



THIRD SESSION - TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

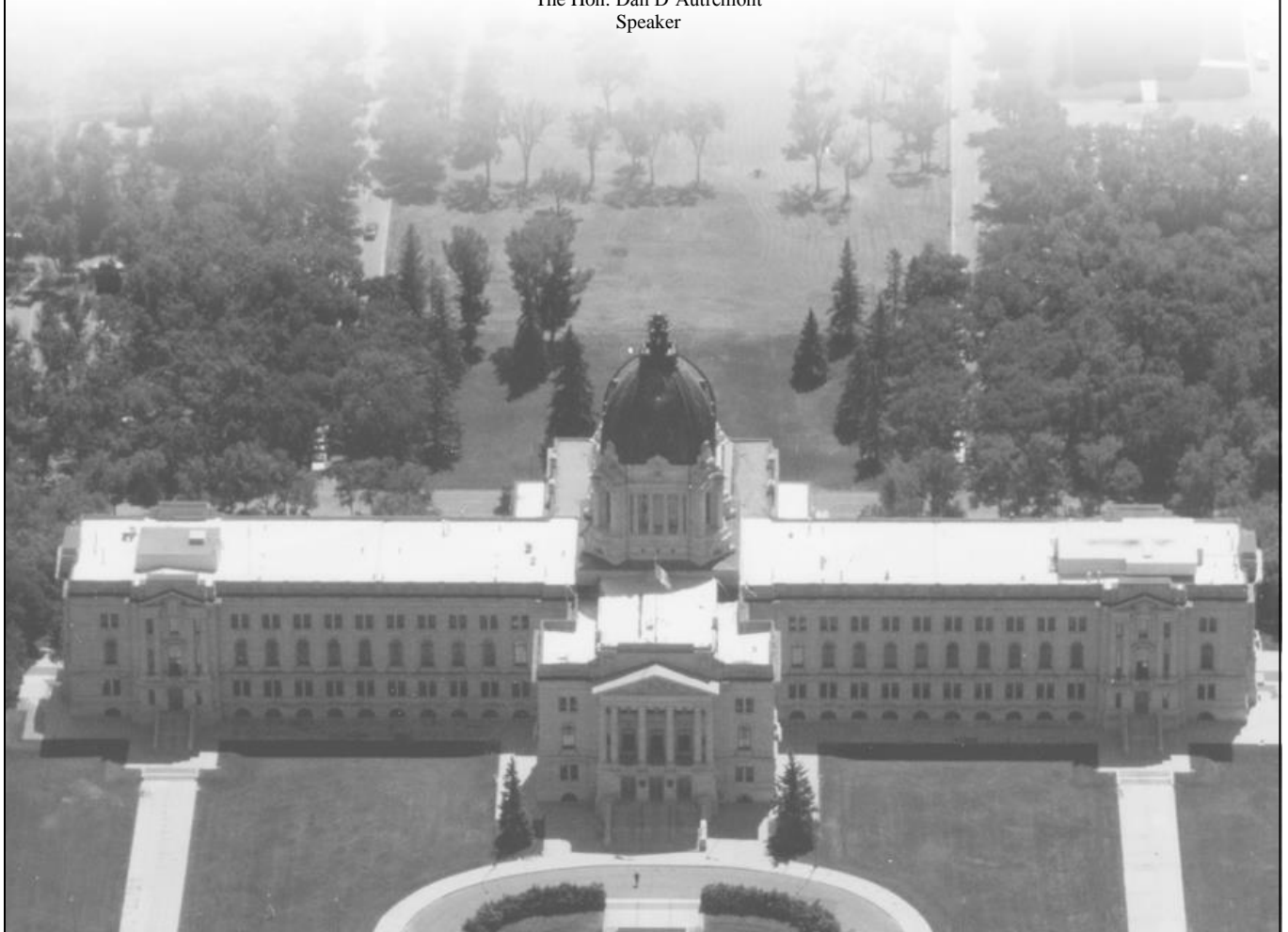
of the

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. I'm going to ask for leave of members of the House to make a very special introduction today.

The Speaker: — The Premier has requested leave to make an extended introduction. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have some very special guests that are seated in the west gallery today that it is my unqualified honour and privilege to introduce.

Mr. Speaker, we live in a wonderful province. On that we all agree. And our provincial motto, "from many peoples, strength" is on exhibit every day in the people we meet. And then even though the entire population could claim credit, and should, for the provincial motto, there is a small and select group among us who are quite literally heroes.

Mr. Speaker, I want to introduce some Saskatchewan heroes to you today and then to members of the House. We are going to recognize these heroes a little bit later on in a special ceremony for the Premier's Commendation Awards. Mr. Speaker, the idea for this award comes from the member for Wood River, and I want to thank him for his suggestion — someone who knows a little bit of what he speaks when it comes to these matters, Mr. Speaker.

And so let's get right to the introductions. I should note, by the way, that there will be a special ceremony where the awards will be presented later this day with MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly] and with the member for Wood River who has really spawned this idea. And obviously I'm going to be honoured to participate in those awards as well.

So, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to read the names of those who've joined us, and I'm going to ask them to just give us a quick wave so we know that they're here. In the west gallery we have Mark Anderson and Nancy Ostime. They're representing the students, faculty, and staff at Luther High School in Regina. There they are. They are being recognized for the actions that they took when an armed student entered the school in September of 2008.

Constable Steve Enns of the Estevan Police Service is in the front row, Mr. Speaker. He rescued four people from a house fire in Estevan in May of 2012.

Joshua Lasas from Flying Dust First Nation is here who, along

with Devin Knot and Brett Opikokew of Meadow Lake, rescued a family of four from a car sinking in a ditch full of water in April of 2009.

And Duane McKay is here, Mr. Speaker. Members will recognize Mr. McKay, Saskatchewan's fire commissioner and the executive director of emergency management. He has shown and his team has shown amazing leadership, outstanding leadership during the floods of 2010 and 2011. And we know the province is in a good state today if Mr. McKay has joined us in the west gallery, Mr. Speaker.

Finally Dwight Siman from Regina is here. There's Dwight. Dwight rescued a man from a burning vehicle in January of 2013, and we've had a chance to talk a little bit about Dwight's efforts in the past.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, there is somebody who is absent who will be receiving the commendation, and her name is Shelley Baldwin and she's from Oxbow, Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. Shelley was some time ago diagnosed with MS [multiple sclerosis] and then more recently with cancer. But she felt that given the amount of fabric in her home and given the amount of energy she still had, she should be doing something for people who needed clothing. And so she's sewn 4,700 dresses with the fabric to give to people who need it, Mr. Speaker, notwithstanding the diagnosis she's received.

So, Mr. Speaker, these are the quality of people that live among us every day, and we should do whatever we can as a province to recognize them. And this particular award is just a very, very small thing, a bauble really, compared to what they contribute, what they were willing to do. Mr. Speaker, we look forward to recognizing them later this day in the official presentation. Mr. Speaker, I would ask all members of the Assembly to join with me in welcoming these guests to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to join with the Premier in welcoming Mark, Nancy, Steve, Joshua, Duane, Dwight, and thinking of Shelley who's not with us today, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the official opposition, to offer our thanks and our appreciation for the service that you have provided and for the acts of bravery that you performed.

And, Mr. Speaker, it goes without saying that when all of these individuals saw an immediate need, an emergency situation, they jumped into action and didn't think about what recognition might be there, did not think about the harm that they may experience individually, but they did it, Mr. Speaker, because they saw a fellow human in distress and they knew it was the right thing to do, Mr. Speaker.

So I'm so pleased that these individuals can be recognized today and, on behalf of the official opposition, I want to say thank you and job well done.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd just like to join briefly with the Premier and with the Leader of the

Opposition to welcome a constituency high school that's here today or the leadership of that high school, and they've already been introduced. That's Principal Mark Anderson that's here today, Vice-principal Nancy Ostime, and as well, the Chair of the board of regents, Stacey Cattell.

And certainly they're an exceptional high school; there's no doubt about that. But you know, the word, when they were dealing with the crisis that they were and the response of the individuals that have joined us here today, were nimble, were smart, were selfless, were strong. And certainly they deserve our admiration and certainly they deserve as well the commendation they're receiving here today. So I'm proud to welcome this constituency high school to their Assembly. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Moosomin.

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Joining us today from the Kahkewistahaw School, Community School, are 16 grade 6 and 7 students. And I'd like to welcome them to their Legislative Assembly where they are joined by their teacher, Johnathan Kaiswatum, and a couple of chaperones, Myron Bob and Maria Sparvier. And Maria Sparvier certainly doesn't need much of an introduction. She's been involved with the Social Science Teachers' Institute program.

And so I'd like to invite my colleagues to help me join these students. We're glad that you've taken the time to come and visit your Legislative Assembly. I look forward to meeting with them after question period.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition calling for greater support for education in Saskatchewan. And we know that education is one of the most vital services that government provides to citizens. And we know that this government has failed to deliver a long-term plan and vision and the necessary resources to prioritize the delivery of educational excellence. And we also know that this government has failed to develop a real plan to close the Aboriginal education gap, to support English as an additional language students, support community schools and their communities and students. And we know that we must build the best education system for today and for Saskatchewan's future.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to read the prayer:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly call on this government to immediately prioritize education by laying out a long-term vision and plan with the necessary resources to provide the best quality of education for Saskatchewan, that reflects Saskatchewan's demographic and population changes, that is based on proven educational best practices, that is developed through consultation with the education sector, and that builds strong educational infrastructure to serve students and communities long into the future.

