



SECOND SESSION - TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

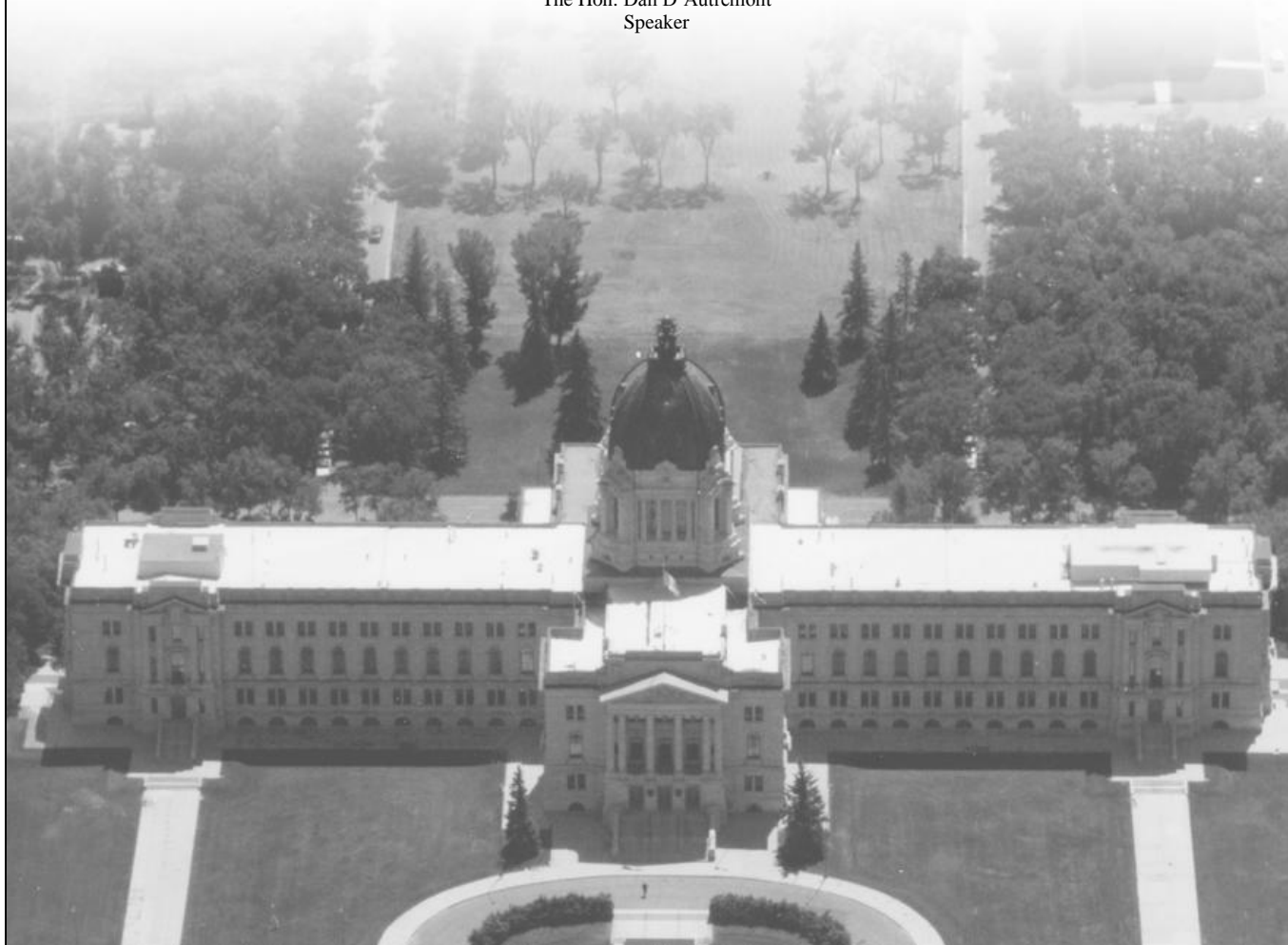
of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(HANSARD)

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



MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN

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

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

[The Assembly met at 10:00.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

Mr. Tochor: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to all members of this Assembly, I'd like to introduce my wife, Danielle, who is sitting in your Speaker's gallery. As all MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly] in here can attest, we can't do what we do without the loving support of our family, and I'm so appreciative of everything. And as the province grows I'd like to . . . also our family is going to be growing as well. We are expecting our first child in July and very excited for that. And so I'd ask all members of the Assembly to please welcome Danielle and the newest member of the Rider nation, coming July 10th.

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

Mr. Hart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly a group of nine Girl Guides that are seated in the west gallery. They are from the 1st Strasbourg Girl Guides Ranger Unit. Members of this unit come from the communities of Strasbourg, Southey, and Lumsden. They are accompanied by Bonnie Pratchler, Lorna Gritzfeldt, Connie Fuessel, and Barb Boughner. I'll be visiting with them later, Mr. Speaker. They are here to observe the proceedings of the Assembly and, as I said, I'll be visiting with them later on and I'm sure they'll have quite a number of questions. So I'd ask all members to welcome them to their Assembly.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I proudly rise today to present a petition in reference to cellphone coverage for the Northwest, Mr. Speaker. And the prayer reads as follows:

To undertake, as soon as possible, to ensure SaskTel delivers cell service to the Canoe Lake First Nations, along with the adjoining communities of Cole Bay and Jans Bay; Buffalo River First Nations, also known as Dillon, and the neighbouring communities of Michel Village and St. George's Hill; and English River First Nations, also known as Patuanak, and the hamlet of Patuanak; and Birch Narrows First Nation along with the community of Turnor Lake, including the neighbouring communities in each of these areas.

And, Mr. Speaker, the impressive part about this petition is this petition has been signed from all throughout Saskatchewan. And this particular page has been signed primarily from the

people from Dillon. And I so present.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition calling for the reconsideration of passing Bill 85, *The Saskatchewan Employment Act*. And we know since that Act was introduced in December, literally hundreds of hours of study and comparison have been carried out in the interests of due diligence. And if this bill does become the new law of the province, working people, particularly young workers, immigrant workers, and other vulnerable workers will suffer from a hasty watering down of our current labour standards which set the mandatory minimums for all Saskatchewan workers. I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the following action: cause the Government of Saskatchewan to not pass Bill 85, *The Saskatchewan Employment Act* in this current session before the end of May and to place it on a much longer legislative track to ensure greater understanding and support for the new labour law.

I do so present. Thank you.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Passover and Easter Celebrations

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, for many Saskatchewan people and people throughout the world, this weekend is a time to celebrate redemption and faith and hope.

Jews are in the midst of observing the festival of Passover, recalling the story of their exodus from slavery in ancient Egypt. It is a story of overcoming oppression through courage and determination and faith. It is a story of hope and inspiration that has been shared for thousands of years.

At the same time Christians, including my own family, will be celebrating Easter and recalling the story of Jesus's life, his tremendous sacrifice, and his resurrection. It is a story of the power of grace and redemption and reconciliation, a story of hope triumphing over despair and love conquering all.

Passover and Easter hold particularly special meaning for Jews and Christians respectively, but I think everyone can identify with elements of each of these stories, for they remind us that out of darkness can come light and out of defeat can come victory.

So to all Jews observing the festival of Passover and to all Christians celebrating Easter, I wish a very meaningful and joyous celebration. And to all Saskatchewan people, I wish a great long weekend filled with family and friends and focused on the things that matter most. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

World Autism Day

Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm happy to rise today to recognize the sixth annual World Autism Awareness Day which is being held on April 2nd.

Autism spectrum disorder is often marked by intellectual disabilities, challenges in communication, delayed social interaction skills, difficulties in motor coordination and attention, and physical and health issues. Even with the improved detection and awareness, research and support is a continuous need. That's why our government is committed to investing \$7.6 million this year to specifically improve targeted autism services and supports.

More than \$1 million of our overall commitment has been dedicated to supporting enhanced therapeutic programming for preschool -aged children and specialized intervention training for professionals in both the health and education systems in Saskatchewan. There is also work being done in the Saskatoon Health Region with the Little Tots program to provide a specialized applied behavioural analysis program to our preschoolers. Mr. Speaker, through the child and youth agenda, there has been a substantial increase in direct client services for our children and youth with autism spectrum disorder. A number of advocates in our province will no doubt be holding their own awareness events on this important day.

Mr. Speaker, April 2nd will be a day of recognition to raise awareness for autism spectrum disorder, to demonstrate the understanding of the disorders and acknowledge those individuals and families who live with it on a daily basis. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Abe Apesis Memorial Hockey Tournament

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to honour the memory of one of our great hockey players, Abe Apesis.

Abe was a hockey legend from English River First Nations, also known as Patuanak, and Abe sadly passed away in 2007. This weekend there will be Abe Apesis hockey tournament taking place in Prince Albert, and many of our communities will be gathering to celebrate sport and our First Nations and Métis hockey heroes like Abe.

Abe played senior hockey for the Meadow Lake Stampeders in the 1960s. He was scouted by the Saskatoon Blades and played for the Kelowna Buckaroos Junior A hockey team. The last few years of his life, Abe stuck mostly to masters tournaments but never lost his passion for the game.

Abe had incredible speed and stickhandling skills but, more importantly, Abe had the ability to inspire people and encouraged many youth to get involved in sport. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank the community of Patuanak for keeping the memory of Abe Apesis alive.

Mr. Speaker, I've had the opportunity to play with a few of our hockey greats in our area who are still with us: Louis Gardiner from Ile-a-la-Crosse, John Young from Buffalo Narrows, Leon Cataract from Turnor Lake, and, Mr. Speaker, I encourage the communities that they are from to honour them as well in the same fashion that Patuanak has honoured Abe.

While we see many young people coming on strong, Mr. Speaker, we need to pay tribute to those players who blazed the trail. And the young ones are coming on, Mr. Speaker. We are proud of our youth, and what they have been able to achieve, young players like Eric Roy from Beauval, Cody Pedersen from Buffalo Narrows, Jordon Iron from Canoe Lake, and Rambo from La Loche.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask that all members of this House join with me in honouring Abe Apesis and the other Aboriginal hockey greats from our area. Thank you.

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

Saskatchewan Athletes Attend National Assessment Camp

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This weekend four young female basketball players from Saskatchewan will be in Toronto trying to earn spots on teams that will represent Canada at competitions in Lithuania and Russia later this year. Paige Crozon of Humboldt and Kaylee Halvorson and Quinn and Zayn Dornstauder of Regina will attend Canada's basketball 2013 national age group assessment camp from March 29th to April 1st.

Mr. Speaker, Canada is ranked number four globally in the age group program, thanks in part to our homegrown Saskatchewan talent. Humboldt's Paige Crozon is a freshman at the University of Utah. She was a member of Team Canada in 2011 and 2012. Kaylee Halvorson is a freshman at the University of Saskatchewan. She was a member of Team Canada in 2009, 2011, and 2012.

Quinn Dornstauder is a senior at Dr. Martin LeBoldus High School in Regina. She played for Canada last year in the world championships in the Netherlands. Zayn Dornstauder also attends LeBoldus High School and was a second team all-star at the under 15 Canadian championships last year.

On top of that, Mr. Speaker, Lisa Thomadis, head coach of the University of Saskatchewan's Huskies, was named the new head coach of the Canadian women's seniors basketball team. Mr. Speaker, I can't resist sharing yet another proud fact. There are more Saskatchewan female basketball players attending the Canada basketball assessment camp than players from Alberta and Manitoba combined. Please join us in wishing them well.

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

Heritage Architecture Excellence Awards

Mr. Hutchinson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What does a stone house in Moosomin, a barn in Indian Head, a tattoo parlour in Moose Jaw, a warehouse in Saskatoon, and an office building in Regina have in common? That answer is that all of

these historic structures have received the prestigious Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan's Heritage Architecture Excellence Award.

Now since the inception of the awards in 1996, a total of 130 projects throughout the province have been recognized. Certificates are awarded to the building owner, architect, and general contractor in each of several categories, including adaptive reuse, conservation, renovation, or restoration of a building, as well as educational programs such as guided tours of heritage homes and even local cemeteries.

Reflecting the provincial scope of the awards is the fact that over the past five years, projects in Eatonia, Cannington Manor, Prince Albert, and The Battlefords have also been bestowed with this award.

I encourage all members to look around their constituencies and encourage individuals and organizations to come forward with projects that merit consideration for an award. The Lieutenant Governor will personally present certificates to this year's award recipients in June at Government House.

Mr. Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to commend the Architectural Heritage Society of Saskatchewan and heritage-minded residents for the good work that they are doing to preserve and promote our rich historical legacy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Corrections and Policing.

Regina Resident Named Citizen of the Year

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On March 22nd I had the pleasure of attending a luncheon to honour a constituent of mine, Mark Stefan, who was named CTV's [Canadian Television Network Ltd.] Regina Citizen of the Year for 2012.

Over the decades Mark has made great contributions to sports, arts and culture, community health, and education in our city. Mark is a member of the Regina Rotary Club and MacKenzie Art Gallery board of trustees. He also served as vice-president of the Grey Cup planning committee and was involved in organizing the 2009 World Junior Hockey Championships. In addition, Mark mentors business administration students at his alma mater, the University of Regina.

Mark has been described by his co-workers as a man with an open heart who makes community service fun. This year his sense of responsibility extended beyond Regina to the global village. Accompanied by his daughter Nicole, Mark served with Habitat for Humanity in El Salvador to help build a home.

There is no place in Canada to see the power of volunteerism at work than right here in Saskatchewan. Mark's inspirational leadership in community service is indeed an example for us all. Through volunteers like Mark, we will keep Saskatchewan moving forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[10:15]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Moose Jaw

Wakamow.

A Time for Reflection, Celebration, and Forgiveness

Mr. Lawrence: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. All around the world, people are preparing to celebrate Easter, one of the most important religious holidays of the Christian calendar year. On Easter we celebrate and remember the suffering and the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, who is understood by Christians to have died for our sins, the sins of humankind. It is a time for reflection, of celebration, and forgiveness.

Easter is also a time spent with family, spent thinking of the promises that Jesus gave to all people who will one day join Him in the kingdom of heaven, and thus a time to remember those of our loved ones who are no longer here with us.

Mr. Speaker, Easter was among the first holy days to be celebrated by Christians, and observing this celebration connects this generation of Christians with the many passing centuries of Christians from all cultures, backgrounds, language groups, racial identities, and political affiliations that have ever been known by the name Christian. And thus it connects the people of Saskatchewan who choose to celebrate this day, whatever their background, to those who have come before and also to each other.

Mr. Speaker, members of this Assembly, staff who work in this building, along with the people of Saskatchewan — Happy Easter and safe travels. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Surgical Wait Times

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday in question period we discussed a recent report from the Canadian Institute of Health Information. CIHI is an independent non-profit organization that provides high-quality data for our health care system, Mr. Speaker. CIHI is the gold standard for health information. It's non-partisan and is respected by people in the country, and it's viewed in the same sort of light as Stats Canada.

