



THIRD SESSION - TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

of the

**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

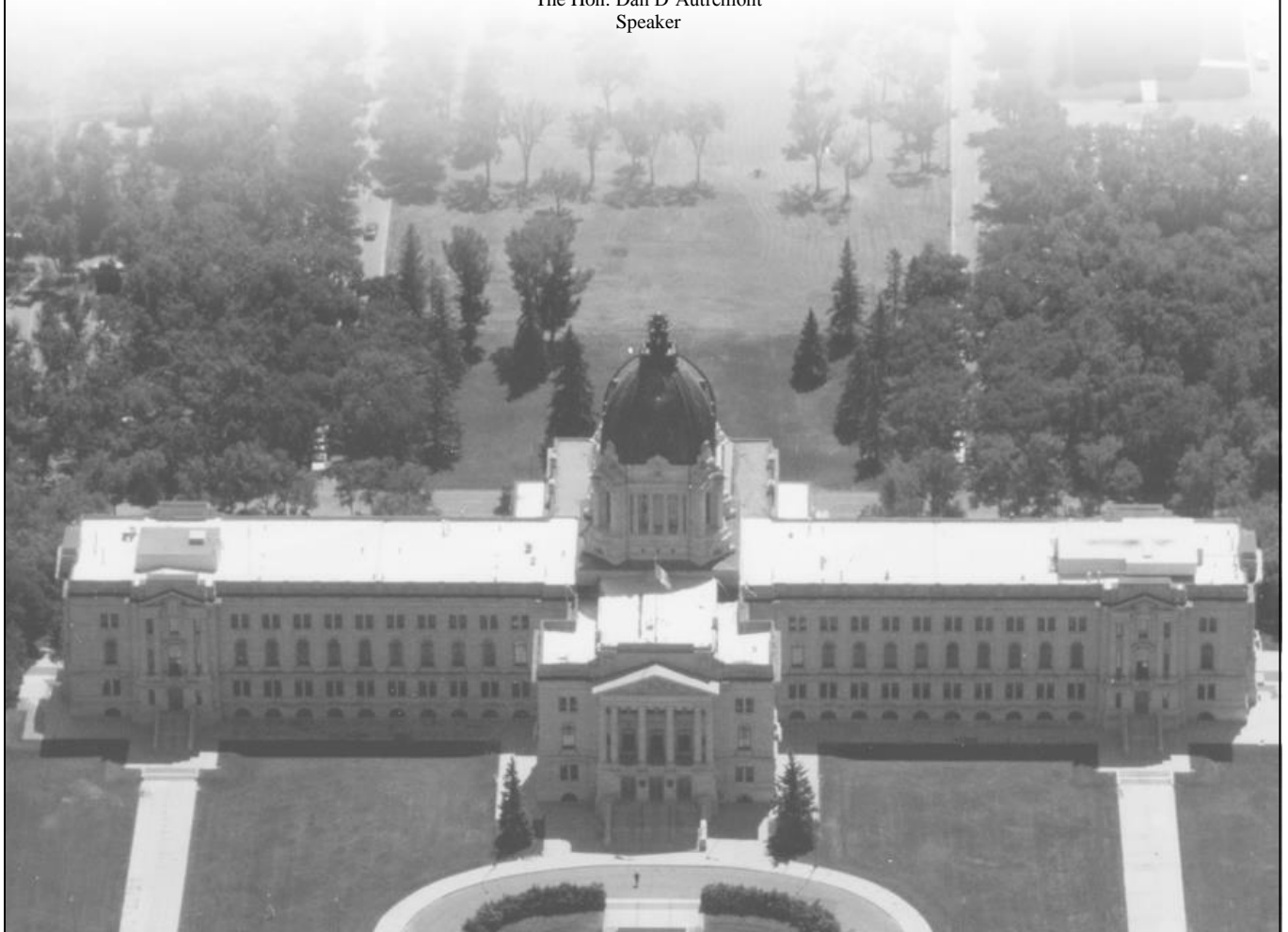
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**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS**

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(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

<b>Name of Member</b>	<b>Political Affiliation</b>	<b>Constituency</b>
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:** — Mr. Speaker, I request leave to make an extended introduction.

**The Speaker:** — The Premier has requested leave for an extended introduction. Is leave granted?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and colleagues, for the leave to make that extended introduction of some very, very special guests who have joined us. Mr. Speaker, this day there was a first in the Legislative Assembly Building, at least as far as our records show. And that first was we had our very first citizenship ceremony right here at the Legislative Assembly Building.

Mr. Speaker, just a few hours ago, 47 people from 22 countries swore the oath of citizenship, pledged the oath of citizenship to our country. Mr. Speaker, each of them is going to be introduced by their MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly] a little bit later on. And we have many to thank in the gallery, including Justice O'Malley who presided over the citizenship court. And the member for Sutherland will make those introductions, but we're grateful for all their work to make it happen.

Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to tell the House that these 47 citizens reside in six communities: in Regina, Swift Current, Estevan, Carnduff, Vibank, and Val Marie, Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, they are among 50,000 newcomers to the province of Saskatchewan since 2007 who have settled in 330 of our communities and who have undoubtedly made this province better, this province stronger, this province more diverse. And we thank them for that, Mr. Speaker.

It was the Saskatchewan-born prime minister, the only Saskatchewan-born prime minister of Canada, John Diefenbaker, who said that we as Canadians are free to speak without fear, free to worship in our own way, free to oppose what we believe is wrong, free to choose who shall govern us. Mr. Speaker, these 47 now can claim all of this for themselves, though they have already been contributing mightily to the communities they're from and to this province and to the country.