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

Mr. Speaker, I do so present. Thank you.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present petitions on behalf of concerned residents and community as it relates to the safety issues on Dewdney Avenue and the need to reroute heavy-haul truck traffic from Dewdney Avenue. It's noted by residents that Dewdney Avenue is a residential artery that connects families to school, to work, and certainly impacts those living there as well. And they note that any further delays from that government is entirely unacceptable in responding to an issue created by that government. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly call on the provincial government to immediately take action as it relates to the unacceptable danger, disturbance, and infrastructure damage caused by heavy-haul truck traffic on Dewdney Avenue west of the city centre, to ensure the safety and well-being of communities, families, residents, and users; and that those actions and plans should include rerouting the heavy-haul truck traffic, receive provincial funding, and be developed through consultation with the city of Regina, communities, and residents.

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

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

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition Whip.

Mr. Vermette: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition. Many northern residents benefited from the rental purchase option program, also known as RPO. These families are very proud homeowners in their communities. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, this government stubbornly ignored the call to maintain this program. Instead it cancelled the RPO. That means the dream of home ownership is destroyed for many families in the North. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly cause the Sask Party government to restore the RPO rent-to-own option for responsible renters in northern Saskatchewan, allowing them the dignity of owning their own homes and building communities in our province's beautiful North.

It is signed by many good people of this province. I so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm proud to stand today to present a petition in reference to our northern highways. And, Mr. Speaker, the petition that I'm about to present is primarily involving the upgrading that is required for the main highway in northern Saskatchewan, one of the main highways, which is Highway 155, which serves northwestern Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

And these petitions have been presented in the Assembly day after day. And we have petitions from all throughout Saskatchewan, as well as northern Saskatchewan. And in this particular petition, Mr. Speaker, the prayer reads as follows:

We respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the following action: to cause the provincial government to commit to repairing and upgrading Highway 155.

And, Mr. Speaker, the people that have signed this petition are primarily from Ile-a-la-Crosse. And I so present.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the residents on this petition from the province of Saskatchewan, I'd like to bring to attention the following for the Legislative Assembly: that Saskatchewan produces the highest greenhouse gas emissions per capita in all of Canada; that Saskatchewan's emissions have continued to grow to 74 million megatonnes as reported by Environment Canada in October 2013 and show no sign of decreasing; and that since 2009, the Government of Saskatchewan has reduced climate change funding by 83 per cent, including another 35 per cent cut in the 2014-15 budget. I'd like to read the prayer, and it reads:

That the undersigned respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan enact a real plan and allocate appropriate funding in the provincial budget to tackle climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions, helping families transition to energy-efficient homes, and encouraging everyone in the province to take real action to protect the environment.

And this is signed by people from Saskatoon, Regina, and La Ronge. And I so submit.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Students Promote Environmental Sustainability

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, environmental sustainability is important to Saskatchewan people. Regina teachers and students are doing their part to raise awareness and take action. The oil recycling project was implemented in the Regina Catholic School Division in the fall of 2009.

Since then, a total of 12 schools have been involved, and over 2000 litres of used oil have been recycled. Students are at the forefront of this program as they develop enduring capacities to take action and lead by example, ultimately contributing to the health and well-being of local and global communities.

Mr. Speaker, this initiative is made possible by the passionate and dedicated educators and Catholic community leaders like Vice-principal Lee Garinger from St. Josaphat, inclusive education teacher Arkin Kauf from St. Matthew, and learning resource teacher Jennifer Untereiner from St. Marguerite as well as strong support from the director of education, Rob

Currie. These teachers continually go above and beyond their professional duties to inspire students and provide them with opportunities to create change.

The oil recycling project is part of a larger initiative that promotes education for sustainable development. The Saskatchewan Regional Centre for Expertise website developed by Mr. Garinger and Mr. Kauf serves as a platform to bring together members of similar local, national, and international projects for collaboration and information sharing.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members of this Assembly to join me in congratulating and thanking the teachers and students of Regina Catholic School Division for taking on this initiative and making our province a better place to live. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[13:45]

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

Prince Albert Firefighter Retires After 32 Years

Mr. Hickie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I am very pleased to rise in the House to recognize former fire chief and good friend of mine for many years, Les Karpluk, for his dedication to the Prince Albert Fire Department and to the residents of Prince Albert and surrounding area.

Mr. Speaker, Les Karpluk recently retired as Prince Albert's fire chief after 32 years of dedicated service to the department, which includes eight years as chief. After starting his career in 1982, Chief Karpluk moved through the ranks with the promotion to battalion chief, then deputy chief, then fire chief after former Fire Chief Brian Shand announced his retirement in 2005.

Mr. Speaker, Chief Karpluk brought many great initiatives to the department during his time as chief. He focused on leadership programming, emergency preparedness and planning, and effective relationships with various levels of government. Chief Karpluk was very dedicated to his work, the safety of his firefighters, and the residents of Prince Albert.

Former Deputy Chief Jason Everitt recently took over as acting chief for the department.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask all members to join me in congratulating Chief Karpluk on his retirement and thank him for his dedication to his job and for keeping the people and property of Prince Albert safe. Thank you.

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

Saskatoon Woman Recognized as Francophone Leader

Ms. Sproule: — Monsieur le Président, je voudrais prendre une minute pour reconnaître une femme importante de notre communauté francophone.

[Translation: Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a minute to

recognize an important woman from our Fransaskois community.]

Françoise Sigur-Cloutier from Saskatoon has been highlighted as one of Canada's leading francophone women by the Women's Alliance of the Canadian Francophonie.

To celebrate the organization's 100th year, they recently announced their intention to create a centenary publication honouring francophone women in Canada. The book aims to recognize the important contributions of 100 female francophone leaders from across Canada, and Françoise has been named as one of these women. The AFFC [Alliance des femmes francophones du Canada] helps unify women of Canada's francophone communities who have been involved in women's rights since 1914. It brings together, supports, and is the spokesperson for its members to the growth and development of their communities.

Françoise has contributed to the Fransaskois community through a number of initiatives, as president of the Assemblée communautaire fransaskoise, and in her extensive work in developing foundations for women and working groups.

Françoise describes her passion for her work, saying she remains involved in the women's movement for two reasons: because she has seen first-hand the value of making changes in society by lending support to those in need, and to remain a good example to her two daughters and her son.

I call on members to join me in congratulating Madame Sigur-Cloutier for being among the 100 women recognized for their important work in their communities. Merci, monsieur le Président.

[Translation: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Cut Knife-Turtleford.

Housing Development in Maidstone

Mr. Doke: — Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise in the House and inform members about a new housing development under way in Maidstone under the Headstart on a Home program. This development, a first for Maidstone, will help four individuals or families purchase an entry-level home that fits within their budget. Under the program, I'm proud that our government is providing 920,000 to help Alderwood Ventures Ltd. bring this project forward.

Mr. Speaker, when we first announced Headstart in 2011, we anticipated a minimum of 1,000 new entry-level homes would be constructed throughout Saskatchewan over five years. I'm pleased that as of February 2014, Headstart has already financed 1,086 new homes, either completed or under construction, in three years. An additional 265 units have been approved for financing but are not yet under construction. Clearly there is a need for the program. Most importantly, there is a need to help provide more renters with an opportunity to buy a home.

As our province continues to grow and prosper, finding an

entry-level home that is affordable in today's market can be challenging. Private and public partnerships such as this initiative are helping to address this issue. These partnerships are part of Saskatchewan's growth plan where everyone works together to make our province the best place to live, work, and raise a family. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

[13:45]

Davidson Residents Join Charity Mission

Mr. Brkich: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to take the time today to speak about the generosity of Davidson residents Larry and Judi Packet, people I'm privileged to represent in the Arm River-Watrous constituency.

Because of the kind efforts of Mr. and Mrs. Packet as well as several charity organizations, a number of handicapped people in Central America have a new lease on life. In February this year, the Packets, along with others, travelled to Costa Rica to distribute over 30 free wheelchairs to needy people in the area.

This project was a collaborative effort of the Canadian Wheelchair Foundation and also the Knights of Columbus, of which Larry's a territorial district deputy. Individuals could donate 150 to the Wheelchair Foundation of Canada who then matched each donation to make up the total cost of \$300 a chair. The Active 20-30 International Club in San José helped assess those who needed the wheelchairs and assisted in distribution of the chairs in Costa Rica. These two charities were able to raise enough money to purchase 130 wheelchairs. Many people benefited from this generosity, including a young boy who will now be able to attend school as well as another young woman who will be able to attend business college without the complications she encountered with her old wheelchair.

Although this is the first time the Packets have been involved in this charity mission, they indicated that it definitely would not be their last. Mr. Speaker, I would like all members to join me in thanking Larry and Judi for their efforts to help the less fortunate people in Costa Rica. Thank you.

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

Spring Fling Supports Programs for People With Intellectual Disabilities

Ms. Ross: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Last weekend I had the opportunity of attending Spring Fling, the annual fundraising event for the Regina and District Association for Community Living.

The Regina and District Association for Community Living is an organization committed to inclusion, acceptance, and participation for people with intellectual disabilities. It was founded by parents with a vision of inclusion for their children with disabilities and based on the philosophy that every person is a valuable member of society.

The Spring Fling was a wonderful event with a fantastic dinner followed by live entertainment, including an auction. But more importantly, Mr. Speaker, it was an opportunity for members of the community to support the Regina and District Association for Community Living, making it possible for individuals with disabilities to have a significant, better life, and a richer, more rewarding and welcoming community for everyone. The money raised from this event will go directly into the various programs offered by the association.

Mr. Speaker, I had the opportunity to speak with many parents and their family members at this event, and I can say I was truly empowered and inspired by their stories. In closing, I ask all members to join me in congratulating the Regina and District Association for Community Living on a great Spring Fling event and thank them for all they do to make our community a better place. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Regina Walsh Acres.

Doctors' Night Out

Mr. Steinley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This past Saturday I had the great opportunity to speak on behalf of the Government of Saskatchewan at the ninth annual Doctors' Night Out black-tie gala. This event was the opportunity to recognize the hard work and dedication of Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region's physicians.

