've been operating this industry this way for many, many, many years. Then all of a sudden you make a huge change that impacts their bottom line by 7, \$800,000. There should be an accounting process in place for the industry themselves.

You know, and when the minister says the industry likes this concept, Mr. Speaker, I would really like to see what the industry truly had to say about this. And if they asked for some concessions in exchange for losing that kind of money, what were those concessions, and how much revenues will they bring in if there was any concessions afforded to them?

Now if my memory serves me correct, Mr. Speaker, I think the horse racing industry themselves had asked for some VLTs [video lottery terminal] to be placed at some of their operations. And I'm not sure if that was a concession given to the industry, but I'm sure at one time I heard in the news that they were asking for VLTs to be placed at some of their places of operations because that would really help their income. Now whether that was afforded to them or not, I don't know. Do they get the revenue stream from some other lottery corporation or some other gaming agreement that they may have struck with the horse racing association? Was there any revenues lost to any other organization when the horse racing industry was given a concession? We don't know those answers, Mr. Speaker.

And that's the important thing, is to be able to ask those answers in a timely fashion and to invite the public, to tell the public to come on down and give us the information — those that may actually do the betting, those that may work in the industry, those that may actually be owners of some of the operations that are out there, and some of the horse owners as well. We need to hear some of that information as to what the government is proposing to change. And once that information is available to us, we can certainly ask the minister and the government, the Sask Party government, to provide those answers in a timely and consistently honest fashion.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I would propose that there's a few other issues on this bill that we need to take further study on. And I would remind the people that are out there in Saskatchewan right now is that what happens in the fall sitting . . . There's only another seven days left, and it's something that we enjoy doing as opposition because we can expose the Sask Party for their mismanagement of our finances and the fact that their spin factory is really misleading a lot of people on a lot of fronts. It's our time in opposition to be able to expose all that — that's our role of government — and we'll continue doing so.

But in the fall sitting, it gives us the opportunity for the government to introduce their bills and the intent behind the bills, gives us an opportunity in opposition to give a first look at these bills. And then over the next several months we're going to be going to different organizations that are impacted by these changes to see if they agree with this and what are some of their concerns. And then when the spring sitting happens in March, Mr. Speaker, that's when we'll come back with a lot of this information, and we'll counter some of the misinformation that the Sask Party provides to the public on many, many occasions, Mr. Speaker.

So that's kind of what the whole intent is: the first initial introduction of the bill and of course our initial comments on the bill, and then we'll go back and research the bill for the spring sitting. And following the spring sitting of course these bills will certainly, if the government's proposing them, will pass, and they'll be proclaimed. But hopefully the opposition will have enough information to embarrass the government or make them change their mind on some provisions. And that's the role of us as opposition, is to hold them to account and, Mr. Speaker, we will certainly do that.

So again on that note, on this particular bill, Bill 77, I want to make sure that people out there are offered the opportunity to provide that information. We look forward to working with you. And on that note I move that we adjourn debate on Bill 77.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Athabasca has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 77, *The Horse Racing Regulation Amendment Act, 2012*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm pleased

to enter the debate today on Bill No. 65, *An Act to amend The Securities Act, 1988 and to make consequential amendments to other Acts*.

I want to just start by talking about *The Securities Act, 1988*, the Act that is going to be . . . is proposed, some amendments. *The Securities Act, 1988* ensures the securities market is fair and protects the investing public. It is administered by the Saskatchewan Financial Services Commission, securities division. So the commission regulates people trading in or advising about securities in exchange contracts in Saskatchewan. Securities are forms of investments such as shares, bond, debentures, mutual funds, and investment contracts. An exchange contract is a futures contract or an option that trades on an exchange under standardized terms and conditions. And a trade is defined as "any transfer, sale or disposition of a security for valuable consideration . . . but does not include a purchase of a security . . ."

And the 1988 Act requires that all persons selling or advising on securities or exchange contracts be registered. There are initial and ongoing requirements that dealers, advisors, and their employees must meet, including capital bonding and insurance requirements, membership and compensation or contingency funds, record keeping, and educational qualifications and experiences. So that's a little bit about *The Securities Act, 1988* which is being amended or proposed amended through Bill No. 65 that we're discussing here today.

In the minister's comments in his second reading speech, he pointed out there are three main purposes or three purposes of this Act. The first one is ". . . to introduce a regulatory framework for financial products known as over-the-counter derivatives." What exactly is an over-the-counter derivative? It's ". . . an agreement where the price, value, delivery, or payment obligation is derived from an underlying interest." And what are over-the-counter derivatives used for, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you might be asking yourself. Over-the-counter ". . . 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."

The minister in his comments pointed that over-the-counter derivatives shouldn't be confused with derivatives that are traded on an exchange: "When traded on an exchange, derivative contracts are standardized and traded anonymously through secure electronic means." The minister argues that "Such products are well regulated and an essential element of a strong global economy."

But with over-the-counter derivatives, some of the problems, the issue that this bill is said to be addressing is that over-the-counter derivative trades are not standardized or cleared in the same manner as derivatives that are traded on an exchange. "They are executed only through bilateral negotiation." And actually the minister uses the word ". . . opaque nature of the . . . [over-the-counter] derivatives market has limited the ability of provincial market regulators to effectively monitor them and deter improper market activity and conduct."

Obviously you do want to deter improper market activity and

conduct. We look back to 2008 and the global economic crisis, the meltdown basically that impacted so many people, where people lost their life savings in some cases, Mr. Deputy Speaker, their retirement savings, their kids' education funds, their whole . . . everything that they'd been saving for. Many people, many people were hurt by the crash in 2008.

The minister actually points out in his remarks that over-the-counter derivatives did in fact play a role in the financial crisis. And he says that although:

. . . they are not considered the primary cause of the crisis, they made it more difficult for regulators to understand the scope of the crisis and the interactions between market participants. In 2008 the . . . [over-the-counter] market and the complexity of . . . [over-the-counter] derivative contracts was compounded by a lack of transparency. This made it challenging for regulators to identify the risk before the crisis. This is in contrast to the trading of [other] derivatives on regulated exchanges which did not experience any significant failures during the financial crisis of 2008.

So the one thing . . . The minister also points out that following that crash, because over-the-counter derivatives did in fact play a role in it:

. . . Canadian firm counterparties are based . . . [in other jurisdictions like] the European Union and the United States, are posed to impose new regulations on . . . [over-the-counter] derivative markets. This means that Canadian entities may have to adhere to new requirements in those jurisdictions as well.

So this bill is before us because “. . . regulatory inaction is not an option given the commitments Canada has made as part of our role in the G20 . . .”

So we have to take a look. Obviously Saskatchewan is part . . . We have our economy here. We're part of a much larger Canadian economy and part of the international economy obviously. And so it is imperative that we have that big picture view of what other jurisdictions are doing on issues like this.

The other piece that . . . There's actually two other pieces that the minister references in his remarks. He talks about:

In addition to the framework affecting . . . [over-the-counter] derivatives . . . 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.

So what does this include?

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. [So obviously] Protecting the confidentiality of these records is critical to ensure the effective enforcement of securities legislation . . .

That's very important.

The third piece, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that “. . . these amendments will provide the fine collection branch of the Ministry of Justice with the authority to enforce and collect financial compensation orders.” The minister says that:

These orders are made by Financial and Consumer Affairs Authority against individuals or companies that have contravened securities legislation through activities such as fraud. Order is made following a formal proceeding that hears and reviews evidence and quantifies the amount of a financial loss. The amount of the order is to be paid to an individual who has suffered financial loss on the account of the illegal activity.

[15:30]

So we see these three pieces, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We see some regulation in over-the-counter derivatives. We see providing certain confidential records and information gathered by officials, a framework for that, and we see some opportunity for fine collection when someone breaches the rules, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So I know that I have colleagues who will also be discussing Bill No. 65, *An Act to amend The Securities Act, 1988 and to make consequential amendments to other Acts*, and I'm sure that they have much to say on this particular Act. So with that, I'd like to move to adjourn debate.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Riversdale has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 65. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 66

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 66 — *The Saskatchewan Advantage Grant for Education Savings (SAGES) Act*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and it's my pleasure to rise today to speak on the debate on the Bill No. 66, *The Saskatchewan Advantage Grant for Education Savings (SAGES) Act*.

