



FOURTH SESSION - TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

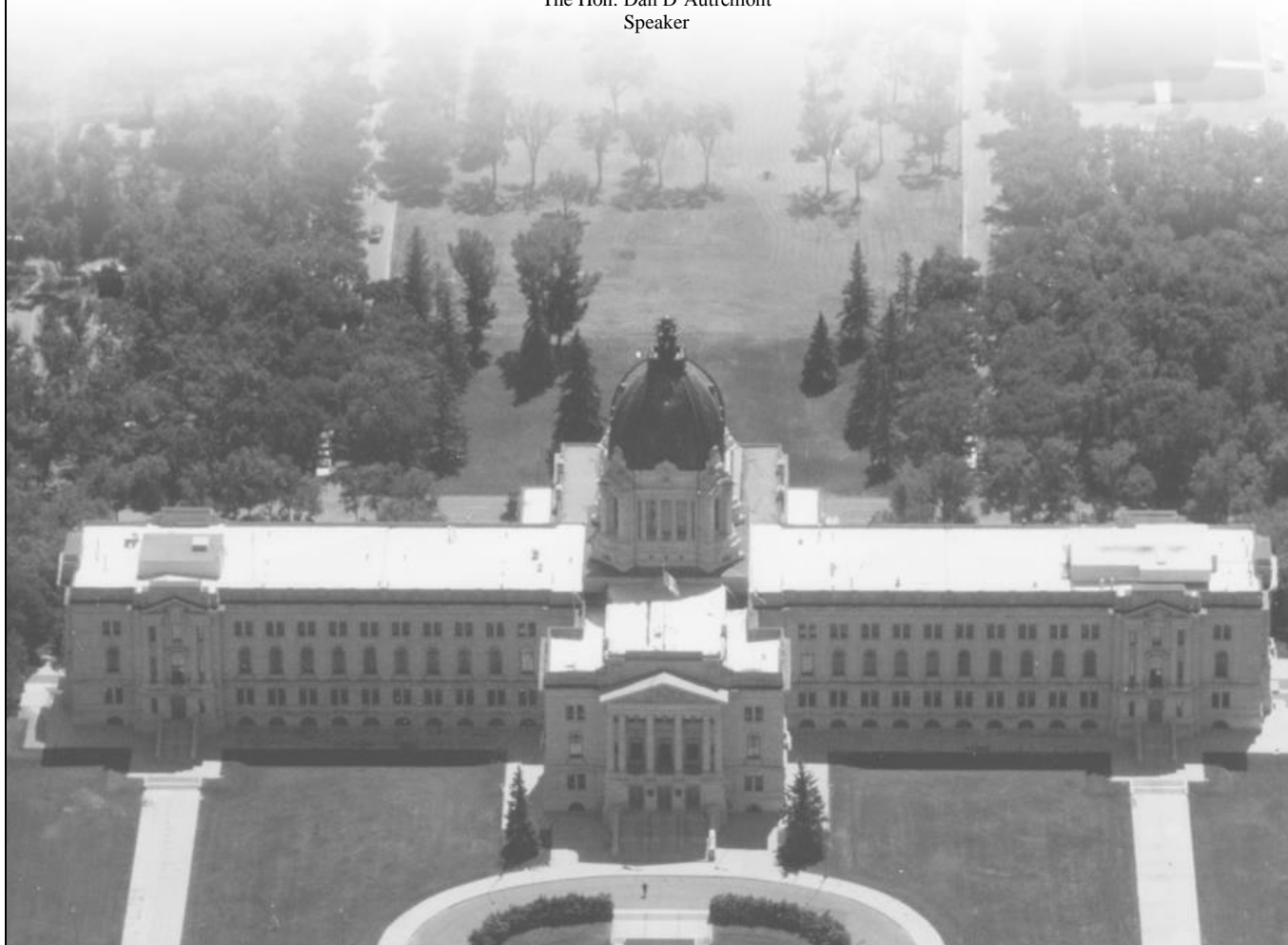
of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(HANSARD)

Published under the
authority of
The Hon. Dan D'Autremont
Speaker



MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN

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 Premier — Hon. Brad Wall
 Leader of the Opposition — Cam Broten

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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
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Draude, June	SP	Kelvington-Wadena
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Eagles, Doreen	SP	Estevan
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Reiter, Hon. Jim	SP	Rosetown-Elrose
Ross, Laura	SP	Regina Qu'Appelle Valley
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Steinley, Warren	SP	Regina Walsh Acres
Stewart, Hon. Lyle	SP	Thunder Creek
Tell, Hon. Christine	SP	Regina Wascana Plains
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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

EVENING SITTING

[The Assembly resumed at 19:00.]

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — The hour now being 7 o'clock, debate will resume on special orders. I recognize the member from Regina Dewdney.

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

ADDRESS IN REPLY

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

Mr. Makowsky: — Now this evening after, after the supper break, I believe when I concluded my comments before that, I was talking about the TASCAP [Trades & Skills Construction Apprenticeship Program] program at Campus Regina Public, how it allows students to have a chance to try the trades. And it fits in well with adult basic education, the more seats that are coming as indicated in the Throne Speech.

And certainly we see the apprentice seats going up by 300. And that number is now at 7,000, an 86 per cent increase, right from the Throne Speech from 2007, Mr. Speaker. So we see, because of the labour shortage in our province, industry and the education sector working together to meet, meet jobs with people that are looking to increase their skills and earn higher wages and contribute to our province with economic growth.

And certainly again the TASCAP program helps students learn. It also provides houses for people to live in. Certainly it's one of the biggest success stories I think of our government. I remember a few years ago the vacancy rate here in Regina was under 1 per cent and that's certainly a tough situation for people trying to find accommodations, people coming to Saskatchewan to work. And right now I believe it's in that two and a half per cent range. Three is considered the optimal vacancy rate. Province-wide it's 3.3 per cent, and that's higher than the national average. So we've seen accommodation improve a lot here in our province, and that's a good thing.

And one thing that was quite surprising to me, listening and looking over the Throne Speech, since '06 the number of rental housing units started isn't — I think two times would be pretty good, four times, maybe even 10 times, that would be a large amount — it's actually 34 times higher than 2006. So that's some good work. The Ministry of Social Services, Sask Housing Corp, Habitat for Humanity, etc. — all those agencies and groups are working hard in our province. And certainly it was acute here in Regina. We're seeing progress made, so that's very good.

Like in the Throne Speech there was some reference to free trade, the CETA [comprehensive economic and trade agreement], the trade agreement nationally by the feds with South Korea. And certainly that's going to be, when our

province is an exporting province, we have what the world needs, and those will open up that flow of goods and services and money coming into our province. And certainly that's good for consumers as well, for goods that they produce coming the other way. So certainly it's a win-win situation, and that's good for consumers and our exporters. And certainly to be able to do that all across Canada, certainly I think that was part of the vision of the Fathers of Confederation. Certainly more work to do in that way, but I think Saskatchewan's taken a leadership in that area. So that's as well good to see.

