



THIRD SESSION - TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

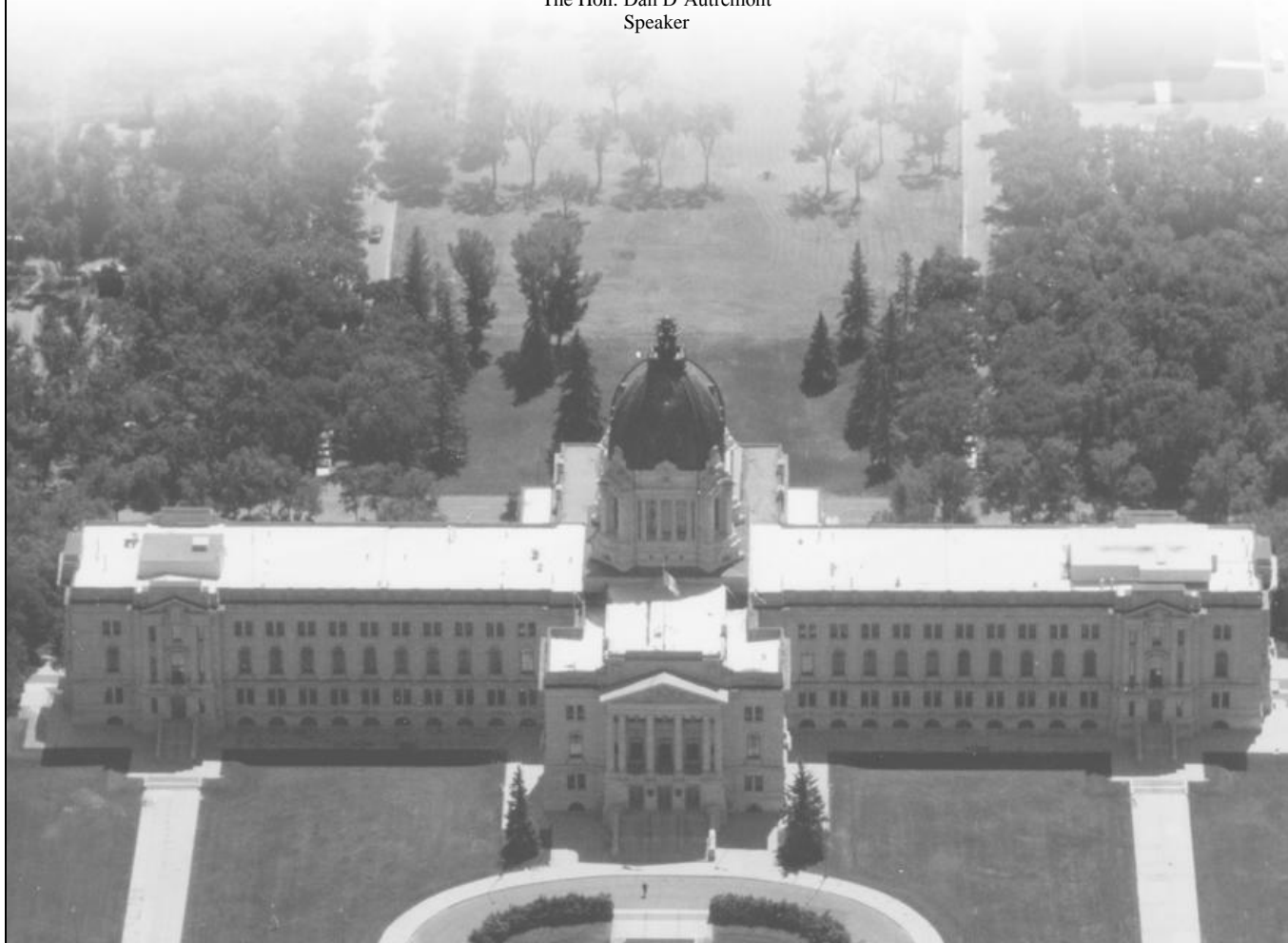
of the

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 — Cam Broten

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, 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, Hon. 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 13:30.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to introduce to you and through you to members of the Assembly, some very special guests that have joined us and are seated in the Speaker's gallery today, Mr. Speaker. We want to welcome from South Africa, His Excellency Membathisi Mdladlana, the High Commissioner of South Africa to Canada. Joining him is Dierdré Viljoen, the Minister Plenipotentiary, South African High Commission; as well as Avumile Dlakavu, first secretary, political, South Africa, South African High Commission.

Mr. Speaker, the delegation will be visiting here in Regina and then in Saskatoon, including with officers from the universities, Mr. Speaker, the mayor of Saskatoon, SaskPower, various representatives from the government.

Mr. Speaker, we have a strong relationship with South Africa, a trade relationship that represents about on average 35, \$38 million worth of exports to South Africa, and lately a growing number of imports to about \$3 million. There's also, more importantly, a partnership between South Africa and the province of Saskatchewan, represented vitally by student exchanges for example.

And so, Mr. Speaker, we want to welcome the delegation. This is His Excellency's first visit to the province of Saskatchewan, and we want to welcome him and the delegation here. We want to wish them well in their meetings, and we hope for continued good relations between the province of Saskatchewan and the people of South Africa. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the Premier in welcoming His Excellency and the entire delegation representing the Republic of South Africa. It's wonderful to have you here in the Assembly with us today. And though there are some things we don't have in common with South Africa here in Saskatchewan when we think of the climate and we think of some of the flora and fauna, as Mr. Speaker would know, what we do have in common is the fact that we have great people.

And our motto here "from many peoples, strength" really is a similar notion to the idea of a rainbow nation and the strength through the diversity that South Africa has. So as you are here in the province on your first visit, Your Excellency, I wish you all the best and appreciate the work that you're doing and congratulate you for what you've already accomplished.

And in echoing the comments of the Premier, when it comes to increased economic and social ties, we're very supportive of

that. So I would ask all members to join me in welcoming His Excellency here.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, joining us today in the legislature as well is a very special group of students from southwest Saskatchewan representing grades 1 through 12. There's 33 of them. They represent the home schooling group from the southwest corner of the province.

Mr. Speaker, they're accompanied by their parents, including from the constituency of Swift Current: Stacie Noble-Wiebe, Jennifer Dyck, Brenda Epp, Nicole Francis; from the constituency of Cypress Hills, Anne Benett, Julia Torgrimson, Art and Leslie McElroy; and from the constituency of Wood River, Doreen Smith, and Francis and Lynette Dyck.

Mr. Speaker, we thank these students and the parents for coming. We also thank the parents for their dedication to the education of their kids here in Saskatchewan, especially considering, Mr. Speaker, the apparent and obvious advantages of living and learning in southwest Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Provincial Secretary.

Hon. Mr. Elhard: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In reference to the introduction just made by the Premier, I would like to welcome the students and the parents from the Cypress Hills constituency, but most specifically I'd like to identify Art and Leslie McElroy as friends of mine. I've known them for a number of years. They moved to the deep part of the Cypress Hills constituency from Alberta, bought a farm which they converted to a ranch, and have raised quite a large family down there very successfully.

But Art was one of my first supporters when I decided to seek elected office, and I want to acknowledge his support over the years. He's been a good friend, and I know he prays for me every day. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the Premier and the Provincial Secretary in welcoming the group of students and parents from the Southwest. And while I extend a welcome to everyone in the group, I want to say a special hello to my nephew, Levin Wiebe, who is also my godson. And Levin is a fantastic kid. He's bright, he's caring, and he's a lot of fun. He's a tremendous nephew and great friend to his cousins, our girls. So I really want to welcome Levin to his very first trip to the legislature and look forward to many returns that he'll have.

And while I'm on my feet, I also want to say hello to Brenda Epp. I know she does a tremendous amount in the Swift Current community with her family. And I also know that their family, along with the boys, help produce some great honey, and we've appreciated that on our toast for many breakfasts as well.

So I'd ask all members to join me in welcoming Levin and the entire group here to the Assembly here today.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Wood River.

Mr. Huyghebaert: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to join with the Premier and the member for Cypress Hills and welcome the group from the Southwest. And specifically I'd like to welcome the people from the constituency of Wood River, Doreen Smith and Francis and Lynette Dyck. I really want to thank you for all the work you do in home-schooling, and I really appreciate people from Wood River coming to the Assembly here. So have a great day and I'll meet with you later. Thank you.

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

Ms. Campeau: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, it gives me great pleasure to introduce Chandra McIvor who is here today with Avenue Community Centre in Saskatoon. If Chandra can just give us a wave. Chandra is joined by Jason McKinnon — he could give us a wave — who is a substitute teacher with Saskatoon Public Schools, as well as a group of outstanding young leaders. Each of these students is a leader within the gay-straight alliance at each of their respective schools, working to ensure their school is a safe place for everyone.

Today we have with us Alicia Roth, Anais Dutka-Stainbrook, Grietje Veltkamp, Charlene Moore, Bailey Lindsay, and Kaylee Smith, and Chance Briere.

Avenue Community Centre provides a supportive place for all people in the community of Saskatoon regardless of race, ethnicity, nationality, family and marital status, ability, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age or income, and social status. They also work to support schools and school-based professionals in creating safe environments for all students, and have recently met with me and provided valuable information they have collected on the ability of gender and sexually diverse students to access education safely to help inform my upcoming report on anti-bullying.

And we very much enjoyed meeting with Chandra, Jason, and this group of young leaders today. We know we still have much work to do to ensure we are leading the way when it comes to making sure Saskatchewan schools are safe, caring, and inclusive spaces for all students. And I thank them for their valuable input. I would ask all of you to join me in welcoming these guests to their legislature.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to join with the member opposite and welcome Ms. Chandra McIvor here today from the Avenue Community Centre, along with leaders within our province, the student leaders that were identified, as well as Mr. Jason McKinnon. It was a pleasure to chat with each of you briefly here today, and I really appreciated sitting down with Ms. Chandra McIvor and working through her brief that she's put forward to government.

What I know about Avenue Community Centre and Chandra McIvor, and many other allies as well, is that these are leaders within our province in a significant way. I appreciate the recommendations you've brought forward to the minister. We'll

be tracking the inclusion of those recommendations into the action plan. And what I want to say about the student leaders is lots of times when students come here, we say these are the leaders of tomorrow. Well, Mr. Speaker, I think it's fair to say in the case of these student leaders, these are the leaders of today.

So it's my pleasure to welcome Chandra McIvor, to thank her for her work, along with all over at the Avenue Community Centre, Mr. Jason McKinnon and these leaders here today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister for Advanced Education.

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I'd like to join colleagues on both sides of the Assembly in extending a warm welcome to Chandra McIvor, to Jason McKinnon, and everyone associated with the work at the Avenue Community Centre. We know how important that work is, especially as we all continue to build increasingly inclusive communities. And so a special thanks for your leadership on any number of initiatives, most especially for those that participated in the consultations that were led by the member from Saskatoon Fairview. Many came out in Saskatoon and gave voice to some important issues. So I would ask all members to join me in welcoming these really fine leaders to their Assembly.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government House . . . or, excuse me, the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Well it's nice to be considered for a promotion, Mr. Speaker.

Good to present a petition today in support of replacing the gym at Sacred Heart Community School. This petition is brought forward by individuals who point out that the gym at Sacred Heart Community School in North Central Regina is now quite literally falling apart, has been closed indefinitely, and is no longer safe for students or staff. There is a temporary replacement gym, the old sanctuary of Sacred Heart being retooled for a gym, but it is a temporary solution at best, Mr. Speaker, and what the citizens are calling for is a permanent solution.

These individuals point out that Sacred Heart is the largest school in North Central, with 450 students, 75 per cent of whom are First Nations and Métis. They point out that the enrolment has increased by 100 students over the past four years and that attendance and learning outcomes are steadily improving and that as a matter of basic fairness and common sense, Sacred Heart Community School needs a gym. In the prayer that reads as follows:

The individuals respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the following action: to cause the Sask Party provincial government to immediately commit to the replacement of the gymnasium of Sacred Heart Community School.

This petition is signed by citizens from Assiniboia, Wymark, and Humboldt. I so present.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Diwali Celebration

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This weekend marked the start of Diwali. For Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, and Jains, the festival of lights is a celebration of good overcoming evil and of light shining through darkness. Diwali is also a time to gather together with family and friends to celebrate, to dance, to eat delicious food, to light up the sky with fireworks, and to just focus on what matters most.

I've had the pleasure of attending previous Diwali celebrations in Saskatoon, and I know that they are always characterized by a strong sense of community, faith, service to one another. And of course they are also characterized by a lot of joy and a lot of fun.

Saskatchewan has been blessed with a tremendous wave of immigration, especially since 2005 with the Saskatchewan immigrant nominee program was put in place. That means we have a significant community of relative newcomers from India and throughout Southeast Asia. These families have joined many others who have been established here in Saskatchewan for quite some time. To all Saskatchewan families celebrating the festival of lights, those who have been here for generations, and those who have just recently begun to call this great province home, I wish a very blessed and joyous celebration. Happy Diwali, Saal Mubarak. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government Whip.

Moustaches Appear for Movember

Mr. Ottenbreit: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Now that the month of November is upon us, millions of moustaches around the world begin appearing for Movember to raise awareness and funds to combat prostate cancer, testicular cancer, and mental health challenges.

Mr. Speaker, Movember is an opportunity for men to support the cause and grow a moustache for 30 days. During these 30 days the flawless, or perhaps not so flawless, moustaches will undoubtedly spark important conversations regarding men's health while the moustache growers fundraise for the important causes. Last year more than 1.1 million people around the world participated in Movember and raised \$146.6 million for the cause.

This year I will be participating, along with the ministers of Justice, Advanced Education, Rural and Remote Health, as well as the members for Moose Jaw Wakamow and Moose Jaw North. Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan is growing and soon so will our facial hair for a caucus Movember team. We're calling it Saskatchewan plan for growth, Movember edition.

So I ask everyone's support for this important movement that raises funds and awareness for causes which affect so many

men in this province and around the world. With everyone's help, we have the power to change the face of men's health. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[13:45]

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

Olive and Grape Harvest Festival

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask all members of the Assembly to join me in recognizing the success of this weekend's Olive and Grape Harvest Festival in Regina. It was a great night to celebrate Hellenic culture in Regina. Hundreds of people came together to celebrate the harvest festival and enjoy Greek cuisine, music, and dance. The event was held at Queensbury Centre on Saturday night, and Stephanie and I were pleased to attend.

It was great to see the involvement of the community and business leaders in supporting such a wonderful evening. I'd like to give special thanks to Spiro Kangles, the committee Chair, and Co-Chair Nick Kodellas for their roles in this successful night. I'd also like to recognize the contribution of St. Paul's Greek Orthodox Community, the Daughters of Penelope Hellenic dancers, and Rustie Dean and Nick Kodellas for their fine work as emcees.

The night began with appetizers followed by a buffet of Greek food including roasted lamb and moussaka. The food was exceptional. But the highlight of the night was the ever-popular grape stomping where guests were invited to stomp the grapes. I had the opportunity to roll up my pant legs, kick off my shoes, and stomp grapes along with guests, our mayor, and the federal member for Wascana.

I'd like to ask members of the Assembly to thank all those involved and especially leaders within our Hellenic community for organizing this incredibly successful event that celebrates culture in Saskatchewan. Thanks, Mr. Speaker.

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

Habitat for Humanity Events

Ms. Jurgens: — Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise in the House today to talk about two Habitat for Humanity events that occurred last Friday, November 1st in my constituency of Prince Albert Northcote. One was a key dedication ceremony and the other was a sod-turning ceremony. These two ceremonies enabled two families to experience home ownership for the first time.

Mr. Speaker, I'm proud that this government is supporting these families by contributing \$100,000 to create homes where they can put down roots and plan for our future. I'm also pleased to inform this Assembly that one home was completed with the assistance of the Carlton Comprehensive High School students and the other will be completed by CORCAN or Correctional Service Canada.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, each Habitat partner family does their

share by contributing a minimum of 500 hours to build their home or other Habitat homes. All this hard work is especially worthwhile when we can say to each family, welcome home.

Mr. Speaker, a key part of our government's growth plan is to build a better province for all Saskatchewan people. Partnership with organizations such as Habitat for Humanity are critical as we strive to meet Saskatchewan's housing challenges and to help Saskatchewan families share in the rewards of our growing economy. We will continue to do our best to facilitate this so more Saskatchewan families can come home. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Moose Jaw North.

Better Together Food Drive

Mr. Michelson: — Thank you. Mr. Speaker, last Thursday was Halloween and a very special evening in Moose Jaw as hundreds of volunteers took part in the Better Together Food Drive. The Better Together Food Drive was initiated eight years ago by the Hillcrest Apostolic Church in aid of the Moose Jaw Food Bank.

Every year, the drive gets bigger and bigger and more volunteers and more donations. This year, the drop-off and the sorting had to be moved to the Exhibition Convention Centre to provide more space. I, along with the member from Moose Jaw Wakamow, were proud to be part of the 460 women, men, students, and even young children who volunteered to be part of this community event. Dozens of drivers with trucks and vans and hundreds of door-to-door volunteers canvassed the entire city gathering pre-delivered paper bags that had been filled with non-perishable foodstuffs.

While the city canvass was taking place, other volunteers at the Convention Centre were sorting the food into boxes, stacking it on pallets to be delivered to the Moose Jaw Food Bank. About 58,500 pounds of food was collected.

Mr. Speaker, the food drive presents an overwhelming feeling of goodwill and pride in our community. Thank you to the organizers, the hundreds of volunteers, and all the residents of Moose Jaw for giving so generously. Their efforts, Mr. Speaker, are greatly appreciated. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Arm River-Watrous.

Martial Arts Student Wins Gold and Bronze

Mr. Brkich: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about a young constituent in the town of Davidson, 14-year-old James Morrison. James is a martial arts student who represented Team Canada at the 2013 World Martial Arts Games in Austria this past September.

Not only did he represent Canada, he represented Canada very well. He won a gold medal in the *kata* event. He was also awarded a bronze medal in the continuous sparring event as well. James was among 500 competitors of the top martial arts artists from 17 countries that competed in various events such as kick-boxing, karate, kung fu, *kata*, and numerous others.

Mr. Speaker, James is a very determined young fellow. Despite enduring a nosebleed at the beginning of the continuous sparring event, he continued on and eventually won a bronze medal in that event. James is currently a student of the Sagayo School of Martial Arts. He works hard and held a fundraising drive this past summer to raise the \$2,800 that was needed for the trip to Austria. James currently has his sights set on the 2014 World Martial Arts Games which will be held in Richmond, BC [British Columbia]. He plans to represent Canada again at this competition.