This is a fairly brief Act, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that creates a new grant for people who can afford to save money for their children's education. And basically what the minister pointed out in his comments when he introduced the bill on November 19th was that it would be 10 per cent of . . . The government will provide a grant “. . . at a rate of 10 per cent of the subscriber's annual contributions up to a maximum of \$250 per year . . .” So this is for people who can afford to set aside \$2,500 in an RESP [registered education savings plan] that they

would also get a grant from this government of \$250. And it's an incentive that I think was something this government had indicated they would be introducing last year.

Now the minister indicated that it will be administered by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, or HRSDC, who are supportive of this grant and have agreed to help administer it on behalf of the government. And it will be done collaboratively, so that's one way of some savings, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in order to ensure that this program is efficiently run.

He indicated in his comments that the ministry "... consulted with the Government of Alberta; the Canadian Scholarship Trust Foundation ... and registration education savings plan advisory group called RESPAG." And he said those groups are all supportive of this grant.

However, Mr. Deputy Speaker, apparently the minister didn't consult with the Canadian Federation of Students because they have some very critical comments about this type of incentive for university tuition costs. And I'm going to share some of those comments with you now.

What they describe, RESPs ... This is just in general, the reviews on RESPs, and of course the SAGES grant is one that encourages RESPs or registered education savings plans. So in and of themselves, RESPs are really already a grant payable to those people who can afford them because it's a tax revenue that's forgone. So it's tantamount to a grant. And although it's not a direct grant, it's an indirect grant.

The only people that it's useful to are families wealthy enough to set aside thousands of dollars each year for their children's education. And one of the points they made is that if every parent participated, the maximum investment in an education savings grant, it would cost the government \$3 billion each year, the federal government, for this type of grant. So obviously the federal government realizes that it's not every parent that's going to be able to take advantage of this, and therefore although it appears to be something that's available to all Canadians, it's not being taken up by all Canadians for a number of significant reasons.

So the other comments that were made by the Canadian Federation of Students come from spring 2012, and I'll just make a couple of comments about that, Mr. Speaker. We know that the costs for post-secondary education is rising every year, and the problem with the RESP programs is that it creates a disproportionate advantage for wealthy families. And the kind of thinking that drives this kind of program is found by a quote from the learning bond. And the proponents there have a statement that says — this is just amazing that someone would say this these days, Mr. Deputy Speaker — through savings incentives ... This is a quote:

Through savings incentives and supports such as financial literacy, low-income earners are encouraged to save for their future goals. With the right incentives, the poor can and do save.

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I find that to be a fairly insulting comment, and it really strikes me that these people that are making these kinds of comments have no understanding how

poverty works, and I think it's very irresponsible of them to make those kinds of comments. The research on RESPs shows that high-income families benefit way more from this type of program than any low-income households do. And put together, the RESPs and the Canadian education savings grant, which is a federal grant similar to what SAGES [Saskatchewan advantage grant for education savings] will be, represents a multi-billion-dollar system of financial aid geared primarily to those families that need it the least. And that's a shame, Mr. Speaker.

Students with financial need ... And this is the CFS, the Canadian Federation of Students' position that "Students with financial need would be better served if the money currently spent on the RESP and CESG programs were reallocated into needs-based grants." And I don't think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there would be any reason for this bill to be treated the same way or not to be treated the same way. Needs-based grants make way more sense for those children and young people who can't afford to go to university than for wealthy and affluent families getting these grants on the savings that they're able to afford simply because they are high-income families. A number of children are being left out by this type of bill.

So I certainly think there would be a lot of concerns that our caucus will have in relation to this bill, and I think other people are going to want to comment on that as well. So at this point though, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that's the extent of my comments. The bill itself is pretty straightforward. There is a lot that we cannot comment on because all of it seems to be driven by what's going to be in the regulations. So once again in the House, we won't have any opportunity to comment on that. Those go through the executive arm of government, and unfortunately the public won't have much say in it either.

So this is not a bill that I think we can be very happy about, however it does provide advantage for some students, so I guess that could be one way of looking at it in a positive light. At that point I think I would like to adjourn debate on this bill.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Nutana has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 66. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 67

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Reiter that **Bill No. 67 — *The Community Planning Profession Act, 2012*** be now read a second time.]

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition Whip.

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to join in on the debate on Bill No. 67, the community planning professional Act, 2012, an opportunity to make some comments about the proposed changes that I guess the association or the professional planning community development planners have requested some changes.

But before I get into talking about the changes in the bill, of course we always want to make comments on, we want to make sure, where are these changes coming from? Who's requesting them? And I know in the minister's comments, he referred to in the second reading comments some of the areas where he's received letters from the association. He refers to someone at the university and some of the changes that . . . And I will talk about those changes as I go through discussing.

But I want to go, Mr. Deputy Speaker, just to kind of talk about the process and sometimes ensuring that we make sure that we debate the bills and the process of the official opposition to make sure there is an opportunity to debate the bills. But also we know that when we leave here, we'll be going to talk to different organizations, different groups on certain bills that come forward before the House. And we have an opportunity to ask some questions, whether it's this process directly on certain bills, how the changes — whether it's name changes, whether the regulations will change — and exactly how will that impact Saskatchewan residents. How will that impact the professional organizations, groups? How will that impact the industry? How will that impact the institutes?

So when we go through discussing these, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and trying to make sure some of the questions are asked and making sure that we talk with individuals that have, I guess, an interest in changes that are made through legislation to this House . . . And sometimes they are housekeeping situations where they make sense, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to truly do them. They were a request of the industry, and it makes sense. But sometimes there's concern because sometimes individuals, groups are not consulted with.

This government currently that we have sitting, the Sask Party government, hasn't been very open with consultation, talking with groups, organizations with some of the bills they've come. They're kind of a surprise to people. So we're very cautious. And I know my colleagues ask, you know, questions, and we've got individuals wanting to know, exactly what are they up to?

And like I've said, Mr. Deputy Speaker, sometimes there are a simple process. They might be housecleaning items, but sometimes they go a little further than that. We don't know who's requesting them. And it's about the trust thing. And everyone wants to trust their government, that they'll bring in legislation that's going to benefit the province. But sometimes it's surprising who benefits and the benefits that come out of the legislation that's being passed here. And we will look at those.

I mean we've had arguments and we have disagreements, and that's why I think the venue is here clearly for us to ask the questions and to make clear some of the concerns that . . . I guess people in the province elect, whether it's the official opposition or the government, but they want them to bring in legislation that works. They want them to make sure the official opposition does the job it's been asked to do by the people elected by those individuals, by the community.

So when we look at this, *The Community Planning Profession Act*, Bill 67, some of the requests that we see here, it's not only the associations asking for a name change, you know, and asking that it be, you know, registered professional planners, which has been requested as well. When we look at that, we

look at part of, I guess, some of their exams or to be qualified as a registered professional planner, there is a process.

And I know I've seen comments by the minister. He says he has a letter that he's received. We have not seen that letter. So it's going to be good for us to make sure that we find out the details, the letter, the association, we find out, is it something that they want? It probably is. But sometimes we have to make sure we do the due diligence, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to ensure that we don't miss things.

Sometimes you go through the bills and you go through very closely. And sometimes you may not scrutinize the bills as closely as one maybe wants to because of the time and the pressure. And it's a busy place, and a person means well. And you're trying to cover everything off, but sometimes you need to go back and speak to the association. You need to speak to the community planners out there to make sure that this is something that they want, they're comfortable with, whether you talk to the universities. Any time they make comments that the minister and his . . . comments on a bill like this that's proposing some changes, you want to make sure that we're covering off.