I notice also in the Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker — and it's been in the last few things I've talked about, it's certainly very important in my constituency — is the Regina bypass, again a very large infrastructure project for our province. And certainly that's ongoing. I believe there are three bidders that have been announced publicly that are competing for the project, and that's certainly a good thing.

Now it's interesting that the last several petitions presented by the member from Rosemont, I notice that he is, you know, he's worrying about truck traffic on Dewdney Avenue West. And certainly that's certainly an issue and it's an issue in my constituency — more and more truck traffic coming into the Global Transportation Hub — but it's interesting that he gives this government credit for that. And certainly there are challenges with growth, and we're working hard to meet those challenges, but I think having extra truck traffic is a good thing for our city. You know, it certainly, like it is, it causes traffic congestion, but certainly it's many more jobs.

There's more products coming into our province. The Global Transportation Hub is obviously a key to that. And we're working very hard on the P3 [public-private partnership]. I know the members opposite don't like to hear that word, certainly. But it's interesting, he brings ... He gives this government credit for doing that. Usually on this side of the House we give credit to the people of the province of Saskatchewan who helped create all the jobs and the industry that happened in our province, but if he wants to give credit to this side of the House, then that's just fine.

Certainly, and I believe in his Throne Speech the member from Rosemont also said this is one of those easy solutions that government should find for it. Well, I respectfully disagree with that. It's a big project. It's over \$1 billion. You have to acquire land. You have to do all sorts of planning.

And certainly, you know, that makes me wonder, with the leadership over there, if they call the Regina bypass project just a simple solution, an easy thing to do, I challenge that member when he's talking to — and he should advocate for his constituents just like we all would do — but I want him to make sure that he tells his constituents that he's against a P3 project for the bypass. The reason for that is it's taking at least a dozen years off the time it takes to put that project through, Mr. Speaker. If it was just a regular government procurement, each overpass, each section would be done individually. When you do it with a P3, it can happen much more quickly. I believe I have heard it is in the area of four years instead of 15-plus years.

So he can tell his constituents that he wants the truck traffic off, but under his plan it would be at least a dozen years into the future. So that is something that . . . You know, we hear that rhetoric from the members opposite that you can't try things here in Saskatchewan. You see that all the time. You can't do that here, I think is their attitude on a lot of things, Mr. Speaker.

When I think of liquor stores, you know, it has been done without the government being involved in the retailing in other places — all over Canada, all over the world, all right. But to the NDP [New Democratic Party] you just can't do that here, all right. You know, Willow Park here in Regina, there's a couple open in Saskatoon. And I haven't been to Saskatoon lately, but I know here in Regina the apocalypse hasn't come. It's not that big of a deal, certainly, Mr. Speaker.

So you know, the other thing they dismiss out of hand, private clinics to do surgeries, Mr. Speaker. The P3s, right off the table even though the waste water treatment plant in Regina here is getting done. I believe it is saving \$43.5 million dollars. Forty-three and one-half million dollars savings just doing it through the P3 model, Mr. Speaker. There was very good, strong competition, and so because of that there was a lot of cost savings. And certainly we've talked before about free trade, the pipeline, carbon capture. The idea, I think, from the members opposite? You just can't do those things. They're stuck in the late '70s. That's not available here.

I remember when I was a kid, Mr. Speaker, when I watched cartoons in the morning, or I was reading a comic book, and there was always, always a disclaimer at the bottom: not available in Canada. Not available in Canada. And that was kind of frustrating. And now I think from the members opposite you get that idea. Just not available here. We can't do it. We're not . . . It's not available. We shouldn't do that. I think that's old Saskatchewan thinking, Mr. Speaker. That's the old Saskatchewan. The new Saskatchewan, we can try things. We can innovate. We can compete. We can do things that other places do and society won't collapse.

So I mean it's not that surprising, not that surprising from the other side, when all they do is . . . They're just negative about ideas, new ideas for our province, new ideas for the province going forward. I think if you have no ideas to begin with like they have over there — no ideas, no plan — you probably won't like somebody else's.

So again we ask those members opposite . . . I think the member from Centre, earlier in his speech he mentioned about there was a few things in the Throne Speech that he wanted more details on. He wanted more details. What's the fine print? Now of course throne speeches, you're not going to have hundreds of pages of exact documents. You're going to have your vision of where . . . and some announcements of course. But we'd love to hear any sort of policy or thoughts about what they would do, how they would do it differently, and how they would pay for it. That might be nice to see. It might be something to see. The people of Saskatchewan be able to see what they thought.

So the only thing I've really heard in the last little while from our friends opposite is a couple of sort of hackneyed slogans that are pretty empty. I've heard, more eggs in more baskets.

More eggs, more baskets. I'm not sure what that means. Maybe that was brought out around Easter time, Mr. Speaker, but we'd like to know exactly what that means. Is that part of your plan? Is that part of your official platform? Are you going to go to the people with more eggs, more baskets? Okay, fine. What does that exactly mean? Let's have some details.

And what I've also heard from the Leader of the Opposition, one of his little slogans he likes to say, looks in the camera and he says, for me, politics, it's not about the province doing well. It's about people doing well.

Well that's true obviously, but I think it's so obvious a statement that it doesn't really mean anything. Of course it's about the people. Everything about this document is about people, right? We don't make highways to cover up weeds. We make highways for it to be safe to travel in our province, for people to get our goods from place A to place B, from Regina to Saskatoon, right? So it's so obvious. That's like the coach of the Riders saying to the Rider nation, he says, football for me is just not about the Riders doing well. It's about the team doing well. Of course that's what it's for. That's what it means. The member from Arm River, if he said, farming for me isn't about the crops doing well. It's about canola doing well. Of course, that's patently obvious. That's what it's about.

Everything in this document is about people, okay? We don't have the poverty reduction strategy just to put out press releases or what have you or what it might be. Everything in here is about the people of the province of Saskatchewan.

This building was built by the people of Saskatchewan. The institutions we inherited from our forefathers — that was people. How do we help people? How do we progress in our society? So of course it's always about people. So that's all we've gotten from the NDP is some empty rhetoric. We're waiting to hear some concrete examples. How would you pay for it? What would you do? What would you do differently rather than just simply criticize the government all the time?

You know, Mr. Speaker, coming up here on Friday is Halloween. And a lot of times, I guess, in my family and all over the neighbourhood, it's a lot of fun that night for the kids of course. And people decorate their yards with what? Witches and ghosts and goblins and mummies and all those sorts of things, right, for the kids to have fun. Give them a little scare.

Now but with the NDP fearmongering, I kind of wondered, I wonder what they would decorate their houses with to scare little kids to come up. And I imagine maybe the member from Rosemont, he might have a picture of a P3 project, maybe a highway or a waste water treatment plant. That might scare the people. The member from Lakeview, he might have a Texas company. It might be a Texas company, not just a Texas company that we buy things from, a good . . . What really might scare people is . . . Well I'll get to that in a second. But one of the members, they might have liquor bottles. They might have liquor bottles not sold by the government. That might really scare the kids coming through. So again what we see from the NDP is scare tactics.