Mr. Speaker, this event highlighted the exceptional work of RQHR's [Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region] retiring physicians. I'd like to recognize them here today and say a special thank you to Dr. Singh, Dr. Graham-Rowe, Dr. Adam, Dr. Danielson, and I'd like to thank Dr. Lombard's wife and daughter for accepting an award on his behalf. Their dedication to providing patient-centred care for the people of Saskatchewan is deeply appreciated.

Mr. Speaker, our government is dedicated to working with the physicians of Saskatchewan to ensure that we have the best possible patient care across our province. Through the physician recruitment and retention plan, we have seen an increase of 300 licensed physicians from '07 to 2013.

To ensure the education of future physicians in this province, our government has added 40 medical training seats to the College of Medicine and doubled the number of residency positions to 120. Our provincial recruitment agency, Saskdocs, has been instrumental in recruiting physicians worldwide.

We are excited to continue our work along with the physicians of Saskatchewan to ensure the best quality of health care for our people. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to say thank you to all the physicians in our province for the amazing work they do for our citizens across Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, I'll ask all members to join me in thanking Dr. Karunakaran for making this event possible, and the Regina health region for hosting.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Travel Expenses

Mr. Broten: — Yesterday we learned a bit more of what the Minister of Social Services meant when she said she was just doing what everybody did. Five minutes before the legislative proceedings began, we learned the taxpayers also paid for a completely unnecessary limo service for the Deputy Premier while he was in London, England shortly after the Minister of Social Services was also there.

The Premier and the Deputy Premier both said the cabinet secretary claimed this expense. But, Mr. Speaker, that's not true. My question to the Premier: why did he say that, and what's the truth?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The cabinet secretary booked the car service without the knowledge of either minister. The money's been repaid.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, the Premier argued that the main problem in this whole fiasco is that there was not proper ministerial oversight by his cabinet ministers. I disagree, Mr. Speaker. I think the main problem is a growing sense of entitlement in this government. But what the Premier has identified as the problem is that the appropriate ministries were not approving expense claims. But that's exactly what happened in the Deputy Premier's luxury limo case. The expense was dealt with by the Deputy Premier's own ministry. It was not dealt with by the cabinet secretary.

So to the Premier: why is the cabinet secretary taking the fall for the Deputy Premier's extravagance? Why isn't he holding the Deputy Premier to account?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition says that this is not a matter of an official booking this particular trip; the problem isn't that officials are booking these car services without the minister's knowledge.

Mr. Speaker, in June of 2006 when Lorne Calvert and Eric Cline went on a government trip to Paris, they booked a car service. They didn't, actually; the ministries booked a car service. The Government Relations ministry told the Industry ministry — that was Mr. Cline's — that they should book a car service. The total cost: \$1,900 for three days. One of those days was a personal day. One of those days on a Sunday was, the car service was used for a four-hour sightseeing tour — car, driver, and tour guide all paid for by the taxpayers.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, this practice has been going on for too long. I'm not even sure, to be fair, if Mr. Calvert or Mr. Cline knew that their officials had booked it. I don't think it was a matter of entitlement even necessarily. However, the expense should not have been borne by the taxpayers. The expense on this side for these ministers involved has been paid back. Will that Leader of the Opposition contact his former leader and Mr. Cline and ask that these dollars be reimbursed?

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, this Premier claims he wants transparency and accountability, and here he is, Mr. Speaker, rummaging through years-old trash bins, Mr. Speaker, trying to deflect from the situation that he has on his hands with his ministers. Saskatchewan people expect better, Mr. Speaker, and I will not be deterred from asking these questions of this government.

It's unbelievable, Mr. Speaker, to see the Premier defend the growing sense of entitlement among his front benches. And the front bench is hollering, Mr. Speaker, and even the backbenchers are getting in on it today, Mr. Speaker. It's unbelievable to see him defend the sense of entitlement with his members.

The Minister of Social Services went to Ghana, billed \$19,000 for a conference, Mr. Speaker, that she applied to go to, she applied to go to. She created this trip, Mr. Speaker. And until yesterday she completely withheld the fact that she had a friend and a family member along with her for the entire time. And, Mr. Speaker, taxpayers actually paid for the visas for her friend and for her family member. Yet this Premier thinks the Minister of Social Services is doing nothing wrong.

My question to the Premier: how can he possibly justify a \$19,000 expense for the minister to go on a vacation with her friend and family member? Mr. Speaker, why won't he demand accountability from his minister?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, I read from a memo dated the 3rd of May 2006, 3:23 p.m., from the Department of Government Relations to the department of industrial relations. I think that's what IR stood for, Mr. Speaker, or maybe it's Industry and Resources. Mr. Speaker, Industry and Resources was the file under the responsibility of Mr. Cline that goes directly to the hon. member's question.

Here's what the memo says, as discussed this morning, SIR [Saskatchewan Industry and Resources] will be responsible — that's the ministry — for the following preparations and costs for the Premier's mission to France, June 23 to 29, 2006. And it goes down the list and included on the list . . . By the way it talks about the arrangements and "the costs," so it could be that Mr. Calvert and Mr. Cline have paid this back. I don't know. That's an important question, and one I would expect we would all be interested in. But the memo goes on to say that the taxpayers, the ministry will pay, officials will book and pay for options and arrangements for the Premier's sightseeing activities on Sunday, June the 25th.

Mr. Speaker, quite rightly members of the opposition have asked questions on the propriety of certain expenditures for car services. When that was known to the ministers responsible, their first inclination was to pay for those car services when they weren't being used for the purposes of the mission, then the official stepped up, that booked them, and did it.

The question for the Leader of the Opposition is, does his high standard apply to members on that side of the House? Do the

standards he's put in place for this side and for government officials apply to the NDP [New Democratic Party]? Will they ask Mr. Calvert and Mr. Cline if they've reimbursed the money? And if they've not — \$1,900 — if they've not, will he ask them to pay the taxpayers back?

[14:00]

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, their first inclination was not to pay it back. Their first inclination was to cover it up, Mr. Speaker. The Premier's spin and the Premier's rhetoric show just how out of touch this Premier is with what his government is doing.

Here's what the Premier's trying to justify, Mr. Speaker: three continents; five days in a world-famous hotel; and 19 days on the road, all with a family friend, Mr. Speaker, and a family member, all in tow for the duration of the time; and just four days of actual conference, Mr. Speaker, with a handful of meetings sprinkled in there in order to justify the bill to the taxpayers. That is the sense of entitlement that the Premier is trying to justify here.

My question to the Premier: why is he not holding the Minister of Social Services to account for her \$19,000 trip with a friend and a family member all at taxpayers' expense?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, why the double standard from the member opposite? The member opposite has raised important questions on expenses. Mr. Speaker, the ministers were unaware that officials had booked the car service. He calls that entitlement, but it happened in 2006 in this instance. And I would expect, Mr. Speaker, it happened in a number of other instances under the NDP when officials of the ministry under direction of Government Relations said to officials in the ministry, pay for a sightseeing tour for Premier Calvert and then NDP minister Eric Cline.

It's a \$1,900 bill for a car service, a three-day mission. It looked like about a meeting and a half, from the itinerary I've seen. Very similar, Mr. Speaker, and I would expect, to be fair, that Mr. Calvert and Mr. Cline would have been unaware of the fact that this was booked or the cost because officials claimed it. That's the problem we are seeking to address with a brand new disclosure system on this side of the House.

Mr. Speaker, the question to the NDP, to that Leader of the Opposition: do the standards he has for members on this side of the House apply to the NDP? Will he get back the money from Mr. Calvert and Mr. Cline if in fact they have not paid it back already?

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, contrary to what the Premier is saying, the minister's stories don't actually add up. The minister was aware, Mr. Speaker, I think, of the expenses related to the posh limousines. The Social Services minister said, Mr. Speaker, she had no idea how costly the chauffeured Mercedes

Viano was. But she says she originally paid about \$800 for the limo service in order to cover just a little bit of personal use for the sightseeing and the shopping with her friend and with her family member.

And I understand, Mr. Speaker, how you would need the Mercedes van when you have family in tow with luggage and travelling around and doing sightseeing and seeing the city. Well if the \$800 was coverage for just a little bit of time, then surely she should have known that the posh service to taxpayers was very, very expensive. And she should have asked some questions, Mr. Speaker, but she did not.

My question to the Premier: why is he going to such extensive lengths to justify this sense of entitlement? Why isn't the Premier holding the Social Services minister to account for her actions?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — This question, Mr. Speaker, from a party that out-spent our side of the House in the use of executive air 3 to 1, Mr. Speaker. This from the NDP who out-spent ministerial travel on this side of the House in their last year in office by 100 per cent, twice as high as what this side of the House has spent.

This from a party that has to claim a memo that reads like this, from June 2nd, 2006. This is from an official about Mr. Calvert and Mr. Cline's trip. Estimated cost for the van rental sightseeing tour on a Sunday afternoon, four hours. It'll be 200 euros. Then for transport during the week, he's offered 300 euros a day, approximately 900 euros. The driver, who was also the van's owner, will make an invoice for the whole service, the tour guide on Sunday as well, 50 euros per hour for four hours. That'll run another 200 euros. And then it says, I understand that Jay Fredericks, who worked for the government at the time, will be able to pay in cash, Mr. Speaker. There's the sense of entitlement right there.

The Speaker: — It seems we have members on both sides who are not on their feet who want to participate in the debate, including heckling their own members. Please, let's hear the questions and the answers. I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, we have a situation where the Minister of Social Services found a conference to go to in Ghana, went to it, and brought along her family and had a vacation with them in London for multiple days. The inconsistencies in the stories, Mr. Speaker, just keep piling up. And frankly I don't know if we can trust the itinerary that was released by this government just yesterday.

When the opposition made a request under the freedom of information legislation for all the details of the minister's trip, the government provided no itinerary. It said there were no such documents. But yesterday, Mr. Speaker, they magically created and provided the itinerary and made it available.