And the minister refers to some of the agreements and that with the new changes will be in compliance. And, you know, some of the areas he was talking about was the labour mobility obligations under the agreement on international trade and the New West Partnership Agreement, that these changes would fall in compliance with the proposed changes. They're not going away from or going to cause grief, according to the minister. We have to make sure that that's exactly the case by asking some questions, whether it's here debating the bill, whether it's in committee. And at some time when we're done with this, it'll go to committee. But we want an opportunity, I think, and it's clear, to discuss some of the issues.

But having said that, you know, they're going to go through a process. And they want to be registered professional planners, and they want to have, I guess, a professional organization that represents their industry. And if there is errors or problems and I guess some of the things found guilty of — you know, misconduct, conflict of interest — they want to be able to deal with this. And I think the provisions in here will give them some of that leeway that they're requesting.

[15:45]

Now we're going to have to go through this a little closer and I think, you know, line by line. And we'll be asking some of those questions, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to make sure that we're doing our due diligence, to make sure that there aren't any areas we've missed. And we'll try to do our best. And I mean of course government, when they make the changes, comes forward with ideas and changes. And I guess they're saying they've been requested to do these changes, whether they're names, whether it's exams, whether they're going to be, you know, a registered professional planner.

So the work that our community planners do truly in our province, the growth . . . And I know my colleague from Athabasca, he made comments on the second reading and his response to it to get into debate, when he entered the debate.

And he clearly talked about the growth, and he talks about the differences between the current government and the NDP government — our plan, the vision, when you talk about real growth. And yes, we want to have growth. We have to make sure that growth in communities, with the planning, it's a crucial position.

And just looking at some of the documents that are here and some of the changes that they're proposing, and again I always say that this is the government proposing these changes, amendments, the way they see it being requested of them. But sometimes they will also add them in on their own. And I think they might come up, and the ministry might say, well we would like this change in there at the same time. Maybe somebody's lobbied them, somebody's mentioned it to one of the MLAs, so they'd bring that information forward. And sometimes it enters onto the actual amendment that's being proposed or the bill changes. And sometimes it's more than just a name change, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It could be something that really, later on, would wake up individuals who are saying, well that's not exactly what we asked for. There's been things changed, added to.

So we got to make sure that and I think we've got to have some time as individual MLAs to see if we can get a response from individuals out there who are in the professional, who are in the community planning. Are these changes that the government's proposing with legislation, are you okay? Are you comfortable with this? Are there anything that you would like us to request of them to add in or take out? And we have to do our due diligence. And you know, we will do that, and we'll make sure that we're doing our role. But having said that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are many challenges. We know that.

And you know, you talk about smart growth and you talk about the planning. And the organization here, you know, professional planners, they do an excellent job. We know that. And of course sometimes if it's housecleaning and it's areas where they want to bring forward, we want to support it. And there's no reason for us not to work with government when legislation is brought forward for the benefit of Saskatchewan people.

And you know, I know my colleagues, they express their concern sometimes on some of the bills that come forward. But I also know we can work together as we're asked to sometimes, representing the province to make sure bills are passed in a way that's making sure that the due diligence is done on it, but also sometimes certain bills come through where on both sides it's beneficial for our Saskatchewan residents and the good people in our province to see that.

But sometimes, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we're very concerned that the way some of these bills come forward, and we have to make sure that we cover them off. We have to make sure that we're doing our due diligence. And we get a chance to look at the speaking notes, and you look at certain bills. And I think my colleagues, as we go through these bills — and we will — we'll ask certain questions, clarification. We'll make sure that, okay, well if those letters are available, can we have copies of them? There's different things, ways we can do that.

The organizations may send us as critics those letters. We are cc'd them to make sure that we understand that . . . And

sometimes, you know, we make contact with those organizations to clearly say, the organization will say, we're actually in favour of these bills. This is something we've requested. We would like the opposition to please work with the government to pass the bill. And we have done that and done an excellent job of that. And I think the people want us to do that. We have a role sometimes and, you know, difference of opinion when you talk about some of the challenges that Saskatchewan people are facing, but overall, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think sometimes the key is working together to benefit Saskatchewan people.

And some of these bills, like I said earlier, are name changes, and some of them, you know, want to be very clear the intent of the amendments that are being proposed, the changes. We want to make sure that those changes are truly going to benefit the people of the province or the industry or anyone that will be impacted by certain bills. And some bills carry, I guess, more change that we're not aware of at the time. And until they impact some of the Saskatchewan people and the residents and people that are truly impacted by some of the legislation and the bills that we pass . . . And there are many examples of that where people didn't realize such changes had happened, that legislation was being introduced, a bill, a change, amendment, or whether it's a name change or sometimes there are things that get put in a bill that organizations, groups weren't aware of.

And like I said, it's clearly that sometimes it's government's idea or might be an MLA talking to somebody in their constituency or sometimes, you know, the partner. And sometimes the political arm plays a role in that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, where politics gets involved. And we see some changes that aren't good for, you know, whether it's the unions, whether it's protected lands, we see some of the changes that have been proposed by the current government as challenging, whether it's elections.

We look at some of the changes that, you know, the government and the Justice minister brought forward was really upsetting to a lot of people, and some of the challenges. And that's something that we have to be very careful on when we're bringing in changes like that, that it impacts so many people. When you want to try to make sure that we're representing people and getting people out to be involved in our province, whether it's elections, whether it's . . . It doesn't matter what service individuals want to use in our province. So it's challenging to see sometimes the bills that this government brings forward. And it's the way they're brought forward, you know, that's very concerning.

But looking at Bill 67, *The Community Planning Profession Act*, I looked through it a little bit. And I looked at the first comments that were made by the minister and by the member from Athabasca. He referred to some areas where he was very concerned about making sure that we have the information, the proof, and we make the contacts.

And hopefully those that are out there in the industry want to contact the official opposition. We encourage that. Individuals who hear some of the stuff that we share in this legislature about some of the changes, we encourage them to come forward to hear, you know, some of the comments going on, debating the bills that are going on here and some of the legislation that's

going to impact them. We encourage people to come forward to hear it but also to respond to us as critics, as MLAs, and not only to the official opposition. Contact their local MLA if it happens to be a Sask Party MLA. Contact them if you're concerned about a certain bill. That's their obligation to bring it forward through their venue to their members, to the minister who is responsible for making the amendments or changing the bill. So there is a process for all of us, I think, in our province to get involved in this.

But at this time, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know my colleagues will have more to say on this bill. And as we go through the process, we will discuss the bill more. It also will go to committee, and I know we can ask questions. And we'll do our homework over the next while, when the session is done, to make sure while we're away doing some of our work that we're getting the details that we need to make sure we can work with the government to move these to committee. And then, you know, if need be, they will be the law. But at this time, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am prepared to adjourn debate on Bill 67, *The Community Planning Profession Act, 2012*.

The Deputy Speaker: — The Opposition Whip has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 67. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 68

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 68 — *The Justices of the Peace Amendment Act, 2012/Loi de 2012 modifiant la Loi de 1988 sur les juges de paix*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise today to enter into the debate on Bill No. 68, *An Act to amend The Justices of the Peace Act, 1988*. And again, a relatively straightforward piece of legislation we think, but of course there could be unintended consequences. So as my Whip had said, we've got lots of homework to do to make sure that we understand these pieces of legislation as well as we can.

It was interesting because as I was going through this, I found out something I didn't know about justices of the peace. I always thought they could do marriages. Apparently they can't. That's the number one frequently asked question, can they do marriages? No, a marriage commissioner can, but not a Justice of the Peace. So there you go, something I learned today.

But there is more to it than that. And seriously, Mr. Speaker, I understand that there's about 160 justices of the peace in Saskatchewan. So this piece of legislation is a critical one for them because what I understand, it talks about determination of salary and benefits, and how do we arrive at that. As the minister had talked in his second reading speech, that it's done by regulation now, but they wanted to make it, bring in the current practices into a more formal arrangement into the

legislation.

And so it'd be based on what the other judges are getting, and it would be a certain percentage of the annual salary of a judge of the Provincial Court of Saskatchewan. And that's prescribed in the regulations made by the commission. And that seems relatively straightforward, and we understand that they've met with the group who represents the justices of the peace.