At my place I might put up a few signs that would really scare the kids and adults that are chaperoning those youngsters that

come through the neighbourhood. Certainly I think they'd get scared by the NDP's policy of the past — higher taxes, the litany of failed investments in other areas. I might put a couple potholes on my driveway. I might close down a bunch of schools and a bunch of buildings. I might represent that somehow. And so those are certainly . . . I might put a few black potatoes from SPUDCO [Saskatchewan Potato Utility Development Company] in my front yard. That might scare the kids. I might even put a spectre of Dwain Lingenfelter on my front yard. That would really scare the kids, I think.

[19:15]

So, Mr. Speaker, that's a little fun at the end of my speech there about things that are certainly . . . that might scare the kids as they're going out through their Halloween. But certainly I'm going to wrap up my comments. I could go on and on about all the great things that keep our Saskatchewan strong in this document, Mr. Speaker, and I'm going to go ahead and support this Throne Speech that keeps our people and our province strong. And certainly the scariest thing out there this Halloween or any other time is the members opposite forming government again, so let's not let that happen. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Fairview.

Hon. Ms. Campeau: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's going to be a hard act to follow, talking about scaring people on Halloween.

So it is with great pleasure that I rise today in the House to discuss the Throne Speech. So I'd like to start off and thank my family, particularly my daughter, and just thank her for the patience and definitely sacrifices that she has to make for me to be here.

I'd also like to thank my constituency assistant, Adrienne, for all her hard work and for . . . definitely she goes above and beyond for our constituents. And also I'd like to thank Kirsten, Shelley, and Tennille from my office in Central Services, which is a little bit of an adjustment now that I have to deal with four people instead of just one, but definitely I appreciate all their hard work and their dedication to their job and to the people of Saskatchewan.

I'd also like to thank my constituents for allowing me this opportunity to represent them in the House.

So with all my speeches or any kind of speeches that I do, I always dig for quotes and try and find something to resonate with something that I'm speaking about. So this one is from Mahatma Gandhi and it's "The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others."

And I think this is very timely when we talk about the men and women of our armed forces. I'd like to thank them who put their life on the line every day to ensure our freedoms and join my colleagues in expressing my condolences to the families of Corporal Nathan Cirillo and Warrant Officer Patrice Vincent. As a former military wife I realize the sacrifices that these men and women make, as well as the sacrifices that their families

have to endure, especially those who go overseas for an extended tour and don't see their families for months and sometimes years. I'd like to also thank the different branches of emergency services, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Democracy is a beautiful thing and I feel very fortunate to live in this country and am quite proud to call myself Canadian. And I realize the efforts and sacrifices the veterans have made in the past to ensure our freedoms. So I'm very proud to be Canadian and that I have an opportunity to live in a country where I have access to education, and encourage my daughter to pursue her dreams without any kind of legislative constraints. And she's free to marry whomever she wishes, Mr. Speaker, so I'm very cognizant of that. There are women and girls in this world who aren't afforded those rights.

So it gives me great pleasure to speak about the great things going on in our province right now. And I have seen this province grow and prosper over the last few years and, you know, being born and raised in Saskatchewan and just seeing the different changes from when I was younger to now, and I'm very honoured to be part of this government, making a difference.

So I was recently appointed as Minister of Central Services by Premier Wall, on June 5th of this year. I know I have a lot of work ahead of me and I take pride in my work, both within my constituency and within government. There is still a lot that we as a government need to do. And we have made many changes already and we continue to work hard daily. And as a newly appointed minister, you know, there's a little bit of a learning curve for this summer, and this year was a year for big changes for me. I'm responsible for both the Saskatchewan Transportation Company corporation as well as Central Services.

STC [Saskatchewan Transportation Company] offers the residents of Saskatchewan bus service as well as freight services to communities across Saskatchewan, which is a very important service to our rural communities within Saskatchewan. STC has bus terminals in Regina, Saskatoon, and Prince Albert, and this agency network reaches communities throughout the province. STC continues to enhance amenities, provide expanded online ticketing, and deliver key promotions and sales to encourage ridership growth. I would encourage all of us to ride the bus and let STC do the driving.

So as Minister of Central Services my duties include the day-to-day operations of all government owned and leased buildings, which is another learning curve for me. We currently own 457 buildings and lease 230 buildings and we maintain 244, and are always ensuring these buildings are up to code.

We are currently working on the rollout of Windows 7 and had great success with this program so far.

So Central Services also has a wide variety of government-owned vehicles that are used within our ministries and other government entities.

The Ministry of Central Services provides a wide array of internal government services to over 12,000 government

employees. When I first got appointed as minister I absolutely had no idea what this entailed. Its main lines of businesses are human resources, accommodations, transportation, and IT [information technology] services.

So Central Services was also pleased to announce the launch of a new SaskTenders website. The redesigned SaskTenders site will be home to all procurement opportunities for executive government and Crown corporations, Mr. Speaker. In addition to the municipal, academic, school, and health sectors operated through Ministry of Central Services, the SaskTenders website facilitates government purchases from the private sector and the procurement of billions of dollars in goods and services each year. Mr. Speaker, similar sites are available for procurement opportunities in Alberta and British Columbia as part of the New West Partnership. The New West Partnership allows Saskatchewan businesses greater access to tender opportunities across Western Canada.

So part of the work that my ministry is able to do is echoing, you know, the Throne Speech, that business needs to continue to grow, at the same time strengthening our province. And I'm a big proponent of this. I have six years of business school. I have an undergraduate degree in business as well as an M.B.A. [Master of Business Administration]. But as the new minister, I'm also learning and applying that knowledge.

So Saskatchewan's small businesses employ 31.7 per cent of our workforce and pay over \$6.2 billion in wages and salary each year. And since 2003, they've created more than 19,000 new jobs. And this side of the House has the ambition, desire, and the right approach to continue to keep Saskatchewan strong and to foster that growth, and we want to see all the people of Saskatchewan benefit from this growth and strength, Mr. Speaker.

We all know that this strength and this record population growth, it didn't start under the NDP government. We're reminded of what we always hear about the dark days under the NDP, when population growth was stagnant and our best exports were our young people. And I was one of those young people who left, but once I had children, well children — my daughter and my niece — I definitely wanted to come home and it was a good time to come home, Mr. Speaker.

So we are now talking about doubling our exports by 2020 and introducing our new-growth tax incentive. And this will help businesses create new jobs while boosting their sales outside of Saskatchewan.

So according to Stats Canada, the number of people living in this province was 1.125410 on July 1st, 2014. And the government set a goal in 2007 to increase the population by 100,000 people within 10 years, and we've done it in six. And we have set a new goal, so 1.2 million by 2020, and I am confident we'll be able to reach and exceed that goal as well. This rapid growth demonstrates that we have a strong economy, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And I go visit family a lot in the southern US [United States] and I like to tell our story, and they like to hear it actually. So it's definitely something to be proud of.

