



FOURTH SESSION - TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

of the

**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

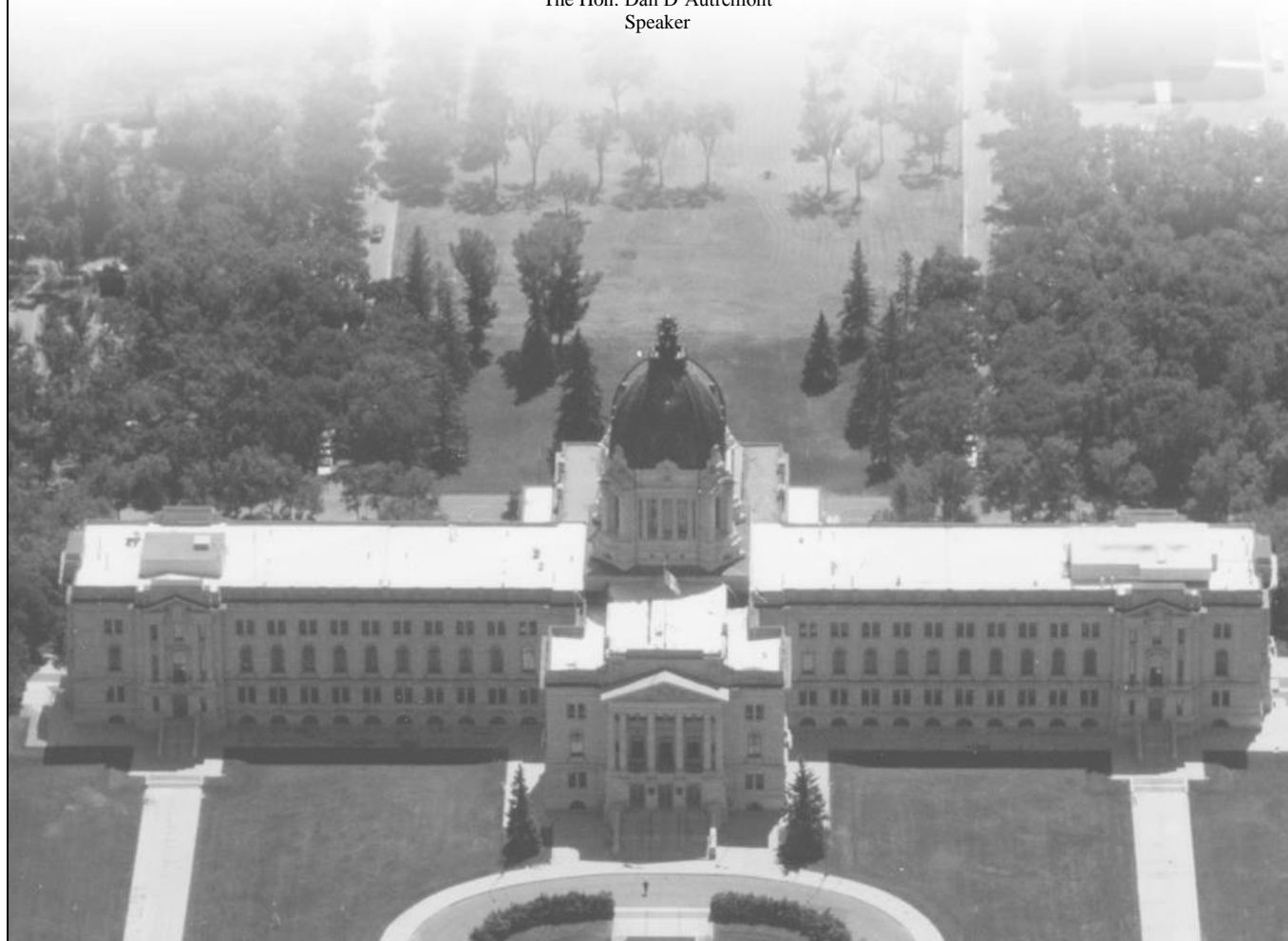
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**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS**

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(HANSARD)

Published under the  
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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, Hon. 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, Hon. Mark	SP	Regina Coronation Park
Doherty, Hon. Kevin	SP	Regina Northeast
Doke, Larry	SP	Cut Knife-Turtleford
Draude, June	SP	Kelvington-Wadena
Duncan, Hon. Dustin	SP	Weyburn-Big Muddy
Eagles, Doreen	SP	Estevan
Elhard, 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
McMorris, Hon. Don	SP	Indian Head-Milestone
Merriman, Paul	SP	Saskatoon Sutherland
Michelson, Warren	SP	Moose Jaw North
Moe, Hon. Scott	SP	Rosthern-Shellbrook
Morgan, Hon. Don	SP	Saskatoon Southeast
Nilson, John	NDP	Regina Lakeview
Norris, Rob	SP	Saskatoon Greystone
Ottenbreit, Hon. 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, Randy	SP	Biggar
Wilson, Hon. Nadine	SP	Saskatchewan Rivers
Wotherspoon, Trent	NDP	Regina Rosemont
Wyant, Hon. Gordon	SP	Saskatoon Northwest
Vacant		Lloydminster

[The Assembly met at 10:00.]

[Prayers]

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

**Hon. Ms. Harpauer:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I would like to introduce some very special guests who have dedicated their lives to making life better for Saskatchewan's children and youth. Joining us today in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, from the Saskatchewan Foster Families Association is the executive director, Deb Davies, and Kevin Harris who is the Chair of the board.

Mr. Speaker, this week we are celebrating our dedicated and caring foster families across the province during Foster Family Week. It also happens to be the year the Saskatchewan Foster Families Association is celebrating its 40th anniversary, an impressive milestone for such a wonderful organization.

Foster families make a real difference in the lives of children and families they serve. In addition to meeting the everyday needs of the children they care for, they also provide the most important things of all, and that's a family and a place to call home. So I want to thank Deb, Kevin, and all those wonderful foster families from across the province for the love and dedication they show to Saskatchewan's children, youth, and families. So I ask all members to join me in welcoming these outstanding citizens to their Assembly today.

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

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I too would like to join in with the Minister of Social Services in recognizing Deb Davies as CEO [chief executive officer] of Foster Families here in Saskatchewan, and the Chair of the association as well. They do outstanding work here in Saskatchewan, really providing support and guidance and protection for vulnerable children. We on the opposition side, and both sides of the House, want to recognize the good work they do. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Mr. Krawetz:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is an honour today to introduce a very special guest, seated in your gallery. Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to introduce Mr. Peter Fedynsky. Peter, if you can just rise please. Mr. Fedynsky is an American Ukrainian journalist who of course was born and now is back in the state of Ohio, has done tremendous work around the world. And today, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Fedynsky is touring Saskatchewan. He's been in Saskatchewan now a couple of days, and he's presenting his work in the celebration of the 200th anniversary of the birth of Taras Shevchenko. I'm going to speak a little bit more on his work shortly in this Assembly. But it's an honour to welcome, and I ask all members to welcome Mr. Fedynsky.

Also seated with Mr. Fedynsky are members of the Regina branch of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, leaders here within the city of Regina in the Ukrainian community. I'd like to introduce Holly Paluck, Vera Feduschak, Ken Mazur, and of course Orest Gawdyda. I'd ask all members to welcome these individuals, but especially Mr. Fedynsky, to the Saskatchewan legislature.

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to join with the Deputy Premier in offering a word of welcome to Mr. Peter Fedynsky for the time that he's spending here in Saskatchewan, the important work that he is doing, Mr. Speaker, and wish him all the best as he does that over the following days.

And also, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to join with the Deputy Premier in welcoming members of the UCC [Ukrainian Canadian Congress] Regina branch, who do such a great job in our community in ensuring that the Ukrainian community is strong and vibrant.

And I would like to note, Mr. Speaker, also as we've talked a great deal about the situation in Ukraine in this Assembly over the past months, I note yesterday I saw statements coming from the Ukrainian government offering words of solidarity and comfort to our country in a difficult time for us. And I recognize that solidarity that's coming back to our country, seeing that we have also stood strong with Ukraine over the past year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Norris:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you to all members of the Assembly, I'd like to take the opportunity to introduce four members of the Al-Katib family. Mr. Speaker, all of us in this Chamber are familiar with the impressive and important work of the Al-Katib family, especially key members, as they relate to AGT Food and Ingredients.

But there are a number of other members of that family that make real contributions to our community, especially in areas of diplomacy and in the arts. This morning I'm delighted to introduce four members of the Al-Katib family. I'll start off by introducing Muveddet Al-Katib who is a fine Saskatchewan artist. In fact next week she's going to be reviewing and celebrating her work that represents building bridges between Turkey and Canada. And she is the wife of Omer Al-Katib, Turkey's honorary consul to Saskatchewan. He's busy doing work today and so we're delighted that Muveddet is able to be here.

She's joined by her delightful mother, Aliea, is here. She came to Canada in 2009 and she's especially proud of her two grandsons. They are here as well. Kerem Al-Katib is here. He's an AcTal student at Greystone Heights School right in the heart of Saskatoon Greystone. He is a remarkable parliamentarian already. He was awarded the top speaker for the 2014 Saskatchewan Elocution Debate. He aims to be a constitutional

lawyer, as we can see, and in fact he looked very, very well this morning in photos with the Hon. John G. Diefenbaker as we were taking photos because I think there's maybe a broader goal in mind.

His brother Emre is also here. He attends school at Lakeview School in Saskatoon. He's nine years old. He's a star basketball player. He's also just entered the debate team and he's looking at options in sports and politics and maybe in business too. Mr. Speaker, I'd ask all members of this Assembly to join me in welcoming these four members of the Al-Katib family to their Saskatchewan legislature.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to join just briefly with the member opposite and welcome the Al-Katib family to their legislature and to thank them for their efforts, their leadership within our province, economically, culturally, your efforts and leadership to improve and maintain international relations. Impressive story told about the young leaders that are up and coming within that family, and we look forward to all those contributions into the future.

It was a pleasure as well to have Omer here yesterday as part of the Throne Speech, as part of the economic summit and some of the diplomatic relations that he maintains. Quite simply, we say thank you to your family for all you provide our province.

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to join in in welcoming the Al-Katib family, but I want to say a particular hello to Kerem. We had the pleasure of meeting at the Diefenbaker Centre over the summer at a democracy camp that was going on. And I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, this young man is wise beyond his years when it comes to awareness of politics, and good advice as well. I think he could give a lot of us in this Assembly a run for our money perhaps, or perhaps some day. So I wish him all the best as he finishes his studies and dreams about his future, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Mr. Moe:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to all members of this Legislative Assembly, I'd like to just take a moment to introduce, in the Speaker's gallery, my wife of many, many years. Krista Moe is down for the day. And from the constituency of Rosthern-Shellbrook as well we have Ms. Sally Fitch down.

My wife also brings with her and is meeting and spending the weekend with a couple of her aunts. First of all we have from Saskatoon, Ms. Connie McGrath, and as well from British Columbia, we have Donna Moffat. Now although growing up in Saskatchewan and now living in British Columbia, Donna — Auntie Donna — has a special connection still to the province and in particular to this legislature as her husband Glen served in the same troop at "F" Division as our present-day Sergeant-at-Arms.

I would like all members to join me in welcoming them to this Legislative Assembly.

**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 legislature, it's my pleasure to introduce three special guests in your gallery today. Today we've got Austin McNally who is a constituent of mine who attends Bethlehem High School. And Austin and I have had the opportunity to connect through a work education program through Bethlehem School. He's got a huge interest in politics, so he's spending a little bit of time with me in my office and had the opportunity to come down for the Throne Speech yesterday and today. And he is here today also with his grandmother, Dianne Winters, and his aunt, Tara Struck, who are also I hope enjoying their time.

And I hope that these last two days for Austin, who has a huge interest in politics, that they're more inspiring than the other direction, Mr. Speaker. So I hope — I think — it's been a positive experience for him and his family so far, but hopefully it continues as he sees his first question period live. So with that I ask all members to join me in welcoming Austin, Tara, and Dianne. Thank you.

## 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 calling for greater protection for Saskatchewan citizens from developers defaulting on fixed-price contracts.

And we, the undersigned, would like to provide some background: that we know in September 2014 this government walked away from a 48-unit affordable housing project in Regina, allowing a private developer to instead take control of and rent the units at full market price. And this allowed the government . . . the private developer to back out of a fixed-price contract without any penalty, setting a dangerous precedent for this type of default.

And further, when asked to explain the government's decision, the Minister of Social Services said, and I quote, "You're assuming there's desperate homeless people," showing how disconnected this government is from the realities within our communities, Mr. Speaker.

And a local political commentator wrote, and I quote, "It's the latest indication that Premier Brad Wall seems unwilling to do anything to displease business . . ."

**The Speaker:** — The member knows that he should not be using the names of members in the Assembly. I would ask him to get to the prayer.

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the following action: cause the government to recognize that there are indeed desperate homeless people in our province and to immediately reverse its policy of

now allowing private developers with whom the government has close relationships to default on fixed-price contracts for affordable housing projects.

People signing this petition come from the city of Humboldt and Saskatoon. I do so present. Thank you very much.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present petitions as it relates to the unacceptable danger on Dewdney Avenue, created by that government with poor planning and their failure to respond to take those dangerous heavy-haul trucks off of Dewdney Avenue and take people and property out of harm's way, Mr. Speaker. The prayer reads as follows:

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

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

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

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

**Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased once again to stand up today to present a petition to build a second bridge for Prince Albert. And the prayer reads as follows, Mr. Speaker:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to guarantee that a second bridge that serves central and northern Saskatchewan, as well as the city of Prince Albert, will receive a firm commitment from senior governments, Mr. Speaker.

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

And the people that have signed this petition in relation to a second bridge for Prince Albert have come from all throughout the province, and this particular petition, Mr. Speaker, are primarily signed by people from the fine city of Moose Jaw. And I so present.

[10:15]

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

**Ms. Chartier:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to present a petition today opposed to lucrative lean contracts.

People who have signed this petition point out that there's many aspects of health care and seniors' care that are getting worse under this government instead of better — going the wrong direction, Mr. Speaker — whereas this government is failing to fix the basics in health care and seniors' care, including rejecting \$8.5 million in urgent requests from care facilities for desperately needed staffing, equipment, and repairs. There are many other points that the folks who signed this petition point out, but I'd like to read the prayer:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to cancel its lucrative contracts with out-of-country lean consultants and instead focus its resources on actually listening to front-line health care workers and fixing the basics in health care and seniors' care.

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

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed from folks in Moose Jaw. I so submit.

#### STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

##### Recognition of Canadian Law Enforcement Professionals

**Mr. Huyghebaert:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to take a moment to recognize the events that transpired in Ottawa yesterday and acknowledge the great impact it has had on all Canadians. There's been an overwhelming amount of support from devastated Canadians nationwide. I know I speak for all members of this Assembly when saying our thoughts and prayers are with the family and friends of Corporal Nathan Frank Cirillo who was killed when standing guard at the National War Memorial in Ottawa. I'd also like to recognize Warrant Officer Patrice Vincent and his fellow soldier who were attacked in Quebec on Monday.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot say thank you enough to the women and men of the Canadian Armed Forces who willingly put their lives at risk to protect our democracy and freedoms. Closer to home, I'd like to recognize the work of the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police], Regina Police Service, and our own Sergeant-at-Arms who ensured that the Throne Speech proceedings were able to go forward safely and without incident.

