



THIRD SESSION - TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

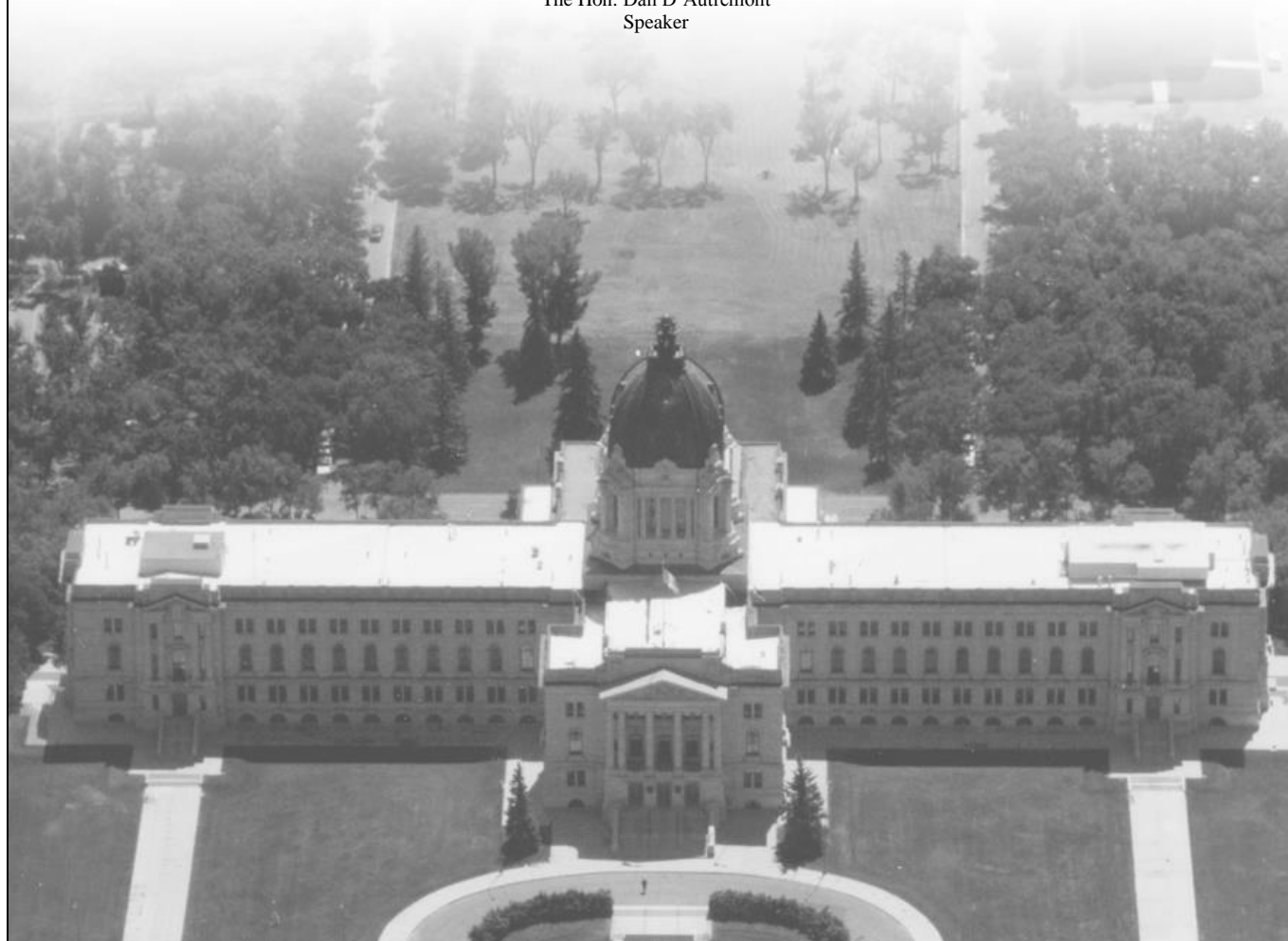
of the

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 10:00.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, I request leave for an extended introduction this morning.

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, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, colleagues. Earlier this week we presented Saskatchewan's Volunteer Medal to nine very deserving citizens of the province of Saskatchewan. Today I'd like to introduce another outstanding volunteer from our province, a global volunteer, Mr. Speaker. With us in the west gallery is Andrew Wahba. We'll get Andrew to give us a wave, please . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . In the Speaker's gallery, thank you.

And he is joined today by his mom. Susan is here and his girlfriend, Monica Pukas. He's also joined by his good friend, originally from Estevan as well and currently the deputy minister for Intergovernmental Affairs for the Government of Saskatchewan, Wes Jickling.

Mr. Speaker, Andrew is a former treasury board analyst with the province of Saskatchewan, and we all know how much fun that job is, to scrutinize the expenditures of government to make sure that the province remains on track. Well he's taken some time from that kind of work, Mr. Speaker, to do a little bit of travelling and a lot of volunteer and community work.

One of the places, Mr. Speaker, he's travelled to is Ladakh in the Himalayas, in the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir. Ladakh is a long way obviously from the province of Saskatchewan, but it has at least one thing in common with the province of Saskatchewan. It's a bit of a hotbed for hockey in India. In Ladakh, Mr. Speaker, they claim to be home to many of the players on India's men's national hockey team.

Unfortunately though, there's not enough equipment to go around to make sure that all who are interested can participate fully. So Andrew decided to do something about that from right here in Saskatchewan. Last year he launched a project called Hockey in the Himalayas through the True Travellers Society, an organization that he set up to connect people with volunteer opportunities around the world.

Andrew put out a call for donations on social media. He organized a fundraiser at O'Hanlon's Pub right here in the capital city. And as they usually do, Mr. Speaker, the people of the province of Saskatchewan responded. Andrew collected 28

bags of new equipment and more than 100 sticks. The equipment has been delivered, and today there are a lot of happy kids in Ladakh playing hockey with new skates and sticks from the people in the province of Saskatchewan.

So we just wanted to bring him into his Assembly today to say thank you for his public service, but even more importantly, thank you for this wonderful act of generosity to bring hockey equipment to the Himalayas and to support Canada's support in that distant land to support those kids who want to play. Mr. Speaker, I would ask all members to join me in thanking Andrew, but also to welcome him here today to his Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the Premier in welcoming and congratulating Andrew Wahba here today. And the Premier . . . It's interesting, Mr. Speaker. About a million years ago I had the opportunity of serving as a roommate with Andrew at a French language bursary in Trois-Rivières. So I don't know if the Premier's interested in any French language tips that Andrew might be able to bring along, but certainly he's got that stick in the bag as well.

It's really good to see Andrew here today in his Legislative Assembly, joined by his mother and Monica, girlfriend. The Wahba family is a pretty amazing bunch. And in terms of what they not just have given to the province in terms of Andrew's mother and father, the great service that they gave to the province in many ways, but certainly throughout Estevan for those many years, but the way that that next generation is carrying it on. And certainly Andrew, the work that he does in the province and the world as one of those True Travellers and the latest iteration being the Hockey in the Himalayas, it's an amazing thing.

And it's not surprising, Mr. Speaker, because there's an individual with a great mind, great heart, and putting that to use not just for people here in Saskatchewan but right around the world. So it's a real pleasure to join with the Premier in welcoming and congratulating Andrew Wahba here today in the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Mr. McMillan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure and honour to introduce an outstanding Saskatchewan citizen, and someone who has been very dedicated to this province over the past half a decade. He's led a truly exceptional life. Dr. James E. Christopher. Could you give us a wave? There. Excellent.

Dr. Christopher was born in Philadelphia. At a young age, he moved to Jamaica where he did his primary and high school, returning back to the United States to find work after high school. He worked as a farm labourer before he joined the US [United States] military. He served in Europe in the post-war occupation.

When he was discharged from the armed forces, Mr. Speaker, he started working in the manufacturing industry and taking night classes towards his goal of geology. He ultimately graduated from Columbia University with a degree in geology, went on to Ohio State where he got his Ph.D. And, Mr. Speaker, when he graduated from Ohio State in 1959, he looked north and accepted a job here in Saskatchewan. He said when he crossed the border, he was coming through Estevan that was having a bit of an oil boom in 1959, and that was a fairly good sign for a geologist moving north.

He said that Regina had 90,000 people when he moved here, and Ohio State had a football stadium that held 85,000 people, so it was a bit of a change for him and his wife, Dora, and their one son.

Through his time in Saskatchewan with the geological survey, Dr. Christopher published several landmark studies that have aided the understanding and development of several of our prolific oil fields here in Saskatchewan. These landmark studies, Mr. Speaker, monographs in 1961 on the Devonian and Mississippian transition beds, in 1964 on the middle Jurassic rocks of Western Saskatchewan, in 1974 the upper Jurassic and lower crustaceous of Western Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I didn't recognize a lot of the titles here but they reflect very much on the oil pools that we are developing today on the Bakken, on the gas fields in Western Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, and the prosperity that our oil industry has today is very much thanks to the work that was done here, and these reports are still the basis of what we're finding today.

He was honoured in 1989 as a member of the Saskatchewan oilmen's hall of fame and he retired in 1987, Mr. Speaker. That, Mr. Speaker, would be a very impressive career. But as Mr. Harvey would say, the rest of the story is, following his retirement he continued to serve our province. He continues to go to work every day, still to this day providing more research to the geological record here in Saskatchewan. And, Mr. Speaker, he received in 2011 the R.J.W. Douglas Medal for geology and, Mr. Speaker, is recognized as a mentor in the geological world and will continue to serve our province. So if all members would help me welcome and thank this great Saskatchewan citizen and welcome him to his legislature here today.

The Speaker: — I would like to remind members, if they wish to give extended introductions, please ask for leave or, better yet, do it as a member's statement. I recognize the member for Regina Rosemont.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the minister opposite and welcome Dr. Christopher to his Assembly. What a remarkable life that was just recounted to all of us here in this Assembly. And the service and experiences of Dr. Christopher seem to be incredibly rich, and certainly your contributions to our province have been incredibly rich. Your continued service is important. Thank you so much for your life of service, your continued service. It's a pleasure to welcome you to your Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And while still on my feet, Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to introduce, I guess on the last day of her legislative internship

program working with myself, would be Ms. Kaytlyn Criddle. Kaytlyn, from my perspective, it's been an absolute pleasure working with Kaytlyn. She's come to this service with a remarkable amount of experience from an international perspective, from an educational perspective, with many sporting accomplishments to date, and continues to have many of those accomplishments as well.

What I've observed and what I've witnessed first-hand working with Kaytlyn is that she's an incredibly intelligent person, someone who's committed and caring. Someone who's in fact an independent and critical thinker, both within our province and the world around her. Someone who's an incredibly hard worker, someone with a great sense of humour, and someone I know that will have remarkable accomplishments ahead of her. And I just hope that Saskatchewan is blessed to have her service in different ways moving forward.

I can say that the time working with Kaytlyn, she's had experiences from writing and researching to being out with community events and to school community groups. She actually played in the caucus hockey game, Mr. Speaker, and has been involved as a coach in the Rosemont Outdoor Hockey League, involved in meetings in formal ways with Saskatchewan stakeholders in various areas.

What I'd like to say to the entire Assembly is it's been a pleasure working with Ms. Criddle, and certainly I wish her well moving forward. And I ask all members to thank her for her service.

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

Mr. Brkich: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you I'd like to introduce some constituents that are in your gallery. I'll just ask them to give a little wave when I call their names. With them up there is Rhonda and Jim Cooper from the town of Watrous. With them also is Gwen Deneiko from the town of Watrous and Jaz Lin Deneiko.

Now with the four people up there is Salome Glaser. She's an exchange student from Switzerland and she's staying with Coopers, a grade 11 student that is going to Watrous High School. She's going to be spending a year here, and the Coopers have been taking her all over Saskatchewan, showing her the sights of this beautiful province. And I know that she's been enjoying them, and I hope she enjoys what she sees today in her first day at the Legislative Assembly here. So to you and through you and to all the members, I want to welcome those people, those members and constituents to their Legislative Assembly. Thank you.

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

Mr. Nilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to all members of the legislature 50 students from Sheldon Williams Collegiate. These students are in social studies 10, social studies 30, and indigenous studies 30. They're sitting in the east gallery, and they're accompanied by their teachers, Jennie Davies, Delaine Anderson, Al Neufeld, and Kayla Bilokury. And I ask all members to welcome them to the Assembly. Thank you.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to all members of the House, it gives me great pleasure again to introduce my legislative intern, Dustan Hlady, on his last day working with me, which I'm kind of sad about.

It's always an interesting journey. This has been my third year to have a legislative intern. And you always start wondering exactly how it's going to work out, and it's been such a positive experience every year. And working with Dustan has been no exception to that rule.

He is thoughtful and insightful and an incredibly hard worker. The one thing that I really appreciated about him, at the very beginning of our relationship I asked him, what is it that you would like to do or take from this? And what he offered me on that first day was, well what can I do to help you in your work? Which is very appreciated as a member of a nine-member opposition, Mr. Speaker.

Dustan and I had an opportunity . . . Or some of the things that he did for me: he did a great piece of research on home care, he wrote member statements, he helped me prep for estimates, he accompanied me on meetings. And I lament that we only had one opportunity to spend some . . . just one occasion in Saskatoon where he joined me at the Westside community clinic which is in my colleague from Saskatoon Centre's riding but serves mine as well. And I'm glad we got to see that and to have lunch at the Park Cafe.

So with that I'd ask all members to welcome Dustan to the legislature and give him a hand for his contribution to this sitting. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[10:15]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Estevan.

Ms. Eagles: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to join the Premier in welcoming the Wahbas to the Legislative Assembly today. The Wahbas have always been very well respected within the city of Estevan and it's an absolute pleasure to have them here today as well as Wes Jickling, a very well-renowned family in Estevan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, 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 the privatization of health care laundry will put patient care at risk as health regions lose direct control over health care laundry services. And we know that the privatization of health care laundry will mean that fair-wage jobs will be replaced with poverty wages, and public

accountability would be lost. I'd like to read the prayer, Mr. Speaker:

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 taxpayers' 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 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.

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

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise to present petitions on behalf of concerned residents as it relates to the lack of safety on Dewdney Avenue and the need to reroute heavy-haul truck traffic from Dewdney Avenue. They note that any further delays by that government is entirely unacceptable in addressing a problem, a challenge, 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 the heavy-haul truck traffic on Dewdney Avenue west of 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 from Regina. I so submit.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Once again I'm very pleased to stand in my place today to present a petition on homes in northern Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. And as we all know, this government callously cut the program of the rental purchase option program and really affected many working families. And, Mr. Speaker, the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your

honourable Legislative Assembly cause the Saskatchewan 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.