But it is important that we take time to talk about this and people are aware and those people watching . . . or hopefully this will be brought up in the media and people have an opinion. It's an important principle that there be some arm's length between those people setting the laws, that being us, and those people applying the laws and judging. And that's an appropriate thing that they're being arm's length.

But clearly there's always a debate in the public around those who are servants of the public, the public servants, what is a fair, what is a reasonable wage and how we do . . . Especially those who we want to ensure that we continue to trust with respect. And those are the judges, justices of the peace that we reflect on who are they and the work that they do, and that they are paid adequately so that the judgments they do and the work that they carry out is done with the credibility and integrity that of course we would expect that would be the case.

Clearly this is what this speaks to, and we'll have to know more about it. It would be interesting to know what are the cost implications of this. It would be interesting to know, when we think of justices of the peace, we don't think of full-time workers. A senior Justice of the Peace may be working more than those who are on a part-time basis. These 160 people are spread out throughout the province because they do an important role of being . . . so people can have access to justice in their own communities.

So it would be an interesting thing to know more about this. Where are the justices of the peace throughout the province? How many are full-time? How many . . . What is the cost implication of this? And you know, they do have a transition process for justices of the peace so that nothing is lost, that they don't actually end up being paid less than what they were being paid before. So that's an important criteria, but it is one that we will ask.

And we want to make sure that when we talk about the costs of the court system, that it's a reasonable one. Because on one hand we absolutely want to ensure that people have the confidence in the justice system and that it's doing the best work and as quickly and as effectively as it can, while ensuring everyone's rights that are involved, that they are making sure that the people's rights are being heard. But at the same time, what's a reasonable cost?

And this is one that I know governments have wrestled with for many, many years because clearly you want to make sure people are paid adequately, and it is fitting to their level of office, their stature in our society, that their pay is recompensed to that. But on the other hand, as we know, we are the keepers of the purse here, and people do not want us to be extravagant and get too far out ahead of this.

[16:00]

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I said, you know, it's interesting to know a little bit more about who the justices of the peace are. And you know, it's quite a system actually. And I do appreciate the opportunity just to reflect on this a bit for those folks at home because they may be wondering who are these, who's the Justice of the Peace in their community and how do you get a hold of them and what do they usually do.

Well you know, what functions do justices of the peace perform? This is a handy-dandy document from the Provincial Court system. They administer oaths for criminal charges laid by the police or the public; confirm or cancel police-issued processes, and those might include promises to appear, appearance notice, or recognizance; reviewing and signing court-issued processes, that would be summons or warrant for arrest, that type of thing. Again that speaks to the need of the court system to be nimble and be able to respond quickly. And I'd imagine without these 160 folks that it could grind things down pretty quickly.

Reviewing and issuing subpoenas compelling witnesses to attend court; administering oaths for affidavits, affirmations, declarations; considering applications for search warrants; releasing or remanding accused persons who've been arrested or are being held in custody. And they can also perform certain court functions in the absence of a provincial court. These include accepting guilty pleas from and sentencing accused persons charged with provincial regulatory offences and granting a judgment.

So you have two different levels. You have the Justice of the Peace, but then you have senior justices of the peace, and those would be the ones who would be doing more the higher level work.

Interestingly, in Regina and Saskatoon specifically designated and trained senior justices of the peace have authority to conduct trials under various provincial statutes including traffic, liquor, and wildlife offences. So that's interesting as well. And I'm not sure . . . It would be interesting because we've seen more work in terms of the labour area, and that's when we have to talk more about offences around occupational health and safety and that. They've not really referred to that here, but clearly liquor offences and wildlife offences. And those are important because we know that, and we've seen that over the past decade, the growth particularly in charges laid under the wildlife legislation.

But the one that really is, that does stand out the most for me is conduct trials for offences under various municipal bylaws, including noise and domestic animal violations. Now sometimes that seems like a minor thing but noise, I know, is a big, big deal. And we've seen . . . Actually I think the minister, one of the ministers has been talking to Alberta around noise from loud vehicles. And I think that's an important area, if you're living in an urban setting and . . . It could be anywhere really. If there's loud vehicles, we have to be able to do something about that. And so this is something a Justice of the Peace would be able to do.

Myself, I think we could do just general noise bylaws. And I'm

anxiously waiting to see what happens in the city of Saskatoon around some of the bars and late-night establishments that are very, very loud. I think they're louder than some motorcycles. If you get the music going inside those bars, I don't think it would take an awful lot to stand across the way, across the street, and measure the noise. So I'm very interested in making sure these justices of the peace are there so we can have some of these bylaw violations and be taken to court.

Frankly, you know, Mr. Speaker, in my 10 or more years as an MLA, I see this as an issue on Idylwyld where there are bars that are so noisy, and we have not been able to take them to court. And I'm looking forward to seeing if we can do more about noise. And I think this is an important issue for our communities. And again if we can have the court system work effectively, and this means utilizing the justice of peace system in that process, that would be very, very helpful.

And again domestic animal violations. Mr. Deputy Speaker, as you would know, a few years ago we had some service animals in here because of the issues around harassment of animals. Now interesting now, harassment of animals can be both a provincial issue and it can be a municipal issue. It would be interesting to know. And this may be something because we've just heard last week about the cats that were in the bag, in the knapsack that some poor guy drove over, and there were some issues on that, whether that's a municipal issue or a provincial issue. But again there were people who emailed me about that issue, very upset about that.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, these are real, real issues, and a Justice of the Peace can perform some real important duties in their communities. So it'd be interesting to know.

And as I get into this . . . And it's always interesting as you prepare for each bill that we have before us, which is at the provincial level, which is at the municipal level, and how do the justices of the peace work within those areas.

Interestingly it does talk about, as I said earlier, about performing marriages. Because maybe I'm not the only guy who made that mistake. Not that I'm looking for somebody, but I just found that interesting here that they can actually . . . that they actually can't perform marriages. So if anybody's worried about that, that's a marriage commissioner.

Now we go through what the other parts are, about hiring and how do the qualifications . . . and all of that kind of thing. So it's important. It's a very important job, and I would not have thought that there were 160 justices of the peace in Saskatchewan. But of course, as I said, not all of them would be full-time, but many of them would be. It would be interesting to know the impact of this legislation when you're talking about salary, whether this is, what kind of increase in the cost. What does this mean for the justices? Will they be seeing much of an increase? It sounds like a bit of a red circle program where if you're making below . . . If you're making more, you won't have your wages cut, which only makes sense. But at the same time I'd be curious to know how many people actually would see an increase in this as well and what kind of an impact that would have.

So I just want to review what the minister said because that's

always very important, that whenever we take a look at second reading debates, what did he say? And that we make sure, that we really make sure we reflect on that because, as we know, that these speeches are carefully given, carefully worded because at some point they may end up coming back and being used potentially as part of a court case. Because this is the interpretation we have of the legislation because we know as legislation is certainly wordsmithed in such a way so it can withstand court challenges. But we need to know a bit more than that, and that's why we have ministers giving second readings. And so what he talks about, what he talks about is the guarantee of financial security. He goes on, he says, and I quote:

The process, Mr. Speaker, is now inadequate, given that courts have ruled the principles of judicial independence applies not only to judges but also [to, and he calls them] JPs. One element of judicial independence is the guarantee of financial security to judicial officers such as JPs. Financial security embodies three requirements. Firstly, salaries could be maintained or changed only by recourse to an independent process. Secondly, no direct negotiations are permitted between judicial officers and the government. And finally, salaries may not fall below a certain minimum level.

And I think that, I think that's very clear and very critical because in that case you have . . . And you know, particularly when we talk about the wildlife fines, that type of thing, or liquor fines, we know that's, on one hand we may argue that it's not a big deal. But it really is. It truly is. And we think that it's important for the judicial system to have that independence. That makes our criminal system, our judicial system have the integrity it does. And if we interfere from the government perspective by overtly setting salaries at a high level for some, a low level for some, you know, maybe perhaps really cutting out some, cutting down salaries, this could be a big deal.