Recently a report from CIHI shows that surgical wait times in the province are actually getting longer. Yesterday when I asked the Premier if he agrees with the recent report from CIHI, he said no. So I ask the Premier again today: why is he stubbornly ignoring the CIHI report that shows wait times in Saskatchewan are actually growing longer?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, the numbers speak for themselves in terms of surgeries completed in this province, in terms of what's happening to wait times in Saskatchewan as a result of this government's surgical wait times initiative. As a result of the deployment of private clinics, Mr. Speaker, something the Leader of the Opposition opposes, wait times for six months is down 55 per cent; 12 months, down 83 per cent; for 18 months, down 92 per cent since our government

implemented this particular initiative, since we began deploying private clinics.

Interestingly, Mr. Speaker, CIHI use a certain methodology. They have a narrow focus in terms of the kinds of surgeries. They also, you know, they also focus on smaller regions where a number of two or three surgeries per year can greatly, greatly see a fluctuation in the percentage numbers.

We have a great deal of confidence in the numbers I've just given, in part, Mr. Speaker, because they're informed by our own health care system and also because we're using the same numbers the NDP [New Democratic Party] introduced in 2004.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, CIHI is independent. CIHI is non-partisan, and CIHI is respected for the work that it does and the numbers that are provided.

Mr. Speaker, let's look at what the report had to say. In 2011 half of those needing hip replacements had surgery within 102 days. By 2012 that wait grew to 120 days. In 2010 half of those needing knee replacements had their surgery within 135 days. But last year they waited a full 30 days longer. Mr. Speaker, I'm not making these numbers up. These are the numbers from an independent organization that is providing information for the government and the government should be listening to it.

My question to the Premier: why does he choose to ignore information from a widely respected organization that is non-partisan, that is providing numbers that are accurate for the health care system?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, the numbers that Sask Health uses uses the same methodology that was developed and implemented by members opposite in 2004 when the NDP finally started to measure wait times. And oh by the way, when they discovered we had the longest wait times in the country, when they began to measure wait times, they started to use this methodology that we're talking about today.

Mr. Speaker, we've already noted, the Minister of Health has noted that the Regina Health Region is experiencing some troubles in terms of the goals and the objectives of the surgical wait times initiative. Resources are deployed in this budget.

The other regions are on track, Mr. Speaker. And the bottom line is that wait times for surgery in the province of Saskatchewan under the Saskatchewan Party are dramatically shortened than they were under the NDP. Part of the reason for that, Mr. Speaker, is that we now have more doctors in the province than we did when the NDP were in office. We have 1,000 more nurses now working in the province than when the NDP were in office, Mr. Speaker, and we've invested \$70 million in this budget to reduce wait times. This is our record. We stand by it, Mr. Speaker. It compares favourably with anything we saw from members opposite when they were in office.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, the Premier's response to CIHI is bizarre. It's bizarre, Mr. Speaker, because it's CIHI that the Premier has turned to on many instances to bring forward reports and to validate positions.

There's a report the Premier would be familiar with, *From Innovation to Action: The First Report of the Health Care Innovation Working Group*, co-chaired by the Premier Wall, Premier Ghiz and Clark, cites CIHI as a reliable source for information. The Ministry of Health *Strategic and Operational Directions 2011-2012* cites CIHI. A news release from January 27th from the government cites CIHI as a reliable source with accurate numbers.

So it's puzzling now, Mr. Speaker, why CIHI is good on certain days for the Premier and for the ministry, but on other days CIHI should be ignored and has no standing, and just trust us what we put in our news releases. Trust our spin in our news releases. It's the fact of the matter.

Mr. Speaker, my question to the Premier: why is CIHI good for government news releases on some days, but on other days CIHI is completely ignored by the Premier.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, why is the NDP methodology for measuring wait times that they implemented in 2004 good enough up until today's question period, Mr. Speaker? That'd be my question for the Leader of the Opposition. When the NDP started measuring wait times in this province, finally, Mr. Speaker, when they were dragged kicking and screaming into finally measuring wait times in Saskatchewan, we were experiencing, under their ponderously slow health care system, here's what the numbers were, Mr. Speaker: people waiting longer than 12 months for surgery in 2004 when they began that measure; 9,428 Saskatchewan people waiting for surgery under the NDP.

What about today, Mr. Speaker? As a result of this surgical wait times initiative, the one the member opposes — and this would be a good chance for him to stand and say does he still stand by his position of no private clinics delivering surgeries in a public system — because, because of that deployment, Mr. Speaker, the number's gone from 9,428 waiting under the NDP to 937 with more work to be happening, Mr. Speaker. These are their measurements, not ours, Mr. Speaker.

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

Potential Spring Flooding

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We said earlier this week that we're pleased to see the Water Security Agency working on some preparations for what could be a disastrous spring flood, including the new mobile website which was announced today. We know there's more snow and higher groundwater tables than 2011. We welcome that work, especially since they're so underfunded and understaffed.

What is concerning are the minister's words and the Premier's spin, Mr. Speaker. The people of Saskatchewan deserve to see

how much the government has budgeted for flood relief in the budget. Instead the Sask Party says that the 5 feet of snowpack is less predictable than lightning, and so they don't budget for potential flooding? Seriously, Mr. Speaker, why does this government fail to properly budget for flood damage relief?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Government Relations.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That's just simply inaccurate. Mr. Speaker, \$182 million has been set aside in the budget from the Growth and Financial Security Fund, targeted for any flooding relief that's needed, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, our ministries, across several ministries, are working hard to prepare for flooding. We're very concerned about the potential. We're taking all necessary precautions.

Mr. Speaker, that member's line of questioning on whether it's a line item expense or not, Mr. Speaker, I think that the citizens of this province aren't so concerned about what page of the financial statement the expenditure shows up as they're concerned about whether or not this government will respond in the case of a natural disaster to assist our citizens. And the answer is clearly yes.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We know that the three-year average for costs to the province for flood damage was over \$100 million per year and yet the government has no need to budget for this in the proper place in the budget. It says that if there might be damages, they'll just find money somewhere else. That's no way to properly coordinate a flood response, Mr. Speaker. And instead of just yesterday asking cabinet ministers to sit down and work together for a response, this government should have been planning for a spring flood through the end of winter.

Next door in Manitoba, the government approach to flooding includes investing, building, planning, and educating. It's just part of their culture, Mr. Speaker. Here in Saskatchewan, the Premier leaves flooding out of the budget and puts out a hasty press release on the eve of a potential flood.

Mr. Speaker, why can't this government take a lesson from Manitoba, properly plan for flooding, and then leave the press releases to actual news?

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

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you very much for the question, Mr. Speaker. The question is totally inaccurate. The premise that the member opposite puts forward is totally inaccurate. If the member wants the facts, I'm happy to present the facts to the House today.

You know, the member opposite talks about when we began planning. Well, Rafferty and Alameda began their drawdown on November 21st, Mr. Speaker. Lake Diefenbaker, Lake Diefenbaker is at its lowest levels in recent years. That preparation began last fall, Mr. Speaker.

This government is proactive. This government is committed. This government is fiscally responsible. And, Mr. Speaker, this government will be effective. The members opposite should already know that.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, the budget has yet to be voted on. The ink is not yet dry, and this government has already spent a big chunk of its piggy bank instead of properly budgeting for the spring melt. And yesterday, yesterday the Premier issued a non-news press release that key ministers are now going to talk together about the pending flood. It's unclear what this committee is supposed to do beyond their obvious ministerial duties and responsibilities to people.

Mr. Speaker, the government needs to give flood preparation full proper planning in the budgetary process, just like they do with forest fire protection and crop insurance. To sneak this money out of our savings, which is supposed to be for the province's future, shows that this government just doesn't get proper planning and preparations.

Mr. Speaker, why has the Sask Party apparently left cabinet coordination of the flood response to the very last minute?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Government Relations.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Once again, Mr. Speaker, the premise of that question, like all questions from the members opposite today, is just simply inaccurate. It hasn't been left to the last minute. As the minister in charge of the Water Security Agency just said, Rafferty-Alameda lowered already in November.

Over the last two years, permanent flood mitigation projects have been undertaken. Mr. Speaker, she's so concerned about the financial statement, \$182 million earmarked, Mr. Speaker, for flooding if necessary. Mr. Speaker, on top of that, since this government took office, we've dramatically increased PDAP [provincial disaster assistance program]. We've increased, the assistance levels are higher, the deductibles are lower, and the payments are much, much quicker than under the NDP. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Decision Regarding Film Employment Tax Credit

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister has had two days to answer why his government chose to hire an economist to look at the tax credit only after they made the decision to kill it. This government seems to have put the cart before the horse. Can the minister tell us today why his government made a decision, then commissioned a report paid for by taxpayers to try to justify that decision?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Parks, Culture and Sport.

Hon. Mr. Doherty: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker,

yet once again for the third day in a row we're talking about last year's budget, a report that was commissioned by senior ministry officials, as was confirmed yesterday to the media, that was commissioned last year, Mr. Speaker, after the decision had been made by cabinet over months of deliberations with respect to the budget, Mr. Speaker, last year's budget.

What I find interesting, Mr. Speaker, is that the hon. member doesn't want to talk about this year's budget. And in this year's budget, Mr. Speaker, we've put forward a new support mechanism for all the creative industries in Saskatchewan called Creative Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, in that Creative Saskatchewan is a \$5 million fund, a new investment fund for all the creative industries to access with respect to supporting their particular genre, Mr. Speaker.

Now we know the hon. member for some reason doesn't care about the other creative industries other than the film industry, Mr. Speaker. She says, and I quote, "... her concern with the new fund is that it divides money with the other arts ... " Mr. Speaker, it divides money with the other arts, and I quote, "... is not going to stimulate film production here in Saskatchewan ... It does nothing for the economy, and that's the bottom line."

Mr. Speaker, we believe in all the creative industries in this province; that's why we're putting \$5 million towards Creative Saskatchewan.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On October 30th of last year, when asked by a reporter what the net cost of the tax credit was, the minister responded with, "We haven't done an analysis with respect to what the total economic activity is."

Interesting, Mr. Speaker, as I'm looking at a report, it's titled *Saskatchewan Film Employment Tax Credit Analysis, March 2012*. Why has this minister been dodging questions on the economic impact of the tax credit when his own office had a report that gave him that exact information?

[10:30]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Parks, Culture and Sport.

Hon. Mr. Doherty: — Mr. Speaker, as I said yesterday and I say again today, perhaps the hon. member didn't hear my answer. This was a report commissioned by senior ministry officials back in March of 2012, two months before I was even in cabinet, Mr. Speaker. I have not seen this report, Mr. Speaker, I have not seen this report until two days ago in my office.

And it's interesting that the hon. member, the hon. member will take selective quotes out of this particular report, Mr. Speaker, that did not, did not engage in the basis of a decision with respect to the film employment tax credit. But in this report, Mr. Speaker, I wonder why the hon. member won't read the exact quote. In the first paragraph of the executive summary, it says:

In terms of some performance indicators such as production volume, the number of productions, and employment, the Saskatchewan film industry is performing at low levels equivalent to those observed a full decade ago and has witnessed a steep decline.

Mr. Speaker, that's exactly what we said. Film tax credits had become a bidding war amongst provinces, Mr. Speaker. This government made the decision not to pursue that bidding war.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Perhaps, Mr. Speaker, the minister should have read a little further down in that report as well, but I know the media has a copy of that report and I'm sure has already done that.

What the report says, that when the Sask Party government killed the film tax credit, the film industry was creating jobs, economic activity, and tax revenues. The government study did not show the minister what he wanted to see, so the government buried it.

Isn't it time for that minister and that government to admit they had no justification for killing the tax credit and with it an entire industry?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Parks, Culture and Sport.

Hon. Mr. Doherty: — Mr. Speaker, I think as I said yesterday, we've got a clear delineation of how to approach supporting our creative sector in this province, Mr. Speaker. This government is interested in supporting all the creative industries: music, digital media, visual arts, crafts, publishing, and the film industry, Mr. Speaker. Those members are only interested in supporting and attracting Hollywood producers to Saskatchewan to give them taxpayers' dollars to take their movies to Hollywood and make the money on the distribution rights of those particular movies, Mr. Speaker. We're interested in supporting indigenous producers, which is exactly what Creative Saskatchewan is going to do.

Mr. Speaker, will the member vote in favour of the budget later today to support Creative Saskatchewan and \$5 million for all the creative industries? That's the question they need to answer, Mr. Speaker.

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

Provincial Budget and Financial Management

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, today this House will vote on the budget. It's a short-sighted budget that pushes costs on to future generations.

[Applause]

Mr. Wotherspoon: — And they can applaud those costs if they want. It's including reporting that's been called misleading and wrong by our Provincial Auditor, from a government that

pretends to be holding the line on debt when anything else is but the case.

Mr. Speaker, last year this government started with \$8.5 billion of debt. At the end of this budget year, they'll be at \$10.4 billion. That's a \$2 billion increase in just two years, Mr. Speaker, almost more than 22 per cent increase in debt in two years — \$2 billion of debt in two years, a 22 per cent increase. Mr. Speaker, to the minister: how is that responsible?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, across Saskatchewan there has been a lot of very, very positive reaction to this budget. We're hearing from so many different groups in the province of Saskatchewan, and now we're starting to actually hear from many groups across Canada.

Mr. Speaker, today the CFIB [Canadian Federation of Independent Business] did a news release that talked about business opportunities in Saskatchewan and how businesses were reacting to Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, I want to quote directly from that news release of today, March 28th, dated here in Regina, and it says this: "Small-business owners in Saskatchewan are the most optimistic in Canada."

Mr. Speaker, that's the reality that people in Saskatchewan . . . There are so many positive comments about how we've moved forward in so many areas, whether it's health or advanced education, Mr. Speaker. And I will make some comments about his question about debt right away.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, I think he's learning from the film minister on how to not answer a question. But the question was about debt. This government's pushing debt on to future generations in other ways as well. And one example of tying the hands of those future generations is the costly P3 [public-private partnership] privatization schemes brought forward by this government. It's a more costly, no-money-down, pay-much-more-later approach that's proven itself less effective and needlessly wasteful. Not only that, it's making our province's books even more tricky to understand, creating a third set of books to hide debt off the two sets of books that have already been called misleading and wrong.

As it relates to the costly P3 privatization schemes, why is this minister asking future generations to pay for his short-sighted decisions today?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the budget summary documents that were started by the NDP back in 2004, where we actually put in place all of the documents regarding the General Revenue Fund and all of the other additions to the summary financial statements, I'm sure the member has noted that the government's general debt back when we became government five years ago was \$6.8 billion. Today, Mr. Speaker, the government's general debt, right in the

document that the member looks at, is \$3.8 billion.

Mr. Speaker, the member opposite looks at the column that is entitled Crown corporations. Mr. Speaker, under the NDP, as one of my members indicated, the Crown corporations used to identify power poles by putting paint on them, and they needed to be replaced. You know what's happened? The paint has faded and the power poles have not been replaced.