Though the events of this past week have threatened our democratic state and the freedoms that it provides, we must not let it shake the democratic ideals that peacefully run our great nation. That is why we will continue to stand here in the Legislative Assembly to represent the people of Saskatchewan. I ask that all members join me in thanking our Canadian Forces, the RCMP, police, and emergency services who ensure our safety daily. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Mr. Speaker, we were shocked on Monday to learn that Warrant Officer Patrice Vincent was killed south of

Montreal. And yesterday we were horrified to watch as an act of brutality was carried out in our nation's capital, an act that directly targeted the men and women of our armed forces as well as the parliamentarians and staff in the Parliament of Canada, and an act that killed Corporal Nathan Cirillo as he stood guard at a monument dedicated to the sacrifice of others who went before him.

Mr. Speaker, our thoughts and prayers are with the families and friends of Warrant Officer Vincent and Corporal Cirillo today. We are grateful to the brave men and women of law enforcement, the armed forces, the sergeant-at-arms offices for their determination, professionalism, and courage.

And we are justifiably angry at those who seek to attack and terrorize, but we will never allow an act of hatred to drive us to hate, for we are better than that. We value democracy, freedom, and community. We respect differences and we look out for one another.

I hope we cling to those core values in the days ahead, because I can think of no greater tribute to Warrant Officer Vincent and Corporal Cirillo than to stand strong and stay true to who we are as Canadians. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### 200th Anniversary of Celebrated Ukrainian's Birth

**Hon. Mr. Krawetz:** — Mr. Speaker, to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the birth of Taras Shevchenko, poet, painter, and father of the modern Ukrainian language, the Regina branch of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress is hosting Ukrainian-American journalist Peter Fedynsky. Mr. Fedynsky has produced the first complete English translation of Shevchenko's collection of famous poems, known as the *Kobzar*, resulting in his work being accessible to new generations in Canada and around the world.

As a journalist, Peter personally witnessed the breakup of the Soviet Union and the birth of the modern Ukrainian state. The inspiration to translate the *Kobzar* came to Peter at the end of his assignment with the Voice of America in Moscow. Mr. Fedynsky is currently touring Saskatchewan to share his work and Shevchenko's important messages of civil rights and social justice. On behalf of the Government of Saskatchewan, I'm very honoured to have been presented a copy of the complete *Kobzar*.

Mr. Speaker, today as the citizens of Ukraine rise up in the name of democracy, freedom, and their right to self-determination, and as we deal with the shock of events in Ottawa, the words of Taras Shevchenko still remain close to our hearts. And I quote:

Our faith can never cease in Thy strong, living Word:  
Justice and Liberty will rise,  
and unto Thee all tribes on Earth shall bend  
For ages without end.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### Education Week

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to recognize that this week is Education Week in Saskatchewan. I'm sure all of us can remember a time when we were encouraged to do our best, inspired or supported by our teachers. Like me, some members of this Assembly have had the privilege to work as educators and understand how fulfilling a career in education can be. I'm sure members for Saskatoon Centre, Nutana, Regina Douglas Park, Dewdney, Canora-Pelly would agree with me that teaching is hard work. But any teacher can tell you that the rewards, mostly intrinsic, are many. It's all worth it when you witness success and growth of your students, a breakthrough, or meaningfully connect and engage with families and community.

But education isn't just about teachers. Administration, professional supports, education workers, support staff, along with students, parents, families, and community partners, all play a key role in ensuring all can reach their full potential. And, Mr. Speaker, they are working towards that every day in Saskatchewan.

I ask all members of this Assembly to join with me in celebrating Education Week and applaud the fine work of so many across our province in the pursuit of educational excellence and a bright future for all. And may we in this Assembly do all we can to not just celebrate these efforts but, most importantly, support this critically important work. Students deserve nothing less. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### New Carbon Capture and Storage Project

**Ms. Eagles:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm excited to announce that at the beginning of October our government attended the official opening of a trail-blazing project at SaskPower's Boundary dam power station in Estevan.

The carbon capture and storage project is the world's first commercial CCS [carbon capture and storage] process at a coal-fired power plant. Delegates from 20 countries attended a clean coal symposium in Regina and then travelled to Estevan to attend the official opening. Mr. Speaker, this is a very exciting time for Saskatchewan as we are the world leaders in this project.

The CCS project, once it's fully operational, will capture about 1 million tonnes of carbon emission per year while still producing 110 to 115 megawatts of electrical power into the provincial grid. This is equivalent to taking 250,000 cars off the road. The carbon dioxide from the Boundary dam power station will be liquefied and stored in impermeable rock 3.4 kilometres under the earth's surface. It will then be sold to Cenovus for their enhanced oil recovery operations.

This project represents a major step forward for clean coal technology and responsible resource development. Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate SaskPower for their amazing work in making our province the world leaders in CCS. I ask that all members join me in celebrating the new carbon capture and storage project at the Boundary dam power station in Estevan.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### Foster Family Week

**Mr. Lawrence:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise in the House today to recognize the dedicated and caring foster families across the province during Foster Family Week. I also want to congratulate the Saskatchewan foster families on providing 40 years of service to Saskatchewan's vulnerable children and youth.

Mr. Speaker, foster parents provide so much more than food and shelter. They provide a home, a family, love, and security. They show children support and caring — the most important things of all. Mr. Speaker, being a foster parent is so much more than a job. It's a calling. It's a 24-hour, seven-day-a-week calling to care for our most vulnerable citizens. It is a calling to making a difference. I know this because I'm a foster parent myself.

Caring for children whose lives have been disrupted by abuse, neglect, or abandonment is never easy. Yet foster families take these children into their homes, make them a part of their families, and provide them with unconditional love. It takes very special people with very big hearts to do what they do, and I want all foster families to know how much it means to this government. By pouring yourselves into the lives of these children and investing in their future, you're also investing in the future of this province. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### Pasqua South Medical Centre Grand Opening

**Mr. Steinley:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It was an honour to attend the grand opening of the Pasqua South Medical Centre located right here in Regina. The opening of this new facility has always been a dream of Dr. Egware who herself is a University of Saskatchewan graduate. This is a welcoming and remarkable building that was specially designed with Dr. Egware's patients in mind.

Mr. Speaker, the scope of services that the Pasqua South Medical Centre provides is also quite impressive, from physician services, pharmacy, X-ray, lab services, physiotherapy, chiropractic, and naturopathy, just to name a few. This type of facility allows Dr. Egware and her associates' patients to get all of their health care needs met under one roof.

Mr. Speaker, this government also shares the vision of having a patient-first approach to patient care. It is this type of approach that ensures the patients and clients will feel comfortable while their needs are being met. This is truly an example of how teamwork and a holistic approach to health care can help improve the patient services. And, Mr. Speaker, I ask all members of this Assembly to join me in congratulating Dr. Egware on fulfilling her lifelong dream of opening the Pasqua South Medical Centre and providing top-level care that patients all across Saskatchewan deserve.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

#### QUESTION PERIOD

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

#### Costs and Benefits of the Lean Initiative

**Mr. Broten:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We've obtained internal government documents that show senior health administrators have major problems with this government's \$40 million lean consultant.

Here's what health administrators have to say about John Black and Associates: "Our experience with JBA has been one of lack of respect, tattling on leaders if they question, expecting rigid conformity in a militaristic style, gossiping, and undermining."

But despite the scathing criticism from senior health administrators, this government, Mr. Speaker, chose to renew the contract with John Black this summer. And despite some minor tweaks and shaving off just a few months, it will still spend, this government will spend nearly \$40 million on this one US [United States] consultant.

My question, Mr. Speaker, to the Premier: why on earth did he renew the contract, the \$40 million contract with the consultant, when senior health administrators have raised such scathing concerns?

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

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member opposite for the question. The reason we're renewing, we've renewed the contract at a total now of 35, not \$40 million — a reduction — is that it's working, Mr. Speaker. We've renewed it because the health regions, the boards of the health regions, want it to be renewed. We renewed it because lean is affording results in terms of improved outcomes for patients. Now a hard-cost savings of over \$50 million, approximating \$57 million, that's what we're going to do.

Mr. Speaker, some other changes have been made as we have listened. We have listened to some who have concerns about this particular lean process, and even members of the opposition. For example, the first day of lean for those who participate is going to be adjusted. We now have Saskatchewan examples to use, Mr. Speaker. We don't need them from other parts of the world. We don't need them from Japan. We can change that first day of orientation and introduction. We've directed that that occur. We think that's going to help this process, Mr. Speaker.

But we're absolutely going to continue with lean, not just in health, but in the economy where we're reducing permitting times, Mr. Speaker. We're going to continue with lean in ministries so long as there are results for Saskatchewan taxpayers, so long, Mr. Speaker, as we can deliver better service to the people that we serve.

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Mr. Speaker, Marlene Smadu is the VP

[vice-president] of quality and transformation in RQHR [Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region]. She was previously the assistant deputy minister of Health, the principal nursing advisor for the Government of Saskatchewan, and the associate dean of nursing at the University of Saskatchewan. She has also been certified by John Black as a lean leader. She wrote a briefing note, Mr. Speaker, that represents the concerns of senior administration in the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region. And again this is a quote from the briefing that she provided: "Our experience with JBA has been one of lack of respect, tattling on leaders if they question, expecting rigid conformity in a militaristic style, gossiping, and undermining."

Mr. Speaker, that description alone, that description alone should have been grounds to fire this US consultant. My question to the Premier: why did he choose to renew the contract this summer?

[10:30]

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

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, obviously we take the concerns of those who are on the front line, those who are in leadership in health very seriously. And that's why there have been adjustments made to the contract, why it has been reduced, both in terms of the amount of time that we're going to be engaging with the consultant and also in terms of the money.

But it's also important to emphasize here that we are garnering results for Saskatchewan people, for patients in the system, for the health care system itself. And we're seeing savings, over \$50 million worth of savings. There are a number of quotations we can read, and I'm sure we will in the weeks ahead, of health care workers, of those who are providers, of those who are in health care leadership who support this initiative, who understand that it is bringing results for the system.

Mr. Speaker, beyond this particular contract, we will have the capacity to continue with lean because, Mr. Speaker, it's an ongoing process, and we intend to do that. We intend to bring the benefits of lean not just to the Ministry of Health, but right across government. Mr. Speaker, it's a part of our plan, not only to deliver better service but to make sure we're doing it in a cost-effective way, by a government that puts a priority, for example, on balanced budgets even as we provide top-quality services for Saskatchewan people.

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Mr. Speaker, this government is not listening because this government is plowing ahead with its lean agenda, its pet project. And it is wasting millions, Mr. Speaker, on this contract with the US consultant. Dr. Smadu's briefing note was prepared on behalf of the entire senior leadership team of the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region. And the note was prepared on June 18th, about a month before this Premier renewed the contract with John Black.

The senior health administrators, Mr. Speaker, they're not only upset with John Black's approach, that we saw with the tattling, with all the concerns that they raised, but they're also concerned about the quality of training that's occurring under this contract

with the US consultant. They're concerned about the quality, the lack of relevance, the focus on memorization, and "Activities that are not meaningful and in some cases are insulting, all of which are part of JBA's approach, are not only not educationally sound but cause skepticism, alienation, and frustration." That, Mr. Speaker, should be grounds to fire the consultant, yet this Premier, this government re-signs the contract, Mr. Speaker, spending more dollars on the US consultant. Why did this Premier, Mr. Speaker, renew the contract with John Black?

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

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as the Premier has indicated, what we have done is embarked upon a multi-year strategy to deploy lean throughout the entire health care system here in Saskatchewan — unprecedented when you look across other jurisdictions who are implementing lean but in a much smaller fashion than we are in Saskatchewan. We have been preparing our health regions for the day when the reliance on outside consultants will be ending. Initially that was March of 2016, but what we have told our health regions is that will be ending sooner. It'll be June of 2015 that we will be fully exiting that contract with the external consultant.

Mr. Speaker, I can tell you this, that I meet from time to time quite frequently during the year with board Chairs of health regions and with senior leaders from throughout this entire province. My most recent meeting with our board Chairs was just, I believe, two weeks ago, and at that time the message was pretty clear that we need to continue on the path of lean because we're seeing results in this province. We're seeing progress, and we're seeing improved patient care for the patients of this province.

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Mr. Speaker, we know members opposite do not listen to front-line health care workers. And now we know, Mr. Speaker, that they do not listen to senior administrators when they give very honest and very clear advice. This government does the exact opposite.

The internal document shows, Mr. Speaker, that RQHR senior leadership don't even like kanban training, and they especially don't like, Mr. Speaker, the \$3,500-per-day senseis. Here's a quote: "The orientation to the kanban process within RQHR by the sensei had little added value." These senior administrators, Mr. Speaker, are saying that the \$3,500 per day spent on each sensei is not adding value, yet this government, Mr. Speaker, this government was still flying in senseis from Japan to Saskatchewan, paying them \$3,500 per day.

My question, Mr. Speaker, to the Premier: why does this Premier insist on flying in senseis from Japan to Saskatchewan, forcing health care workers to take these programs that are offered, Mr. Speaker, and paying these senseis \$3,500 per day? How does that make any sense?

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

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker,



we have made some changes to the way . . . for example how orientation will take place for new employees that are going through lean training. But, Mr. Speaker, I can say that why we're doing this in Saskatchewan is because the results are pretty clear.

Mr. Speaker, for surgery alone, here are some examples of how the process has improved and how it means it's more, not only cost effective for us as a system, but also more patient focused. For example, there's a 93 per cent reduction — from 113 minutes pre-lean to seven minutes now — from a surgical case cart going from sterilization to being used in the operating room, which means we can actually do more surgeries in a given day.

As well through lean processes, there has been a change in the way that transfers are done, for example with Sunrise Health Regions. When patients have their surgeries in Regina but their home region is Sunrise, there is a change that has been taken place which means that we have reduced the number of delayed transfers. Because in the past it used to be a last-minute type of deal, and now it's three days in advance. There's advance notice that's given to ensure that there is actually a bed and a way to transfer that patient. Just two examples on how surgeries are now improved here in Saskatchewan because of lean.

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Mr. Speaker, we've known for some time front-line health care workers don't like the kanban training with the senseis. And now we know, Mr. Speaker, senior leadership of RQHR shares that sentiment, seeing that the kanban training is adding little value.

My question, Mr. Speaker, was to the Premier, not the Health minister. My question to the Premier was, why, Mr. Speaker, is he supportive of the senseis coming from Japan and paying them \$3,500 per day? I don't know how much more, Mr. Speaker, this Premier will need to hear before he starts listening, listening to the concerns from senior health administrators.

The concerns are listed very clearly in a briefing note by the VP of quality and transformation here in Regina, someone who has completed the lean leader training. Here's a quote, Mr. Speaker, provided by senior leadership: "The presentation dogma is incompatible with the alleged encouragement of new analysis and improvement."

Senior administrators, Mr. Speaker, are saying the dogma through JBA, through this government's lean pet project, is not actually improving things. That's coming from the leadership, Mr. Speaker. That's backed up by the Health Quality Council's very own statistics.

My question to the Premier: if it's not bringing improvements, how on earth can he defend renewing this contract?

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

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Frankly, Mr. Speaker, I would disagree with the premise of the Leader of the Opposition, that this in fact is bringing improvements to the health care system. For

example, just in savings alone, as the Premier has mentioned, \$57 million to date in dollar cost savings. That doesn't include the work that frankly you can't quantify, but that is in fact better for patient care.