The only problem is, Mr. Speaker, the details in the itinerary don't match up with the documents that are provided in the FOI [freedom of information]. June 15th is listed as a personal day

in the itinerary — no meetings. But in the FOI package, there are notes from meetings supposedly held on June 15. So either, Mr. Speaker, the itinerary is wrong, the notes are wrong, or one or both were fabricated by someone. My question to the Premier: which one is it?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, if the accusation that the minister actually was doing work while she was claiming a personal day, then I guess if that's the smoking gun the member wants to go with, he's welcome to it. I do not know the specific reference he's making. It's something we can check into.

But, Mr. Speaker, I think anybody watching this debate is going to find it more than passing strange that the Leader of the Opposition can get up quite sanctimoniously, make accusations of entitlement, Mr. Speaker, use some other . . . Frankly, call into question not just the government, but officials who have prepared itineraries and presented it to members of the House and members of the media. And at the same time, Mr. Speaker, he won't even comment on this trip by Mr. Cline and Mr. Calvert where they spent \$1,900 or so on a car service. Questionable use, I would say, given the itinerary. We're happy to send it over.

But where we say because it . . . Where we know, because it's explicitly mentioned in the memos, that at least for a full day it was used for a multiple-hour tour of Paris in springtime, Mr. Speaker, in a limo service, I guess, to use the vernacular of the member opposite.

Mr. Speaker, yes or no, does he think that's an appropriate use of taxpayers' dollars? We agree that it probably isn't. Does he also agree that it is not? And if so, and if it's never been paid back by Mr. Cline and Mr. Calvert, will he phone them? They're in his party. It's his former leader and a former minister. Will he call them and ask them to reimburse the taxpayers?

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, the FOI material and the itinerary provided by the government don't match up. Either the itinerary is wrong, the FOI information is wrong, or both were made up by someone, Mr. Speaker.

My question to the Premier: which one is it?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — It's neither, Mr. Speaker. Let me just read from this memo again, June 2nd, 2006, from a government official. The current draft of the mission itinerary . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Oh, the members don't want to hear it. But they are going to hear it. They will absolutely hear what their NDP government was telling officials to do on behalf of the premier, the NDP premier, and an NDP minister. They will hear this.

Here's what the memo says, estimated cost for the van rental, because it was a van, not a limo, let's be fair. Sightseeing tour on Sunday afternoon for four hours, sightseeing, it'll be 200

euros. Then for transport during the week he's offered another 300 euro-a-day charge. That's 900 euros. But frankly not a lot of meetings that are happening and Areva was driving them around for Paris for part of it.

The driver, who was also the van's owner, will make an invoice for the whole service. The tour guide on Sunday as well will get paid by the taxpayers, 50 euros per hour for four hours — 200 euros. And, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Fredericks was instructed at that point, an official of the government — not his fault — instructed by the NDP government to pay this in cash, Mr. Speaker.

And then there's an expense later on. This whole thing's been expensed to the taxpayers. Now maybe it's been paid back by Mr. Calvert and Mr. Cline. Maybe they didn't know about the booking. I think, to be fair, we should hear that explanation.

But shouldn't also the NDP leader, Mr. Speaker, be requiring of his own party the same conduct he would require of others?

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan people are puzzled why this Premier is bending over backwards to defend his Minister of Social Services and his Deputy Premier for their expensive time in London. But they're also baffled at the changing stories that we received from the Premier in the remarks that he's made over the past days.

It's a very big deal to designate something as a work-related expense when it's actually entirely a personal expense. That's exactly what happened with the costly lunch in London. The Premier originally said it was just a clerical error and he said he didn't know who was responsible. But yesterday, the Premier admitted that it was his right-hand adviser who had falsely labelled a 200 meal as an official debrief meeting, and the Premier claimed that he knew all along. My question to the Premier: why didn't he say so last week? Why did he say he didn't know who labelled it as a work meeting?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, that's a great question. It applies to the case that we're talking about with respect to 2006 when the NDP premier and NDP minister Cline went to Paris to meet extensively with Areva and look at options for the nuclear industry here in the province. A worthwhile mission, I would say, Mr. Speaker.

But when they recorded the fact that there was ground transportation provided, Mr. Speaker, when they recorded that fact, there is no mention of the tour in the line item spreadsheet. It's just listed, Mr. Speaker, as a payment to Guy Beaubien for ground transportation in the amount of \$1,933.72.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I don't think there was any official that was trying to do anything but list this thing in a brief way. And perhaps the fact that the tour, the personal tour, and the tour guide for the NDP premier and the NDP minister, the fact that they're not included in here, perhaps is the product of a clerical mistake, Mr. Speaker, or a mistake by those who've recorded this.

But either way I think the important part is, in the case that we're talking about here in Saskatchewan involving the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Social Services, the money's been paid back, Mr. Speaker, and we've set about a system to avoid this in the future. And the question for the New Democratic leader again is, if this money hasn't been paid back — clearly for personal use, sightseeing on the taxpayers' dollars — if it's not been paid back, will he ask Mr. Calvert, Mr. Cline to do so?

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

Mr. Broten: — Last week, Mr. Speaker, the Premier claimed he did not know who . . . well he claimed, Mr. Speaker, that he did not know who signed off on the very personal lunch at the expense of taxpayers, Mr. Speaker. He said it was a clerical error. Yesterday, Mr. Speaker, the Premier said, well actually it was the cabinet secretary. And the Premier claims that he knew that all along.

My question to the Premier: why last week did he say that it was a clerical error and he didn't know who did it, when yesterday he said that all along he knew it was the cabinet secretary?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — You know, Mr. Speaker, yesterday in the House the member quoted the member from Melfort. The member that was just on his feet completely misquoted the member from Melfort in terms of his speech on long-term care, Mr. Speaker. And so his recounting of events — what I said or frankly what anyone said, including himself in this House — frankly are suspect at best. And the answer is, Mr. Speaker, when it was realized that this payment was expensed and it shouldn't have been, a repayment was made immediately.

Mr. Speaker, we have presented one example. I expect there to be more examples where officials in government have made arrangements on behalf of ministers, made arrangements on behalf of ministers, ministers didn't know, forms were filled out, expenses were filed, Mr. Speaker. Now I'm not sure if that's the fault of Mr. Calvert or Mr. Cline. I really am not sure that's their fault.

But, Mr. Speaker, now that we know, now that we know that member's high moral ground that he's on with respect to this issue — and fair enough, it's an important issue — should apply to this side of the House, it should also apply to his. Why can't he simply answer yes or no? These are the facts of the case, Mr. Speaker. Will he phone Mr. Calvert? Will he call Mr. Cline and say, if you haven't paid this money back for your personal tour of Paris, will you do that now?

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, that front bench can threaten all it wants, but we will not be deterred from asking these questions that Saskatchewan taxpayers expect.

The Premier, Mr. Speaker, has provided two very different stories about the \$200 lunch that was paid for by taxpayers and was strictly personal. Last week he said, Mr. Speaker, that he

didn't know who it was; it was a clerical error. This week, Mr. Speaker, he says that it was the Provincial Secretary and he knew it all along. He can't have it both ways, Mr. Speaker. The story keeps changing.

Originally the government said the receipt, Mr. Speaker, had been labelled personal and that a clerical error was made. But nowhere, nowhere on the receipt does it say personal. And, Mr. Speaker, all of the booze was removed from the receipt because it was the explicit intention to bill this to taxpayers, Mr. Speaker. To the Premier: who separated the booze from the food on the receipt?

[14:15]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, with respect to this particular receipt, when this issue was first raised, I had no idea of the providence of the receipt. I did not know who submitted it, did not know who signed it, did not know if it was part of the minister's FOI, or part of the FOI response to the official that travelled with the minister. So, Mr. Speaker, at all times we have responded in a forthright manner. And when it was determined that by mistake, this bill was included for expensing, Mr. Speaker, it was repaid immediately by the official that included it. That's the action we've taken.

Moreover, both ministers involved, as soon as they found out about the nature of the car service booked and the cost of it, voluntarily . . . And I've got the Minister of Finance's cheque here. I don't think we have to hang onto it for a while, but I have it, Mr. Speaker. And it was offered immediately, Mr. Speaker. That's the different . . . Moreover, we spent the weekend going over actually past travel of ministers of this side of the House, and we looked at what the NDP used to do in office, Mr. Speaker. And we've been able to find . . . in fact the government officials will remember these kinds of trips, frankly. They will be able to report back when the NDP travelled to places and exactly what they did, Mr. Speaker.

And now we have some questions for the NDP, Mr. Speaker. The questions on this side have been asked and answered. The money's been repaid. Here's a trip back in 2006, taxpayers on the hook for a personal, private tour of Paris, France in June of 2006 by Mr. Calvert, by Mr. Cline. Do his standards that he has for us apply to his own party? Will he ask them to repay taxpayers?

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, this Premier is forgetting that he is in charge. This Premier is forgetting that he needs to answer the questions. This Premier, Mr. Speaker, is bending over backwards to defend his Deputy Premier, to defend his Minister of Social Services. This pathetic display, Mr. Speaker, to try to deflect from the issue is not what Saskatchewan taxpayers deserve, and he knows it, Mr. Speaker.

What the Premier is saying, Mr. Speaker, is that he knew, he knew his right-hand adviser had labelled the personal expense as a work expense and billed it to taxpayers. But the Premier claimed that it was just a clerical error. This was a \$200

personal meal which was designated as an official debrief meeting, official debrief meeting, and billed to Saskatchewan taxpayers. And, Mr. Speaker, they only paid it back once they were caught.