So let's consider what the NDP thought of the growth and strength in our province. You know, former NDP MLA

[Member of the Legislative Assembly] Doreen Hamilton, she said the Saskatchewan Party's plan to increase our population by 100,000 in 10 years is more wishful thinking than statistically attainable. And for me to have gone away and then come back and actually have lived in a city of 8 million and seeing what that does to the tax base and the growth, definitely it was the right idea.

So in the last 16 years . . . You know, I always hear from members opposite how great it was under the NDP government. And I've heard from public and even family, and for those that they claim to represent, a different story, Mr. Speaker. You know, they talk about health care a lot, but they seem to forget that they're the ones who closed the Plains hospital and that they closed 52 rural hospitals, they closed 100 schools, and that 1,200 nursing home beds were shut down, Mr. Speaker.

So I want to speak about some personal experiences with our health care system in the last year because I've experienced first-hand, and I'm sure others have, many others in Saskatchewan who are dealing with a sick parent or a sick spouse or somebody very close to them that's ill. And my experience was with palliative care within the Saskatoon area. We did have a palliative care bed for my mother at St. Paul's for a while but we wanted to bring her home and have more personalized care for her, as well as home care nurses. And her support team were absolutely amazing. So I have nothing but good things to say about the people who choose this profession and who basically make terminal patients comfortable in their last few months or weeks of their life.

So my mom lost her battle with colon cancer in early September, and I was very fortunate to spend time with her this summer before she was called home. But the nurses who cared for her and her doctors were absolutely amazing. I have nothing but good things to say about our health care system. The health care supports that my mom received were exemplary, and as Canadians we are fortunate to have the system that we have in place. And definitely health care in Saskatchewan has its challenges but they really, when it comes to addressing some of the issues that are going on with health, you know, people's health today, we definitely . . . I think we should be thankful and grateful about the systems that we have.

So this Throne Speech only reiterates this government's focus on continuing to plan for growth and keeping this province strong. We will continue to take the right steps, Mr. Speaker, to encourage economic growth. And with economic growth then we do have the means to put money into the health care system, as well as our social services system, as well as our education system. And definitely I think, especially with what's gone on last week, we should definitely be thankful and grateful for what we have and what our veterans do and what our Armed Forces do every day in order for us to afford to live in the Western society that we do.

So you know, exciting things have been happening in Saskatchewan. The first new potash mine to be built in the province in 40 years — what other state or province can let people, you know, can declare that? It's actually quite amazing. Uranium production is up. Manufacturers are on track to ship record amount of product this year. Introduction of a new-growth tax incentive, continuing to build and strengthen

relationships by participating in trade missions to key international markets and reducing international trade barriers, and making trade within our country more open.

[19:30]

So through the New West Partnership, Saskatchewan is working with Alberta and British Columbia to harmonize labour standards and occupational health and safety regulations, provide further support to local businesses. The Ministry of Central Services has, you know, we have launched the new SaskTenders website, which we're very proud of.

And we have a plan for economic growth that builds on the strength of Saskatchewan's people, resources, and innovation to sustain Saskatchewan's place among Canada's economic leaders. We need to continuously invest in our economy, infrastructure, skilled workforce, and education of our children. So our goal as a government is to continue working hard for the people of our province, listen to their concerns, and do all we can to ensure Saskatchewan continues to move forward.

So, Mr. Speaker, this is an exciting time in our province, with unemployment hitting an all-time low of 3.5 per cent, well below the national average of 6.8 per cent, and Saskatchewan's unemployment rate remains the lowest in Canada for the 22nd consecutive month. You know, that's definitely something to be celebrated. So you know, we will never look back, and we will continue embracing the strong economic growth.

So, Mr. Speaker, I support the Throne Speech and not the amendment. Thank you.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — I recognize the member for Biggar.

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you very much. It's a great pleasure to stand in my place today and reply to the Speech from the Throne that was brought down last week.

As many members have done, I think it'd be fitting if I also did recognize and give condolence to the family and friends of Corporal Nathan Cirillo, who was killed while standing guard at the National War Memorial in Ottawa, and also recognize Warrant Officer Patrice Vincent and the fellow officer who was attacked in Quebec on the previous Monday. These were senseless and cowardly attacks, and it's very unfortunate that that happened.

I think we have to recognize the House of Commons Sergeant-at-Arms, Kevin Vickers, who, if I understand the story about the Sergeant-at-Arms, he was a retired RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] officer who had never discharged his firearm in all those years as an RCMP officer. And he was the gentleman who was at the right place and the right time and took down the assailant that did the attack in Ottawa. So thank you to him very much for what he did doing his duty.

But it's a very wonderful thing that we have people like him in our House of Commons and in our legislatures around the country. You know we have to thank our own Sergeant-at-Arms and the security people who protect us every day here in this building and do a wonderful job, and they keep you very, very

safe.

Biggar constituency, like the province, is very strong. There's just a number of great things that are happening in Biggar constituency like there is in many constituencies around the province. And you know, I'll speak about the highways, but in Biggar constituency we have a number of major highways crossing through the constituency, and they're all in very good shape.

I would have to also admit that many of the thin membrane highways have problems. We have a pilot project in place that a couple of rural municipalities are taking part in. And you know, the problems with the thin membranes have been exacerbated by the wet weather that we've had, and our maintenance crews have done a very good job. Always could be done quicker in filling the potholes, but for the most part, highways in the constituency are very good.

Look at the town of Biggar, the great things that are happening. Prairie Malt Ltd. now is bringing back their production up to 100 per cent. They've been down to 50 per cent for some time, and so they've announced that they're going to hire seven new employees and bring back the production to 100 per cent, which is very good news. They're a major employer in the town of Biggar.

Other employers in town are AGI, which makes tanks for the oil field, oil and gas industry. They're a major employer, and very thankful to have them. E-Kay manufacturer makes various equipment or adaptations to short-line equipment for augers and crop dividers and things like that. So we have a real bustling business community in Biggar with all the other businesses, the spin-off businesses and many other businesses that are operating in the town of Biggar.

These businesses have brought in a number of immigrant workers through the nominee program. Got to know many of them, especially from the Philippines. They are very productive citizens. I know many of them that go to the Catholic church, so they fill our church every Sunday and obviously also our schools in Biggar, so this is just another part of a strong economy in the province and in the constituency of Biggar.

Along with this of course is a booming real estate market. Many new homes are being built in Biggar. A new condo development has just opened up. Many people have just moved into there. And also a new business development being planned inside the town of Biggar, so there's a lot of great things happening.

You know, there's new housing in and around, not just in the towns and villages in the constituency but in the rural areas. Small holdings, pretty well every small holding has been purchased. Some have had to be repaired or revitalized, and many new houses have also been built out in the rural areas of the constituency.