I ask the members to join me in congratulating James Morrison of Davidson on his impressive accomplishments.

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

Position on Public-Private Partnerships

Mr. Tochor: — Mr. Speaker, on October 31st, the Education critic wrote to the *Leader-Post* opposing our government's plan to build nine new schools. He claimed, "The government is dismissing the concerns from the construction industry."

In response, Mark Cooper, the president of the Construction Association, wrote, "The government is listening." Mr. Speaker, he said about the member from Rosemont's comments: "I can say with certainty that this has not been the case to date."

Getting his facts wrong is nothing new for the member from Rosemont. In fact, Mr. Speaker, we still don't know what his party position actually is. We know he opposes P3s [public-private partnership] and bundling on ideological grounds, but the Education critic hasn't come clean on what his party thinks of P3s all together.

As early as March of this year, around budget time, we heard him saying things about P3s, like "They are nothing more than a tricky privatization financing scheme." So it was a relief when on October 22nd, the day we announced nine new schools, his leader said, "My approach to P3s in general is not opposed based on ideology." He claims they are not opposed on ideology, Mr. Speaker. Yet 50 minutes after the announcement, the NDP [New Democratic Party] rejected these new schools. So what is it, Mr. Speaker? Does the NDP support P3s or not? Because right now, Mr. Speaker, it looks like they may have a new leader, but it's the same old NDP.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Relationship with Teachers

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last week we learned that 73 per cent of our province's teachers voted to reject the tentative agreement. Clearly, Mr. Speaker, teachers are very frustrated with this government's approach to education. My question for the Premier, to the Premier: what does he regret about his government's approach, government's track record with teachers here in Saskatchewan?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Well, Mr. Speaker, we certainly respect the collective bargaining process which will begin . . . which will resume between the government-trustee side and the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation, Mr. Speaker. The proposed deal was come to by consensus of both sides, both the Teachers' Federation and the government-trustee side. It represented just over 6 per cent I think over four years, 6.5 per cent, Mr. Speaker, would have ensured that a number of teachers in our province would be at the high range in terms of Western Canadian salaries for teachers. But we respect the process, and so now both sides will return to the table. We'll seek to solve this at the table, Mr. Speaker.

I note that one element of the deal was a new partnership with teachers. I've heard anecdotally a great deal of optimism about the future of that particular partnership where we don't just address monetary issues but the other issues that are at play, Mr. Speaker. And so now we need to let that process resume, the collective bargaining process to resume, Mr. Speaker, and we hope that both sides can come to an agreement in short order.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, when 73 per cent of teachers vote no on the tentative agreement, that's a strong indictment of this government's approach to the education sector. And clearly, as the Premier said, dollars are part of contract negotiations. But what really is also part of contract negotiations is a sense of respect, a sense of entering into good faith, and teachers believing that they're actually being listened to. And that's why they're frustrated, Mr. Speaker. And I know at the STF [Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation] luncheon, that's what I heard clearly around the tables, is that teachers aren't feeling like they have been listened to.

The president of the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation, Colin Keess, had this to say: "Teachers are looking for change in relationships and supports for teaching and learning." A change in relationships, Mr. Speaker, a focus on teaching and a focus on better learning in the classroom. My question to the Premier: why has this government been so dismissive of the concerns that teachers have brought forward?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think it's important to correct the record in the wake of the Leader of the Opposition's question. This was not the government's deal that was rejected by 73 per cent of teachers. This was a deal that was concluded by both sides, the Teachers' Federation and the government-trustee side of the table, Mr. Speaker. And the teachers had a vote, and that's precisely how collective bargaining works.

Mr. Speaker, I met with teachers this spring, as did the former minister. The current minister has been doing the same thing and, Mr. Speaker, we've reacted to the concerns that we've heard from teachers. Just very recently, Mr. Speaker, in reference in the Speech from the Throne, is a historical increase in bandwidth in the classroom, which is a concern of teachers, Mr. Speaker.

Also we heard a bit of a concern from teachers across the province about their exclusion from the curriculum development process that had been in place in this province for a number of years, so we're going to correct that through the student-first initiative. We're going to pause any curriculum changes, ensure that both teachers and parents — all the stakeholders — are included in developing a new curriculum development process.

Mr. Speaker, we also heard from teachers about the need for classroom supports. That's why, about a year ago in fact, this government in an unprecedented way, mid-budget, added resources for capital, Mr. Speaker, but also for operating, in terms of ESL [English as a second language] and other supports the classroom needs, Mr. Speaker. There ought to be no doubt about this government's commitment to education, based on the record in terms of increased capital funding and operating funding, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, teachers have been clear. They've been clear that they want to be treated with respect. They want to be engaged. They want to have sincere consultation. But what I've heard from teachers, Mr. Speaker, is that that approach hasn't been coming forward, hasn't been the characterization of this government's approach with the ed sector and especially with teachers.

So the Premier highlighted a couple of items in talking about what he was just stating in his response. Well my earlier question, Mr. Speaker, was: what does the Premier regret about this government's track record as it relates to that relationship of trust, as it relates to honestly consulting and engaging with teachers here in the province?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — So, Mr. Speaker, is the Leader of the Opposition concerned about the issues teachers raised, or is he concerned about politics? He was at the luncheon I spoke at recently with the STF where I laid out precisely what this side of the House, what the government could have done better in terms of the educational . . . the relationship we have with all education stakeholders. We've been very clear about it. But now the Leader of the Opposition, apparently more interested in political points than the issues at hand, wants to take the debate in this direction.

Mr. Speaker, we'll continue improving the relationship, Mr. Speaker, through things like the partnership that are part of the agreement, through things like engaging in collective bargaining and, more important than that, through investments in increased bandwidth for our schools, Mr. Speaker; to offering — by the way, together with the STF — deals that would put teachers at a comparable rate with any other Western Canadian teacher, through things like brand new schools right in his riding, Mr. Speaker, schools that he opposes, Mr. Speaker.

We'll take the pause on curriculum development. We'll listen to the teachers in that regard. We'll be there, as we have in the past, for increased ESL supports, for increased classroom supports. The province is growing. This government recognizes

it, and we've been investing in education, Mr. Speaker.

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

Educational Initiatives

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, for the Premier to say that we oppose schools is simply laughable. What we oppose, Mr. Speaker, is an approach by this government that hides the details. What we oppose, Mr. Speaker, is an approach by this government that can ultimately cost the taxpayer more. That is where our opposition sits.

Teachers, Mr. Speaker, they do want more respect from the province and they want a better teaching environment, Mr. Speaker, and they want a better learning for their students. And they're frustrated. They're frustrated by crowded classrooms, by crumbling schools, by a lack of educational assistants, Mr. Speaker, and the lack of the one-on-one time that their students need. And they are concerned and frustrated about the lack of respect that this government has demonstrated consistently over the past years. They're concerned about the misplaced priorities, Mr. Speaker, of this government.

And while they're pleased that apparently some of the initiatives are being put on pause, some aren't being put on pause and this has created a lot of confusion. In fact this government, Mr. Speaker, has created great confusion in the ed sector over the past years. My question to the Premier: for the benefit of very frustrated teachers and parents, which initiatives of its agenda are being put on the back burner or being shelved or being cancelled, and which initiatives are full steam ahead?

[14:00]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, the process for using P3s and bundling to build new schools, one in his riding, couldn't be more transparent. There is first and foremost an evaluation of the business case. We use an external firm, perhaps like Ernst & Young or Deloitte & Touche. I assume he's not calling into question their reputability. Then there is an external fairness officer assigned to every single project that's there, to ensure that there is no preferential treatment. Then we narrow down the successful proponents for the new schools, we qualify those, and then from that group we go forward with an RFP [request for proposal] — all of which is transparent and reported, Mr. Speaker, the same model that's being used for 204 P3s across the country.

So this isn't about transparency, for the Leader of the Opposition. It's not about a process he can't agree with. I think it's quite simple. It's politics. Fifty-four times he stood in the Assembly and said, build a school in my constituency, build a school in Hampton Village. Mr. Speaker, we've announced a school for Hampton Village and eight others. But, Mr. Speaker, the CUPE [Canadian Union of Public Employees] leadership, the union leadership that ideologically oppose P3s — the only group in the country that do — are calling the tune over there, Mr. Speaker. He needs to stand up in his place, acknowledge the transparency of the process, and say, thanks for building a school in our constituency; that's what I've been asking for in

this Assembly.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, in Nova Scotia's experience it wasn't CUPE that cancelled the P3 approach, Mr. Speaker. It was a Tory Finance minister, Mr. Speaker.

It's no wonder teachers are frustrated. When a question is asked about what initiatives are being put on hold, what initiatives are full steam ahead, there is absolutely no answer. So I'll ask specifically to the Premier: on the issue of standardized testing . . . This is something that greatly concerns teachers because it's ill-informed and frankly, Mr. Speaker, isn't putting resources into the classroom where they are needed most. My question to the Premier: is its approach to standardized testing being scrapped? Yes or no.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — The Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and a few others were kind enough to attend the fall session of the STF councillors where I spoke, where . . . Well in this particular occasion however I answered all of those questions already, Mr. Speaker. The former minister has answered the questions. The current minister has answered the questions.

Mr. Speaker, we're proceeding with early years evaluation. We're proceeding with Tell Them From Me, Mr. Speaker. And in terms of standardized testing, we're going to pause the provincial-wide standardized testing proposal as it was debated here in the Assembly. I've been very clear about this.

Mr. Speaker, what we're going to do is seek to expand those standards-based efforts that are working, including the one at Chinook School Division which has seen literacy, grade reading levels increase, Mr. Speaker, by some 80 per cent in the cohort that was studied. We're going to continue with proven standards-based efforts that have been occurring in the Melfort area, Mr. Speaker, in the Regina Separate School Division.

We're going to take those projects, spread them over the province. Because you know what, Mr. Speaker? We know they work. They're good for the students. The teachers like them. Our students are achieving at a higher level. And it's going to take us to a point, Mr. Speaker, where our completion rates will meet the growth plan targets, and we'll have a better education system, Mr. Speaker. We're going to do it over the politics that are coming from the other side.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, the question was whether or not the standardized testing approach of this government was going to be scrapped, yes or no. And in that very long answer, Mr. Speaker, I heard a no. It's no wonder that teachers are frustrated, Mr. Speaker. And Dr. Spooner, an education prof at the University of Regina, had this to say about the government's recent rhetoric on this:

The ministry's previously announced standardized testing plans were merely on pause long enough for them to

rebrand and relaunch the unpopular and misguided, top-down directive under a more slick public relations strategy.

My question to the Premier: is this really just a public relations exercise when it comes to standardized testing, or will his government scrap this ill-informed approach and put those resources straight into the classroom where our kids, where our students, where our teachers need them most?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, I would caution the Leader of the Opposition not to take knowledge of the inside thoughts of the Saskatchewan Party from former NDP candidates like Mr. Spooner. With great respect, I don't think he knows exactly what the plans of the government are or, Mr. Speaker, whether or not he perhaps is supportive of the direction we're going to go.

Mr. Speaker, I have answered this question in scrums. We've answered the question, I think, in estimates last year. We've answered the question subsequently through the minister, the new minister's scrums. I have answered this question at the STF. We've answered it already in this House.

I've said we are pausing the province-wide effort. We're going to take what's working in the school divisions today. We're going to export it. We're going to continue with Tell Them From Me because it's working. We're going to continue with early years evaluation. That was the answer when he asked it in the spring. It's the answer today. I say it to him in the House again, Mr. Speaker. I can go to his home if he wants me to repeat it there, or meet him for coffee. The answer is the same. So are the questions, Mr. Speaker.

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

Public-Private Partnerships

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, another area that that government's being stubborn is in its approach to the P3 schools that it's pushing forward. Despite the fact of and all the evidence of much, much larger cost and certainly construction delays, it seems that this government is unwilling to provide taxpayers all the facts that they deserve. In fact this government's been really secretive about its P3 approach to schools. So I guess I say, if this government is so confident in its P3 approach and that it's the right one, as they say, for students and communities, then I don't understand why it's afraid to expose just a little bit of daylight to its plan.

My question to the Minister of Education: will this government support an independent, upfront analysis of its major P3 schools project?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Highways and Infrastructure.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll repeat the answer from the Premier that talked about this very thing. The process of P3s since 2004 . . . And I know when they want to cite a P3 that hasn't worked very well, they go back to the

'90s, Nova Scotia. They've done it time after time after time. And they would realize, if they've studied P3s at all, that since 2004 they have been very successful. Prior to 2004 there were mistakes made. And mistakes were made, Mr. Speaker, but governments learned from them, learning such as always having a value-for-money calculation done, Mr. Speaker, by an independent officer such as Ernst & Young or Deloitte or KPMG, Mr. Speaker — very independent. They go on to make sure that we have a fairness adviser through the whole process so all people that are bidding have all the fair information, Mr. Speaker.

We went through this in estimates. And I'm looking forward that we can get the time again where I can spend more than a minute to answer the question; I can have a long time to answer the question. Because after we did, Mr. Speaker, this is what that member's comments were. He said, "... I'm not suggesting that the route needs to be . . . an independent officer." Except today he is.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, that was after many, many, many questions about accountability. And since that, we see a plan come forward without any detail. And for the minister to pretend somehow that he's provided people with the upfront analysis in their hands, the facts, is simply not the case. Nor is it independent when it's some process that's appointed by Executive Council and kept in the dark.

This side of the Assembly doesn't support secret deals, Mr. Speaker. And so I look back to government. At this point in time the public deserves to know the full cost of the full cycle of the P3 project as described. This government continues to stubbornly move forward with its processes, denying Saskatchewan people with the facts that they deserve. So to the minister: can't the minister simply commit today to support an independent, upfront analysis that includes the full costs and the full cost of credit to be shared with Saskatchewan taxpayers?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Highways and Infrastructure.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, I just finished explaining to the member opposite. And you know, a number of months ago he agreed with the process that there'll be an independent money evaluation done by an independent officer. Now if he's questioning Deloitte's independence, and if he's questioning Ernst & Young's independence, Mr. Speaker, I find that very questionable myself because they are very reputable firms, Mr. Speaker, national firms.

I find it interesting that the NDP would have the nerve to stand up in the House and talk about secret deals. Mr. Speaker, of all the parties to stand up in the House . . . I don't know if the member opposite was in the House, but I know the fellow sitting right behind him was, when Eldon Lautermilch had to stand in this House and apologize for a P3 that had the public in for 97 per cent and the private partner in for 3. We're not getting into those, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, if the minister wants to compare his P3 deal to SPUDCO [Saskatchewan Potato Utility Development Company] or some other circumstance in the history is, have at her, Mr. Speaker. But this side of the Assembly are going to be calling for all the facts to be shared with taxpayers. And I'll remind the minister that it's the Wildrose party in Alberta, along with all the opposition parties, that are calling for the P3 plan to be scrapped. And in fact, I quote the Wildrose party. It's "worried that taxpayers will be fleeced."

Saskatchewan taxpayers deserve to know the facts, and they're worried about being fleeced too, Mr. Speaker. They can't understand why this government's being so stubborn and won't provide them the upfront facts in an independent way. So if it's really such a great deal as the minister suggests, it's not good enough to just simply suggest that. What is he willing to do to ensure the transparency that Saskatchewan people deserve? So to the minister: he doesn't have to wait for the legislation to be brought forward here today that we're bringing forward. Will he commit to an independent, upfront, value-for-taxpayers evaluation of this project?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Highways and Infrastructure.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, for the third time, for the third time, we'll be doing an independent evaluation, Mr. Speaker. Not the government, not the proponents, but a firm like Deloitte, Ernst & Young, any of those firms, Mr. Speaker, they will be doing the evaluation as this project moves forward.

He cites an Alberta example, Mr. Speaker. I want to tell you that in phase no. 1 in Alberta, with 18 schools that were bundled, there is a total savings of \$97 million. In the second phase, 10 schools were bundled, a savings of \$105 million, Mr. Speaker. And in phase no. 3, a savings of 43 million. It would be only the NDP that would say that's not good enough, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is good enough.

But I don't necessarily think it's even the NDP that are asking these questions, Mr. Speaker. I believe that CUPE couldn't get the referendum done here in Regina, Mr. Speaker, on the waste water treatment plant, so now they're asking these people to put in legislation, Mr. Speaker. That's where the questions are coming from.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Of course the numbers referenced about Alberta are under investigation by the auditor right now as well, Mr. Speaker, and Saskatchewan people should be well aware of that. And I think we can recall the comments of the now Deputy Premier who was once the minister of Education just back in 2008, who said, "It's easy to say a P3 is a great idea in the first year when, in fact, over 25 years, it may not be such a great idea." He said that in 2008 when his government chose not to pursue P3 schools. And he's still right. It's sure easy to suggest that P3s are the way to go or a great idea, but you know, it's the responsibility of a government to actually prove that to taxpayers.

To the minister: will this government listen to the advice of the

minister of Finance from 2008? Will it recognize it's not simply good enough to just say P3 schools are a great idea, and will it submit to an independent analysis of its plan so that taxpayers aren't fleeced?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Highways and Infrastructure.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, I want to put on the record that we will listen to the advice of our Finance minister not only in 2008, 2009 to 2013 because every year it's been a balanced budget. That's the advice we're going to listen to.

Mr. Speaker, it's interesting that the opposition would talk about Alberta and the auditor looking into it. The auditor is looking into the fact that whether in bundle no. 1 they actually saved \$97 million, or maybe it was just a little bit less. It's not that it was to cost more; it's how much money they save, Mr. Speaker. That's what the Auditor General is looking into, Mr. Speaker. We are going to move forward as long as these projects make sense, Mr. Speaker.

It's interesting because just here today before question period, there was a petition read about more work that needed to be done on one of the schools. I will tell that member opposite, that work will get done a lot sooner if he'd support the nine new schools we're building in Saskatchewan.

[14:15]

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

Long-term Care Placement

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We've just learned that Regina seniors could soon be shipped to care facilities that are 150 kilometres away. This means vulnerable seniors will be left far away from their spouses, their families, their friends, and their support systems. Does this Minister of Health support the expansion of this policy?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Mr. Speaker, Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region is looking at expanding the policy to include citizens of the city of Regina within the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region to look to see if there are available beds within the health region that would provide more adequate care for them in long-term care, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, should the change be made by Regina Qu'Appelle, this would put Regina Qu'Appelle and citizens of Regina on the same level playing field, Mr. Speaker, as every single citizen in this province in the 10 southern health regions, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, in the meantime, we know that we are making improvements in terms of reducing the wait times for long-term care. There are 33 per cent fewer people waiting in long-term care, Mr. Speaker, than there was just two years ago, and the average wait time today, Mr. Speaker, is 25 days. That's half of what it was 18 months ago, Mr. Speaker. So, Mr. Speaker, I believe that Regina Qu'Appelle is close to making a decision on this particular matter.