It was just a real honour and a privilege to be a witness to that ceremony today. And I want to thank them on behalf of all of the colleagues who were there because we were able to see Saskatchewan and Canada through their eyes and realize just how privileged we all are to be citizens of this great Dominion

of Canada.

And so, Mr. Speaker, as a larger group before the individual introductions — and I have one of those — I would just ask all members of the Assembly, not just to welcome these citizens, our new fellow citizens to their Legislative Assembly, but also belatedly to welcome them to the province of Saskatchewan in the great nation of Canada.

And, Mr. Speaker, I have two quick introductions while I'm on my feet. It is a real privilege for me to introduce as a part of this group of 47, Herman and Tarasita Cesante from the constituency of Swift Current. They're joined by their children Hanniel and Seth. And I would ask them to give us a wave and ask my colleagues to welcome them to their Legislative Assembly. It's good to see Herman and Tarasita here today, Mr. Speaker.

And finally it is a great honour and a privilege for me to introduce someone who is a close friend of many members on this side of the House and the mother to one. She is a remarkable lady who may be relocating soon to British Columbia to be closer with family, and we will miss her desperately when she does. To most she's known as Arlene Heppner. A lot of us are privileged enough to call her Mother Heppner, Mr. Speaker. And I want to welcome Arlene Heppner to her Legislative Assembly.

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well as we gather as a Legislative Assembly today in Treaty 4 territory, Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to join with the Premier in extending a welcome to the new Canadian citizens who are with us here today, Mr. Speaker.

I'm sure members on both sides share the experience of door knocking during the election campaign and coming to a doorstep with someone who is not yet a Canadian citizen but who has PR [permanent residence] and seeing the enthusiasm in their eyes when they say, well soon citizenship is coming for me, and next election we'll be able to participate. And, Mr. Speaker, that's why it's great to see these residents become citizens and continue to contribute so mightily to our province, Mr. Speaker.

And I want to pay a special tribute to the families who are here today, because immigration is not an easy thing to do. It's a big emotional change. It's a big financial change. And, Mr. Speaker, immigrant families work incredibly hard, work multiple jobs, take on a mortgage, contribute to our society, all at the same time caring for family members back home. And so, Mr. Speaker, I want to pay special tribute to the hard-working immigrant communities that we have in the province and for all that they contribute. Thank you for being here today.

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

**Hon. Mr. McMorris:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have two introductions. The first kind of follows along with what the Premier had to say as far as our new

citizens. I do want to quickly tell you that we had a little discussion in caucus because there would be a lot of new citizens that we're going to introduce from around the world really, and we were wondering should we introduce them by name.

The Premier has already started and done a great job by introducing by name. I want to introduce a new citizen to the constituency of Indian Head-Milestone, and I'm going to struggle with his name. His name is Dan Bentley, Mr. Speaker, and I want to welcome him to his constituency of Indian Head-Milestone, more importantly the province of Saskatchewan and the country of Canada. Thank you for being here.

While I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, I also want to introduce a group of grade 11 and 12 students from the Bert Fox Community High School in Fort Qu'Appelle. They're here with their teacher, Valerie Brooks. They are also studying law 30 and social 30 classes, Mr. Speaker. They come from, as I said, the beautiful community of Fort Qu'Appelle and probably surrounding area. It's a real treasure and a jewel, Mr. Speaker. Actually one of our Pages is from that community as well, probably not too many years ago may have sat up in the gallery and watched the proceedings. So I'd like all members of the Assembly to welcome this grade 11 and 12 class from the beautiful community of Fort Qu'Appelle.

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

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, it's my privilege to introduce Judge Terrence O'Malley, the presiding judge of today's Canadian citizenship ceremony. Mr. Speaker, I understand that Judge O'Malley has performed 14 such ceremonies in the last month, which I think speaks volumes. I think sure it's quite a honour for him to be the first to welcome so many new Canadians to our province and to our country. So please if the rest of the Assembly could help me welcome Judge O'Malley to his legislature.

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

**Mr. Steinley:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Today it's a great privilege for me to introduce, on behalf of all Regina MLAs, four new citizens of Canada: Mrs. Edna Velasco, Mr. Jerome Laquinon, Mr. Rikesh Patel, and Wezenet Anday. So would the Legislative Assembly please join me in welcoming these new Canadian citizens.

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

**Mr. Merriman:** — I'd like to welcome my colleagues in welcoming the new Canadian citizens, but I wanted to touch a little bit on the people behind the scenes, the people from Saskatchewan immigration team. And I'm just going to list them. These are the people that are behind the scenes starting off the immigration process and were able to participate, some of them, in their first citizenship ceremony. And their names are Ian Gardner, David Li, Kadine Taylor, Chris Truscott, Michael Exner, Crystal Montoya, Jennifer Draper-Forsythe, Judy

Kobsar, Lidija Ilic, Karen Clark, Kimberly Donald, Michael Fink, and Karina Jimenez Rivera.

And I also want to say a special thank you to Richelle Bourgoin and Kirk Westgard. These are people that provide leadership to the nomination group. And I'd like all members to join me in welcoming them to their Legislative Assembly. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Opposition Whip.

**Mr. Vermette:** — To you and through you, Mr. Speaker, in the east gallery is sitting a gentleman from Prince Albert. I'd like to introduce Tony Head. Welcome to your Legislative Assembly. Tony wants to see the proceedings and he is interested in politics.

Prince Albert was my home when I was growing up, the West Flat, and that's where Tony's from. So I just want to welcome Tony, and get involved in politics, seeing the proceedings here today, and seeing if he is going to be interested in it. And I hope he is. So I welcome him to his Legislative Assembly. I ask all members to join me in welcoming Tony to his Legislative Assembly.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister for Central Services.