Mr. Speaker, we're going to continue to allow our Crown corporations to borrow money to make sure that we have an infrastructure in place that can deliver the kind of services that our Crowns are expected to deliver.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, I think Saskatchewan people ignore the loud nonsense we get from the Finance minister. And they'll probably look to the green sheet of this government, its own budget, that says at the end of last year we had \$8.5 billion of debt; end of this year, \$10.4 billion. That's \$2 billion increase in one year. Not just that, they're adding a more costly, risky P3 privatization scheme. They're robbing our Crown corporations of the dollars they need.

But Mr. Speaker, nowhere is this budget more short-sighted, more evident than in education. This is a budget that's failed to support our students, our classrooms, and our teachers. This is a government that fails to respect the needs in our classrooms today.

Mr. Speaker, to the minister: how exactly does denying the students of today the opportunities and supports they deserve and need serve the next generation?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Mr. Speaker, the member opposite has to clarify a few things. He's identified the growth in the Crown debt, and I've said that why Crowns are continuing to borrow.

He needs to answer the question, is he opposed, is he opposed to the City of Regina using a \$100 million debt, a loan to build the stadium here in Regina? That's part of that. Is he against that? Is he against the fact that \$125 million have been allocated to the casinos to upgrade the VLTs [video lottery terminal] and ensure that we're competitive with other provinces and other parts of North America? Is he against that? Is he against the fact that further borrowing will be done for the Boundary dam project to ensure that we continue to move forward? Is he against that, Mr. Speaker?

Because you can't talk out of both sides of your mouth, Mr. Speaker. You either have to be against something or you'd better be supportive of Crowns moving forward and being as important as they are right now.

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

Performance of Government

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, as we've seen throughout the

course of QP [question period] today, it has been a case study in Sask Party stubbornness, Mr. Speaker. First we had the Premier stubbornly refuse to accept numbers from CIHI, despite the fact that half the time he embraces CIHI numbers and uses them in his own reports.

Then, Mr. Speaker, we heard ministers stubbornly refuse to properly account for the expenses that could be coming with flooding, to properly budget. Mr. Speaker, a refusal to properly do that. Then, Mr. Speaker, which is par for the course, we have the film minister stubbornly refusing that the Sask Party government had absolutely no proper analysis and foundation for their decision to eliminate the film tax credit, Mr. Speaker.

And then, Mr. Speaker, we have the Finance minister stubbornly refusing to move to one set of books and give Saskatchewan people an accurate picture of the total financial picture for the province. My question to the Premier: why such a stubborn approach? When will he and when will his front bench ministers start using an approach based on common sense?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, I don't even know where to start in terms of that preamble. It's so full of inaccuracies because, you know, you can ask the wrap-up question and stick with your stubborn theme, but you maybe should have paid attention to at least one of the answers.

Let's pick on the flood preparation issue for one thing. The minister stood up and said that water was being released from Rafferty back in November, Mr. Speaker. Diefenbaker action was taken. Twenty-five million spent over the last two years in flood mitigation. That's preplanning. That's proactive. Mr. Speaker, money's also set aside in this budget. It was hidden in the minister's budget speech, for crying out loud, on budget day. These are the kinds of things we're doing, Mr. Speaker.

I might suggest to the new Leader of the Opposition that he might want to get a little more stubborn actually, find a little bit more resolve, because so far he hasn't come to a position that he hasn't changed. He says one thing about health care efficiencies and then when we're doing it, he says he's opposed to it. He likes to point to CIHI numbers when they're good, but maybe not so much when they were bad for his government, Mr. Speaker. He has two different positions on Keystone he has to clarify. The same is true for uranium, Mr. Speaker. If you're going to apply for another job in this province, if you're going to be a leader of a party, you may want to actually find a position and maybe stick with a position, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Why is the Minister of Health on his feet?

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to introduce guests.

The Speaker: — The Minister of Health has requested leave to introduce guests. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you to all members of the Assembly, I'm very pleased to have this opportunity to introduce some special guests that are seated in the west gallery, Mr. Speaker, and they're representatives from the Autism Resource Centre.

Mr. Speaker, today we have with us the president of the board, Angela Ricci. And we have a board member, Dr. Didi Emokpare; vice-president, Stephanie Casper; and the executive director, Theresa Savaria.

Mr. Speaker, these individuals are responsible for a great deal of support in raising awareness for those that live their lives with autism spectrum disorders in our province and in this city, Mr. Speaker. I look forward to meeting with them after question period. I want to thank them for attending this morning, and I also look forward to joining them next week, Mr. Speaker, for a special announcement. So I would ask all members to join with me in welcoming them to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Nilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the Minister of Health in welcoming these special people in Saskatchewan who have been working with autism for many years. And we appreciate the education that they have done to the public and the work that they have done with Saskatchewan Health as they've attempted to get the right services for autistic people in Saskatchewan. So on behalf of the opposition, we bring our greetings as well.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 90 — *The Planning and Development Amendment Act, 2013*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Government Relations.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 90, *The Planning and Development Amendment Act, 2013* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — The Minister of Government Relations has moved first reading of Bill No. 90, *The Planning and Development Amendment Act, 2013*. 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 will this bill be read a second time? I recognize the Minister of Government Relations.

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

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

[10:45]

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

MOTION FOR APPROVAL OF BUDGETARY POLICY (BUDGET DEBATE)

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Krawetz that the Assembly approves in general the budgetary policy of the government, and the proposed amendment to the main motion moved by Mr. Wotherspoon.]

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

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure this morning following question period to have the opportunity to enter into the debate that we've been having over the last days here on the budget. And, Mr. Speaker, I look forward to making some remarks, but before getting into the content of the budget I would like to make a few additional remarks as this has been my first opportunity since being elected leader to give a speech, and so I do want to make a few comments and thank you to individuals.

First of all, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank my colleagues in the opposition for their support and thank them for I think their willingness to pitch in where needed and to make our team work. And it's like any caucus when you're working with individuals, as members on the opposite side could also attest. You do become very close to individuals and you rely on one another in a variety of circumstances. So I want to thank my colleagues on the opposition benches for their willingness to pitch in, as I said, and thank them for the work that we will be doing in the years ahead as well.

I also, Mr. Speaker, want to thank a few individuals who are often behind the scenes and don't receive the attention that they deserve. I'm thinking, Mr. Speaker, of the individuals working in our caucus office, our many CAs working in our constituency offices, as well as those working in the party office, Mr. Speaker. I know we don't say thank you as often as we should at times, and so I want to take this opportunity to thank them for all of the work that they do that allows us to conduct our work in the Assembly and our work throughout the province.

I also want to make a few comments, Mr. Speaker, because as members will know and as the general public will know, as a party we've recently come through a leadership race. And I want to say a special thank you to each of the other candidates and especially to all of their teams, because the race was a good race. It was competitive but it was not destructive. And to the candidates and to their teams, certainly it caused a few sleepless nights for me as we go through that process, but it's what a party needs in order to be strong, what a party needs in order to turn the page and start the next chapter, Mr. Speaker. So I'm

thankful to everyone in the party who pitched in and made a contribution throughout the leadership race process.

I'm also, Mr. Speaker, tremendously grateful for the individuals who helped in my own campaign. And a campaign is always a lot of work, and members on both sides of the House will know, when it's a one-month campaign in a general election, it's a lot of work. But in a leadership race, when it's stretching over half a year, there's a lot of work to do. So to everyone who made a contribution in bringing food, in helping with driving, in stuffing envelopes, in making signs, in doing data entry, in working the phones, and in keeping the office running, in managing the campaign, in making donations — to every one of these individuals, I'm very grateful for the contributions that have been made.

I also want to say a special thank you to my parents and my family. They've always been very supportive and very encouraging of what I do. I know through the leadership race my dad was always travelling and out attending events and being very supportive. And I joked with him that I didn't play organized hockey as a kid, so I didn't drag him or I didn't bring him out to rinks all across the province in early mornings and late nights, but I think I made up for it through the commitment that he showed through the leadership race. So I'm very thankful to my dad for that.

And most importantly, to my wife, Ruth, who's absolutely amazing, I'm very grateful to be married to her and raising our family with her. To my girls, Ingrid and Clara — they probably aren't watching TV, and if the TV is on, they're probably watching *Franklin* and not the legislative channel — but I want them to know that they're the reason that I'm involved in politics and the future that . . . And I want a better future for them, Mr. Speaker, one that is healthier, one that's more equitable in our province, and also having a cleaner environment in our province.

And the future that I want for my two girls, Mr. Speaker, is the future that I want for all Saskatchewan children. And I know that's the view that we have as New Democrats, the view that we want to extend opportunity to more and more people and create a future that brings the best possible future to the greatest number of people.

And it's with that lens, Mr. Speaker, of how we are thinking long term, how we are thinking in a sustainable way, and how we are bringing opportunity to more and more people, Mr. Speaker, it's through this lens that I approach the budget and examine the budget to see what is right in the budget and where the budget is off track, Mr. Speaker.

As an NDP official opposition, we've been very clear in the areas we wanted to see improvements and where we wanted to see progress in the budget. The one area, Mr. Speaker, where we wanted to see strong action was in the area of improvements to education to support our students, to support teachers. Because, Mr. Speaker, through the conversations we've had with teachers, with parents, as we've been in communities and as we've been travelling the province, we've heard, Mr. Speaker, how the classroom is under strain, how there are increased demands, increased needs for educators, how there are increased challenges brought from the reality of the

modern-day classroom, Mr. Speaker. And we wanted to see the right resources, the right investments in those areas.

So the first area was in education, Mr. Speaker. The second area where we wanted to see good improvements was in the area of long-term care for our seniors, for our grandmas and grandpas and our moms and dads. And many of us can think of loved ones who are in a situation where they are vulnerable, where they need long-term care, and they need better options. We believe, Mr. Speaker, that seniors, the individuals who built this province, should have more choices and better choices as they contemplate what sort of living arrangements they should have as they grow older.

So the first area where we wanted to see improvement was K to 12 [kindergarten to grade 12] education. We wanted to see improvements, Mr. Speaker, with long-term care choices and options for seniors. And, Mr. Speaker, we wanted to see a movement and a shift by the Sask Party government to a more transparent, a more open, and a more accountable government when it comes to the finances especially, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to the issue of maintaining more than one set of books.

We know, Mr. Speaker, that the public sector accounting standards from across the country have moved in the direction of having one set of books. We have been of the position that we should move in that direction as well because, Mr. Speaker, it gives Saskatchewan people a better picture, a better understanding of the true state of the province's finances.

So on these three issues, Mr. Speaker, of K to 12 education, of long-term care, and of increased transparency, Mr. Speaker, sadly I see this budget as being oh for three. I have not seen the steps that are needed, Mr. Speaker, in these three areas, in order to support the budget. Instead, Mr. Speaker, what we have seen — and this is what we have been talking about over the past days as opposition members — is a credit card budget, a budget, Mr. Speaker, that pushes the costs into the future, that pushes the cost on to future generations, on to our children and on to their children, Mr. Speaker. I think, Mr. Speaker, that that's not a common sense approach, this approach of just letting our kids pay for it. I know, Mr. Speaker, it's not the approach that I want for my girls, and I know, Mr. Speaker, it's not the approach that many other families want to have for their children. Because they know, Mr. Speaker, that their children will in fact be paying the price, will be paying for the cost that the Sask Party, the decisions that the Sask Party is making now.

Another area of concern within the budget, Mr. Speaker, that we identify and which troubles us, is the movement and the favoured approach that the government now has towards P3 privatization approaches. Mr. Speaker, this is a fine example of how the credit card approach to budgeting is taking place, with the big reliance on P3s and increased privatization. So as the budget identifies, Mr. Speaker, new schools, the Saskatchewan Hospital at North Battleford, and even some highways projects, Mr. Speaker, will be paid through P3 privatization schemes.

Our concern, Mr. Speaker, with this type of approach is that it is more expensive in the long run. In some ways, Mr. Speaker, it can be likened to the issue of renting or renting to own instead of actually buying. We could think of — to use an example, Mr. Speaker — of an individual who wants to buy a

shiny new laptop, goes into a rental store and signs a 10-year contract to purchase that laptop with a monthly fee to rent the computer. But, Mr. Speaker, the individual still has to pay for the Internet himself and for the printer, for the laptop case, headphones, and everything else that is needed in order to make the laptop work properly. The cost of the 10-year contract, Mr. Speaker, is much more, much more than actually paying for the laptop upfront. And at the end of the contract, Mr. Speaker, it's not clear whether the individual will actually own the laptop or whether it is handed back. That is not clear.

So, Mr. Speaker, if at any time if the individual was to decide through the process of the 10 years of making those rental payments that the laptop was not what suited his needs, that the laptop needed upgrading, the laptop needed repairing, Mr. Speaker, he's out of luck because he's in the costly contract that he's unable to get out of, Mr. Speaker.

And that's what P3 schemes are like. It's the taxpayer footing the entire bill for the project, Mr. Speaker. And it's kicking the responsibility further down the road. It's kicking the responsibility down the road on to future generations. So we've raised concerns, Mr. Speaker, and we will continue to raise concerns around the issue of P3s and the increased privatization.

We also have concerns, Mr. Speaker, on the issue of debt. It's the same, the approach, the philosophy, of letting our kids pay for it, Mr. Speaker, that's increasing our debt in the province by \$835 million this year. In the last budget, Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party added 1.1 billion to the total provincial debt. So over the two years, with last year and with this year's budget, Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party has added about \$2 billion in debt.

And, Mr. Speaker, that \$2 billion of debt doesn't take into account the debt that has been off-loaded to other organizations, Mr. Speaker. We think of our universities, where the Sask Party government decided, at the University of Saskatchewan, to off-load nearly \$100 million of debt, and the problems that that has created on campus, Mr. Speaker. But the true intent and the true desire of that, Mr. Speaker, was the desire of the Sask Party government to paint a rosier picture of their own provincial finances by pushing that debt on to the universities' books.

We also see debt, Mr. Speaker, being off-loaded onto K-12 schools that aren't being properly funded, Mr. Speaker, as school boards are doing their best to provide the education needed to children here in the province.

We see debt also, Mr. Speaker, being pushed on to municipalities with large infrastructure needs, Mr. Speaker, and government not doing enough to address the concerns of municipalities.

And we see debt, Mr. Speaker, in the area of the Crowns. Crowns, Mr. Speaker, need the ability to reinvest their profits in order to provide services to Saskatchewan people, in order to make the upgrades that are needed, Mr. Speaker, and in order to ensure that utility bills for Saskatchewan middle-class families are in fact kept low, Mr. Speaker, and that the Crowns are working in the best interests of all Saskatchewan people.

And, Mr. Speaker, worst of all, when we look at the issue of

debt, it's the Sask Party's reliance on, Mr. Speaker, this approach of putting the debt on to future generations that they will be paying off for many years to come.