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

Ms. Chartier: — The fact that this policy has been in place in other health regions does not mean that it should be expanded further. When our economy is doing so well and when government revenues are up 50 per cent, Saskatchewan families expect health care and senior care to be getting better, not getting worse. But it is getting worse, Mr. Speaker. And many Regina seniors are now afraid about what this new policy will mean for them.

To the minister: what does he have to say to these seniors who are now on the verge of being shipped 150 kilometres away from their homes and their loved ones?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, we have roughly 8,700 long-term care beds in this province. The reality is, is that beds are not always available in the home community of the individual when they need that, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the last week we've had the Leader of the Opposition raising an issue about a senior living in an acute care bed when a long-term care bed was not available, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, if the regional health authority, in this case Regina Qu'Appelle, has beds available in communities surrounding the city of Regina, Mr. Speaker, I think it is appropriate for the region to look to see whether or not this would be an option that they could present to the family members.

Mr. Speaker, in this case, the 150-kilometre radius would include 10 long-term care facilities, Mr. Speaker, many that do not have wait-lists and many that have beds available, Mr. Speaker. In fact these 10 long-term care facilities are single-room facilities. Every single room is a single room with an individual bathroom, Mr. Speaker. We believe that seniors can get adequate care in rural Saskatchewan as well as in Regina, Mr. Speaker.

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

Combatting Bullying

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Well, Mr. Speaker, we know the importance of anti-bullying initiatives in the lives of students across Saskatchewan. The Legislative Secretary who's responsible for this government's anti-bullying work said this last week:

It was very hard for me in the last couple of weeks when everybody wants to know what's the strategy. It's really hard to keep my mouth shut when it comes to that because I don't want to jump the gun and let the cat out of the bag ...

It sure sounds like this government had already written the report and action plan, that the plan was ready and in the bag, so to speak, Mr. Speaker, but it seemed it was just waiting for Thursday's deadline. So there is absolutely no excuse any longer to keep delaying its release. After all, this isn't

something that should be stage ... This isn't something that should be stage-managed.

My question to the minister: will this government release its anti-bullying report and action plan today?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can advise the members opposite the report is in its final stage and is going to be released very soon.

I find it interesting to note that the NDP government released an anti-bullying strategy when they were in government. They announced it in February 2005, and finally introduced it — surprise, surprise — Anti-Bullying Week November, 2006, 22 months later. And what for? So they can introduce it during Anti-Bullying Week, and — surprise, surprise as well — done without any consultation with students.

Mr. Speaker, we are going to have something that works well, that's effective. And we've got no help from the members opposite because they submitted absolutely nothing. They should be embarrassed and ashamed, Mr. Speaker.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Highways and Infrastructure.

Improved Cellular Service in the North

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Thank you. Thank you. Today, Mr. Speaker, we are very happy to announce that four remote northern communities in Saskatchewan will be receiving cellular service as early as 2015.

Thanks to a new agreement between SaskTel, Huawei, and the Athabasca Basin Development Corporation, we will see 4G wireless services extended to Wollaston Lake, Fond-du-Lac, Stony Rapids, and Black Lake. This new agreement combined a contribution of 5.8 million from SaskTel, \$385,000 from Huawei, and \$249,000 from the Athabasca Basin Development Corporation. This investment will bring cellular phone service for the first time to Wollaston Lake, Fond-du-Lac, Stony Rapids, and Black Lake.

By fostering this partnership to bring better communications to the North, we are working with northern communities to ensure that they get the best services that can be provided. It is this kind of investment in the future that is needed to maintain the unique way of life many northerners cherish. When these new facilities are up and running and SaskTel's 4G network brings these communities online, the residents and visitors to the region will be much more connected and have a lot more opportunity for education, health, government services, and business.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Saskatchewan government I congratulate the partners of this initiative — Athabasca development corp., SaskTel, and Huawei — for their contribution to bring 4G service to the North for the first time in these communities.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'll try to get it across the Deputy Premier hollering across the floor, but thank you very much to the Minister Responsible for SaskTel for providing us with an advance copy of his remarks. And I'd like to say, on behalf of the official opposition and particularly on behalf of our two northern members to the legislature, but particularly the member from Athabasca who's been well on the record in terms of the expansion of this kind of service, we think that this is a good announcement. We think it looks good on the face of it. We'll be interested to see how it plays out, Mr. Speaker.

But in particular, we want to extend our congratulations to the communities and the Athabasca Basin Development Corporation. But the communities of Wollaston Lake, Fond-du-Lac, Stony Rapids, and Black Lake, communities and First Nations that have been there, steadfast in terms of developing economy, developing the basic infrastructure that you need to make that economy grow, and calling for that partnership, not just calling for it, Mr. Speaker, but putting up their own dollars for investment as well.

Certainly I would be interested to see the role that Huawei plays in the development, Mr. Speaker, and of course with SaskTel additionally. But on the face of it, Mr. Speaker, we think this is a good announcement, and we're very anxious to see how this unfolds in the days ahead. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 107 — *The Wildfire Act*

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

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I move that Bill No. 107, *The Wildfire Act* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister for the Environment that Bill No. 107, *The Wildfire Act* be now introduced and read the first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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

The Speaker: — When shall this bill be read a second time?

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

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

Bill No. 605 — *The Public-Private Partnerships Transparency and Accountability Act*

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 605, *The Public-Private Partnerships Transparency and Accountability Act* be now introduced and read the first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the member for Regina Rosemont that Bill No. 605, *The Public-Private Partnerships Transparency and Accountability Act* be now introduced and read a first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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

The Speaker: — When shall this bill be read a second time?

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Next sitting of the House, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Next sitting. Why is the Government House Leader on his feet?

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With leave, asking leave to make a motion regarding time of the votes.

The Speaker: — The Government House Leader has asked for leave to make a motion regarding timing of the vote. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to grant leave?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government House Leader.

MOTIONS

Time Allocation

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There has been discussion between the parties. I believe you'll find leave for the following motion:

That notwithstanding rules 29(5), 29(6), 29(7), on Tuesday, November 5th, 2013, at 30 minutes before the ordinary time of daily adjournment unless the debate on the address in reply is already concluded, the Speaker shall interrupt the proceedings and put every question necessary to dispose of the main motion.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Government House Leader:

That notwithstanding rules 29(5), 29(6), and 29(7), on Tuesday, November 5th, 2013, at 30 minutes before the ordinary time of daily adjournment unless the debate on the address in reply has already concluded, the Speaker shall interrupt the proceedings and put every question necessary to dispose of the main motion.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

ADDRESS IN REPLY

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the address in reply which was moved by Mr. Makowsky, seconded by Mr. Merriman, and the proposed amendment to the main motion moved by Mr. Wotherspoon.]

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

Mr. Hutchinson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to resume debate on the Speech from the Throne.

Now, Mr. Speaker, as you might recall, when I began my remarks on Thursday last I talked about the concept of growth, in particular two kinds of growth, the first being growth in population. And I mentioned the fact that we have seen recently growth in our population that we haven't seen since the early years of our province. We've seen growth on an unprecedented scale, growth that we haven't seen in generations, growth that has propelled our province's population to 1.1 million individuals for the first time in history.

Mr. Speaker, I also began to talk about growth in the economy. And I mentioned that regardless of which measure you want to pick — whether it's GDP [gross domestic product] growth, retail sales, or wholesale sales, export sales, capital investment, job creation, increases in average weekly wages — regardless of the measure you use, our economy here in Saskatchewan is either number one or two in the entire country. We are Canada's leading economy, something that we haven't seen before, Mr. Speaker. All across the board the growth in fact has been impressive.

I mentioned construction. I was in the construction industry for 30 years. It's an industry of particular interest to myself. Historic investments in road infrastructure that we mentioned now total \$3.7 billion since the election of fall 2007. Highways and bridges in Regina — where I'm a member, proud to represent the good constituents of Regina South — we have seen the completion of the Lewvan overpass, the completion of the Pinkie Road overpass, and also the construction of new roads serving the Global Transportation Hub.

In addition to the highway construction that we'll all have soon done, 13 new and completely upgraded special care facilities in rural communities all across Saskatchewan, along with a new hospital now under construction in Moose Jaw, the new children's hospital which is set to begin construction early next year, and of course planning to replace the century-old provincial hospital in North Battleford well under way as we speak, Mr. Speaker. Now it's the same with K to 12 [kindergarten to grade 12] schools everywhere, where hundreds and hundreds of millions of dollars are being invested in dozens of new facilities, major additions and renovation projects.

Right here in Regina, just to bring it back to Regina again, the old Arcola school, the old Douglas Park School — both of them have now been replaced with brand new state-of-the-art facilities. Campbell Collegiate's long-standing structural issues have finally been resolved, and Robert Usher school has been remodelled to accommodate the high school students formerly at Monseigneur de Laval school. More work is being done on the planning stage.

[14:30]

Three of the province's newly announced joint-use schools are to be built in Regina to serve growing student populations in our city's expanding northwest, southwest, and southeast neighbourhoods. We're very pleased with that. As the press release from October the 22nd underlines, all this new school construction is needed because, for the first time in a great many years, Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan's K to 12 enrolment is growing.

I'll take this opportunity to quote a few remarks from the press release if I can. It begins by saying:

Today, Premier Brad Wall joined Education Minister Don Morgan, students, teachers and school division administrators at Dundonald School in Saskatoon to announce that the Government of Saskatchewan will build nine new joint-use schools. These schools will be located in communities experiencing unprecedented growth including: Saskatoon, Regina, Warman and Martensville.

The press release goes on to say the following, "Saskatchewan is experiencing remarkable growth across the province, and some of it is right in the classroom." As the Premier has noted, "We need to meet the challenges of growth and have adequate infrastructure in place."

"Saskatoon public schools [says Saskatoon Public Division Board Chair Ray Morrison] has seen unprecedented growth in the last few years . . . With new neighbourhoods being built, we need to ensure we can provide the right facilities to support learning for our students. On behalf of our board [he says], I want to extend my sincere thanks to the provincial government for responding to the needs of our students and families. By providing vibrant learning spaces for our students, we are fostering their potential and building stronger communities."

Well spoken. Another quote:

"Our division has been growing on average the size of an elementary school each year for the past . . . [few] years," Regina Catholic School Division Board of Education Chair Vicki Bonnell said. "While this growth is welcome, it does strain our facilities [she notes]. It is wonderful to see the provincial government actively addressing these pressures and the new schools announced today will go a long way in helping our division accommodate the city's growth."

Now those are the quotes directly from the Chairs of the school divisions affected.

Mr. Speaker, K to 12 enrolment isn't the only thing that's going

up in the new Saskatchewan. Remember the critical nursing shortage mentioned in my remarks on Thursday? Well unlike the NDP who were afraid to set targets lest they fail to reach them — can you imagine, Mr. Speaker, afraid to set targets unless they couldn't meet them? — we set a target on finding 800 new nurses in our first four-year term of government. Now, Mr. Speaker, as you know, we achieved that goal. In fact we achieved more than the goal, and today we're happy to say that over 1,000 new nurses are practising medicine here in Saskatchewan.

We also recruited 300 new doctors. Now there's clearly more work to do on this particular issue, especially, as we have noted, in rural Saskatchewan. But we're much better off today than we were before, with more progress to achieve in the future.

And there are more special care facility workers and more social care workers as well, more daycare spaces and, Mr. Speaker, more affordable housing units than before. All these very important indicators are up in the new Saskatchewan.

Amidst all this growth, Mr. Speaker, it is true to say that not everything is going up. Some things are actually going down. Provincial debt has gone down. Provincial debt when we took government in 2007 was \$6.8 billion. Today it stands at \$3.8 billion. Now that's down \$3 billion, down over 40 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, unemployment is down as well. It's down to about 5 per cent, one of Canada's lowest figures coast to coast to coast. Unemployment in Regina and Saskatoon in particular is way down, the lowest levels of all major cities in Canada — all major cities in Canada.

Surgical wait times, as we know, are down. We used to have Canada's longest wait times. Now we're at fourth. Lots more work to do on this file, but it's a good start.

Crime statistics are down as well. Personal income tax, Mr. Speaker, is down. Education property tax is down, and small-business tax, well that's down too. All these things are down. Ridiculous money-losing government forays into competition with the private sector — like SPUDCO, like Navigata, and other ill-advised adventures, Mr. Speaker — they're way, way down.

And you know what else is down, Mr. Speaker? And there might be a correlation here. I'll leave that to members to decide. The number of NDP MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly] is down. It's down a lot. In 2003 after the provincial election, there were about 30 of them, as I recall. After the 2007 election, they were down to about 20. As we look across the aisle today, Mr. Speaker, I think there are less than 10 — nine to be exact, single digits. It seems like every election the NDP loses about 10 or so MLAs. Now if that continues on pace, Mr. Speaker, well I'll leave you to draw your own conclusions on that.

Why point out all this, Mr. Speaker? Why is it important? Mr. Speaker, it's important because, to the NDP, growth is in fact a foreign language. They don't understand it. They don't welcome it. And they never actually planned for it. In fact as we know, they planned for decline in the economy and decline in the population.

Just listen to what NDP MLAs said about the possibility of growth here in our great province. I know we've heard it before, but it's worth repeating. I know the members opposite will respect me and listen to me as I tell them:

The Saskatchewan Party plan to increase our population by 100,000 in 10 years is more wishful thinking than statistically attainable.

So said former NDP MLA Doreen Hamilton.

... they propose to increase the population of Saskatchewan by 100,000 over ... I forget what number of years, Mr. Speaker.

Well it so over the top, it is so farcical, Mr. Speaker, that it flies in the face of reality.

So said former NDP MLA Harry Van Mulligen in this Assembly.

Now I'm sure the NDP didn't want to hear those old quotes again but, Mr. Speaker, like I said, they need to. It's important. Just look at the opposition members opposite, Mr. Speaker. Do they look like a group that understands the importance of growth? Do they look like a group that understands the importance of meeting the challenges of growth and ensuring that all Saskatchewan residents benefit? Mr. Speaker, I for one don't think so. I think my colleagues don't think so as well. That's why the NDP don't get the Saskatchewan plan for growth, Mr. Speaker. They've been calling for a plan, not recognizing that it's been sitting there right in front of them all along.

I have a copy right here, Mr. Speaker. It says, right on the cover, growth and Saskatchewan, which of course doesn't make sense to the NDP who for 16 years planned for a decline and said growth was impossible. That's what the quotations prove. That's why they closed the Plains hospital. It's why they closed 52 rural hospitals. It's why they closed over 100 schools in the province of Saskatchewan and even shut down 1,200 nursing home beds — planning for decline, Mr. Speaker.

Here's a little bit of this plan that we're talking about. The Premier's opening message:

Too often enterprise-oriented governments appear to see growth for the sake of growth. This is a mistake — one that can cause governments to lose focus and discipline. The Saskatchewan Plan for Growth is about that focus and discipline. It sets out the Government of Saskatchewan's vision for a province of 1.2 million people by 2020. It is a plan for economic growth that builds on the strength of Saskatchewan's people, resources and innovation to sustain Saskatchewan's place among Canada's economic leaders.

Growth [it continues] will be a result of continued investments in a competitive economy, infrastructure and a skilled workforce. Building on our agricultural and natural resource advantage, Saskatchewan will be a global leader in export and trade by 2020 and will invest in knowledge and innovation in the development of Saskatchewan's

future economy. Capital investments in new projects and expansions will grow our economy, and Saskatchewan will continue to welcome newcomers from across Canada and throughout the world to live and work in our province.

An expanding economy is the foundation for a growing and prosperous province. The purpose of growth is to build a better quality of life for all Saskatchewan residents. To this end, the Saskatchewan Plan for Growth outlines the government's direction to improve health care and education outcomes, while building growing and safe communities and improving the lives of persons with disabilities in Saskatchewan.

The Saskatchewan Plan for Growth reaffirms the provincial government's commitment to fiscal responsibility through balanced budgets and further reduction in government debt.

Mr. Speaker, that sounds like a plan to me. If we continue, just looking at the table of contents. A growing Saskatchewan. The opportunities and challenges of growth. The Saskatchewan plan for growth: vision 2020 and beyond. Building the infrastructure for growth. Growing and developing Saskatchewan's labour force. Increasing Saskatchewan's competitiveness. Advancing Saskatchewan's natural resource and agricultural advantage. Connecting Saskatchewan to the world. Fiscal responsibility to support growth. Growth with purpose: building a better quality of life for Saskatchewan people. And finally, the Saskatchewan heritage initiative: the use of non-renewable resource revenue in a debt-free Saskatchewan.

Once again, Mr. Speaker, this sounds a whole lot like a plan to me.

Mr. Speaker, I know that I've taken a lot of time from members, and it's at this time that I think it's probably time for me to wind up my comments.

I'll do it in the following way if I can. Traditionally what I like to do is to thank members for their time and their patience, and I always invite members of the opposition to reconsider their stance on the Speech from the Throne. In years past, I've remained ever the optimist. I've said, I know they're going to change their mind one day because secretly they know that we're right, secretly they know that our budget is sound, secretly I know that they like the fact that the debt is being reduced, that the population is growing . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Absolutely, it is a good point.

In particular I want to appeal, this time, to the Leader of the Opposition who has come out, we think, against the idea of building a school in his own constituency in Saskatoon. Mr. Speaker, could that possibly be true? When you think about the comments from the Saskatoon Board of Education Chair who says, thanks to the provincial government for recognizing the unprecedented growth in the enrolment in our classrooms, the unprecedented need as a result to build new schools in our community. Thank you for recognizing and acting on this imperative.

Mr. Speaker, it's going to be hard for me to accept that the Leader of the Opposition could possibly vote against this kind

of improvement. I appeal to him and his eight other members across there — at least at this point in time — to reconsider; not to let ideology stand in the way of sound public policy; not to let party politics get in the way of good decision making on behalf of the people that we are all elected to serve. Mr. Speaker, I appeal directly to the Leader of the Opposition and his colleagues in the New Democratic Party of Saskatchewan to do as I will, to vote against the amendment and instead to vote for the Speech from the Throne. Thank you very much.