For example in Prairie North Health Region, an issue with missing information happened at 84 per cent of medication orders. Through mistake-proofing, which is a lean process, that has been reduced to zero — better for the patient, better for the system.

Mr. Speaker, CIHI [Canadian Institute of Health Information] information, CIHI has pointed out to wait time reductions all across Canada. And in their own documents, CIHI points out to what other provinces are doing. For example, Health PEI [Prince Edward Island] has developed an advanced clinical access program under lean. Manitoba cancer patient journey initiative is using, and this is CIHI, "... using lean methodologies to increase efficiencies." It's happening in Manitoba. It's happening in PEI. It's happening in Ontario. It's happening at the Mayo Clinic. Mr. Speaker, this is really something that is improving care for our patients.

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Mr. Speaker, let's review what this briefing note says about the approach of John Black and this government's ongoing love affair, Mr. Speaker, with this US consultant, and the millions that they're shovelling out the door. Senior health administrators, Mr. Speaker, say that John Black lacks respect and actually tattles on leaders if they question what is being done, Mr. Speaker. They say that training is irrelevant and that it is insulting. They say it's a bunch of dogma, Mr. Speaker, that actually doesn't even bring improvements. And they say, Mr. Speaker, flying in senseis, \$3,500 per day per sensei, is a waste of money. So it's no wonder, Mr. Speaker, it's no wonder that RQHR says this, and here's the quote from the senior administration, Mr. Speaker: "Getting out of this will be an improvement."

Mr. Speaker, if senior health administrators are saying the contract with John Black is a problem, that this government has an unhealthy fascination with John Black and with its lean pet project, why on earth, Mr. Speaker, did this Premier choose to renew the contract this summer?

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

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we did renew the contract although we have indicated that the end of our contractual relationship with JBA will be ending sooner than was expected by the regional health authorities. We knew it all along, when this was first signed, that our intent was a four-year contract, but that at the end of that process that RHAs [regional health authority], because of the good work that we've seen done through the implementation of lean, that they would need to be able to transition away from the use of consultants and build that capacity within the system. That transition is going to take place sooner than we had first anticipated. It'll be ending in June of next year.

But in the meantime, Mr. Speaker, I'm very happy to point to a

number of good work that has been done through lean that is going straight to the heart of patient care, improving patient care, and providing efficiencies within the health care system — something that I think we all agree on, that we need to find efficiencies within health care.

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Mr. Speaker, I do not know how this is not a huge wake-up call for this Premier and this government. I do not know it, Mr. Speaker, how this government could not change its course and how it could just plow ahead with its agenda. They're using the same lines, Mr. Speaker. They've been on rinse and repeat for some time now, and they're not actually listening to front-line health care workers. They're not listening to senior administration who highlight concern after concern.

This should be a wake-up call: a briefing note from senior administration of RQHR written by the VP of quality and transformation of RQHR, a former ADM [assistant deputy minister] of Health, a former principal nursing advisor for the provincial government, and former associate dean of the U of S [University of Saskatchewan] for nursing. The note says this, Mr. Speaker. Here's a quote: "I think this offers an important opportunity to keep whatever benefits there may be from lean and be free of the rigidity of JBA."

But instead of seizing that opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to end the contract, to stop wasting money, Mr. Speaker, this government did the opposite. This government, this summer, chose to renew the contract in the face of criticism coming from the front lines right up to the most senior administration in our health care system, a briefing note directly from senior leadership clearly being filtered out by the time that it gets to the speaking notes of the minister.

My question to the Premier: why on earth did he renew the contract with John Black this summer?

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

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, if you want to talk about a wake-up call, Mr. Speaker, in 2004, when the health budget of this province increased by 6.3 per cent, and despite that, the member from Lakeview had to close 90 beds and fire 160 employees, including 40 nurses, you would've thought that that would've been a wake-up call for health care in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we have embarked upon a new direction in this province, patient-first, where we are putting the patient first. We are looking for efficiencies that will actually help to improve the patient outcome, Mr. Speaker. This is something that frankly other provinces are now looking to Saskatchewan to see what we have learned and to see the expertise that we're developing in this province, something that leading organizations have already done in past, such as the Mayo Clinic, Mr. Speaker, which I'm happy to report has already signed on this year to our main fellowship program.

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Mr. Speaker, I thought the Health minister was better than giving the type of answers we see from the federal Tories in question period, Mr. Speaker. And it's a shame. It's a shame that the Premier would make the Health minister give that kind of response to a very direct question to the Premier.

The internal briefing note, Mr. Speaker, the internal briefing note might actually contain the answer about why this government chose to keep plowing ahead with its fat, cash cow contract with John Black. And here is what it says. Here's a quote: "Biggest concern around an early exit of JBA is in the optics it would produce." The biggest concern, Mr. Speaker, for getting out of this contract are the optics. That's it. That's the preoccupation by this government.

The vast majority of doctors, the vast majority of front-line health care workers, the vast majority of nurses hate lean, Mr. Speaker. And we know the senior health administrators have major problems with this government's approach to lean. But simply, Mr. Speaker, because of optics, this government is refusing to listen and it's plowing ahead.

My question, Mr. Speaker, is for the Premier. What will it take for him to listen? What will it take for him to listen to front-line workers, to senior administrators and admit renewing the contract with John Black was a mistake? When will this government start fixing the basics in our hospitals and care facilities and stop the fat contract with John Black?

[10:45]

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

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, while this government certainly . . . we look to implement lean as one tool to help to improve the health care system. But in terms of the basics of health care, surely hiring 423 additional physicians in seven years points to the basics. Over 2,400 nursing positions, licensed physicians, people in those positions, speaks to the basics, Mr. Speaker. And record investments into our RHAs, into our budgets, speaks to getting to the basics of health care.

But, Mr. Speaker, in terms of what lean has done as a tool, as one tool in our system, for example, Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region — and I know this will be one that is of interest to some members — but mental health and addictions reduced the number of cancelled appointments from 42 per cent a month cancelled appointments down to 4 per cent today, Mr. Speaker. That means that more people can get access to their programs. This is just one example of where lean has been a benefit to not only the system but more importantly to the patients of this province.

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

#### Smart Meter Program

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, two days ago a home here in Regina was demolished due to a fire that was caused by this government's failed smart meter program. It's a direct result of this government's failure to undertake due diligence. And we know that during the trial period more than a year ago to test

these meters, there were eight incidents. Eight times something went wrong. But the government concealed that and decided to plow ahead with its smart meter project anyway and put more than 100,000 of these dangerous smart meters on the homes of Saskatchewan people.

To the Premier: how can he possibly justify the decision to install smart meters on people's homes using unqualified workers from a temp agency and using questionable technology that had failed eight times during its trial period?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister for the Economy.

**Hon. Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With respect to the smart meter program, clearly there was problems with it. The government has certainly taken steps to address it, and I'll outline a number of them.

Initially, after there was a number of incidents, the government immediately moved to instruct SaskPower to remove all of these meters, some 105,000 of them across our province. We have gone through, SaskPower has gone through about . . . Roughly 25 per cent of them so far have been removed. If people make a request to remove them, they are dealt with on a priority basis with respect to it.

In addition to that, we immediately, the government immediately started negotiations through SaskPower officials with Sensus, the company involved in this, to recover the taxpayers' dollars, which they did.

In addition to that, the government then ordered a review of this whole process to see whether there were problems with the procurement around these smart meters. That review will be coming to light here very, very soon within the next few days.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, that government did anything but act as had information come to it. They had eight incidents over a year ago in a trial period, and expert electricians with local knowledge of our electrical system warned that government about using unqualified workers. For some reason that government chose to ignore those warnings. And a simple Google search would have revealed to this government that the particular meter that that government was engaging into contract was involved in fires all across North America. But that government failed to do the even basic homework that you'd expect of a government, selling out Saskatchewan people, putting them at risk.

To the Premier: whose idea was it to ignore concerns and ink a \$200 million contract with an American contractor who would only then subcontract with unqualified workers through a temp agency? And whose idea was it to buy 500,000 meters from a company that had problems with fires, without doing any homework before signing the deal?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister for the Economy.

**Hon. Mr. Boyd:** — Mr. Speaker, upon review of the eight incidents, the eight incidents that resulted in fires, five out of the eight incidents were installed by qualified journeyman

technicians — five out of eight of them.

In addition to that, as I have indicated earlier, the government took a number of steps, appropriate steps, I would believe, with respect to the removal of them. We're partway through that process. We are now reviewing the whole process to see whether there was any problems in terms of the procurement around this incident, these incidents, Mr. Speaker. When the member opposite speaks about that this was an American company, it is American companies that are the only providers of these types of meters, I would indicate.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, no answer to the question. We know that at least 10 of these fires were caused by the smart meter program, but we don't know the total number of incidents reported. We know that Grid One trucks with Texas plates are all across our province, but we don't know the details of that contract with America's Grid One. We know the value of the Grid One contract was \$200 million, but we don't know how much has been paid to Grid One, and we don't know if they're still receiving money.

There are many unanswered questions, and Saskatchewan people deserve an independent investigation. But this government is pretending to investigate itself, hiding from real answers and accountability. To the Premier: why won't he simply step up and call in the Provincial Auditor to investigate his smart meter mess?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister for the Economy.

**Hon. Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our government did indeed take action. We directed SaskPower to remove all of the smart meters. We recovered the taxpayers' money from Sensus. We ordered a thorough review of this whole project. That information, Mr. Speaker, will be available in a few short days. That will indicate where the problems were with respect to that. We directed CIC [Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan] to develop stronger project management policies. And in addition to that, there was a whole host of work done to remove these meters as quickly as possible.

Mr. Speaker, this is in sharp contrast, in sharp contrast to the way the members of the NDP [New Democratic Party] used to handle problems. Let's take for example, let's take for example, SPUDCO [Saskatchewan Potato Utility Development Company]. They covered it up. They covered it up for six long years, six long years, and then they only told the truth around this when it was dragged out of them in court. The company went bankrupt; \$36 million of taxpayers' money was gone for the people of Saskatchewan . . .

#### PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Deputy Chair of the House Services Committee.

#### Standing Committee on House Services

**Mr. McCall:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm instructed by the

Standing Committee on House Services to report that the committee has considered committee membership changes and is presenting its ninth report. I move:

That the ninth report of the Standing Committee on House Services be now concurred in.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the Deputy Chair of the House Services Committee:

That the ninth report of the Standing Committee on House Services be now concurred in.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried. Why is the member on his feet?

**Mr. Huyghebaert:** — Mr. Speaker, I'd ask leave for a motion of condolence.

**The Speaker:** — The member for Wood River has asked for leave to do a motion of condolence. Is leave granted?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

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

## MOTIONS

### Condolences

**Mr. Huyghebaert:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thanks to my colleagues. This is a motion of condolence, and it reads as follows:

That the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan express its deepest condolences to the family and friends of Corporal Nathan Cirillo who lost his life on October 22nd, 2014, while serving his country on honorary guard at the national war memorial.

And further, that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan express its deepest condolences to the family and friends of Warrant Officer Patrice Vincent whose life was tragically taken on October 20th, 2014.

In so doing, that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan records its own sense of loss and bereavement and express its most sincere gratitude to the members of the Ottawa Police Service, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and to all those who serve in our Canadian Armed Forces.

I so present.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the member for Wood River:

That the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan express its deepest condolences to the family and friends of

Corporal Nathan Cirillo who lost his life on October 22nd, 2014, while serving his country on honorary guard at the national war memorial.

And further, that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan express its deepest condolences to the family and friends of Warrant Officer Patrice Vincent whose life was tragically taken on October 20th, 2014.

And in so doing, that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan record its own sense of loss and bereavement and express its most sincere gratitude to the members of the Ottawa Police Service, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and to all those who serve in our Canadian Armed Forces.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried. Carried *nemine contradicente*. At this time I have a number of . . . I recognize the Government House Leader.

**Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I ask for leave to send a transmittal motion.

**The Speaker:** — The Government House Leader has asked for leave to make a motion of transmittal. Is leave granted?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

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

**Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, colleagues. I move:

That the Speaker, on behalf of the Legislative Assembly, transmit verbatim transcripts of the condolence motion just passed to Corporal Nathan Cirillo's family, Warrant Officer Patrice Vincent's family, to the House of Commons, and to all provincial and territorial legislatures.

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

That the Speaker, on behalf of the Legislative Assembly, transmit verbatim transcripts of the condolence motion just passed to Corporal Nathan Cirillo's family, Warrant Officer Patrice Vincent's family, to the House of Commons, and to all provincial and territorial legislatures.

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. I recognize the Government House Leader.

**Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I ask for leave to move a motion regarding the Deputy Chair of Committees.

**The Speaker:** — The Government House Leader has asked for leave to move a motion regarding the Deputy Chair of Committees. Is leave granted?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

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

#### Appointment of Deputy Chair of Committees

**Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, colleagues. By leave, I move:

That the member for Batoche be appointed to preside as Deputy Chair of Committees of this Assembly.

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

That the member for Batoche be appointed to preside as Deputy Chair of Committees of this Assembly.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

[11:00]

#### TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

**The Speaker:** — I have a number of items to table, including one related to the last item that we'll get to.

Pursuant to section 67 of *The Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act*, I hereby inform the Assembly of the membership of the Board of Internal Economy effective June 5, 2014.

[Interjections]

**The Speaker:** — Order.

Hon. Dan D'Autremont, Chair; Hon. Nancy Heppner, Executive Council nominee; Hon. Jeremy Harrison, MLA; Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff, MLA; Doreen Eagles, MLA; David Forbes, MLA; Warren McCall, MLA.

Yours sincerely, Vaughn Solomon Schofield, Lieutenant Governor, Province of Saskatchewan.

And:

In accordance with the Board of Internal Economy Directive #23, please find enclosed a copy of the following reports prepared by the Saskatchewan Party Caucus [in accordance] by the accounting firm MNP LPP:

Audited financial statement for the year ended March 31, 2014.

I table.

Pursuant to Board of Internal Economy Directive #23: Caucus Accountability and Disclosure, I hereby submit the audited Financial Statements for the 2013-2014 fiscal year, prepared for the NDP Caucus by the accounting firm of Mintz & Wallace.

I so table.

As per directive #22, Members' Accountability and Disclosure, clause (1), I table the fiscal reports for the end of the year for the members' accountability.

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS

##### Resignation of Deputy Chair of Committees

**The Speaker:** — We've dealt in part with this, but I wish to inform the Assembly of the following resignation: Mr. Corey Tochor as Deputy Chair of Committees of the Legislative Assembly, member for the constituency of Saskatoon Eastview.

#### ORDERS OF THE DAY

##### SPECIAL ORDER

##### ADDRESS IN REPLY

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

**Mr. Tochor:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll be moving a motion at the conclusion of my comments. Last night I was able to FaceTime my wife and son. Jacob smiled, laughed, and babbled as an innocent 16-month-old should without having to know or try to understand yesterday's events. We added a fallen hero's family to our bedtime prayer. I'm so thankful for my family's love and support. "All the great things are simple and may be expressed in a single word: freedom, justice, honour, duty, mercy, hope" — Winston Churchill.

It's an honour to serve the people of Eastview but the public service in this role is so insignificant compared to the public service we receive from the men and women who protect our country and fight overseas to protect our freedom. I stand today with the events of yesterday in Ottawa weighing heavy on me. The gratitude for those that stand on guard against the evil of the world. Their attempt to shake our beliefs will not succeed. Our thoughts and prayers are with the family and friends of fallen hero, Corporal Nathan Cirillo. We pray for the speedy recovery for those wounded from yesterday's terrorist attacks.