My question to the Premier: how does this not qualify as expense fraud, and why is he not taking this issue seriously?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, this Premier and this government have presided over a 53 per cent reduction in ministerial travel in our last year versus their last year. This side of the House has presided over a 63.5 per cent reduction in the use of executive air, Mr. Speaker, one-third of what members opposite used. This side of the House, this Premier has presided over a 24 per cent decrease in political staff costs in this Legislative Assembly. This side of the House, this Premier has presided over 18 per cent reduction in advertising spending, Mr. Speaker. We've also, Mr. Speaker, ensured that when information comes to our attention as elected officials, action is taken immediately, Mr. Speaker, including the repayment of this particular car service. That's the record of this side of the House.

What will this new leader of the NDP do, Mr. Speaker? Is he now going to step up? Will he step up and say, if it happened now, it's not correct in terms of officials booking without ministers knowing; and if it happened under the NDP's watch, that's not right either, and as the leader of the NDP, I am going to take steps to get the taxpayers' money back one way or the other? That is a test for the Leader of the Opposition today. Will he meet that test?

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, the Deputy Premier hopped into the limo service in London. He knew what he was getting into. The Minister of Social Services hunts down a conference in Ghana, arranges a family and a friend to go along, Mr. Speaker, and bills \$19,000 to the taxpayer.

This Premier, Mr. Speaker, would like the public to believe that this is simply one government official who's lost his way and made a few mistakes, Mr. Speaker. He would want Saskatchewan people to believe that that's the real common denominator. But that isn't the real common denominator. What the real common denominator is, Mr. Speaker, is a government that is entitled and a government, Mr. Speaker, that takes the right actions only once they have been caught.

We have a minister going to a trip on Ghana that is not needed. We have a Deputy Premier going to London, spending lots on limo service when it's not needed, Mr. Speaker. And the Premier's reaction, Mr. Speaker, is a half-hearted, quasi-punishment to his right-hand adviser, pretending like that is real action.

My question to the Premier: when will he stop making excuses? When will he act like the Premier? When will he hold his Deputy Premier, his Minister of Social Services, his official to account?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — You know, Mr. Speaker, what we've seen today is the clearest indication that the NDP have learned nothing, not from our party but from the voters of this province in 2007 and in 2011, Mr. Speaker, when the people of this province said, we reject not only the record of the New Democratic Party, we reject frankly the attitude of the New Democratic Party. And then because I think they noted after the '07 election there was absolutely no contrition, the minister, the current member for Lakeview said after that election, I'll be around, we'll be around to clean things up. Well he barely was around to clean things up. He only won his seat by about 100 votes, Mr. Speaker.

But after that election, Mr. Speaker, the 2011 election, I waited to hear the NDP and I waited to hear this new leader and the deputy leader say, we've made mistakes in government. Well, Mr. Speaker, a double standard would be an indication, holding to a double standard would be an indication that they've learned nothing.

Travel is down on this side of the House from the Saskatchewan Party government. Mr. Speaker, political assistant costs are down on this side of the House as a result of leadership from this side of the House. Mr. Speaker, overall advertising for government is down. Mr. Speaker, we have been responsible with the taxpayers' money. And we're asking now that the Leader of the Opposition would stand up, admit that they made a mistake in government, and get the taxpayers' money back.

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

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — What's your point of order?

POINT OF ORDER

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — During question period I believe I heard the Leader of the Opposition say fabrication or fabricated, which is of course unparliamentary. I'd point to debates from January 27th, 1959, page 385 for a Speaker's ruling in that regard. And I would call on the Leader of the Opposition to stand in his place and apologize.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Mr. Speaker, again the questions were put in good faith. They were put in accordance with the rules. And I'd welcome a review of the tape in terms of what has or has not transpired before we take a further course of action on this, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I will take notice of the Government House Leader's point of order and review *Hansard* and come back with a determination.

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

The Speaker: — I recognize the chairman of the Crown and

Central Agencies Committee.

Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies

Mr. Brkich: — Mr. Speaker, I'm instructed by the Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies to report Bill No. 122, *The Alcohol and Gaming Regulation Amendment Act, 2013 (No. 2)* without amendment.

The Speaker: — When shall this bill be heard in Committee of the Whole? I recognize the Minister of Crown Investments Corporation.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, I request leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on this bill and that this bill be now read the third time.

The Speaker: — The minister has requested leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — The minister may proceed with third reading.

THIRD READINGS

Bill No. 122 — *The Alcohol and Gaming Regulation Amendment Act, 2013 (No. 2)/Loi n° 2 de 2013 modifiant la Loi de 1997 sur la réglementation des boissons alcoolisées et des jeux de hasard*

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, I move that this bill be now read the third time and passed under its title.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Crown Investments Corporation that Bill No. 122, *The Alcohol and Gaming Regulation Amendment Act, 2013 (No. 2)* be now read the third time and passed under its title. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Speaker: — Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Clerk: — Third reading of this bill.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government Whip.

Mr. Ottenbreit: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the answers to questions 326 through 330.

The Speaker: — The Government Whip has tabled responses to questions 326 to 330.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 132 — *The Public Guardian and Trustee Amendment Act, 2014 (No. 2)*

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

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to move second reading of *The Public Guardian and Trustee Amendment Act, 2014 (No. 2)*. Mr. Speaker, this bill is being introduced along with *The Queen's Bench Amendment Act, 2014* to establish a new program for counsel for children in the Ministry of Justice.

The program which was announced in the budget is modelled on similar programs in other provinces and territories. Under the program, the Public Guardian and Trustee will establish a list of specially trained lawyers throughout the province who can act as lawyer for a child in child protection proceedings. This will occur when the Court of Queen's Bench or the Provincial Court orders that child to be represented.

The Public Guardian and Trustee also has the discretion to appoint a lawyer for a child without a court direction if there is a request from another individual. We expect that those requests could come from the Advocate for Children and Youth, a relative, or even the child him or herself. The bill sets out factors that the Public Guardian and Trustee is to consider when exercising that discretion.

When the Public Guardian and Trustee is considering such a request and when a lawyer has been appointed, they will need access to information and to the child. The bill provides that they are entitled to disclosure and access to the child. These rights can be enforced by court order. They are also entitled to address the court, file written submissions, and call on examined witnesses.

Mr. Speaker, the amendments to *The Provincial Court Act, 1998*, which are consequential to the creation of this program, give that court the power to direct representation for a child in a protection matter where it is satisfied that the interests or views of the child would not otherwise be adequately represented. The court is required to consider the same factors as the Public Guardian and Trustee considers when exercising his or her discretion. In keeping with the provisions of *The Child and Family Services Act*, the child does not become a party to the protection proceedings.

Mr. Speaker, until now the need for counsel for children has been fulfilled by a small group of dedicated lawyers to the pro bono law program of the Law Society of Saskatchewan. I want to take this opportunity to publicly acknowledge and thank them for their work over the past several years. We've consulted them in the development of this legislation and have received valuable input. Unfortunately there are simply not enough of them in all parts of the province to fulfill the need. I also wish to thank the Court of Queen's Bench and the Provincial Court of Saskatchewan for their co-operation and the Advocate for Children and Youth for his input.

Mr. Speaker, we estimate that there will be as many as 150 to 200 cases in which a lawyer will be appointed in each year. It is our expectation based on past history that, with the assistance of a lawyer representing a child, most of these protection cases will be settled without the need for an actual hearing. This is the ideal situation, which is best for the child, for the family, and for society.

Mr. Speaker, I now move second reading of *The Public Guardian and Trustee Amendment Act, 2014 (No. 2)*.

The Speaker: — The minister has moved second reading of Bill No. 132, *The Public Guardian and Trustee Amendment Act, 2014 (No. 2)*. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Again I am very pleased to stand on behalf of the opposition today to give the first few comments on the particular bill, Bill 132, which speaks about amending *The Public Guardian and Trustee Act* and *The Provincial Court Act*.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I've looked through the bill. Some of the comments that we have initially is that we understand that this bill harmonizes some of the language about children in the court setting with other bills. And certainly, Mr. Speaker, any time that you are able to strengthen the children's hand in many of these court settings, it is always something that certainly from our perspective, we certainly applaud that effort.

[14:30]

We have to make it also easier to understand for all the players involved with this process because obviously protecting children is one of the most important things that government has to do.

And we've seen a lot of tragic events over the last number of decades and certainly over time in which children have been exposed to a lot of challenges as they grow up. And, Mr. Speaker, there has been some very dismal times in the world's history, and certainly our country and our province also needs to always be aware of some of the challenges involving children.

So I think we want to make sure that we pay very close attention to this particular file. Children, as we all know, is something that we hold dear to our hearts. And when you see some of the tragic events, as I speak about earlier, when we have 100 children die while in care since 2010, we obviously have to make sure we do all we can to protect the children from being harmed and in this instance of course the tragic event of loss of life when it comes to these children.

It's very difficult from our perspective as we see the Ministry of Social Services cutting budget to child and family services by \$5 million in this budget. And from our perspective, it's a bit conflicting and confusing as we don't look at that as any evidence of putting children and families first.

So this bill talks about children and how they will be represented in courts. We need to make sure that this legislation is exactly what is being looked at from the perspective of the

child. And that's why we're looking, Mr. Speaker. It's so very important to see what the Children's Advocate has to say about this particular Act and about the legislation. I understand from initial comments that he's pleased that they were moving in the right direction and that the money that's being earmarked today will be used to train lawyers that are able to work with children. And, Mr. Speaker, it is certainly something that we ought to be looking at.

Now what's also important, Mr. Speaker, is we need to talk about some of the other outlying agencies that are involved with child protection, that do get involved with children in courts. And the list goes on as to the different agencies and people of sufficient interest or personal interest. And we need to see the families, the groups, the organizations, the leadership, all the different organizations and people that are involved with children in custody, Mr. Speaker. There is a network of groups out there. We've got community-based organizations that we have to talk to when it comes to this particular bill. We need their advice. We need their direction. We need a lot of their input as to whether they think this particular Act fits the bill so to speak in terms of providing care for that child.