And, Mr. Speaker, the people that have signed this petition are from all throughout Saskatchewan and this particular page, Mr. Speaker, are people that are primarily from Beauval, Saskatchewan. And I so present.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And this is a petition that's opposed to government cuts to the harness racing industry. The undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan wish to bring to your attention the following: that in 2012 the government stubbornly cut the grants for Yorkton's harness racing industry, the government's failed to properly listen or consult with the residents of Yorkton, and whereas this 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 in the prayer that reads as follows, the petitioners:

Respectively 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 is signed by individuals from Yorkton and Ebenezer, Saskatchewan. I so submit.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Messages of Hope

Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, for many Saskatchewan people this is a time to celebrate faith, hope, and renewal. Jews are in the midst of observing the festival of Passover, recalling the story of their exodus from slavery in Egypt. The story of Passover is one of overcoming oppression through faith and through courage. It's an inspiring story of hope that has been shared for thousands of years.

At the same time, Christians will celebrate Easter and recall the story of Jesus' life, his incredible sacrifice, and his resurrection. It's the story of the power of grace and redemption and reconciliation, a story of hope triumphing over despair and love conquering all.

Passover of course holds special meaning for Jews and Easter for Christians. But I'm sure everyone can identify with elements of each of these stories for they remind us that out of defeat can come victory and out of darkness can come light.

So to all Jews observing the festival of Passover and to all Christians celebrating Easter, I wish a very meaningful and joyful celebration. And to all Saskatchewan people, I wish a

great long weekend filled with family and friends and focused on all the things that matter most to all of us. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government Whip.

Easter Greetings

Mr. Ottenbreit: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Easter weekend is upon us and, although many see it as a commercial holiday, Christians worldwide recognize the celebration as the defining events of Christianity. Tomorrow is Good Friday, the day we remember when Jesus the Christ was crucified. On that day about 2,000 years ago, as he freely gave his life, the earth quaked, the sky went black, the curtain in the temple tore. Upon these events, as Jesus hung on that cross, even a Roman officer said, truly this was the Son of God.

Christians believe that in this ultimate act of love, Jesus took the sin of all mankind on himself and our salvation is now a free gift because of his actions and the cross. John 15:13 says, "Greater love has no man than he lay down his life for his friends."

But that's not the end of the story. Jesus stated to the religious leaders of the time, tear down this temple and I will raise it up in three days — a comment that in part led to his death. But he didn't mean the actual temple in Jerusalem. He was speaking of his own body that he was willing to sacrifice for mankind.

This Sunday is Easter and we celebrate the resurrection of the Saviour, Jesus Christ. He did what he said and was raised from death on the third day. Many of his followers saw him that day; however, over the next 40 days, over 500 people including political, religious, military, and community leaders are documented to have seen and interacted with Jesus alive before his ascension into heaven. It's the good news, the most amazing event in history, Mr. Speaker. May everyone have a blessed and happy Easter. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition Whip.

New Arena Opens at Southend

Mr. Vermette: — Mr. Speaker, the community of Southend has always been passionate about the game of hockey. Adults and kids have been coming together on the south shore of Reindeer Lake to play shinny for generations.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the community will no longer have to play outside. At the opening it was announced that the new rink would be named Henry Cook Memorial Arena after a dedicated community member who devoted his time to maintaining the old rink. The dedication of parents and local volunteers has always been a cornerstone in Southend, and I can't wait to see a lot more great hockey talent coming out of the woodwork.

On March 21st the community held a great ceremony at the Reindeer Lake School gymnasium, where we were treated to a traditional fish fry. I would like to acknowledge the leadership of Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation, especially Southend councillors Simon Jobb, Kevin Morin, who were instrumental in developing the arena. The community worked alongside the

builders of Norseman Structures to develop the project.

Many past coaches and leaders attended the event, including FSIN [Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations] Vice-chief Simon Bird who calls Southend his home. PAGC [Prince Albert Grand Council] Grand Chief Ron Michel was also in attendance and donated 15,000 to the rink fund on behalf of the Prince Albert Grand Council. There was no funds allocated from the province or federal government.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize the people of Southend for the efforts to provide a safe place for our youth to play hockey and for those who supported the community to making this rink possible.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Melfort.

Emergency Telecommunicators Week

Mr. Phillips: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise in the House today to acknowledge that our province has proclaimed April 13th to 19th as Emergency Telecommunicators Week in Saskatchewan.

Saskatchewan joins the rest of Canada to commend the work being done by all of our emergency telecommunicators. The people of the province depend on the dedication and expertise of these professionals and they represent the first point of contact when a citizen dials 911, and are often the first people we turn to in a time of crisis.

Our emergency dispatchers from police, fire, and emergency medical services are a critical lifeline to aid and assist for all our residents. They are that calm and reassuring voice on the other end of the line when we are at our most vulnerable.

Mr. Speaker, last night I attended the 12th annual Telecommunicator of the Year awards banquet on behalf of the Minister of Government Relations. And I would like to extend our congratulations to this year's honourees.

Saskatchewan is a great place to be and a safe place to be because of the dedication of all emergency telecommunicators and emergency services personnel in the province. Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members join me in thanking all of our emergency telecommunicators for the work that they do each and every day. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Moose Jaw Business Excellence Awards

Mr. Michelson: — Thank you. Mr. Speaker, it was a night of achievement recognition in Moose Jaw as the business community celebrated its 13th annual Business Excellence Awards last night in Moose Jaw.

Hundreds of business entrepreneurs, employees, friends, and family enjoyed a gallant evening showcasing business achievement. Mr. Speaker, it was intriguing to see the dozens of new entrepreneurs, expanded business ventures and innovations, heritage, culture, utilization of green practices, and pioneer award nominees as a testimony of the healthy business

climate in our friendly city.

In all, 45 businesses were nominated in 12 categories, including the Business Leader of the Year awarded to Greg Simpson of Simpson Seeds for three generations of production and world marketing of agricultural products.

The Business of the Year is selected from all nominees and the award went to the Grant Hall for its restoration of an abandoned building on Main Street, reviving this landmark to a stunning hotel-restaurant complex of elegance and glamour and historical design, respecting the environment and the technical upgrades like geothermal heating.

The Business Excellence Awards reflect the positive attitude of a progressive city in our growing province, Mr. Speaker. Congratulations to the nominees, the winners, and all the businesses for their leadership and accomplishment in making Moose Jaw a city of business pride. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government Deputy Whip.

Contract Extension for Rider Quarterback

Mr. Makowsky: — Mr. Speaker, more and more people are choosing our province as the best place to work, live, and play. In that light I'd like to take this opportunity to extend congratulations to Darian Durant who has chosen to make Saskatchewan his home for the foreseeable future. Yesterday the Riders announced a multi-year extension that will keep Darian Durant in Rider green for years to come.

Darian has emerged as one of the CFL's [Canadian Football League] biggest stars at the most important position on the field. In six seasons as a starter, he has led the team to three Grey Cups, and of course last year the Riders won it all.

Over the last several seasons he has lived here full-time so he could become more involved in our community, and of course also prepare for the upcoming seasons. The Riders have also recently locked up key personnel, general manager Brendan Taman, and head coach Corey Chamblin.

Like our province, it wasn't that long ago — and I remember those days — that the Roughriders had great difficulty in attracting free agents and retaining their key players. Now our province is attracting and keeping people here, and the Roughriders are the flagship franchise of the league and the one that everybody wants to play for.

Of course, Mr. Speaker, it's no wonder Darian fits in so well in Saskatchewan. Yesterday he made it clear his priority wasn't about himself, but about stability and what was best for the team as a whole. Those are values you can find right across this province. As the Roughriders get ready for training camp, I ask all members to join me in wishing Darian and the team all the best in the upcoming season. Thank you.

[10:30]

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

Support for Culture, Sport, and Recreation

Mr. Steinley: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's taken a while but the people of Saskatchewan may have finally gotten a glimpse of NDP [New Democratic Party] common sense policy. On Tuesday, April 15th, the member from Saskatoon Nutana expressed her reservations regarding the funding of volunteer-run groups. She said, and I quote:

I guess the other thing for me is it's always been a concern that the lottery dollars go to culture, sport, and rec. And why not have the lottery dollars go to the Ministry of Agriculture and have the culture, sport, and rec be supported by taxpayers' dollars rather than gambling dollars?

Mr. Speaker, sport, culture, and recreation is one of the most powerful tools this province has to improve quality of life of our children and families. Mr. Speaker, for the year ending March 31st, 2013, approximately \$53.3 million was available to distribute to sport, culture, and recreation organizations. Approximately 1,200 organizations are directly funded and these in turn support more than 1,200 local community organizations.

To the Leader of the Opposition: where is the common sense in stripping volunteer-run organizations of over \$53 million? Will he stand in this House and clarify his party's new position on scrapping a lottery program that supports culture, sport, and rec and has served this province well since 1974?

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Provision of Hospital Services

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Dr. Nawal Sharma, a highly respected internal medicine specialist in Saskatoon, has this to say:

Most physicians and nurses think the standard of acute care in Saskatoon hospitals has steadily declined in recent years. This isn't for the lack of effort by doctors, nurses, and other care providers, but because of the lack of space and resources.

My question to the Premier: does he agree with Dr. Sharma or does he stubbornly dismiss these concerns?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Saskatoon City Hospital is, certainly it's not closed for acute care services that are provided. In fact, in the last year that we have a full year of records, there were more than 5,000 in-patients that had service provided at Saskatoon City Hospital. The day surgery and the main operating room provided for over 7,000 patients to be provided surgery for, as well as the emergency room, which the members opposite will know is not open 24 hours a day. It's only open for part time of the day, but it did provide services for 5,000, more than 5,000 patients.

Certainly, Mr. Speaker, we think that this hospital is an important hospital for the city of Saskatoon and for the people that it serves from Saskatoon and the area, but we do know that services are spread out through all three hospitals in Saskatoon. And I think that they provide a great service to the people of Saskatoon and central and northern Saskatchewan.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, Dr. Sharma says it's very difficult to get sick patients admitted to hospitals now, and there's tremendous pressure to discharge those patients as soon as possible. He says, Mr. Speaker, terms like overcapacity alert, bed crisis, and hallway beds are now incredibly common.

Yet what does this government prioritize, Mr. Speaker? Where do they spend their attention? Where do they spend their dollars? We see untold millions of dollars being spent on their shiny lean pet project: \$40 million, Mr. Speaker, going to one US consultant; \$17 million each and every year for kaizen promotion offices; \$3,500 each and every day for Japanese senseis who are brought here to the province, Mr. Speaker; and untold millions of dollars to train senior administrators in lean programs, Mr. Speaker.

That's where this government has its priorities. My question to the Premier: why is this government not focused on the issues of overcapacity, of alerts, of hallway beds, Mr. Speaker? Why are they so obsessively focused on their lean pet project?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, I would just point out to the hon. member opposite and all members of the House, the record of the government since 2007 as an indication of where our priorities rest, Mr. Speaker. Soon after the 2007 election, we immediately set out to build a new partnership with health care providers. We immediately set out to keep a promise of hiring, making sure there were 800 more nurses in the province. That's pretty much the basics in health care. In fact, there are now 1,000 more nurses practising. We set out to recruit more doctors, Mr. Speaker, now 300 more doctors practising in Saskatchewan.

We set out to focus on the basics of training both nurses and doctors to a greater extent in the province, adding to residency positions so that we can retain them. We set out to focus on surgical wait times we had inherited from the NDP, the longest in Canada at the time, and now, Mr. Speaker, a new surgical wait times report out, indicating that wait times are lower.

There will always be work to be done in health care, which is 40 per cent of the provincial budget and the largest element of the Government of Saskatchewan's activities. It's at the top of the priority list. And, Mr. Speaker, the evidence, the evidence is the record of the government in terms of investments we've made in capital, in new health care positions, health care worker positions, more doctors, more nurses, surgical wait times initiative. And instead of closing beds as the NDP did, whether it was the Plains or a long-term care facility, beds are now being opened in the province of Saskatchewan.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, once again, we see the dismissive approach by this government when legitimate concerns are raised by well-respected individuals here in the province. One of the main concerns that Dr. Sharma points to is the fact that Saskatoon City Hospital is not used for the purpose for which it was built. This is a concern that's shared by many people in Saskatoon and folks throughout the province, Mr. Speaker, especially, especially ever since this government closed City Hospital for acute care in 2008. Mr. Speaker, this concern, this very serious concern, is highlighted by a coroner's inquest jury of just a few months ago.

To the Premier: is he familiar with the recommendations made by the coroner's jury in the inquest into the death of Stanley Robillard?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, we have asked of our health regions, and the health regions actually have asked this of the health care facilities, that they focus on certain elements of the health care spectrum. Sometimes that would be the surgical side of things; sometimes it would be acute care.

We know that one of the challenges at City Hospital frankly, under the New Democratic Party when they were in office, was the fact that there were so many people in long-term care beds — and there are still too many in the province, by the way — but so many in long-term care beds in acute facilities like City Hospital.

And so, Mr. Speaker, early on in our government's history we sought to work with the Catholic Health Ministry and build a new long-term care facility to alleviate some of, some of those pressures, Mr. Speaker. And who opposed that project — Amicus — who opposed that new long-term care facility because it was with a faith-based partner, I think is the reason? The NDP did. The NDP did . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Well, well they opposed it. They can explain why they opposed it, but they did. They opposed the Amicus project.

Mr. Speaker, there's more work to be done in health care. That's why this government continues to provide record funding in health care budgets year after year, and why we will continue to do that, Mr. Speaker, investing in capital facilities and in people providing health care in the province of Saskatchewan.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, it was this government that closed City Hospital for acute care in 2008, Mr. Speaker. My question, Mr. Speaker, to the Premier, which he did not address in any way, was this: is he familiar, is he familiar with the recommendations made by the coroner's jury in the inquest into the death of Stanley Robillard?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, the government has worked hard with respect to the improvements that have been required in health care, whether they were part of a certain report that was presented to the province or just part of the public record, a

record that was inherited from 16 years of New Democratic government where we did suffer under the longest wait-lists in the country; where we were understaffed in terms of nurses in the province of Saskatchewan; where the doctor shortage was going unaddressed, and the doctor shortage exists to this day, Mr. Speaker; where the training seats at the university for health care professionals, doctors, and nurses were consistently underfunded to what we needed in the province.

So, Mr. Speaker, whether it's the report referenced by the Leader of the Opposition or the public record or health care workers providing advice to government, we've taken all of these things very seriously and presented to the province of Saskatchewan, not just talk about these issues but action, with a recognition that more will need to be done. And we'll continue to work on these things, Mr. Speaker. We'll continue to see record health care budgets that focus on new facilities, fixing facilities we currently have, and ensuring that we're investing in health care human resources for LPNs [licensed practical nurse], for nurses, for nurse practitioners, and for doctors in the province of Saskatchewan.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, my specific question was about the report into the inquest of the death of Stanley Robillard. The coroner's jury heard how our emergency system failed Stanley Robillard. And he died, Mr. Speaker, as a result. The coroner's jury made 13 recommendations to avoid a similar death in the future. One of those recommendations, Mr. Speaker, is that services available at Saskatoon City Hospital be increased. And that's something that Dr. Sharma and other health care providers are also calling for, Mr. Speaker. And it's something that Saskatchewan people and residents of Saskatoon are most certainly calling for and have been for some time.