I'm honoured to be able to stand and move the Speech from the Throne. Yesterday we heard the priorities of the government for the upcoming year. In our democracy it's an important day and everyone here today rejects the fear that others would spread. Democracy is what evil fears. Democracy represents freedom, Canada's "True North strong and free." The strength of this country will see us through these challenging times.

We need to thank our brave men and women that put their lives on the line so that Canada can stay a beacon to the world of hope and democracy. In this building we must thank our Sergeant-at-Arms, Pat Shaw, and his dedicated team in keeping this building open and safe. We will not back down; we will not run. Democracy will continue. This Assembly will continue. Today and for the days to follow, we will debate, present different views, deliver speeches, disagree, and hold important votes. We get to exercise our democracy because we live in the best country in the world.

Our rights and freedoms was paid for by the heroes that gave all so that we get to settle our differences in a democratic, peaceful fashion. We get to exercise our democratic responsibilities in this Assembly because we live in a free country. There is a cost to this freedom, to stand on guard against the evils that challenge our beliefs, our freedom, our society, and our way of life.

In the coming year we can continue to improve our province, fulfill the promises found in the Speech from the Throne. In the coming days in this Assembly and out in our communities, we will and should include vigorous debate on both sides of the Assembly. Both sides will present policies, debate their merits, compare records and ask for a mandate in the coming days from the people of this great province. It's what freedom affords us. It is this context I would like to add my comments on the Speech from the Throne.

Living in a strong Saskatchewan affords us the opportunity to grow our economy and reinvest the dividends of growth into important programs in health and education. Because Saskatchewan has a strong economy, we've been able to add more than 400 more doctors and over 2,600 more nurses. Not that long ago we had the longest wait times in the country. We've been blessed by a strong economy that has allowed us the ability to decrease wait times for surgeries — 81 per cent reduction in patients waiting more than three months for surgery, Mr. Speaker. We welcome innovation and are using private surgery delivery to improve the health care in the province.

In the old Saskatchewan, the province was closing 52 hospitals and 16 long-term care facilities. Today we are opening new hospitals and long-term care facilities, and there's more work to be done. In this Assembly and communities across Saskatchewan, we can debate how and who should be building them but, Mr. Speaker, that debate is so much better and stronger to have compared to the negative debate on which community should be losing their health care and facilities.

In a strong Saskatchewan, we'll be debating how many new schools we'll be building. Not that long ago in Saskatchewan, the debate was on which schools to be closed. Over the last seven years, we've spent more than \$700 million on education infrastructure, a 268 per cent increase, with more work to be done. We will be using innovation and bundling of new schools where it makes sense. That's what strength and leadership provides.

A strong Saskatchewan means more students deciding to stay and start their career here. Over 50,000 students have chosen to stay here and strengthen our province with the help of the

graduate retention program.

Not that long ago, the economy was weak. Saskatchewan was in trouble, and many of our friends and family had to leave. Those days are behind us. Families are returning and our province is growing again. Our province is now at an all-time high of over 1,125,000. That's what a strong province looks like.

We are not a wee, little province anymore with a wee, little economy, Mr. Speaker. Our economy is growing, providing a record 577,000 jobs. We have a very diversified economy that helps Saskatchewan keep and make Saskatchewan strong in a challenging world economy. Of the over 70,000 new jobs created, fewer than 10 per cent are in the resource sector. The mass majority are found in the ever-growing diversified economy. To help keep Saskatchewan strong, we'll be introducing a growth tax initiative for manufacturers who create new jobs and for head office jobs.

Saskatchewan has the lowest poverty rate in Canada, but we can and will do better. By recognizing true leadership in the area of poverty reduction, we'll be working with individuals like Alison Robertson, Dr. Ryan Meili, and Dr. Cory Neudorf. That's how you build a strong, healthy Saskatchewan for all.

A strong Saskatchewan means lower taxes for everyone. Since 2007 our government has reduced taxes and have saved the taxpayers more than \$2.8 billion. The best use of this money is in the hands of the taxpayer who earned it, not the government. Today, no one in the province pays Saskatchewan income tax on the first \$18,650 that they earn. This tax reduction has helped low-income earners and has removed over 100,000 people from having, paying any income tax in the province.

We have increased opportunities for low-income families to own their own home through Habitat for Humanity. This work will continue along with Headstart on a Home, a program that helps people get into home ownership.

Mr. Speaker, we'll increase the scope of services that can be provided by pharmacists. These highly educated professionals . . . [inaudible] . . . to help meet some of the challenges in health care.

Mr. Speaker, we'll also be expanding the Hub crime reduction model to other communities in Saskatchewan. I had the opportunity to meet with and hear success stories of this program in Saskatoon. It's not the expansion of new services but the coordination of existing help that is making a difference. We are leading with this innovative program and other provinces are following our lead: Alberta, Manitoba, and now Nova Scotia.

Mr. Speaker, we will champion the reduction of trade barriers and aggressively promote a strong Saskatchewan to the world. We have what the world needs: food, fuel, and fertilizer. We ought to act like the leaders that we are and challenge the doubters and be proud of a strong Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, we will not spend one more dollar building new liquor stores in Saskatchewan. There are way too many hospitals and schools to be built. We'll be presenting an option

paper and public consultation process on private liquor stores in Saskatchewan. We welcome the debate. We welcome the feedback on the direction of what the people of Saskatchewan want.

A balanced budget is at the heart of a strong Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, with the challenges we face in the ever-changing world economy, this government will manage the finances of the province with caution and prudence. We need to remember, every ask for increased spending from the opposition will be paid for by taxpayers in higher debt or higher taxes. That is the reality the public must weigh when we hear the countless demands for more spending from the NDP.

I was elected to keep my word and live within our means. We must find efficiencies. We must seek out innovation. The government will adapt to meet the challenges and opportunity. Weakness is the inability to adapt to change. A strong Saskatchewan can adapt to anything. Mr. Speaker, I'm confident that this government will be as strong as the people of Saskatchewan and rise to that challenge.

Mr. Speaker, we are blessed in Saskatchewan. We live in a country that is protected by the bravest and strongest men in uniform. We are indebted for their services, and anything we can do to honour them will find support on both sides of the Assembly. It is why this government introduced the Saskatchewan Scholarship of Honour, the scholarship to returning military personnel and the spouses and children of Canadian Armed Forces members killed or permanently disabled in the service to their country. This fall we will be introducing a special licence plate available to loved ones of our fallen heroes.

Of the Canadian Armed Forces, we cannot say thank you enough to show our appreciation and gratitude. I'm thankful we live in a country like ours, and a province as strong as its people. All the great things are simple and may be expressed in a single word — freedom, justice, honour, duty, mercy, hope. Mr. Speaker, I think we need to add gratitude and strength to that list.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to move the following motion, seconded by the member from Moose Jaw Wakamow:

That an humble address be presented to Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor as follows:

To Her Honour the Honourable Vaughn Solomon Schofield, Lieutenant Governor of the province of Saskatchewan.

May it please Your Honour:

We, Her Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Saskatchewan in the session assembled, humbly thank Your Honour for the gracious speech which Your Honour has been pleased to address to us at the opening of the present session.

I so move.

[11:15]

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the member for Saskatoon Eastview, seconded by the member for Moose Jaw Wakamow:

That an humble address be presented to Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor as follows:

To Her Honour the Honourable Vaughn Solomon Schofield, Lieutenant Governor of the province of Saskatchewan.

May it please Your Honour:

We, Her Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects of the Legislative Assembly of the province of Saskatchewan in session assembled, humbly thank Your Honour for the gracious speech which Your Honour has been pleased to address to us at the opening of the present session.

Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member for Moose Jaw Wakamow.

**Mr. Lawrence:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm honoured to stand here and second the motion for the Speech from the Throne. Before I get into the meat and potatoes of this speech though, I'd like to take some time to thank some people. First and foremost, I would like to thank the people of Moose Jaw Wakamow. Just about three years ago, they chose me, little old me, well more than little, to represent them here in this legislature, and I've been very honoured to do that.

It's been a very good summer in Moose Jaw, and I was able to get out to a lot of events and out on the doorsteps actually listening to what the people of Moose Jaw Wakamow had to say. And I must say they're pretty happy with the way the government's going right now.

Next I would like to thank the people back home that I work with in my office. And that's Laurie who's been there with me since the start. She's done a wonderful job. And now we've added Evelyn Marcil who fills in when Laurie can't be there. We all know and hear the great work our constituency assistants do back home while we're here that enable us to come here and do the job we have to do here. I'm probably a little biased, but I'm pretty sure that they're the best ones out there.

Last, but certainly not least, I need to thank my family. My mom and my dad who have given me my work ethic. Wow. Dad, who is now 66 years old — 66 years young — and is still moving rigs in the oil field down in the southeast. And he tells me that retirement would be too boring, so he's just going to keep going. And my mom who still works in the office with my dad.

My kids, who are still in this province because this province is doing well, doing strong, moving forward. Two of my boys who are working, one as an apprentice aircraft mechanic or technician or engineer. He says that the name changed constantly. So he's there. One that's working right here in the city of Regina, and one who is still in university. He tells me he may graduate this year, hopefully at Christmas, but I think he's enjoying the university life. So hopefully he'll graduate and stay here.

And also I now have a daughter-in-law who's taking care of my two grandsons. My family's added to the growing of the 1.25 million people here in the province, so we're doing our part to keep the province growing. So now I have Jordison and Jaxton added to the family.

And my boys, they've been there all along through the thick and the thin. They helped me during the campaign, so I want to extend my thanks to them.

And last but certainly not least is my wonderful wife and partner, Marjorie. She was there at the start. She's still there, sticks by my side through the thick and the thin, and at times it gets pretty thick.

Two more names I'd really like to add after the happenings in the last week is Corporal Nathan Cirillo and Warrant Officer Patrice Vincent, who both lost their lives in cowardly, cowardly attacks in the last while. Cowardly. And as much as we don't want our nation to be changed, I think it's given us a wake-up call.

I've spoken to friends . . . And being from Moose Jaw, we've got 15 Wing right outside of town, a big part of our community, a huge part, as most bases are with the towns they're in. I spoke to some friends that have moved out east and they've been advised that, don't tell people that your families are Armed Forces. And that's a sad day for our nation. So I want to extend a tremendous thanks to our Armed Forces. Not only are they doing great work around the world, they're doing tremendous work here in our nation. And they shouldn't have to be afraid.

Now let's get to this Throne Speech. Our theme is, keeping Saskatchewan strong. And members opposite seem to have a different thought of what keeping Saskatchewan strong means. It comes down to some pretty basic stuff. If we don't have a strong economy, we can't provide for those who need our help. And through that strong economy it allows us to provide housing. In the Saskatchewan plan for growth we've committed \$344 million to boost the supply of housing in this province for our low- and moderate-income families. Right in Moose Jaw we have 145 housing starts on the go or in the process of moving forward. That's huge. That's helping those people that need it most.

If we don't have a strong economy . . . This is what I really get concerned about from the opposition. In the last election they had the tree book, and it must have been a money tree because if you don't have a strong economy, how are you going to get the money to help those that need the help the most? To do that, we need people coming into the province. So you take a look at the unprecedented growth that our province has right now — 125,000 people over the last seven years coming, coming to this province — not leaving. That's 70,000-plus new jobs, 70,400 new jobs since 2007.

So I grew up in a town down in the Southeast called Estevan. We've got our member from Estevan; she knows that's where most of my family is and, you know, huge supporters of our MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] from Estevan, and that's seven Estevans that have been created in job growth here in this province. Two Moose Jaws, two Moose Jaws of new jobs created in the province. So, you know, that's huge. That's

huge.

And when the opposition, they put out all these points of what they want to see in the Throne Speech and then they kind of ignore what those points actually are. One of the things that they said that we need is stop ignoring urgent needs in care facilities for front-line staff, equipment, and repairs. Well they seem to set aside that we provided \$10 million to the health region for specific initiatives, an additional \$3.7 million for ongoing programs. This funding is used to purchase 700 pieces of equipment, hire additional staff, and support staff training. Of those 70,000 jobs I was talking about earlier, in health care — which is the government's responsibility — there was 10,700 health care jobs created, 10,700. So when they talk about us ignoring those needs, I wonder if they're really looking at what's going on here.

With regards to our First Nations, moving swiftly to solve the unacceptable inequities in education for First Nations children, we've moved on those fronts. Aboriginal enrolment in post-secondary education is increasing. Our government will continue to support the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies, the First Nations University of Canada — close to my heart, being Métis — Gabriel Dumont Institute, and all post-secondary institutions to ensure that our First Nations and Métis students have the support they require to continue their studies.

So I met a young man in Saskatoon a few years ago at one of the Métis legislative assemblies and that was Max FineDay. So what he tweeted out yesterday, because it's not just us touting what we're doing, Max FineDay tweeted out, "Supports for #Aboriginal students, commitment for a poverty reduction plan, & support for #USask all good things from the Throne Speech. #skpoli." So we have Aboriginal young people paying attention to what we're doing, providing funding for that.

Those aren't the only positive reactions that have been out there. We've introduced a comprehensive poverty reduction plan or, or . . . and starting that process. And Ryan Meili who I'm sure some of the opposition is quite familiar with, I'll quote his tweet: "My government announcing the development of a poverty reduction strategy. Would like to thank organization @PovertyCosts @Premier . . . [and we're not supposed to say the name] #skpoli." So when we have somebody who actually ran for the leadership of the opposition thanking the government for the work that we're doing, I think we're listening to the people of Saskatchewan.

**An Hon. Member:** — Nice to see some leadership from them.

**Mr. Lawrence:** — Yes. Poverty Costs themselves, they've said. And it hits close to home, because this week in Moose Jaw they're actually . . . A bunch of students have got together and some other folks in town are doing a Poverty Costs challenge. So they're actually spending this week living like it would be living in poverty. So it hits close to home. It's teaching us . . . These are people I chat with lots. Dr. Meili's actually in Moose Jaw, I'm not sure if it's today or tomorrow, to actually talk on this. And Poverty Costs have said, "Here we go! Big mention for the team in the Throne speech #skpoli and the commitment to a poverty reduction strategy #WeDidIt."



So this thought that we don't listen to the people of Saskatchewan is a misnomer. We listen to the people of Saskatchewan. It's obvious we listen to the people of Saskatchewan and have been listening to them all along. If you can do simple math, it shows just with the number in the House, with the nine on that side and the 48 over here. Just specially for the teachers that are out there and teach us math, that 9 to 48 should be glaringly right there.

[11:30]

So one of the other things that we've moved forward with is Habitat for Humanity. And actually there's a groundbreaking; they've been working on it in Moose Jaw already over the summer. And there's another groundbreaking just down the street from my office. Actually down the alley from my office there's another groundbreaking for Habitat for Humanity.

So you take a look at what we've done with Habitat for Humanity, and what Habitat for Humanity has done just in this year's budget, an extra \$750,000 through the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation to build an additional 12 new Habitat for Humanity homes throughout Saskatchewan. And for those people that are out there and they don't really know what that program's about, you need to check it out. We're not giving these people a home. These people have to apply, get a mortgage through the Habitat for Humanity. And on top of qualifying for that mortgage through Habitat for Humanity, they literally put in thousands of hours of work on those homes. Those homes are built by volunteers, volunteers that have time. They're sponsored by corporations and companies here in this province. And if we didn't have a strong economy, if we didn't have a strong Saskatchewan, we couldn't do that.