And in fact, Mr. Speaker, I heard this morning a group of Guatemalan women have actually come to Toronto to raise a case about a Canadian company because they had no faith in their own justice system or judicial system in Guatemala because it can be easily intimidated; it can be easily manipulated. And the easiest, the most direct way to intimidate or manipulate a judicial system is through their wages, is through their wages. And because we all have to make a living, we all have to have economic security. And I agree with this very much so, because in order to have integrity of the justice system, there has to be economic security and independence.

And so it's interesting to see that justices of the peace are now being considered part of that group. When we talk about judges, we're also referring to justices of the peace. And while we may often not have thought of that in the case, but clearly as we do more and more of this work that we're bringing them along because they're an integral part of the justice system. They make sure things flow quickly. They can do a lot of things that would bog down the court system if we had only judges doing all the kind of work that I described earlier. We would have a problem.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I just want to reflect too on what the minister talked about, "senior JPs are most responsible . . . have

most of the responsibility." And they can "conduct trials for provincially regulated offences . . . [such] as bylaw and traffic safety matters." And he goes on to say, "In recent years, the work of these JPs has taken pressure off our Provincial Court and improved timely access to the criminal justice system."

And again a very, very critical part when we talk about timely access. That's one of the things we would hope that if you are going to court . . . Nobody wants to be part of the court system, either as a victim or someone who's charged. Clearly if you can handle your matters in ways otherwise, that's the thing you want to do. But sometimes we find ourselves in the court systems, and we hope that it can be done in a timely and effective manner, and making sure justice is carried out with all the due diligence to make sure that nobody's rights are being trampled on, but at the same time there's not an undue pressure of living a crime or, you know, wondering about what's going to happen with this or that, that they can be done in relatively quick fashion.

He goes on to talk about, "The framework introduced through this bill achieves judicial independence," and then he talks about an independent commission that will be set up to "review and make recommendations regarding salaries and pension benefits for JPs." And then following the initial one, it will be established as a percentage of the salaries of the Saskatchewan Provincial Court. Now going forward they will be adjusted accordingly with any adjustments to the salaries of Provincial Court judges.

And he also talks about senior justices of the peace being brought into the public employees pension plan. And again maybe this is something that we need to think about. And it would be interesting when we have this discussion in committee. Who are these justices of the peace?

[16:15]

You know, we often have this mindset of older folks, you know, just doing a little bit of work. But it sounds like now it's getting to be more and more a bit of a career. And I'm not sure because I don't know any JPs myself, so I don't know what these folks, these 160 people, you know, what their demographic is. Are they older folks? Are they younger? Are they people who are looking at careers when they are in their 20s and 30s saying, I'm going to be a Justice of the Peace? I don't know. It'd be interesting to know the career ladder. Do many justices of the peace end up as judges? I don't know.

So it's going to be an interesting conversation when we get into the committee. I'm finding, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to be in many of these committees. I've just got a lot of questions. I'm kind of curious about who these folks are because there's 160 of them, and that's a fair number. And I don't know whether they're full-time, part-time, what they are. But they do an important job.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I said, this is relatively straightforward, it seems. But it's one of those things that's critical about the success of our court system, as I said, to make sure it's independent, it's fair, it has integrity, and people view it that way and the people who are in that system are valued and know that they have the respect of their communities.

And at the same time, as I said, it's up to us to make sure we do our due diligence, that we've checked this out a bit, find out more about it. But I know that many folks here will have many questions about this bill and other bills and so . . . But as I said, I always enjoy getting up and speaking as I learn a little bit more every day, even though it may not be the most valuable thing of the day, but I do think it's important to challenge some of the stereotypes we have. And I'm glad I learned a little bit about justices of the peace.

And with that, I would like to now adjourn Bill No. 68, move it to adjournment. Adjourn Bill No. 68, *An Act to amend The Justices of the Peace Act, 1988*. Thank you very much.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Centre has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 68, *The Justices of the Peace Amendment Act, 2012*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 69

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. McMorris that **Bill No. 69** — *The Information Services Corporation Act* be now read a second time.]

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition Whip.

[Applause]

Mr. Vermette: — A little excitement over there. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to join in the debate on Bill 69, *The Information Services Corporation Act*. Actually this is one that I think that we could probably want to speak to in length with concerns from where I'm hearing from constituents all over about the concern the way this has come through. And we've got a lot of information I'm going to go through today to talk about: reports from the Crown Investments, the minister's own words, different committees. Going right through, there is a lot of concern about this bill.

When you're trying to sell off a Crown corporation, a lot of promises, commitments that the current government made and truly is now . . . you know, didn't talk about those issues when they were campaigning on the doorsteps, and you didn't hear it in their platform. You didn't hear it door to door that, you know, we're selling off the Crown corporation, you know, ISC. That's very concerning to a lot of people, and I'll get into the details why that is. And this is a start. Very concerning.

We've seen some of the stuff that the current government, the Sask Party government has already done with getting rid of Crown corporations, taking steps to I guess weaken the Crown corporations and then say, oh no, we're the champions of the Crown corporations, which is false. We see the finances and the mess it's in. And the government can sit here and spin the way they want. I understand that.

But the people looking at this are starting to notice some things.

If things are so good, why are we selling off things that are making the people of this province good, good, good profits? It makes good business sense to retain a company or an asset that is making the people of our province money, that help us pay for education, that help us pay for bridges. And you know, maybe they should keep this Crown corporation and not sell off anything. Clearly maybe they could use those dollars in a commitment to Prince Albert for a second bridge, which Prince Albert really needs. And maybe the members from Prince Albert could do a little bit of work on lobbying and, you know, advocating for Prince Albert because they have said very little or nothing about the bridge. So maybe that's an area where they could go.

But having said that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you know, I want to get into I guess different areas of this. And if you look at the information, I guess, corporation that Saskatchewan people have come to rely on, there's many different parts, components. And the government is now trying to propose that through this legislation, it sees this as an, I guess, an opportunity to get some money for the Finance minister so he can, I guess, go around and put up billboards saying that he has a balanced budget. If that's really what they want to do with a Crown corporation, where the people have said very clearly, Saskatchewan people do not want the Crown corporations sold off. They want them protected for a reason. They give a lot of benefit back to Saskatchewan people.

And you know, we used to have of course under the previous NDP government, utilities that, you know, bundle . . . they talked about the cheapest bundle of utilities in all of Canada. And we see exactly what this government, since they have taken over, has caused. And we look at the different areas that this government wants to brag about and talk about and pat themselves on the back, put up billboards. That's fine.

You know, you can do all that if you want to spin, and they're good at that. You know, that's the one thing I'll say about the Sask Party government — they like to spin. They are truly the PR [public relations] spin of the world. They truly are good at it. I give them credit. Well I didn't want to say, like the member from Carrot River . . . I don't like using "the universe," so I didn't want to use it. But I know I don't want to connect that.

But it's amazing to see some of the areas where this government is going. It's concerning to a lot of people. You're having discussions, Mr. Deputy Speaker, with citizens that really I think enjoy the province. Some of them are struggling. Some of them are wondering, well why — in a time of protection, you hear the Sask Party saying they're not going to get rid of our Crowns — are they actually going ahead and moving on getting rid of our Crowns? So people are very concerned about the information that, you know, Information Services Corporation takes care of.

Clearly, clearly . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Oh, the member from Moose Jaw North can say that people like him. And we'll see if he's one of the ones that aren't speaking up for Valley View over there and for a community that are having issues just like the P.A. bridge. And you know, you think about speaking up. They want to speak up now and they want to make comments from there. It's too bad they're not back in their home constituency arguing and fighting for the people that they

should be arguing with, and for, with this government, for the way that this government is dealing with some of them. So, Mr. Speaker, I would remind those members to make sure maybe they go back home and maybe would be a little louder in their community saying, opposing what the government's trying to do in that community of Moose Jaw.