Now we also know that the Children's Advocate, who is one of the champions of children's care in the province, that he certainly from his perspective, when we speak about the loss of staff positions within the Ministry of Social Services that cut their budget, he indicates that the loss of 90 staff positions in the ministry was a blow to the case management of children in the system. Now, Mr. Speaker, we'll be very interested in hearing how this particular law would alleviate some of the challenges that the children are and the CBOs [community based organization] are . . . when it comes to dealing with the stress of looking after children in care, of dealing with the challenge of having children that are in the court system, and how we're able to take the perspective and safety of that child first and foremost in our mind and to see whether some of this Act and some of the cuts are counterproductive, Mr. Speaker.

So it's really, really important that we look at this particular bill and pay very, very close attention to it because obviously you can't have a bill of this sort, Bill 132, when we talk about *The Public Guardian and Trustee Act* and *The Provincial Court Act*. And we can't have the effort here to try and support the children in the court setting and yet you see cuts happening in the Ministry of Social Services. You see the CBO sector not being totally engaged to the extent that they have. You see the Children's Advocate talking about the 90 positions that were cut from case management as being something that's not productive towards children in care, the child's care. We're seeing that there's 100 children since 2010 that have perished and, Mr. Speaker, there's a wide variety of reasons for the children losing their lives. And the list can certainly be shared.

But, Mr. Speaker, when you see these kind of cuts to the Department of Social Services, you see these kind of 100 deaths of children in care, and then you see this particular Act, we have to make sure that we intermix all these Acts and intermix all the actions of government to see that they're all achieved and we're trying to achieve the same plan and the same stated objectives, Mr. Speaker.

So there's no question then from this particular bill, we need to

see what direction it's going. We need to see its impact. We need to see how it correlates with other actions of the government to see that obviously if there is some benefit and value of this particular bill, we want the CBO sector, the parents, and the children of course, and many key players like the Children's Advocate to have an opportunity to study the bill and to share their information and share their concerns and share their network of challenges that they see when it comes to caring for the children within the provincial system overall.

So on that note, Mr. Speaker, we had a very quick look at the bill itself, and we understand what the bill is intending to do. And I'm sure that my colleagues and many other organizations out there will want to have their opportunity to have a say on this particular bill as well. So on that note, I move that we adjourn debate on Bill 132, amending *The Public Guardian and Trustee Act* and *The Provincial Court Act*.

The Speaker: — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 132, *The Public Guardian and Trustee Amendment Act, 2014 (No. 2)*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 133 — *The Queen's Bench Amendment Act, 2014/Loi de 2014 modifiant la Loi de 1998 sur la Cour du Banc de la Reine*

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

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to move second reading of *The Queen's Bench Amendment Act, 2014*. Mr. Speaker, this Act along with *The Public Guardian and Trustee Amendment Act, 2014 (No. 2)* enable a new program for counsel of children in the Ministry of Justice.

Mr. Speaker, the Court of Queen's Bench has inherent powers to appoint lawyers for children involved in child protection matters. In fact judges of that court have done so on a variety of occasions. This bill will set out the factors for the court to consider in making their discretion, that they are consistent with the factors to be considered by the Provincial Court or the Public Guardian and Trustee.

It will also provide that when the court directs that a lawyer be appointed for a child, the Public Guardian and Trustee program will appoint the lawyer. Mr. Speaker, I'm now pleased to move second reading of *The Queen's Bench Amendment Act, 2014*.

The Speaker: — The Minister of Justice and Attorney General has moved second reading of Bill No. 133, *The Queen's Bench Amendment Act, 2014*. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Once again, I'm pleased on behalf of the official opposition to give the initial first comments on Bill 133. I understand that the amendment here on this particular bill, *The Queen's Bench Act*, is really again, as we had mentioned at the outset, it's an

accompanying bill that allows the province to ensure that *The Queen's Bench Act* is complementary to Bill 132, in which we're going to obviously provide counsel for children when they're involved in the court system, Mr. Speaker.

So obviously as the minister pointed out, I understood him to say just briefly here that *The Queen's Bench Act* has the inherent powers to appoint counsel for a child and that they're able to streamline this particular process to match the desire in Bill 132. So these two bills are actually complementary bills from what I can see. And Bill 132 and 133 are obviously going to be looked at very, very closely, again from the perspective of the many CBOs that are involved, the community-based organizations that are involved in child safety.

And we need to again make sure that while on one hand the province is collaborating on their particular justice bills with their initiative to provide counsel for children, but on the other hand we see cuts to the Ministry of Social Services in the sense that there's 90 key positions lost for the case management. You're seeing \$5 million cut overall in this year's budget. And it really becomes confusing as to how these particular bills are going to help the process legally when there's no financial basis and no financial support on another front.

So, Mr. Speaker, there's a lot of questions on the interaction, and obviously we want to be able to not just study Bill 133 but study all the other actions by the government to see if they truly are making an effort, not just from a legal perspective, from the resources perspective, to make a big difference to the children so we're able to reduce the number of children dying while in care by 100 since 2010. These are not stats that we should be pleased with nor stats that we should accept, Mr. Speaker. And that's why it's important we pay very, very close attention to any bills that are coming forward as it relates to children in care.

So on that note, Mr. Speaker, we have much more work to do, much more networking to achieve, and gain and seek input and advice of many, many other stakeholders. So on that notion, I move that we adjourn debate on Bill 133.

The Speaker: — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 133, *The Queen's Bench Amendment Act, 2014*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 134 — *The Financial Administration Amendment Act, 2014*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to move second reading of Bill No. 134, *An Act to amend The Financial Administration Act, 1993*. This bill repeals section 15 and amends sections 17 and 18 of the Act to remove the requirement for the financial statements of the General Revenue Fund to be prepared and included in the public accounts and to remove the requirement for the Provincial Auditor to audit and issue a report on the General

Revenue Fund financial statements.

The amendments, Mr. Speaker, support the government's decision to change the focus of the province's budget and financial statements to a summary basis. Presenting the budget and financial statements on a summary basis captures the complete picture of the Government of Saskatchewan's finances and the total cost of providing programs and services to the people of Saskatchewan. The amendments are consistent with the recommendations made in the Provincial Auditor's April 30th, 2013 special report entitled *The Need to Change — Modernizing Government Budgeting and Financial Reporting in Saskatchewan*.

The Acting Provincial Auditor, Judy Ferguson, said, and I quote, "Our office strongly supports these changes. They will eliminate confusion and help legislators and the public better understand the government's finances." The amendments will come into force on Royal Assent but are retroactive and are deemed to have been in force on and from April 1, 2013.

Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of *An Act to amend The Financial Administration Act, 1993*.

The Speaker: — The Minister of Finance has moved second reading of Bill No. 134, *The Financial Administration Amendment Act, 2014*. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Again I am pleased on behalf of the official opposition to give our first response to Bill 134 in which we talk about *The Financial Administration Act*. And of course, Mr. Speaker, as we all know we've been pressuring and certainly calling on the provincial government to do what the bill intends to do today and that's to have a summary financial system that's put in place for the people of Saskatchewan to know exactly how we're dealing with our finances as a province overall. And, Mr. Speaker, what we could basically frame this bill, Bill 134, is what we would call the bill, the no-more-two-sets-of-books bill.

Mr. Speaker, what it says is the government must now report on one clear set of books. And, Mr. Speaker, why would this government be forced to follow this particular Act, Mr. Speaker? Because the auditor has called their books, and I quote, Mr. Speaker, not our quote but the Provincial Auditor calling their books "misleading and wrong."

Last year, Mr. Speaker, the auditor said in a very special report that the province had run many consecutive deficits, and in 2011 at the end of the fiscal year the government had run a \$622.7 million deficit. And yet, Mr. Speaker, they continued to call it a surplus. Let me repeat again, Mr. Speaker, the Provincial Auditor — and I know the members on the backbench wanted to cut her budget when she spoke the truth — said that the Sask Party government ran a \$622.7 million deficit all in the while, Mr. Speaker, we're in the middle of this fantastic boom and certainly the boost to our economy.

Mr. Speaker, the auditor went on and she said that they also ran a \$409 million deficit in 2010 and a \$105 million deficit in 2012. So you have deficits in 2013, you have deficits in 2012, you have deficits in 2010, Mr. Speaker. All that certainly adds

to the overall strain on our financial picture as a province. And, Mr. Speaker, the auditor of course is totally neutral in terms of her particular job here in the Assembly. The auditor neither curries any favour with the current government nor does she curry any favour with the opposition. Her job is to be as independent and as pragmatic and practical as possible. Her job as the Provincial Auditor and as a paid Provincial Auditor is to look at the finances of Saskatchewan and to report them based on her principles and her integrity as an independent auditor on behalf of the Saskatchewan government and the Saskatchewan people. So this is a totally independent office, totally independent office that is not to be swayed and not to be persuaded in any way, shape, or form. And we certainly respect that process.

[14:45]

This auditor called the books from the last number of years “wrong and misleading,” Mr. Speaker. She has indicated time and time again that the surplus that the government opposite has been claiming were actually deficits. And I’ll go back again, Mr. Speaker. In 2010 they had a deficit of 409 million. \$105 million in 2012. And, Mr. Speaker, again, let me repeat again, the whole deficit of 2011 of \$622.7 million.

So, Mr. Speaker, you add that all, all that up, the deficit after deficit after deficit, and what happens now, Mr. Speaker? It all goes back onto our debt. And she said that the government has tried to minimize it. The auditor has said as of a week ago the debt now is scheduled to go to \$19.1 billion, Mr. Speaker, and that’s about 19,000 for every person, every man, woman, and child in this province.

So obviously we applaud the effort to have one clear set of books. We applaud this particular bill as primarily being a bill that requires the government to follow an Act that doesn’t present two sets of books, books that they can share with the public and books, of course, that the auditors say are misleading and wrong.