**Hon. Ms. Heppner:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to join the Premier in welcoming my mom to the legislature. Mr. Speaker, 50 years ago, my mom who's originally from BC met a very handsome young man from Saskatchewan and has been here ever since. And she has recently decided that it's time for her to go back to her original home, although we like to think that mom's actual home is here.

I have been informed by the Premier and the member for Kindersley that cabinet will be passing an order in council barring her from leaving the province, and she can fight that if she so chooses.

Mr. Speaker, as the Premier has already said, my mom is often referred to as Mother Heppner by so many people. She's one of those amazing women who loves being a mom and not just to her own kids, but to anybody else who needs a little bit of mothering, and is so loved by so many.

She's my greatest supporter and my fiercest champion, and I will be missing her. And I ask all members to welcome her back to her Legislative Assembly.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, seated in the east gallery, it's truly my pleasure to welcome a remarkable group of young leaders to their Assembly here today, and a remarkable teacher as well. We have the SRC [student representative council] from Thom Collegiate here today, from northwest Regina.

It's special to have this group here. You'll hear a little bit more about their accomplishments very shortly. It's special, because of course they're from northwest Regina, but of course I think that's also the place that the member from Regina Elphinstone graduated from, and also myself. So it's a pleasure to have these

students here today, as well as a remarkable teacher and a friend, Ms. Kam Bahia.

I would like to read into record the students leaders that are here today as well: Hayley Wagman, Cheyenne Esmond, Linden Leugner, Armin Smajevic, Ashley Hollinger, Kaytlyn Kotylak, Jessica Rotariu, Ashley Rotariu, Anita Kotylak, Ashley Beach, Amber Holmes, Taylor Haubrich, Natasha LaBar, Jada Baker, Shelby Murdoch, Katie Abramovic, Carolyn Moorman and of course Ms. Bahia who I referenced.

These are remarkable young people. I also note that as a student leadership council, it's heavily dominated by women, maybe something that at some point in time this legislature might look a little bit more like as well, Mr. Speaker. I ask all members of this Assembly to welcome these student leaders and this very fine teacher to their Assembly.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Rosthern-Shellbrook.

**Mr. Moe:** — Mr. Speaker, I would like to join with the Premier and the member from Martensville in welcoming Ms. Arlene Heppner to her Legislative Assembly. I've said many times in this legislature, Mr. Speaker, that no member serves alone. You do not serve here without the full support and backing of your family, and this is by far and away on display in Arlene and her family's case.

I would also concur with the Premier that Arlene is going to be desperately missed, not by many members just in this Assembly, but by many members in Rosthern-Shellbrook constituency, and most particularly in and around the community of Rosthern. So I would like all members to join me in wishing Arlene the very best in health and happiness and welcome her to her Legislative Assembly.

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

[13:45]

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd also like to join with members in welcoming someone special in their Assembly here today, seated in your gallery, and that would be Ms. Judy Kobsar, a constituent, a strong public servant, a community leader, and a good friend to Stephanie and I. Please all join Ms. Judy Kobsar to her Assembly.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Estevan.

**Ms. Eagles:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you to all members of this honoured Assembly, I'd like to introduce someone that's very special in my life. Seated in the west gallery is my sister Edna, and Edna's no stranger to the members on this side. She makes a trip up every session, and her and I get to spend some time together. So I look forward to doing that again for the next couple of days. So I ask all members to join me in welcoming my sister to this legislature. Thank you.

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

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To you

and through you I'd like to introduce to members of this legislature a frequent visitor to this House, Gunnar Passmore of the sheet metal workers. He's no stranger to issues of working men and women here in the province. I would ask all members to give him a warm welcome to his legislature. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** — It is my pleasure to introduce and welcome to the province of Saskatchewan and to the Legislative Assembly very special guests from the state of Western Australia. As a part of an interparliamentary study exchange program with the state of Western Australia, our members and legislative officials had the opportunity to travel to Western Australia to study their system of government. While there, they were paired with legislators and legislative officials and shadowed them throughout their daily routine.

The Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan is now pleased to reciprocate that visit. They will be in Saskatchewan from April 15th until April 23rd. I would ask our guests to please stand as I introduce you. Ms. Wendy Duncan, MLA, member for Kalgoorlie, Deputy Speaker; Mr. Roger Cook, MLA, member for Kwinana, Deputy Leader of the Opposition; Dr. Graham Jacobs, MLA, member for Eyre.

From the Legislative Council, the Hon. Barry House, MLC [Member of the Legislative Council], president — Speaker in our terms — the Hon. Kate Doust, MLC, member for south metropolitan region, Deputy Leader of the Opposition; and the Hon. Paul Brown, MLC, member for agricultural region.

From the Legislative Assembly we have Kirsten Robinson, Deputy Clerk. From the Legislative Council, Nigel Pratt, Clerk. And from parliamentary services, Russell Bremner, executive manager.

Please join me in welcoming our guests from the state of Western Australia to the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan.

## PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition against Saskatchewan health care laundry privatization. And we know that in May 2013 the Government of Saskatchewan announced its plan to privatize health care laundry in Saskatchewan, handing it over to a for-profit, Alberta-based corporation, K-Bro Linen. And we know that privatization of health care laundry will put patient care at risk as health regions lose direct control over health care laundry services, and that the privatization of health care laundry will mean that fair wage jobs will be replaced with poverty wages and public accountability will be lost. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to read the prayer:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly be pleased to cause the government to reverse the misguided decision to privatize Saskatchewan's health care laundry, which will result in the devastating loss of over 300 jobs in the communities of Prince Albert, Moose Jaw, Yorkton, Weyburn, Regina, and Saskatoon.