Another community like Borden, Saskatchewan, who had a potential huge flooding issues last year and survived it . . . Quite frankly it was very tense for many days. But it cost a lot of money to do trenching and water diversion, and PDAP [provincial disaster assistance program] and SaskWater had

come through and really helped the village of Borden get through their financial costs of the potential flooding.

Borden, like Radisson, like Langham and other communities, Asquith, Perdue, Biggar, Delisle, Vanscoy, you know, many of the people are commuting from those communities into Saskatoon to work. And also many people from Saskatoon drive out to these communities to work in schools and in businesses as well. So it's very active in the constituency.

Langham, there's a proposal to have an oil . . . not an oil, a gold processing plant that is being planned. It would be 200 construction jobs, 100 full-time jobs. We're hoping that's going to go ahead. That would be a huge economic boom for the town of Langham.

They already have a tentative agreement with the Langham town council to use their treated sewage water, which would reduce the amount of water they would need from the Dalmeny aquifer, and also Fortune Minerals has also said that they would not have a permanent waste storage facility on site. It'd be temporary, and they would find a permanent storage facility someplace else. It might not even be in the province. So the company has gone a long ways to alleviate some of the concerns that people had. And so now it's in the hands of Corman Park, and hopefully that will be approved and construction can start soon.

On the provincial front of course, Mr. Speaker, you know, in June employment hit a record high of 577,000 people working in the province. In June unemployment hit a record low of 3.2 per cent, the lowest unemployment rate ever in this province. Quite amazing.

Of course our province has a balanced budget, and recently Moody's upgraded Saskatchewan's credit rating to AAA, their highest possible rating. That's an incredible statistic and incredible strong performance of the provincial economy.

Saskatchewan exports have increased by 63 per cent. Manufactured shipments have climbed by more than 50 per cent.

The Saskatchewan population is now at an all-time high of 1.125 million people, which is incredible, representing an increase of 123,000 people in the past seven years. This is incredible in many ways, given what the NDP had always said about being statistically impossible to grow the province by 1 per cent and under the Saskatchewan Party government the population has grown more than 1 per cent, which is very encouraging for the future of the province.

Why are people moving to Saskatchewan? Well obviously there's economic development. There's things happening in this province, you know: a new potash mine being built by K+S, Legacy near Bethune; uranium production is increasing; the Cameco Cigar Lake mine; Saskatchewan setting new records in oil production. The forestry industry's coming back with seven mills now operating in the province and two more expected to reopen in 2015. And you know, our province has done things to help, and our government will introduce a new-growth tax incentive tied to the creation of new jobs by the manufacturing processes as they expand their sales outside of Saskatchewan.

Now, Mr. Speaker, our government is also very active promoting free trade. It's a common saying that there's more free trade between countries than there is between provinces. And Saskatchewan is leading in this country to break down barriers through the New West Partnership and with Canada's Agreement on Internal Trade to break down these barriers so we have free-flowing goods and services and people across this country so that wherever there's the economic diversity or improvements, that Canadians can move to that area, which is generally Saskatchewan and Western Canada, to take advantage of the growing economy, a strong, growing economy. Of course on the international field, working with the federal government to have free trade agreements with Korea and European trade agreement and so on. So it's very encouraging to see those types of things being done and our government working hard to improve trade across this province.

Another area of great importance is the shortage of skilled labour in this province. And I just know from my own personal experience, a young lady that we know very well needs to get her grade 12. She's working hard at it, you know. She's likely going to get it through the adult basic education, which really is a prerequisite to go on to SIAST [Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology] or other training so that they can get training to work in jobs that there's a real shortage in in the province.

Our government will increase the number of the adult basic education training seats by 775, eliminating the 2012 wait-list and bringing the total number of seats to 9,355, an increase of nearly 60 per cent since 2007. Our government will boost the number of apprenticeship seats by 300, bringing the total number of seats to 7,000, an increase of 86 percent since 2007. Saskatchewan took a leading role in national negotiations on the design of the new Canadian Job Grant which provides employers with up to \$10,000 per worker to cover the cost of training. And the list goes on and on of great things that our government is doing and with the federal government and other provinces to encourage trade and investment across this province and across this country.

Since 2008, you know, we've known that there's a huge infrastructure deficit in this province. And it's not going to be fixed overnight by any stretch, but since 2008 ministries and Crown corporations have spent close to \$16 billion on a range of capital projects, including hospitals, highways, schools, and power plants. That's an incredible investment. And more needs to be done, and our government intends to do that.

[19:45]

This year alone nearly \$3 billion have been committed to renew and expand the province's infrastructure by using projects, by initiating a number of P3 projects. And these projects include nine joint-use elementary schools located in Regina, Saskatoon, Martensville, and Warman; the Regina bypass project, the largest transportation project in Saskatchewan history; and the Saskatchewan Hospital, North Battleford integrated correctional facility. A 225-bed Swift Current long-term care centre is now under construction, saving \$13 million by using the P3 [public-private partnership] approach. And the list goes on and on.

Our government has recently partnered with the city of Saskatoon and the federal government on a P3 project to build the North Commuter Parkway Bridge and have offered the same partnership with Prince Albert to build their second bridge.

Mr. Speaker, so it's an ongoing concern, infrastructure, but our government is committed to narrowing that gap of infrastructure deficits and staying above, ahead of the curve, actually, as development and the economy expands in this province, and continue to encourage growth in this province.

I think the Premier's words on this next item said it all: "Not one more dollar will be spent on building a new liquor board store." And that's just a common sense thing but, you know, the previous NDP government wouldn't ever think of having anyone but the government spend money on liquor board stores. We're committed to infrastructure, that money that we're not spending on liquor board stores obviously going into infrastructure where it's needed. You know, new liquor board stores in the province will be built and operated by the private sector, and there are two new private liquor stores operating in Saskatoon and one in Regina, with another one in Regina opening soon. So some very common sense things, common sense approach as far as liquor board stores.

As I was speaking about infrastructure and highways in the Biggar constituency, there's just a number of areas on the highway front that needs to be mentioned: Highway 16, work is being done on the new twinning project from Saskatoon to Clavet; on Highway 7, new passing lanes between Delisle and Rosetown are under construction; pre-construction work continues on twinning of Highway 7 from Vanscoy to Delisle; Highway 6 and 39 from Regina south to Estevan.

Again, our government is committed to infrastructure and we're moving ahead on that as quickly as we can under a balanced budget using P3s and other forms of financing, but this is very encouraging to see that type of investment in highways.

Under health care, you know, when we took over as government in this province, I mean health care was, quite frankly, in disarray, and how far we have come. Our government on a number of areas has moved forward. And the one area, a number of areas, but in the coming months the commissioner appointed to lead a review of mental health services in the province will release a 10-year mental health and addictions action plan.

Last year our government announced the creation of an Urgent Action Fund to improve the quality of care for residents of long-term care homes. Our government has provided \$10 million to health regions for specific initiatives and an additional 3.7 million for ongoing programs. This funding will be used to purchase 700 pieces of equipment, hire additional staff, and supporting training staff.