Now clearly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, concerns are not only from business people. There's a lot of different organizations. Groups are watching this file closely. And there's a good reason why they're watching this, because clearly the people of this province in 2011 and, you know, the members opposite, clearly the people have said, yes. Go ahead. We voted you in. Run the affairs. The member from Athabasca always says, you know, always constantly makes the remark about, you know, we said just take care of everything. You know, don't make a mess and don't mess it up, you know, very clearly. He also says a few other things that, you know, I won't comment on. But having said that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, clearly, clearly his concerns are probably echoed by a lot of people watching what's going on now, that you have a government that has been given a lot of trust by the people, and to watch what this government has done when it comes to promises that they've made to people.

And they like to put out photo ops and press releases and say they're going to do certain things. And I think about the Wollaston Lake road, 2008 February. They make a big announcement — the road will be completed. I just want to show the different things that go on, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I want to use . . . I want to refer to the bill and Bill 69, but I also want to make it very clear the commitments that a government makes and whether that's on the doorstep to the people of Wollaston Lake, what a . . . You know, that is not respect when you make an announcement and you put out a press release telling them they would have a road completed in February of 2008; your road will be completed in 2012 construction year.

They were here in this legislature — chief and council, their senator, their elders, some of the youth — concerned about their community and about this government's commitment to doing a road where after the by-election in June of 2008, they never heard any more. So they wonder sometimes what's going on. What's the frustration? So I can see their concern for their community members when it comes to safety. Take the politics out of it. It's the right thing to do when it's about safety. It's about taking care of community members. And yes, you have to look at the economics, and I know the government says different priorities. Well is this a priority of the government to get rid of, you know, the Crown corporation?

So I'm really concerned about that when the government decides that on some of its commitments that it writes . . . and it puts out a press release and photo ops. It likes to do that. The government likes to do that. The ministry, the Premier likes to do that as well. So here you go.

I'm just using an example. You take that money that you save if you keep the Crown corporation as a Crown corporation, and you utilize that money for the Wollaston Lake road to make sure their community members are safe. So you can save that money, instead of selling it off and it's gone. We can get this money in every year. It showed a good profit back to the people of our province. Why would you want to jeopardize that?

So here's an opportunity for the government to say, you know what? We're going to rethink this. Maybe it's time we don't sell off, you know, ISC. Clearly we'll keep it because we're going to utilize those dollars that we were getting each year and we're going to build a road to Wollaston Lake. We're going to build a second bridge in Prince Albert. The people of Prince Albert deserve that. It's there; let's do that. And let's hope, you know, we're going to deal with the situation and the issues that the community of Moose Jaw's dealing with. There's a lot of people going to be impacted, and we're going to use those dollars to make sure the people in Moose Jaw are dealt with fairly. So the government could use those dollars rather than selling off, you know, the information . . . You know, you look at that type of stuff very clearly.

And you know what? We could use that to build addiction treatment centres. We could use that to make sure, you know, people are never turned away, not like some facilities. Some ministers say well, people will never be turned away in certain situations. But unfortunately here's situations where addictions, people are turned away. So if it's health care facilities, addiction treatment, assistant education with addictions, and maybe it's time that this government start using some of that money to deal with those issues instead of selling them off for a one-time . . . to fix their so-called . . . They can put up a billboard to say, it's a balanced budget. Here you go. We put up another billboard. To me it is the wrong thing and the wrong message to send to the people of our province.

You know, you think about it and you understand some of the situations that the people back home in Saskatchewan are dealing with — addictions, and you're dealing with poverty and you're dealing with the youth suicide and you're dealing with some of the serious issues, housing. And you have a government who I really feel is missing the opportunities to deal with some of the situations. They talk about the growth and they talk about all the money that they have and they talk about all these areas. So utilize that money, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Instead of selling off our Crowns, utilize that money. Retain those dollars to keep in this province. Those are the people of the province who own these Crown corporations.

They're the ones that should benefit from the cheapest bundle of utilities. Clearly we should have that. But clearly we should also make sure that we keep the Crown corporations and the money and the assets for the people of this province to deal with some of the situations that many of our communities are facing.

You know, it's not just northern Saskatchewan that's suffering with some of the topics and issues I've shared and some of the challenges. It's rural areas that are dealing with it too. They have a lot of the same challenges that we're facing in the rural Saskatchewan. And the government can cheerlead all it wants on some of the things that they're doing. Yes. And I'll give credit sometimes where the government needs it. There's nothing wrong with that. It's the right thing to do. When a government does good things for the people of the province, you have to agree it's a good thing, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

[16:30]

But when you see some of the things and the neglect that this

government has done to a lot of people in our province and the neglect under this bill, by trying to sell off this bill, by not telling the people what they were up to in 2011 . . . They didn't mention it on the doorsteps. It's in no pamphlet. There's no pamphlet; there's no platform . . . They didn't mention one word, you know, that they were going to sell off Crown corporations. Oh, I think they went the other way when they were questioned. And those members know what they talked to individuals on the doorsteps when they were campaigning. They know what they said. Go back and search the conversations you had with the people in the province that you asked for their support. Did you tell them?

And you know, you look at cost. And I'm going to go into cost. You could utilize the money from not selling this Crown corporation. You could save the money for our seniors so they don't have to be charged \$5 more for a prescription. Maybe you could use those moneys for that. You could use the money for the ambulance, \$25 that seniors have to pay. Then maybe we don't have to charge them when they're in a long-term care facility for their personal hygienic products that they need. They don't have to pay the \$240, whatever was requested of them to pay per year.

These are things that people expect, and when you have Crowns that make the money . . . And we don't want the government going in and taking special dividends from our Crown corporations so that they can again put up billboards and say, yes, again we have a balanced budget. And you know, it was interesting to see today in question period again, you know, the critic for finances. Clearly he truly has a good understanding of what's going on, which is good for us but not good for Saskatchewan people.

You can spin it and you guys, as a government, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they can spin it how they want. There's a lot of people suffering. And they can talk about all the different people that are off the tax rate, you know, that aren't paying tax any more. I mean, I listen to them. And they can make all the comments in the world about there's more work to be done, but there's people back home that are truly suffering in the rural, in the urban, in the North, First Nations communities, many Métis communities. There's a lot of people are not doing so good. And this so-called growth and this so-called balanced budget billboard and the spending, there's a lot of people that are not, truly are not benefitting.

So I would suggest that maybe the government scrap the idea of selling our Crowns. Come clean with the Saskatchewan people. Come clean with the people that are needing the services. Come clean with the people that are needing services in their community.

And you know, I think it's important to talk about the addictions, you know. There are so many concerns. And I mean, we're going to get a chance to talk about certain bills and bills that are introduced.

But when you see some of the spin that members opposite are coming out with, I mean, I realize they need the backbenchers — and I know my colleague always says this — get the backbenchers to get up and speak and fight for. And I understand and I know that we get a lot of it. But you know, he

makes up some good . . . He makes clear points on some of the issues that are facing some of the people. He makes it very clear. Moose Jaw. He raises some interesting issues over there that the members should be fighting for. Prince Albert, second bridge. Very clearly he mentioned some of the areas where nobody's from there are fighting. So I wonder why he's doing that. Because somebody needs to hear their concerns. Somebody needs to have a good understanding of what's going on. And trust me, he says it all the time. Keep doing what they're doing; the people will judge you. You'll come. We understand that.

You didn't tell them you were going to sell off our Crown corporations. There's a lot of surprises that have gone on, Mr. Deputy Speaker. This bill is just one of those surprises that have come out. They didn't talk about that in their campaign. They never talked on the doors. But there's been so many surprises coming — certain bills coming forward, things they want to sell off, things they want to do, their own agenda.

Here's truly, I guess, what I've heard from some people who have been supporters of the Sask Party. That's amazing to watch, you know. There are truly supporters, and I realize, you know, business world and everything else. Even in our own families we don't all have the same political beliefs. Some of us, you know, come to the agreement we can disagree on our politics. And that's fine and that's okay, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But at the end of the day the people ask the government to take care of them, to do the right things, and don't come up with surprises. Don't mislead, don't say, well we're not going to sell these off, you know; our intent is to keep them.