And moreover, the privatization of health care laundry will misuse vital taxpayer dollars by taking money out of Saskatchewan's health care system to boost the profits of an Alberta-based corporation; and, furthermore, the privatization of health care laundry will put patient care at risk as Saskatchewan's health regions lose direct control over laundry and thereby will have a significantly reduced ability to quickly and effectively respond to infectious outbreaks in health care facilities.

And as 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:** — Thanks, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present petitions on behalf of concerned residents as it relates to the lack of safety on Dewdney Avenue and their call to have the heavy-haul truck traffic that's inundated Dewdney Avenue rerouted off of Dewdney. They note that any further delays of that government to address an issue created by that government are unacceptable. 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 the 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 people of this good province. I so present.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

**Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I too stand today to present a petition on the highways in northern Saskatchewan and all throughout Saskatchewan, as before. And 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 918.

And that's the highway of course that serves the community of Patuanak and the English River First Nation. And, Mr. Speaker, the people that have signed this petition are all from Ile-a-la-Crosse, and I so present.

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

**Ms. Sproule:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present a petition that's opposed to the government cuts to the harness racing industry. And the undersigned residents wish to bring to our attention the following: that in 2012 the government stubbornly cut the grants for Yorkton's harness racing industry, and the government failed to properly listen or consult with the residents of Yorkton. The government's cuts towards harness racing will continue to negatively impact breeders, trainers, and other employees, as well as destructively impact the economic spinoffs of the harness racing industry. And without the grants, Yorkton residents who have contributed through their hard work and tax dollars may have to relocate to provinces which support the harness racing industry, like Ontario, Alberta, or British Columbia. And these cuts have and will continue to have a negative economic impact on the city of Yorkton and their surrounding communities. Here's the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan may be pleased to call on the government to immediately reinstate the grant funding for harness racing in Yorkton, Saskatchewan.

And, Mr. Speaker, this petition's signed by folks from Rama and the city of Yorkton. I so submit.

## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

### Saskatchewan a Family of Families

**Mr. Broten:** — Mr. Speaker, yesterday evening several of us had the opportunity to enjoy a delicious meal, good visits, and a great speech by former Premier Roy Romanow at the Intercultural Dialogue Institute's second annual Friendship Dinner. The theme of this year's dinner was Family of Families: Sharing the House of Saskatchewan, which is an important message in a province such as ours.

The fabric of Saskatchewan consists of those whose families have called this place home since time immemorial, families like mine that have been here for about 100 years, and families that have just recently moved to Saskatchewan from other provinces and from other countries. The diversity of our

province is a great blessing and something we should always celebrate.

I'm grateful for the good work of the Intercultural Dialogue Institute, which is working to promote mutual respect and greater understanding in order to continue to break down the walls that restrict us from experiencing the joys of other cultures.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in congratulating the organizers of this year's friendship dinner and to thank the Intercultural Dialogue Institute for their ongoing work in making Saskatchewan a welcoming place for all.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### **Jewish Community Celebrates Passover**

**Mr. Merriman:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday marked the beginning of Passover, a time for people of the Jewish faith here in Saskatchewan and around the world to gather with loved ones and commemorate the exodus of the Israelites from slavery in ancient Egypt over 3,000 years ago.

Passover is a very spiritual time for those who celebrate the Jewish faith. It is time to celebrate the resilience of the Jewish people in their long history. It's a time to celebrate community, family, and the strength and spirit of a people who have been tested through tragedy and triumph.

Mr. Speaker, many special traditions and customs are observed during Passover, such as the Seder, which is a special family meal that takes place on the first night of Passover. Seder is filled with a ritual that can take several hours and includes readings from the Haggadah.

Mr. Speaker, Passover also affords us in Saskatchewan an opportunity to reflect on the importance of freedom, family, faith, and tradition, and turn our thoughts to many blessings that we have here in Saskatchewan, and to the millions more around the world still struggling for basic rights and freedoms.

It is with this that I ask all members to join me in extending the best wishes to the Jewish community during the special time of Passover. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### **Thom Collegiate Fundraiser to Beat Cancer**

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, for two weeks every year, the students and teachers from Thom Collegiate raise thousands of dollars through their Beat Cancer fundraiser. This year the high school raised almost \$20,000 which will go to the Allan Blair Cancer Clinic to help those undergoing treatment. The tradition started in 1998 when a former Thom student was diagnosed with cancer. Since then more than \$250,000 has been raised. In the past, funds have been donated to the Terry Fox Foundation and the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency.

Fundraising events were organized by students in the student representative council and included taco-in-the-bag, bake sales, bottle drives, pie in the face, movie mornings, a dance, and a teacher versus student basketball game.

Mr. Speaker, \$20,000 is an incredible amount of money for the Thom students to have raised in only two weeks. It's inspiring to see how students, teachers, and the Thom community all pooled their time, efforts, and dedication to raise these funds for such an important cause.

This could not have been made possible without the willingness and determination of the students to make a difference in our community. Special thanks goes out to the Thom Collegiate SRC students and Ms. Kam Bahia, the SRC teacher adviser and a remarkable teacher.

I ask all members of this Assembly to join with me to thank and congratulate the students, the staff, and community of Thom Collegiate for their incredible leadership in their successful Beat Cancer fundraiser.

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

#### **Canadian Western Agribition Scholarship**

**Ms. Ross:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when the family of Barry Andrew announced a \$25,000 donation to the Canadian Western Agribition Scholarship Fund, Lil Farley was listening. She heard the Andrew family ask other families connected to the long-running agriculture show to donate. And she acted. The result of her action was the biggest single donation in the long history of Agribition: \$50,000 towards a scholarship in the name of her late husband.