Another area of concern, Mr. Speaker, that we see, is in the area of education. And we've been talking about this a great deal through our budget speeches, and we will continue to do so, Mr. Speaker, because the Sask Party government is not taking the necessary steps right now in order to ensure that educators in the classroom have the resources that they need to provide the top-notch, top-level education to our children that children need and that parents expect.

Mr. Speaker, in this budget we've seen a huge focus on testing instead of teaching, Mr. Speaker. We've seen \$6 million, including 5.5 million in software, that is budgeted for standardized testing. Mr. Speaker, standardized testing takes teachers' attention away from teaching students in order to focus on bureaucracy and administration. That is not, to me, Mr. Speaker, a common sense approach. What is a common sense approach, Mr. Speaker, is providing the necessary resources there so increased one-on-one time with students can be delivered — so increased time with students, Mr. Speaker, meeting their special needs, providing enrichment to each student, Mr. Speaker, in the classroom.

You know, this issue, Mr. Speaker, of standardized testing . . . I'm reminded of a conversation that I had just recently, Mr. Speaker, with a parent talking about her son's experience in a kindergarten classroom. And this teacher, Mr. Speaker, was praising the work of the teacher and how the teacher communicates the performance of her child in the classroom. Through the reporting mechanisms that are already in place, the parent had a wonderful understanding of where her son was doing well as well as the areas, Mr. Speaker, where the son could improve.

And it's because, Mr. Speaker, that teacher has the devotion to her classroom but also, Mr. Speaker, because of the experience and the willingness to communicate with parents what is needed for Saskatchewan children. And, Mr. Speaker, when we move to a focus that is more about testing instead of teaching, it takes teachers away from that one-on-one time they need with students to do the proper instruction, to do the proper evaluation, and to do the proper reporting to parents.

We also see, Mr. Speaker, in the budget . . . Another way that the budget falls short on the area of education is dealing with the pressure of new students within the province, Mr. Speaker. The budget identifies about 4,500 new students in the province. But to address that, Mr. Speaker, we saw a budget increase of 40 portable classrooms, Mr. Speaker. We know that is not enough, Mr. Speaker, to meet the needs in the classrooms. And increasingly large class sizes are something the parents are raising with us, parents are raising as a concern, Mr. Speaker. The Sask Party also, Mr. Speaker, with their fondness of the standardized approach when it comes to testing, Mr. Speaker, they won't consider standardized maximum class sizes. So it's fine on the one hand but it's not fine on the other.

[11:00]

Mr. Speaker, what we wanted to see for education in this

budget was smaller class sizes, a true commitment to reducing the class sizes in the province. Mr. Speaker, we wanted to see the reinstatement of the 350 educational assistants that have been eliminated under the Sask Party government. We wanted to see, Mr. Speaker, more support for English as an additional language, recognizing, Mr. Speaker, that that's a smart growth strategy that allows our province to do well in the long run. We wanted to see more teachers, Mr. Speaker, and more classrooms, more opportunities, Mr. Speaker, more individuals in the classroom so they can teach our children.

And we wanted to see a better investment, Mr. Speaker, in new schools. And I think of Hampton Village in my own constituency and the pressure that Dundonald School and St. Peter School are under and the need for the new school in Hampton Village. And it's not just a school like Hampton Village, Mr. Speaker, but it's also repairing leaks and repairing the problems with asbestos in other facilities — projects that need to occur, problems that need to be fixed, issues that need to be addressed in order to have a safe and positive learning environment for our kids. But instead of the Sask Party, Mr. Speaker, taking this approach and taking right action, they're asking future generations, Mr. Speaker, to take up the . . . to pick up the bill and to make the decisions later on that need to occur.

Mr. Speaker, we also see concerns when it comes to the area of health care. Mr. Speaker, this is an area where not enough is being done, and I think, Mr. Speaker, we see on a number of fronts where health care is being undermined.

We look, Mr. Speaker, at the area of health regions and the Cancer Agency, the instruction from the Sask Party government, Mr. Speaker, that these, the health regions and the Cancer Agency, find \$54 million in cuts. Mr. Speaker, this ignores the fact that health regions, Saskatoon and Regina for example, are starting this fiscal year already in a deficit position of about \$25 million each. Officials, Mr. Speaker, in the health regions will identify that they've already made cuts, that they presented a budget that is lean already to the ministry, Mr. Speaker. And the insistence to find \$54 million in cuts, Mr. Speaker, will have an effect on the health regions. And, Mr. Speaker, our concern is that will affect the clinical care that is provided, the services that are provided to our families, the services that are provided to our loved ones. That's a big concern, Mr. Speaker.

And it's consistent with this approach, Mr. Speaker, where we've seen from members opposite where they offload, where they push the tough decisions on to other organizations in order to provide some insulation from that decision, whether it's the \$100 million of debt at the University of Saskatchewan, whether it's decisions that school boards need to make or whether, Mr. Speaker, it's decisions that health regions are now having to make because of increased cuts.

We also, Mr. Speaker, needed to see better movement for new long-term care spaces for seniors. The facilities mentioned in the budget, Mr. Speaker, are recycled announcements from 2009. And we believe, Mr. Speaker, that seniors in the province deserve more options and better options when it comes to long-term care. And, Mr. Speaker, we also have to ensure, when we're spending dollars for long-term care, that we're

spending dollars in a smart way. That we're not pursuing approaches, Mr. Speaker, that actually cost us more in the long run, actually cost taxpayers more in the long run and use up precious health care dollars. And we can think of the experience, Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party had with Amicus, how it has been identified that that has cost millions more than what was necessary.

I am happy in the budget, Mr. Speaker, when we look at the topic of health to see a funding increase to the First Link program to help families and individuals that are affected by Alzheimer's disease. Mr. Speaker, as I've said in a number of question periods and in other opportunities, I think this is a common sense approach, Mr. Speaker, and I think this is a wise allocation of dollars because, Mr. Speaker, it's that increase in dollars that will allow individuals to care for their loved ones in a way that they want to and are able to and allows individuals to stay in their homes for a longer period of time. So I called for this, Mr. Speaker, through numerous question periods, and I'm happy to see that there was increased funding for the First Link program. I recognize though, Mr. Speaker, that the increase of about \$400,000, while important, there's more to do in that area, Mr. Speaker, so we can't lose sight of that.

I'm also happy, Mr. Speaker, to see some funding for home care. But, Mr. Speaker, the increased funding for home care on the overall picture for the province doesn't create more spaces and more choices and more options for our grandmas and grandpas. So much more needs to be done.

In the lead up of the budget, Mr. Speaker, going back to the Provincial Auditor's report, we also heard some concerning aspects about some care facilities and the care provided to our seniors here in the province. And what was highlighted was the need for increased standards, increased enforcement, basically better levels of care in order to ensure that the seniors, who are in a very vulnerable position very often, are cared for in a way that respects the contribution that they've made to this province, respects them as individuals, Mr. Speaker, and first and foremost is a safe and healthy environment for them, Mr. Speaker.

In the auditor's report there was talk of lack of soap in certain facilities, unidentified issues that . . . concerns to do with blocked fire exits, Mr. Speaker, or scalding water. So we need to see a better focus by the Sask Party government when it comes to the setting of standards, when it comes to ministry enforcement, and when it comes to the proper follow-up, the proper carry through when an issue, a problem is identified, Mr. Speaker. It's completely unacceptable to have an issue identified, to have a problem identified and then not have the proper follow-up through the ministry in order to ensure the changes have in fact been made.

Mr. Speaker, because of the shortage of long-term care spaces, Mr. Speaker, what we are seeing in some facilities is how this has a ripple effect throughout the system, specifically, Mr. Speaker, how there can be individuals staying in the hospital longer than needed as they're waiting for a suitable spot to go home or, Mr. Speaker, as they're waiting for the appropriate and the proper resources though home care to be there to allow them to leave the hospital, Mr. Speaker.

When seniors are left waiting in hospitals for an appropriate spot to live, it creates a ripple effect, Mr. Speaker, that can cause problems and clog up our hospitals, Mr. Speaker, which causes problems in many other departments where we can see through that an increase in hallway care, Mr. Speaker, and longer waits in emergency rooms. So it's important, Mr. Speaker, that we are in fact creating more options and better options for Saskatchewan people.

So fixing long-term care, Mr. Speaker, improving and expanding the options available and providing better options for people is an important component in improving the health system overall. Now what I wanted to see, Mr. Speaker, in this budget was a stronger focus on health care, a stronger focus on long-term care options for seniors.

Other concerns, Mr. Speaker, from the budget that we saw outside of the areas of K to 12 education, outside of the area, Mr. Speaker, of long-term care options, and outside of the area of increased accountability and transparency needed by the Sask Party government, was on the area of the environment.

We saw, Mr. Speaker, efforts to address climate change in a meaningful way greatly reduced through this budget — cut another 20 per cent, Mr. Speaker. And this is combined, Mr. Speaker, with the cuts that occurred last year. We see that that's a 73 per cent cut over two years. And unfortunately what we see from government members, Mr. Speaker, is unwillingness to recognize the concerns around climate change, the very real nature and existence of climate change. We saw a Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker, that did not mention climate change. And we also saw, Mr. Speaker, a budget that did not address climate change other than cutting the funding in areas to actually address the concern, to address the problems.

We also saw, Mr. Speaker, steps in the wrong direction when it comes to post-secondary students facing massive tuition increases and universities left in a debt crisis. Mr. Speaker, as the Sask Party government has had this reliance to push decisions on other organizations, as they've had this fondness to insist that other organizations take on borrowing in order to make their own financial picture look better, Mr. Speaker, this has created a financial crunch on our university campuses. And we hear stories from both institutions, Mr. Speaker.

Earlier this week we heard of the imminent 100 layoffs at the University of Saskatchewan which is a huge concern. And, Mr. Speaker, we hear of increased program cuts, of programs being eliminated as well as services. And students are concerned, Mr. Speaker, because they want the programs that are needed there to provide the education that they need and deserve. And they also want, Mr. Speaker, the proper resources when it comes to staff on campus to provide the services to students. We also see concerns, Mr. Speaker, at the University of Regina with reductions in the number of sessional lecturers as one example. And we see tuition going up on both campuses.

And we see, Mr. Speaker, also comments from the administrators of universities, Mr. Speaker. Thinking of the comments from the president of the U of R [University of Regina] identifying that they have taken steps, Mr. Speaker, to find savings in different places, and the insistence to find more, Mr. Speaker, will inevitably affect programs, will inevitably

affect the staffing levels and the services most importantly provided to students, all at the same time as we see tuition increases going up for students.

We also see growing communities, Mr. Speaker, and we see municipalities more and more being left to take care of infrastructure needs within their own local area, Mr. Speaker, pushing more debt onto municipalities and not providing the infrastructure needed.

On the agricultural front, Mr. Speaker, we see tens of millions being cut from the business risk management programs and, Mr. Speaker, these are programs that help producers. These are programs that are there to provide services to producers, to provide increased security and planning ability for producers. And, Mr. Speaker, to see these steps, it is concerning.

We also saw, Mr. Speaker — this was clearly identified through question period today — we saw a complete unwillingness to recognize how poorly the issue of the film employment tax credit has been handled by the Sask Party government. We have seen a minister, well two ministers, and both having problems, Mr. Speaker. But we have huge concerns. The members opposite, the Minister of the Economy is saying, well this is last year's budget, last year's problem.

Well, Mr. Speaker, it's today's problem. It's today's concern, Mr. Speaker, because it has effects on our economy today. It has effects on Saskatchewan families today, Mr. Speaker. And for the members opposite just to slough this off, to say, nothing to look at here, move on, everything is fine right now, that says there's no attention here, Mr. Speaker. Don't look at our past actions. Don't look at how poorly we handled this. Don't look at how we commissioned reports to try to cover our tracks, to try to provide spin for how we need to sell this to Saskatchewan people, Mr. Speaker. We see a stubborn unwillingness, Mr. Speaker, to recognize that they made a mistake on the film employment tax credit and to recognize that they need to do so much better when it comes to the creative industries here in the province.

And instead, Mr. Speaker, instead of recognizing that, instead of having a change of heart, instead of recognizing what Saskatchewan people, what Saskatchewan businesses or Saskatchewan families know to be true, Mr. Speaker, we see the members opposite casting blame on everyone else. I can see them casting it on the opposition. We see them casting blame on people in the opposition. We see casting blame on the previous minister, Mr. Speaker, but we do not see members owning up to the decision. We do not see the minister taking responsibility for the decision. And, Mr. Speaker, we do not see the right steps in this budget to address the problems created in last year's budget when it comes to the film employment tax credit.

We also see a stubbornness, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to the decisions that the Sask Party government made around the Aboriginal employment development program. Mr. Speaker, this was a program that was very successful. It was a program that encouraged partnerships between First Nations and Métis individuals and groups, with business as well as government, Mr. Speaker. It was bringing results. It was providing a benefit to the province. It was engaging more and more people in the

workforce, Mr. Speaker, which is a positive, which is a good thing.

But for no good reason, Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party government eliminated that program in their last term. And sadly now without the presence of that program, we have seen movement in the wrong direction.

If we look at the jobs, Friday's job numbers, Mr. Speaker, in most months what we've seen the trend being since the elimination of that program is movement in the wrong direction. We have seen numbers that are more discouraging or we've seen numbers that are stagnant in many of the months.

And individuals recognize, Mr. Speaker, that this is a short-sighted decision. This is not good long-term thinking. This is not sustainable thinking. This is not the type of decision that is in the best interests of all Saskatchewan people because, Mr. Speaker, all Saskatchewan people benefit, all Saskatchewan people will do better when we extend opportunity to more and more people in the province. And for that reason the Aboriginal employment development program was very important.

Now, Mr. Speaker, economists recognize that this is a problem. Businesses recognize that the elimination of the AEDP [Aboriginal employment development program] was a problem. Certainly people in the province, including those who are First Nations and Métis, recognize that it is a problem. And I think secretly, Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party government even recognizes that it was a problem. And so late in the game, Mr. Speaker, after the damage had been done by eliminating the program — not unlike their decision to eliminate the film employment tax credit — we saw government members strike the task force, Mr. Speaker, on Aboriginal education and achievement, Mr. Speaker, unemployment.

And the task force, Mr. Speaker, in itself, the individuals doing the work are respected individuals who have a great deal to add, a great deal to say and, Mr. Speaker, though somewhat late, I look forward to the opportunity to seeing their report. My concern, Mr. Speaker, is after cutting the AED, after seeing numbers go in the wrong direction and late in the game striking the task force and then the task force taking a considerable amount of time to come up with the findings, my concern, Mr. Speaker, is the track record demonstrated by the Sask Party government doesn't bring a lot of confidence, Mr. Speaker, that they're going to act on that task force in a way that is in the best interests of Saskatchewan people.