To the Premier: is this government listening, listening to the recommendations from the inquest, from the people of the province, or is it dismissing these concerns about City Hospital being underutilized and health care getting worse?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Certainly, as I've indicated before, there is a variety of services that are provided by each of the hospitals within Saskatoon, as it would be with any other community. Certainly we do know that for example Saskatoon City Hospital is open for emergency room services for part of the day. It also does provide for in-patient care. It provides for ambulatory procedures. It provides for day surgeries.

We do know that we do need to improve when it comes to emergency department waits. In fact Royal University Hospital, employing some lean methodology in some of the work around improving our record when it comes to waits in the emergency rooms, RUH for example was able to reduce the number of patients to zero who left without being treated. Previously to that, approximately 12 patients per day left the emergency room because they waited too long and didn't want to wait that long, and RUH reduced that down to zero. We need to maintain that record. But we have indicated that we are looking at the emergency department waits as the next initiative for the entire

health care system, by 2017 to reduce that to zero waits.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, City Hospital is not being used for the purpose for which it was built. It's this government in 2008, Mr. Speaker, that closed City Hospital for acute care. Well-respected physicians are saying, Mr. Speaker, that health care is getting worse. In our province's largest city, Mr. Speaker, we want to see this government to start properly utilizing Saskatoon City Hospital.

The coroner's jury found that this government needs to fix our emergency system, and part of the answer to that is to increase the hours of the emergency room at Saskatoon City Hospital. But instead of focusing on those basics, Mr. Speaker, instead of ensuring that we have enough spots for acute care, instead of ensuring that an emergency room was open when people need it, this government is obsessively focused on its lean project. That's where their energy is placed. That's where millions and millions of dollars are going, Mr. Speaker.

My question to the Premier: why won't this government listen to physicians? Why won't this government listen to reports from inquests? Why won't this government listen to the people in Saskatoon in this province who demand so much better?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. With respect to fully utilizing the facilities that we do have in this province and based on the records of the members opposite, I don't think we'll take many lessons from them when it comes to using health care facilities, based on their record of closing facilities, including the third hospital in the city of Regina, the Plains hospital.

But, Mr. Speaker, we are investing \$4 million, as the member will know, in an initiative in this budget year to reduce emergency department waits to zero by 2017. It is an ambitious goal. It's been one that's been recognized though by some of the leading health commentators like André Picard in *The Globe and Mail* as an example of what health systems need to be doing into the future.

We've also undertaken 30 regional improvement initiatives across emergency rooms, knowing that this is an issue that patients and family members and providers have told us about, that this is something that we need to focus on. So for example, a 58 per cent reduction in times that cardiac patients wait at RUH for services in the emergency room, a 58 per cent reduction; and a 90 per cent reduction in the amount of time that EMTs [emergency medical technician] spend just in the hand-off of their patients that allows them to get the patients quicker service and allows the EMT to get back out to other patients that do need them.

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

Funding for Education

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, yesterday this government received a scathing letter from the Saskatchewan School Boards

Association. The letter retracts the SSBA's [Saskatchewan School Boards Association] initial reaction to the government's budget, which was initially a positive reaction. They did so because when they dug into the details, they became increasingly concerned with the actual impacts on students, classrooms, and local school divisions.

My question is for the Premier: does he agree with the concerns of the elected school board leaders across Saskatchewan, or is he going to stubbornly dismiss them?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

[10:45]

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, we received the letter earlier this morning. I have asked my officials to arrange for a meeting with the SSBA to identify specifically where problems are.

I can advise the House, Mr. Speaker, that since 2007, we've increased operating funding to school divisions by over 26 per cent. We've increased capital spending by 268 per cent. We've increased the number of child care spaces by 53 per cent. We've increased pre-K [pre-kindergarten] programs by 104 per cent. Mr. Speaker, the total budget for this ministry is \$1.88 billion. We've already built and completed 20 schools, Mr. Speaker, and we have plans for another 20.

Mr. Speaker, we know that we have more work to do. We're going to continue to do that work and, Mr. Speaker, we'll meet with the school divisions to identify where problems and issues are.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, stubborn dismissal from that Premier and that government is all we're seeing once again here today.

The Saskatchewan School Boards Association expresses significant concern about "the lean initiative clawback" of that government. To the Premier: what exactly is the lean initiative clawback, and why is that government imposing it upon school boards all across Saskatchewan?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, we know that we always will have more work to do, and we're going to continue to do that work. But two things that we're never going to apologize for, one is for consultation; the other one is for looking for efficiencies. Mr. Speaker, our budget is nearly \$2 billion, and there is no reason why we should not look for efficiencies in that sector. We've had great successes so far.

The Prairie Valley School Division around Regina reduces students' wait times for speech language pathologists by half. Students' occupational therapist wait times in the division dropped from seven weeks from a high of 18 weeks. In Regina Public, a lean project has now made hiring new staff more efficient; it has reduced application processing time by 75 per cent. The Light of Christ School Division used lean to improve

student attendance and improve transitions from elementary to high school.

We are going to continue with that type of efficiency, Mr. Speaker. We're going to look for it and we will work with the school divisions to achieve those savings.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Saskatchewan School Boards Association is clear that the main concern the school divisions have is with regard to the government's lean initiative clawback. That's what they call it.

So our elected school board trustees and all Saskatchewan people certainly deserve better answers than what we're hearing here today from that minister. So again, to the Premier: what is this lean initiative clawback and why is that government neglecting the basics in classrooms all across Saskatchewan?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, we will look for savings in group tendering, buying in bulk, software contracts, open-source use of textbooks. Mr. Speaker, at the ministry level, we have reduced the amount of time it took to get a contract . . . [inaudible] . . . for a grant payment. The wait time for contract completion has gone from 20 to 40 days to eight days. It has saved \$200,000.

The teacher certification process, we've reviewed the certification process to streamline the process, saving \$100,000. Turnaround time for Saskatchewan graduates, three days from four weeks; turnaround time for non-Saskatchewan graduates, two weeks from six weeks.

Mr. Speaker, the reason we're doing those things is not simply to save money. We want to be efficient. But the reason we're doing that, Mr. Speaker, is so that we can commit more resources to the front lines and more resources to the classroom. And we'll take no lessons from a group of people that chose to demonstrate efficiency by closing 176 schools.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, the impact of this government's lean initiative clawback is significant and it's a hard hit on classrooms across Saskatchewan. For some of the smaller boards, this government has peeled back around \$100,000, ranging to hundreds of thousands of dollars for many others.

For the large boards in Regina and Saskatoon, the clawback, the reduction, the cut is almost a million for each of them, Mr. Speaker. It just isn't fair and it defies common sense that this government is forcing cuts on our schools, in our classrooms, at a time that they're already under-resourced and strained because of that government's actions.

My question to the Premier: how on earth is this acceptable?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to give the member some examples of where we've committed funding to. And, Mr. Speaker, we'll take no lessons from people over there that have chosen to ship students out of province, ship them out of province by the hundreds of thousands. Mr. Speaker, Saskatoon Public since we formed government, enrolment up 15.9 per cent, operating funding up 33.2; Saskatoon Catholic, enrolment up 12.2, operating funding up 32.7; Prairie Spirit, enrolment up 16.9 per cent, operating up 25.9; Regina Public, enrolment up 5.7, operating up 30.8 per cent; Regina Catholic, enrolment up 7.5 per cent, operating up 26.8 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, we have continued to make large investments in our school division. We have more work to do, and we'll continue to work with the school divisions to try and provide them with the most effective, best funding we can.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, the school boards in this province said they had no forewarning of this clawback, the lean introduction, lean clawback, before it was introduced. They were taken by complete surprise. No communication from that government. Instead of huddling away in secret, this government should be working with their education partners. But that's not what's happening. Here's what the SSBA president, Janet Foord's letter says, "Lack of communication diminishes the trust relationship the education partners have worked so hard to build with the ministry."

To the Premier: why can't the government treat boards with the decency and respect they deserve as partners in education?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, we have ongoing meetings and dialogue with the Saskatchewan School Boards Association and with the individual school divisions. We will continue to have those dialogues. We will deal with and we will identify specific problems and we will work our way through those problems, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I want to point out to the members opposite, the people over there that closed schools, 176 schools, Mr. Speaker, we've built 40 schools versus 176 that they've closed. Mr. Speaker, with regard to capital, we have record investment in capital, over \$700 million on school projects big and small: 43 major capital projects, 22 brand new schools in this budget, 25 major renovations and additions, 9 joint-use schools. Mr. Speaker, there is an additional \$96.2 million in this budget which provides for four new projects, seven ongoing projects such as Langenburg and Gravelbourg, 29 relocatables, a 23 per cent increase in preventative maintenance funding.

I appreciate the needs and strains that are on with our school boards. We will meet with the school boards. We'll identify issues. We will work our way through those things. But, Mr. Speaker, I'll tell you one thing we're not going to do, and that's take lessons from the people over there that have the most hideous record . . .

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, school boards are also frustrated that the new funding formula hasn't been completed, meaning that they can't make long-term plans for improved student outcomes. That's their words.

But they're especially frustrated about this lean initiative clawback of that government that was foisted upon them without warning, without consultation. The government, that government, has spent already \$1.2 million on lean consultants in education alone, instead of fixing the basics like overcrowded classrooms, repairing the schools that need to be repaired, or making sure that students have the one-on-one supports and attention that they deserve. And now this government has forced the lean initiative clawback on to classrooms and on to schools.

To the Premier: when will he stop this nonsense? When will he start listening to school boards? When will he start focusing on what matters in classrooms across Saskatchewan?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, I continue to be surprised that the members across have the ability to stand up and ask questions. Mr. Speaker, the member for Saskatoon Centre rises in the House almost every day asking for there to be a sector plan, a strategic plan. Our sector partners began work on a plan long before he asked for it. Now there is a sector plan, a strategic plan. It was created, Mr. Speaker, by using lean methodology.

Last Thursday the member for Regina Rosemont said, what we do know is where they've been working and looking at reviews under lean process, they haven't taken into account any of the stuff that really matters in education. Well, Mr. Speaker, is he saying to the trustees of the 28 school boards, to the SSBA, to LEADS [League of Educational Administrators, Directors and Superintendents], to the STF [Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation] that the sector plan is not significant, doesn't work? No, that is something that was built by and for the sector. They have produced it themselves, Mr. Speaker. We accept it. We will continue to work our way through it, and we're not taking lessons from those people.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, we see someone here in this Assembly as minister who won't take responsibility for his file. We see it with someone who doesn't understand his standardized testing agenda and the cost for students. We see it here when he's unwilling to listen and work with school boards. And he pretends to hold up his plan as something that suggests that he's finally learned and willing to work with school boards.

Yet he received a letter yesterday that takes him to task for failing to listen with vital educational partners in this province. That minister, to get up in this Assembly and to pretend somehow that his record in education is a good one, is an embarrassment for all Saskatchewan people.

The lean initiative clawback that was foisted upon school divisions will have consequences for all schools, all students across Saskatchewan. And my question to the Minister of

Education: why didn't he have the integrity and decency to be clear with school boards before the budget?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, the member opposite wants to talk about integrity and decency in how you treat the school division. They're the folks that gave zero after zero to the school division. Mr. Speaker, the members on this House, we've responded to the needs of the school divisions in our province by increasing operating funding by over 26 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, there are now more teachers in our classrooms than ever. We have, since forming government, increased regular teachers by 566; student support teachers, 159 more; psychologists up 37 per cent; speech language pathologists up 26 per cent; social workers up 12 per cent. And when it comes to helping immigrant students this year, the number of English as an additional language teachers is up nearly 17 per cent. They always talk about educational assistants — 2007 there was 3,546, now 3,601. There are more EAs [educational assistants] and more professional supports in the classrooms today than there was ever was under the NDP. We will take no lessons from that side of the House, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I would like to caution the member for Regina Rosemont to carefully choose his words and not to attempt to bring members into disrepute.

As well, next week is a week off. And I think it's probably appropriate, as members are getting very testy in here, including the Speaker. So when you return to your constituencies, please, Saturday morning, step outside on your front step and take a deep breath and enjoy the fresh air, and come back with a better attitude, including the Speaker.

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

The Speaker: — I recognize the chairman of Human Services Committee.

Standing Committee on Human Services

Mr. Kirsch: — Mr. Speaker, I am instructed by the Standing Committee on Human Services to report Bill No. 123, *The Miscellaneous Statutes Repeal Act, 2013 (No. 2)* without amendment.

The Speaker: — When shall this bill be considered in Committee of the Whole? I recognize the Minister of Health.

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

The Speaker: — The minister has requested leave to waive consideration of Committee of the Whole on Bill No. 123, *The Miscellaneous Statutes Repeal Act, 2013 (No. 2)*. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — I recognize the minister.

THIRD READINGS

Bill No. 123 — *The Miscellaneous Statutes Repeal Act, 2013 (No. 2)*

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — 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 that Bill No. 123, *The Miscellaneous Statutes Repeal 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.

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

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

The Speaker: — I recognize the chairman of the Human Services Committee.

Standing Committee on Human Services

Mr. Kirsch: — Mr. Speaker, I'm instructed by the Standing Committee on Human Services to report Bill No. 124, *The Miscellaneous Statutes Repeal (Consequential Amendment) Act, 2013 (No. 2)*. This is a bilingual bill without amendment.

The Speaker: — The member has requested leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on Bill No. 124, *The Miscellaneous Statutes Repeal (Consequential Amendment) Act, 2013 (No. 2)* and that the bill be now read the third time. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — The minister may proceed.

[11:00]

THIRD READINGS

Bill No. 124 — *The Miscellaneous Statutes Repeal (Consequential Amendment) Act, 2013/Loi de 2013 portant modifications corrélatives à la loi intitulée The Miscellaneous Statutes Repeal Act, 2013 (No. 2)*

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Mr. Speaker, I'm requesting leave to waive consideration of Committee of the Whole on this bill and that the bill be now read a third time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the minister that Bill No. 124, *The Miscellaneous Statutes Repeal (Consequential 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.

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

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

The Speaker: — I recognize the chairman of the Human Services Committee.

Standing Committee on Human Services

Mr. Kirsch: — Mr. Speaker, I'm instructed by the Standing Committee on Human Services to report Bill No. 127, *The Mental Health Services Amendment Act, 2013* without amendment.

The Speaker: — When shall this bill be considered in Committee of the Whole?

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

The Speaker: — The minister has requested leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole ... [inaudible interjection] ... Does the member for Sutherland have something to say? The minister has requested leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on Bill No. 127, *The Mental Health Services Amendment Act, 2013* and that the bill now be read the third time. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — The minister may proceed.

THIRD READINGS

Bill No. 127 — *The Mental Health Services Amendment Act, 2013*

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — 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 that Bill No. 127, *The Mental Health Services Amendment Act, 2013* 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.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SEVENTY-FIVE MINUTE DEBATE

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

Lean Initiative

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to participate in the 75-minute debate once again. At the end of my remarks, I'll be moving a debate that will condemn this government for pouring untold millions of dollars into its wasteful and misguided lean pet project, for ignoring serious concerns from front-line workers, and for plowing ahead with its plans to impose lean on our hospitals, seniors' care facilities, home care programs, and schools. So I will be moving that at the end of my remarks, Mr. Speaker.