And I think this next item really speaks to our government and our Premier and our vision about what needed to be done in this province. And we have, in 2011 our government established the Saskatchewan surgical initiative and set a bold objective ensuring no patient wait more than three months for surgery. Can you imagine, you know, 15 or 20 years ago to say that

surgeries would be done in three months? It was just unheard of. People were waiting 18 months, 24 months for surgeries. And now because of this effort within the health care system, the number of patients waiting more than 3 months for surgery is down 81 per cent. It's amazing. Talk to anybody who's waiting for a hip or knee transplant or many other procedures and had to wait for years, quite frankly, before they could get their procedure, the suffering and pain that they endured. And now we're down to nearly three months wait for those people. So it's quite incredible.

Other areas, you know, our government will amend *The Pharmacy Act* to enhance the scope of practice for pharmacists by giving authority to administer vaccinations and other drugs, as well as ordering and assessing and using lab tests. And since 2007, the number of doctors practising in the province has been increased by 400, while the number of nurses in all designations has increased by more than 2,600.

On the education file, our government recently received the results of its historic student-first consultation. More than 120 engagement sessions were held involving nearly 1,000 students, parents, caregivers, teachers from across the province, and more than 1,500 submissions were received online.

This session our government will introduce legislation to make the regulatory process for teachers similar to that in other jurisdictions and other professional bodies within our province. And over the past seven years, our government's spent more than \$700 million on education infrastructure, a 268 per cent increase. Forty new schools have been built or are in the planning stage. This year new schools have opened or will open soon in Swift Current, Lloydminster, White City, Regina, and Saskatoon. Mr. Speaker, I can go on and on with the number of great initiatives in this Throne Speech.

You know, I have to say a few words about agriculture. You know, it's still a very, very important part of our provincial economy, and our government stands with the agriculture sectors, farmers, and ranchers. The government's contributing \$4.5 billion — or agriculture is contributing \$4.5 billion — to Saskatchewan's gross domestic product and sustaining 50,000 direct and indirect jobs. In 2013 Saskatchewan set a record for agricultural exports for a third consecutive year with sales of \$11.7 billion, and we're on track to meet our goal of increasing the agricultural exports to \$15 billion by 2020. And you know, rural Saskatchewan is growing with the rest of the province and is doing very well, and agriculture is a big part of that.

Mr. Speaker, I think I will take my seat now and let other members have an opportunity to reply to the Speech from the Throne. Again this Speech from the Throne is a great indication of how our economy is doing, how the people of Saskatchewan is doing, and obviously, Mr. Speaker, I will be supporting the Throne Speech. Thank you.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — I recognize the member from Moosomin.

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's a pleasure to stand in this House. It might be the last time to speak to a Speech from the Throne. We'll find out whether the federal government decides to go earlier or just at the regular forum,

but if it is the last time it's certainly an honour to enter the debate here.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, a number of my colleagues have already spoken about the events that took place in Ottawa last week and they were tragic events, whether it was the event that took place at the cenotaph in Ottawa and then on the Hill, or the event that took place in Montreal. I think, Mr. Speaker, as we've heard over the past few days, you heard constantly from Canadians who have said, well we didn't expect that we would see something like this on Canadian soil. Somehow or other we've been very fortunate and we've been truly blessed and we have not had circumstances of that tragic nature hit us, but I think it's a stark reminder of the fact that no matter where you live, if you don't work to preserve the freedoms that we're going to be honouring the men and women in the next few weeks . . . Actually it's about two weeks from now on Remembrance Day. We're going to be thinking about all the men and women who have fought in two major wars, the Korean War, and then the wars since then. And they worked hard, and they gave their lives so that we could enjoy what we take for granted, many of us take for granted. And then we see what happened the other day, and I would suggest that it's a stark reminder to each and every one of us that we need to continue to work to ensure that we preserve what we have and not just take for granted the freedoms.

And we want to thank the families of the individuals who lost their lives, and we want to extend our sympathies and our prayers as they struggle in this difficult time in their life. But let's never forget that incidents of this nature can happen at any time. Let's work to preserve our freedoms.

Also, Mr. Deputy Speaker, what really encouraged me as well, as I was watching the news the following day, and to see the members in parliament, how they all stood together. I think that speaks highly of who we are as Canadians.

And whether or not we have different political views, and in this Chamber as well, I think we need to recognize that every member who has had the opportunity in the past and who sits here today, sits here today because their constituents gave them the opportunity. And we should learn how to work with and get along with, even though we may have totally different views when it comes to the political realm because we are all human. We make mistakes as well.

So I want to compliment the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition and the third party leader in Ottawa for the leadership they gave last week. And to all of my colleagues here, let's continue to build relationships. We may have differences of opinions, but that should not interfere with our ability to show respect, one for the other.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, as we talk about the Throne Speech that was presented the other day, I'm going to speak about a few things in my constituency as well as just a number of the initiatives that have been brought forward by the Throne Speech. But first of all, I want to speak about the people of this province, and I'd speak about people in Moosomin. I had the pleasure of attending a couple of events, one sponsored by the Saskatchewan Elks and Royal Purple and the other sponsored by, put on by the Shriners.

First of all, the event that the Shriners sponsored, this event was to raise money to go to Shriners hospitals. And if you're not aware of what Shriners hospitals do, they are hospitals that are really specifically geared to meet the needs of individuals with very specific health problems. We had a young couple and I believe they were from the community of Willow Bunch, they brought their young child. He's eight years old now but he was born with some very significant health issues. And if it wasn't for the Shriners stepping up to the plate and helping them get to Montreal where they could receive the treatment that he needed — and then it's I believe three times a year they still have to go back, Mr. Speaker — this little boy probably wouldn't be with us today. And it was quite an emotional time as he was . . . You know, as an eight-year-old, and I was amazed at how he could read and how he talked about his life, and it was so nonchalant. Like, that's just how it is. But it was a pleasure being part of that fundraising dinner.

And then the Elks and Royal Purple, and they were speaking about the work they do for young children and men and women who have problems with hearing and need cochlear hearing implants. And, Mr. Speaker, there again I think in both events the number of people who came out and the fundraising and the way the people gave of themselves speaks again of who we are as Saskatchewan people, and the fact that we're not just thinking of ourselves but we're willing to think of our neighbours and willing to reach out and help those less fortunate amongst us.

Mr. Speaker, at this time we in Saskatchewan are truly blessed with a growing and strengthening economy. But as the Throne Speech said, a strong economy is the foundation of a strong province with an excellent quality of life for all of its people. Now we can take that for granted or we can continue to work to improve who we are, what we are, and what we have to offer the people of this province. And I believe there isn't a person in this province, even in this Legislative Assembly, who is not in favour of a growing and strengthened economy. And many of my colleagues have already spoken about the positive impact of that strengthening economy.