[11:15]

And we saw the first glimmer, Mr. Speaker, of this with the dollars designated to the task force of just a few million dollars. Not a significant amount when we look at the issue before us, when we look at what the needs are and what the challenges are, but more importantly, Mr. Speaker, when we look at the lost opportunity that we have by not taking the right steps now. So it's my hope, Mr. Speaker, that when the report comes forward, when it is made public, and when I trust there will be good advice in the report . . . I'm sad, Mr. Speaker, that it was a delayed response by the Sask Party in relation to their elimination of the AEDP but I hope, Mr. Speaker, that the

report brings forward good information.

But, Mr. Speaker, it has to be taken seriously by the Sask Party government. And in order to be taken seriously, Mr. Speaker, the right dollars have to be put in place in order for the recommendations, in order for the good information that is obtained through the report to be of use to Saskatchewan people and to be of use to Saskatchewan people in the short term, but especially, Mr. Speaker, in the long term. And, Mr. Speaker, what the budget has indicated for the 3 million or so that has been allocated to this, it is not enough to address the issue when we look at the challenge, when we look at what the lost cost is, the lost benefit is to the province by having everyone engaged here in the province, Mr. Speaker.

What Saskatchewan people do want in this budget, Mr. Speaker, is long-term thinking, Mr. Speaker, that's in the best interest of Saskatchewan people. What we do not want, and what I believe Saskatchewan people do not want, are short-sighted decisions that benefit some, Mr. Speaker, especially friends and insiders, but not for the broader public, Mr. Speaker. We need the proper long-term thinking, the proper long-term vision in order to create the future that we want in Saskatchewan so that everyone can benefit.

Mr. Speaker, we need to create an economy in the province that benefits everyone. We need an economy, Mr. Speaker, that is there engaging people — First Nations and Métis people, engaging new Canadians and newcomers to our province, engaging those of us who have been here for some time, Mr. Speaker, engaging the young, and engaging the old. We need an economy, Mr. Speaker, that benefits everyone in the province.

What we also need in a long-term view, Mr. Speaker, is an environmental plan that does what is required to address climate change in a meaningful way. And we will hold the Sask Party government to account, Mr. Speaker, on their do-nothing record when it comes to climate change. We will hold the Sask Party government to account, Mr. Speaker, when we see cuts to climate change, when we see cuts to programs that could help address the issue. We will hold them accountable, Mr. Speaker, when we don't see the proper type of action we need from our public utilities, from our Crowns in leading the positive change that we want to see when it comes to climate change. We will hold them to account on that issue, Mr. Speaker.

What we also need in a long-term vision, a long-term plan for this province, Mr. Speaker, is a health care system that actually helps us be healthy, a health care system, Mr. Speaker, that addresses many of the root causes of our illness. And Mr. Speaker, when we're only addressing the symptoms, when we're only addressing issues once people become sick, Mr. Speaker, when we're not having the proper focus on housing, when we're not having the proper focus on early intervention programs, Mr. Speaker, we will be speaking out on those issues.

And we will be speaking out, Mr. Speaker, when we see health care dollars being spent in a way that are not in the best interest of Saskatchewan people. And we will be speaking out, Mr. Speaker, when we hear and we see of cuts being instructed by the Sask Party government on to other organizations that will have an effect on clinical care here in the province.

Mr. Speaker, for a long-term vision of our province that is in the best interest of all Saskatchewan people, we also need to see an approach to northern Saskatchewan, to the environment and to its people, that sees northerners, Mr. Speaker, as the huge asset that they are to our province — not as a liability, not as a drawback, not as an expense, but as a huge asset that they are to Saskatchewan people. And this directly ties into the earlier comments I made, Mr. Speaker, when we talk about investments in housing, when we talk about proper investments in the early stages for health care, when we talk about having programs that are in place to actually help people like the Aboriginal employment development program. But instead, Mr. Speaker, on so many fronts, we've seen the Sask Party government step away, pull away, not concerned about the issues of the North. And I think that is a shame, Mr. Speaker.

We also, Mr. Speaker, need a plan in the province when we look at education that improves outcomes for First Nations and Métis students, Mr. Speaker, recognizing that the achievement gap between non-First Nations and Métis students and those who are First Nations and Métis, Mr. Speaker, is too great, recognizing in light of the same comments I made, Mr. Speaker, about extending opportunity to more people, that we are in fact putting resources in place so that we can achieve the goals that we need to achieve in order to be successful.

It goes back to the earlier discussion about standardized testing over teaching. Instead of plowing millions of dollars, Mr. Speaker, into standardized testing, why not put those dollars into the classroom? Why not hire more teachers, Mr. Speaker? Why not reinstate the educational assistants that have been eliminated under the Sask Party government? Why not improve buildings where it's needed, Mr. Speaker? Why not build new schools where they're needed, Mr. Speaker?

So instead of this tunnel-vision focus that we have from the Sask Party government on standardized testing over teaching, Mr. Speaker, let's look at the resources that we need to put in place so that educators can do what they love and what they excel at, and so that our little ones can actually learn to their full potential and can do well. Teachers know how to teach, Mr. Speaker. Teachers know what they're doing. Parents care about their children. Parents want the best education for their children, Mr. Speaker, and by not putting the right investments in our education system, but especially in the area of improving educational outcomes for First Nations and Métis students, Mr. Speaker, we are not doing justice to the considerations of future generations. We are not doing justice to the consideration of our kids and the kids of our neighbours, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I've identified some of the areas where we've had concerns about the budget. I've identified some areas, Mr. Speaker, where there have been some positive steps in this budget. The approach that we'll be taking as an opposition, Mr. Speaker, and the approach that I will be taking as a leader, is one based on common sense. We will listen to good ideas no matter where they come from, Mr. Speaker. Good ideas based on common sense is what we need in order to have the long-term thinking.

It's common sense, Mr. Speaker, that we need to make the right investments in the classroom in order to have the right education for our children so that they can get into the

post-secondary programs that we need, so that they can contribute to the economy, Mr. Speaker. That's a common sense approach. That's a good idea, Mr. Speaker, that we can support regardless of where it comes from. And I think that's a good idea, a common sense approach that all members should support, and it should inform, Mr. Speaker, their position on testing over teaching.

Mr. Speaker, the approach that we will take, the approach that I will take, Mr. Speaker, is to not change the things that are working here in the province. When things are going well in a direction, when they are on the right track, Mr. Speaker, we will support that in a constructive way because, Mr. Speaker, that is a common sense approach. That is what Saskatchewan people, that is what the constituents expect of us when we come to the legislature, yes representing our individual constituency but, most importantly, speaking for and speaking to the best interests of the entire province, Mr. Speaker.

So when there are things that are right, Mr. Speaker, we can support those. But when the Sask Party government is misguided, when the Sask Party government is stubborn, when the Sask Party government is on the wrong track, when the Sask Party government won't admit a mistake, when the Sask Party government won't fix a problem that they've created in a program like the film employment tax credit, like the Aboriginal employment development program, Mr. Speaker, we will stand up and we will hold them to account on that. We will be firm, Mr. Speaker, and we will say, Mr. Speaker, that they should be doing better.

And, Mr. Speaker, we will be offering a positive alternative. We will be saying, instead of standardized tests, Mr. Speaker, how about we have standardized class sizes? How about we put the dollars into the classroom so that we can have the right resources for teachers so that the little ones can be in a class size that makes sense and allows them to thrive as individuals, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Speaker, it is important to recognize, Mr. Speaker, when things are off track, we will stand up, we will speak out, and we will offer a positive alternative. This budget, Mr. Speaker, is an example of the Sask Party pushing ahead and plowing ahead with a plan that is not in best interest of Saskatchewan people, not in the best interest of the middle class, and not in the best interest of vulnerable people.

Mr. Speaker, it has not done enough for health care. It is pushing cuts on to health regions. Mr. Speaker, it does not do enough for education. It is causing more problems in the classroom instead of fixing problems in the classrooms. It is not, Mr. Speaker, reversing the poor decisions that have been made on issues like the film employment tax credit, like the Aboriginal employment development program, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, this budget does not do enough to expand and improve options for long-term care and home care for our seniors. This budget, Mr. Speaker, does not do enough to provide a clear and accurate and transparent picture of the provincial finances. And it does not do that, Mr. Speaker, because of their stubborn insistence to maintain two sets of books.

This budget, Mr. Speaker, is not in the best interests of future generations because of its reliance and its determination to go to a P3 privatized model when it comes to health care, when it comes to education, when it comes to caring for our seniors, when it comes to instructing our children, Mr. Speaker. This budget does not do enough for the Saskatchewan people because in too many instances it puts politicians ahead of people, Mr. Speaker. And it's a credit card budget that is kicking the responsibilities, kicking the burden, kicking the debt down the road on to future generations, Mr. Speaker. So for these reasons I will not be supporting the budget presented by the government.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you so much, Mr. Speaker.

[Applause]

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thanks, colleagues. Thank you. Mr. Speaker . . . Wow, everyone's in a good mood. It must be the break that's coming up, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I want to first and foremost thank the Minister of Finance, thank his office, thank the officials over at Finance and really all the officials across government for their work on this particular budget that we're debating today, that we'll vote on later this day. Mr. Speaker, it's a very large task and members on both sides of the House will know that. Certainly some members on that side of the House participated in many budget development processes, and so we know it starts fairly . . . Frankly it starts in the summertime, late summer and goes through fall and then a lot of work, especially at the Treasury Board level. And I want to acknowledge members of the Treasury Board who have had a lot of meetings, a lot of meetings to get the budget to the point where it is — balanced and moving this province forward.

You know, Mr. Speaker, we've made some changes in the organization of government. It's not something we talk a lot about, but for a number of years we've been ensuring that it isn't just members of Executive Council that are on these very important and strategic boards of government like the Treasury Board. We have private members as well involved in the Treasury Board process, Mr. Speaker. And we want to acknowledge the member for Arm River and the member for Cut Knife-Turtleford for their work they have done on the budget, all the members of Treasury Board. And we want to thank them for their work and willingness to go to all of those meetings that the Minister of Finance would call, all the time and frequently.

Mr. Speaker, I think in the life of a legislature, one of the best tests, one of the best reflections on a government, on what its priorities might be, is a budget. It also, for the opposition, says a little bit about them. And I'd like to focus on those two things as I enter this particular debate, Mr. Speaker. And just before I do, again on these major opportunities to speak, I want to thank the people of Swift Current for their ongoing trust that they've placed in me to try to represent them as best as I can, and to acknowledge my family — Tami, Megan, Colter, and Faith — for their continued support and love so that I can also continue to do this work.

Mr. Speaker, we've already taken the opportunity to welcome the member for Massey Place as the new Leader of the New Democratic Party, the new Leader of the Opposition. I offer those congratulations to him and through him to his family again. And I know we're going to have many months of debate and, at the end of all of this, a very good campaign where we will offer competing visions and ideas to the people on behalf of our respective parties. And in the meantime, we look forward to the questions and we look forward to the debate that's going to unfold, Mr. Speaker, with the Leader of the Opposition and his colleagues across the way.

So, Mr. Speaker, I do think a budget is a reflection on a government, on its priorities, and I think then we should . . . I'd like to look at the budget in that context. Mr. Speaker, I would add one more context to the analysis and that would be the overall situation in Saskatchewan vis-à-vis revenues to government.

Mr. Speaker, we saw in 2009, with a precipitous drop in revenues to the Government of Saskatchewan when no potash was sold really anywhere and we were short around \$2 billion, we noted that the economy of the province of Saskatchewan continued to move forward. We noted that the state of the finances, the state of the revenues to government was not necessarily a reflection of the continued strength in the economy. And you know, I think that was an interesting year for a lot of Saskatchewan people to realize . . . Most of us would think, quite rightly I think, quite intuitively, that as goes the revenues to government from taxes, from resources, so goes the economy. We know that's not the case.

[11:30]

We saw that in 2009, as I've just referenced. And frankly we're experiencing it right now because, Mr. Speaker, in almost every respect our economy continues to lead Canada. We have 3.8 per cent unemployment. Every economic statistic that is reported reflects our leadership, something that the government doesn't take credit for but we do want to celebrate Saskatchewan people — entrepreneurs, businessmen and women — who are creating the Saskatchewan advantage and of course all of the people that work in those businesses.

But our economy is the envy of the nation and yet revenues going into this year — frankly, towards the end of the current budget year, which will end in just few days — the resource revenues were soft. Potash revenues were down. Sales were made, prices had dropped a little bit. And the way our royalty structure works, one that we inherited from the members opposite, one we support — they no longer support it, we should note; they'd like to increase those; but the ones that they agreed on at least when they were in the Government of Saskatchewan — has left us in a situation where our royalties are very price-sensitive.

So a relatively small decrease in the price per tonne for potash can have a disproportionately high impact in terms of our budget, can really hurt the revenue side of the budget. So you'd see, Mr. Speaker, for instance the forecast made a year ago by ministry officials and reported by the Ministry of Finance in terms of price are not, not that off from where they would be as we close this year and move into next year. But any change,

any change in that price, because of the sensitivity of the royalty structure, causes revenues to decrease. We saw softness in oil as well.

So moving into this particular budget, we believed that, and those who study these things, those who are experts believe these factors probably will continue, this softness in natural resources prices. Not certainly a huge drop, nothing to be really worried about in terms of the forecast, but still concerned in terms of a natural resource revenue softness. So that was the parameters. That's the context for the budget development — tighter revenues, and yet, Mr. Speaker, an economy that's leading the nation; an economy that needs the government to continue to invest in skills in terms of dealing with the labour shortage; and an economy that requires its government to continue to invest in education. An economy that requires, because we're attracting people at a record pace, that we would invest in education, Mr. Speaker. And I'll get into more details on this in a moment.

But I would note at the outset with respect to education that the Leader of the Opposition who just spoke likes to use the word cuts, likes to ask rhetorical questions about resources for growing enrolment in the province. You know, Mr. Speaker, I think it's very important for anyone who serves in this legislature, especially for a leader of the party on either side of the House, that they need, when they're making their case, to recognize all the facts, even some of the facts that are inconvenient to their position, some of the inconvenient truths that we don't hear the Leader of the Opposition acknowledging. We hear some members acknowledging them. Certainly the deputy leader during his leadership campaign I think did a better job of this perhaps.

But, Mr. Speaker, I can say to you that because of enrolment pressures last year, we said in the fall, the Minister of Education said in the fall to school boards across the province — and this was unprecedented; I echoed the same comments in the growth plan speech I gave in the fall as well — the message to school boards was this. We know that there are more people moving to the province than ever before. We know they're bringing kids. We know the population is growing, enrolment is growing. And so when we have a better idea of those enrolment pressures, we will take I think the unprecedented step, the unprecedented step of a mid-year increase in investment right to those classrooms, right in those school divisions where growth happened. And I think the number was about \$6.6 million at the end of a tight budget, Mr. Speaker.

We sat down as a cabinet and a caucus and we said, we need to be able to respond to these pressures. It's one of the pressures and challenges of a growing economy, a challenge that we welcome. So let's find the resources we need, not only on the operating side, but also on the capital side in terms of some immediate renovations and improvements that could be made to schools that had pressures.