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

Mr. Nilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Coming to this Speech from the Throne in this year, I'm reminded of the first chance I had to speak to the Speech from the Throne quite a number of years ago, and at that time I spent some time talking about my family. And it's especially important this year to talk about my grandfather, John Farden, who I'm named after, and his father, Ole J. Farden who moved up here from Minnesota in 1903. So it's 100 years ago this year that they came. Other parts of my family then came over the next four, five, six, seven years to live in the central part of Saskatchewan. So that was the Fardens and the Nilsons and the Jacobsons.

And what I know, Mr. Speaker, is that they came here with a plan and a vision for the future, and they were thinking about the long term. They were thinking about me even though it was many years before I existed. They were thinking about my children and about the other people who are part of our family because they came here to set down roots and to build a place that was good for all of us.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to say a special thank you to my wife, Linda, to my daughters, Ingrid and Solveig, for all of the support that they provide to me in this job. They have made a number of sacrifices, but they also have benefited from being part of this legislative family, this legislative organization. And I want to say a special thank you to them.

I also want to acknowledge my parents, Tom and Randi Nilson, who live here in Regina and follow the question period and things that happen in the legislature every day, as they have every year of my political career. I also want to thank Linda's parents, Stan and Betty Lee, for all of the support that they have provided to us as a family.

[14:45]

In my constituency office, I want to thank Conni and Cory and Judy who have provided assistance to me over the years and continue to provide sage advice to me but, more importantly, to all of the people who contact them.

And I also want to say thank you to all of the people of Regina Lakeview — and I would say the southern part of Regina, as I feel very much that I represent that whole area — for all of the support they provide but, more importantly, all of the questions that they raise about what's happening in the community and how they provide suggestions and ideas about how we can build for the future.

And while I'm saying thank you, I also want to make a special point of thanking the civil service of Saskatchewan, all of those

people who provide us advice here in the legislature, who provide advice in the executive side of government, and also I think those who work with the judiciary. All of those people have a very good, important task to provide independent, fair advice on all of the policy issues that are being dealt with by the government.

And, Mr. Speaker, what is especially frustrating for someone who knows that that's an important part of how our society works, what's really frustrating for me is how often much of that advice is ignored or it's not sought. And I think that's one of the reasons why, as we talk about this particular Throne Speech, we talk about disappointment because we're in a situation where we have some very good things that we can do but, unfortunately, much of that plan for the future isn't there.

I was quite surprised to see that the Premier had written a letter to *The StarPhoenix* in response to *The StarPhoenix* editorial. And his whole point of the letter was to say, well I have a plan; don't you recognize that? Well I think we all recognize in this Assembly that that plan from a year ago was dismissed as a pamphlet or something that really had no substance, and I think it continues to be a problem for this government because we do not understand what their vision is for the province.

Now, Mr. Speaker, when you are elected to be government, there's an opportunity for you to do some things and to make some choices that are of benefit in the short term but also in the long term. And I'm reminded of a line from a poem by Seamus Heaney who died. He's an Irish poet. And it's from his poem called *Squarings*. And it's just one line, and it's this line: "Just old truth dawning: there is no next-time-round." Mr. Speaker, there is no next time round.

The choices that are made, the disappointing Throne Speech that we have, there is no next time around for these people who are supposedly providing us with leadership in this province. And, Mr. Speaker, I want to say that that's the same kind of a line I want to talk about here: for the Premier, for the Finance minister, for the Highways minister, all of those ministers, is there's no next time round. We are living here in Saskatchewan in some of the best times that we have ever seen, and the people are fed up and surprised by the choices that the government is making.

And, Mr. Speaker, we know right now that the budget that we have is based on taking about 25 per cent support out of one-time royalties. We know Newfoundland is spending more, but Saskatchewan is 25 per cent. We know that that's not sustainable because there's a cycle in the revenues from resources that we all have to be aware of. We have seen the issues that have happened in Western Canada around those kinds of resources.

And, Mr. Speaker, there is no next time round. When the economy is in good shape, when good things are happening, that's the time that you need to make the choices that benefit all the families of Saskatchewan. And unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, I'm not seeing that in this government.

Now what we instead see or hear are things like the Premier saying, on Thursday, that issues are being torqued. Well, Mr. Speaker, I think that that's exactly what we're getting from that

government, is that instead of getting clear plans that people understand and can feel good about, we're getting torqued messages that end up diverting us from the problems that are ahead.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we have a whole number of things that are causing us some difficulties, but I think they all go back to this difficulty about understanding how you provide for the financial benefit of the province.

Now I heard some of those members over there say that on this side of the House, we don't have a long-term plan for this province. And, Mr. Speaker, I know, I know that the Minister of Health worked in the civil service helping develop the long-term plan for Health for this province, and I know he now has a different role, but I would . . . I know he keeps in mind the good, hard work he did 10, 12 years ago in developing that plan.

I know that there's other people who, within the government, who are building on the things that have been done over the decades. And one of the most frustrating things in this legislature is to hear the Premier or to hear the Minister of Health or to hear the Minister of Highways talk about things that are not . . . have not been done over the decades.

Now I know that the Premier was going after our leader this morning about a brand new school right in his riding. But, Mr. Speaker, the Premier was there when he got a brand new hospital in his riding. And I know that the Minister of Health was talking about no long-term care developed, but before he was a member from Weyburn, there was a brand new health facility, Tatagwa View in Weyburn.

And I know I can go right across the whole of that side of the House and point out that those kinds of projects which the people of this province want, whether they're hospitals or schools or roads or other government structures, are the kinds of things that the people of the province want. But they also know that they take long-term planning. They take lots of work and understanding.

So, Mr. Speaker, when the Minister of Education kind of avoids and passes over to the minister of structure, or whatever they call him, the whole job of dealing with building new schools, and they do it in a haphazard way, we have many, many questions about that. What we do know is that when you are going to build something, it takes money. And I think most Saskatchewan people know that you can get that money by saving up your money to build something, or you can borrow money and build something. But you can't just sort of create a P3 and say there's not going to be any debt involved, or there's not going to be any money involved.

And, Mr. Speaker, I think that the minister has been torquing this issue, to use the Premier's words, to try to divert the attention from the fact that this is going to cost all of us some money. Now the big difficulty is that in this time, where we've got the most money that we've ever had in this province, we're not paying for it now. We're pushing it out down the road. And why are we doing that? I'm not quite sure, Mr. Speaker. And the people of Saskatchewan aren't quite sure.

That's why we've introduced legislation here in this House about transparency as it relates to the debts that are going to be incurred and pushed down the road. Mr. Speaker, we had a previous time where a lot of debts were pushed out into the future. And we came to a come-to-Jesus moment, if I can put it that way, that caused a lot of trouble, not just for people here in this legislature, but for every single person in the province.

And, Mr. Speaker, those of us who are a little bit older — and I know there's probably more on that side than on this side — we know that when you get to that point where you have to pay for things that you've committed to, then the dollars had better be there or else you're in some fairly major trouble. And, Mr. Speaker, the people of the province have had a few instances like that over the decades, and they're not in favour of flowing that way now.

And so, Mr. Speaker, what we ask of the government is if you're going to make these kinds of debt commitments — whatever you want to call them, lease payments, or P3 payments, or whatever — tell us exactly how much it's going to cost and when we're going to have to pay it. And I think that's the part, Mr. Speaker, that seems to be covered up or held away from us here in this province. Now when you go and you do the . . . look at the international studies of public-private partnerships — and there are many, many books that have been written in the last couple of years — the continual theme is always transparency and public accountability and telling the public exactly how much it's going to cost.

And, Mr. Speaker, many of the issues around those projects which have caused a great deal of difficulty relate exactly to that question of who is paying what when, what kind of risk is being shared, what kinds of things are going to be done in the longer term.

And, Mr. Speaker, I don't think that this government and these ministers have enough experience to give us any assurance that we're not going to be in trouble on this whole area. Because, Mr. Speaker, part of our concern on this side of the House is that every time we've raised this issue, there's been this diffusion of the question and there's been a pushing away of getting the information.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there's a simple way to deal with that particular issue, and that is to come forward with the information and make sure that the public knows all the way along. And if you think about the three words in P3, it's public-private or private-public partnership. And partnership is a clear meaning where obviously the public and a private company have to work together and make sure that a plan is developed that everybody understands and that works for the people.

Now in this particular instance we as the public have not given a blank slate to the Minister of Infrastructure or to the Minister of Finance or to the Premier to spend our public money without telling us what the long-term commitment is going to be. And that is the fundamental issue that I think is behind all of the questions that are being raised at this point.

Now we know that we have a system of retrospective review. Auditors can go back and look and see what's happening. The difficulty with this is you're going into a commitment where

you don't know the long-term costs. Now in my previous roles in this legislature, I was involved with the development of legislation around the cost of credit. And part of a, I think, uniform law conference or national effort — both on a provincial basis and on a federal basis — was to get very clear rules on the cost of credit, and then the disclosure of that information.

And so if one goes to the statutes that we have over here on the side, or if you go onto your laptop at home, you can look up *The Cost of Credit Disclosure Act*. And what does that Act do, Mr. Speaker? That Act tells those provincial banking institutions that we have, credit unions and other companies, to in a similar way that federal banks are told, is that if I'm going into the bank to borrow money, or if I'm going to lease a car, or if I'm going to lease a school, I'm going to have that information laid out to me by the bank. And there are very strict rules about what information is supposed to be there, and how the information is to be described. And the whole purpose of the legislation, after much work, was to make sure that you could have a comparable list of the costs in all the different ways that you might buy or lease, or what other arrangement you wanted to get a particular asset.

[15:00]

And, Mr. Speaker, I think that's the fundamental question that this government is avoiding. They don't want us to see what those kinds of commitments are. And they won't disclose, they won't provide a full cost of the credit disclosure that the public needs when we're looking at some of these particular issues. Mr. Speaker, that's fundamentally wrong. That's why we passed legislation both provincially and federally to deal with the banks because we wanted to make sure that people would not get into debt situations that they didn't understand.

And, Mr. Speaker, that's the question that we have here because we've had a bad experience with the party that many of these people opposite were part of before around the long-term costs of credit that eventually came home to roost. And so, Mr. Speaker, I think that we need to ask some serious questions about that.

Now when I come into the Throne Speech and listen to a number of the speeches that have come from members across the way, I'm disappointed by the fact that the notes and the information that's been provided to members has not been vetted more carefully by those members. And, Mr. Speaker, there are a number of themes that are, I think, beneath the respect I have for individual members across there that they have been talking about and pushing. And I think maybe the last speech was a good example of that.

Mr. Speaker, one of your roles being a member in this legislature, is to make sure that what you are talking about you can then respect and honour. And, Mr. Speaker, there are a whole number of issues and there are a whole number of places where members have just read off stuff that's been handed to them. And, Mr. Speaker, I think that we all must, in this place, do some serious thinking about how that happens.

Now, Mr. Speaker, when the statistics are thrown about, about population, I think it's quite curious. I know I listened to the

member from Cypress Hills last week and he was expounding about the difference in numbers in the province between what StatsCan has, or the census numbers and the health card numbers. And I always remind people, and I know as government, we were always watching and looking at the health card numbers versus the Statistics Canada numbers because they were different. They changed at different times.

Now what we know, and if you look at the Throne Speech material or you look at other material that this government has spread out across the province, they have basically looked at the Statistics Canada numbers. But what we know is that when you look at the health card numbers, they're adjusted every time the new health cards are brought in.

But it's quite interesting, and I encourage people to go to the Ministry of Health and look at their covered population statistics. And what we have, I think as of June 30, 2012, is 1,090,000 people. And that I think fits with kind of what we know. But we also know that if you go back and you look at their figures, that there has been over a million . . . It was up, I think in 2006, to 1,040,000 people. Mr. Speaker, all I want to say is that when you get some of this information, it's good for the bluster and for the arguments, but let's look at the information in a way that takes into account exactly what is happening in the province.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I think if I could make any suggestion to the Premier and to the government, is that they're at six years plus or about, well I guess six years almost to the day in government, and people are wanting to know where we're going, not where we've been. And a big problem we have, Mr. Speaker, is that we don't know where we're going.

I recall in 2007 when we got . . . My first speech in opposition, I talked about a bus going down a hill with a driver with no control on the steering wheel. Unfortunately it still feels a fair bit like that. And when we don't actually get a vision for the province, well then we get some of our thoughtful people in the province like the editorial board at *The Star Phoenix* saying, what's going on here? Where's the plan? What's happening?

And, Mr. Speaker, when we get too hyperpartisan, when we get too torqued, to use the Premier's words, we forget about how and why we can build as a legislature. Because one government builds on the work of another. And I was really dismayed to hear on Thursday when the Premier, and I'll quote from *Hansard*, said on page 3773 — this is October 31st, 2013 — he said, “. . . Mr. Speaker, there are no lessons in health care, human resource policy to be learned from members on that side of the House.”

Now, Mr. Speaker, as soon as you use an absolute term like no or complete or all those kinds of things, what you are forgetting about is that the person out there listening to you realizes, well that can't be right because how in the world could you be building a children's hospital if there hadn't been years of planning before? How in the world could you have a hospital in Humboldt if there hadn't been planning before? You know, how in the world do you have a hospital in Outlook if there hadn't been planning before?

And, Mr. Speaker, we are getting too much of this sort of attack

to the back as opposed to looking forward and telling us where we're going to go. And, Mr. Speaker, we in this province have a strong, bright future ahead, but too many people are being left out. And, Mr. Speaker, those people have just as much right as the rest of us to be part of building in this economy.

And, Mr. Speaker, what I would suggest to the members opposite is that they should start thinking about what it is that the public expects of them in those best of times that we have right now, because there's no question that there's a situation right now where there is no next time 'round. Mr. Speaker, that is a crucial factor in what we are thinking about and what we are doing in this legislature.

So, Mr. Speaker, I unfortunately am extremely disappointed in the vision that I was expecting. I'm disappointed in the fact that what we got in the Throne Speech doesn't build on the strong, long history of this province respecting all of the contributions that are made, and it doesn't include everybody in the future for the province.

So, Mr. Speaker, I will not be able to vote in support of this Throne Speech. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of the Environment.

[Applause]

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I don't know, I'm at a loss as well. I don't know what my colleagues are going to want as payback for that. But, Mr. Speaker, it is indeed a pleasure to stand in the House . . .

An Hon. Member: — Interesting and short.

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Yes, I will be short. Yes, I will grant them that. I will do that. But, Mr. Speaker, it is indeed a privilege to stand in the legislature today, almost 10 years to the day after I was elected to this Legislative Assembly. It is indeed a privilege to stand here and to be able to represent the people of Saskatoon Silver Springs, the people of Saskatchewan, and it is indeed . . .

You know, I read a book about how you divide your life into decades, and I can tell you that this past decade has been very rewarding. It's been an opportunity for me to get to know colleagues on this side of the House, all colleagues in the legislature. Each election some members come and go. But indeed it has been a privilege to stand in this legislature and to represent people and to be in government right now at such a historic time in Saskatchewan's history, Mr. Speaker.

Our government's message in the Throne Speech was one of optimism and growth. It is an exciting time to be in Saskatchewan. The population growth the past six years is staggering and I must say surprising to many, although they seem to all be on the other side of the House. We've heard the comments from many members about how it would never happen, how it is impossible, how it was farcical that we could ever grow in Saskatchewan. Well, Mr. Speaker, this government, this Premier, we are able to prove the skeptics wrong, and Saskatchewan is not only growing but will continue

to grow. Mr. Speaker, under the capable leadership of our Premier, the most popular Premier in the country, we have experienced unprecedented growth. Our population is at an all-time high. Our economy is strong.

Mr. Speaker, I've always been proud to call Saskatchewan home. There were times in my life when the pull to move somewhere else was quite strong. Jobs weren't abundant . . . that there was opportunity. Friends were leaving. But I always wanted to stay in Saskatchewan, and now I'm so proud that 1.1 million people are able to call our province home.

It's been a pleasure to be part of a government during a time when Saskatchewan is thriving and growing. We are not planning for decline, as members opposite had an opportunity to do for 16 long years. Mr. Speaker, today we are the envy of the nation. Saskatchewan that was stagnant in population and economic growth is no more. And if we have anything to do with it, it'll never be that way again in Saskatchewan.

For the first nine months of 2013, our employment was up nearly 20,000 people. This put Saskatchewan on pace for the best year of economic growth on record ever, bar none. Our two largest cities, Saskatoon and Regina, are expected to lead the nation in economic growth, and our population continues to grow as the opportunities available for individuals around the world are right here in Saskatchewan. Not only are our large urban centres growing, but rural Saskatchewan as well. My hometown of Blaine Lake, Saskatchewan, continues to do well, continues to grow, and continues to prosper.

Agriculture, which is the centre point of the community that I come from, continues to be an important part of Saskatchewan's economy. In 2012 our agricultural exports were \$11.2 billion, Mr. Speaker, accounting for one-third of all Saskatchewan exports. With this year's harvest nearing completion, it looks like 2013 will indeed be a record year. To help ensure that our agriculture sector remains strong, our government has committed \$27.7 million to agricultural research this year. This indeed is a record investment. Not only is it a record investment, Mr. Speaker, but it is a good investment.

As a government we seek to invest in areas that will provide jobs, provide economic growth, and provide a better quality of life. Investing in agriculture does all of that while working to feed our world. This important industry is vital to Saskatchewan, and our government has continually listened to farmers and will continue to listen to farmers.

One of the ways we are doing this, listening to Saskatchewan residents, the rural residents especially, is through the innovative online agricultural drainage forum. The Water Security Agency is undertaking an unprecedented forum where we're asking Saskatchewan residents for their opinions on agricultural drainage regulations. It's a complicated issue. Water does not end at property lines. It does not end at provincial boundaries. It does not end at international boundaries, Mr. Speaker.

To begin this review, we have gone to the Saskatchewan public and asked for their input. We have asked for farmers, ranchers, landowners, mayors, councillors to go onto the online forum

and to give us their opinions regarding agricultural drainage.

[15:15]

We are listening to people who will help us work and design legislation to suit their needs. Rather than initiating legislation like we saw for 16 long years by the NDP that often would come from this building or come from somewhere in their ministries, we are going out and starting and asking the people of Saskatchewan what they want to see, and we will build our legislation around that. It'll be a robust online discussion that will lead to very sound legislation.