Like Barry Andrew, Bill Farley was a dedicated supporter of Agribition. A seed farmer from Grand Coulee, Bill was active in what has become Canada's premier agriculture show for a decade, both as a member of its board of directors and a committee Chair. Bill played a very important role in the development in its grain show in the 1980s. In 1994 Bill received the Chris Sutter Award for exemplary contribution to the development and the sustainability of the show.

Students qualifying for the annual scholarship can receive up to \$1,500. Bill and Lil were both very interested and dedicated to post-secondary education. In her words:

We felt that a scholarship would be an incentive for students to continue their education, whether it's at university or at an institution like SIAST. We really feel strongly and our family feels the same way.

Mr. Speaker, I would like all members of the Assembly to join me in recognizing Lil Farley and her late husband, Bill, for the contribution to both agriculture and the youth of our province.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

### Support for Saskatoon Housing and Shelter Projects

**Mr. Tochor:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise in the House today to talk about a wonderful announcement that took place in Saskatoon last Friday, April 11th at the Lighthouse Supported Living. Through the ministries of Health, Corrections and Policing, and Saskatchewan Housing Corporation, our government is providing \$1.5 million in one-time capital funding towards the \$4 million total cost of this project.

The funding will be used to support two components of the project. The first component is the renovation of 59 existing supportive living units at the Dubé Lighthouse. Mr. Speaker, the Dubé Lighthouse provides housing for close to 70 individuals who are some of the most vulnerable citizens in our society. They include the working poor, people with physical and intellectual disabilities, and people with addictions.

The second component of this project is the development of an innovative, 38-bed emergency shelter and wellness centre. This emergency shelter, Mr. Speaker, will provide a place for individuals who are not able to access other emergency shelters in the city. This shelter will provide a safe place for them, especially during the winter months when they may otherwise access to hospital or police services which put additional strains on available resources.

Our government couldn't reach our goal without our community-based partners like the Lighthouse. Today we accomplished much more than either of us could individually. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[14:00]

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

### Affordable Rental Units Opened in Regina

**Mr. Marchuk:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise in the House to talk about a wonderful grand opening this morning right here in Regina. Along with our federal partners, the city of Regina, and PR Investments Inc., we officially opened eight new affordable rental housing units at 1936 Cameron Street.

Together with the Government of Canada, we have invested \$320,000 from the Investment in Affordable Housing Agreement to assist in the development of these units. And in addition to this money, the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation has also provided another \$40,000 under the rental construction incentive to our partners at the city of Regina in order to match their funding for this project.

But, Mr. Speaker, the most important thing about these units is they are helping to improve the quality of life for the people who live there. Providing a safe and comfortable home environment for individuals and families in our communities should be a priority for all of us no matter where we live.

Since 2011 our government has invested \$256 million to develop more than 4,500 units and repair more than 24,300

homes around the province. We are also proud that we have implemented a number of initiatives to encourage the development of affordable homes.

With these units today, the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation has funded 3,158 units that are completed or under construction since 2007. We want to thank our partners in the federal government, the city of Regina, and PR Developments for their dedication to this important project. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Health.

### Remembering Dr. Krishna Kumar

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in the House to remember the remarkable life of Dr. Kris Kumar, a prominent Saskatchewan physician and neurosurgeon who passed away Sunday night.

Dr. Kumar was born in Jabalpur, India, and came to Canada in 1957. He studied medicine in India and then began his studies in neurosurgery in Halifax, Edmonton, and Saskatoon before calling Regina home.

During his life, Dr. Kumar was awarded the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal, the Saskatchewan Order of Merit, the Order of Canada, and was also named Saskatchewan's Physician of the Year in 2008. Dr. Kumar's research was largely based on the treatment of chronic pain, more specifically through spinal cord stimulation, which was the focus of a documentary called *Living with Pain*.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. Kumar was dedicated to his work and to his patients. In fact late last year, Dr. Kumar was recognized by the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region as well as by his peers for 50 years of medical service in the city of Regina. He worked tirelessly with his patients to help relieve their chronic pain and to help them regain a positive and fulfilling life. His amazing work and caring personality touched the lives of every patient that he worked with.

We were very lucky to have such a great man and an amazing doctor work and live in Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, we have lost an incredible physician and a wonderful, wonderful man. Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join with me in thanking Dr. Kumar for his devotion to his patients of the province, and join with me in passing on our heartfelt condolences to his family, his friends, and all of his colleagues. Thank you.

### QUESTION PERIOD

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

### Health Care and Lean Initiative

**Mr. Broten:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the Premier confirm that his lean pet project is leaving seniors' care facilities without desperately needed supplies, including bandages and dressings?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Mr. Speaker, I can confirm for the House



that the lean initiative that's been working its way through the health care system has already saved more money than has been invested in lean for the taxpayers. And even more importantly, because lean is about improved care, we've seen measurable improvements in terms of patient care.

Mr. Speaker, we've also said to the extent we can improve the lean process by listening directly to health care workers, patients, all those involved, all the stakeholders in the system, we'll be prepared to do that.

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps news like this continually catches the Premier and the Minister of Health off guard, Mr. Speaker, because they're more obsessed with promoting their lean pet project than actually listening to the very legitimate concerns that are being raised about lean.

The reality is, Mr. Speaker, is that lean has led to significant problems with how supplies are managed. This means senior care facilities are running out of supplies, desperately needed supplies, including bandages and dressings. This means that front-line workers, Mr. Speaker, are required to stretch those bandages and those items to the absolute limit, and this means that these front-line health care workers are forced to call the family members of residents to ask if they want to pay extra in order to have the necessary supplies for their family members.

My question for the Premier: how is this acceptable?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Mr. Speaker, I'd be interested to know where these specific instances are occurring. On a cursory check by the ministry already, I think 8 out of 12 regions are reporting no particular shortages. There's work under way with the other four frankly, and no shortage determination, especially necessarily linked to lean.