I know the Leader of the Opposition doesn't like numbers and stats; he said as much for yesterday. But it shows in the stats that Habitat for Humanity provided, Habitat For Humanity changes lives. Seventy-eight per cent of families rated their health and the health of their families improved. Fifty-eight per cent are better off financially. Twenty-one and a half upgraded job skills or learned a new trade. And over 17 per cent returned back to school.

So we're out there. We're helping the people. And you can't do that without a strong Saskatchewan. A strong Saskatchewan means we need a strong economy. That strong economy is what provides for those who can't provide for themselves. And when it comes to parents that have issues, it's close to my heart, being a foster parent, dealing with some of these folks. Some of them were single moms. So what we've done earlier this year, our government was pleased to announce the opening of Sweet Dreams home in Saskatoon.

Now Sweet Dreams, if you'll remember, will provide at-risk single mothers with affordable housing and support while they complete their education and learn life and parenting skills. There's nothing closer to being family for the people than that. And the fact that that's not supported because of the funding model is beyond me. I really don't, I don't get where they get this from.

"This program gives at-risk mothers and children a better chance at life and will ultimately support the entire fabric of our

community." And that was a quote from Colleen Mah.

I'd like to quote one of the moms, and I've quoted her before, earlier this year:

It gave me a safe roof over my head, a support system that would take me to school and pick me up. I was able to make it to school every day. I always had food, money for clothes so I wouldn't have to worry about those things.

That was Chantal McLaren. And she was previously couch surfing with a one-year-old son.

So we funded that project . . . Or the project was actually made possible through a social impact bond funding model, so we actually didn't fund it upfront. The first of its kind in Canada. The first implemented in its kind in Canada.

So we have to look outside the box that the opposition seems to want to stay stuck in and not take a look at how we can do things better, how we can do things differently. You know, Saskatchewan's moving forward, and it doesn't appear that they've caught on to that, that Saskatchewan is moving forward and actually leaving them in the dust. I'm just, you know . . . And I want to quote the Leader of the Opposition from the Moose Jaw *Times-Herald* from yesterday.

**An Hon. Member:** — Don't do that.

**Mr. Lawrence:** — Oh I have to, because this goes to exactly what I was talking about earlier. And start quote: "Politics can't just be about helping the province do well. It has to be about helping the people do well."

So if the province isn't doing well . . . I'd like to pose a question. If the province isn't doing well, how are we supposed to help the people? How are we supposed to help the people? You know, it is about the stats.

Sometimes I really wonder if they read the Throne Speech, read the budget, and understand what it really has to say. One of their questions asked was, stop cutting climate change programs and environmental assessment and protection, and start investing in more clean, renewable power. So what do we do? Well, I believe the member from Estevan did a member's statement on this. Earlier this month people from around the world gathered at Boundary dam power station. And again, I just happened to work there for a while back in the day when I was in Estevan. I'm quite, quite familiar with them.

SaskPower opened the first commercial power plant in the world with a fully integrated post-combustion carbon capture system. More than 90 per cent of the carbon dioxide emitted at Boundary dam 3 will be captured and stored for enhanced oil recovery in mature oil fields. That's the equivalent of taking more than 250,000 vehicles off the roads here in Saskatchewan every year. That's huge. And it's not just for Saskatchewan. The world was there to take a look at the innovation that's here in the new Saskatchewan, moving this province forward.

You know, it's huge. That in itself is a game changer. When you take a look at countries like China with the amount of power plants that go up, with the United States with the amount

of coal-fired power plants they have in the United States that'll be able to adapt this technology to their existing infrastructure, it doesn't just help Saskatchewan. It helps the world.

It's tough to know really where the opposition is coming from, how they can miss the point that we're moving the province forward, that the province is moving forward and the government's not in the way. You know, exports have increased by 63 per cent, while manufacturing shipments have climbed more than 50 per cent. You know, it's pretty straightforward. People are actually moving here because they want to, because the jobs are here, the works are here, the work's here. They can build a life. They can build a family. My kids are part of a new generation that don't have to move away. So those of you in the opposition with new, young kids, if we keep moving forward they won't have to move away 20 years from now either. If we slide back, go back to the way things were in the '90s, they may have to change and move on to Alberta.

You know, I've talked to lots of grandparents that still have their kids in Alberta. And it becomes a struggle going to visit their kids in Alberta. It just . . . It's a hassle. So if my kids don't have to move to Alberta to get a job and build a life, that's good for me. However, for every other family out there in this province that their kids don't have to leave to get a job, it is great. It's good for them. They can build their families here and that's what it's about. That's why we have to keep Saskatchewan strong.

So again I really don't know why the opposition is so afraid of even talking about new ideas. We said there will be no liquor stores built, new liquor stores built in Saskatchewan with taxpayers' dollars. They don't like that idea. They would rather spend money on liquor board stores, building new liquor board stores, than building hospitals and schools. That boggles my mind. Why do you want to build liquor stores and not hospitals and schools? That's the question. And one of the ones in Saskatoon, is a Co-op. So any of the Saskatoon members from over there that are Co-op members, you're actually part owners of a private liquor store. So just saying.

So with that, I actually want to leave some stuff for my colleagues to point out about some of the opposition's ideas where we've actually moved forward. We're beyond that. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, with that I'm very happy to second the motion for the speech to the throne. Thank you very much.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just maybe I'll just . . . I'll beg the indulgence of members just for the front end. I wanted to just touch on the brutal and cowardly attacks that have certainly shook all of us and shaken our province, our entire nation. And certainly it's with heavy heart that we all think of the families of all those impacted and, most specifically, Corporal Nathan Cirillo and Warrant Officer Patrice Vincent who have lost their lives, who were killed in, as I say, brutal and cowardly actions here this week.

Both those members of the Canadian Armed Forces should have been home with their families each night this week. Instead their families are planning funerals, mourning their loss.

And it's important for them to know that we too as a nation, we too as a province, we as every member in this Assembly mourn those members. And so our thoughts and prayers, and our heavy hearts are with all those that have been impacted. And those thoughts and prayers are also with all Canadians and our members of the Canadian Forces particularly to ensure safety and protection for all.

It's events like this that can't often be described that also display great heroics. And certainly I want to provide the greatest thanks to the Sergeant-at-Arms in Ottawa, in legislatures across Canada, in our legislature here, and as well the law enforcement officers, our regional police, municipal police, the RCMP for their response, and of course the Canadian Forces.

I have members that serve in the Canadian Forces that have served abroad and are currently members of the Canadian Forces, and I know that this shakes those families. And I know they're strong and their resolve is strong, and I know we too as a nation and a people are strong. And it's a time for us all to stand together to respect and care for one another. And for us, as we remain strong to ensure that we don't let this shake the ideals and values that we cherish, that we work for as a province and a nation, Mr. Speaker. So I wanted to weigh in with some initial remarks before entering into my response to the Throne Speech that was delivered yesterday.

My initial focus on the Throne Speech, I'd like to sort of have a local perspective from our constituency on what people were looking for, what the pressures are that people are facing, and what was or wasn't in the Throne Speech. So that will be my focus.

But before getting into that, certainly as many other members do, I'd like to thank our families that support us to serve, that contribute to that service, and that to give back to our communities. And importantly in my life, I'd like to recognize Stephanie, my beautiful, intelligent wife who is a smart, hard-working educator who contributes to our community in so many ways. I'd like to recognize her. She also always has very good advice, is a very good forum to discuss matters that come before this Assembly and the people of our province.

[11:45]

I'd also like to . . . I'm thinking of our new addition, our first addition, the best thing in our life, William, who is now near six months old and who has sort of flipped our priorities upside right. And although he may cause us to have little sleep on certain days, as all parents would know — standing here today, I needed a little extra coffee — he's an incredible young man who we cherish and look forward to every step of the way with him and his role within the service as well.

I also want to recognize Gloria Patrick. She serves as the constituency assistant for Rosemont. And we have some casual constituency assistants I'd also like to thank. But these are in many ways the unsung heroes in each of our ridings. And I know each and every one of us as members value and thank those constituency assistants. In the case of Gloria, she's an exceptional individual. She has a mind to the community. She comes at things in a common sense way, and she has a deep

sense of compassion in dealing with matters in a professional way, in a way that can best advocate for our constituents. And it's just a pleasure to work together with Gloria for the betterment of others.

And you know, a lot of times the public perceives the political process to be simply an adversarial one or to be what they see on the evening news with ten seconds of one side, ten seconds of another, and they take it simply as that. But many that engage in our office are aware of the literally hundreds of families that connect within our offices and for which you work with in a constructive fashion as members of the opposition, and hopefully government as well, to advocate for their needs and see constructive resolution of their challenges.

Of course there's an important place in our parliamentary democracy for that role of advocacy on the floor of this Assembly as well and for the role of an opposition to oppose and yes to propose. And we're certainly proud to do our best to fulfill that role. And all I can say is I work with great people, and I work for great people.

When I think of what really makes a difference in the life of a province, in the life of a community, in the life of a city, and I think of our own riding, it's the leaders within those communities that make a difference every day. It's those in the schools that are providing the next generation the opportunity they so deserve. It's those in our community associations that are ensuring programs and extending supports and addressing local community need. It's those coaching sports and that are supporting programs that make a difference, whether it's in a kid's life or whether it's in the life of seniors.

And I can think of so many, Mr. Speaker, within our constituencies. Those in our churches that support and bring a place for people and families to come together in a place of faith and to extend that family. It's those working in our seniors' homes and in all aspects of public service. It's those creating jobs, the entrepreneurs who are a very important driver within this economy. The families, the workers, the entrepreneurs — I can think of so many right across our riding that make a tremendous difference in our province and within our community.

So it's thinking of all of those people. It's drawing upon the discussions on doorsteps when listening to constituents. It's the conversation at the hockey rink or the grocery store, the gas bar, with people that I use to inform some of these conversations. And of course it's the critical casework that comes into our offices that informs the remarks that I offer here today.

And in looking at the Throne Speech, there will be disappointment for many if they break it down and look at the real pressures that they are facing within their life. It seemed evident to me that this Throne Speech cemented that this government just doesn't get the realities of affordability, the cost-of-living pressures that everyday families are facing in this province. It's almost comical, but it frustrates and in some ways angers many, Mr. Speaker, to see their own tax dollars going to run ads to have a government boast and try to pretend that somehow that government is making life more affordable for Saskatchewan people when Saskatchewan people know full well nothing could be further from the truth, Mr. Speaker.

And the reality of this, when you have an environment where families are stressed by cost of living and not seeing some relief on those fronts, is it comes directly out of quality of life, Mr. Speaker, families making tough choices with household priorities and, in many cases, needs. And that's where this Throne Speech, and this is where this government has been off track in its record. And it's a tad rich, it's certainly a tad too sweet, Mr. Speaker, for a government that has presided over great opportunity but failed to address the affordability pressures, and in fact has jacked up the cost of living on families across Saskatchewan, to now come out with an ad campaign at the expense of Saskatchewan people and families, to try to pretend that somehow they're making life more affordable.

What I'd expect, Mr. Speaker, on an area like this is less boast, less boast from government, less pretending, a little bit more understanding of the realities families are facing, and then some practical and real solutions that make a difference for Saskatchewan people and my constituents, Mr. Speaker.

If I'm looking at some of the local needs and pressures that need to be addressed within our constituency, you know, it just stands out — and I've raised in this Assembly I know before, Mr. Speaker, and advocated — is that very important facility, Pioneer Village, and the care that it provides Saskatchewan people, many Saskatchewan seniors, many Saskatchewan people. The families and the people that are supported through Pioneer Village through all levels of care come from across Saskatchewan. Every single one of these members, I would suspect, have had or have constituents or family members that have been supported at Pioneer Village. And the staff, the team are doing everything they can with the resources they have to provide the care that's so critical to those that we love, Mr. Speaker.

But the facility, Mr. Speaker, is past its useful lifespan, needs to be replaced. And what they don't need is empty mentions from government about possibly doing this. What they're looking for is a timeline, an allocation of resources, and a plan that makes sense for the quality of care that reflects best practice of care moving forward, Mr. Speaker. So I advocate for that important, important facility to be restored — well, to be replaced, Mr. Speaker; it's past its useful lifespan — and to make sure that there's care for those that are there.

When I think of the health services, and we know and we hear often from so many across Saskatchewan about the shortage of specialists in important areas, I think of Jacqui Cameron and her son Rylan in my constituency, her son who's lived with epilepsy for so many years — a real hero, a real champion, the biggest Rider fan, Mr. Speaker, in this province, I would argue to say — but a young man that needs to be supported by pediatric neurologists. And it's just not good enough to not have the complement of pediatric neurologists for people like Rylan or for many others that we know that require these services.

We also see it through the home care, Mr. Speaker, the important needs. And I can think of constituent after constituent that requires support. These are meaningful supports. They can foster and allow dignity, independence, and support, and they're rather affordable and economic, Mr. Speaker. And government needs to do a much better job of extending home care, not

reducing home care for those that rely on it, Mr. Speaker.

I think of the emergency room waits, Mr. Speaker, that are absolutely unacceptable, that are leaving far too many languishing at a time of need and crisis. I think of the debacle last year managed by this government where the Pasqua emergency room was basically at crisis and potentially closing down. That's not what Saskatchewan people need in a growing Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. What they expect is that in a growing Saskatchewan with unprecedented opportunity that the government can get the basics right that matter to all Saskatchewan people and matter certainly to my constituents.

I can think of the challenge of access to family doctors. That is a challenge in many communities and certainly a challenge, yes, Mr. Speaker, in Regina and northwest Regina as well, and we're looking for practical, meaningful actions on that front. I didn't see anything in the Throne Speech to address that. These are the local concerns, the local lens that I'm applying to this budget, Mr. Speaker.

I also think of our schools and classrooms and an area that this government has really been an abject failure on as a government, Mr. Speaker, failing students in the next generation, failing to get it right, cutting educational assistants across Saskatchewan, filling classrooms with larger class sizes at a time where we have greater complexity to those classrooms than ever before, Mr. Speaker, and failing to provide the supports that are, yes, needed for students, most importantly needed for students, Mr. Speaker. And for me, when I see a province like ours doing as well as it is on so many fronts, it's an abject failure of this government to fail the next generation, to fail students, Mr. Speaker, and of course the continued poor treatment of the hard-working, incredible, fine educators of this province. These matter to my constituents. They matter to the constituents of the member from Saskatoon Centre. I suspect they matter to every single member's constituents in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker.

I also think on a local perspective we have vibrant schools. We have the new Martin Academy, Mr. Speaker, that's bringing a new life and future to that facility and an important facility and school to our community, Mr. Speaker. These are important things, but they need to be supported every step of the way by government.

I think of the closure of Dieppe School caused by the inadequate funding of this government, Mr. Speaker, Dieppe, a school that's so vital to a community, that is actually quality infrastructure that serves people as not just a school, which is critical, but as a community hub that was closed because of inadequate funding by this government. And I urge this government to find solutions, and there could be very common sense, practical solutions to work directly with the school board to ensure the reopening or to cause the reopening of Dieppe School, Mr. Speaker. And I'll continue to push for that on the floor of this Assembly, for that government to reach out and work directly with the board to make that happen, Mr. Speaker. And that's something that's critically important.

I know another aspect that I raise on the floor of this Assembly almost every chance I have, almost every day that I'm in here, Mr. Speaker. And we've rallied as a community. We have a

community petition drive that we've engaged. We've had the issue brought to the attention of community leaders that have assisted in bringing the issue to the attention of the broader public, but something that's totally unacceptable by way of the response of this government, and that's their response to causing the heavy-haul truck traffic and danger on Dewdney Avenue.