Mr. Speaker, while I'm talking about the Water Security Agency, I want to just take an opportunity to thank the many women and men that work in the agency for how they handled the challenge that we faced in the spring of this year — a 300 per cent snowpack, an incredible amount of water coming into our province, and how it was handled. And, Mr. Speaker, I also want to thank members on both sides of the House for bringing their constituency concerns to myself and to the Water Security Agency. And we have spent now, between 2011 and 2013, some \$50 million in addressing water concerns in the province. And I put to you, Mr. Speaker, that we are making Saskatchewan a better place, and we will be better prepared in the future as we face those challenges.

While the agriculture sector is growing and exporting more than ever, other areas of our economy are growing as well. We are now Canada's largest exporter on a per capita basis. Our exports were some \$32.6 billion in 2012. That's a 10.3 per cent increase from a year ago, more than triple from a decade ago. The member opposite in his speech, he said, we didn't know where we were going. Well we do know where we're going. We have a higher population. We have more exports than ever before. We have a growing economy and we have a better standard of life for all Saskatchewan residents. That's what this government was put here to do and that's what we are doing, Mr. Speaker.

Contributing to the growth in our province is our manufacturing sector which provides employment for some 27,000 people. Many of them come from the Saskatoon Silver Springs constituency. It results in over \$14 billion in annual sales.

There are investments being made in the resource and mining sectors. BHP Billiton has decided to invest \$2.6 billion over the next three years in its Jansen project. Again, Mr. Speaker, this is an area that employs many of the residents of Saskatoon Silver Springs, along with the potash corporation and Agrium and others.

Saskatchewan is producing agricultural produce, manufactured goods, and natural resources that are in demand across the globe. It is not only what our province produces that is being exported but also our innovation and ideas. Our government invested \$5 million from the Go Green Fund in the Aquistore project at SaskPower's Boundary dam 3 carbon capture and storage. This project will demonstrate the feasibility and safety of long-term storage of carbon dioxide in deep saline geological formations and could result in the reduction of greenhouse gases.

So instead of being like the members opposite who talk about how we should be reducing greenhouse gases . . . And certainly they don't want to talk about their record, their 70 per cent increase that we had in greenhouse gas emissions. While the population was going down, they had a 70 per cent increase. Now with the growing and thriving economy, Mr. Speaker, we indeed have greenhouse gas emissions that are going down on a per capita basis, Mr. Speaker.

The project that has attracted investment from around the world, this project attracts investment from Japan and Korea and shows that Saskatchewan is indeed a leader in carbon capture and storage innovation. People that are interested in Saskatchewan's innovative approach to all kinds of things, Mr. Speaker. And one that I've had an opportunity to talk about on an international stage is about water. We have generated a lot of international interest in Saskatchewan through our 25-year water security plan. In fact, Mr. Speaker, I had the incredible opportunity two weeks ago to present the 25-year water security plan at the WATEC [Water Technology and Environment Control] 2013 Exhibition and Conference in Tel Aviv, Israel. It was a very interesting trip, Mr. Speaker, a very interesting conference, and indeed I learned a lot. The WATEC Conference is a leading international conference on the issue of water and had people there from around the world. The Governor of Texas was there. The Governor of Nevada was there, and indeed the leaders from around the world.

The WATEC Conference focused on how new technologies in water management can help countries around the world with water management issues. This includes panel discussions on presentations of irrigation technology, regional water co-operation, and ways to approach financing water technology.

Members opposite might be interested to hear they were talking about P3s as well. It's something that countries from around the world . . . It seems to flow off the tongue. They're not concerned about P3s. They're talking about how you make them better, how they discipline government, and how they continue to be a very responsible way to put things forward for Canadian taxpayers, for Saskatchewan taxpayers, and for those around the world. So we'll be interested to hear more about the P3 debate because as usual — and the member from Athabasca is an example of this — the world is moving in one direction and the member from Athabasca and his colleagues are moving in the other direction. I would suggest that P3s are the direction to go. You know, they're not the be-all and end-all of everything, but they're a tool. They're an approach and they're something that responsible governments around the world look at, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, there's been a keen interest from people around the world interested in our government and Saskatchewan's story. It's been a privilege, on behalf of the Premier and the government, to showcase Saskatchewan's 25-year water security plan on the international stage.

Last October the Premier announced *The Saskatchewan Plan for Growth*, and again the member from Regina Lakeview said, where are we going? We don't have a plan. Well I ask him to reread the plan. He may have read it a year ago and maybe he didn't read it all that close, but indeed we have a plan and we have a plan that's the envy of other provinces around the

country, other nations around the world, Mr. Speaker.

As our province grows, so does our demand for infrastructure and resources like water. When I had the opportunity to do the presentation in Israel and talk about Saskatchewan, I also had a chance to meet with many companies one-on-one that are interested in doing business here in Saskatchewan. This conference was a great example of people taking notice of Saskatchewan. They have researched our province. They realize the vast resources that we have and they are interested in doing business here in Saskatchewan.

The goal of the Water Security Agency and the Ministry of Environment, Mr. Speaker, is to balance the needs of industry with a healthy water system and to do it in an environmentally sustainable way. That is part of our plan going forward.

I must say there were a few raised eyebrows at the conference when we talked about a growing economy and they learned that we are leading the country in growth, in GDP growth, and we have a very, very low unemployment rate. Those from around the world that were still feeling the effects of the recession wanted to know more about Saskatchewan and how we dealt with things and how things are moving forward.

Our government has created a business climate. And the Premier has always said, and we say, we don't take credit for everything that's happened in the last six years, but certainly we are creating the climate that encourages companies and industries to grow and expand in Saskatchewan. And we are doing it in an environmentally sustainable way. I see the Environment critic taking notes and listening very carefully, and that's encouraging. That warms my heart because indeed we can do that. Our government's goal is to protect our environment while ensuring that business can operate and that we can get the benefit of those businesses operating in Saskatchewan.

I know members across the way, they seem to suggest sometimes that we can be environmentally friendly or business friendly, but not both. We don't see it as black and white, Mr. Speaker. It's not mutually exclusive. We can't have one without the other. We want to respect the environment, and we want to ensure that industries and businesses will provide jobs and economic stability for our province. Again I see the member from Athabasca looking and writing some notes and making sure because I think he would agree that that's what we want in Saskatchewan. We want to continue to be the fastest growing area of our country, but we want to do so in an environmentally sustainable way.

Mr. Speaker, another area that we're leading the way in is the Environmental Code. It's something that we're going to be introducing in the legislature very quickly. The code is being developed as a collaborative and a consensus model. It's based on an unprecedented level of stakeholder involvement and leadership. We are working with industry, and we are working with environmentalists — those that value the environment — to come together with a creative, innovative, results-based regulation that allow for greater flexibility for industry while requiring very high environmental standards, Mr. Speaker.

The code will focus on holding companies accountable for

achieving desired environmental results. It's exciting. It's innovative. It's leadership, Mr. Speaker, and that's something that we feel is our responsibility.

Not only do we have the fastest growing economy in the country, but we want to do so in an environmentally sustainable way, Mr. Speaker. Not only do we talk about it — though, you know, we're happy to talk about it and talk about environmental issues in this legislature — but what rings true is when companies talk about it, especially those who have chosen to come to Saskatchewan, those that have choices around the world of where they could set up and operate. One of those is Emterra, the company building the new recycling facility in Regina. They spoke very positively about the business climate in Saskatchewan last week, and to quote a CJME news story from last Tuesday, and here it is:

“Compared to our 37-year history and starting new facilities like this in BC, Manitoba and Ontario, and even the state of Michigan, this has been the most productive, efficient and smooth transition we've ever had,” said Paulina Leung, VP of corporate strategy and business development with Emterra.

[Applause]

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — You bet. That's something that deserves a round of applause. Leung credits the province's attitude toward new businesses and the commitment from the city, the Global Transportation Hub, and the Ministry of Environment.

Well, Mr. Speaker, that says a lot. A company like that, that is worldwide in their technology, worldwide in their innovation, has decided to come to Saskatchewan to set up, and gives credit where credit is due. Here is a business that's helping ensure our province is greener, and that we were able to do this because our business climate facilitates growth, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, I am indeed thankful to be from Saskatchewan. I am thankful to be able to raise my children here, and I'm hopeful that they'll have an opportunity to stay in Saskatchewan as they grow and start their careers. I'm thankful for the growing community of Saskatoon Silver Springs, thankful that they've bestowed their trust in me to represent them here in the legislature. As I said earlier, it's coming up on 10 years, and it has indeed been a rewarding time to be here.

During that time the constituency I represent has seen phenomenal growth, Mr. Speaker. There's new construction everywhere you look, whether it's new homes, new businesses. The progress and optimism of people investing in our community is evident.

We all have seen the redistribution that's taking place. And it's always a difficult thing for a member of a growing constituency to have redistribution come because in effect my constituency is going to be cut in half. But that's the short-term view. The long-term view is how positive it is because this constituency reflects what's happening in Saskatchewan, that we're growing. We're welcoming more people, and I know when you go down the street in Willowgrove, for example, you're going to meet people that have lived in every part of Canada that have come to

Saskatchewan from around the world, that represent different religions from around the world. And they have one thing in common: they're so happy to be in Saskatchewan.

So, Mr. Speaker, when I was first elected to the legislature, my children were just toddlers. They were small enough to stand on the chair and do a few things they probably shouldn't have been doing here in the legislature. Sometimes their dad does things like that, that he's not supposed to be doing in the legislature — but not very often, Mr. Speaker.

But now my kids are 15 and 13. My daughter is 13 years old, and she's in grade 8 at Cardinal Leger. My son is 15 years old and getting very, very close . . . I know my seatmate is a former driver trainer instructor, and that's where I sometimes hope I had more skills in that area, and more patience, as my son gets near his 16th birthday and will be getting that driver's licence, I'm sure. Both kids are very busy with many activities and also they benefit from great parenting from their mother, from my wife, Trish.

At this time I'd like to thank Trish for all that she does to keep the home fires burning, keep the kids involved in their activities, and have her own career as well.

[15:30]

Mr. Speaker, life is busy, and I, like many people, am very fortunate to have support at home and support at work. I'm fortunate to have amazing people that give of their time and energy to support me, to support us, to support everyone in the legislature. And I have to thank my team of volunteers back at the constituency, led by my campaign manager and sort of 24-7 supporter, Merle Sawatsky. She coordinates a group that provides me with just a tremendous amount of support and assistance and helps me do my job as the MLA for Saskatoon Silver Springs.

Mr. Speaker, this year has not been without challenges. It was a tough, tough summer. I lost my mom. She was very, very near 80 years old. She was an incredible woman that lived life to the fullest. Every day, she just loved to be alive and loved to live life with passion, and she did that each and every day. She loved this place. She loved coming here for budgets and speech from the thrones, and later in life to be able to just watch it on TV. And from her, I learned a lot of lessons. I will miss her praise. I will miss her scolding, sometimes. And she'd always ask the question, why are the people on the other side so mad? And I said, oh, mom, they're not really like that. They're friendly people, but they have a job to do. They have a job to do.

An Hon. Member: — I actually met your mom. I met his mom, nice mom.

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Yes, the member from Athabasca, I know he met her in a restaurant, and I know she got to know each and every member whenever she could. So, Mr. Speaker, it's tough. It's something that we all go through, and I will miss her a lot. I'll miss her love and I miss her dedication, and that is a tough thing to say.

We also had another significant loss in the constituency of

Saskatoon Silver Springs, Quinn Stevenson. A young man tragically lost his life in a traffic accident. Quinn was a remarkable young man, 17 years old, had recently graduated from Centennial high school. He was a role model to many. Following Quinn's untimely passing, we saw an example of what Saskatchewan people are made of. Over 1,000 people attended his funeral in Centennial Collegiate. The outpouring of support and tributes through fundraising for a scholarship in Quinn's name has indeed been incredible.

Mr. Speaker, this is probably one of the things that I've learned in this legislature, that this is the finest attribute that Saskatchewan people have, coming together to help people in a time of need. And again I saw that in the Saskatoon Silver Springs constituency through the outpouring of support for a young man that left us much, much too early, but again left a great effect on all of us.

Mr. Speaker, we couldn't do our jobs without excellent support staff: my chief of staff, Cole; and ministerial assistants, Kaitlyn and Theo; admins, Shelley and Annie; and constituency assistants, Sara and Jacquie. Thank you to all of you for what you do. It's been said many times by members on both sides of the House, but we have to rely on good people who are dedicated to their work to enable us to do our job. And I thank each and every one of you for helping me.

This is an exciting time to live in our province and see it grow. This indeed, Mr. Speaker, is the new Saskatchewan. We have a new sense of optimism, a new sense of confidence that is seen throughout communities, big and small, far and wide, in our province. I'm very proud to be part of a government that listens and responds to the needs of Saskatchewan people.

The constituents I have talked to since the Throne Speech are thrilled with the announcement of another joint-use facility in Saskatoon Silver Springs constituency in the Evergreen community, Mr. Speaker. I will talk in glowing terms about new schools, whether they're P3s or not. We need them in Saskatchewan. And as an MLA, and I think it's incumbent upon all MLAs, especially when it's located in their own constituency, to talk about the need for schools and to talk about how we have built more schools than ever before in the last number of years. And it's just a sign of optimism that the government has confidence in growing areas of the province. And that's indeed why I'm so thankful that we're able to see another joint-use school because I know it'll spur on additional growth for the area and for the province.

Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to be here as an MLA, privileged to serve in Executive Council as the Minister of Environment, and to see how Saskatchewan's growth has benefited many, and to ensure that this continues.

I have seen the change in Saskatchewan in the last six years. It's a good change, Mr. Speaker. A former teacher of mine and a good friend, Dr. Dean Vause, he says, success isn't what you accomplish in life; it's what you inspire others to do. And I am grateful to my family, friends, colleagues, and constituents, and members on both sides of the House for the inspiration that they provide me and enable me to do my job.

It's my goal, Mr. Speaker, it's our government's goal, that we

will continue to keep moving Saskatchewan forward and that, Mr. Speaker, is why I will be voting in favour of the Speech from the Throne and certainly not supporting the amendment. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Central Services.

Hon. Ms. Heppner: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I would like to start off my remarks this afternoon by thanking a few people, in particular my constituency assistant, Whitney, who I know I've talked about many times before. I think he's on year 20 of being a CA [constituency assistant]. I'm his third MLA. He started working for Bill Neudorf in the '90s and worked for my father as well.

Whitney is a wealth of knowledge. It's really his constituency and I kind of work for him. He knows everybody and everything and has historical knowledge of what's gone on before, and is really in touch with the communities that I represent. And considering how much time we spend in Regina, it's so reassuring to know that I've got Whitney in my constituency office taking care of things. I don't have to worry about . . . I don't have to worry about things when I'm gone. So I want to start off by thanking Whitney.

I also want to thank my staff in my minister's office in this building, Tennille, Tara, and Stacey. They're all relatively new to their positions and it's been exciting to get to know them and watch them get comfortable in the jobs that they have. And I want to thank them for their support.

As my colleague, the member for Silver Springs, had mentioned there's been a few of us who have faced some challenges and losses, myself included, over the last several months, and I want to thank my colleagues for their continued support. I've been supported by this family that I have since I was first elected seven years ago. So I want to thank . . . I want to thank my colleagues for their help and support. We really are a family.

And I joke with the Finance minister that I spend more time with him than anybody else I know because we're on so many different committees together. And it's kind of nice that you like the people that you work with considering we do spend so much time together. So I want to thank everybody for supporting me. And I've seen these folks rally around our own when we face challenges, which is very comforting.

Mr. Speaker, I represent, along with my colleague from Silver Springs, one of the fastest growing areas in the entire province. And indeed, Mr. Speaker, I have communities that are amongst the fastest growing communities in all of Canada. And with that growth, comes challenges. And I know that we've said this many times before, but I think we would all rather face the challenges of growth than the challenges of decline.

And I want to want to thank the mayors of my communities and the reeves that represent the areas for their approach to regional co-operation. It used to be that they, small-town Saskatchewan, they were pitted against each other, usually based on their hockey teams and that kind of carried over into municipal politics. And it's really good to see the co-operation from the mayors and the reeves, partly because they're so physically

close together. In some cases there's only a mile or two that separate these communities. But their approach to things has been very encouraging for me. And I'm so very blessed to have this group of men and women to work with on a daily basis.

Mr. Speaker, speaking of growth, I know one of my colleagues has used this quote before, but I'd like to put it on the record yet again, quote, here is the acid test of any government: is the population growing or is it decreasing in its population? Are we getting people to come here because there are jobs and hope and opportunity for the future? Or are we faced with massive job loss, massive outflows and exodus by the people of Saskatchewan?

Mr. Speaker, that was from former Premier Roy Romanow. And it's interesting that it was a NDP member who said this. And I think, Mr. Speaker, if we look at the history of the NDP in this province, according to their own former premier's words, they were an abject failure.

And the member from Athabasca's beaking from his chair again. And I know he doesn't like the reality of the situation that we now face, Mr. Speaker, because he has to admit that their policies didn't work. They didn't work.

We have seen the increase in population and absolute attitude change of the people of this province over the last several years. And according to Roy Romanow, the NDP failed at their job as a government because they oversaw a massive exodus of people from our province, Mr. Speaker.

So their attitude towards growth, we saw it again today with the member from Lakeview complaining about the population numbers that we've used. We've had unprecedented growth in this province. And even today, faced with the reality of our new situation, Mr. Speaker, the member from Lakeview still can't accept the fact that Saskatchewan's a great place to be and that we're actually really doing very well. He wanted to dispute the population numbers, Mr. Speaker, and I think it just goes . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — I know some of the members would like to enter into the debate. I believe some of them already have. Others will be given an opportunity, but currently the Minister of Central Services has the floor. I recognize the Minister of Central Services.

Hon. Ms. Heppner: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. As I said the NDP's negative attitude is so evident even today with the member from Lakeview trying to dispute our population numbers. And I think it's a really sad reflection. It's . . . I don't know, Mr. Speaker. They come to this House and there's no smiles over there and they seem pretty grumpy, and I think that's kind of a sad state of affairs. I know on this side we're pretty pleased with the way our province is growing, and it's too bad that the NDP apparently aren't.

And, Mr. Speaker, speaking of the member from Lakeview — and just an absolute unwillingness to understand how well we are doing or to accept the fact that we're doing this well because we know that we didn't see any of this under the NDP — the member for Lakeview said, "A document like this . . ." It's the Premier's growth plan that he released last year. "A document like this distracts everybody, and I think his popularity [the

Premier's popularity] will stay up there as long as there's sort of a myth of a booming economy."