What this is yet again — and we've had this discussion over the course of the session here, Mr. Speaker — this is a debate about priorities. It's about investing in front-line health care workers, those who actually provide the services to the people of Saskatchewan, or investing in untold millions of dollars to have a high-priced American consultant to look at our watch and tell us what time it is, Mr. Speaker.

This is a debate about providing the best possible care for our citizens in long-term care, most of whom are seniors, not all of them, but most of them who are seniors who built this province, or do we spend our money on a \$40 million-plus contract with John Black and Associates? Do we spend our money on \$17 million a year on kaizen promotion offices? Do we spend our money on \$3,500-a-day senseis who also need to fly here to the tune of approximately \$2,000 for a flight, or is this about again making sure that seniors in long-term care have what they need? We have had this ongoing discussion, again this is a debate about priorities.

We can take ourselves back about a year ago when Carrie Klassen came to the legislature and started talking about some of the concerns that she'd been hearing in long-term care or her experiences where her mother was, Mr. Speaker. This government initially stubbornly dismissed Carrie Klassen's concerns and many other people who'd come forward to talk about their concerns around staffing issues in our long-term care facilities, Mr. Speaker. There were story after story of individuals who are not getting the care that they needed, Mr. Speaker.

So this government, in fact after being pressed, initially saying, nothing to see here. There's no problem in our long-term care facilities. Our seniors are being well looked after. And in fact

after being pressed and pressed here in this House and by others, Mr. Speaker, the government agreed to do a CEO [chief executive officer] tour. So they sent their CEOs out to long-term care facilities, Mr. Speaker, to see if there was in fact a problem.

Part of the problem with that tour though, Mr. Speaker, even the way in which they conducted it identified some glaring problems. But you know, you talk to special care aides or people on the front lines who said they didn't have an opportunity to talk to the CEO. I've talked to residents who've said they didn't have an opportunity to have input into that. So a whole piece of work was missing around . . . further what was going on in our long-term care homes.

But what did we find in those long-term care homes, Mr. Speaker? I think it's important to put on the record once again some of the issues. Again when we're talking about priorities, do we spend on front-line health care, Mr. Speaker, or do we spend untold millions on a contract with an American consultant and millions of dollars to bring a Japanese sensei here to have our health care administrators taking 35 per cent of their day — our well-paid health care administrators taking 35 per cent of their time — to learn how to do lean, Mr. Speaker?

So I just want to talk a little bit about what's going on in some of our seniors' care homes. I think it's important to put it on the record here. And I have quite a long list.

At Central Parkland Lodge in Lanigan, one of the issues that came out, Mr. Speaker, in that CEO tour, a staff member commented that they sometimes struggled with priorities. For example, when feeding one resident and another rings to be toileted, they don't know if they should interrupt the meal which in turn gets cold for that resident or if they should go toilet the person who may soil themselves. The reality, again, staffing levels were the main issue.

In Stensrud Lodge in Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker, some of the comments that came out, they can hear people crying for help in the evening because of staffing shortages: 1 to 25 care aid ratio on evenings, Mr. Speaker.

And as someone who has parents who are aging, in their early 80s, Mr. Speaker, as I've said in here, I'm very happy that they're still at home and are still going strong. But this is something that is front and centre for me as some of their contemporaries are not faring quite as well as my parents, Mr. Speaker.

Sherbrooke Community Centre, which works on the Eden philosophy, Mr. Speaker, Sherbrooke is the sought-after long-term care facility, Mr. Speaker, in Saskatchewan and I might say the province, Mr. Speaker. It is a place where you want your loved ones to go. And in fact, at Sherbrooke they say the main issue is staffing levels, Mr. Speaker.

Spruce Manor Special Care Home in Dalmeny: staffing levels are inadequate to meet the needs of the residents due to the increased level of acuity. And another comment that came out of Spruce Manor, Mr. Speaker, was they think that the care their loved one is getting is very good, however there isn't enough because the staff are way too busy.

Mr. Speaker, I can go on here with . . . Again, we talk about priorities: \$40 million-plus and the ticker continues to rise, Mr. Speaker, or money on front-line health care workers. We've got, at the Goodwill Manor in Duck Lake, residents notice staff shortages and often have to wait up to 30 minutes after they ring their call bell. Continent residents have soiled themselves because of it. Saskatoon Extencicare, sometimes they need to get up at 6:30 a.m., even though breakfast isn't until 8 a.m.

Oliver Lodge in Saskatoon, there were a few different issues identified here, Mr. Speaker. Residents notice staff shortages and often have to wait up to 30 minutes after they ring their call bell. Continent residents have soiled themselves. Thirty, 40, 50, 60, 90 minutes go by, waiting to go the bathroom. Very great loss of dignity when you have to just go to the bathroom in your pad.

One woman, this, Mr. Speaker, absolutely breaks my heart: "My husband was taught when he was a child not to pee his pants and now they are telling him to just go in his pants. He tries to go to the bathroom by himself, but they tell him he is at risk of falling."

Parkridge, Mr. Speaker: residents don't get their teeth cleaned regularly. Shaving is rushed, causing neck rashes. Only one bath per week. Walking program is neglected, and there is a lack of physio. They have a really nice pool, but staff don't have the time to do therapy in it with residents, Mr. Speaker.

And here again at Parkridge . . . And Parkridge, I might note, Mr. Speaker, is the only facility in Saskatoon owned by the health region. All the other facilities are affiliates, Mr. Speaker. So Parkridge, the reality is, gets the highest, they get the most difficult cases, Mr. Speaker, that affiliates can turn down. At Parkridge, and I understand where this is coming from, if you're understaffed and you have the highest level of need, Mr. Speaker, for your residents and you don't have the proper staff, it's incredibly demoralizing, Mr. Speaker. And at Parkridge Centre, at Parkridge Centre, morale of some staff is very low because of the shortage which affects residents. So when you have staff, Mr. Speaker, whose morale is falling, it does in fact have an impact on residents.

Porteous Lodge in Saskatoon need more people to answer buzzers. Average wait is 40 minutes. Someone actually timed it. So this goes on and on and on, Mr. Speaker. There are many, many issues around lack of staffing. We've heard that in our long-term care facilities. And I've mentioned some of those. Those priorities we've heard here in this House.

We've brought forward the issue of Ron Caron who has been living in the Dubé Centre. And he does now have a placement at Parkridge. Ron Caron suffers from dementia. He's 65 years old and has some very serious issues with dementia. And he didn't make it onto the long-term care list initially, Mr. Speaker, because he has such high needs. So instead he was living in a mental health centre, the Dubé mental health centre in Saskatoon, which is an acute psychiatric in-patient facility, Mr. Speaker — not the place for a senior with dementia. And it was after pushing here that this man has finally been offered long-term care and one-on-one support in Parkridge.

But he is not alone, Mr. Speaker. I hear over and over again that

many people, the more challenging and complex cases, don't make it onto the list, Mr. Speaker. Because when they're being assessed, the assessors know that there's no place with some of these complex and challenging needs to go. So we have people languishing in facilities that are not homes, Mr. Speaker.

Again this is a debate, this is a debate, Mr. Speaker, about priorities. Forty million-plus, other untold millions being spent on a lean pet project versus our hospitals, Mr. Speaker. We've had stories in the House. Darren and Kerrie Anderson came forward and talked a little bit about their experience, about Kerrie who needed regular pain medication and was getting it once every three or four hours if she was lucky because of a shortage of staff, Mr. Speaker. This is a woman who, if her pain got out of control, it was very hard to get back on top of it.

We heard, Mr. Speaker, around infrastructure. We talked today a little bit about City Hospital being underutilized. RUH has some serious challenges. At RUH, Mr. Speaker, in one of the rooms, they were using a urine sample bottle as a call bell. A urine sample bottle with something shaky in it, Mr. Speaker, giving that to a patient, saying, shake that, shake that sample container if you need help, Mr. Speaker.

So this again is a debate about priorities. Do we spend it on lean, which is what this government has chosen to do, or do we spend it on much needed repairs and on, most importantly, front-line staff who provide the services to our citizens, Mr. Speaker?

I had an occasion to talk to . . . The other thing the Andersons brought forward is the disgusting state of the Royal University Hospital. They talked about . . . And they are not the only ones. We had people here in the fall, a former nurse talking about the conditions, the cleanliness, or the lack thereof at Royal University Hospital, Mr. Speaker, because of a lack of cleaning staff, Mr. Speaker.

I had the occasion on Friday to be at St. Paul's Hospital and was chatting with a nurse there, and she had said the same thing is going on at St. Paul's Hospital. She's been at that hospital for many years, since the '80s, Mr. Speaker, and has said cleanliness is at an absolute low, Mr. Speaker.

This, Mr. Speaker, is a debate about making sure people have the basic needs, young people have the basic needs to live their fullest potential, Mr. Speaker.

[11:15]

So this government started out with lean in health care, and now as we've heard today and in the past few weeks, the movement to lean in education, Mr. Speaker. Last week we had some occupational therapists here. Three school divisions in the last year have cut their occupational therapists. And what do occupational therapists do, Mr. Speaker? They help individuals with their daily functions, Mr. Speaker, kids who have fetal alcohol spectrum disorder and autism spectrum disorder.

I had an opportunity to chat with a mother whose son is on the autism spectrum, Mr. Speaker, and had the benefit of occupational therapy this last year. One of the issues with autism, there can be sensory issues. And this individual boy had

trouble putting on clothing, irritation with fabrics and tags, those kinds of things. And it was a huge struggle for this mother. The occupational therapist helped work with the family and give them some tools to help this little boy. And their occupational therapy services were cut, Mr. Speaker. And this mother has seen her son progress with the services that were once provided, and now has regressed. And it was a difficult conversation to have with a mother who just wants the best for her child and is not getting it, Mr. Speaker.

I know that this legislature can be a bit of a bubble, and sometimes we wonder if we bring forward . . . I've never had the opportunity to be in government, but in opposition I know how it works. I know that we hear from people, and we are expressing the concerns that we bring forward. We bring forward the concerns that we hear from people, Mr. Speaker. It's not us saying these things. We are the voice of people with whom we've had conversations and discussions, Mr. Speaker.

But the reality is sometimes it's important to step back and check in, and I like to do that on a regular basis. Last week I had the opportunity to speak to a nurse, a doc, a physiotherapist, and a pharmacist, all who've worked in the Saskatoon Health Region for decades combined, Mr. Speaker, and they've reflected the concerns that we heard today from Dr. Sharma that health care in this province is in fact is getting worse, Mr. Speaker. We see a decline of services in terms of staffing, Mr. Speaker. We have difficulty with infrastructure, shortage of spaces, Mr. Speaker.

The reality is we bring forward concerns that we hear from people, Mr. Speaker, and people are telling us that this government's lean pet project is failing, Mr. Speaker, people who take great pride in their work but see huge struggles under this particular government's approach with their lean pet project.

Again this is about priorities. Do we invest in the services for our people, Mr. Speaker, making sure they've got front-line services and making sure that the infrastructure works so people aren't using urine sample bottles for call bells, Mr. Speaker? Instead of spending . . . But this government has chosen to spend 40 million-plus on an American consultant.

So I would like to move the motion:

That this Assembly condemns this government for pouring untold millions of dollars into its wasteful and misguided lean pet project, for ignoring serious concerns from front-line workers, and for plowing ahead with its plans to impose lean on our hospitals, senior care facilities, home care programs, and schools.

Thank you.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the member for Saskatoon Riversdale:

That this Assembly condemns this government for pouring untold millions of dollars into its wasteful and misguided lean pet project, for ignoring serious concerns from front-line workers, and for plowing ahead with its plans to impose lean on our hospitals, senior care facilities, home

care programs, and schools.

Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the Government Deputy Whip.

Mr. Makowsky: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to join the debate today. It's very similar to the one we had two weeks ago that the opposition brought across. My remarks today will focus around efficiencies and better care, and that's what the lean system's all about, Mr. Speaker.

I saw an article recently, and I think it's no secret to the members on both sides that there is questions about long-term sustainability, the physical capacity of the taxpayers of Canada to continue to pay for the system we have in place. Certainly with the population, demographics are getting older. The people in our country are getting older. Diagnostics tests are becoming more expensive and many procedures are becoming more expensive.

So I found this article from the Canadian Institute of Actuaries. And I don't believe it's a think tank, a partisan think tank. It just looks strictly at the numbers, and the title of it was *Canada's Current Health Care System is Not Sustainable; Action Needed to Maintain the System's Survival*. So I'll quote into the record here what this article said. It's from late 2013, "Actuarial Research Shows Just How Fast Action is Needed," and it continues:

. . . analysis of the Canadian health care system concludes that, at current growth rates, costs will eventually be at levels such that the provinces and territories will be required to spend the major part of their budgets on health care — at the expense of other programs such as education, social welfare and infrastructure. Using the current Canada Health Transfer (CHT), health care expenditures will equal 97 per cent of total revenues available to provinces and territories at the end of 25 years, compared to 44 per cent in 2012.

And it continues:

Proposed changes to the CHT, effective April 2014, will exacerbate the problem. Canada's current health care system is not sustainable over a 25-year horizon unless significant actions are taken, including changes which substantially reduce the increase in the costs of health care, boosting GDP growth and raising taxes/fees or investing in preventative approaches.

I think the people of the province have done a great job of helping to grow the GDP [gross domestic product] of the province. We've seen great news there for the last number of years — a growing province, a growth economy. Certainly that's helping, but that's not enough. So it states, and I think it's generally assumed, that increases in health care spending of 8, 9, 10 per cent year over year likely in the long term aren't sustainable.

So I know, I believe Ontario and Quebec already, they spend 50 per cent or just over, of GDP on health services. And here in the West, it's closer to 40 per cent across the board. So certainly I think you have to be smarter with money, Mr. Speaker. We

have to be . . . The idea, I believe anyway, that they just spend more, spend more per capita, write the cheque, put the blindfold on, and everything will just simply take care of itself, I hope those days are over.

And I know our friends across the way, they have a bit of a checkered past when it comes to dealing or thinking about efficiencies. And I look to the tree booklet here, Mr. Speaker, the tree booklet written by the current Leader of the Opposition for the last provincial election, and on page 12 and 13 they talk, he talks about building efficient health system, address the rising costs of prescription drugs.

So those are things that . . . But then at the same time, he believes in those at that time, but during the last election campaign we saw a \$5 billion spending spree, certainly a lot of that on health, Mr. Speaker, with the orange credit card. And that would have been a big, again one of those big increases we talk about year over year over year. And we could do that. In the short term we could do that. We could use the orange credit card and, you know, increase spending exponentially. But how's that going to look in 10 years, 15 years, 20 years?

So, Mr. Speaker . . . And also most recently there was an article in the editorial of the Saskatoon *StarPhoenix* on Thursday, March 6, and it again . . . Well here's what it said in regard to the Urgent Issues Action Fund. I quote:

For Mr. Broten to say that the government should have forked over \$18.5 million in order to meet every request made by the regions suggests that he's simply trying to pander to public sentiment in a sensitive area. Either that, or he demonstrates a reckless approach to spending public money that raises questions about how the NDP would run the province if he's given the reins.