You know this, Mr. Speaker, this isn't stuff that is not solvable, Mr. Speaker. These are some of the simple things that a government should simply take care of. And for that government to create the hub but not think of the safe traffic flow and the impacts back to residents and communities, Mr. Speaker, is absolutely unacceptable. And it's intolerable, Mr. Speaker, to continue to see this government delay its actions to get those dangerous heavy-haul trucks off of Dewdney Avenue, ensure safety and peace of mind for the residents of Dewdney Avenue, the users of Dewdney Avenue, Mr. Speaker.

And of course that's many. It's the families that are accessing work. It's the families that are accessing schools. It's those that are coming to Pioneer Village, Mr. Speaker, from all across this province to see loved ones. It's those that are visiting great heritage sites like the RCMP Heritage Centre or depot itself or Government House, Mr. Speaker.

So this is an issue that needs to be resolved, and my frustration with this government is high on this front because it's been brought to their attention. It's easily resolved, and the unwillingness and stubbornness of this government isn't good enough. The long-term west bypass is an important part to ensure that occurs, but there needs to be interim measures to address it. And we've brought forward proposals to government that have been rejected, Mr. Speaker.

These are some of the aspects that are important to my constituents, Mr. Speaker, as I talk about. It's the failure of that government to make life better when it comes to affordability. The concern, Mr. Speaker, of a government that really doesn't get the realities of everyday households across Saskatchewan is certainly important, Mr. Speaker.

[12:00]

There are some things in the Throne Speech for which I can speak positively to. And you know, the amending of *The Health Information Protection Act* is a good thing. Protecting patient safety, this is critically important.

The needs of communities are many right now, and the failure of governments and the provincial and federal governments to support the growth of this province is falling heavily on property tax payers of this province, falling heavily onto communities, the property taxes of families and businesses, Mr. Speaker, who continue to see their property taxes increasing, Mr. Speaker. And what we've been calling is for better support for our municipalities. And certainly the SIGI, the Saskatchewan infrastructure growth initiative being reintroduced is a good thing, but that's simply supporting borrowing, Mr. Speaker, lending of municipalities. What we need, Mr. Speaker, are real solutions when it comes to dedicated infrastructure funding that will allow communities to plan for the growth they're experiencing and to take the

pressure off of families and businesses who simply can't afford the big tax increases this government is imposing upon them.

We also support the expansion of adult basic education. I've some experience with this in my life as an educator before entering into this House. This is critically important. And it's absolutely unacceptable to have any wait-list for adult basic education in this province, and certainly we're pleased to see some progress there.

And so those are some of the things, Mr. Speaker, that we're focusing on. But when we look at this in general, Mr. Speaker, and I think of the entire province, this Throne Speech is focused on a select few, Mr. Speaker, instead of all the people of this province. And as our leader, the Leader of the Opposition often says, it can't just be about the province doing well. It has to be about people doing well, Mr. Speaker, which is why we're going to continue to stand up for Saskatchewan people, why we're going to work and propose ideas to work with the tremendous opportunity, the hard work of Saskatchewan people, to better this proud province of ours, Mr. Speaker, and to challenge government when it's off track.

And clearly, Mr. Speaker, this government's off track in areas. When we see the untold millions, tens of millions of dollars, Mr. Speaker, being doled out to American contractors for this lean debacle that we've experienced, Mr. Speaker, the kinds of questions that were placed in question period today are the valid ones. Instead of spending tens of millions of dollars to an American contractor, Mr. Speaker, who's making things worse, who's not respected, who's not appreciated by the health sector, they should be putting those dollars to where they make a direct difference in the lives of Saskatchewan people — directly into seniors' care, directly into health care.

I've spoken about the concerns around education, Mr. Speaker. This is a government that — given incredible opportunity and exceptional revenues — this is a government that has failed students in the next generation, Mr. Speaker. They've disrespected and dismissed teachers, ignoring their very important voice, failing to provide the supports that they know are important to students, Mr. Speaker, and a government that rams forward with its own agenda without listening, tinkering around with school days, tinkering around with calendars, monkeying around with things for which they didn't even understand the practical implications of doing so, which are now causing some challenges, Mr. Speaker.

So what we're calling for on this front is it's a time to focus back on the basics, to make sure that government can reduce class size. Let's make sure those supports are there. Let's respect our teachers. And let's make sure that, most importantly, that we get it right because we have one shot when it comes to the education of young people.

It's different . . . I know these guys get caught up, Mr. Speaker, in this Toyota lean American-Japanese project that they are engaged in, Mr. Speaker. But unlike a Toyota car, Mr. Speaker, that can be recalled after its gone through that lean process, we have one chance to get it right with the students of this province, and it's a failure of all of us if we don't provide the supports that are important, Mr. Speaker.

Before closing, Mr. Speaker, the one last area I'd like to touch on is that we see a government that's focused on selling out Saskatchewan opportunity on too many fronts. We have such tremendous opportunity and resources and people and businesses in this province. This government is all too willing to sell out Saskatchewan's opportunity. We see it in this debacle where this government entered into a contract — \$200 million if you can imagine, Mr. Speaker — with an American contractor to send Texas plates up to Saskatchewan who then subcontracts that work through a temp agency to put unqualified workers into our province to create safety risks, cause fires here throughout the province, Mr. Speaker, and failing to provide the good jobs and opportunity that Saskatchewan people deserve.

We see it in the outsourcing and privatization in many other areas, whether it's the important work of corrections workers in this province who are now . . . a government who thinks somehow that that should be a job that's outsourced and privatized to some company that's going to put lower paid workers into those roles, threatening the integrity of that system and taking away good, important jobs within our communities, Mr. Speaker.

And it couldn't be more evident, Mr. Speaker, than the P3 [public-private partnership] rent-a-school scheme that we see of this government, and we see it in other areas as well, but where a government rejects any accountability, any transparency, rejects the economics of the decisions they're entering into, rejects to learn from neighbouring provinces like Alberta that are shelving this wrong-headed approach to building infrastructure. You know, Mr. Speaker, it's just an example of a government that's grown stubborn, a government that's grown ignorant, and a government that's not tending to Saskatchewan people the way they should and in fact are selling Saskatchewan people out.

It's a concern to me that the P3 rent-a-school scheme of this government will cost Saskatchewan people more — taxpayers. It's a concern that it will delay construction. It's a concern that it'll forfeit local control of the school boards and the community groups that need those schools to be hubs, Mr. Speaker. And it's a big concern, Mr. Speaker, that the way this government's going at it, it will shut out Saskatchewan companies from the participation in building the schools that they should.

And these are the companies, Mr. Speaker, who have skin in the game, who have stuck through more challenging times within this province, who deserve, who deserve to be part of the projects right now, with workers, Mr. Speaker, who own homes, pay taxes, and send kids to school. Which is also why, Mr. Speaker, on this idea, this focus that we have, we want to build on Saskatchewan opportunity that extends to the young child that's going into school this year that also extends to the businesses of this province so we can build on that opportunity.

Something that I'm very proud of that was proposed by the Leader of the Opposition and our team is the sophisticated and modernized improvements to procurement in this province that we're calling for, Mr. Speaker. That government ignores, that government ignores the benefits that are derived in making sure there's at least an equal footing for Saskatchewan companies. It

doesn't make any sense to have steel manufacturers, Mr. Speaker, and contractors not being able to engage in an equal way with the procurement in this province. And that's about . . . again another example of this government not looking to build on Saskatchewan opportunity but selling that opportunity out. And of course we see that in our Crowns, Mr. Speaker, on so many fronts.

I'm cognizant that I've gone a few minutes past my allotted speaking time within our allocation here today, but I wanted to touch on those important points. What I want, what I want to express is that it's an honour to work for my constituents. It's an honour to work and represent the issues that are important to all Saskatchewan people.

We're going to be here to propose better ways forward. We're going to be there to point out to aspects we can support as we've done here today, but most importantly we're going to work tirelessly to make sure that we make life better and address the real challenges that Saskatchewan families are facing. Too often from the current government it's about boasting and back-patting, sort of all about them and all their partisan interests. We believe it should be more about Saskatchewan people, Mr. Speaker.

There's a lot of opportunity in this province. People are working hard. We want to play our part and are willing to play that part to work with Saskatchewan people to make this great province an even better place.

With that being said, Mr. Speaker, I'll be moving an amendment, seconded by the member of Athabasca, which reads as follows. I won't be supporting the Throne Speech. I'll be, as I say, moving this amendment:

And that this Assembly condemns this government for primarily working to benefit a select few while dismissing the most important things Saskatchewan families want and need, especially in the areas of health care, education, and the rising cost of living.

I so move. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — The member from Regina Rosemont has moved the motion, seconded by the member from Athabasca:

That the motion be amended by adding the following:

And that this Assembly condemns this government for primarily working to the benefit of a select few while dismissing the most important things Saskatchewan families want and need, especially in the areas of health care, education, and the rising cost of living.

Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Athabasca.

**Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm proud to stand today in my place to second the motion as presented by my colleague in relation to our response to the Throne Speech.

Obviously we see a lot of gaps. And I want to emphasize the point that my colleague raised, that despite this government having received probably the greatest gift any new incoming government could receive in 2007, which was money in the bank, a booming economy, population growing, optimism abound, a great CFL [Canadian Football League] team, Saskatchewan Roughrider team, and they won the Grey Cup that year — all these stars were aligned for them, Mr. Speaker; they were all aligned for them.

And today, seven years later, Mr. Speaker, as a result of the Throne Speech, we see a tired, old government that simply has not done anything significant for the people of Saskatchewan. They have not done anything tremendous for the people of Saskatchewan to take notice. All they have done is simply caretake the work of the previous NDP government and the people of Saskatchewan to make sure they don't mess up the economy and the direction that Saskatchewan was finally going, Mr. Speaker.

Now the member from Kindersley, the Minister of the Economy, he sits there in his place — and the economy's doing great so he doesn't get a lot of questions, Mr. Speaker — but one of the things that he has really, I want to point out, that he's really made a mistake on is the whole area of agriculture. When we had the grain transportation crisis, Mr. Speaker, being a northern MLA, I don't know a lot about agriculture, but throughout my years here I've learned a bit. And all I know is that the minister who was based in rural Saskatchewan, who's part of the economic brain trust of that particular party . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Well isn't the safe movement of goods and services part of the economy? And on the grain transportation questions that happened last year, Mr. Speaker, where farmers lost billions of dollars, billions of dollars, Mr. Speaker, because the rail companies could not move their grain, what happened to our Minister of the Economy? He sat on his hands, didn't say a word, and actually told many of the people in the organizations that should be speaking up, he muzzled them, Mr. Speaker. And that's our point.

As a result today, the point that I'm raising today is that this is what people of Saskatchewan expected and it's a huge disappointment for us on this side of the Assembly, and it's a huge disappointment for many people throughout Saskatchewan. Despite given a huge surplus, that government getting a huge surplus, a booming economy, and a growing population, Mr. Speaker, they can't figure out where they're at, what they're going to present to the people of Saskatchewan. And the Throne Speech is a good example of how they've failed miserably, Mr. Speaker.

But on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker, optimism is growing. Optimism is growing. We're certainly going to continue working hard. We're going to continue working hard. And we know, Mr. Speaker, we know as a result of their lack of vision that clearly one-third of them have indicated they're going to quit. They're going to quit politics. They're leaving politics, Mr. Speaker. Now the other third are confused as to what to do and the other third, Mr. Speaker, we're going to work very hard to go after their seats, Mr. Speaker.

So the vast majority of them, the vast majority of them are quitting. You know why they're quitting, Mr. Speaker? Because

they have failed miserably and they know in their hearts that they have not risen to the occasion that the people of Saskatchewan deserve. They know it and we know it, and that's why on this side of the Assembly there's a lot of optimism. And, Mr. Speaker, the NDP are going to come back and are going to show the people of Saskatchewan what they're made of come next election, Mr. Speaker. There's great confidence, great optimism on this side of the House because they have dropped the ball, Mr. Speaker. No vision, no plan, Mr. Speaker. And it gets pretty sad. It gets pretty sad, Mr. Speaker, when they've got to go back eight years to find any examples that they can argue about.

Mr. Speaker, the lack of leadership is very apparent from that government, Mr. Speaker, and now even suggests that the front row, the cabinet, there's already half of them quitting, and the other half probably will last maybe 20, maybe 20, 30 per cent left in their political shelf life, so to speak, and then they're off to greener pastures.

[12:15]

And that's why it's important for the people of Saskatchewan to pay attention to the Throne Speech to see what's being planned, what vision is being implemented, and where they're planning on going. And, Mr. Speaker, the Throne Speech was a huge, huge disappointment — no vision, no plan, nothing to articulate and to emphasize growth for the people of Saskatchewan.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to point out here as well, for northwestern Saskatchewan, the constituency of Athabasca, we know about how they've wasted millions of dollars hiring consultants. We know about the smart meter problems. We know about the fact that they've decimated many programs in the Aboriginal community. They've worked hard to get rid of a lot of teachers. And, Mr. Speaker, they're working hard to get rid of a lot of working men and women in our union movement. We all know what this government's all about.

So what do you do when you really have nothing to worry about when it comes to continue to build the economy? You go back to your principles of trying to put privatized health care in place. You go back to your principle of trying to sell off the Crowns, and the Information Services Corporation's a good example. And then you ignore certain sectors. And then people in northern Saskatchewan see all this, and they ask questions of, why aren't they addressing the agricultural issues? Because they know that the farm community's important to our economy. People in northern Saskatchewan know that. We tell them, go and ask them because they've dropped the ball on that front.

So we know all of these issues. A lot of the provincial information that we get and a lot of issues that we learn about, Mr. Speaker, northern Saskatchewan people see what's going on. They're concerned, but they also want to make sure that they know that they appreciate the work that many of the agricultural producers contribute to the province of Saskatchewan. I think that's a really key message that northern Saskatchewan people want to share. That being said, Mr. Speaker, we don't want to diminish the needs and certainly the issues of southern Saskatchewan.

We want to talk a bit about what Athabasca's all about because that's primarily one of the reasons why I'm here. And one of the things that I looked at when we looked at the Throne Speech, nothing on highways for northern Saskatchewan. Nothing on health care for northern Saskatchewan. Nothing, Mr. Speaker, on housing, Mr. Speaker. Nothing on education. Absolutely nothing for northern Saskatchewan.

And I want to talk about highways. The Minister of Highways is chirping from her chair, Mr. Speaker. She's chirping from her chair. And I want to share with her a headline, a headline, Mr. Speaker, that came across on October 21st, 2014, *Northern Pride*, *Meadow Lake Northern Pride*. The headline says, "Dore Lake residents threaten highway blockade." That's the headline.

And, Mr. Speaker, one of the things that's important for the Minister of Highways to know is that one of the quotes of a councillor for Dore Lake, and the councillor's name is Jonathon Fonos, and this is what Mr. Fonos said in that particular article from this past couple of days. And the quote was, "I'd much rather be put in handcuffs than have to bury one of my kids." And the reason he was saying that, Mr. Speaker, when he threatened a blockade, they threatened to put handcuffs on him. And his response was, and again I quote, "I'd much rather be put in handcuffs than have to bury one of my kids." That's a message from Mr. Fonos to this particular government and to that particular minister that's chirping from her chair.