Yesterday in the House, the member stood up and made some allegations about "time-out rooms," Mr. Speaker. We've been unable to determine where those have existed. And even when the stakeholder group that the member quoted said it was the Five Hills Region, the Five Hills Region has confirmed that, to their knowledge, it did not occur there either, Mr. Speaker. And so we would ask the member to share whatever information he has on the specific region because we're going to make sure that supplies are available as they are needed, Mr. Speaker.

In fact what we've seen through lean is the appropriate management of supplies. I would take for example the blood inventory system in the province, where before lean we used to throw out a lot of blood, Mr. Speaker, because of poor management processes. Now we do not do that. Now we have a different process that's saving money and, more importantly, preventing the waste of valuable blood.

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Mr. Speaker, what we see with this government's approach to lean is that they dismiss concerns when they're raised. When the nurses and front-line health care

workers in this province raise concerns, Mr. Speaker, we see a dismissive approach. It's no wonder health care workers are afraid to come forward and voice their concerns with the approach that we're seeing from this government.

What Saskatchewan people can't understand, Mr. Speaker, is how this government's priorities can be so misplaced. Here we have this government that will spend \$40 million on one US [United States] consultant to come to Saskatchewan. This government spent \$17 million a year, Mr. Speaker, on a kaizen promotion office. Mr. Speaker, this government flies Japanese senseis to Saskatchewan and pays them \$3,500 per day. This government has untold millions of dollars to force health care workers into train where they'll learn Japanese terminology, Mr. Speaker, and how to fold paper airplanes. All at the same time, Mr. Speaker, that they are neglecting the basics and not even providing the basics for Saskatchewan's residents and patients.

My question, Mr. Speaker, to the Premier: when will enough be enough? When will he stop wasting time on this lean pet project? When will they focus on the issues that actually matter to Saskatchewan families instead of making them pay more?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, let's consider what this government has done in terms of prioritizing the basics in the health care system. Mr. Speaker, we inherited the situation where members opposite had closed hundreds of long-term care beds. We're now opening long-term care beds in rural Saskatchewan. We opened long-term care beds together with the Catholic Health Ministry in Saskatoon. They opposed that.

Mr. Speaker, let's consider that we inherited, from the NDP [New Democratic Party] government, a shortage of nurses. Mr. Speaker, now fully 1,000 more nurses practising in the province. That's a focus on the basics. That's more front-line resources. We inherited, from the opposition when they were government, a shortage in doctors, Mr. Speaker. And while there's still more work that needs to be done, there's over 200 more doctors practising today in the province of Saskatchewan.

We inherited . . . We'll talk about the basics. We inherited from that member's party opposite the longest wait times for surgery in the Dominion of Canada, Mr. Speaker. We set out with resources and a plan to reduce them, Mr. Speaker. Now we're in the top tier, have reduced the wait times for surgical care. We're on our way to meet those objectives. Those are the basics.

Surgeries that are happening on time to a greater extent than they ever did, more long-term care beds instead of closed long-term care beds, STARS [Shock Trauma Air Rescue Society] ambulance for rural Saskatchewan, more health care workers — that's the record on the basics on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Mr. Speaker, do I oppose \$40 million going to one US consultant? Absolutely, Mr. Speaker. Do I oppose flying in Japanese senseis and paying them \$3,500 a day? Absolutely, Mr. Speaker. Do I oppose forcing health care

workers into training sessions, Mr. Speaker, where they learn how to fold paper airplanes, where they're taken away from providing care to the patients that they want to properly care for? Absolutely, Mr. Speaker.

Do I oppose this government creating a culture of fear within our health care system where nurses, where front-line providers are afraid to come forward, Mr. Speaker, because of the tone being set from the top, Mr. Speaker? I absolutely oppose those measures because they're not in the best interests of Saskatchewan patients or health care.

Mr. Speaker, this Premier is not focused on the basics when it comes to health care. We have nurses identifying shortages in bandages and dressings that is hurting patient care. Front-line workers, Mr. Speaker, have to call patients' families, ask them if they want to pay extra in order to have the bandages replaced on their family members, Mr. Speaker.

My question to the Premier: how on earth is this acceptable, Mr. Speaker? To the Premier: when will he end this lean nonsense? When will he end the fat cash cow contract for \$40 million?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would just take the opportunity to inform the Leader of the Opposition of what we're doing in the health care system is about the patient. It's not about him.

Mr. Speaker, what we've done is we've identified, Mr. Speaker, that we do need to make improvements within the health care system. We know that we have to improve the quality of the services that we provide. We need to reduce the errors, Mr. Speaker.

And that is much of the work that we're doing throughout lean, to the point where other provinces, Mr. Speaker, are looking at us, knowing that we have saved more money already than what we'll spend on the four-year contract, a contract which is the same proportion, by the way, Mr. Speaker, to the two-tenths of one per cent that the member from Lakeview authorized when he was the Health minister in Five Hills Health Region.

With respect, Mr. Speaker, to the Leader of the Opposition, his allegations, what I would hope that he would do is provide some more information because when he comes in here and provides information that we cannot verify because we don't know when, we don't know where.

What we do know is, in terms of the supply chain issues that he's talking about, eight of twelve health regions have already said they don't know what he's talking about. In terms of the allegations that he made about Five Hills and time-out rooms, Five Hills has said they don't know what he's talking about. Mr. Speaker, I think we're hearing a lot about that from the Leader of the Opposition.

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

#### Notification Protocol

**Mr. Nilson:** — Mr. Speaker, it took 17 hours for this

government to notify the public that an inmate with a history of violence had escaped from the psychiatric hospital in North Battleford. To the Minister of Corrections: why did it take so long to notify the public?