So in the tree booklet he says we've got to find efficiencies. But later, earlier this year, he says fork over the cash; sign a blank cheque. So we're not sure where they stand there.

But talking about the lean process, Mr. Speaker, it's interesting. The NDP have had sort of two rounds in their past. In their 16 years of government they had two rounds of lean. The first one, it was not the current edition of lean, it was an acronym that I believe was thought at the time . . . I don't know if it was officially used, but lean meant leave everything annihilated now. There was massive cuts, Mr. Speaker, throughout the '90s and even the early 2000: 1,200 long-term care beds cut, 19 long-term care facilities cut, 52 hospitals cut, the Plains Health Centre cut, thousands and thousands of health care workers cut or laid off, Mr. Speaker — nurses, doctors, chiropractors, pharmacists, all sorts of health care workers, Mr. Speaker.

And when I'm out on the doorsteps, Mr. Speaker, talking to people around my constituency, yes, when we're talking about health care everybody asks, why did you close the Plains? Why was the Plains closed? It was basically a new facility on the outskirts of town. People from all over southern Saskatchewan knew where it was, could find it easily. It was right on the outskirts of town. All single rooms. Mr. Speaker, it was a wonderful facility for our province. The NDP cut that too. That was their version of lean: cut everything, Mr. Speaker.

Back in the early days of the previous NDP government, Mr. Speaker, in the year 1992 . . . I know the member earlier talked about the staffing levels, the staffing levels in health facilities, Mr. Speaker. Well in '92 there was 141 graduates at the Wascana Campus of SIAST [Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology] here in Regina, Mr. Speaker.

Now can anyone guess how many people were hired from out of 141? Was it 100? No. Seventy-five? Fifty? No, Mr. Speaker. There was four people hired by that NDP government out of 141 potential nurses that graduated from that program, Mr. Speaker. So you wonder what . . . There's basically a generation lost of nurses at that time. And those weren't four permanent full-time jobs, Mr. Speaker. They were temporary workers, so they had no chance of . . . Well they had little chance of supporting their family, paying off student loans, etc., to make a career.

Now this was great news for Alberta. This was good news for Texas, Saudi Arabia. A lot of those nurses went there, Mr. Speaker. So what ended up happening? The taxpayers of Saskatchewan helped those other jurisdictions find nurses. And that's what was happening and certainly part of the greater more out-migration.

What happened then, as those nurses were being cut? Within the units in the hospitals themselves, Mr. Speaker, there was a thing called bumping where more senior nurses could bump other nurses out of a job because there was cuts happening. So what would happen on a unit? One of your co-workers, one of your friends, somebody you've worked with for a long time, they'd just get bumped. And you could do that to your friend. So that's what was happening under the NDP policy decision that took place, Mr. Speaker. And of course all that, all the bumping, all the cuts, all the no hiring, led to the 1999 strike.

Of course we all remember those days, Mr. Speaker. You know, nurses are certainly the most dedicated professionals out there. They care so much about their patients. So for them to go on a strike after they were legislated back to work, by the way, by the NDP after six hours — after six hours — imagine how up against it, you know, how disrespected they felt at that time, Mr. Speaker, for them to not be able to look after their patients. It must have been a really, really tough time for the nursing profession at that time for them to walk out under those circumstances. They were very tough days back then, and we all remember them well.

And the second iteration of lean, Mr. Speaker, was in 2005. The member from Lakeview, he was the Health minister. He brought it in in Five Hills. He used approximately the same amount of percentage of funds, Mr. Speaker, and that was working well. Now the NDP didn't decide to continue . . .

The Speaker: — Time has elapsed. Next member. I recognize the Opposition Whip.

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, to join in on the 75-minute debate and on the motion that . . . my motion. And I guess, you know, when you look at the lean and you look at the lean process and some of the challenges, and my colleague before me, the member from Riversdale made it very clear why the lean is failing and why this government is taking taxpayers'

dollars.

Now let me get into it. And I'll talk about what needs to happen, what needs to be done for Saskatchewan residents, what they want, what they deserve. It's their tax dollars. But let me talk about some of the challenges that we're hearing.

You know, you look at our seniors, those men and women, those seniors who earned the respect, their family members who think highly of them, who love them and want the best of care for them. We look at what's going on in this province with seniors' care, and I want to talk about the challenges. And we've raised the concerns, whether it's been petitions for northern Saskatchewan supporting the health regions, supporting the communities, supporting families who have been saying that their loved ones deserve better in the communities of northern Saskatchewan and in the rest of the province where there's areas.

[11:30]

But I represent the Cumberland constituents. I want to talk a little bit about it because, Mr. Speaker, that's important. And I'll talk about the millions that this government is wasting of taxpayers' dollars, Mr. Speaker. I'll talk about that. I'll talk about that clearly.

Now, Mr. Speaker, what we see is such a need, critical shortage of space for long-term care beds in the North in the health region. Clearly, clearly the people of the Cumberland constituency, the people of the North that are in the health region, the health region clearly wanted to see more beds because of the Croft report of 2009 that came out publicly in 2010 that identified a code red critical shortage of beds for seniors' long-term care in the health region in the North, clearly.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we waited to see, would this government respond? Yes, with petitions. And I want to thank the people back home who raised a concern, whether it was the good work that was done by the leadership, by community members, by seniors who signed the petition, who raised their concerns over their loved ones saying, I don't want my grandparent, I don't want my mushom, my kohkom, my mom or dad, I don't want our loved ones leaving the North where they're used to the culture, where they're used to the language, where they can be with their family, Mr. Speaker. You know, we talk about that, the government. It's a start. Five hundred thousand for planning is a start, but there's so much to do. And people were expecting and I was expecting an announcement of a facility.

But they'll do the good work with the money, the health region and I know the volunteers that are going to work hard to do the plan. And they'll do the tough work, Mr. Speaker. They'll get the job done because they'll do their part. This government needs to do their part and give them a facility once and for all — not just planning, commit to a facility. And that is something I know we will be working hard on with the health region, the leaders in the community, residents, with our seniors.

And I think of some of the challenges that the seniors have had and the experiences. It's been terrible. When you take a loved one and you take them hours away where their family cannot

travel to see them, that facility could have been built with the money that they've wasted, of taxpayers' money, money of northern Saskatchewan residents, of southern, of this province who have worked hard. Seniors have done their part. They have paid their taxes, paid their dues.

And what does this government do? It's focused on lean, a process that isn't working. It's failing miserably. But you know what? The government stubbornly will not listen to front-line workers. They won't listen to families. They just push ahead. They push ahead: lean, lean, lean.

And you know, Mr. Speaker, the frustration out there within the workers and seeing how they talk about being bullied and being scared. You know what? Clearly, Mr. Speaker, we see some of the challenge. And I know we've had family members coming here and, Mr. Speaker, those family members have shared their concerns, their frustration.

And you know, it's about safety. And I talk about the nurses and the front-line workers talking about safety of our patients, safety of our loved ones. And what this government does, it says, oh yes, yes, yes. No, we're doing such a great job on the lean. This lean, everyone's buying into it. Well news flash, Mr. Speaker: this government is failing the residents of this province when it comes to the lean, wasting taxpayers' dollars where they could go to so many different areas in the health . . . [inaudible].

And talking about front-line workers, we could have more front-line workers with the millions, millions that they're paying to a US consultant, with the millions of dollars that they're opening up certain offices with the lean to make sure our health regions are complying, and pushing ahead on that. And it doesn't matter who raises it with them. They are so stubborn.

And, Mr. Speaker, when you talk about patients, whether they're pressing a call button because they're expecting someone to come, the front-line workers are doing their part again. The resources are not being provided to them to make sure that our seniors are getting the service and I guess the needs that they're looking for and have come to expect. They have done their part. And when a family presses a call button because of an emergency in a patient's room and nobody responds to it because they're busy, they're tied up because they don't have . . . And when you find out later why, because they're rushing around because they are so overworked.

So when we talk about the money that the government's wasting, and I tell you, tax dollars, wasting on the lean process, use those millions of dollars of taxpayers' dollars to cover off the shortfalls, to give the support to the front-line workers to make sure facilities are there for our seniors, to make sure, to make sure that our loved ones — our loved ones, our loved ones — are getting what they deserve and what they need, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Now we've seen a lot of the challenges and frustrations from family members who have come to this Legislative Assembly with their concerns. And what have they got from this government? Nothing. This government just kind of ignores them, doesn't listen to the concerns, whether it's the front-line

workers' families who are raising real concerns about safety, about patient safety. Do they not understand?

You know, we have our own family members — myself — who is frustrated watching what's going on when our loved ones are in a health care system. You know, and I think about a family and good friends of mine. They were in a health facility in Saskatoon. And my good friend's wife said to me, Doyle, we've been here 30 days. I know they talk about the cuts, the cuts, and they're realizing these rooms are filthy. They just don't have enough staff to cover them. So that individual was making sure that her husband's room was clean, and that shouldn't be happening.

But we've got money, millions to waste on the lean everywhere. It seems like every ministry is getting involved, and they're pushing it. And we could be using those dollars, clearly, those dollars to take care of the needs of Saskatchewan residents. They expect proper health care. They expect proper care for our loved ones. And unfortunately, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you know, that is not happening because this government's got its idea, and the Premier and his government has an idea. They're so focused on this US consultant, spending millions and millions of taxpayers' dollars.

And I think at the end of the day, Mr. Deputy Speaker, yes, there's going to be the voters. And it's going to come down to voting. People will look, people will look at that, and people will look at that, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And there might be some leaning going on on the other side. The members may see . . . The taxpayers may show them about leaning some of those members because of not listening to the safety.

Very clear, Mr. Deputy Speaker, very clear, the needs are out there. They are being identified. And government can't . . . We've raised them. Our leader has got up in this House day after day, raising the concerns of Saskatchewan families, whether it's a mother, a father, whether it's of a grandparent, a parent. Our leader has raised those concerns very clear. And you know, I talk about that.

When you raise those concerns and a government ignores them and does not even pay attention and mocks things and then talks about all the members over here, and you're down to . . . [inaudible] . . . When you mock, there might be a little bit of leaning going on on that side of the House, that the taxpayers will say enough is enough. You're not wasting.

And people are paying attention. Everywhere I go, people are talking about it, and they are very concerned about it, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They want some action, and they do not want their tax dollars . . . They're hard-working. People work hard, and they are doing their part for this province, and they want their government to do their part. This government is failing them miserably, miserably, with taking money that individuals and families have worked hard to provide for this government in the coffers. And they waste it. Their priorities are truly not on Saskatchewan citizens. It's on their priority with their consultant, with their lean process. They've bought into this, and it's doing . . . [inaudible].

At this point, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know I'm going to be supporting my colleague in her motion forward to get . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — The member's time has expired. I recognize the member from Moose Jaw North.

Mr. Michelson: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. I realize from the opposite side of this House that there is some disgruntledness, but I can only say that this has been told at least a dozen times in this very House by our Premier, by our Health minister, that lean has saved already more than it's cost. It's saved more than it's cost. For some reason they just don't get it over there.

And there's so much to talk about when we start talking about the lean process and the advantage of it, the health care that goes into it, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's not just about saving money, although that's a big part of it, but it's better health care for the people of this province.

And it's always hard to know where to start out but, you know, where I feel like starting out from is to apologize for this motion that we're debating today. You know it's a blatant motion of irresponsibility and ignorance in my opinion, their narrow-minded statement of little thought and little consideration. It's a negative suggestion from negative thinking and no thought of improvement for future growth and future health care needs, an understanding of a process, and the betterment for the people of this province in health care and other initiatives that we're . . . [inaudible] . . . they're implying, with the lean principles.

But, Mr. Speaker, perhaps it's not hard to understand, coming from the limited mindset of non-progressive people who choose to merely exist rather than think of progression and growth and expansion and good living, those who would rather tear down this province, those who would rather do it with ignorance and no sense of advancement rather than build and prosper and fulfill.

Now we have not needed to look far to the record of those of little thought and no planning. Their government's priorities when they were in government was not to build. It was not to grow. It was to close 52 hospitals.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we know that the doctors left this province. The nurses left because they had to go to different jurisdictions to do their chosen careers. When we look at the record of the NDP, they lost over 1,160 health care workers in the last four, five years of their government, including 173 doctors, including a loss of 455 nurses, 155 pharmacists. Pharmacists leaving this province, that's even further removed from the health care providers, but they chose to leave because of the actions of the former NDP government.

That government promised to cut surgical wait-lists by 30 per cent back in 1999. What happened? Well the wait-lists actually increased by 61 per cent. Like I said, they eliminated 52 hospitals. They eliminated 19 long-term care facilities. They eliminated 1,200 long-term care beds. They didn't even look after seniors. They did not increase the seniors' income plan for 16 years. Mr. Speaker, when we look at their record, we can see that their whole idea of cutting health costs was simply closing facilities.

So what happens? Well we lose doctors. We lose professionals.

And the length of stay in hospitals, the length of waiting lists increased. And that was their record. So no wonder they don't want to look at something that's more achievable, something that's . . . And I hate to use the cliché of thinking out of the box, but that's what this is all about. It's about ways of doing better things more efficiently. That's what the lean principle is all about. And they just don't follow it. They just don't understand it, and they don't want to understand it.

You know, when we look at the record of our government, the blood and plasma products, the lean improvement projects, a saving of \$35 million. That's just since 2010, \$35 million. And they're worrying about \$4 million for a learning process? The Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region mental health and addiction clinic reduced the number of cancellation appointments from 42 per cent to zero. The Regina health . . . also the cancellations of MRIs [magnetic resonance imaging] went from 12 to 1 per week, allowing to do 650 more scans each year.

The Saskatchewan . . . [inaudible] . . . control laboratory cut turnaround times for tests, resulting to 40 hours, from 40 hours to 12 hours. The emergency room of the Royal University Hospital in Saskatoon reduced the number of patients leaving without being treated by 66 per cent.

Those are just some of the initiatives this government has brought, and it's all to do with the lean process. Time spent by ambulance staffers waiting in ERs [emergency room] was reduced by 90 per cent — think of the cost savings there, Mr. Speaker — which resulted in a 67 per cent increase in productivity for ambulance staff.

100 per cent of the patients receiving care in the Regina Qu'Appelle in-patient mental health unit are now connected to an appropriate community service before they leave the unit. Previously only 79 per cent were. The Royal University Hospital in Saskatoon reduced the time patients spent waiting for X-rays from one hour to only 22 minutes. Those are just some of the savings received.

[11:45]

In Moose Jaw, the operational efficiencies of \$85 million to \$160 million over 20 years will be obtained in the Moose Jaw Union Hospital replacement by using the lean principles. And, Mr. Speaker, if I could, I'd like to spend a little bit of time talking about the new hospital in Moose Jaw.

It is the first lean design probably in the country, at least in Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, there was great thought going into this hospital. In fact, just to go back a little bit, in 2007, two cabinet ministers that were with the NDP on this side couldn't even get an addition to the Moose Jaw Hospital, which was requested and needed for years. We're building it.