And while she's busy chirping from her chair, Mr. Speaker, I want to point out that they're going to have a fairly significant meeting in Dore Lake and Sled Lake. There's a lot of cabins in that particular area because it's a beautiful part of our province. Now what happens is the people of Sled Lake and Dore Lake and those cabin owners are having a big meeting October 28th, 1 p.m. at the Dore Lake community hall. I'm going to ask the Minister of Highways, will she be attending that meeting? Are the concerns of the Dore Lake, Sled Lake, and cabin owners of that particular area, are they legitimate enough to demand that she be there on October 21st at the Dore Lake community hall, 1 p.m.? I'm going to ask the minister, will she attend that meeting, yes or no? Will she attend that meeting?

And she's chirping from her chair, Mr. Speaker. Again to point out that there was no leadership from her part. And, Mr. Speaker, that's what's really galling about this particular government. They talk a good game, but they can't deliver anything, Mr. Speaker.

Now the other point I would point out is that Mr. Fonos went on to say, and this is again a direct quote from the article:

Fonos said, "This is a far cry from the discussions held in 2005 at which time the ministry claimed it would address the issues to rebuild the highway." A change in government, however, is what the councillor believes led the project to eventually fall by the wayside.

So, Mr. Speaker, there was commitments made. This government stopped those commitments. They stopped those commitments. And, Mr. Speaker, that's the problem that we have on this side of the Assembly, is that this government doesn't care about certain regions, about certain concerns, about certain people. And that's a shame because you govern for all,

Mr. Speaker.

And some of the points I want to raise as well is the people are rallying in Dore Lake. They're trying to pressure this government and this minister to attend that meeting. They're trying to get her to be there to answer questions, Mr. Speaker, why that project was cancelled.

And according to Joel Cherry, again a direct quote from the article, "According to Joel Cherry, a communications consultant with the Ministry of Highways . . ." Now I don't know what that means, a communication consultant. Was he working for Highways before? Is this a new way of putting employees under a consultant title? Are we letting go of a lot of the workers within the Highways department? These are some of the questions we had. So is he a communication consultant with Highways or is he an employee? Well Mr. Cherry is basically saying that Dore Lake and Sled Lake are not on the capital lists for the next five years.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the people of Dore Lake are putting their lives at risk, their children's lives at risk. And the problem is they see 200 trucks going through that road, hauling out what? A northern resource called timber. They're hauling out 200 loads of forestry product for the mills in Meadow Lake. Now I think Dore Lake, Sled Lake, and the people that own cabins there, they appreciate that they have to do their part for the economy. But as you're pulling the resources out of northern Saskatchewan, should you not put something back for safe highways and to ensure that people's lives are not threatened? Should you not put some of that money back?

We on this side of the Assembly believe that it's a good balance to invest in infrastructure, to develop the resources which strengthens the economy overall and respects people of the region. That's our vision, Mr. Speaker. Nothing in this Throne Speech says anything remotely about that particular vision, Mr. Speaker.

Now look at the other argument about Highway 302 outside of Prince Albert. My colleague, the member from Cumberland, joined me and we had a tour of Highway 302. It took them — what? — six months to replace a culvert. Six months and almost \$2 million to replace one culvert, Mr. Speaker. Never mind the cost of the economy and the cost of people travelling around. Highway 302 was washed out for almost six months. Cost over close to \$2 million to repair that, never mind the cost of the people going around. That cost must have been incredible.

Now you look at . . . Those are some of the examples though. When the minister talks about \$1 billion towards highways, I wonder how many \$2 million culverts are involved with that figure. Two million dollars to replace a culvert. Come on, you've got to get things figured out better on that side of the Assembly. And that's why the NDP are feeling optimistic and we know we're going to work very hard to improve our seat count, Mr. Speaker.

The other point I would point out, Mr. Speaker, is New North issued a press release. New North issued a press release and every mayor and councillor in northern Saskatchewan are telling the provincial government, it's time for you to start

putting money back into our northern roads. Enough of this hauling out resources and, as you're hauling out our resources, you bang up our highways. You've got to put something back. So every northern mayor here has said they want to see action. And any northern mayor who does not follow the directive of New North isn't worth his salt, isn't worth his salt if he's defending the government's spending on highways in northern Saskatchewan, because the government is not spending anything to improve highway situations in northern Saskatchewan.

And again to point out to the Minister of Finance, chirping from his chair again, you were left with billions in the bank. Share the wealth. Give something to the North as well. But no, Mr. Speaker, his priorities do not include certain sectors, and northern Saskatchewan highways is one of those sectors that he has completely ignored and will continue to ignore, Mr. Speaker, for years to come.

So Mr. Fonos and many people that he sits with and talks with has a message to this government: get our roads fixed because they're dangerous. And as you're hauling out the resources, at least have the courtesy and respect to put some of that money back so his kids can travel safe, and the people that access the cabins can travel safe. You've got to get that message on and make sure that message is loud and clear today in the Assembly to the Saskatchewan Party government. And I would encourage the people of Dore Lake and Sled Lake and the cabin owners, send letters, sign petitions. Let's fight this together. And I can guarantee you that they will stubbornly dismiss your concerns and they will not resolve the issue because this government has no vision for the North and no plans to help out Sled Lake nor Dore Lake.

So, Mr. Speaker, again I want to ask the minister a second time, the meeting on the, I think it's this Tuesday, 1 o'clock at the Dore Lake community hall, will she attend? And she sits there laughing in her chair as if it's not important. It is important. You should be there because they're asking you to be there, Mr. Speaker. They're asking the Minister of Highways to be there to answer some of these questions.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to look at the other aspect of the Throne Speech which also had some concerns for me. And a good example, Mr. Speaker, is the hunting issue, when they talked about a one-year ban for hunting if you're caught out of season or poaching. Then they spoke about a two-year ban and then they spoke about a three-year ban. Well, Mr. Speaker, we have a lot of questions about those hunting issues as it relates to First Nations and Métis hunting rights. We need to have clarity from this government to ensure that the COs [conservation officer] out there know exactly how to handle certain situations and that they're consistent when they handle these particular circumstances, Mr. Speaker.

We know that people in our area, Métis people, have been given warning tickets when they're out hunting. They've been given warning tickets. There are court cases that say they're allowed to hunt in their area, and that's for sustenance for their families and so on and so forth. So the courts, the highest courts recognize that they've got the right to hunt and gather and fish and trap as they've done for centuries, Mr. Speaker. The First Nations also have that right firmly entrenched. So now they



come along with this Throne Speech and they're saying, well if anybody's caught with a hunting violation, you have a one-year ban. You're caught again, you have a two-year ban. Then you're caught again, you have a lifetime ban.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we need to make sure that our resource officers, the conservation officers out there have very good information, have consistent practice in implementing the need to conserve our resources well. And I can tell you right now, Mr. Speaker, there's a lot of confusion out there. There's a lot of confusion and I'm telling the Saskatchewan Party Government, you'd better provide leadership on there. Otherwise there'll be a lot of people in court, and there'll be a lot of fights that the government's involved with, all because you couldn't lead your way out of a wet paper bag when it comes to issues of hunting rights and privileges that the people of Saskatchewan enjoy. We know, we know, Mr. Speaker, that there should be more hunting. We know a lot of people aren't hunting as much as they should. We hear that from the Wildlife Federation. We hear that from a lot of people, that hunting is really starting to decline in the province of Saskatchewan, that we have to do more to stimulate that kind of activity because it's a natural part of who we are as Saskatchewan people.

So we need to look, we need to look, Mr. Speaker, at ways in which yes, you manage the resource. Yes, you encourage people to be self sustaining, whether they're Aboriginal or not. You know, we all have the same kind of motto that, what good is the right to hunt if there's nothing left to hunt? So I think it's important that we share the responsibility of maintaining the resources and the wildlife to ensure that hunting continues on for years and years.

But this confusion as a result of their Throne Speech needs to be addressed at the outset because what you don't want to do is have COs that are uncertain and don't have some good directive and good directions and leadership from this government to make sure that they're consistent in their practice, that they educate and work with the Aboriginal community and the non-Aboriginal community to ensure that this one-year ban or two-year ban or lifetime ban doesn't create problems for the people of Saskatchewan where we have to needlessly go to court to settle this difference that had been settled 10 times over already, Mr. Speaker.

So I know I've been going on for a bit, but I wanted to quickly touch on education. You look at the challenge addressed by my colleague, Mr. Speaker, and we in the opposition know one thing is that you've got to engage the Aboriginal community in this economy. And the key to get them to this economy, Mr. Speaker, is education. It's a \$90 billion opportunity for the people of Saskatchewan. We understand that on this side of the Assembly, Mr. Speaker. But while this government announced a \$3 million task force on Aboriginal education, well all this time they were gutting the Aboriginal department within the Ministry of Education. They were gutting programs and key people that were making a difference to make sure we brought the Aboriginal community to the opportunity and education and trades and skills training, Mr. Speaker.

So how is it you announce a \$3 million fund on one hand, then you cut 20 or 30 key positions and a whole department, a whole department that's leading us in terms of trying to provide

educational opportunity and resource development opportunities for First Nations and Métis people? It just does not fit, Mr. Speaker. Their actions and basically what they have committed to, there's just a huge disjuncting, Mr. Speaker, between what they proposed in their Throne Speech and what is happening out there in Saskatchewanland.

[12:30]

So, Mr. Speaker, I look at some of the other points that I would raise. We see a huge waste in the lean pet project: \$40 million is what it's costing the people of Saskatchewan. This government stubbornly refuses to recognize that mistake, Mr. Speaker. They continue signing these contracts and sending money off to the States to these American consultants when we have the solution here. Well you give us 10 million bucks; we'll show you how to save 80 million. We'll not be . . . Price tag you're paying to Black and Associates down by 30 million, so you can claim that you save another 30 million. So give us 10 instead of giving them 40, and we'll consult with the managers and the front-line workers on how to make the necessary changes so our services are top quality, so that our hospitals are kept very clean and orderly, Mr. Speaker. We'll get advice from them, and guess what? We'll only charge you a quarter of what you're paying that consultant from the States. How is that for a deal, Mr. Speaker, \$10 million to save you 80 million? I think that's a better deal than Black and Associates saying, give us 40 million; we'll show you how to save 50 million.

Well, Mr. Speaker, this is the type of government that people have seen. They have time and time again failed, failed to provide that necessary vision. Everything from reducing poverty to a strategy that really works, that's really effective, they have no plans to do. They just simply chirp about it, Mr. Speaker.

They have no plans to help certain regions of the economy that needs help. And I keep talking about the P.A. [Prince Albert] bridge, Mr. Speaker. We need to have that as an integral part of the northwest economy. But does this government . . . in the northeast economy. Does this government care about P.A.? Absolutely not. Absolutely not.

So today, Mr. Speaker, I've gone on for a bit. We're going to continue to hold this government to account. There's great confidence. There's great confidence on this side of the Assembly, Mr. Speaker, because we know exactly what this government's failing to do. They know what they're failing to do. One-third of their caucus is done. They've quit. We're not going to run anymore; we're out of here. They've lost one member from Lloydminster already and maybe another two-thirds, they're ready to go out in the next two or three years. So they're 80, 90 per cent done on the other side of the Assembly, Mr. Speaker.

And this Speech from the Throne is evidence of that because there's no energy, no vision. There is a half-hearted effort to try and recognize accomplishments that they had nothing to do with, Mr. Speaker. And I say this because nowhere in the history of this country, and I will say of this continent, that a government has come into a place in a province or a territory with billions in the bank, a booming economy, and a growing population. The Saskatchewan Party inherited that from the

NDP, Mr. Speaker, and, Mr. Speaker, we see now that they don't know how to handle the growth and we see now they don't have the vision to continue that growth.

And I can assure the people of Saskatchewan on this side of the Assembly, we are waiting for an opportunity to prove to Saskatchewan people that we can build a great, bold, new Saskatchewan that involves the teachers, that involves the Aboriginal community, that involves regions in the North, that involves all sectors of our province, big or small. We will do it all, Mr. Speaker, because this party, this party is concerned about the people of Saskatchewan, not just elite friends of the Sask Party seem to be lining their pockets with our Saskatchewan money.

So, Mr. Speaker, mark my words, mark my words. One-third of them quit already; another third looking for an easy exit. They're looking for that exit and, Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan sense that. We know that and that gives us great confidence on this side of the Assembly. That's why we're going to fight this session and the next session, and that's why I support the amendment to the Throne Speech. And I encourage the people of Saskatchewan to watch carefully what this government cannot do and then certainly act accordingly come the next election. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Hickie:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's a pleasure again to stand in this House and to be able to take part in the debate involving the Speech from the Throne. Again we see strong leadership, a strong vision from Executive Council, from the ministers on this side of the floor in developing a speech, a document that shows the people of this province continued strength and initiative moving forward, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

But before I get into my speech in too much depth, I want to take some time and I want to be able to identify, like many of the members already have acknowledged, the hard work and the tragic loss of a member of the Armed Forces. As people know, my mom and dad were both in the military, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I understand that the extended family of the military from all the different sectors are feeling the pain today in that tragic loss.

One thing I want to talk about, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is in fact the legal community, the actual law enforcement community, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Again I say as in a time of great stress and turmoil, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when people run away from a situation, who do you see running into the situation? You see women and men in law enforcement and emergency services running into the situation to deal with it, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And as a former member of our tactical unit in Prince Albert, with the Prince Albert Police Service, I understand the amount of training these men and women took to prepare for that unfortunate circumstance yesterday, as well as the men and women who work on the Hill in security. They train on a regular basis, as well as the tactical units for these kind of circumstances.

And it's because of the good work of the law enforcement community, and in fact the Sergeant-at-Arms in the House, an

ex-RCMP officer, amazingly jumped into action after being retired. And from what we understand, he was the individual who shot and killed the assailant yesterday. And I want to say that as a member of the law enforcement community, as a police officer, it's a proud moment for me to say that and to acknowledge that training always comes to the forefront time and time again. And I want to thank all the men and women yesterday from the law enforcement community who put their lives on the line to save those involved with this that were just in the area at the wrong time when this cowardly act took place. That's important, Mr. Speaker.

Now we get to talk about what the member from Athabasca just went on a tirade about, Mr. Deputy Speaker . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Thank you. You know, it's interesting. A little while ago, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I thought I'd be toned down, calm, talk about the great things in the Throne Speech, and take a different demeanour than I usually take. But you know what, Mr. Deputy Speaker? We have a member opposite who spends his time on his feet berating a government and ministers of the Crown and the Ministry of Highways and the Premier for what he claims is inaction. Well you know what, Mr. Deputy Speaker? We have had an announcement by our Premier just recently in August talking about how we will in fact be there if the Prince Albert City Council wishes to go forward with a new bridge in a P3 concept. So we've already said that.

And this is a quote from the member from Athabasca from some time ago. He says, "We can't leave money on the table." You know what, Mr. Deputy Speaker? He says that. We have now had an announcement from the Premier, we're going to partner with the city if they so choose to look at a P3 model.

And he now is ranting from his seat, on his feet sometimes as well, that we are not in fact working hard enough for the city of Prince Albert to support or look at another bridge. Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, he says one thing, says something else. Today he gets up again and he berates the government for not being there to support the citizens of Prince Albert for a second bridge when clearly we have on record the Premier saying that yes, we will be there. And the talks have taken place, and they'll continue to take place on a P3 for a bridge.