Mr. Speaker, we look at the job numbers. We look at manufacturing numbers. We look at export numbers. We look at all of the financial and economic indicators in our province. We're not making that up. We don't do that. It's other people who put those numbers together and present them to the public. And the member from Lakeview, his only reaction in the face of all of this good stuff that's happening in our province is to say that it's a myth. And I'm sad for him, Mr. Speaker, that he can't accept the reality of what our province is doing and what we're capable of.

But to the NDP and their economic plan, they talk about smart growth a lot, which is I guess an interesting buzzword. I don't know if they did some polling on that to see how that played with people. But polling and buzzwords aside, I think what you need along with whatever kind of growth plan you have is the actual plan. And to this day, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there's no plan. I've gone over their website several times, and it's interesting to me not what's there — because it's pretty vacuous; there's not much there at all — it's what's no longer there.

A couple of years ago they put together a policy document on the eve of the last election, which was authored by their current leader. It's gone. Any documents referring to the policy positions and election platform from the last election — gone. Mr. Speaker, even the *Regina Manifesto* is gone from their website. I don't know how on earth they're ever going to plan to eradicate capitalism now that their little guidebook to doing that has been taken off their website as well.

So, Mr. Speaker, the members opposite talk about a smart growth plan, but they don't have one. There's nothing. I know when our Premier was elected Leader of the Saskatchewan Party when we were in opposition, within months he had a plan in place which he gave out to the people of this province, and we were judged on that. And I think, Mr. Speaker, the results of the last two elections show very well what people thought of the plan that we presented to them.

We see the numbers in the House today reflect that even above the numbers that we saw in 2007. People expect their governments, or those who think they want to be government again, to have an actual plan. And to stand in the House or stand in scrums and go . . . Any answer to anything or any problem that the NDP see as, well we need to have a smart growth plan, but they'd have absolutely no plan in place. I think the people of this province are absolutely going to see through that.

The only thing that I did find on their website, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to economics or a growth plan was, we need more eggs in more baskets. I don't know if he's going to try to be a chicken farmer or a cook or a chef. I don't know what his plan is with more eggs in more baskets. But, Mr. Speaker, it reminds me of another brilliant political candidate whose only economic policy was to bake a bigger economic pie. Maybe they can get together because the member opposite apparently has the eggs for that. But, Mr. Speaker, more eggs in more baskets is not a plan, economic or otherwise.

[15:45]

And I think again if we look at what the province is doing now, how things are going now, and you look at the growth plans that we've released, something is working, Mr. Speaker. We have record population in our province. We have record investment in Saskatchewan. We have record weekly wages in our province. We have record export numbers, record retail numbers, record wholesale trade, record construction levels — both residential and commercial — record employment levels, and the lowest unemployment level in Canada, Mr. Speaker. I think there's probably some more economic indicators, but I got tired of searching for them so I just wrote down a few. And I think, Mr. Speaker, like I said, the people of this province are expecting something a little bit better from the NDP than more eggs in more baskets.

And I would point, I would point out, Mr. Deputy Speaker, even their former leader, Dwain Lingenfelter — or as the members opposite like to say, he whose name cannot be spoken — knew that our government was on the right track. And this is a quote from the day after the election in 2011. Dwain Lingenfelter said, and I quote, "... I give full credit to the premier for the work he's done in keeping the economy going." So, Mr. Speaker, even the leader of the NDP, former leader of the NDP, knew that something was going right in this province and was giving our Premier some of the credit for that, although, Mr. Speaker, we all know that the credit for how well our province is doing is not the government's credit, although our job is to kind of stay out of the way and let people live their lives and put their businesses into effect and make good choices. It's the people of this province who are making these record numbers in the province.

Mr. Speaker, I want to go back to the issue of population. The biggest challenge in my constituency is — the Highways minister will be shocked to hear this — is not highways, partly because they're all getting fixed, so I want to thank the minister for that. We've got some awesome roads in my constituency. Our challenge is schools. And when the Saskatchewan Party came out with a plan to increase the population by 100,000 people in ten years, it was interesting and pretty shocking the reaction from the NDP. And I know the member for Athabasca says that we're rewriting history, but I don't know how we can be rewriting anything when we're quoting NDP members. You know, these are public statements that they made in *Hansard*. We all agree *Hansard* is pretty accurate.

So Harry Van Mulligen had said in 2003, in response to this proposed plan to increase the population, he said, and I quote: "... I say their plan flies in the face of reality ..." He goes on to say it's not very realistic. And he goes on to say that this is a shaky basis for an economic plan. "Because these plans, Mr. Speaker, if you're not right, you will in effect take hundreds of ... billions of ... dollars to put it into a plan that is doomed to fail because the reality says the plan will fail."

Mr. Speaker, what a bad attitude and proven absolutely wrong in his assessment of what our province was capable of doing. And it wasn't just Mr. Van Mulligen. There was policy analysts that said the same thing. And I think, Mr. Speaker, the tides have really turned in our province, and we have a different outlook in our province as to what we are capable of doing.

But I wanted to go back to schools. Just recently in the announcement for nine joint-use schools in our province, two of them are in my constituency, one in Warman and one in Martensville. There's unprecedented growth. The enrolment numbers in the elementary school in Warman has gone up 90 per cent in the last few years. There is a brand new middle-year school that just opened this September in Warman. And I'm very thankful for past and present Education ministers for understanding the need for capital infrastructure in my constituency when it comes to schools. There is an expansion to the high school in Martensville that will be open shortly and then, with the addition of these two joint-use schools, Mr. Speaker, I think the children and the teachers and parents and the community in my cities of Warman and Martensville will be well served.

And you know what wouldn't have happened, Mr. Speaker? None of these would have even been planned for under the NDP. I have their enrolment projection numbers from 1994-95 up to 2010-11. And, Mr. Speaker, year over year, decline, massive decline they're predicting in our student population in the school. And even ... I'm not sure what year this was released. Oh, June 2001. And for the next 10 years, they had predicted absolutely nothing but decline. And even then, in the early 2000s, my communities were already starting to grow. They're bedroom communities out of Saskatoon, and they would have had absolutely no plans to build schools in my constituency, Mr. Speaker.

So I want to thank my government, treasury board colleagues, cabinet colleagues for understanding the need for capital, education capital in my constituency. And, Mr. Speaker, as far as I can see ... First of all, when I talk to parents, nobody cares that it's a P3. They absolutely do not care. What they care about is that their children are being educated in a healthy environment where there is space for them to learn. They don't really care how it gets there and not a lot of concern about the P3 aspect of it.

And I think the one thing that we've lost in this discussion — I know the NDP certainly have lost this, lost sight of this in this discussion — are the students. The member, the Education critic on the other side wants to talk about process. Well go ahead and talk about process. But I can guarantee you, Mr. Speaker, the teachers and the parents and these kids don't care about process. They want to know that there are going to be desks in a school, in proper classrooms — not in gymnasiums, not on stages — that they can actually have a really good ... They're getting a good education. And those teachers are amazing for what they've done in the cramped spaces that they have, waiting for these new schools to be built, Mr. Speaker. But these students need a healthy place to learn, and the Education minister has completely lost sight of this.

As far as I can tell, the only people who are upset by this announcement are the nine ... Education critic. The nine members on the other side of the House are the only people upset about this, which is shocking for the Leader of the Opposition to not agree with a school in his own constituency. I was at that announcement, Mr. Speaker, and I spoke to folks from Hampton Village who were there, the parents that were there. They're excited about this. So I wish the member opposite luck when he goes home and goes door knocking in

Hampton Village and explains to those parents and the kids why he doesn't want a school for them because I think he's probably on a slightly different page.

I do want to quote from mayors in Warman and Martensville, and I would like to point out, Mr. Speaker, that I'm the only constituency in the province with two cities. We are growing every day it seems and these schools really need to be built. So the mayor of Warman says, and I quote:

We appreciate and thank our provincial government for stepping up and looking for solutions for overcrowding in our schools. With this announcement, we are charting new ground. We look forward to all the good work that lay ahead and the brand new school that will follow.

The mayor for Martensville says, and I quote:

The provincial government's announcement of two new schools in Martensville is simply great. Any time a new school is announced is a reason to celebrate.

And then he goes on to continue to thank his MLA and the government. And, Mr. Speaker, like I said, I think that the only people who aren't excited about this announcement are the nine people sitting across the aisle from us. I have quotes from parents as well.

I want to end, Mr. Speaker, on just a little discussion about economics. We know that the NDP want to be government again. I've already stated that they have absolutely no plan except having eggs kicking around in a basket, and they need something a little bit more than that. And what's really frightening, Mr. Speaker, considering how well our province is doing, we know that the members opposite refuse to stand up to their federal leader. They take marching orders from Thomas Mulcair.

And there is an article that was out lately, and the article begins with, and I quote, "Federal NDP leader Thomas Mulcair says if his party wins the next federal general election, his government will manage Canada's finances in the same manner as Greg Selinger has managed Manitoba's finances." Oh my goodness, Mr. Speaker. That's what his plan is for our county? I can't even imagine what playbook the NDP are going to be taking their cues from on economic policy because they don't have any plans, they have nothing on paper to tell us what it is. But I certainly hope they won't be taking their marching orders from Thomas Mulcair saying that Manitoba is the shining example of economic management in our country.

The article goes on to say, points out why this is probably not the best position for Thomas Mulcair to take. They are in debt. They are overspending. They overspent last year. They're slated to overspend again. The only reason they come anywhere close to not spending more is because of federal transfers. They have some of the highest income taxes in the country. They have been hiked regularly over the last several years. And then right after the 2000 election, Mr. Speaker, they hiked the PST [provincial sales tax] without any warning during the election.

That cue we understand the NDP on the other side will actually take because that's exactly what they did. They ran an entire

campaign, got into government, hiked the PST and then said after the fact, well the election campaign's no time to talk about raising taxes. Well no kidding because people wouldn't vote for you, so they just do it on the sly. Talk about having a little secret agenda, Mr. Speaker. The NDP know all about that. And as a very wise person said the other day when we were discussing this article, taking economic advice from the NDP is like taking Stanley Cup victory parade advice from the Leafs. My apology to the Finance minister.

So, Mr. Speaker, we've seen the economic policies of the NDP in the past. And it's been referenced many times, many times in this House — I think my colleague from Wood River can do it off by heart — the long list of mismanagement from the NDP. So I won't go into all of that. But the mindset behind it, Mr. Speaker, is another scary thing, along with Thomas Mulcair's economic plan for our country, because Maynard Sonntag said in 2001, in the face of all of these massive losses by the NDP government said, "I bet — and I'll put my job on the line . . . that we will lose money in the future." That's their attitude, Mr. Speaker.

And I know that the people in this province work far too hard to have an NDP government in place who has absolutely no regard for their money. They think it's their own and they can spend it as they wish, Mr. Speaker. But it's the taxpayers of this province who fund the things in this province, and we need to treat their money with the respect and dignity that it deserves. They work very hard for it. And we ask for a share of that, and it's our job to spend it wisely.

And, Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that one of those wise things we can do is to continue to build schools for our children. And for that I'm very thankful for this government's approach. So, Mr. Speaker, I'm getting over a cold and I'm starting to lose my voice, and I'm sure there are some in this House that are quite happy by that. So I will wrap up my remarks by saying that I will not be supporting the amendment, and I wholeheartedly support our government and our approach to growth in this province.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Batoche.

Mr. Kirsch: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the House for this privilege to speak on behalf of my constituency at this time. I would also like to thank our Premier for his leadership and his eloquence in telling the Saskatchewan story. I would also like to thank all the members of our caucus for their support and the work to draw together and build this wonderful province. I would also like to thank our capable office staff, the people in there. They work hard behind the scenes, but thank you for your work and your continued work.

I'd also like to thank some of the people at home. First off in my office, team Telfer. They've been such fantastic support. In the last little while I've needed them extra, and it has been very much appreciated. Once again, a thanks to my board of directors from the constituency. Their advice and counsel is always needed.

I would like to thank also my wife, my partner, my friend, Valerie, for her continued support. And of course our children,

our three kids, two girls and a boy who always support, and now the latest member. I've got a grandson that's 21 months old. And this grandpa job I would recommend to anyone. It's probably the best job I have. One of the ministers down there says he would gladly wait for a while yet, but when the time comes, it's the best job you'll ever find. And last but not least, I would like to thank the people of the Batoche constituency for supporting me these past 10 years.

To start my reply to the Speech from the Throne, I would like to give some history of how we got here. And that would mean looking at the NDP record.

The NDP was relieved of their government duties after a 16-year downhill run. In fact they've held power for about 70 of the last 100 years. So let's look at the foundation, or shall we say the record of the NDP, and then our present government. I would like to compare the economy, health, agriculture, highways, education, and then key to growth is population.

When opportunity knocks, you have to answer that door. Well the NDP answered the door and said, go away. The NDP record on the economy is a dismal report of decline and mismanagement. From SPUDCO, a phony potato company, to driving out the potash companies, and crippling, crippling the oil industry. A gentleman in Saskatoon has pictures of a caravan of vehicles belonging to the oil companies, a full caravan of vehicles leaving Saskatoon and heading for Calgary courtesy of Tommy Douglas.

[16:00]

And the most famous oil rig in all of Alberta is Leduc No. 1, and I think the records show that that rig was brought over from Saskatchewan. It could have been us, Mr. Speaker, but they said, go away.

The NDP record on health care is as follows: 52 hospitals closed. And we keep repeating this because it is a fact. It is true. That is what happened; 52 hospitals closed. Twelve hundred seniors' beds closed — phenomenal. The longest surgical wait-list in all of Canada by the party that claims to have built medicare, and they crippled it to the point of the longest surgical wait-list in all of Canada. We had a shortage of 800 nurses. They promised to build, at the corner of my constituency or actually in Humboldt constituency, the Humboldt hospital which our area uses. And they promised for three elections to build the Humboldt hospital, and of course it was just never built.

The NDP record on agriculture, which is very dear to me, the NDP plan on agriculture was simply zero, nothing, nada, zilch. We all remember the municipal tax revolution as a low point in the NDP relationship with agriculture. The hollow echo of the status quo is not on.

Then we go to the NDP record on highways. Highways were so underfunded that catching up will be the most difficult part. The provincial government collects 15 cents a litre tax on fuel to build and maintain highways. What did the NDP do? They put that money in general revenue and let the highways deteriorate. The NDP record on education, the NDP plan for education was the same as their other plans. They planned for decline. They

closed schools. They laid off teachers.

NDP MLA Harry Van Mulligen, March 24th, 2003 said the following in the legislature, and I quote:

... they propose to increase the population of Saskatchewan by 100,000 over ... I forget what number of years, Mr. Speaker.

Well it is so over the top, it is so farcical, Mr. Speaker, that it flies in the face of reality.

... So, Mr. Speaker, I say their plan flies in the face of reality, Mr. Speaker. Now it may well be an admirable goal, but it's not very realistic, Mr. Speaker. It's also I might say, if this is the basis for their whole approach to government, that this is a shaky basis for an economic plan, Mr. Speaker. Because these plans, Mr. Speaker, if you're not right, you will in effect, take hundreds of millions, billions of ... dollars to put it into a plan that is doomed to fail because the reality says that plan will fail, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP planned for decline, whether it was the economy, health, agriculture, education, highways, and yes of course population. Or to quote Eldon Lautermilch when he said, "It will leave more for the rest of us." That was the NDP plan and they stuck to it.

Enough said about the record of the negative nine on the other side of the House. Let's look at the record of the Saskatchewan Party who has been in power for a short six years. First, our record on the economy. The province with the lowest unemployment rate, the fastest growing economy in Canada. The largest mining company in the world is building the largest potash mine in the world right here in Saskatchewan. K+S mining is back. That's one of the companies that the NDP drove out. The forest industry is finally standing up again, getting back to work. Things are happening. There's a future in the forest industry. And most important, we've paid off 40 per cent of the provincial debt. That enables us to do a lot of things for the economy.

Saskatchewan Party's record on health. Under the Saskatchewan Party's record, we are building hospitals, even that one in Humboldt. It's now built and open and working. We have shortened surgical wait times. We have 300 more doctors. We have more than 900 nurses added to the list.

And now we've a new endeavour. We are opening collaborative emergency centres, CECs, to facilitate rural communities. One of them is in my constituency at Wakaw. These are a huge step in the right direction to facilitating the people of Saskatchewan in the health care program.

We are in the process, in the process of building 13 seniors' care homes. Some are already under construction and one has already been built — a far cry from shutting down 1,200 beds.

The Sask Party on agriculture. The Sask Party has been working with agriculture since our first election. With 47 per cent of Canada's cropland, Saskatchewan is agriculture, and agriculture will always be a key player in the Saskatchewan economy. The

latest endeavour for agriculture was revealed in the Throne Speech, and that is the setting up of a livestock insurance program. This is something that the livestock producers have been asking for, and I'm looking forward to watching it unfold.

Farmers have also been very pleased with the increased coverage in crop insurance. The response by our government to several years of spring flooding disasters has been unprecedented. With a 300 per cent snowpack, the government aid for flooding was huge. The work of our government has been very much appreciated by the people of this province.

The Saskatchewan Party's response to highways. The Saskatchewan Party is committed to the infrastructure and hasn't stopped building highways since we were elected just six short years ago. The toughest job has been to decide which highway to do first, as there are so many that the NDP has left in disrepair.

Just the other week I had the privilege of attending the grand opening of the final leg of the twinning of No. 11 Highway, so it is now twinned from Regina to Prince Albert. For Prince Albert, this is huge. We always are referred to as the Gateway to the North. Well this acknowledges us. This is like the early settlers had the ribbon of steel to connect British Columbia to the rest of Canada. Well this connects Prince Albert with the rest of Saskatchewan. And it's huge and very much appreciated. At over \$1 million per kilometre, highways are a major cost for the provincial coffers, but highways remain a huge factor for the Saskatchewan future.

The Saskatchewan Party on education. The biggest challenge to education has been to keep up with the growth. In order to facilitate this unprecedented growth, we are building nine new schools. These schools will be built using the P3 system of financing and building. P3 stands for public-private partnership. The overall cost will save our government millions of dollars.

The NDP say it won't work and cite some P3 projects that floundered in the early days of the development of P3s in the '90s. The P3 system has now been fully developed and has an impressive record across Canada. I believe over 200 P3 projects are under way or have been completed and are very successful.

The Saskatchewan Party on population. What can you say? More than 1.1 million people. Saskatchewan has grown by 100,000 people in six years. The original goal we were aiming for was to hopefully accomplish that in 10 years. And now the people of Saskatchewan have responded, immigrants have come, and we are there in just six short years.