And this lean design for this new hospital, Mr. Speaker, a lot of thought, a lot of care has gone into this. They've spent a whole year in a warehouse setting up the lean design — how patients would come in, how they'd be handled, where the supplies are — and working toward a system that is different. Again the cliché of thinking out of the box so that patients would spend less time waiting, more time being treated and moved on. And from the efficiencies of the medical profession as well were

outstanding, as this design showed that they didn't have to run from one end to the other for products. The products would actually come to the patient, reducing the amount of hours that a patient would be there.

And, Mr. Speaker, just I do believe it was two weeks ago, I happened to be in the hospital as it is now as they're implementing more of the lean processes. You no longer have to come into the hospital and take a ticket and sit down, wait for your number to come, get some answers. All I needed was a blood test. When I got to the front desk, she said, well you just go right back to the lab. Thereby even 20 minutes on me. Is that a big time? Well it is for me, but when you take that for the hundreds of people that go into that hospital every week, that's a fair savings in time and efficiencies that we've seen.

Mr. Speaker, just earlier this week the Health Foundation had an announcement for a new campaign for the Moose Jaw Health Foundation. During the foundation we happened, myself along with the member for Moose Jaw Wakamow, were sitting at a table with the head of communications, and I put the question to him quite point-blankly: what is lean doing there? And I said, I don't want any fancy answers; I just want to know the truth. What is your impression of lean? And he said — he called me Mr. Michelson — but he said, there is no way we could have brought this system together with the savings and the implementation of better quality service more efficiently if we didn't have the lean principles that were brought in from other jurisdictions. It's something we couldn't have thought by ourselves. And I thought that was very important to hear and very important to impress on what this government is doing, what lean is doing.

So when we come to a motion that is put before this Assembly today, I think it's rather disgusting that we should have to have this debated here when lean makes so much sense. And, Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity. I will not be supporting that motion. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: — Before I recognize the next speaker in this debate, I find it somewhat unusual for caucus members to be speaking and carrying on conversations and heckling their own members. If they would like to do that, I guess that's their choice, but when a member from the other side is speaking, I would ask that members on the opposite side at least tone down their conversation so that I have an opportunity to hear what that member is saying. I recognize the member for Regina Rosemont.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to enter the debate here today on a really important issue, and it's a motion that's been put forward by the member from Riversdale here today, and that motion is:

That this Assembly condemns this government for pouring untold millions of dollars into its wasteful and misguided lean pet project, for ignoring serious concerns from front-line health workers, for plowing ahead with its plans to impose lean on our hospitals, senior care facilities, home care programs, and schools.

That's the motion put forward by the member of Riversdale and it's one that I speak strongly in support of. It's a huge concern

when we see what's going on in front-line health care and seniors' care in our province right now, and the misguided priorities of this government who would rather shovel money over the border to an American contractor — ten and tens of millions of dollars, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if you can imagine — at a time where we have all the needs that we have here in our own province. Wasteful spending, Mr. Speaker, and the lack of ability for government to realize that they've been had in this contract and that they're bleeding dollars that really are needed on the front lines of education and front lines of health care.

We've heard about the costs, and the costs are huge. We've heard tens of millions of dollars in the contract. One contract, if you can imagine, Mr. Deputy Speaker, was at least \$40 million alone. I understand that there's a cost of up to \$17 million a year for something called lean kaizen offices across the province, Mr. Speaker. And it just speaks to the misguided priorities of this government, that they'd pump all that kind of money into these lean kaizen offices which aren't making the improvements that they should in health care, instead of to the services that people depend on, like emergency services in our emergency rooms here in Regina, and the emergency services right across the province, or the critical needs in seniors' care where quite simply the dignity just isn't being provided to those who deserve it, the seniors of the province. No action to meaningfully address those critical issues.

We see the shortage and pressures of being able to access a family doctor for so many. No real action to ensure proper succession of family doctors here in Regina, as an example. Yet they have untold millions of dollars to set up these kaizen offices all across the province, Mr. Speaker, to allow this lean takeover of medicare, Mr. Speaker, to allow now the rampant takeover of lean in education, Mr. Speaker, with millions of dollars being funnelled outside of the province and away from the priorities that really matter to Saskatchewan people.

We see it in education now as well, where we see the lean obsession of this Premier, the lean obsession of this Premier now starting to enter into education, run rampant within education.

We know just at the very initial start here, that it's at least \$1.2 million that they've spent and dedicated towards lean contractors in education at a time where they're forcing cuts and have forced cuts in many classrooms across Saskatchewan. And when they've been failing to get the job done for the students of Saskatchewan, and applying a model with this obsession of the Premier towards this lean kaizen model, that just doesn't fit well into areas like education, applying this simplistic, assembly-line model to something as human and something as real, something as dynamic as young people and students, Mr. Speaker. It just doesn't make sense.

And you know, when I look at this assembly-line model that they've imported from the States and from Japan, from different factories, and, Mr. Speaker, and applied it to our medicare system and now to our education system, you know, I remind members opposite that when we're dealing with the children of our province, when we are dealing with students in Saskatchewan, we're dealing with education, we have one chance to get it right.

And unlike, you know, what happens when actual cars for example come off a production line, in education we don't have the chance to recall students 5 or 10 or 15 years down the road. We have one chance to get it right, and it doesn't make sense to be applying a simplistic, assembly-line model to education and to health care, Mr. Speaker.

It's disappointing to see the government simply laugh off or heckle or something that's wasting tens of millions of dollars, Mr. Speaker. And it's also disappointing to see a government not be accountable to Saskatchewan people, not be transparent to Saskatchewan people, fail to stand up and provide answers to Saskatchewan people, and something that they really deserve.

We know that when we say there's untold millions, Mr. Speaker, we know the \$40 million to the American contractor, where we've heard many say that the Premier has been fleeced on this deal, Mr. Speaker. We know where there's the \$17 million, I believe annually, for the lean kaizen offices, Mr. Speaker. We know that they've actually been flying in . . . And I know many just can't get their heads around this and I certainly can't figure that out, Mr. Speaker, is that we have \$3,500 a day being paid for Japanese senseis, Mr. Speaker. And you know, I don't know. This is the province, these are the people of the province that have invented and built medicare, Mr. Speaker, and for the government now to be shipping out the dollars, to be outsourcing that system, and to be causing issues in those systems just doesn't make sense, Mr. Speaker.

In education we see that approach now as a big concern. We see it with this simplistic standardized testing agenda of government, where it's clear government doesn't understand what standardized tests are even all about, Mr. Speaker, where they are foisting upon Saskatchewan people, and wasting millions of dollars to do so, an outdated, old-fashioned testing agenda regime that just doesn't meet the needs of students or the realities of classrooms today.

And I note that the University of Saskatchewan has weighed in on this one, and this is their education foundations faculty at the University of Saskatchewan. They've written a letter to the Minister of Education that we believe should be listened to, the same sort of position that's already been taken by the University of Regina Education faculty. And I quote from that letter, "We would like you to take a firm stance and reject these plans entirely."

Mr. Speaker, that's the call from the University of Saskatchewan. It's past time that that Education minister and that that government, for one, learn what a standardized test is; secondly, why they're bad for Saskatchewan; and then reject the misguided agenda that they're on.

We know there's needs in classrooms all across Saskatchewan. We know that in so many circumstances they're under-resourced, overcrowded. We know that the students have been stripped of the one-on-one attention that they so deserve, that they need, Mr. Speaker. We know the government's failing to get the job done in repairing and building the schools that we need, Mr. Speaker. There are so many places for this government to be stepping up in a meaningful way. Where they should be stepping up in a meaningful way for education, they're just failing to do so.

I'll quote just a couple of other pieces from that letter from the University of Saskatchewan, of why standardized tests aren't the right way to go. I quote: "Standardized assessments have not been demonstrated to improve teaching or learning in any significant manner." That's Hout & Elliott from 2011.

"Standardized tests diverts teaching time and monetary resources away from student supports, teachable moments, and direct teacher-student contact time." That's Kohn of 2011, 2000; and Sahlberg of 2011.

They go on to say that "standardized tests that are used in some jurisdictions are considered to be racializing projects," Mr. Speaker. Burris, 2014.

It's clear that standardized tests are culturally insensitive. It's clear that they're unfair to students that are learning English for the first time, Mr. Speaker. And it doesn't make any sense at a diverse time in our province, a time where we have a growing population and many new Canadians, to be bringing forward an outdated system like this to the students of Saskatchewan instead of addressing what matters.

I'd like to address as well the lean efficiency clawback that we addressed here today that the school boards are now bracing themselves for. It's been foisted upon them. Again this government has failed to listen to key educational partners, the school boards of this province, and they're ripping dollars back from students, ripping dollars back from school divisions. And the school divisions themselves have called this the lean efficiency clawback, something that's going to come as a big consequence to students if not addressed by the minister opposite.

And it also again highlights the lack of respect of that government to work with their educational partners, the teachers, and in this case the school boards, Mr. Speaker, the failure to communicate with them, to work together. This should have been no surprise to the government, and the consequences of this poor decision should have been understood to government by those on the front lines, by those that know local needs best long before it was foisted upon school divisions.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support the motion. I stand opposed to the wasteful agenda of this government, their obsession with lean. And we call for those dollars to be diverted to where they matter in the lives of Saskatchewan people.

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

Mr. Hickie: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's a pleasure to once again stand in this House and take part in a debate, a debate that is so critical to the future of this province moving forward. And not just health care, but other mechanisms as well, other ministries as well in this government, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I want to start off by just talking about the last speaker from the opposition who said that, you know, we have one chance to get it right. The member from Regina Rosemont, it's interesting that he would say that because I think he fails to recognize in

2005 there was, in fact, a lean initiative under the NDP. And in fact it was a pilot project in the Five Hills Health Region, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And at the end of that pilot project, there is a quotation here:

The region has successfully pioneered the adoption of lean across all aspects of the health care enterprise. As a result of this success experienced in the Five Hills Health Region, the province is in a position to implement lean throughout the health care sector.

[12:00]

That's from 2005, Mr. Deputy Speaker, from a government at the time who would, by all appearances, be in favour of lean at that time. Now to be granted, lean may have changed its terminology and the methodology in how it actually instructs its leadership candidates to implement lean across a government kind of a wide spectrum. But you know, when we look at that start and the government back in 2005 was in support of lean, now we're hearing from the opposite side that members are opposed to lean because they're saying . . . and I believe the motion talks about the pouring of untold millions into lean projects.

Well you know what, Mr. Deputy Speaker? The question will have to be raised, what was the cost of lean at that time as a percentage of the budget for that particular health region? I'm sure at the time it was one of those things that the government thought it was money well spent. Because you know what? There's an analogy. There's a bit of a saying out there. It takes money to save money in some cases. You have to put dollars in. You have to train staff. You should always be asking yourself, how do we make things better? How can we improve something that's already in place? Not just to be complacent, and not just to look at complacency and say that that's the status quo, because it's not on.

You know, when we talk about complacency in the health care system specifically, there's a quote here from a nurse from March 24th, 2014 that says, and I want to say this here, quote it, and go on the records:

Lean is about no longer tolerating complacency. It gives us the tools that help us create a system to deliver safer, better quality care. As a nurse I fully support the implementation of lean in Saskatchewan health care.

That's from Amy Strudwick, a registered psychiatric nurse with 14 years of front-line experience in acute care in RQHR [Regina-Qu'Appelle Health Region]. So right there we hear from a front-life staff member who sees that lean is busting down the walls of complacency.

Now there are other accounts of how lean is being looked at across the sector from doctors and other nurses as well, as well as from administrators across the province. I'll get into those if I have time, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

But clearly we hear that to be complacent within the health care system — and I would argue across any other ministry — makes us as a government fail the people of this province who pay their tax dollars to see a government and a province thrive

and stay alive.

And on that measure, Mr. Deputy Speaker, why would we not check out different avenues, different ideas? Why not bring in something from a manufacturing sector, a private sector company, a corporation? See if we in fact could implement it into a government operation to see if it in fact can do one major thing, save taxpayers' dollars which can be reinvested in other measures to advance the life and well-being of those people who are paying taxes in this province, and people who want to move to this province. Because we see, they see economic development and prosperity like no other time before, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

You know, it's also funny that I . . . interesting, not so much funny, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That would be rude to say that. But interesting that the member from Cumberland rose in the House today to speak in favour of the NDP motion, which I will never support and cannot support that motion. But you know what, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that he talks about the need for long-term care facilities and a facility in La Ronge. And you know what, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that he asked for it for many years. And to his credit he is making his voice of the people up north heard. And you know what? The Minister of Health and the officials listened to that and brought it forward, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So I'm not sure why, but we all know that he voted against the budget which incorporates substantial funding for a long-term care facility in La Ronge.

And you know what, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that I believe, I believe that when we look at what's happening in our health care systems now, our new facility development, lean is a part of that. It's incorporated in the actual talk and the design and the overall embracing of the fundamentals of lean to make any new facility run better, service the patients better, and help the staff ensure that we have the best operations possible, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And on that point, to that point, the member from Cumberland should be very much aware that when the process is engaged in La Ronge that — because I saw what happened in Prince Albert with the first lean exercise developed in the new, rolling out of the new hospital plan for Prince Albert — is that they will engage patients, family members, front-line staff, administration staff, and people who also have a stakeholder interest in that particular design and that particular field, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So this will not be a government ministry, top-down design or a directive or a dictatorship at all.

The lean concept will engage those people who'll be using the facility, are using it now, working there now, to ensure it's the best design, the best flow, the best management of dollars going forward. And it'll address the needs coming in the future as well, not just a cookie cutter . . . drop down a design platform and within a minute it's filled. This design function of lean will help to ensure that the long-term care facility will manage the needs of the population of the growth, the demographic of the North, and the growing population, the age of the population, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So the member from Cumberland should be very thankful that lean in fact is something being engaged and will be engaged in the health regions as we look forward to this building.

Now I know I was . . . I had the honour of a couple of weeks ago taking part in a bit of an exercise with the member from Northcote, the member from Sask Rivers as well, when in Prince Albert after a 5-day lean first initial process of the 3P [production preparation process] model design for the new hospital in Prince Albert. They engaged everybody that would be involved in that particular hospital in the future. Patients, staff, EMS [emergency medical services] staff, the police force was also part of that. Interesting enough the fire department was there as well. And they walked us through what would be technically a change of the design of the first floor — emergency room, some diagnostic testing, some basic ambulatory care facilities as well.

And what was exciting, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that they had . . . The staff members took a leadership role within their team structure, looked at designing what would be the best model to move forward. And oh, by the way, architects were there as well, because the architects will take what's been learned from that exercise and incorporate that in future design concepts. Again not just an architect saying this is the best thing that they think is for the hospital, but they're going to be listening to the actual people who are going to work there. And there were patients taking part in that, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So this design function is going to help in the future moving forward to design the Vic hospital. So a lean process like this is very exciting. And I know myself, the members from Prince Albert and area are . . . I won't be here most likely when that hospital is built. But I'll tell you what. I'll be there to see the grand opening. If I have a day off from the police force, I will show up there absolutely. It'll be a very proud day for me.