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

**Hon. Ms. Tell:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In 2008, this government committed to a timely reporting of escapes from any of our correctional facilities. In this incident that the members opposite are referring to, the reporting protocol was not followed. That said, we take the safety of public, staff, and offenders very, very seriously. The ministry is working with the Saskatchewan Hospital, North Battleford and the Prairie North Regional Health Authority to ensure timely communication when incidents such as this occur. And this particular incident, Mr. Speaker, is under review.

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

**Mr. Nilson:** — Mr. Speaker, this government and a minister of the government made a promise to the people of Saskatchewan that what happened in 2008 wouldn't happen again. And that promise was broken this week. It took 17 hours before the government bothered to let people know about the recent escape of the violent offender. What assurances can the minister give to the people of Saskatchewan that this won't happen again? And can the minister give the people of Saskatchewan an update on the status of this escaped inmate?

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

**Hon. Ms. Tell:** — Mr. Speaker, on the night that this incident occurred, the hospital staff notified the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police]. They were on-site. However, the hospital did not notify Corrections staff at that time.

As I said, we are working the Prairie North Health Region and the Saskatchewan Hospital at North Battleford to ensure that the proper protocols are being followed. The Ministry of Policing and Corrections actually and the head of the forensic unit at the hospital have just agreed that we will implement a similar protocol reporting agreement that is currently in place, and therefore the protocol will be followed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[14:15]

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

#### Membership of Social Services Appeal Board

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Social Services: does she think it's important for the Social Services Appeal Board to be fully independent and appear to be fully independent?

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

**Hon. Ms. Draude:** — Yes, Mr. Speaker, I do.

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

**Mr. Forbes:** — Mr. Speaker, we've had concerns raised with us about this government's approach to the Social Services Appeal Board.

Clark Puckett, the former constituency assistant to the member for Arm River-Watrous and a candidate for the Sask Party nomination in Arm River-Watrous tonight, served on the Social Services Appeal Board for two years while he was a constituency assistant. And we're told that the Social Services minister appointed her own constituency assistant to the Social Services Appeal Board in December.

To the minister: how is this acceptable for constituency assistants to serve on the Social Services Appeal Board?

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

**Hon. Ms. Draude:** — Mr. Speaker, when we looked at the people who had qualifications, we determined that these people did actually qualify for the job. But then at the same time, we wanted to make sure it was fully independent, so those names were removed. And my assistant is not at any meetings as she's not on the board.

And, Mr. Speaker, our job is to make sure that people who bring concerns to our government are looked at fully through the eyes of professionals, and we will continue to do that.

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

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We understand when concerns were raised about the Social Services minister appointing her own staff member to the Social Services Appeal Board, the minister did do the right thing and removed her.

But then she did the wrong thing, and she appointed a very close friend of hers to the board instead. And she actually made this friend the Co-Chair of the board, the same close friend who went to Ghana and London with the minister, and the same close friend who had a \$200 lunch with the minister in London. And we've heard a lot of concerns about the minister putting a travel buddy of hers onto the appeal board because that board is supposed to be fully independent from the minister.

To the minister: how can you justify this?

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

**Hon. Ms. Draude:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The member opposite is well aware of the lunch and that it was not paid for by the taxpayers. That money was repaid.

The people that are on the appeal board are there because they are professional people that have the right background. I think if the member opposite would be looking at the background of the people that were appointed to that board, look at their professionalism and their training and where they've been working for the last number of years, we put people on the boards who will do the right thing when it comes to vulnerable individuals. They'll look at their claims as they come forward. We know the percentage of people that come forward and have

their . . . that is actually overturned by the appeal board when looked at through their eyes instead of the ministry. That's the type of work that we look at all the time.

Mr. Speaker, I'm well aware that there are competent people that are friends on this side of the House. And I think there are some competent people from that side of the House, and they've been put on boards as well. Mr. Speaker, we ensure that the work that's being done for the taxpayer of this province is done by competent people.

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

#### Ministry of Education Sector Plan

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, the first question reporters asked the Minister of Education yesterday was just six words. It was a pretty simple question. The minister talked and talked and talked and didn't provide a clear answer. So I'll repeat that question to the minister here today, and perhaps he can finally bring some clarity to the people of the province. Is standardized testing on or not?

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

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We're respectful and mindful of the processes that are under way through student-first and through the advisors that we have. And we are going to respect that process as we work through things.

What I can say, Mr. Speaker, is that there will not be any form of large-scale computerized testing of all subjects and grades. By that I mean there will not be the same test on the same day province-wide.

Mr. Speaker, what we will do is have a continuing discussion and dialogue with our sector partners, including teachers, as we move forward to try and implement the education sector plan. We will build on the successes that take place in other parts of the province, and that will include some of the great successes that have taken place in Melfort and in Swift Current that are based on evaluations of students. We will take those things, we will build on those and spread them across the province. Because that's the type of thing we want to do, is look at the best practices in Saskatchewan and elsewhere, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — You know, the minister's remarkable as he continues to change definitions and sort of reframe what he calls standardized testing. But when we looked yesterday, the minister kept saying that he didn't want to get into the semantics of whether standardized testing is on or off, and he didn't want to speculate as to whether or not this government has actually flip-flopped. Well this isn't about semantics or about speculation. This is about a straight-up answer from that minister and from that government, something that's been awfully difficult to get to date.

So again to the minister: why won't he just tell us whether or not there'll be standardized testing for Saskatchewan students?

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

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday the member for Regina Rosemont asked questions about the education sector's strategic plan. He referred to it as the government's plan. In fact it's the plan of the sector.