And that is exactly what we did, Mr. Speaker. We kept the promise that we had made, that we would be there in the event that there are enrolment pressures, Mr. Speaker. The budget speech and all of the interventions on this side of the House and the interventions of the Minister of Education have been quite clear. We will also be there in the future in terms of enrolment

pressures. The best indicator of future behaviour is past behaviour. That's something we're pleased about on this side of the House.

They're probably not that happy about it on that side of the House because the past behaviour of members opposite when they were in government was, well a couple of things with respect to the enrolment pressure. They wouldn't have had to make an in-year investment in education, Mr. Speaker, because there were no enrolment pressures when the population was actually declining or was stagnant, Mr. Speaker. That was the reality under the New Democratic Party.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, we know now, we've seen the documents, I think it was the minister of Education, Mr. Melenchuk, who was pretty clear about the fact that the province then . . . And that's not, not that long ago I would say. The Minister of Finance references this every now and then. Not that long ago, the NDP were saying, we just think enrolment in this province overall is going to go down because we believe the population is going to continue to fall, that we're going to continue to see the demographics in our province age, frankly, and there will be fewer and fewer students.

There was never really a plan, by the way, by the NDP to change that fact; to say, no, that can't be right in a province with all of these resources, with the great people that we have in this province of all places, where we have literally what the world wants, a world that wants food security and energy security. In that world, we should have a vision for growth. They did not. They had vision for decline. And guess what, Mr. Deputy Speaker? Guess what? They actually acted on that. They frankly did not provide the investments for future growth in education.

We inherited a situation, and the Minister of Finance was first the minister of Education, we inherited a situation from the New Democrats that was quite shocking and appalling in terms of education and infrastructure in the province — neglected schools, obviously no planning for new schools. Their focus was on how do we actually close more schools? What's the best way to close schools?

Mr. Speaker, things have changed. And in this particular budget, there are again millions of dollars pointed towards enrolment pressure. And, Mr. Speaker, I think it's fair to say you can judge a government by its budget. You can judge this government by its increased investment in education heretofore and what we're prepared to do in the future to help with those classroom pressures that we see in the province.

Mr. Speaker, while I'm on education, I do want to talk a little bit about the standards-based testing we're going to be doing as part of the student achievement initiative. We should have a good debate about this. The member talked a lot about standards-based testing. In fact it was — I would argue, in terms of his speech he just gave — it was sort of the centrepiece of his critique of the government's education policy. They use a few slogans and buzz words. They talk about teaching instead of testing. Mr. Speaker, this is a simplistic view of what the government has already been doing in four regions across the province.

I want the Leader of the Opposition, if he would, to listen very carefully. Mr. Speaker, when we talk about standards-based testing in this province. We're not talking about no child left behind. We're not talking about the use of standards, frankly, to decide on funding for classrooms or to make accountability decisions for teachers.

We're talking about an investment in the classroom, an investment driven by teachers to improve the results for students, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And more to the point, we're actually advancing. We're offering something for which the evidence is in in this province. He's now the new leader of the NDP. He needs to talk to those divisions that are doing this. He needs to talk not just to the school administrators that are proud of this, who are here in the gallery and with whom I met not long ago to talk about their specific examples, but he also needs to talk to the teachers.

I remember our own education leader in the Chinook School Division, a gentleman by the name of Liam Choo-Foo who has been a long-time education professional and now with the Chinook School Division. His view was, his theory was you couldn't actually take away from the teachers the standards-based initiatives that that division has deployed because the teachers see the results. And here they are, Mr. Speaker. Chinook School Division introduced something called the balanced literacy initiative. The Chinook School Division — and I think this was on their own actually, to be fair; I don't think the government provided extra resources but they had budgeted for it — they actually invested in additional resources to focus on a challenge they had with respect to students not meeting their grade level standards in literacy.

In fact when they began the standards-based initiative about four years ago, Mr. Deputy Speaker, 63 per cent of students were reading at grade level. They used — here it comes — standards-based testing. They targeted resources for teachers. And four years later, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the number of those kids, that cohort now reading at their grade level is up 20-some per cent. It's up over 80 per cent, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That's standards-based testing. You need to properly resource it. But there's \$5.9 million, I believe, in the Ministry of Education's budget to do just that, to expand on what's possible to bring that result to all the school divisions.

How would you, how could you oppose . . . They do because it's sort of a dogmatic, ideological thing for even the new leader. It's interesting, as a much younger caucus, new leadership on the front bench, but their ideology is as old and tired as ever, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We just saw it again with respect to private clinics. They refuse to understand that today in the province standards-based and student achievement initiatives are delivering better results in the classroom.

Here's another example. Prairie Valley School Division has seen a year-over-year improvement in 23 of 26 areas, including reading and math because, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in part because a significant part of it is that they're deploying standards-based testing and achievement. And they're investing, by the way, they're backing it up with resources in the classroom so teachers can take this information and actually do something with it.

That's the point of what we're talking about. We're not just talking about a measure. We're not talking about teaching to the test. We're talking about using benchmarks, using standards-based benchmarks for kids, for teachers, in the classroom to say, here's where they're at now. We need them to do better. We want them to do better. Their parents want them to do better. We're going to provide them the resources to ensure that happens.

At the end of his speech he talked about this great vision for properly educating kids so they could then move on to post-secondary and then, Mr. Deputy Speaker, get a job in this economy. That is exactly what this initiative and this government is all about with respect to this education. They should vote for the budget.

What's happened, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in Prairie Valley, exactly? Eighty-one per cent of Prairie Valley students graduate on time compared to 72 per cent province-wide; 23 out of 26 areas, including reading and math, improvement. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, graduation rates there higher than in the rest of the province. What more evidence do they need to sort of set aside the ideology, to set aside really just their rigid position and their willingness to instead engage in a meaningful debate to throw out slogans, as the leader of the NDP did in his budget speech?

In Melfort, Mr. Speaker, in that area they're also using standard-based achievement. And I could tell you that they're pretty pleased with what's going on in that particular school division, especially in terms of graduation rates. So we're carefully watching what works. The minister together with education professionals and a panel that includes teachers is going to bring forward — and this is very much germane to the budget debate because we've got extra resources in the budget for standard-based achievement, the student achievement initiative, I should say, Mr. Deputy Speaker — he's going to work with those groups. We have years now to make sure that we take what is working already, support it, and export it to other parts of the province.

And I hope, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I hope that this new leader of the New Democratic Party, who should be less encumbered by their old ideological approach, I hope that they will look carefully at the results. I would ask him now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, through you, to consider meeting with these directors of education in those four divisions. Talk to them. Talk to them first before they oppose this in a blanket fashion, in an ideological way. Understand that this is not no child left behind. This is an initiative informed by education professionals, going to be resourced properly by the Government of Saskatchewan so that we can simply see better achievement for students, improved graduation rates. That's what the education system should be all about.

And though there are those who will oppose it, and maybe they'll change their mind, but if they continue to oppose it, I'll tell you this, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and it's a big reason why I support the budget — we are moving forward with it. We will provide support to the Ministry of Education and school divisions. And we're going to get to those kinds of results for all children in the province of Saskatchewan.

So you know, when you look at the education budget, there are certainly operating increases there overall for school divisions. And there's very significant capital investments that we're making, Mr. Speaker, two new schools, Mr. Deputy Speaker, two new schools — Langenburg and Gravelbourg — projects that the respective MLAs have worked on hard, the communities have worked on. We have I think 40 relocatables in the budget. Obviously these are transitional supports for education capital, but important because again we're growing at a very fast rate. We want to be there for them.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we did also mention in the budget the fact that through SaskBuilds the minister responsible is going to be looking at doing more schools at once — bundling. And that brings us to P3s because again I go back to the original premise. I think a budget is a good reflection of what the government's priorities are and how it will implement those priorities. And they're also a reflection of where the opposition of the day might be.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when members breathlessly talk about P3s, the deputy leader and the current leader, they talk about them as though they're not working anywhere in the world today. They're not working in Canada. They talk about them as though they haven't even talked to their federal counterpart. The federal New Democratic Party have specifically endorsed the option for P3s.

[11:45]

Now I know — and we give them credit — I know the hon. leader, the new leader of the NDP doesn't always support Mr. Mulcair. And this is a good thing, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It took him a day or two on Keystone. He kind of . . . I don't know. I don't know what they had to check or who they had to phone because the first time on Keystone he was pretty unequivocal and more . . . It was pretty equivocal, I should say. More on that in a moment. But the next day he did come out and say, no we support Keystone and we don't support Mulcair.

But on this particular issue on P3s, we think Mr. Mulcair's got it right. We think the federal NDP are saying, absolutely. This is part of one of the tools, one of the arrows you need in your quiver to actually address the infrastructure needs of a growing province. It doesn't mean you move away from government-owned capital. It doesn't mean you move away from cash flowing infrastructure projects in a more conventional way. But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if we need 10 schools in short order and we know that bundling those schools has worked in Alberta and pencils out financially . . . As Conference Board of Canada and others have identified, it does pencil out in the interests of taxpayers. It wouldn't be just wrong to not look at that option; it would be irresponsible to not look at the option of building, say, 10 schools at once and dealing with this challenge.

But again, Mr. Deputy Speaker, notwithstanding the relative youth of now the front bench, the deputy leader and the new leader, they are just tied to old ideology. Even Mr. Mulcair is shaking the shackles of that old ideology when it comes to P3s. Even Thomas Mulcair, I would argue a fairly left wing New Democrat, his party has said P3s are part of the answer. They're one of the pieces in the pie. But not the new leadership of the

New Democratic Party here in the province of Saskatchewan who seem happy to, who seem happy to just abide by this old and tired ideology that, by the way, didn't work for this province in the past And I can say most assuredly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it won't work in the future. And that's why we're going to work hard to have them comfortably sitting to your left hand, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think a budget does say a lot about a government's priorities. And I want to highlight a few things here in the budget if I may. You know, it was a tighter budget. We came in I think at 3.1 per cent increase in overall expenditures. And it is a balanced budget on the GRF [General Revenue Fund] and on the summary. Because in the budget as you know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and as the deputy leader, the Finance critic would confirm, we did present the summary finances of the province. The Minister of Finance certainly did that on budget day. And in fact, we went beyond that. We did a little better. We actually presented the GRF as well, and we're going to continue to do that, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

But within that balanced budget, within some of the difficult decisions we made . . . And I'll highlight one of them in particular with the ethanol industry where we've decided to move away from a tax credit, a kind of sector-based focus, a sector-based subsidy. If that sounds familiar to members, it should. We also did that, by the way, with the natural resource tax credit where we reduced that. We also better focused the labour-sponsored venture capital program, also a tax credit, as it were, for those who are investing.

By the way, we had a debate about that in the legislature yesterday. And there's only two, well there's two major players in the LVC [labour-sponsored venture capital] market right now. And it's interesting. I think we'll hear more about it a little bit later. But with only two players, you'd think the critic, before he asked questions of the Minister of Finance, would call both of them. It's only the two calls after all. But he didn't do that. He didn't do that before he asked his questions about the changes the Minister of Finance has announced. And now I think he . . . Well we may hear a little bit later that he wasn't right about that. And maybe that won't surprise very many people.

So within a balanced budget, Mr. Speaker, I think it's worth noting that this side of the House has again increased the senior income plan in the province of Saskatchewan. This is an income program for . . . an assistance program, I beg your pardon, Mr. Speaker, for low-income seniors. This program has been around for a very long time. According to our quick review, it was around, this particular program, there to help seniors, was around for the 16 long and ponderous years of New Democratic government in this province, Mr. Speaker.

You may wonder why . . . You may wonder this point. You may wonder if the NDP in any one of those years where there was inflation — maybe the economy wasn't that strong, but there's inflation every year; it's 1 or 2 or 3 per cent perhaps through that period of time on an annual basis — you may ask yourself, well surely then they would have increased the income assistance program for low-income seniors. Surely there would have been something, a binary increase, a per cent or one and a . . . Nothing, Mr. Speaker. Sixteen years of nothing

for low-income seniors. This was the social democrats — right? — the social democrats who like to talk about low-income seniors, but they're not actually there for low-income seniors, Mr. Speaker.

Well we won the election in 2007. \$3.2 million increase in this particular budget, \$250 a month. That's up 178 per cent since 2008, Mr. Speaker. That's a pretty significant lift.

I think some of the members over there are saying, well we're new; we're new. Some of the members over are saying, well we weren't here for those 16 years. We weren't really a part of it. Oh, Mr. Speaker, yes, they were. They are a part of a party, and I'm sure they were volunteers in that party's army that would, again, talk about these issues but not do anything about them.

What else did we do within a tight but balanced budget? The seniors' personal care home benefit increased, now \$3.4 million.

And, Mr. Speaker, this is an important one. The SAID [Saskatchewan assured income for disability] increase, Saskatchewan assured income for the disabled, increased support by another \$50 a month — by 2015, 4,200 more dollars per year for people with disabilities — more for singles, more for couples so they can find greater independence with a little bit more support so they can engage in the economy, so they can have the dignity of their own home, Mr. Speaker.

Not ever from members opposite. In fact when that community simply asked members opposite, would you just actually change the program we're under — because they were under the Saskatchewan assistance plan payment, welfare basically, and they said, it's not quite a good fit for those of us in the disabled community — will you just change the name? No. Years and years of no didn't cost . . . wouldn't have cost them a dime, but they refused to do it.

Our government was elected. We were grateful for the chance to lead. The minister of Social Services at the time said, absolutely we will do that, and we will call it SAID.

And then in the last campaign under a new Social Services minister, we laid out a plan to actually and finally increase money for the disabled in this province. And that is also in this budget. And that is also a reflection of the priorities of a government that you might see in a particular budget.

The hon. member is right when he, the new leader of the NDP, has raised Alzheimer's in the past, and so has First Link directly with this government, with different ministers. Certainly we were talking about this for some time under different ministers. And this budget, Mr. Speaker, includes \$350,000 for Alzheimer's First Link services, and we think it's an important step forward. This is a disease that affects our family, and we want to see these supports increased through the future.

Transit assistance for the disabled, capital grant, \$550,000 — again in a tight budget, Mr. Speaker, in a budget where we wanted to balance it but there wasn't a lot of extra room. We made decisions, and those decisions are a reflection of the priorities of a government.

Mr. Speaker, in 1989 my dad was involved in a volunteer committee in Swift Current, and he was involved in a lot of volunteer activities. He still is, not quite so much anymore. But he is still involved in his community. They identified the need for a transition . . . for a women's shelter, for a family shelter in Swift Current. They worked with the then, I think it was, the Devine government to try to get some support for this particular shelter in Swift Current. And the Devine government came through. They provided some assistance, and this shelter has been running so very effectively and with great compassion ever since that date.

Mr. Speaker, we looked through the record of the, again, the NDP government and tried to determine where they may have opened another shelter because certainly there were needs in other parts of the province and, Mr. Speaker, we found none. You can go through *Hansard*, and you can find a lot of talk from members opposite, from those who say, well we're all about the disadvantaged; this party's all about helping those who are disadvantaged. Yes, and members may be laughing about it, but this is the record. This is their record.