For example, the population in this province now over 1.125 million people; 577,000 people working as of June — a record high for employment in this province — and a record low for unemployment of 3.2 per cent. And you know, the constituency of Moosomin is an area that we can say low unemployment is really creating a problem for us. And how many times do you have people talk about low unemployment creating a problem for you? But I constantly hear from businesses, businessmen and women in my constituency, about the challenges of finding individuals to fill the job opportunities that are there.

And so many of these businesses are truly appreciative of the Saskatchewan-Canada immigration program that has enabled them to bring people from other parts of the world, in many cases a lot of men and women from the Philippines who have come and fit right in. And they're just part of the community. And I tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, sometimes they make us look just not the most progressive people. They're very outgoing and hard workers, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but they're sure a welcome addition to our communities.

[20:00]

And talking about a strong, growing community and economy, I look four miles down the road. I don't have to go very far to not see how our economy is growing, as I see what was the Seed Hawk manufacturing plant, now under the ownership of Vaderstad manufacturing out of Sweden, and they just entered into another major expansion this year. By the time their expansion is completed I believe, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they are looking to have around 480 employees at that little plant just outside of the community of Langbank.

I'll tell you what, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's a real economic boom for our constituency. And so I thank the young man who had the vision in the first place in designing that direct seeding equipment and putting the plant and believing they could operate a plant successfully in rural Saskatchewan. The member from Melfort talked about a number of initiatives and private manufacturing plants in his area. And what we have seen, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have seen the ingenuity of Saskatchewan people in building and putting their ideas, bringing them to fruition and helping this province grow.

Part of the Throne Speech was talking about expanding the New West Partnership. When we formed government in 2007, there was an initiative at that time that was taken to try and address the issues of different weight restrictions from one province to the next and how it impacted the trucking industry. And over the past few years, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we've been able to come to a common agreement, which I know the trucking industry and those working in my area are really pleased to see because it sure made it a lot easier travelling across Western Canada, just to have a uniform weight restriction that everyone could operate with rather than having to change a load every time you moved into a different province.

And with that in mind, we have the New West Partnership, and Saskatchewan is working currently with Alberta and BC to harmonize labour standards and occupational health and safety regulations. And I know for the business community, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that's a very strong initiative that they certainly want to see move forward.

But as I was mentioning earlier, I talked about the workplace and the challenges we have in finding people to fill the job opportunities. Adult basic education has been in this province for a number of years. And I again have had the privilege of attending a number of ABE [adult basic education] grads in my area, in my constituency. I guess the one thing that really impresses me and really makes my heart feel good — whether it was the governments of the past or where we are today — is the fact that you can see the joy in these individuals' lives as they have gone back through the ABE program and been able to get their grade 12 matric, and now they've got a certificate that they can take as they move forward and try to expand their education and apply for job opportunities.

So what this Throne Speech is doing is expanding the number of opportunities for people that enter the ABE program. And through this, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we trust we will be able to enable individuals by giving them the tools that will allow them to apply for the job opportunities that are not only maybe in their area, or maybe leaving the community and moving to another community within the province to fill jobs.

But you know, Mr. Speaker, it's not all about government. At the PNWER [Pacific North West Economic Region] conference I attended this year and as well as Midwestern Legislative Conference, there were a couple private businesses who came and made presentations. And while the individuals that were making the presentations commented about the importance of university education or tech training, they said, you know, a university degree or tech training doesn't necessarily always give an individual the right tools to fit the workplace that may be looking for employees.

So what they have done is they've decided, why don't we invite people to come and work with us and we'll train them on the job. And one individual mentioned that one source of employment individuals actually happened to be the correctional facility in their state.

And they said they found that when they took these young men who had served their time for whatever crime they were spending time in a correctional facility or a prison, and they trained them, they became some of their best employees. In fact, they became their best employees. When they had the opportunity . . . First of all, the fact that they were given an opportunity after having spent time behind bars, and now could do something for themselves, they said it just made them as employers feel so good to see that someone was so happy and pleased to have had someone believe in them to provide the training and then give them the job opportunity. And that's what the new Canada Job Grant will do for many people. It will give individuals, and working with the federal government and businesses, the opportunity of working to train people to fit the job opportunities that are out there.

My colleagues have spoken of many of the 3P projects that have been and are ongoing in the province of Saskatchewan. And while I'm not going to get into P3 projects individually, I know that within the next few weeks or a month or so where the new health care facility in Kipling will be opening — I believe at the end, roughly the end of November if I'm not mistaken — they're looking to move the heavy-care patients from the Willowdale Lodge across town into the new facility, and then shortly into the new year have the acute-care part of the facility open.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that didn't happen overnight, didn't happen by chance overnight. In fact I've been here since 1986 and I've been lobbying for that, and it finally got there. And so I thank my colleagues for the fact that they recognize the need for a facility in Kipling.

And you know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I think about it, there was a period in time, even in my own constituency, where some of the other communities thought, you don't need a hospital in Kipling. And one of the communities, they've got a pretty good health facility and a pretty good doctor base, and comments from a couple of doctors along the same lines. And you know, when Kipling went down, even this past summer it was down for about eight months. And then the folks from Wawota and Redvers and Carlyle started showing up at Moosomin. They were beginning to ask me, is anything happening in Kipling? We've got to get that open because we're not going to survive here with the number of patients coming our way.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, not only are we pleased and the Kipling area and the surrounding area that's served by that facility, but I know the community, even the health caregivers in the constituency are pleased to see this facility moving forward. And I want to thank the people of Kipling for the work they have done, because it isn't all government money. There's a lot of private money going into that facility and the work they've done in raising it. And I'm looking forward to a dinner on Saturday evening, probably the last one, a fundraiser for this project because I believe most of the money is now in place. And it's kind of going to be kind of a windup dinner and fundraiser just for people to have a good time as we look at our new facility.

There is one facility, however, in my constituency that desperately needs work. And I know I've been in contact with the Minister of Health and the Minister of Rural Health, and the former minister of Rural Health has been out to that facility. And it's the heavy-care facility in the community of Grenfell.

Now whether or not we get to it while I still have the opportunity to be a member of this Legislative Assembly or not, I don't know. But I do know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's a facility that needs work. And not just needs work, it's one of those where as individuals, when you're looking at spending money, my views are why would you put good money after bad? Why not just replace the facility like it needs to be replaced? But I also realize that there are so many projects that are needed across the province of Saskatchewan. So hopefully in the not-too-distant future we might be able to do something for the community of Grenfell.

Highways is always, in rural Saskatchewan, an issue. And I had a parcel of highway, and there again it took me a lot of years to get there. It was kind of a parcel of 16 kilometres of highway, actually 20 kilometres between the community of Kipling and No. 9 Highway. People get to Kipling and they see a sign. Actually the last sign that was out there kind of spoke very highly of the highway. It basically said, drive this parcel of highway at your own risk. So people would take the grid roads around that piece of highway.