And you know, I'll give some quote. It's interesting because I want to, you know, mention a quote, the 2008 ISC annual report and the minister back then:

My priority for the future remains the same: to ensure that Saskatchewan's Crown corporations remain publicly owned and provide high quality services at a low cost. This is a promise our Government made to the people of Saskatchewan, and it [will be] . . . a promise we will keep.

Like it's interesting to see some of the comments that the minister can make. So in 2008 there's a promise they made to the people; they're going to keep them. So all of a sudden here we are. The election's over and why are we dealing with this? Why are we debating this bill? Why are people talking about it in the coffee shops? Why are people wondering what's going on? Like why are people starting to understand that, whoa, this isn't what we asked for? And I tell you, when you have individuals who are truly supporters of a certain political party, or thought, well maybe times we'll support this government and give them another term, now they're starting to question themselves. And you know, and I've had people who are supporters and told me they are true supporters, are concerned about the way they're handling of this bill and many other bills that they're proposing. Surprises, Mr. Deputy Speaker — situations that they're bringing forward that the people didn't ask for, didn't want. So they're wondering why.

Well you know, my colleague, the member from Athabasca, makes it very clear. You know, he's passionate about showing how things are — the difference between the Sask Party and the

NDP — clearly. And you know, you look at some of the information. Privatization you talk about, when you look at the Crowns the way they're going, what protection is there? I mean they say they're going to retain so much of the Crown that the government will retain. What guarantee do we have that the government won't sell it off? I mean if they're not disclosing stuff to the people that elected them and they don't have to disclose that to them, then clearly you think they're going to right now protect a Crown corporation that they're willing to . . . So what guarantee is there? There's none.

So you know it's very clear, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and the members over there can say what they want. You know, they get a little sensitive when you talk about the people that are supposed to support them and trusted them and believed that they would do the right thing. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know even some of the members opposite, whether they're in the backbenches, they must look at some of this. They're not in on the plan, but they must look at this. And I hope they look at this and they're saying, this isn't what we campaigned on. This isn't what the people wanted. These are surprises that the people didn't ask for, don't want, and are very concerned. And they are very concerned, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

When you talk about privatization of our Crown corporations — which have made us millions of dollars, which have benefited us, and which go back clearly to deal with the situations that are affecting our Saskatchewan people in the rural areas — we see what the government's willing to do and the programs that the government's willing to cut. All for the reason . . . And clearly they say because they want to make sure they can say again for another year, they have a balanced budget. So they can put up the billboards; so they can spin it, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that it's a balanced budget. Who suffers for that? How many people have to suffer for a small few to get to spin it that they have a balanced budget? Well people are suffering out there. Grandparents, youth, seniors. Again, whether the cost, the affordability, housing, when you look at the housing in northern . . . You look at the poverty numbers that have come out clearly. You look at some of the numbers coming out and this government wants to brag about having . . . and, you know, advertise billboards.

Clearly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is a problem. This government is not connected to the people. They may have been elected by the people, but for some reason they have left them behind, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They've left the people that elected them behind. They're not doing what they were asked to do, and they know that. And that's why you have them every now and then, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they want to engage into it.

Well how come they're not speaking up? How come they're not back home speaking up? Because nobody seems to hear them. They're not saying anything. They're quiet. They're so quiet. Why is that? Why are the members opposite so quiet in their own areas? Because they're told to follow the party line. They're told what to do.

Well let me tell you one thing. Those members back over there, members opposite, the people will get a chance to send you a message. You can laugh. You think it's funny when people are suffering, when the people are suffering and people aren't doing well, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They can laugh and they can say all

they want. They may have their so-called mandate, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but the people will send arrogance a lesson. And they will teach them. You'll see. You'll see . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . That's good. You just keep, keep preaching about it. That's fine. You keep saying your message, keep spinning it.

But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's clearly, clearly the concerns that people have about messing around with the Crown corporations on so many areas. Information is something they want to protect. People hold information very near and dear to their hearts . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Thank you. You know, clearly, why doesn't the Sask Party do the same thing, Mr. Deputy Speaker? How come they don't understand that? How come they can't see the media, they can't see individuals? You can't tell me that they don't see this, they're not hearing it. Clearly people are concerned about the Crowns.

So let's take this back a little. Let's go back a little bit about areas of need. When we have people in the province who have needs, and they have a Crown corporation and they expect a government to do the right thing with the Crown corporations, to protect them, to make sure that nobody messes with those Crown corporations, that's all they're asking. They're saying, be upfront, utilize the services, and respect us.

So what does the government do? It thinks it can sell off whatever it wants. And people are concerned that this is just the start. This is their test case to see where they go. Well the people are going to . . . And I encourage the people, send a message to the MLAs of the Sask Party. If you're living in a constituency where you have a Sask Party MLA, send them a message. Tell them, what are you guys doing selling off our Crown corporations, to even consider it when you never campaigned on that? You made promises you weren't going to. How is it that now you can sell off Crown corporations? I don't know how you get away with it. I don't understand it.

But take them for granted. And that's what I think, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Some of the members are doing that and I think they will pay a price. They can sit here and say what they want. Oh well, we're 49. That's fine. Keep with that. Run with it. Do what you want with it. But at the end of the day, you're here representing the people. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they've been asked to represent the people in this province who want to make sure our Crown corporations are protected, who want to make sure services are provided to all Saskatchewan. Whether you live in a rural, an urban, the North, whether you live on First Nations community, people want to make sure that the services are there. And how do we make sure those services are there? With revenue.

It's interesting how the changes are going on with some of the proposed changes of legislation. Now I know sometimes you hit a nerve with members because they figure their plan, their idea, and they talk and they spin. And I watch their growth plan. Why is it that they had to take money from our Crown corporations, SaskEnergy, SaskPower, wherever they've been taking? I mean the colleague of mine who's a critic for, you know, finances, clearly said it today. The amount of money that's been taken in special dividends from our Crown corporations, the government wanted to, you know, spin it that it has a balanced budget, Mr. Deputy Speaker. A balanced

budget to do what?

Now when you see them doing this type of spin and they're going after the assets, the rainy day fund, you look at the amount of money that this government's after. You know, some of the comments that some of my colleagues said, they're hunting for money. I've heard different comments all over: they're on the hunt for dollars, they're on the hunt for money, and they're going everywhere and anywhere and they're looking at anything.

And you know, people are concerned when you start selling off our Crowns. Where will it end? Where will it end? Well we have to make sure that we protect, you know, the Crown. ISC has to be protected. There's no provisions in here. This is just the start of it. You have comments from ministers, promises, commitments to the people that they would not sell off the Crowns, and here we go. We're introduced to legislation so that they can do what? Sell off a Crown.

[16:45]

That's just the start, so that they can again do their spin that they have the only balanced budget. Well you know what? I think even the rest of the provinces are watching this file closely because I know the Provincial Auditor has been watching it closely. And I think one of these days we're going to have to show the public exactly where we're at, not use the accounting practices we've been using. But we should be in compliance with the rest of the province and Canada to show that the public gets to see it dollar for dollar and see where we're at, that you can't manipulate it and they can pass on.

You know, I think about this, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when you talk about the whole plan. And this government has been in here for years, and people are saying that now. I'm listening to them. They're not new any more. They've been here for years and years and years. How many more years do they want to be here? Well keep doing what you're doing and I guess you will understand what the people are saying when they say, protect our Crowns. Do not give us all these surprises you're giving us. Three more politicians that millions . . . More politicians for what? People are asking that. It's amazing. You know, they say clearly it was not in their campaign promise. Oh you look at all the different things going on, that the surprises that people are seeing.

And again I go back to this legislation that they're proposing, Bill 69, just to see how that is coming out. Clearly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, people are very concerned and some of them are getting angry. And I'm watching them, and I'm wondering, what's going on? How come? Well because they never told us that when I supported them. I voted for them this time, you know. I thought, well hey it would give them . . . Things were going good. They looked good. But you know what? It's that PR, spin shop, whatever you want to call it. You get it going, you keep things going. PR is amazing, and it is.