And you know what, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that we have other quotes from doctors who talk about lean. And you know what? And there's one from Dr. Vino Padayachee.

A Member: — Padayachee.

Mr. Hickie: — Padayachee, thank you. Chief executive officer, Saskatchewan Medical Association, and it says:

We support Saskatchewan's transformation agenda in improving the health of the people of this province, and the use of LEAN methodology to improve access to safe, quality patient care.

You know what, Mr. Deputy Speaker? Again it's going to take money to save money. We know that already from what's been talked about in the government from different ministry agencies, how they've saved money already, and across health regions. It's going to take new ideas to look at new design concepts to build health care facilities. It takes money to save money. It takes money to make money, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And in this case we're seeing an investment of taxpayers' dollars, which we see already has saved dollars, have improved patient care, have moved the agenda away from emergency — help me, I need help right now — to how do we make the system better to involve patients, to move them through the system, and to actually support the conditions as we go forward, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So today I'm proud to stand today and say I will not support the motion at all.

The Deputy Speaker: — The 65 minutes for debate has expired. Questions. I recognize the member from Saskatoon Fairview.

Ms. Campeau: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our government is committed to setting progressive goals and works to achieve them. In 2012 our government came out with the growth plan which laid out our plans for the future of Saskatchewan. In the growth plan our government committed to surgical wait times that are no more than three months.

To date our government has invested 186 million to achieve this goal and we are almost there. Eighty per cent of procedures are now performed within three months. And the leader of the NDP has now been in his position for over a year, and they still have no plan. We know they do not support lean, but we have no idea what they support because they have no policies. So to the member from Regina Rosemont: what is your party's health care policy?

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Rosemont.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Part of our health care policy, Mr. Speaker, is recognizing that at a time where you're growing, that you need to make some direct investments into where they matter for Saskatchewan people. We need to make sure that Saskatchewan people have access to a family doctor, something that far too many don't have. We have to restore and ensure the trust in our emergency rooms and emergency services across the province. And we need to make sure that the seniors of this province have the supports they need in seniors' care, Mr. Speaker, a circumstance that for far too many is not dignified.

One way to get there is to divert the tens of millions of dollars being wasted by this government on an out-of-country contractor and this whole lean obsession of this government, and to redirect them in practical ways back to where they matter — in the life of Saskatchewan people.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member for Regina Elphinstone-Centre.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I mean some of the arguments that get made over there are kind of laughable, but we've heard from different members on that side that every penny they've shovelled into lean, on the part of this government, has been money well spent. The \$40 million with the one US consultant, the \$17 million on kaizen promotion offices, the \$3,500 per day for senseis, Mr. Speaker, and the meter is running — not just in health care but throughout government. But we hear that that's money well spent.

I guess my question is to the member from Moose Jaw North: if that's money well spent, says who? The US consultant that they've done all the deals with?

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

Mr. Michelson: — Mr. Speaker, well thank you for the question, the member opposite. When we think of money well

spent, when we think of the \$4 million that has been made up already and we're just starting this whole process, I think it is well invested. I'd rather use the word invested.

But I would ask the member, if they're so concerned about this money well spent, we don't see their plan. All we saw was closing hospitals. And what was the money well spent when we talked about SPUDCO [Saskatchewan Potato Utility Development Company] and those kind of initiatives coming from that side? So the money well spent for increasing health benefits and health information, a better system, more efficient, and looking after the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, that's what's monies well spent.

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

Mr. Cox: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the opposition leader said in a leadership platform, "Our focus needs to be on establishing a more efficient system that is centred on patients and their families." We agree with that statement. And thanks to lean, we have found many of those efficiencies. The blood and plasma product lean project has saved our government \$35 million since 2010. Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region's mental health and addictions clinic reduced their wait lists from 400 clients to only 70, and they reduced the number of cancelled appointments from 42 to zero.

Thanks to lean, 100 per cent of patients in Regina Qu'Appelle in-patient mental health unit are now connected to the appropriate community service before they leave the unit.

To the member from Saskatoon Riversdale: will you stand with our government and your leader and endorse a lean initiative that finds efficiencies in our health care system while focusing specifically on health care?

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our leader spoke about being centred on patients and families. And that would be Bill 606, Mr. Speaker, the private member's bill that our side has brought forward ensuring that there are minimum quality of care standards in our long-term care homes. This government is spending untold millions on lean and can't even get the basics done, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I was listening with interest with what the member of Moose Jaw North was saying, and of course we're interested in hearing some proof, who actually says there are savings. But you know, what he was saying in his speech, he went on waxing eloquently about how the creativity of lean is really helping them to think things through. In fact he was talking about the ability to think outside the box and how he could not possibly have done this without the help, the creativity of the consultants. So it sounds like, Mr. Deputy Speaker, he has leaned himself right out of a job. So today I'm asking him, why doesn't he simply resign?

[12:15]

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

Mr. Michelson: — Mr. Speaker, you know, the premise of the question just shows how ridiculous and out of touch that side is with the people of Saskatchewan. If he'd have been listening and if he wants proof, if he'd have been listening when I said I went for a blood test in the Moose Jaw Hospital less than two weeks ago, I didn't have to stop in the front and get a number and sit down. I didn't have to spend 20 minutes there. They took me right back to the lab. The lab test was done in a matter of 10 minutes. Mr. Speaker, it's only a matter of 20 minutes to me, but when you think of 400 people in a given week, that's a lot of time and a lot of savings. And the efficiencies that we see in this whole lean system, Mr. Speaker, that's what this government wants, that's what lean's about, and they should learn that.

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

Mr. Docherty: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The NDP's track record on health care worker staffing is far from stellar. In fact, Mr. Speaker, it's quite the opposite. Between 1996 and 2001, Saskatchewan lost 451 nurses. This trend continued from 2001 to 2006 when Saskatchewan lost a total of 1,160 health care workers, Mr. Speaker. Since 2007 our government has strived to recruit health care providers and took measurements such as adding 300 physicians and 1,000 nurses to our health care system.

To the member from Cumberland: do you think it's acceptable that your former government watched health care workers march out of the province in droves and did nothing about it? Thank you.

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

Mr. Vermette: — To get in on this, let's be very clear. The priorities of the money that this government is wasting, taxpayers' dollars could be definitely building a long-term care facility in La Ronge, could deal with a lot of the issues. Now let me tell you why. There has been a lot of good work, a lot of good work done by community members, by community members who . . . [inaudible] . . . embarrassed this government to put 500,000 into long-term planning — but embarrassed them. They should have announced and not waste the money, 40 million on lean all over.

Let's do the right thing. Let's respect the community of the North. Let's respect our seniors. Do the right thing and announce a facility once and for all. The planning's over; the need is now.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the member from Moose Jaw North say with a straight face that his government is actually meeting the basic needs in our long-term

care and our acute care facilities — with a straight face, Mr. Speaker?

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

Mr. Michelson: — Mr. Speaker, you know, basic care is everywhere. We don't have to put limits on it or establish . . . We want to look after people. We know that they shut down more long-term care spaces, and we're building them, Mr. Speaker. We're building hospitals. We're looking after people. With a straight face absolutely I can say this government is doing better in this province for the betterment of people than the NDP did in their last 16 years. Time after time you can see the improvements that we've done, both in seniors and disability, with people with special needs. Mr. Speaker, we're doing the job that they didn't do because they never got around to it.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Moose Jaw Wakamow.

Mr. Lawrence: — Mr. Speaker, again in this debate we've seen the NDP playing politics and not supporting good policy. It was the same with the 2014-15 budget. Before the budget came out, they said they wanted a La Ronge long-term care facility. Our budget committed funding to adding more long-term care beds in La Ronge. They said emergency wait rooms were too long. Our budget committed \$4 million to reduce wait times. And they said that the Sacred Heart School needed a new gym. Our budget committed 4.1 million to completely replace Connaught and Sacred Heart School.

Even though our budget included funding for many of their demands, they still voted against it. To the member from Cumberland: when will your party . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — The 75 minutes has expired.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS

Motion No. 2 — Saskatchewan's Forestry Sector

Mr. Bradshaw: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's great to be able to talk about forestry, and I will be moving a motion at the end of my talk here. It's well known that Carrot River Valley is not only known for its great agriculture land, but it's also known for its forestry . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . and the Carrot River Wildcats, who have won the provincial title, by the way, for four different times in their football team. I thank the member for mentioning that.

Mr. Speaker, I'm also very proud to announce in this House that, at the same time, I'm not going to be challenged for the nomination in Carrot River, as it looks like I'll be able to run for this side of the House next election. And hopefully, hopefully . . . It's been a privilege to talk about Carrot River Valley and to represent Carrot River Valley, and I hope that the people will see the same thing next election.

Mr. Speaker, now I am the Legislative Secretary to the Minister of Environment and with a focus on forestry. So it makes me very happy. And I think what I should do is put in some of my

expertise that I was picked for, to be a Legislative Secretary to Environment, with forestry. And that is what I did in my former life before becoming a politician, before coming into this House.

First off I know something about forestry as my father owned a lumber mill, a small lumber mill as back in those days they were all small lumber mills, out in the Pasquia Hills area. And, fact is, it's still well known, Mr. Speaker, as the Bradshaw mill site. It's one of the places out in the Pasquia Hills that the snow toboggan trails go through, and it was quite interesting.

Now needless to say, I was quite young at that time, and I really didn't do all that much out there. I used to go out there on the weekends and, you know, I used to hook up chokers for the log truck, and also I tailed the edger a little bit and piled lumber. Of course, everything was done manually at that time, so it was certainly different, and obviously not near as efficient as the mills that we have operating in Saskatchewan nowadays.

The other thing I have done, Mr. Speaker, is I have a Class 1A driver's licence, and I still hold it because you never know in this business if you're going to be around or not. But I still hold my Class 1A driver's licence and I've hauled logs to the various different mills. I hauled logs into the plant in Carrot River that's now owned by Edgewood, the Weyerhaeuser plant in Hudson Bay, and the pulp mill plant in Prince Albert.

So needless to say, I've seen some of that on the forest end of it. The other thing I've also done in my former life is I was an ag pilot. We actually had a separate company called Green Forest Applicators, Ltd., owned by . . . with myself and a couple of my friends, and we did forestry spraying, Mr. Speaker. And so consequently we went out there, and I guess that's why we called it Green Forest Applicators because it was to make the forest green. And we actually did four contracts here in Saskatchewan, and in truth we were the first one to ever run turboprop spray aircraft within the province.

So I guess what I'm saying is that I was very happy when I was given the position of Legislative Secretary, and with it, to concentrate on forestry. Now there's a big difference — I know the member from Saskatoon Centre doesn't think very much of legislative secretaries — but it's a lot different than when that government was in power. When that government was in power they had all these little, little jobs that they gave to all the different people. And you know something, Mr. Speaker? They all got paid for them. They all got paid. Now that wasn't very efficient.

The one thing about legislative secretaries within this government is we don't get paid for those extra duties. We just do it on our MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] wages and we don't get paid. We do it because we like doing it and we appreciate what we can do for the province as MLAs. We're not like the other side. We don't want to get paid for every little odds and ends that we do, Mr. Speaker. And when you take a look at that end of it, when you take a look at that end of it, it's been a lot of fun being in the forest industry, talking to the different people within the forestry. I know a lot of the contractors personally, working within the forest industry. And I've been through quite a few of the mills, seeing the efficiencies that they put forward. You know, those mills have

to operate efficiently or they're not in business. And we saw a great downturn in the forest industry for a while. And of course the NDP didn't help that at all.

About the only thing the NDP ever did was just before the 2007 election, decided to go along to Domtar and offer them \$100 million, which Domtar didn't know anything was coming. Their president was actually in New York at the time, never knew anything was coming. And the former premier, Calvert, offered up \$100 million for him and made him fly back so they could try and buy some votes in Prince Albert, Mr. Speaker. The people of Saskatchewan saw through that and that didn't work.

But I do take exception for the work that we have done on our Legislative Secretary end of it.

And, Mr. Speaker, I want to talk about what was said by the member from Saskatoon Centre. And I'm going to quote a little bit that came out of *Hansard* of what he said on March the 12th:

And again I think that when we have legislative secretaries that they're . . . And I was one too. And I remember I was the Legislative Secretary for a few short, a few months of SchoolPlus. And I think the initiatives then were that we would see legislative secretaries do a lot of work. And I think about the member from Fairview and her work on bullying and there was actually a lot of profile and her work did create a lot of interest.

And we have to thank her for that. She did a great job.

But many of the other legislative secretaries haven't quite achieved the same level of profile in the public. And I think that it's important that when we have people who are appointed legislative secretaries that they actually do get out there and create profile within the public and do some work on that.

Well, Mr. Speaker . . . And I'm going to end my quote at that part. Mr. Speaker, this going around and looking at these different forest plants, talking to the contractors, do you know what, Mr. Speaker? This isn't going to go out and generate just a ton of public interest. But what it does do, what it does do is I can take stuff back to the ministry and tell them where things maybe should be looked at, things maybe should be changed. It's not a matter of being out there. You're not in the news. You're not on TV or anything else. But that work, Mr. Speaker, is being done.

Now apparently the member from Saskatoon Centre thinks that unless you're in front of a TV camera, unless you're writing reports I guess for them, then you're not doing anything. Well I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker, but we are. We are working.

He goes on to say, and I'm going to quote again:

So I think there is a role for legislative secretaries, but they need to be much more active. And as I say, I think that very few of them actually do achieve that profile in the public, and so I wonder, why do you even have legislative secretaries? Now you're getting rid of the idea that you have to reappoint them. I mean I think it would be good for them to show up maybe once a year to get their new

contract. That would be at least showing that they are interested in their role. I mean I know some of them over there are legislative secretaries and we haven't seen them.

Well I'll tell you what, other than the two members that are one from Athabasca and the one from Cumberland, the rest of them really don't live in the forest area, so maybe they haven't seen somebody like me going around there and looking at the forest industry.

[12:30]

And speaking of the members from Athabasca and Cumberland, I'm actually very disappointed in them for not even talking more about the forest industry because the forest industry obviously is in their area. And they should want to see improvements within the forest industry because 15 per cent of the forest industry has Aboriginal employees. That's the highest percentage, Mr. Speaker, in all of Canada. But I know what they think about the forest industry, and they haven't got a plan. You know, they haven't got a plan. They've never had a plan on basically any industry.

Do you remember the famous tree book, Mr. Speaker, forestry? And here you have two of their members, Athabasca and Cumberland, the forest industry was not mentioned one time, not one time in their famous tree book. You know, that tree book used a lot of paper, but truthfully the pulp that they used to make the paper in that tree book would have been far better off on a roll, Mr. Speaker.

And speaking of that, Mr. Speaker, they still haven't come up with any kind of policy. I would like to see them try and move forward. I would like to see them look at the forest industry.

Let's go back to some of the challenges that the industry had in the past, you know, when the NDP, they were shutting down all the mills. Well at one time Weyerhaeuser wanted to cogenerate power. That may have kept that mill operating in Prince Albert. But, Mr. Speaker, you know what? The NDP said no to cogeneration for that plant. That plant now is cogenerating and is producing power. It's producing employment. It's getting rid of the hog fuel, Mr. Speaker. This is a government that said, yes, you can go and you can cogenerate. You can go and operate.