Now having said that, there is much more from the Speech from the Throne that I want to talk about. But you know, when the member from Athabasca focuses on what he believes is inaction, it's only incumbent upon us as members on this side of the House to bring up on a regular basis, whereby he is mostly grandstanding for no apparent reason. He has to keep the facts straight, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And you know, the things that he talks about, how we mismanage the public purse, how we aren't doing enough for the citizens of this province, well clearly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we see a province that has grown to the point where we have the highest population ever. Our families are seeing children staying in this province, starting careers here. We see opportunities like nowhere in the time before because, Mr. Deputy Speaker, not because of what the government solely does, I've said this time and time again, it's because of the men and women out there who are supporting the economy, hiring the people in this province that drive the local economies, the goods and services that are bought and sold in this province.

People in this province believe in this province, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Our government's listened to those individuals, and we have set the table to expand for other opportunities. And yes, we give tax incentives when the time is right, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And we see in the Speech from the Throne that we have in fact, or will be doing that for the certain sector of this province that seems to be driving the economy at this time and hopes to be sustainable moving forward, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's important for us to look at that.

You know, we don't ever want to stand in the way of growth and keeping Saskatchewan strong. But to keep Saskatchewan strong, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it involves a lot of hard work of everyone in this province. Everyone in this province today is pulling their weight, Mr. Deputy Speaker. There are people in this province who are reinvesting in their businesses and hiring young men and women to start up in this province and giving them careers, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

That's an important thing to think about when this particular Speech from the Throne was scripted, I'm sure, and when the ministers did such a great job in bringing forth initiatives that they prepare to move forward with in this next session, and with the leadership of our Premier. We're looking at all these opportunities, and we're going to move this file forward. Every minister has great incentives to bring more to the table and more enthusiasm to see their particular portfolios expand to support the economy and to support the men and women in this province, still, Mr. Deputy Speaker, not forgetting about those who still need our help because there are some people in this province who still need a hand-up as opposed to a handout.

And you know, we look at the Speech from the Throne and different things that we're doing in all those initiatives. And you know, we talk about housing in this province, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And you know, I've been lucky in my term, two terms now, to see Habitat for Humanity build homes in Prince Albert, along with my colleague from Northcote. We've had some other housing announcements as well. And you know, we have to look at the simple plan for growth where we committed \$344 million to boost the supply of housing in the province, particularly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, particularly for those who are low- and moderate-income families.

You know what? We've decreased the waiting list for those families in need of housing as well, and we've increased supports for the homeless. So we have a government, today we have a government that recognizes that yes, we are strong, but we still are supporting those individuals who, for whatever their reasons, Mr. Deputy Speaker, still need the assistance of ministries.

And you know, sometimes having been part of some of these announcements for Habitat for Humanity, along with some other home housing developments in Prince Albert, you know what the families tell me? That it's the security of having a home that they can get themselves a strong foundation. They can put their feet down, give their families security, and then from there secure employment and provide for their families. And again, they are providing to the local economies as well, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And you know, we also see that, in some cases, tenants in the

housing communities in Prince Albert have actually purchased the homes that they were living in. That tells you something, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that these people are hard-working women and men who are providing for their families and who in fact understand there's an opportunity to stay in that home as they have. And you know what? Unlike no other time in this province, people are taking the simple fact that homeownership means security. And they don't want to always be having their hand out. They want to be able to make and establish a foundation for their families. And that's a good thing, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

You know, as we keep moving forward, we have to look at what's happening in the province as we keep our Saskatchewan — you know, people, the economy, the province — strong. You know, Moody's recently upgraded us to a AAA rating, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That's the highest possible rating that anyone could ever get. And you know, that talks about the fiscal stewardship of our province, under again the Premier and the ministers and the treasury board members that do the budgets every year, along with the ministries who provide their input.

Everybody's working together, pulling in the same direction here, Mr. Deputy Speaker, working within balanced budgets but still providing the necessities for this province to stay strong and to provide the necessities for those individuals such as our students in university with the graduate retention program, opportunities for not just . . . for every post-secondary education, not just the universities but all the post-secondary sectors to engage those students, to have them learn in this province, to stay in this province, to re-engage in the local economy upon graduation, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That's an important thing that this government believes in.

And you know, when we talk about that tax incentives, I mean, we want businesses to thrive in this province. And I hate to say it, but for some reason the opposition believes that's a bad thing. They believe it's a bad thing to see industry and employers and businesses thrive in this province, for some reason.

And I just can't understand that because that's who drives the local economy. It's not the big government Crown corporations. To be sure, they have contributed to local economies, yes. But it's those mom-and-pop operations, those small operations that actually drive and feed the local economies on a regular basis. And because they're sustainable, they keep on hiring more people to stay in as they're expanding so the province has opportunities like no other time, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And you know I just have, in all my years here I have — I can't believe I just said that; I guess I've been here long enough to say that — that every year we hear the NDP always criticizing the government for putting money in the pockets of businessmen and women. And you know what? That's all we hear from them.

[12:45]

But look what's happened in the province with some very common sense approaches to taxation, to growth incentives, even supporting the local municipalities as they have seen growth. They've asked us for programs to support them as they have to increase infrastructure needs. We have to thank the

federal government as well for the amount of money they've put into other projects and other Building Canada Fund initiatives, recreational complex initiatives as well, to support growth.

Now with that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we still see that there's opportunities for the government to play a role. And as we heard yesterday in the Speech from the Throne, the Saskatchewan infrastructure growth initiative fund will again be re-engaged, will be looked at to support municipalities and, for the first time, our First Nations communities as well who want to take part in this, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That's exciting news because we're seeing opportunities just south of Saskatoon where a First Nations community is in fact looking at housing developments and such for non-Aboriginal, non-First Nations people.

And you know what? Why not look at opportunities? Why not support those visionary men and women out there who want to be able to say, you know what, if it's always been this way, why has it always been this way? Why can we not look at rewriting history? Why can't we do something different? If we're allowed to do it, why not? And why would not a government support that in any way, shape, or form we can, Mr. Deputy Speaker? And that's what this new re-engagement with SIGI — that's the acronym for it, Mr. Deputy Speaker — is going to help.

And you know, under the first iteration of SIGI since 2007, you know, nearly \$200 million in borrowing was approved by this government, and 82 communities benefited from interest rate subsidies. You know, as a previous minister who oversaw that particular initiative along with the other previous ministers that did a great job before me, you know what? It was not a lot of money expended for great gain in every community that engaged and used this fund, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

That's important because we still want to support this strong economy, this strong growth we're seeing in the province. And you know, why again — I always say it — why would a government not look at the people who are on the ground working hard and developing their communities? Why would we not look to them for advice? Why would a government not take the advice of those people who are working day in, day out like the RM [rural municipality] administrators, the local municipal administrators, and city managers. When they come to the government asking for a possible, you know, a solution to a problem, why would we not engage that? I just don't understand that. We would of course.

The NDP think that we're not doing enough. Clearly, I don't know what they did. I mean, when I was the minister, I remember being told time and time again that they clawed back up to \$600 million from municipalities. And you know what? That's a lot of money, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we're now, through the revenue-sharing program, we're seeing the fact that we have municipalities who are in fact benefiting once again from the opportunities that are available because we're re-engaging and we're re-supporting the local municipal economies because we in fact made an agreement to them. They came to the government, before we were government actually, and said you know this revenue-sharing piece? It would sure be nice to have some of that because it would help us to put money

back into infrastructure or operational needs, whatever we want to do. It's unconditional money, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And you know what? On that note . . . I mean, that's where a government has to take the advice of those around us every day we can and see if we can in fact work that way. And you know what, you know what? The revenue-sharing piece in next year's budget, predictable amount of money I might add, predictable amount of money by the current Minister of Municipal Affairs who's done a great job with his staff as well and the officials in the bureaucracy working to support this initiative, in next year's budget, \$265 million, more than double than in fact what was in our, when our government took office, is going back to municipal governments in the revenue-sharing model, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That's important. This is money you can work with.

You know, back on the tangent of helping those communities out as well, in another aspect, you know we see our communities of course still need some help when it comes to being, providing a safe area for families to live and raise their children and to support the economy of the province.

And you know, I'm very proud. I was able to work in Prince Albert Police Service with Chief Dale McFee. And it was Chief McFee who came up and took some high level staff with him over to Scotland to look at a new model, a new model to be able to address and possibly reduce crime, but to address the cyclical part of our society that keeps on . . . We keep on having families involved in the justice system, and we were seeing those younger members of the family coming back into the system as well. And there seemed to be a cycle, a perpetual cycle of that.

So when the former chief of the Prince Albert city police, my good friend Dale McFee, went forward with the Hub model for crime prevention in Prince Albert — and I know my colleague from Northcote, I imagine she'll talk about this as well when she has her chance here — we both believe that that was the catalyst that we're seeing now to see crime rates reduced in our province through other communities that the Hub has now become entrenched in.

And you know, this program in fact will have 13 programs up and running in this province this year and, you know, we're seeing Yorkton, La Ronge, North Battleford, Moose Jaw, Estevan, Weyburn, Nipawin, Swift Current, Saskatoon, Lloydminster engaged in the Hub and in the process of reducing crime in our cities and communities. And you know, this wasn't just a made-in-Saskatchewan model just to stay here.

I know full well that former chief McFee, who is now the deputy minister of Policing and Corrections, has in fact championed this across Canada. I know he has spoken in the States as well about this. We're getting recognition as a government for spearheading this and funding these models and working with ministry staff across the province to in fact remove silos and work together in a team environment to reduce all this wasted time and energy doing the same work over and over again.

And you know that it's this good work that's actually being seen by Ontario, Alberta, Manitoba, and Nova Scotia, and

they're actually taking our lead on this, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And you know what? These are successful crime prevention programs that are being looked at and implemented in other parts of our country. And I want to thank Deputy Minister McFee for his leadership in this role, along with the minister herself involved with Policing and Corrections, for helping this move forward too, another former police officer, Mr. Deputy Speaker, an old colleague of mine from way back. So moving . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Okay, not that far back.

So we still have some time, Mr. Deputy Speaker, so it's going to be easy for me to keep on filling up the clock today with some good speaking notes here I've got on the great points from the Speech from the Throne. And you know, I talked about it before, that every year when a government sets a vision, whether it's in the budget or in the Speech from the Throne, it's a report card, to be sure that the people of the province and colleagues across the way can grade us upon.

You know, there will be criticism that maybe we haven't done enough. But you know, when I look at the speeches from the throne in all the years I've been here, we've always seen a progressive move to maintain the economy of the province, to support the initiatives across every ministry as best we could on a regular basis, always engaging with the staff, always engaging with the ministers, who are equally engaging back with the members of caucus for our communities, to ensure that it's not just high-level kind of initiatives that are being put forward. They're looking at the grassroots as well in our communities, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to support families, to support the economy, to support the strong initiatives that have already been started back in 2007.

And you know, some of these as well are just basic common sense ideas like, you know, under Parks, Culture and Sport, the Main Street Saskatchewan program, you know, revitalizing historical downtown and commercial areas. And I know the city of Prince Albert has benefited from that, and I want to thank the current minister and previous ministers in that portfolio for those initiatives. Those are great things. And you know what? We have to consider, and I've said it before in many other speeches, the pioneers, those people's shoulders we stand on today who made this province what it is. We were lucky. We inherited at a very good time in this province some good fortune involving royalties and oil prices and potash prices, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But we have to recognize those who came before us in this sector, that the pioneers that built this province made it what it is, that we were able to take over as a government and work with this economy that was strong then, and maintain its momentum. And again, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you know, when we see our government engaging in things like the historical communities and the cores of our communities, I mean, people recognize that as a government that cares.

We see our core communities and the historical sectors of our communities as being important. If we don't continue to take care of our legacies and the history of our province, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you know, what happens then to my children and my grandchildren in the future? We're going to lose that perspective. And this government doesn't want that to happen, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And you know, you talk about opportunities across the board

for post-secondary, but you know, we also recognize that there are those individuals who want to get engaged in the economy, who want to be contributing citizens in their local communities, and for whatever reason they didn't get their educational opportunities that they were after when they were younger. You know, our government listened to that sector, listened to those individuals, and listened to the people who were teaching those individuals in the adult basic education component sectors of our province, that, you know, we needed to in fact take care of the wait-list. Because there weren't enough spaces for these individuals who want to get engaged in the economy, who want to better their lot in life, support their families, support themselves. And not every one of these individuals goes on to university and becomes a doctor or lawyer or whatever you may have, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But some of them will go to the trade schools, and they engage in the economy. Some of these men and women, I would bet today in fact have started or are looking at starting their own businesses, which again self-perpetuates a cycle of a strong economy in our province, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and we can't forget that.

And you know what? Part of the Throne Speech talks about the fact that in this upcoming fiscal year we will increase the number of ABE, adult basic education training seats, by 775, Mr. Deputy Speaker — that's a big number — eliminating the 2012 wait-list and bringing the total number of seats to 9,000. I wish the member from Athabasca was here because I think he went off on a tangent on this as well. 9,355, an increase of nearly 60 per cent, 60 per cent since we took office in 2007. And you know what, Mr. Deputy Speaker? It's when you look at those numbers and then we hear the member from Athabasca talk his own . . . he brandishes his own type of math over there, talking about percentages and ratios and statistics. I don't want to be in his classroom as my teacher, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because I don't think I would ever have got through high school, let alone a university degree and had the opportunity to be here, for Pete's sakes, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So I mean I don't know where he gets off on his numbers. And we clearly have statistics that show that this government is engaging with the people continuously in this province to better everyone's lives, Mr. Deputy Speaker, not just those people like he says that are private sector companies, and we're just padding their bank accounts and filling their pockets with cash, Mr. Deputy Speaker. This government in fact is looking at those individuals who need the government to support those opportunities. Training seats. They want to go to school. They want to advance their education. They want to engage in the economy. They want to provide a good, secure home for their family and give their children opportunities as well, that many of us were blessed to have, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And you know, I just don't understand how an opposition looks at things and criticizes the government. We talked about, you know, an interesting point that, you know, looking at the whole promoting this issue about poverty reduction and those kind of issues and things that were always there for us to look at. And you know what, Mr. Deputy Speaker? When you have an influential member in the community of Saskatoon who was a former candidate for the NDP leadership race provincially who now says, you know what? And I'm going to just use a small little piece of what he said yesterday: "My government [my government] announcing the development of a poverty

reduction strategy is amazing. We would like to thank organizations @povertycostsask @premierbradwall #saskpoli.” That came from Dr. Ryan Meili, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and you know what? That’s an interesting perspective coming from an individual who we recognize as a true advocate for those in his community and across this province who are struggling in economies, but they’re still trying to make it work, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They’re working hard to provide for themselves and their families.

And you know what? When Mr. Meili steps up and thanks his government who we know isn’t of the same political stripe as him, but he removes the partisan politics from the equation and he thanks the government and thanks . . . In fact I think the Minister of Social Services, the previous minister as well, were fully engaged in this opportunity. Of course we have the leadership of the Premier and his staff who looked at this possibility of engaging this particular individual and this group in this province. Why would we not look at that? Remove the politics and just get to the work. Get it done, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Show leadership across the way, removes his political stripes, as do we when we talk and we engage those individuals. Why would we not as a government work that angle and actually make it work and work for the benefit of the people of this province, Mr. Deputy Speaker?

So you know what? This Speech from the Throne is one of many that I’m proud to say that I will in fact be supporting.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — It now being the time of adjournment, this House stands adjourned until Monday at 1:30 p.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 13:00.]

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