And you know what? But watch out when the people start to figure it out. When the people of our province . . . And I believe that most people in our province and the people that I have met and talked to and shared are very genuine. They're caring. Our elders teach us to do that. Our community members, our

seniors, they tell us to show respect and work together as a province. Be proud.

But when you see some of the challenges that are facing our rural, northern, our urban, our First Nations, our Métis communities, it's appalling and it's shameful. It's a disgrace to see some of the conditions people are living in today, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It is, it's a shame, a province that's as wealthy as we are, clearly. And you know, you have a government who wants to say it has the only balanced budget in all of Canada. And that's fine if they want to put up billboards and all that. How about the children that are suffering? Education, we've seen the challenges. Addictions, we've seen the suicides. We've seen the mental health challenges that individuals are having. We're seeing the housing. There are so many challenges facing many Saskatchewan people, and it isn't just Aboriginal. It isn't just north. It isn't just rural. It isn't just urban. There's a lot of people who are suffering under the management of this government.

You know, you get to pick and choose the priorities. Governments pick and choose the priority. They're supposed to talk with the people. Well you know what? I've heard a lot of people tell me, oh the minister was here. The government came. They said they heard us. That's all they said. They heard us. But there's been no action on those files. Hear the people, what they're saying about the Crowns. Protect the Crowns. Hear what's going on in the coffee shops, in the streets, supporters that supported your government, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the government of the day, members of the Sask Party.

You know what? Take the people for granted and see what will happen. You know what? I mean they're talking and there's more people talking about it, and they're not happy. They're not happy the way the government's dealing with some of the files. And we see about the surprises, you know. The film tax credit, we see how that went on. It was amazing to watch what went on there. You know, clearly, the way the Chamber of Commerce of Saskatchewan was treated in this Assembly, their Assembly, you look at some of the way people are treated who oppose this government, and you know what? We should be passing legislation. And I think some people talk about that — bullying — make sure people can come to their legislation and talk freely.

And when the government makes a plan or changes things without consulting, talk to the people, that the people can come. And you know, a government should be willing to say, we made a mistake. We're sorry. We're going to correct it. Unfortunately people are seeing exactly what's not happening with the current government who has the so-called balanced budget.

But having said that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I go back to this Crown and the protection. And I have a lot more to say about this because there are so many people talking about it and concerned, even back home, Mr. Speaker.

Well I'm not done. I'll be back this evening, Mr. Speaker, you know, and I'm going to enjoy coming back now because I want to get some ammunition over supper, and a break. Now you see, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the challenges that our people are facing, you know. And I just want to show examples of surprises that

this government has brought forward where people have not shared. We look at Tourism Saskatchewan — used to be an arm's-length organization. The industry was totally surprised. So we looked at that, and look at the industry. Another surprise of a government, Tourism Saskatchewan. You look at what this government's willing to do, even with an arm's-length industry throughout Saskatchewan who truly showed that it was the industry driving what Tourism Saskatchewan was doing.

And yes, government funded a lot. I think there were something like almost, I don't know, 11, maybe \$12 million that comes in from government. I may not have the number exactly right, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but I'll tell you what. There was a lot of money used for advertising, PR work. And people are very concerned that the government of the day took over that organization, Tourism Saskatchewan, who were doing an excellent job with a board and an independent board at arm's length, that was doing a good job and represented the industry fine, was taken over. And the people are concerned of the way it was done, and we heard a lot of people speaking out and a lot of concern about the way it was done. It was done without anyone being aware of it, without consultation. That's just another one.

You know, we see some of the other thing that government's willing to do, surprises — the LeRoy regional park. You know, you look at that one. In secrecy again. Another plan, you know, prepared to do with secrecy. And it's interesting to see, Mr. Deputy Speaker, what this government's willing to sell off, support, without consulting the public, without consulting the industries a lot of time. They just want to do their own initiative and their own agenda — that conservative agenda, Sask Party agenda. Some people call them cousins. But you look at what they're doing.

But I think, you know, not only that, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We should be looking at what they're not doing, what they're not doing, and the individuals that are falling through the cracks. And my colleagues have talked about some of the individuals when we look at immigration, some of the health care, some of the individuals that fall through the cracks. And we're trying to make sure that that doesn't happen.

So we're looking at different areas, Mr. Deputy Speaker. You could utilize the money if you don't sell off this Crown, Bill 69. If you were to keep this Crown and keep the assets, the money that it makes every year — and it makes millions for this province — you utilize those dollars, not only for a second bridge for Prince Albert. You know, you could utilize it for medications, for the immigrants, for everything to cover off things. So there's a lot of things we could do with that money — education, housing. There's so many. The list goes on — addictions. You know what? You can look.

The only place, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the government seems to really focus on saying is, you know, nobody's turned away. We see where that is. There's only one area where nobody will be turned away. You know, it's quite surprising to me, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the whole process of privatization . . . On one hand we say, the government says, it's not happening. How do you start off? You start off small. You start off selling off bits and pieces of a Crown corporation. You sell off small parts of it. The people don't notice it. And you think, oh well, they're not noticing so we'll sell this off.

And you might weaken our Crowns. And if you weaken the Crowns enough, you know, the people might start saying . . . But do you know what, what I'm finding? People are not happy, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when this government looks at selling off the Crowns. Clearly. Clearly, they do not want the government to sell off the Crowns. Clearly, they're saying no to selling off any part of our Crowns.

Now I don't know how the government misses that. Do you need, do you want a letter campaign? Maybe people could write letters to all their MLAs. Maybe they could sign petitions to all the MLAs. Maybe those people in Prince Albert who would like a second bridge could send letters to their two MLAs saying, could you save our Crowns and utilize the money to build us a second bridge?

Maybe there's other areas where we can use the dollars, whether it's addictions. You want to educate and, you know, we're making legislation and changes. Maybe we can use those dollars that we save from not selling off our Crowns and we could use them to do education and addiction services and to make sure nobody is turned away when they go to addiction and treatment. Maybe that's what we can do instead of making sure . . . That's one area we should make sure, this government and the province. And we as a province should make sure nobody's turned away when it comes to addictions. And that's something where we should be looking.

So you know, you watch some of the things going on and you watch some of the priority of this government. And you know, it's sad to see some of the suffering that's going on in our province. You know, you have . . . Members opposite may have their own area that they want to go and they want to cheerlead certain things. And sometimes, you know what, Mr. Deputy Speaker? It is a sad reality. Sometimes it's the right thing to do for people. A government has to do the right thing. It isn't about politics. It shouldn't be about the way people vote. But unfortunately this government has shown its own agenda, and by proposing Bill 69 to sell off our Crown corporations, people are not happy and they will not be happy.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know I have more to say. And I know my colleagues have a lot that they want to say. This is a bill that warrants a lot of discussion. There's been a lot of hard work done by many people who have worked for government, many people who have worked government, have had a career in government to protect our Crown corporations. And I see SOS [Save Our Saskatchewan Crowns]. It's a good organization that's trying to save our Crowns. And you know, it's clear that this government has an issue that it's going to have to address with the people. And I can't wait till that happens. But you know, I have more to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I'm going to.

Now this bill proposes retaining 40 per cent. Now there's no guarantee that they have to. Like it's almost like saying, you know, giving examples. Trust us. We won't sell off all of it. We're going to save 40 per cent. Clearly, clearly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, how can you be willing to sell off 60 per cent of a Crown where the people asked you not to? But you're going to say, we're going to keep 40 per cent but there's no guarantee we're going to, if we need the money for next year because we want to have another billboard that says we have a balanced

budget because we really don't want the people to know. We want to take special dividends. We want to sell off assets of the people to make it look like, you know, the books are balanced again. You know what? People are going to get tired of that. And I think the Provincial Auditor's going to start clearly, and I think she has like, you know, my colleague, the Finance critic . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — It now being 5 o'clock, the Assembly stands recessed until 7 p.m. this evening.

[The Assembly recessed from 17:00 until 19:00.]

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