In my area alone, Mr. Speaker, we have Edgewood Forest Products who moved in from British Columbia. Now Edgewood Forest Products bought up the Weyerhaeuser stud mill in Carrot River. Edgewood has a plant in British Columbia. They've got a plant in Alberta. And they looked at Saskatchewan and they said, you know, it looks like we have a pretty good government in Saskatchewan now, rather than the NDP. So they decided to move here. Never asked for any money, never asked for any concessions. And they moved here all on their own and got that plant operating in Carrot River, which made a very significant difference to the money and the employment that's going on around Carrot River.

You have to realize that the forest industry, it's not just a matter of the plants themselves, Mr. Speaker. It's a matter of all the spinoffs. Like you can go to the tire shop in Carrot River, and they're busy. We have the truck tires, the loader tires. You

know, you take a look at the contractors. Basically all the contractors in Saskatchewan when the forest industry went down were pulling out. These contractors are going out there and employing people, working.

We've also done some things within the government to help the forest industry. You know, the highway, Highway 55 running from Carrot River basically comes through Hudson Bay, Carrot River over to . . . well it goes right out to the west side of the province, Mr. Speaker. That highway was in deplorable shape, and that is an understatement. I drove truck on that highway. I drove car on that highway. I drove pickup trucks on that highway, and it was terrible.

Mr. Speaker, this government made a commitment to fixing those highways so the truckers could go and operate properly, hauling logs back and forth as needed. They've also got the chip trucks that are running, and there's also been a lot of work done actually right through to Shoal Lake where a lot of the chips, Mr. Speaker, are going out to Manitoba.

So, Mr. Speaker, contrary to what the opposition says, or I guess maybe doesn't say because they really haven't said hardly anything about forestry at all, some of the things also that we have done is we've done some restructuring within the forest industry.

Mr. Speaker, we've assigned the Prince Albert Forest Management Agreement to a new company called Sakâw forest management inc., and that was in November of 2010. Now that was done through Economy. You have to realize, although I'm Legislative Secretary going through to Environment looking at the forestry, part of forestry is also under Economy.

Now this was something new. Sakâw is six forest companies that are in partnership with two First Nations groups. This is where all partners have received a wood supply allocation. The agreement was subsequently amended to better address the business needs of the partners and to accommodate the unique structure of that particular FMA [forest management agreement].

Also over in the Pasquia/Porcupine Forest Management Agreement, that's now jointly owned by Weyerhaeuser and Edgewood. And subsequently in 2013 that agreement was amended to better meet the business needs of those companies.

Conducting an analysis of forest inventories for biomass availability to support energy from a biomass industry with a focus on the Meadow Lake area was something else that this government has done. These are all things, Mr. Speaker, to help our forest industry work and thrive in Saskatchewan. We have a revised wood supply analysis and prepared harvest volume scheduled for northern timber supply zones.

We also have an insect and disease program, and from April 2008 till September 2013, the insect and disease program in support of the forest industry and other forest values has expanded \$5,189,536.21 for provincial aerial and ground-based insect and disease surveys and associated spruce budworm spray services. During this time frame, a total area of 57 203 hectares have been sprayed for spruce budworm.

A total of \$1,966,748.43 has been spent on mountain pine beetle surveillance and management services from 2008 to 2013, including support for on-ground control work in Alberta. Now we've all heard about the pine beetle, and hopefully this . . . We didn't really want this real cold weather that we've had, Mr. Speaker, but all the scientists are saying that if we have a real cold winter, this is going to help eradicate the pine beetle. And I guess we'll find out this year if that's actually true because it's really something that is scary. We definitely don't want to see the pine beetle come into Saskatchewan. And I'll tell you what, there's almost no way to eradicate it other than fire or cold weather, and although I don't like either one, I'll take the cold weather over the fire.

Also, Mr. Speaker, we have the forest service renewal program. The program continues to reforest old harvest areas, which are the government's responsibility in support of the forest industry and other forest values. In the spring of 2013, 2.561 million seedlings were planted on approximately 1383 hectares of NSR [not sufficiently reforested] lands. A total of 12,716,990 seedlings have been planted on 8601 hectares of NSR lands in the province since April of 2008.

Mr. Speaker, this is another thing that this government is doing to help the forest industry. From April the 1st to August 31st of 2013, approximately 925 hectares of plantations have been completed, and a total of 7637 hectares of plantations in the Pasquia/Porcupine forest management area have been treated in the province since April of 2008 — another shot that we are helping within the forest industry of which, I'll go back again and say it, that side never mentions, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we also have approved Mistik Management's new forest management plan — that was in June of 2009 — the first forest management plan that conforms to the new forest management planning standard. Forest management plans provide long-term strategic guidance for forest management including determining appropriate harvest level and addressing other forest values.

Mr. Speaker, we also tabled the state of the provincial forest report. That was done in February 2010. Published a new guidebook, *Field Guide to the Ecosites of Saskatchewan's Provincial Forests*, and that was in 2010, which provides detailed information about the characteristics associated with the . . . [inaudible] . . . and wetland ecosystems found in Saskatchewan's provincial forests and parks, providing a foundational piece for the results-based framework. Also *The Forestry Professions Act* was passed in 2013 spring session of the legislature. This Act moves from protection to the title of right to practice.

Now, Mr. Speaker, these are a lot of different things that our government has worked forward, and one other thing we brought up is, obviously forest fires are a bit of a problem. They can be a big problem. We went to the automated fire tower system and, Mr. Speaker, this is proving to work very well. This system now monitors 24 hours a day. It contains infrared so it can see through smoke. It contains cameras. It goes into the forest service in Prince Albert. And this is a great initiative that was put forward by this government to help improve our detection, early detection of forest fires.

Now the member from Saskatoon Nutana was totally against this. Actually that was one of the few times that forestry was brought up, and they were against these fire towers. They would not believe in the benefits of 24-hour surveillance. Now I can't figure that one out, Mr. Speaker, why they wouldn't want great 24-hour surveillance of our forests. I guess it was just a matter . . . They didn't care. They didn't think it was all that important.

But, Mr. Speaker, the member from Saskatoon Nutana brought up some facts that just, well, they weren't really accurate. Some of the things that came out was the NDP Environment critic, that's the member from Nutana, claimed that Oregon is only using fire detection cameras as a pilot project in one small test area, and she said all the rest were just still using human observers. Well Mr. Grafe from Oregon confirmed that the fire detection cameras are a statewide program in Oregon. They operate over 30 detection cameras statewide, and they also continue to expand them. Now I don't know where that member from Nutana was going on this, but obviously she was getting wrong information. Unfortunately they were spreading it out throughout the public, and I actually had some calls into my office on it. But once it was explained that this is a better system for looking at fires that were happening, it wasn't a problem anymore.

I think sometimes what the NDP does is they just don't understand. Maybe they don't understand the forest industry. Maybe they don't care about the forest industry. Maybe they're just more worried about trying to get the city vote. But where are the members from Cumberland and Athabasca, Mr. Speaker? They should be very interested in the forest industry.

[12:45]

Mr. Speaker, we can continue on, you know. Forestry is — and this goes back to the member from Athabasca and the member from Cumberland — it's northern Saskatchewan's second-largest economic driver. And, Mr. Speaker, also Saskatchewan forest industry currently has the capacity to utilize approximately 70 per cent of the AAC [allowable annual cut] in normal market conditions, generating over \$1 billion in forest product sales including 800 million in exports and over 5,000 direct jobs. Mr. Speaker, I am very happy, very happy to be a Legislative Secretary on this end of it, to be able to help facilitate moving forward with our forest industries.

Mr. Speaker, another thing that was brought up was under the NDP they had a very convoluted dues system. In other words you could have one plant . . . And I'll just use an example. You could have the Weyerhaeuser plant over in Hudson Bay had different stumpage fees than Carrier who just opened up a new mill up in Big River. Mr. Speaker, what this government did is they went through and they levelled that playing field out and made it so it wasn't a convoluted system, made it so all of the mills were running on an even keel because what it does is it creates conflict between the different mills. Well one mill would say, well we got this. And the other mill would say, well we've got this. And it was very hard to have proper operation within the province on stuff like that. So this was something that was done, and it's made all of the players within the industry very happy.

Now that one was done, Mr. Speaker, through the economy end

of the forest industry. And it has definitely improved relations between the different mills because obviously you don't want to have one mill saying, oh we've got this, and the other mill says, well we're paying way higher. It was totally unfair.

But, Mr. Speaker, that's what this government is about. This government is about steady growth and it's about ready for growth and it's about taking action, Mr. Speaker. You know, the other side, they can talk. But it's been well said by our Premier many times, that side talks; this side takes action, Mr. Speaker. And we want to move, and we want to move forward and we want to do things as seamlessly for business as possible, whether it be in the forest business, whether it be basically in any business.

And, Mr. Speaker, that's one of the reasons why we have a red tape committee set up, which I know the other guys never thought about at all. But we have a red tape committee set up to try and make things easy for business to operate within this province.

Obviously, Mr. Speaker, some of these things must be working or else why would we have this influx of people coming into Saskatchewan, coming into Saskatchewan to do business? People like Edgewood who came from British Columbia to set up a plant in Carrot River. People who think that Saskatchewan is a good place to do business under this government.

Mr. Speaker, going back to the forest end, you know, we have quite a few of our mills . . . There were a lot of our mills shut down through the downturn, the largest downturn that we've ever seen in the forest industry. We've had quite a few mills start back up again. And the latest actually is the member from up in Big River. The member from Saskatchewan Rivers is very happy just to have a mill start up, up in their area. You know, that was a Weyerhaeuser mill at one time up there, Mr. Speaker, and they shut down. Carrier has taken it over now, and now they are operating. And as far as I know, I think that they are — I think, I'm not positive on this, Mr. Speaker — but I think that they've got two shifts going there.

I know the Weyerhaeuser mill in Hudson Bay is running three shifts. The Edgewood mill just increased to a two-shift here last fall.

So things are looking, things are actually looking quite good within the forest industry as long as we, as long as we do not get in their way, Mr. Speaker. Let's let these people go out, do their jobs, and move this province forward.

Mr. Speaker, we have, you know, we worked at trying to lower the tax rate for these various different plants. The corporate capital tax has been eliminated and the corporate income tax rate is . . . Well it's at 12 per cent.

You know, Mr. Speaker, it'd be nice if we could get that down more some day, and maybe some day, you know, we will. It's a work-in-progress, Mr. Speaker. You have to realize that we still have to have some taxes here in this province because we're still working on trying to fix up the great infrastructure deficit that was left to us, the legacy that was left to us under the NDP, Mr. Speaker.

So, Mr. Speaker, as I talk about the forest industry and the things that have been done in it, you go into the new plants nowadays, the efficiencies that they have put in in the grading system . . . It used to be everything was graded manually. And now you go into those plants and it's absolutely amazing. They use photoelectric lights. They take pictures and grade the lumber. It runs through there, slick as can be, comes out . . . And Saskatchewan's well known for having top-grade lumber.

Actually I can talk about a friend of mine down in North Carolina, and he has a Weyerhaeuser mill that's only about 7 miles away from his place. But you know, the contractors down there prefer to use the lumber from here. And the reason being is their trees grow so fast, the rings are so wide apart and they grow fast there. They are generally about 17 years from cut to . . . from plant to harvest. And our lumber is much stronger. Where we can use . . . I was looking in his garage and they were using four-by-fours for rafters. That's because their lumber isn't as strong, whereas in a garage, normal garages, you'd just use an ordinary two-by-four. And so consequently the contractors down there love using the lumber that is coming from here. It's a great export market.

And, Mr. Speaker, with those things, we have to make sure that we help them along. One of our initiatives also, Mr. Speaker, has been talking about the rail issue. And I think we should keep pressing on that, because the rail issue not only affects grain, but also it affects our lumber industry. I know that Weyerhaeuser over in Hudson Bay shut down two times this winter. And it costs a lot of money to shut one of those plants down because they operate 24 hours a day. They had to shut down two times because they had so much inventory that they actually ran out of room. CN [Canadian National] was supposed to be supplying cars for them and the cars weren't there. They have told me that they have lost quite a bit of money on sales, Mr. Speaker, due to the fact of poor rail transportation.

Edgewood, Mr. Speaker, has told me the same thing. Edgewood lumber has . . . They had some cars in there, came in in December, and it was for just-in-time delivery and it was close to the end of January before the cars were picked up. So needless to say, this did not make their sales contract. So it's something that I believe we, as a government, should also work on CN on this rail transportation issue, not just for grain and not just for oil, not just for potash, but also for lumber because this is very important and very critical to northern Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to go back to this Legislative Secretary piece again, Mr. Speaker, because I think that this is an honourable thing that I have been tasked with and, like I said before, you know, it's not out in the public. It's not good TV material. It's not good radio material. Personally I don't look very good on TV anyway, or in any picture as far as that goes.

But, Mr. Speaker, the thing is you have to think of the work that is being done behind the scenes. And that behind-the-scenes work, for not just myself as the Legislative Secretary, but for all of us that were put in as legislative secretaries to work in the various different ministries, I believe it is very important work, and work that shows that we have a government that cares. And it's not caring about the extra money because we don't get any extra money for this. It's a matter that we are doing it because this is a job, Mr. Speaker, that we are passionate about. We

want to work to move the province forward because we can see the growth that is happening in this province. [The Assembly adjourned at 12:59.]

And that's one thing about the backbenchers on this side of the House, of which I am one of them. We are very fortunate. We have a cabinet that listens to what the backbenchers say. We have a Premier that listens to what the backbenchers say. And we want to continue to move the province forward because I can tell you, it's really nice. A matter of a few years ago, you used to go into the States and people, you'd tell them you were from Saskatchewan, nobody even had a clue. Well they couldn't even say it to begin with. But they didn't have a clue where Saskatchewan was, what was happening there or anything. With this Premier, with this government that's operating here, I'm totally shocked that how many people know where Saskatchewan is.

Now mainly we're thought of because of our agriculture, because of our oil, because of our potash. But forestry is also a very integral part of this province. And people do not realize sometimes how important, people in the province do not realize sometimes how important the forest industry is to the province of Saskatchewan. \$1 billion, Mr. Speaker, is not small change. Maybe to you, Mr. Speaker, but not small change to people like me. But, Mr. Speaker, I would like to now move my motion:

That this Assembly supports this government's initiatives to ensure the vitality of the Saskatchewan forestry sector.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: — It is moved by the member from Carrot River Valley:

That this Assembly supports this government's initiatives to ensure the vitality of the Saskatchewan forestry sector.

Is it the pleasure . . . I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I move adjournment of debate.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

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

The Deputy Speaker: — The Government House Leader has moved that this House does now adjourn. It is the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — This House stands adjourned until Monday, April 28th at 1:30 p.m.

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Premier
President of the Executive Council
Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs

Hon. Bill Boyd

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

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff

Minister of Environment
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Water Security Agency
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