The sector has worked together, all 28 school divisions. They've consulted with STF [Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation], with the School Boards Association, with teachers, and with everybody that is active and involved. And they have actually for the first time ever, Mr. Speaker, come together and developed a plan. They will build on the successes and we will respect that process. If the members opposite want us to throw that aside, he can stand up and say that he does not respect the education divisions, that he does not respect teachers. Because that's what he's doing by saying, do something different. We want to work with those people, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, there's no mention of standardized testing in that plan. It became evident yesterday in questioning that the minister didn't even know this one- or two-page plan when he was out before the media or in committee last night. We're now hearing this government use terms like common evaluation instead of standardized testing because the minister said yesterday that the term standardized testing is toxic.

So the question to the Education minister is, how is this anything but a rebranding of standardized testing as common evaluation or some other cute name?

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

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Mr. Speaker, we will work with the sector partners. We will let them develop a plan that is appropriate for our province, and we will work with them unlike the members opposite. Between 2000 and 2007, the NDP spent over \$8 million on their own standardized testing regime to assess hundreds of thousands of students. And, Mr. Speaker, I will read from some of their documents.

Since 2000, the department has increased its large-scale assessment activity in Grades 4 through 11 in response to increased emphases on accountability within public administration, and to Saskatchewan's standing on international test results. The Assessment for Learning Program has grown from measuring 11,000 students . . . annually to over 70,000 students."

Mr. Speaker, that's the record of the members opposite. We're not going down that road. We're doing consultation. We have a process in place. We will support and work with that process.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, let's be clear what that government's looking at is a province-wide testing scheme, a standardized testing scheme that the NDP would never support, Mr. Speaker. This is incredibly frustrating for parents, for educators, for academics who simply want a straight-up answer

from that minister about standardized testing. Instead the government is giving the illusion of listening, but it's not actually changing a thing. It's just rebranding.

The University of Regina education faculty has already passed a motion against standardized testing. And on Friday, the department of education foundations at the University of Saskatchewan passed a motion or resolution against standardized testing. They wrote to the government saying, "We would like you to take a firm stance and reject these plans entirely."

To the minister: why won't he do that here today? Why won't he finally take a firm stance and reject these plans entirely, and put some focus into where it matters on the front-lines of education?

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

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — This is a government that consults. This is a government that listens. We have a plan approved by all 28 school divisions, a plan supported and approved by the STF, SSBA [Saskatchewan School Boards Association], and LEADS [League of Educational Administrators, Directors and Superintendents]. We will work with them to develop something that's appropriate, something that works in this province, something that supports the students of our province, that recognizes the successes that we've had in places like Melfort, Swift Current. We'll build on those and spread them out across the province.

That's what this side of the House is going to do, is work with the sector partners, instead of like the throng that they've got across there, where they went ahead and spent millions of dollars and tested hundreds of thousands of students. We're not on for that.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, again today no answers from the minister on a file that certainly parents and educators deserve some answers, Mr. Speaker. And in fact if the minister's trying to suggest somehow that the teachers of this province or the STF support standardized testing, I think he better check his facts on that one, Mr. Speaker.

You know it's about time that that minister take some responsibility for his file. In fact I think maybe at some time that he himself gain some learning, Mr. Speaker, engaged in some schooling. So I'd recommend to him, and in fact I call on him here today, will he meet as soon as possible with the education faculties, the academics at the University of Regina, the University of Saskatchewan, so that he can actually learn what a standardized test is, and why they're bad for Saskatchewan?

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

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Mr. Speaker, we know that assessment and evaluation of our students is absolutely critical if we want to be able to mark their successes and move forward. And virtually every teacher in the province is in favour of that.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to read a quote: "I'm not against assessment. On the contrary, I'm all for assessment for learning. I still want tests in the classroom. I still want students being measured as to whether they know certain things or not, and I want to have them respond when they don't know." Dr. Marc Spooner.

Mr. Speaker, another quote: "... testing itself is not a bad thing. I am not an anti-assessment person ... Problems arise when ... [they] become higher in stakes and include sanctions to teachers or schools as a consequence of poor performance." Pasi Sahlberg in his book.

Mr. Speaker, one more quote: "This is something that's very important, that we want our students to achieve. And it's great they're making that commitment to do that with the additional resources to make sure that happens and there is a balance between testing and teaching." The member for Saskatoon Centre.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, the games just continue from that minister. For the minister to get up and pretend someone like Pasi Sahlberg supports province-wide standardized testing is utter nonsense, Mr. Speaker. For the minister to get up and misrepresent Dr. Marc Spooner of the University of Regina as somehow a proponent, a supporter of his plan, he should know is also absolutely nonsense, Mr. Speaker.

What we know about standardized testing and the positions taken by parents and by schools and by academics, is that there's all sorts of issues with this plan. A few for example: they are culturally insensitive. They're unfair to students that are learning English. They cause educators to focus on the test instead of on teaching and ensuring actual learning.

Why is that minister, why is that government, why is that Premier rejecting all the evidence and plowing ahead with a plan that's not in the best interest of students?

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

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Mr. Speaker, what the member opposite is doing is absolutely contemptible. He is disrespecting not only the teachers of this province, he's disrespecting the school boards, the STF, and the students and the parents in our province.

Mr. Speaker, this is a government that's made major capital commitments. We will continue to support those things in a financial manner. We will respect the student-first process as it goes ahead, and we will respect the student sector plan because that is how the direction of this province is going to go with education. And we will produce meaningful results. It is the first time in 26 years that we have ever had a comprehensive program that will go ahead with including all of our sector partners. And we'll take no advice from those members over there, none at all.

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

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In order to facilitate the work of committee, I move that this House do now adjourn.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

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

[The Assembly adjourned at 14:30.]



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