And that once again was said by the negative nine as impossible. I now say to them . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Mr. Speaker, I'm being heckled by the member from Athabasca. When he speaks, I quietly listen and let him speak. How about you give me the same respect and let me speak?

The Speaker: — Order. I would like to . . . Order. I would like to remind the member to place his comments through the Chair.

Mr. Kirsch: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I now say to them, have a little faith in our people. We have given them the tools, and they are limited only by their imagination. Our people have

always been resourceful, otherwise they wouldn't be here.

The future of Saskatchewan has never been brighter. We are now a have province. People are calling us the new Saskatchewan, and there are jobs and a future for our children right here at home. There is an interest by the world in all the products and resources Saskatchewan has to offer. Opportunity has again knocked at Saskatchewan's door. This time we answered and have thrown the doors open wide. Welcome to the new Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I will be enthusiastically supporting the Throne Speech and not supporting the amendment. I thank you for the privilege.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Highways and Infrastructure.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is a privilege to enter into the debate again. I think this is about the 14th Speech from the Throne I've heard. I don't think I've answered or replied on every Speech from the Throne but most of them over the 14 years. And it's always a privilege to be able to stand up and talk a little bit about . . . Because when you reply to the Speech from the Throne, it's a little more wide-ranging. You can talk about a few more things other than perhaps a piece of legislation or a specific budget bill or what have you. So it certainly has the opportunity to speak a little bit more broadly about what's going on as far as a political life.

As many other members talked to what's going on in your personal life, so I'm going to do a couple of those things as well as then get into my different responsibilities, whether it's Ministry of Highways, whether it's SaskBuilds, SaskTel, Gaming, STC, [Saskatchewan Transportation Company] and just talk a little bit about those responsibilities, what we've done over the past year, and what we need to do as we move forward. And then I'd like to wrap it up by 5 o'clock, I hope. No, then I'd like to wrap it up quite a bit earlier than that and just talk a little bit about, really, the attitude that we see in the province.

And it's interesting that we could have members on this side over the past year since the last Speech from the Throne, and they're out in their constituencies as I am in Indian Head-Milestone and what we hear in our constituencies compared to the nine on the opposite side, you'd really, truly believe that you're in a totally different province. I mean from what they say to what we say and, you know, I guess probably we each can be, can really stress our point, and perhaps not everything in the province is quite as glowing as what we'd like to think it is. There are some room for some improvements, but I can guarantee it's a far cry from what the opposition talks about when they talk about the doom and gloom that they see around the province.

Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure what that sign language is but anyway, I need to get on to the content. Here first of all I need to thank people that, in my political life, that make it as successful as it has been, and starting with constituency assistants. My previous one was Vonni Widdis, and Nicole Entner-McCullough has been managing the office for the past number of years since we've become government and how she does an excellent job.

I think we all talked about how important our constituency assistants are. And I can tell you that Nicole has been crucial in keeping the concerns of the people from Indian Head-Milestone in forefront in my mind. She kind of keeps me apprised of every call that comes in and the calls I need to return. And sometimes she has to remind me again to return that phone call, but she does an excellent job and I really appreciate her for all that she does.

As well as the people in my office, whether it's Karalee, Amanda, Chris, or my chief of staff, Clay, looking after the issues that we have within the Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure. And as I said, it's just not the issues that we deal with in Highways and Infrastructure, but it's all the other issues that we have, whether it's issues around SaskTel, whether it's issues around the Gaming Corp., SaskBuilds, all those different interests and responsibilities. They all do a great job and I want to thank them for that.

I can tell you that there are times through the summer that I'm not here a lot. I'm usually available by phone or email, but they're the ones that keep the office going here in Regina and do a very good job of that, an excellent job. So that if we have successes or I sound like I have the right information, it's because they've provided it to me more than anything else. So I want to thank them for that.

[16:15]

The other area I want to just touch on is at home, my wife, Cindy, and our two boys, Craig and Mark, who have really been kind of living a dream life, especially over the last, well last probably . . . Actually I think they've always had a dream life right from the time that they were born. They've been very fortunate boys. But over the last little while they've had some great opportunities and I think they've taken advantage of them for the most part. They've been able to travel the world and they've seen the world through an athlete's eyes as well as . . . maybe not always an athlete. Sometimes they kind of cross over and are more tourists and partiers and kids, yes, but have had really an amazing opportunity.

And it was just kind of interesting and I was quite frankly a little concerned, although I had seen the premiere of their new TV show that just aired — on MTV at 7 o'clock if anybody's interested — and I had seen the premiere so I kind of knew what was coming but you're never quite sure how the general public is going to see it and accept it. I kind of saw it for, you know, what it is. And I was part of seeing it being made, whether it was in Aspen, Colorado, at the X Games or at home or wherever. And so far so good, I think. For the most part, the reviews have been pretty positive. I just know that it's really geared for a younger audience. I would probably . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Yes. I would probably be . . .

I do know that, talking to some of my colleagues here that have been great enough to say that they've watched it and enjoyed it, to some of the younger friends, more their age in the mid-20s, who really enjoyed it, to the two grandmas. Our boys have two grandmas that are left. Both their grandfathers have passed away. And after seeing the show, it might be a good thing . . . No. But the two grandfathers who have passed away, but the two grandmas who are still living, and what their comments

were. And it was a little bit different than the 22- and 23-year-old comments. It maybe wasn't quite as glowing. I think even though the one grandma said, you know, after she was saying that, I'm not so sure I really wanted to hear my grandson say that he was hung over on national TV, and then she started reminiscing, oh but boy, we sure used to have some pretty crazy parties. So I guess it depends on the perspective that you're coming from.

But it has turned out fairly well. My only concern is that it was episode one of eight, and I think they kind of build as far as different activities, I guess I'll say. I don't think I have to worry about being seen in any more. The next one is set in Vail, Colorado, at the US [United States] Open and then they go to Cancun after, so I know what's in that one. And I may be just really briefly in that because we were at that competition. And then maybe there's one held here this summer, this past summer, where they show the beautiful Saskatchewan in the summertime, and especially the Qu'Appelle Valley. And so they kind of, I think they might even contrast the beauty of the Qu'Appelle Valley and how, you know, nice the lakes can be, and then the other half of the show I believe is Craven, which maybe not be the beauty of Saskatchewan. That may be Saskatchewan at its . . .

An Hon. Member: — It's a different kind of beauty.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Different beauty, yes, when it's fully in flight, I guess. That's one other episode. And then I'm not sure. I mean the other ones are around the world. But anyway, point being is that I just hope people kind of take it for what it is. It's their life and what they're doing, and kind of a glimpse behind. And it's not all actually reality. I think there is a bit of staging going on. But for the most part it is kind of what they do when they're on the road. Enough of that.

Anyway on to the political and my responsibilities when I'm at work, and I will honestly tell you that I really have to thank again my constituency assistant Nicole and the people within my constituency office for keeping me going as straight as they possibly can. Because I can tell you that my mind has been distracted a little bit, all that's been going on at home with the craze around the Olympics coming up. Mark is going to be competing, I think, pretty darn sure, unless he is injured, which is just one jump away. The next jump could be that next injury. He hurt himself in Australia and bruised his heels really bad. And literally it's been two months before he's been able to do much of anything, so it does happen. But hopefully he's healthy enough. And he's favoured, which is kind of one nice thing because you're certainly getting lots of recognition. The only problem is, it's a long ways down if you don't follow through with the expectation. So there's that pressure riding on him.

And on Craig, he's also competing on the national team and he's kind of on the bubble. I think they take four and he would be about rider number six or seven, so I think it's going to be difficult for him to get there on the competitive level. But he does have a — I don't know where he gets it from, from his mom — a bit of a gift of the gab and . . . What are you guys laughing about? A bit of the gift of the gab and he has been hired by CBC [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation]. He's going to be . . . If he's not riding, he's going to be the colour commentator for CBC through the two weeks of the Olympic

games for all the snowboarding events. So that's going to be interesting.

It was weird. I never thought that we had . . . I was guaranteed that one son was going to be there. I always thought it was Mark, but it's definitely Craig because who knows with Mark whether his body holds out. So anyway I said I wasn't going to talk anymore about that and that was another few minutes.

So anyway, I do need to talk about what we have been doing as a government in the various areas that I have responsibility with. I found it interesting, one of the members from across the way, and I appreciate she had looked into the Speech from the Throne and what the Speech from the Throne was supposed to entail. And it was supposed to entail what we've done in the past and then what we are going to see in the future. And she was very critical of the Speech from the Throne because she didn't feel it had much of a vision of the future. I really looked at it. Obviously like we would probably do on most issues, that member and I see it completely opposite.

I saw in the Speech from the Throne, certainly . . . And they would like to say it's some patting on the back. I would say it's just simply talk; what we've done as a government over the past year, but more importantly what our visions are and what we want to do and what we want to complete as we move forward into the next year, as the province is doing very well. But that still means a lot of work ahead of us in order to keep up with the growth.

In Highways and Infrastructure, when we look back on what we've completed over the past year . . . And this work certainly didn't end or start under my watch as the Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure, but this has been work that has finished in this past year, but has been worked on for many, many years in planning and designing, all that work that needs to go in to make sure that this infrastructure is in place to meet the demands that we have moving forward.

For example, in some of the most recent projects was opening the No. 1 overpass on the west side of Regina, the west Regina bypass. Had the opportunity to be part of that ribbon cutting with the GTH or the Global Transportation Hub CEO, Bryan Richards. That's a huge advancement, allowing trucks that are going in and out of the GTH to get back on to No. 1 or off of No. 1 in a safe manner.

These aren't the typical semis that we used to know, the 18-wheelers as we used to say. And I think there's probably the odd song about an 18-wheeler. I don't know how the songwriters would do a song about a 28- to 32-wheel truck. It just doesn't have the same ring as the 18-wheeler. So there may not be any more country songs written after truckers. But anyway, the west Regina bypass is crucial in making sure that those trucks that are, you know, quite frankly small trains going up and down our roads but small trains that are driven very safely, getting in and out of the GTH in a safe manner and making sure that for all the rest of the traffic, we're all safe and sound.

October 18th also marked the opening of No. 10 passing lanes, and I had the opportunity to be with the mayor of Fort Qu'Appelle and the mayor of Balgonie with the opening of the

passing lanes going out from Balgonie to Fort Qu'Appelle. As I said, and I want to make sure this is very clear because that's kind of in the heart of my constituency, this work started a long time before I was the Minister of Highways and is great work. I travel up and down that road often and I can tell you over the last couple of weeks or three weeks that it's been open, I think traffic is flowing more smoothly. I don't see people taking quite the chances that they were in the past if it's a slower moving vehicle. But I really think the proof of how effective these passing lanes will be will certainly take place this summer as the summer traffic increases with boats and campers and sometimes campers and boats being pulled and see how effective these passing lanes are. And if they're effective, certainly look to spread them out into other high-volume traffic areas, especially when it's a mix of traffic such as campers and that type of traffic that tend to drive maybe a little bit slower and how they interface with all the rest of the traffic. So look forward to the benefits of those.

On October 25th I was unable to be there, but my colleagues from Prince Albert and Batoche and surrounding area were part of the completion of the No. 11 Highway between Saskatoon and Prince Albert. And how important that was.

That's all work that has been done in the past, and I know the members don't want us to pat ourselves on the back too much about the past, but we can certainly look to the future and some of the projects that we've talked about as we move forward.

The No. 11 twinning was the final piece of twinning that we had necessarily on the books for this year but in the Speech from the Throne we lay out a number of other areas that will be twinned as well as planning that will take place. You know, we'll certainly start the twinning between Saskatoon and Clavet, which is a very high-volume area because of the potash mines out east of Saskatoon, as well as No. 7 between Saskatoon, Delisle — huge traffic volumes — as well as Highway No. 39 between Estevan and Bienfait which again has high traffic volumes.

With that, Estevan to Bienfait is only one section of a fairly lengthy section from Regina to the American border. We are committed to, also in the Speech from the Throne, the planning of that because we know that the truck volumes have increased maybe higher on that road than any other road. So we need to keep that in mind and address it. That's part of an overall highway infrastructure program. But for the members opposite to say that there's nothing looking forward, there absolutely is something to look forward — twinning on those sections. Also the work that's being done from Regina to Estevan.

But not only that. You know, on an average year in Saskatchewan, we spend — and I'm going to ballpark it here; I'm going to average it — around \$600 million a year. And some of that is for maintenance. Some of that is for capital. But when you think about it, it's not quite \$200 million a year. But if you condense it down into, for example, the capital of the five or six months that we need to get work done in Saskatchewan, it's an awful lot of expenditure on a daily basis here in Saskatchewan.

I don't think that's going to slow down any time soon. In fact I think if anything else, you know, the work that we're doing on

highways is only going to continue to accelerate. We know the demands are there. The east Regina bypass is definitely a piece that we're continuing to work on, as well as looking at other pressure points, as well as looking at some of the TMS [thin membrane surface] roads, or thin membrane surfaces, that we need to address. So lots of work going forward, but certainly a lot of work that we've done over the past number of years.

I have the responsibility for SaskTel, which is a company that's very well respected here in Saskatchewan, and it continues to invest greatly in the province. Right now we're in the middle of a \$670 million upgrade, fibre to the premises, and also for Infinet, Mr. Speaker, huge investments into the infrastructure because, quite frankly, the infrastructure for SaskTel was put in place some times as far back as the '50 to '60s. Some of the copper wire is outdated. We need to make sure that that infrastructure is upgraded because people are wanting that, they demand that, and that's what SaskTel is working towards.

In fact you know, just in the Speech from the Throne, the member opposite said there was no looking to the future. Well looking to the future is putting \$5 million into CommunityNet so that schools throughout the province have proper broadband width. They do have proper broadband width, Mr. Speaker. And you know, it's great to have the hardware. It's great to have the computers. But if you don't have the bandwidth in order to utilize those computers to their maximum, it kind of defeats the purpose. And that's why SaskTel, along through the government, is investing through CommunityNet to make sure that that is complete as we move forward.

I was certainly glad to have the opportunity today to stand in the House as the minister . . . as a ministerial statement and talk about the four communities that have . . . If you can imagine, it's really hard to believe, but there are still more communities that have never had cellular service before. And after the announcement today of cellular service that will be going into Stony Rapids, Fond-du-Lac, Black Lake, and Wollaston Lake, what an improvement I think — although sometimes I wish I didn't have cellphone service — but what an improvement that will make for citizens in that area to be able to communicate, especially because it's a remote area, and to be able to get help if they need help.

So improvements moving forward, not just looking back but moving forward. And that's another area that SaskTel will be working on, not to mention the partnership between SaskTel, SaskPower, and Cameco to make sure that there is a proper line up the northeast side for business and communities to access Internet service, continuing to invest in the infrastructure throughout the province.

SaskBuilds I have the responsibility for, and we've talked a little bit about it in the House over the past couple of days. SaskBuilds is a new corporation, not quite a year old, a treasury board corp. that is looking at the infrastructure in our province. First job was to develop a 5- to 10-year capital plan that will help guide our investments into the future. The second issue or mission of SaskBuilds is to look at alternative financing. How can we meet some of the infrastructure needs that we have today and meet those needs today and not push them off into the next generation or generations down the road that we saw previous governments do?

[16:30]

So that's what SaskBuilds has been up to, and it's had a very busy year looking at different P3 projects, whether it's 225-bed long-term care spaces in Swift Current to the replacement of the provincial hospital in North Battleford to the work that it's doing on the Regina east bypass to, finally, what's been talked about most recently are the nine schools that SaskBuilds is looking at bundling to move those projects forward. It's interesting that the questions from the opposition have been around the schools, and I can see they're talking on more the bundling. I don't know if they're . . . I think they're totally against P3s, although they haven't really talked about North Battleford, Swift Current, or the Regina east bypass. They've really certainly only seemed to focus on the schools here in Regina and Saskatoon.

I was also very fortunate to have the responsibility, and only for maybe a year, of ISC [Information Services Corporation of Saskatchewan]. And as of June the 9th — July the 9th, sorry — 2013, ISC became a publicly traded company, Mr. Speaker, with the government still maintaining quite a significant share. But the successful restructuring has allowed the government to realize about \$150 million of proceeds from that public offering, still with some control in the company, but also allowing the company to expand way past its borders and benefit from the expertise that we've learned here in Saskatchewan, and then be able to move it out across, really across Canada and even into around the world.

I've had the opportunity to get to understand the busing company much better over the past year and a half, and some of the challenges STC has seen. But this is not just over the past year. It's been over a past number of years. It is a service that many residents have come to rely on. I certainly know that. STC, in order to manage its losses and its subsidy that it gets from government, has been looking at trying to increase ridership, trying to make ridership — people that are riding the bus — that much more comfortable, whether it's Wi-Fi [wireless fidelity] on the buses, whether it's changing route times, or whether it's seat sales. They've done an awful lot to try and increase the ridership. Unfortunately that hasn't always increased the ridership. But, Mr. Speaker, they're doing everything in their power to make sure that's the case.

In the event that we don't see ridership increase and we have buses travelling routes with only two or three passengers, I think it's only a responsible government — some might even say it's a common sense government or smart government; I would think maybe those words would come into play — that you'd have to look at those routes and say, should we continue those routes or not? And if we discontinue them, Mr. Speaker, what does that look to the bottom line of STC? It's a very difficult decision to make, absolutely. We've made that decision on three routes to discontinue them. I've certainly heard the lobby of the people in those communities. But I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that I've also heard an awful lot on the other side. And people were even questioning we, as a government or myself as a minister, what took you so long? You know, you should have been doing this certainly a lot sooner.

But I want to congratulate the people from STC on the work

that they've done to make sure that that corporation is running as lean as it possibly can be. They do a great job over there, and I appreciate the work.

Just one other responsibility that I have — and this is not in any sort of particular order so I don't want anybody to read into it — but the Gaming Corp., Sask Gaming, is also under my responsibility. In other words, the casinos in Regina and Moose Jaw and their entertainment centres. And this is a very interesting business right now because you've seen it mature, really. There's not a lot of growth. There's not a lot of opportunity to bring more people in the doors, but they're doing everything they possibly can to make sure that it's always entertaining, as they would say and, you know, I admire the work that they have done over the past number of years to build the business. There was huge growth for a number of years and it's flattened out. And this is pretty traditional across the piece, across Canada. But they're still working hard to make sure that people are coming in the doors, and not just coming in the doors but they have a good experience when they do come into our doors as they move forward.