So once again, Mr. Speaker, we’re going to have a lot more to say about this particular process. We think that summary financial statements are the best way to go because it gives you a true, clear picture of what’s going on. And we certainly want to continue paying very close attention to the manner in which the Finance people are preparing the budget, and of course the Saskatchewan Party government and the manner in which they present it to the public.

These are some of the things that we have to pay very close attention to. So on that note, we have a lot more to say on this particular bill, but I move that we adjourn debate on Bill 134, *The Financial Administration Act*.

The Speaker: — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 134, *The Financial Administration Amendment Act, 2014*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 135 — *The Income Tax Amendment Act, 2014*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise and move second reading of Bill 135 to amend *The Income Tax Act, 2000* to implement the income tax initiatives that were announced in the government’s 2014-15 budget on March 19th, 2014.

Mr. Speaker, the federal budget on March 21, 2013, was delivered the day after the 2013-14 Saskatchewan budget. That federal budget included two taxation initiatives that impacted Saskatchewan’s income tax. But those announcements were made with no prior consultation or notice being given to us.

The first federal initiative, which I’m sure all members will be aware of, was the announcement that the special tax reduction for credit unions would be phased out over five years starting in 2013. Mr. Speaker, this special tax reduction generally allows credit unions to pay income tax at the small business tax rate on all of their taxable income rather than on just the first \$500,000 of income. Mr. Speaker, the federal government has decided to eliminate the special reduction so that only the regular small business taxation rules will apply to credit unions for federal tax purposes.

As members will know, Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan income tax legislation provides a parallel special tax reduction for provincial tax purposes. Our government made an interim decision which was announced on November 4th, 2013 that we would maintain the full special provincial income tax reduction for credit unions for the 2013 taxation year, and that we would announce a decision with respect to subsequent years in the 2014-15 budget.

As part of the development of the budget, Mr. Speaker, we were able to carefully assess the implications of the federal tax change on both the provincial tax system and on Saskatchewan credit unions. We were also able to consider the importance of Saskatchewan’s credit unions to the provincial economy through the dominant role they play in financing the growth of Saskatchewan’s small and medium sized businesses.

In Saskatchewan, there are 55 credit unions operating 297 branches in 264 communities. Credit unions are the only financial institution in 162 communities in Saskatchewan. Credit unions were very appreciative of our decision. Keith Nixon, CEO [chief executive officer] of SaskCentral said, “It is clear the Saskatchewan government recognizes the contributions credit unions have made to the communities of this province.”

As a result of this assessment, I was pleased to announce in the 2014-15 budget that our government will not follow the federal measure and will instead retain, for provincial tax purposes, the special income tax reduction for credit unions.

Mr. Speaker, the second initiative that was announced in last year’s federal budget was a change to the taxation of dividend income. By way of explanation, Mr. Speaker, dividends are paid by a corporation to its individual shareholders from its business income after paying corporate income taxes. The

individual shareholder then includes that dividend as income when determining his or her personal income taxes.

To avoid the double taxation of that dividend income, the tax system requires the dividend received by the individual to be grossed up in order to approximate the pre-tax business income. Personal income tax is then levied on this grossed up dividend amount, but a dividend tax credit is provided to the individual to effectively offset the tax paid at the corporate level.

Mr. Speaker, the federal government is reducing the gross up factor that is applied to the dividends that are paid from corporate income that was taxed at the small business tax rates in order to arrive at a better approximation of the pre-tax corporate income. This federal change to the gross up factor will automatically apply for provincial tax purposes due to the linkages between the federal and provincial tax systems.

Mr. Speaker, to prevent an unintended increase in provincial tax on this type of dividend income and to maintain the current degree of integration between the provincial corporate and personal income tax systems, the 2014-15 budget announced that Saskatchewan's dividend tax credit would be correspondingly adjusted.

Mr. Speaker, this bill also contains some technical amendments. Our government's 2012-13 budget introduced an incentive to encourage the development of new multi-unit residential rental projects. This incentive provides a tax rebate equal to a 10 percentage point reduction in the general ... in the Saskatchewan general corporate income tax rate on rental income earned on new projects. This addresses this incentive of high income tax rates on investment income earned from the development and rental of multi-unit residential projects.

Mr. Speaker, this incentive was introduced for projects completed within a specific time frame in order to encourage the rapid development of new housing projects. In December of last year our government announced a one-year extension to that time frame. This bill implements that extension, Mr. Speaker.

This bill also includes legislative clarification of a measure announced in the 2006-2007 budget, Mr. Speaker. That budget announced the wind-down of the royalty tax rebate program because it was no longer necessary since the federal government had reinstated full deductibility of provincial resource royalties for income tax purposes. Mr. Speaker, the Canada Revenue Agency, which administered the rebate in accordance with that budget announcement, has noted that the wind-down period has now expired and has asked that the legislation be amended to reflect the policy announcement and the program's end.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, the remaining income tax amendment is a technical addition that has been requested by the Canada Revenue Agency to reference a federal rule that prevents the issuance of an income tax refund or benefit payment to a taxpayer who is delinquent in filing any type of tax return.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of the Act to amend *The Income Tax Act, 2000*.

The Speaker: — The Minister of Finance has moved second reading of Bill No. 135, *The Income Tax Amendment Act, 2014*. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. This obviously has a lot of financial implications and certainly has a lot of changes that we obviously as an opposition have to pay very close attention to, Mr. Speaker.

I understand from the comments that the minister made that this obviously impacts the credit union taxation system, as we spoke about. He spoke about the dividends earnings being grossed up and certainly the challenges of how the federal and provincial government do collection on taxes with the dividend earnings. I understand that there's some technical improvements in a manner in which rental property in the investment of a multi-unit housing complex is also going to be impacted; certification or clarification on winding down the royalty tax rebate program, Mr. Speaker; and also in terms of the delinquency, when folks do not file their income tax for a number of years, that some of the tax benefits may not be accrued to them.

So, Mr. Speaker, just basically from our perspective again as I mentioned, we certainly applaud the effort of not taxing the credit union. As I mentioned in the past, the whole notion that the credit union system in Saskatchewan has services and has support mechanisms in place where other traditional, larger banks do not ... And we look at the examples of northern Saskatchewan, of rural Saskatchewan, and of course, many of the small communities that dot our great province.

So I think it's important, Mr. Speaker, to show that the credit union system itself, that we have to be always cognizant of the fact that these extra services within the sparse populated areas, these extra services far from the larger centres, these extra services that have a smaller population base — these are all challenges that the credit union system have to face. And we have to incorporate that particular challenge as a government when we talk about how we would support the credit union system.

So certainly we don't applaud the federal government's effort to continue looking at taxing the credit union system. We look at this aspect of the bill as being a step in the right direction.

The second component, Mr. Speaker, in terms of dividend earnings, as you know, as the minister spoke briefly about, when we look at the dividend earnings in terms of paying tax twice on earnings, Mr. Speaker, because obviously if you're a dividend holder or a shareholder of a company and you earn a dividend, obviously your company pays taxes on the particular activity of the company. And then when you get your earnings in terms of a dividend, as a shareholder you obviously, sometimes the occasion occurs where you're being taxed twice, you know, from what I understand.

And there's a lot of interplay and interaction with the federal government on how they administer this particular program, of how the small-business tax rate is also implemented. So there's a bunch of moving parts, if you will, to how the taxation system really impacts dividend earnings. And we obviously need some

greater clarification on that particular aspect of this bill and to ensure that there is some adequate time to understand exactly how the interaction is going to occur between the federal and provincial taxation systems to ensure people are not being unduly taxed.

The other aspect, Mr. Speaker, the minister spoke about, is the technical improvements needed on the rental income of multi-unit housing projects. This is always something that we pay very close attention to because we want to see that the Saskatchewan boom in the economy stays strong and that we're able to build for years and years and years. And it's important that we put the proper venues of encouraging investment. And, Mr. Speaker, this is something that we need to pay close attention to, and we certainly intend to do that.

And the other aspect I think is really important, Mr. Speaker, when we look at income tax overall, it is certainly a very, it's an incredible challenge of trying to make sure that you have the right system in place of taxation. We look at some of the earlier work. I can remember in the earlier years where people were within the NDP government that we looked at eliminating the debt surcharge. And that was something that was really important because in the early years we had to put a debt surcharge because debt was so bloody high. And we made an effort to try and make sure that the debt surcharge was eliminated, that people had enough of paying that surcharge because obviously the provincial government was doing better and better as each year came through.

[15:00]

We looked at things like, for example, the taxation system for low-income people. We also began the process to eliminate the taxation system for low-income people because we noticed that a lot of the evidence showed that, you know, as you leave less taxes for the people that earned less in the province, that's actually good for the economy and spurs development and certainly spurs spending which in turn helps the government and economy overall.

And, Mr. Speaker, we also looked at the rate of taxation that many families, many people, many young people also were forced to pay in the early years because of the debt. And I think it was a four-year strategy that we implemented to talk about not just corporate debt but to also talk about personal taxation. And these were some of the issues that were dealt with in the '90s.

And certainly I think overall that we're seeing a lot of good evidence that the taxation system itself, if properly controlled, if properly developed, and if properly thought through, could be of a significant benefit to a province and to her people.

So I think it's important that we pay very close attention to the taxes and the system that's being implemented today through this particular bill. I think Bill 135 is obviously a bill that needs very, very close scrutiny because obviously we don't want to see any extra taxation being imposed on the people of Saskatchewan because there are many reasons why. And, Mr. Speaker, we think that it's obviously . . . You know, before we support the particular bill, we want to make sure that what the intended plan is with this bill is really what is being delivered

overall.

Finally I would say, Mr. Speaker, that it comes to the overall taxation system. There was a lot of good work and some great work being done in the early '90s as a result of the NDP taking over office. There was a royalty tax that was looked at. There was the corporate tax system that was looked at. There was the personal income tax system that was looked at. The land tax issue was looked at. The whole array of taxes that were out there, the province of Saskatchewan took a great amount of time and took a great amount of effort to look at how taxes and the challenge of meeting all those taxes were playing on the Saskatchewan people overall. And over time, as the economy grew and grew stronger, less taxes were needed. And we want to see that particular action, that particular activity continue on for many, many years.