Mr. Speaker, I'm very proud to stand in the Legislative Assembly today speaking in favour of a budget that is for the first time in the life of this province, since that shelter that my father was involved in in Swift Current, is opening up a . . . supporting the opening of a brand new one in Melfort, Saskatchewan.

I think what members opposite are, I think what members are noting is that — and I hope they take special note of this because soon they'll be asking the people for the chance to lead and govern this province — you can't just talk about things. You can't even just enter a budget debate and say, well there should've been more for this or less for that or we would've done . . . You've got to be able to demonstrate you have the capacity, fiscal capacity, or even a record of actually doing the things that you talk about, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, an increase to the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency, a \$12 million increase, up 8.6 per cent; 10 million more for the surgical wait times initiative, as well as the innovative home care pilot in Regina, for another \$2 million.

And, Mr. Speaker, also in a tight budget, we've identified \$3 million that will go towards the joint task force with respect to our partnership with the First Nations, with the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations. We've been working on this task force for some time. This particular group of women and men have been identifying again pilots that are working, projects in classrooms that are getting better results for First Nations students. And we're going to get their report soon and very soon, Mr. Speaker, and when we do, we will be able to highlight those projects that work, that are bearing results. And we'll now have money in the budget to invest in those projects and bring them to other parts of the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, you can take a look at the operating funds, the grants that we provide to third parties, frankly in a very tight budget, and see there are increases. Where other provinces are giving zeros to those groups, there are increases. They're almost all of them better than inflationary increases to those important third parties.

In the case of municipalities, 11 per cent increase in terms of revenue sharing. And here again I think it is a reflection of the government's priorities when, because of the formula established by this government, this partnership with the municipalities, revenue sharing is increasing another 11 per cent. It's up over 100 per cent since we took over from members opposite. And here again this was one that the NDP liked to talk a lot about and actually never did. And now it's happening for municipalities, and it's also reflected in the budget that we debate today.

From a capital standpoint, Mr. Speaker, we see big increases. I noted at the top of the speech that our growth plan calls for a robust infrastructure investment program, and we followed through with that over our first term in government. And this budget is no exception. I think we're close to 8 per cent increase in overall capital expenditures for the province. And so that means highways and that means two new schools, and it means important health care projects moving forward. The hospital that members from Moose Jaw have been working so hard will go forward in that community. The Saskatchewan Hospital in North Battleford will continue to move forward, Mr. Speaker. We're going to get those pieces done. And in highways we've seen just significant increases year over year, another historic budget in highways, Mr. Speaker, because we understand that a growing province needs a good transportation system, and we're going to be continuing to invest in highways in Saskatchewan.

So all of that within a balanced budget. All of it done balanced on the GRF side, balanced on the summary financial statement side because we report in both as we've already noted, as the minister's noted. We go that extra step of reporting in both of those areas, Mr. Speaker.

So what have those who rate the fiscal probity of a provincial government, of any organization, what are they saying about the province of Saskatchewan? I'm always interested in what the Finance critic and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has to say about the Minister of Finance's budgets. I enjoy the debates. They have good debates. Some of them are quiet, and some of them are not so quiet, but I enjoy them. I like listening to his questions. And often he'll give his opinion on the budget, and that's important. That's part of his job.

But I hope he's okay with the fact that when it comes to actually measuring the fiscal health of Saskatchewan, when it comes to determining the fiscal probity of Saskatchewan, that we would look to those who are in the credit rating business first before we might be listening to the deputy leader, as earnest as he is, that we might also look to advice from the economists at the various chartered banks in the country.

So here's a few of them. The Bank of Montreal said, and I quote, "As expected, this is a largely stay-the-course budget. With firm economic growth, persistent surpluses . . ." Persistent surpluses. That doesn't sound at all like what the Finance critic or the Leader of the Opposition just said. And yet this is an economist that's . . . Anyway ". . . persistent surpluses and low debt levels . . ." That also doesn't sound at all like the rhetoric we hear from members opposite. And the quote continues, ". . . Saskatchewan continues to earn its AAA stripes," Mr. Speaker. And that of course is a reference to, that of course is a reference

to the fact that there's obviously credit ratings, each province has a credit rating, and never in the history of Saskatchewan have we ever been AAA.

[12:00]

Janice MacKinnon, who now the members don't like — they don't like Janice MacKinnon — Janice MacKinnon I think was in the '90s when all the provinces were running, were dealing with big deficits, all of the provinces. We had one that was more acute here, absolutely. But when she faced that particular budget, Mr. Speaker, those budgets, those series of budgets, she became the first Finance minister in the Dominion of Canada to balance the budget in that era of governments trying to wrestle these fiscal challenges down to the ground . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Yes. They're not clapping now because they don't, they don't like Janice MacKinnon anymore. Maybe it's because she was about balanced budgets. Maybe it's because she liked our surgical wait times initiative.

I think it's because she thinks we should probably use private clinics within a public system if it actually lowers wait times. But not these fresh-faced, new leaders of the NDP. They're here. They give speeches. And they absolutely want nothing to do with innovation in the health care system. They want nothing to do with what even Janice MacKinnon recognized as important changes to deliver better health care within a public system, by the way, changes in terms of private clinics that are today in the province reducing wait times to historic levels, Mr. Speaker. They're not interested in that.

Anyway, so I was talking about Janice MacKinnon. And she really did a lot of heavy lifting to get the province to where it is even today because she got the books balanced again. And then successive governments were able to do some good work there as well. But, Mr. Speaker, what never happened, what never happened . . . Although that was good work — this is no but, this is an and. That was good work and there was no real, there was changes to the credit rating but we never ever got to AAA. How did we ever get to AAA, Mr. Speaker? That's the highest rating you can have. How did we get to AAA? Well it was because there was an election in 2007. And yes we had some good luck in terms of revenue, but then what did the government do with that good luck? We paid down the general debt of the province by 44 per cent, Mr. Speaker. We balanced the budget every single year. That's what we did and that's what we're doing this year. And the response from the credit rating agencies was to say, man we're going to go AAA in Saskatchewan now.

So we, unlike the New Democrats, we will acknowledge Janice MacKinnon and we will be grateful for the work that Janice MacKinnon did to help us get down this road. And we hope now that the party that used to formally claim Janice MacKinnon will say, and now to the credit of this outfit we've taken the next step, we've paid off general debt, we're at a AAA credit rating here in the province of Saskatchewan.

What else were some of the banks saying? "Saskatchewan is expected to be the only province for fiscal '12-13 reporting black ink. Its budget today projects a \$54 million surplus to the General Revenue Fund." That's Scotiabank.

Overall, given its relative economic and fiscal outperformance and sterling credit rating, Saskatchewan boasts a strong following in debt capital markets, where its bonds can be expected to continue to trade at a notable premium to more-indebted provincial peers.

That was CIBC [Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce].

Never heard that from the Finance critic. Never heard it from the Leader of the Opposition. But economists at banks are saying so. Here's the Conference Board *Outlook 2013*: another bright point for Saskatchewan's economy is the province's fiscal position and a string of balanced budgets.

Mr. Speaker, budgets are a reflection on the priority of a government. And we've made some difficult decisions here. The members of the opposition have given in their speeches a long list of things they wanted more money for. The Leader of the Opposition says, don't look for efficiencies in health, actually even though when he was campaigning for the leader, he said that he would look for efficiencies in health. One of the problems I think he's having there in terms of just the number of positions on any given issue. But they've said don't look for efficiencies in health; give more money to universities; give more money to all the education partners.

They've identified in a speech a long list of wants and needs and demands that the NDP would like to give to the people of the province in the budget but, Mr. Speaker, what they are missing is this basic fact, one that was never lost on Janice MacKinnon. The best way to ensure sustainability of quality of life, the best way to ensure government can afford to make those key investments going forward in the decades — not the months, but the decades — ahead is to balance your books and not borrow any money that actually will have to be paid back by your kids. They seem to have forgotten that basic fact. They have seemingly ignored and rejected what Romanow and MacKinnon knew and what they practised.

We saw, Mr. Speaker, in the federal campaign — now granted that was when Mr. Lingenfelter was the leader; now we have a new leader — we saw a platform that had \$5 billion worth of promises there. That would have meant massive deficits and rising debt for Saskatchewan. And you know, Mr. Speaker, that included some ideas we didn't agree with like a special deal for First Nations with respect to resource revenue sharing.

Mr. Speaker, we've had a chance in the budget debate, the perfect opportunity in the budget debate for the brand new Leader of the NDP to say, those ideas were wrong even though I helped write them, even though I wrote the tree booklet. That was it; rooted and growing, I think it was called. Even though, even though he could say . . . Yes here it is right here. I won't hold it up, but there it is.

You know, by the way, by the way, when we . . . By the way, when we made this point to the Leader of the Opposition that he wrote this book, he wrote the Lingenfelter book, I think he said, well you're trying to tie me to Dwain Lingenfelter, and I'm only 34. To which we said, happy birthday. But the bottom line is, he wrote the booklet. Then out in the scrum the next day, his staff were saying he actually didn't write the booklet. He just signed the transmittal letter on the booklet. He didn't

write the policies that Mr. Lingenfelter ran on, the \$5 billion in campaign promises . . . at least it helped inform that. He only signed it.

But, Mr. Speaker, we were noting on his leadership campaign website . . . It's excellent. I'm glad we're screen capturing it before they take it down because it was on that website where he said, we need more efficiencies in the health system. And then a few weeks later he doesn't agree. But here's what it also says. The member's officials were saying, no, no, no, no, the leader didn't write the tree booklet; he just signed it. But here's what it says on the now Leader of the Opposition's website under "Stronger democracy, long-term thinking and smarter decision." There's a line here that says, "But as Cam wrote in *A Rooted and Growing Vision* in 2010 . . ."

So, Mr. Speaker, the bottom line is . . . And he should . . . This is a chance as a new leader to just say, yes I did write that, and yes we had \$5 billion in promises. And we had policies that weren't right for the province — special deals for one particular group on resource revenue sharing. And we've heard from the people because now there's only nine of us; we heard them loud and clear. They rejected this. They want us to move more in the direction of the party that has more members, in other words, fiscal responsibility.

But they haven't done that. He has not done that. He didn't take the budget debate as an opportunity to say, we were wrong. I think the NDP are incapable of it. They blame a snowstorm on election day. They blame the old leader. They blame . . . I'm not sure all the other things that they blame.

Part of it was the ideas that they were offering, Mr. Speaker. They weren't in line with what Saskatchewan people want. Saskatchewan people do want more money for post-secondary. They want more money for education. They would like to see more investments in health care. They want to see more in highways. But you know what, Mr. Speaker? The people of this province, first and foremost their prime directive is, live within your means. Balance the budget. And these members haven't heard that yet.

So I think they've got some challenges over there. Obviously they're going to vote against this budget. That's pretty clear. And they'll vote against the next budget and the one after that, and they'll oppose the things the government's doing. I sat in opposition; that's certainly part of the role. But as we get closer to an election, now that the leadership question is settled, they're going to actually have to start proposing some things. They're going to have to say, yes we wouldn't do that but we would do this, or we're going to spend all this much more money on all these areas and here's where we're going to get it from. We're going to get it from tax increases, maybe, or they're going to go back to the old hobby horse of royalties. I don't know what they're going to do, but they're going to need to be able to go before the people of the province and say, you should vote for us because we're offering this particular plan for the province's future.

And from what we've seen so far from their interventions in this particular budget debate, I don't think it's going to wash with Saskatchewan people. We've seen some research that that might already be the case, Mr. Speaker, that the people of this

province understand the importance of investment in quality of life, but they also understand the way to keep that for the long, long term, the way to make sure that our kids and their kids and their kids after that can make some decisions, can invest in those important quality-of-life areas, is that we are fiscally responsible today, is that we balance the budget.

And as tempting as it might be for a new leader or for any of us to promise everything to everyone, Mr. Speaker, it is a recipe for disaster that we have been down in this province. And the members on this side of the House have learned that history. Members on that side of the House lived it, some of them. Their party lived it. You'd think they would not have forgotten it. But they have forgotten the importance of fiscal responsibility, of a responsible plan and vision presented to the people of this province.

Mr. Speaker, I'll just close with this. A budget is most assuredly a reflection of the government that presented it. And in this budget we see strategic investments in infrastructure. We see investments for those who are most vulnerable in our society. We see, Mr. Speaker, increases in health. We see increases in education and still more increases in post-secondary. A new student residence here at the University of Regina, new hospitals, new schools — Mr. Speaker, we see all of that. We see a priority that we have placed on those who need our help more than anyone else. But above all, we see that there is fiscal responsibility in Saskatchewan. And it is a reflection of our priorities.

Other provinces are going down a different road. Other provinces have listened to those economists who say, John Maynard Keynes said you should deficit budget at a time like this. The problem is, it isn't John Maynard Keynes or — well, he's dead — but other economists that actually have to get you out of that challenge. It's politicians. We have to try to make the decisions then to get out of a deficit if we would follow along the track of the NDP because that's where they would take us. We would be in a deficit.

We have to balance the budget. We've got to make sure we're not borrowing some future generation's money to take care of current challenges. We need to make the decisions that we have made in this particular budget, Mr. Speaker. It is a reflection . . . The budget is a reflection of this government's priorities: key investments, the strongest economy in the country, and a balanced budget. And, Mr. Speaker, I think it is also a reflection — this debate, the response to the debate from the NDP — on the opposition, and it's a reflection of a new leader but the same old NDP. It's a reflection, Mr. Speaker, on them. We have somebody brand new now who is sitting across the way but who is tied to these tired old ideologies that even leaders and stalwarts in his party like Janice MacKinnon and Thomas Mulcair have thrown off, Mr. Speaker.

And so in that context this side of the House is encouraged. We're encouraged to move forward, to engage members opposite in a meaningful debate. And most importantly, Mr. Speaker, we are motivated. We are determined to continue to work to earn the support of the people of this province. We will never ever, ever take that for granted, and we will remember in the last election, even if members won't on the other side, that the people of this province said, live within your means; keep

the Saskatchewan advantage; balance the budget. We're leading now; we should continue to lead; don't go back to the ways of deficit budgets.

Mr. Speaker, we heard that message in the election. The Minister of Finance was clearly paying attention because that is precisely the kind of budget he's presented in this House to the people of the province, that's being heralded across the country. And that's why — I don't really need to hear him wrap things up — I'll be supporting the budget.

The Speaker: — Before I recognize the Minister of Finance, I must inform the Assembly that under rule 30(7), the Minister of Finance is about to close the debate. Are there any other members who wish to speak? I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is indeed an honour to be able to enter the debate again as far as the budget of 2013-14. As everyone in the Assembly — my colleagues, members opposite — they heard me for almost an hour back last Wednesday and I'm glad to see that there is a time limit, Mr. Speaker, and that you will shut me down long before 20 minutes probably but at least . . .