Just in closing, Mr. Speaker, that's kind of what's been going on on the day-to-day basis as far as looking back through the many responsibilities I have and also looking forward. But I think it's really extremely important, the last piece that I wanted to touch on. And as many of our guys and men and women travel the province in their constituencies and around the province, they really are noticing . . . And I have to admit it's palpable. You can feel it, the change in attitude in our province over the last number of years after . . . You know, and some would pinpoint it six exactly to the date which was 2007 . . . The exact date was, people . . .

An Hon. Member: — November 7th.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — November the 7th, 2007. Thank you. That didn't take you too long. Maybe it's not exactly to that date, but what I can tell you is in the last number of years, two or three years, I have noticed a huge difference in the attitude of this province.

You know, it doesn't matter whether it's the people in agriculture are positive, very positive. They are investing. You go into any of the dealerships — and I am lucky enough to represent the community of Avonlea — Nelson Motors. Or if I go into South Country just outside of Regina, those businesses . . . And I don't mean to just pick on John Deere. I also should say Young's and Markusson New Holland in White City and Young's Equipment just outside of Regina. All the dealerships are noticing a huge investment into agriculture the likes of which they've never seen before.

And I don't know if I've heard a positive word from the other side. You know, it's just negative, negative, negative. But when you go out into rural Saskatchewan, it's extremely, extremely positive. Do they have other needs? Yes, they want to do some work on some of their infrastructure, some of their roadways, Mr. Speaker. But you would never get it from the other side that there is a positive vibe going on, Mr. Speaker. And it doesn't need to be in rural Saskatchewan. It's in urban Saskatchewan too.

And I just . . . I really do have to kind of wonder. I remember being in opposition, and I had the privilege of being in opposition for eight years. The people of Saskatchewan thought we needed some years to age I guess in opposition. And it was difficult to go out and just kind of look at the fault or the negative part of what was going on in the province because people want to for the most part be pretty positive. But we were having to . . . I remember back from '99 to 2003, things weren't great in the province. People had stuff to complain about. And you'd feel like you're piling on if you're always looking at the negative and what's going wrong, and you want to look at the positive.

But, Mr. Speaker, that's the job of an opposition. And I remember it being difficult at that time, but I can't imagine what it would be like for the negative nine going out right now when there is so much positive, and you're trying to look for the negative. When we were in opposition, you went out to look for negative, and it wasn't too hard to find, you know, whether it was a tax revolt meeting or whatever it might be, when it was schools having to close. I think there was 13 schools closed in my constituency in the eight years that I was representing them. There was businesses closing. There was a lot of negative. You didn't have to look too hard.

But, Mr. Speaker, when I go out in my constituency now, there are challenges absolutely, but it is a completely different world than what those members come back into the House and spout. It is not anywhere comparable, Mr. Speaker. And, Mr. Speaker, so because of that, because the Speech from the Throne is such a positive, forward-looking document, exactly opposite to the nine speeches or eight speeches that we've heard from that side, nowhere close to reflecting what we're hearing when we're out . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Only six have spoke so far? Seven? It's nowhere close to the reality that we see when we're out on a day-to-day basis talking to residents.

Mr. Speaker, as I said, there are challenges moving forward absolutely. And we're going take a look at those, what needs to be done and try and address them. But I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, the province is in as good of a spot today than it has been in its 100-and some-years of existence. Mr. Speaker, more work to do and that's why I'll be supporting the Speech from the Throne. Not only does it look at what's been positive in the past, but it's got a strong direction and plan for the future. I will be supporting the Speech from the Throne and not voting for the amendment. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Regina Coronation Park.

Mr. Docherty: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a great honour to rise and speak to the Throne Speech motion moved by the member from Regina Dewdney. And I'll be supporting this motion.

I'd like to begin by thanking some people. I'd like to thank my partner, Lisa, my family and my friends for their ongoing support. Thank you. I'd like to thank my former constituency assistant, Kalee Kent for the effort she put in opening the office and making it a welcoming environment for the constituents of Coronation Park. She set the tone for assuring that our office was not the wrong door for people to knock on. So thank you,

Kalee, and all the best in your new endeavours in Calgary.

I was worried that she'd be difficult to replace because we're a very busy office, and luckily I was able to find a new assistant. Kristy Shaw is my new CA, and she arrived in the middle of some very complex casework issues and has managed very well. She stepped up and ensured that we, as an office, have not skipped a beat, and the transition has been almost seamless. So thank you, Kristy. I and the people of Coronation Park are lucky to have you on our team.

Mr. Speaker, up until now, I've usually been fortunate enough to be one of the first MLAs to rise in support of our government's throne speeches. On the plus side, being among the later group this year has given me the opportunity to listen to many of my colleagues pointing out how strong the Throne Speech is. I want to congratulate everyone who's risen before me on doing such a great job highlighting all that our government is doing to support Saskatchewan's growing economy, population, and communities.

On the downside, it means that my colleagues have already spoken about many of the highlights of this year's Throne Speech. So I think the best approach for me to take is to speak about the Throne Speech from the perspective of my role as the Legislative Secretary for disability issues.

One of the great things about this government, Mr. Speaker, is that we have not, we are not, and we will not pursue growth just for growth's sake. After all, growth without purpose will be a hollow goal. As the Premier has said all along, growth is about enabling us to improve quality of life and support our most vulnerable citizens. That, Mr. Speaker, is a noble goal — growth with purpose. And grow we have, Mr. Speaker. We've reached record population numbers in the past year, over 1.1 million people and still going strong. That's a remarkable milestone.

And you know what other remarkable milestone we've reached this year, Mr. Speaker? One that's just as important, one that says just how seriously we take our goal of growing Saskatchewan for the right reasons? This past year, we reached the milestone of over 11,000 Saskatchewan citizens enrolled in the Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability program, or SAID.

Why am I linking these two numbers, Mr. Speaker? Because at their heart, they are linked. It's our growing population base and revenues that have allowed our government to expand and increase the SAID program, and that in turn has helped us to help people change their lives.

People like Gayle Dixon, Mr. Speaker. I was fortunate enough to meet Gayle last spring when we celebrated SAID reaching its 10,000th client enrolled. Gayle and her service dog Daisy attended that event, and I have to admit that they stole the show. Gayle was one of the first folks to go on SAID when the program was expanded in 2012, and her story shows the impact that SAID can have on quality of life, on dignity, and on pride.

When Gayle got her first SAID cheque last year, she said she wanted to go out and do something she'd never been able to do on social assistance. You know what that was? It was a trip to

Wal-Mart to buy a furnace filter and some stain for her back steps, and a trip to the Dollar Store for a brush to do the staining with. That was the difference between SAID and social assistance, the kind of thing that most of us here would just take for granted. Gayle says that SAID gives her self-respect. To quote Gayle herself, "SAID gives respect. I can take care of myself."

That SAID celebration was one of my first official events as Legislative Secretary. It's one I'll remember for a long time because the people who came out to share their stories about how pivotal SAID has been in their quality of life, and because it demonstrated how important our growth plan goal of becoming the best place in Canada to live for people with disabilities really is.

A key part of that goal, Mr. Speaker, is set out in this year's Throne Speech: our commitment to develop a comprehensive disability strategy. As Legislative Secretary for disability issues I have the honour of being part of that work. It's a big job, no two ways about it, but I'm pleased to say that we're bringing some of the best, most committed people in Saskatchewan together to tackle it.

Just last week we announced the members of the new citizen consultation team who will lead the consultations that will support our disabilities strategy. The committee is made up of 15 people who are committed to making Saskatchewan the best place in Canada for people with disabilities. The committee will be co-chaired by Amy Alsop, a Regina woman with a vision disability. Amy is a Paralympic gold medallist, a disability advocate, and we're lucky to have her co-chairing our team. The other Co-Chair is Daryl Stubel, director of the office of disability issues in the Ministry of Social Services.

[16:45]

Other committee members are Merv Bender, the executive director of the Prince Albert and district service centre; Larry Carlson, a retired civil servant who's worked in the field of disabilities his entire life and who himself has an acquired brain injury; Roger Carver, a Saskatoon man recently retired as executive director of Saskatchewan Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services and who is himself deaf; Dawn Desautels, a Shaunavon mom of an adult son with a disability who is currently serving as a board member of the Cypress Hills Ability Centres; Carole Eaton, a registered psychologist who works with people with psychiatric disabilities, people with concurrent disorders of mental illness and substance abuse, and people with acquired brain injuries. Lynette Griffin, a Regina woman who's lived her entire life with a physical disability who is a manager of paratransit accessibility for the city of Regina and who is also a Paralympian; Charmaine Landrie, Lloydminster cognitive disability strategy consultant; Andrea Lavalley, Meadow Lake mom of a son with spinal muscular atrophy type II, co-founder, past-president and current board member of People Advocating For Children With Exceptionalities.

Michael Lavis is a Regina man and founding executive director of Creative Options Regina, a non-profit organization that develops personalized support services for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities; Marie

Lindenschmitt, a mother of a child with autism and an occupational therapist who supports integrating her clients into their home, work, school, leisure and community; Laurie McSymytz, a Wynyard resident who has been a rehabilitation and peer councillor for the Canadian Paraplegic Association who is involved with the development of the South Saskatchewan Independent Living Centre here in Regina; Eugene Paquin, retired senior school administrator with experience supporting students with special needs and who was a caregiver to a daughter with Type 1 diabetes, a spouse with multiple sclerosis, and a second daughter who is deaf; Shaun Soonias, a First Nations man living in Saskatoon who is a director of social development for the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations who manages the FSIN [Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations] disabilities office; and Ian Wilkinson, a Saskatoon father of a child with autism who is also the executive director of the Saskatchewan Abilities Council.

I had the honour and the privilege of meeting with these folks last Wednesday, and let me tell you, they're an impressive group of people who are going to get the job done. We're lucky to have them working on behalf of our province and our province's most vulnerable citizens. And I look forward to working with them over the coming year on the consultations and the disability strategy in general.

Mr. Speaker, our government's commitment to supporting vulnerable citizens does not begin nor end with the disability community. Before I joined this Assembly, if you asked most people to describe me, they would immediately have said Street Culture Kidz, and they would have been mostly right. Working with and supporting street culture is one of my life's greatest joys. Seeing the difference a small group of people can make in helping young men and women leave street life, build healthy and productive lives for themselves, become contributing members of the community, and become taxpayers contributing to our province's growth, that's not an easy journey for any person. The odds are incredible. The obstacles are almost insurmountable. Yet time and time again I've seen young men and women do it with little more than determination to build better lives for themselves and their families and with the support of Street Culture.

So you can imagine my delight, Mr. Speaker, when one of the first events I was able to attend as the MLA was opening Downtown Browne's shelter, the province's first voluntary youth shelter owned and operated by Street Culture. Sometimes the first step in turning your life around is just having a safe place to go. The shelter gives kids exactly that — a warm, welcoming, safe place. It was this government that funded the shelter and it funds it to this day. It was this government that understood the critical need of the community and that stepped up to meet it. It was this government following through on our commitment to use the benefits of growth to support our province's most vulnerable so that in the end we can all share in the good things that growth brings.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, the men and women across the aisle don't seem to get it, that with growth comes opportunity. No, they prefer instead to paint a picture of doom, despair, gloom, and negativity because to listen to them nothing is ever good enough. They mock our goals. They disagree with how

we're achieving them. And when we do achieve them, they say they would've done better.

Mr. Speaker, as Teddy Roosevelt has often been quoted:

It's not the critic who counts, not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or the doer of deeds could've done better. The credit belongs to the man who's actually in the arena; whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly . . . who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who, at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly; so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat.

Maybe, just maybe, Mr. Speaker, it's time to channel one of my favourite segments from *Saturday Night Live*, and in particular *Weekend Update* with Seth Meyers and Amy Poehler, a segment SNL [*Saturday Night Live*] likes to call "Really!?"

Our government has reduced surgical wait times. We've increased the number of nurses caring for patients, and most recently, we've created a \$10 million Urgent Issues Action Fund to begin to address some of the issues facing long-term facilities. The NDP says, not good enough. Really?

Some Hon. Members: — Really?

Mr. Docherty: — Really. So let's look at what they consider good enough when they were government. The NDP closed 51 rural hospitals. They closed the Plains hospital. They closed over 1,200 long-term care beds. Let's not forget that under your so-called leadership, Saskatchewan had the longest surgical wait time of any province in Canada. And now the nine of you, including a former Health minister who oversaw so many of these closures and fiascos, and you criticize our plan to fix it, to fix the mess that you left behind. Really?

Some Hon. Members: — Really?

Mr. Docherty: — Really. Real leaders spent months petitioning for a new school in Hampton Village, but when we announced the plan to build not only that school, but nine new joint-use schools to serve public and separate school divisions there and in other communities, he changes his mind for nothing but ideological stubbornness. Really?

Some Hon. Members: — Really?

Mr. Docherty: — Really. I find that tough to swallow. Our government has funded 43 major capital projects and over 900 additional smaller projects across the province. What did your government do again? Oh right, you closed schools. And now we're preparing to build nine joint-use facilities, the equivalent of 18 new schools. You oppose that? Really?

Some Hon. Members: — Really?

Mr. Docherty: — Really. Really. You say government needs to do more to combat bullying. You criticize our government's anti-bullying consultations. You criticize the work of my colleague from Saskatoon Fairview on those consultations and you criticize our plan to report back to the people of this

province on what we heard during those consultations. Yet you couldn't be bothered to contribute to those consultations by sending in a submission of your own, despite having months to do so. Really?

Some Hon. Members: — Really?

Mr. Docherty: — Really. But a year ago you somehow found the time and the energy to pull together a submission on Bill 85 back when those consultations were open. In fact I seem to remember seeing footage of the Labour critic, the member from Saskatoon Centre, on TV holding a news conference to release his report, and then walking a copy of the report up to the Minister of Labour's office himself. So he can pull something together for labour issues, but not for anti-bullying? Really?

Some Hon. Members: — Really?

Mr. Docherty: — Really. What about disability issues? You criticize us for not doing enough, in spite of expanding benefits, implementing the SAID program, setting a goal to make Saskatchewan the best place in Canada for people with disabilities. So what exactly did you do? Oh right. You let the wait-list for services for people with intellectual disabilities grow to 440 people. You left shelter allowances untouched between 1992 and 2005 despite about 40 per cent inflation over that period. You ignored the need for assured income for people with disabilities for 16 years, and for 13 of those 16 years you didn't even increase shelter allowances for people with disabilities. Really?

Some Hon. Members: — Really?

Mr. Docherty: — Really. I can't imagine the audacity of having left such a dark, dreary, pitiful legacy to the people of Saskatchewan, and then sitting here and criticizing the government that has built a legacy of growth, of opportunity, of prosperity. I thought hope was better than fear. What would Jack say? Really, Mr. Speaker. I'll be supporting this Throne Speech. And really, Mr. Speaker, I will not be supporting the amendment. Really. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know the members opposite are eagerly awaiting my speech. I know that they're all waiting with bated breath, so I'd like to start. I always have much to say. I am a Chartier. I don't think there's a single person in my very large family who doesn't always have much to say, but I think before I get on to the Throne Speech, it's always very important for me to thank and recognize people who, in my life, ensure that I'm able to do this job.

I have a really amazing family, Mr. Speaker. My kids, Hennessey and Ophelia. Hennessey is 15 and Ophelia is 5, and they have made huge sacrifices — we have as a family — so I can serve the constituency of Saskatoon Riversdale and the people there. My kids are wonderful and incredibly patient and understanding, not always on Sunday night when I get in the car to drive here, but they know, and we've had lots of conversations about why I do this job. And short-term sacrifices in our family hopefully, for long-term gain for their generation

and future generations, Mr. Speaker. So my kids, Hennessey and Ophelia, are the reason I'm here. And we sometimes pay the price for that. But they're pretty special kids, and I'm very thankful that I'm their mother.

I have to say thank you to my mom and dad. My mom and dad, who are 81 and 80 years old respectively, they're the reason, I think, I'm here as well, Mr. Speaker. I come from a family of activists, both political activists but also community activists. My parents still, at the age of 80-plus, are going strong in trying to work hard to ensure their community is a better place. And they really instilled that in all seven of their children and their 14 grandchildren.

My sister Michelle, who, I have said this before, but she always says, do not thank me. Do not do things like that. But my sister Michelle is like another mom to my children. She really is there when I can't be. And there are times when I think she's the preferred option. But I really appreciate that. She makes coming to Regina much easier for me. I know that when my kids, whether they need a ride to meet at We Day on Wednesday at quarter to eight in the morning, that my sister will be the one pinch-hitting and doing that for me. I know that when someone needs to be at a school Halloween party, it's my sister Michelle who will take time off work to do things like that. So I'm very grateful for my sister Michelle.

Blair, Ophelia's dad, is awesome too, and has been very supportive of me in this role. And he also is really great when it comes to taking care of the kids.

Of course all of us have incredible staff. I know that to be true, and my staff are wonderful as well. I have Judy who has filled in in my office in a pinch, but she's also spent the last year in my office when Vanessa was on maternity and parental leave with her sweet little baby. And Vanessa just came back actually to my office two weeks ago. I missed her tons and I was very glad to see her back. But I know, I know that pull that comes from leaving your children, whether it's a 10-minute drive from your office or a two-and-a-half-hour drive from your office. So I am very grateful and appreciative that Vanessa has returned to work after her year-long maternity-parental leave. I'm very lucky to have both these women in my office who work very hard for the people in my community and working hard to ensure that people have what they need. And they're great, incredible advocates. They both have very different skill sets but complement each other so incredibly well. One has been a long-time constituency assistant and Vanessa was much newer to the job, and they are a great team.

I have to say thank you to the staff in the caucus office. They work so incredibly hard and do such a great job. With the nine of us in opposition, sometimes things are stretched pretty thin, but we always can count on the staff for getting the job done and providing us the support we need to do the job that we are responsible for here in this House.

I want to talk about the legislative staff. This summer, as a member of the all-party Traffic Safety Committee, it was great to get to know some of the folks in the Clerk's office. The library staff are always amazing. Everyone from custodial to cafeteria staff are great too.

And last but not least here, I want to thank the people of Saskatoon Riversdale for giving me the trust to represent their voices. Saskatoon Riversdale is a wonderful community. This has been my home for much of my life and I couldn't imagine living anywhere else.

So I know once we call a supper break here, I will come back and have an opportunity to speak much more fully to the content of the Throne Speech.

The Speaker: — It now being after the hour of 5 o'clock, this House stands recessed to 7 p.m. this evening.

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

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