So obviously any taxation bills are really important. At the outset we see this particular tax bill being complemented to some of the earlier work around the royalty tax, around the personal tax, around the issues of the debt surcharge tax, and all the other taxes that were in place over the years in Saskatchewan that have since been eliminated to consecutive governments. And it's always important to pay very close attention to files of this sort.

So, Mr. Speaker, a lot more people have a lot more things to add on this particular bill, and so on that note I move that we adjourn debate on Bill 135, *The Income Tax Amendment Act*. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 135, *The Income Tax Amendment Act, 2014*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 136 — *The Oil and Gas Conservation Amendment Act, 2014*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Energy and Resources.

Hon. Mr. McMillan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to move second reading of the Bill No. 136, *The Oil and Gas Conservation Amendment Act, 2014*. Saskatchewan's oil and gas sector has grown substantially in recent years and we expect it to continue to grow into the future. Saskatchewan is setting records in oil production, a record in 2012 and again in 2013.

We need a system that is strong but efficient, with regulation, and that it can ensure that it will keep pace with this growing industry. Mr. Speaker, this bill will amend the Act and replace 10 existing fees and charges with a single levy. The current 10 fees are the fee to drill a new well, the fee to transfer a well licence, the fee to license a structure test hole, the fee to change a well name, the fee for a facility licence, the fee to transfer a facility licence, the fee to deepen or re-spud an abandoned well, the fee for a new pipeline, the fee to amend a pipeline licence, and, no. 10, a fee to extend a pipeline.

This will simplify the application process for the industry and for government, and will eliminate 20,000 invoices being sent out by government and 20,000 transactions and bills being paid by industry each year.

The amendment to this Act will have companies paying one annual fee instead of several fees throughout the year. Licence holders will be billed June 1st of each year. All operating wells are placed in one of eight classes. Classification is based on annual production data as reported on December 31st of the preceding year. Each class is charged a base fee, multiplied by an adjustment factor. Mr. Speaker, this adjustment factor will be adjusted on a yearly basis to ensure that industry is paying 90 per cent of the costs related to servicing the industry and for regulating it as well, Mr. Speaker.

The adjustment factor will be set annually by order in council to ensure that total fees collected satisfy revenue requirements for regulating the sector. The amendments to this Act will enable us to enhance our efforts to regulate and monitor the oil and gas development in Saskatchewan and help keep pace with the rapid growth of the oil patch.

Mr. Speaker, under the Act government will retain control over all regulatory functions but will provide resources for enhanced service levels to industry. These enhanced service levels will include multiple things. One, same-day approvals for routine horizontal well applications, enhanced air pollutant monitoring and enforcement, increased oversight for contaminated sites, and enhanced well and facility operating monitoring and enforcement.

Mr. Speaker, we're also looking to move forward with a single-window approach for industry. Today they may have to approach multiple different ministries in government to drill a single well. We think, Mr. Speaker, the level of service that would be appropriate would . . . that we would have one window where industry could come and all of those processes and that oversight would still be done. But for the customer or the investor, Mr. Speaker, they would only have one point of contact.

Brad Herald from the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers said in regards to the levy, Mr. Speaker, that "this positions us for the next decade of growth, that by modernizing our system and ensuring that the capacity would be there to grow and allow the industry to grow, that it positioned industry for a decade or more of growth."

The chief operating officer for Teine Energy, Jay Denney, said, "It's a better system, and at the end of the day this is as competitive or more competitive than other western provinces that are producing oil and gas. And I think we can support it." And, Mr. Speaker, that was Jay Denney, COO [chief operating officer] of Teine Energy.

Both industry and government will continue to benefit from Saskatchewan's reputation as a responsible resource jurisdiction. With that, I am pleased to move second reading of *The Oil and Gas Conservation Act*, 2014. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — The minister has moved second reading of

Bill No. 136, *The Oil and Gas Conservation Amendment Act*, 2014. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly . . . I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Again I'm pleased to offer the official opposition's initial comments on this particular bill, Bill 136, which of course speaks about amendments to *The Oil and Gas Conservation Act*, Mr. Speaker.

And the minister very briefly spoke about coordinating the fees for the year and talked about defining the classes of wells and of course trying to coordinate those fees for the industry as per the classification of wells, as I understood him. And, Mr. Speaker, it also talks about enhancing the service levels to the industry. And he made reference to some of the qualifications that the industry provided to him as it relates to Bill 136.

Now, Mr. Speaker, it's very important that the province of Saskatchewan, the people of Saskatchewan know that there's so much that you have to be careful of and to watch very, very carefully when you talk about income tax changes, when you talk about trying to attract investment, talking about the oil and gas sector, to make sure that Saskatchewan is always wary of the balancing that is required, not only for our own finances as a province, but to ensure that issues, for example, environmental challenges are not lost in the mix.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I remember having a number of meetings with the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers and, Mr. Speaker, they were very pleased when the Calvert government announced a number of changes to the royalty structure. And we've seen en masse the people from Alberta coming to Saskatchewan, and we see the Bakken play come into effect. We've seen all this activity and we've seen all the investment that occurred when of course the changes were put in place.

And, Mr. Speaker, I can tell you that it's very, very important that as a province that you put the right regime, not only the tax regime in place, but the royalty regime and the support mechanisms in place to be able to achieve strategic investment into our economy, whether that be in oil and gas as this bill certainly makes a lot of points towards, but also, Mr. Speaker, that the next step must be also taken to balance some of the environmental challenges to ensure that we have a sustained economy for years to come, to ensure that we attract as many of the people of Saskatchewan to participate and benefit from that activity or that overall strategy that the government has. And that's one of the things that's really, really important I think that we want to look at in terms of the overall purpose of this bill, is to make sure that we take absolutely everything into account that's important for the people of Saskatchewan.

So I think from our perspective, we watch very carefully the taxation system that's being implemented by the government, but certainly some of the oil and gas plans that they might have and some of the amendments that they might have as dictated in Bill 136.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we know that streamlining regulations is pretty darn important. We know that industry doesn't want to be hampered with going to 20 different offices on 20 different days and paying 50 different fees. We understand that. It is very

common sense that you would go to one particular avenue of authorization, if you will, and get the proper permits, get the proper licences, and of course be able to invest in your particular sector and create jobs and of course stimulate the economy overall. It's kind of amazing that after seven years, we're getting some effort by this government and in particular by this minister to try and do some of the coordination of the fees on an annual basis.

And, Mr. Speaker, when you hear the definition of the class of wells, that also begs the question . . . is this stuff should have been done years ago. And, Mr. Speaker, it's certainly something that I think the people of Saskatchewan can clearly understand.

So again I would point out that CAPP [Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers] is a very important industry. CAPP has led on many, many occasions the strategic investment into Saskatchewan that we see, the boom in the economy growing strong as a result of that, of course potash and the agricultural sector and uranium and the list goes on as to what great, great advantages that Saskatchewan has overall. But clearly oil and gas is one of the immediate industries that we want to keep, not only attractive, but keep for many, many years.

And we understand that on this side of the Assembly. When CAPP certainly approached us on many, many fronts, Mr. Speaker, I know that there was a ton of ministers that were continually working with CAPP, and they were talking about how we can make Saskatchewan strong. And we're seeing some of that initiative over the last number of years now in Saskatchewan finally bear fruit. And, Mr. Speaker, I want to point out it is people like the former Premier Lorne Calvert, people like Eric Cline, people like Eldon Lautermilch, people like Maynard Sonntag, people like Clay Serby — these are the people in and around cabinet at that time that had some very, very good discussions and some very hard discussions and made some very good decisions, of which we're seeing a lot of benefit from today.

[15:15]

So it's nice to be able to see some of this activity happening in Bill 136. We're kind of confused and concerned why it took this long to coordinate all the fees for the oil sector, Mr. Speaker. Our argument is that the coordination and the avoiding duplication and stimulating supports for the oil and gas sectors should have been done years ago. I think the next level of work needs to happen to ensure, as I mentioned at the outset, to ensure that we have an environmental piece attached to many of what they're doing in the oil and gas sector to ensure that we have not only a booming resource economy, but we also have a very stable environmental plan, Mr. Speaker. Because obviously the people of Saskatchewan want to be able to see both, and we have to make the effort to achieve both.

So there's a lot of issues that plays here, Mr. Speaker. From our perspective, we see a lot of waste in terms of lean, \$40 million that was just a complete waste of money. These are some of the things that, from our perspective, we say it's important to do the amendments as attached to Bill 136. But it's also important to remind people that on one hand, while they're trying to improve efficiency and service to the oil and gas industry, you see a waste of money to a lean program. And to me, I don't think that

. . . The conflict of where you're spending your money, at the same time trying to attract more support for the oil and gas industry, we need to also marry that and make that connection.

So, Mr. Speaker, we have a lot more to say on this particular bill. People are out there, they're looking very closely. And they want to see where Bill 136 is going to, what the impacts are going to be. They'll talk to industry folks on their own. We'll do a network of contacts to ensure that they have the opportunity, including the environmental industry or the environmental CBOs that have a lot of issues that they want to raise. We will talk to people about those issues as time goes on.

So, Mr. Speaker, we have a lot more to add on this particular bill. So therefore I move that we adjourn debate on Bill 136.

The Speaker: — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 136, *The Oil and Gas Conservation Amendment Act, 2014*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, in order to facilitate the work of committees, I move that this House do now adjourn.

The Speaker: — The Deputy Government House Leader has moved the House do now adjourn. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — This House stands adjourned to 1:30 p.m. tomorrow.

[The Assembly adjourned at 15:17.]

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Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs

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Minister Responsible for The Global
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Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Power Corporation

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff

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Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Water Security Agency
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
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