No, Mr. Speaker, I do want to just wrap up with a couple of comments. First of all, as I indicated on budget day and the Premier has indicated and many in this House have indicated, to be able to introduce a budget on behalf of a growing province, on behalf of so many initiatives that are presented by members, by individual MLAs and ministers, it takes a lot of time and it takes a lot of initiatives. And I want to thank all of the staff, first of all in my office here in the Legislative Building, but also over in the finance building. My deputy minister, Clare Isman, this is the first opportunity I have had as Minister of Finance to work with her on this first budget, and I want to thank her and all of those individuals, and I'm not going to name them.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to thank all of my colleagues, not only on this side of the House but also on the other side of the House, for entering into the debate, putting forward positions that are somewhat contradictory because, Mr. Speaker, I think on this side of the House we've indicated very clearly how the people of the province have reacted, have reacted to a very positive budget.

[12:15]

And, Mr. Speaker, for a few minutes I just want to enter into the record comments by a few people. Now there are literally dozens and dozens and dozens of reactions by individuals and companies across Saskatchewan and across all of Canada for that matter. But I want to enter into the record a few comments.

First of all, Mr. Speaker, from Shantel Lipp, the Saskatchewan Heavy Construction Association, I quote:

Today's budget announcement shows the government is listening. Infrastructure investment tops the list of public priorities.

Second one, Mr. Speaker, from Christian Braid, the Greater Saskatoon Chamber of Commerce:

Achieving a balanced budget and continuing on a path towards a productive agenda is remarkable compared to other Canadian provinces.

Mr. Speaker, from Colin Craig from the Canadian Taxpayers Federation: “. . . [Saskatchewan's] budget released today — you're not going to find a better one in Canada this year.”

Mr. Speaker, from CIBC:

Saskatchewan's relatively strong fiscal position means that social programs will likely see proportionately larger investments than in some provinces still in the red. Saskatchewan will also enjoy a fiscal benefit in the form of declining debt charges — a dividend linked to both earlier debt paydowns and an extremely low interest rate environment . . .

That's from the CIBC.

Mr. Speaker, from Marilyn Braun-Pollon, the vice-president of CFIB . . . And I also indicated this morning, Mr. Speaker, in question period, that today CFIB across all of Canada has indicated that Saskatchewan businesses are the most optimistic in all of Canada, Mr. Speaker. But in reference to CFIB's comment about the Saskatchewan budget, and I quote, “While other provinces face massive deficits, we're pleased the . . . Saskatchewan budget is balanced, holds the line on education property taxes, invests in roads/infrastructure, training opportunities . . .” That's the quote from CFIB.

From the president of SIAST [Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology]:

That's great news for us for sure. The new budget and the announcement fits very well with the province's growth plan. SIAST supports that growth plan, particularly its focus on students and Aboriginal people, which resonates with SIAST. That's what we're all about so we're very pleased with the budget and the announcement of 3.1 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, from Swift Current, from the CEO [chief executive officer] of Great Plains College:

I was pleasantly surprised at the way the Ministry of Advanced Education and the Economy stepped up with 2.1% for the regional colleges. Frankly I was expecting the news to be worse but it was not . . . A lot of provinces are cutting in post secondary education, including Alberta and B.C., and Saskatchewan is not one of them and that is noteworthy.

The end of the quote, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, there are so many, but I'm going to conclude with one quote and that's from the CEO of Habitat for Humanity. Habitat for Humanity has been moving forward, you know, just literally project after project after project, in communities right across the province, Mr. Speaker. And we decided this year that the \$1 million that government provided to Habitat for Humanity for the construction of 20 homes on average per year wasn't sufficient, so we doubled that money, Mr. Speaker. We

doubled it from 1 million to 2 million. And this is the quote from the CEO of Habitat for Humanity, Dennis Coutts:

We are the envy of the country . . . I applaud the Government of Saskatchewan for keeping their commitment for more housing to help low-income, hard-working Saskatchewan people.

So, Mr. Speaker, in light of all of those comments and many, many more that have been in the press, including some comments by the journalist Murray Mandryk who made some comments . . . I won't put those on the record, but they were very, very positive, Mr. Speaker, and I want to thank him for that.

But, Mr. Speaker, the question has to be asked. If that's the reaction by dozens and dozens of people, so what was in the budget then? Well, Mr. Speaker, as I've indicated, when the revenue was projected to be at \$11.61 billion and expenses are estimated to be \$11.54 billion, that means you have a surplus, Mr. Speaker. That means you have a surplus of \$64.8 million and it is balanced. And, Mr. Speaker, it is also balanced on the summary financial statements. And I'm going to talk a little bit about that right away because, Mr. Speaker, when you introduce all of the different agencies, the different boards, the different things that are going on in the province of Saskatchewan, we too have a summary financial surplus and that is going to be \$149.8 million, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, many of my colleagues have highlighted the specific things that will be done by different ministries that will assist people in constituencies. And the Premier today, just before I am up on my feet, I think did a tremendous review. And I want to thank him for the leadership that he's provided to me, to our cabinet, and to the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. You have to take a look at the current premiers across the province and you note, Mr. Speaker, that the Premier of Saskatchewan continues to be the leader in Canada, Mr. Speaker, and I think that's a great compliment to him as well.

Mr. Speaker, very quickly, we focused on many areas in our budget but some critical ones are dealing with the labour force. Who will make up the labour force of the future? The students that are currently either in our grade K to 12 system or in our post-secondary system. And I've already read to you how, you know, the SIAST has reacted. Well what we did, Mr. Speaker, is we allocated \$20 million more, or in other words 20 per cent more, to raise the total now to \$117.4 million. This money is direct support to student programs.

One of the programs that we introduced when we became government and we weren't sure whether or not this was going to be the program that would meet with the successes that it has, and that's the graduate retention program. Well, Mr. Speaker, I can tell you that it is meeting with tremendous success because this year we had to add \$12.2 million for a total now of \$63.9 million to the graduate retention program. What does that do, Mr. Speaker? That provides any student in the province of Saskatchewan who gains employment in this province the opportunity to be able to receive, by way of refund and rebate, \$20,000 of their tuition monies, \$63.9 million, Mr. Speaker. And as they would say in Telemiracle, it's only going higher, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, in health, we know that health over the last number of years has taken up a very significant amount of the budget. In fact this year the health budget is \$4.8 billion, which is about 42 per cent of the budget. Mr. Speaker, again an increase of 4.5 per cent to regional health authorities — \$131.8 million more to the 12 regional health authorities. So it's interesting listening to the members opposite talk about cuts. Mr. Speaker, there were no cuts. There were additional dollars provided to those institutions.

Mr. Speaker, in the area of the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency, in the last six years, over 90 per cent more dollars to the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency. An increase this year, very significant increase. And we know that that's an agency that's going to continue to be a focus for our government.

Mr. Speaker, we talked about housing. We talked about the fact that in Saskatchewan we do need . . . At the University of Regina, we do need a new housing complex and that's why \$10 million to make sure that that project gets under way. \$17 million for enrolment pressures, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, my days of course, or many of my days in my previous life were spent in education, Mr. Speaker. And I used to, as a member of a school board, have to deal with declining enrolments year after year after year. You know, the government, when the NDP were in government, their plan was for decline and non-growth. Mr. Speaker, our plan is to ensure that we grow this province. That's why our population now, 1,089,807 call Saskatchewan home, Mr. Speaker. They call it home because 82,000 people have moved in. We have, for the first time in a long time, enrolment pressure. It's a challenge. It's a challenge of growth, but it's a great challenge to have.

So, Mr. Speaker, that's why there's 20.2 million spent on 301 pre-kindergarten programs. Fifteen more than we had last year, Mr. Speaker. That is why we're spending \$120 million — 120, Mr. Speaker — in this year alone. That's the kinds of numbers the NDP opposite can not fathom, because of course their commitment to capital in their final four or five years was extremely small, Mr. Speaker — 23 million, 26 million per year. This year alone, 120 million to ensure that the schools that were announced last year, the new schools in Gravelbourg and Langenburg, are going to move forward, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, a quick comment about highways. As the Premier indicated and the Minister of Highways, a very significant budget. But I do want to talk about one component of that and that's called the economic corridor program — 63.6 million for economic corridors. Mr. Speaker, we're going to see the completion of the twinning of Highway 11. We're going to see the passing lanes that are going to be built on Highway 10 between Balgonie and Fort Qu'Appelle. Mr. Speaker, we're going to see the Estevan bypass move forward and we're going to see the Regina west bypass move forward as well, Mr. Speaker.

Revenue sharing, Mr. Speaker, has been something, as the Premier talked about, has been something that municipalities have looked forward to for years. And now they're finally seeing the result of that formula we have in place. Mr. Speaker, it's not too long ago we had property tax revolts in this province because there was a significant impact on property

owners, that the former government, the NDP, downloaded, downloaded, and downloaded onto the people of the province of Saskatchewan expecting that that was just an endless pot that they could rely on. Mr. Speaker, we didn't do that. And that's why this year alone, 11 per cent increase to municipal revenue sharing.

Mr. Speaker, one of the other things we did this year is we have something called the municipal roads for the economy program, MREP. MREP has had an increase of \$2 million, increasing it from 23.5 to \$25.5 million, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, one of my final comments I'd like to make, Mr. Speaker, is in the area of debt. On page 53 of this document, Mr. Speaker, it talks about two kinds of debt. I want to very quickly put on the record when it says this: "Crown corporation debt is divided into two components: Crown corporation general debt and government business enterprise specific debt." Mr. Speaker, our Crowns are going to continue to borrow money, continue to meet the challenge of a growing province, continuing to ensure that there are hookups, not only SaskTel hookups, but SaskPower and SaskEnergy, Mr. Speaker.

And, Mr. Speaker, the interesting thing that the government members opposite don't recognize is that government business enterprises are self-sufficient government organizations that have the financial and operating authority to sell goods and services to individuals and organizations outside government as their principle activity. Amounts borrowed specifically for these enterprises are disclosed separately from other government debt because they are expected to be repaid from cash flows generated by these business enterprises, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the last year, the last year of the NDP, the last full year, 2006-2007, I'm going to give you a couple of numbers, Mr. Speaker. And this is the ratio, this is the public debt ratio and it's for the government general public debt. As I've indicated, it is down from 6.8 to 3.8. And of course we talk about Crown corporation debt. In 2006-07 the total amount was 23.8 per cent; government general debt, 15.9; Crown corporation public debt, 7.9 per cent. Mr. Speaker, projected for this year, the total amount of debt, 12.6. That compares to 23.8.

In the area of government debt, as I indicated, that old number back in the NDP days was 15.9. Today it's 4.8 per cent, Mr. Speaker. And on the Crown side, because the member opposite, the critic rises often in this Assembly to criticize the fact that Crowns indeed are growing in the amount of monies that they need to meet. As I indicated, in 2006-07, 7.9 per cent of the GDP [gross domestic product] was for Crown corporation public debt; today 7.8 per cent, Mr. Speaker. In fact smaller number in comparison to the growth of this province. So, Mr. Speaker, I make no apology for the fact that the Crowns are going to continue to move forward, that the Crowns are going to continue to deliver the kinds of services that they're expected to deliver, Mr. Speaker. And we will continue to ensure that that of course continues to happen, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, as I indicated, the summary financial statement, which is included in the budget, indicates that on a basis where we introduce the not-for-profit insurance groups — the Workers' Compensation Board, Saskatchewan Crop Insurance,

the auto fund, all of the Crown corporations, the regional health authorities, the school boards, regional colleges, Mr. Speaker — and I could go on and on and on about the two pages of information that's there, we will have a surplus, Mr. Speaker, in the summary financial statement.

[12:30]

So, Mr. Speaker, I want to conclude by saying that I will be supporting the budget. And I want to thank all the people in the province of Saskatchewan for encouraging not only our government but encouraging one another, encouraging the businesses, the entrepreneurs in this province to move forward, ignore the NDP, and build Saskatchewan.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the amendment to the budget motion moved by the member for Regina Rosemont, seconded by the member for Athabasca:

That all the words after "That the Assembly" be deleted and the following be added:

disagrees with the government for tabling a credit card budget that pushes costs on future generations, hurts health care, fails students and schools, rolls back the clock on environmental progress, denies transparency, and relies on short-sighted privatization schemes.

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

Some Hon. Members: — No.

The Speaker: — All those in favour say aye.

Some Hon. Members: — Aye.

The Speaker: — All those opposed say nay.

Some Hon. Members: — Nay.

The Speaker: — The nays have it. The question before the Assembly is that, moved by the Minister of Finance, seconded by the member for Saskatoon Greystone:

That the Assembly approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — All those in favour say aye.

Some Hon. Members: — Aye.

The Speaker: — All those opposed say nay.

Some Hon. Members: — Nay.

The Speaker: — The ayes have it. Call in the members.

[The division bells rang from 12:33 until 12:34.]

The Speaker: — All those in favour please rise.

Government House Leader.

[Yeas — 46]

Wall	Morgan	Stewart
Duncan	Draude	Krawetz
Boyd	Eagles	McMorris
Cheveldayoff	Harpauer	Toth
Huyghebaert	Doherty	Marchuk
Reiter	McMillan	Heppner
Harrison	Wyant	Tell
Weekes	Elhard	Hart
Bjornerud	Brkich	Hutchinson
Makowsky	Ottenbreit	Campeau
Wilson	Norris	Ross
Kirsch	Michelson	Doke
Cox	Merriman	Jurgens
Steinley	Hickie	Lawrence
Tochor	Moe	Parent
Docherty		

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

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. This House stands adjourned to 1:30 p.m., April the 8th.

[The Assembly adjourned at 12:41.]

The Speaker: — All those opposed please rise.

[Nays — 8]

Brotten	Belanger	Wotherspoon
McCall	Forbes	Chartier
Sproule	Nilson	

Clerk: — Mr. Speaker, those in favour of the budget motion, 46; those opposed, 8.

The Speaker: — The ayes have it. The motion is carried.

I wish to inform the House that there will be a photographer present. As well, the Administrator, the Chief Justice John Klebuc is here for Royal Assent.

ROYAL ASSENT

[At 12:38 His Honour the Administrator entered the Chamber, took his seat upon the throne, and gave Royal Assent to the following bill.]

His Honour the Administrator: — Pray be seated.

The Speaker: — May it please Your Honour, this Legislative Assembly at its present session has passed a bill which in the name of the Assembly I present to Your Honour and to which bill I respectfully request Your Honour's assent.

Clerk: — Your Honour, the bill is as follows:

Bill No. 88 - *The Saskatchewan Medical Care Insurance Amendment Act, 2013*

His Honour the Administrator: — In Her Majesty's name, I assent to this bill.

[His Honour the Administrator retired from the Chamber at 12:40.]

The Speaker: — You may be seated. I recognize the

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Premier

President of the Executive Council
Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs

Hon. Bill Boyd

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

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff

Minister of Environment
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