But over the last few years . . . And thanks to the member from Maple Creek who was minister of Highways when we first formed government. He took the time to travel that piece of highway and recognize what kind of shape it was in and push for that highway to be completed. Highway 48 from Kipling to No. 9 is one of the nicest stretches of highway you'll find in the province of Saskatchewan now. The company that built the highway did an excellent job. And people are certainly pleased to see the work that was done, the fact that they don't have to find rural roads to get around, find their way from one place to the other.

And you know what, Mr. Deputy Speaker? Yes, I believe it was an article in *The Citizen* in July, and I forget which one, but they commented about the fact they could hardly believe how much traffic was on that road. And I mentioned for years that if that highway was complete, you would be surprised at the amount of traffic. And the traffic flow going through to Kenosee Provincial Park was just unbelievable. I had people from Regina, when I was down at the park, telling me, thanking me for the highway, thanking us for the highway. They said, we

didn't have to go to Whitewood and south, the No. 1 to Whitewood and south, and add another 20 or 30 minutes. We could go right through. And what a beautiful highway that's been built there. Thank you very much.

And that's just part of the highway expenditure budget that we have had for the past number of years and are currently working on as we try to meet the needs of a growing province because, as we see, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's not just people coming to the province. We can have a growing population. A growing population also means more vehicles on our highway system. And we know what the challenge is in our two major cities as we look at the bottleneck that's beginning to grow in the province of Saskatchewan because of growth.

Supporting communities. One of the things that I believe our municipal governments are really pleased to see is the fact that they know from year to year exactly what they will be receiving from the provincial government. For years, and I mean years, the municipal governments had to wait until budget time to see whether or not they'd get a morsel out of the budget so that they could plan their local budgets. And the commitment of this government to 1 point of the 5 per cent sales tax to municipal governments means that revenue sharing this year will be \$265 million, and that local governments, as they're planning their budgets, they don't have to wait for the provincial budget. They already know what will be coming into their hands and they can plan their budgets. And I know municipal governments are certainly pleased to have that.

I also want to say that . . . I want to thank the individuals, the men and women who have been working with the PDAP program. Our area was hit quite dramatically with flooding again this year. And in fact there are areas in my constituency in the southern part and certainly going down to the American border where there are farmers still trying to get crop off the ground because of the excessive moisture. But also in many communities and farm operations the significant rainfall created a lot of problems for people in their dwelling places. And I have to say to those working in the ministry and the PDAP employees, thank you for the time and effort and the work you did, because this year was a cakewalk compared to 2011 when it came to PDAP claims.

And I might just put a plug in, I really appreciated the work that the member from Wood River did in 2011. Because after he took hold of the file, was given the responsibility, a lot of people respected and appreciated what was done because there was an individual that took the time to go out and listen to and inspect what was going on. And I believe that as a result of what was done it enhanced and gave us the opportunity for PDAP to work much more smoothly this time around. And I trust from the work that was done at that time and this year, our PDAP program will be refined to the point that any time an emergency of this nature happens, it will be right there and it will be certainly meeting the needs of people.

Mr. Speaker, I'm just going to close by commenting on one other thing that we as a government have made a commitment to in this provincial Throne Speech, the co-operation with the . . . the work that we've been doing to help families and to help individuals with disabilities. As a member of this Legislative Assembly, from the time I was elected, it's always been on my

heart to ensure that people who have to deal with health issues and disabilities as a result of things beyond their control, that as government we should be there to assist them. And I'm pleased to see how we put the money into different programs which are helping, whether it's families or individuals, giving them a better quality of life.

[20:15]

And one of the things that is happening right now, we are increasing opportunities for low-income families to own homes in co-operation with organizations like Habitat for Humanity. Here again, Mr. Deputy Speaker, why would we just do it on our own if there's an organization already out there working to provide and help people, low-income people? Why wouldn't we work together with them to help meet the needs of the low-income families? And I was pleased to see that we're working together with Habitat for Humanity. In fact, Mr. Deputy Speaker, since 2009 our government has committed \$7.85 million to assist Habitat for Humanity build 134 houses in 12 communities.

And we pledge to make Saskatchewan the best place to live for persons with disabilities. The Saskatchewan assured income for disability program is an important part as well of our effort to fulfill that promise.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think by our actions we're putting into practice just a common principle of reaching to help those who are less fortunate than we are. And I'm proud to be part of a government that over the years has seen fit to recognize the needs of people with disabilities, and help families who have individuals with disabilities as well, to ensure that they have a better quality of life.

And one other program I would like to speak to and comment on is the program we have to assist operating rinks in the province of Saskatchewan. In my constituency, one of the biggest complaints I heard every year was the cost of power in community rinks. And the community rink affordability grant program that was designed in 2012 is again being implemented this year. Since 2012, \$3.2 million has been invested in the program, with more than 380 communities benefiting. This year our government will commit 1.7 million to the program. Mr. Deputy Speaker, what that means is these local rinks will continue to operate and provide the opportunities for young men and women and seniors to get out and curl if they'd like, enjoy curling or skating. Or as we see at the Ochapowace First Nation and their new arena, they've even created a walking track in their facility. Mr. Speaker, that is another positive program that I hear a lot about and that community organizations are certainly pleased to see.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, without taking any more time, it's certainly been a pleasure to sit in this Assembly as a member, and I look forward to see . . . And I support the Throne Speech that was laid down before us just the other day. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — I recognize the member from Regina Douglas Park.

Mr. Marchuk: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's nice to be

batting cleanup at this time of the year with the World Series going on. I'll do the best I can, Mr. Speaker. Anyway it is a pleasure that I rise in the House today, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to speak to the 2014 provincial Throne Speech.

And like many of my colleagues before me on both sides of the House, I do want to reflect a little bit on the events of last week, on that tragic and senseless loss of life of two of our finest protectors, Mr. Deputy Speaker. You know, I'm reminded of the words of Winston Churchill. I believe he's quoted as saying that the worst form of government is democracy, except for all others. When you really think about what's taken place in our country last week, it is an exact testament to that statement. It's a statement that shows just how vulnerable our democracy can be when innocent lives are taken in the manner that Corporal Cirillo's and Master Warrant Officer Vincent's were. Mr. Speaker, there's no doubt that acts like that test our system but certainly not our resolve.

You know, I'm reminded of my dad somewhat as I think about the past. My dad landed in Sicily with the American Fifth Army as a tank driver, and through the course of the next two years drove his tank up the eastern side of Italy and fought at the Battle of Monte Cassino, one of the fiercest tank battles in the Second World War.

In 1976 I had the occasion to bring mom and dad to Europe where I was teaching school. And my mom, being strong Catholic, I knew that she would enjoy a trip to Rome and the Vatican, and so we made that trip. And then dad started talking about Monte Cassino and the road south, and so we decided to drive on to Pompeii and Naples. I thought it was going to be a . . . well it was a marvellous trip. But an interesting dynamic took place during that road, during that time from the road south of Rome to Naples. It's about a three-hour trip by Italian autoroute. My dad's eyes were glued, absolutely glued to the countryside on his left. He never spoke a word for three hours driving from Rome to Naples. I can't imagine the thoughts that were going through his head as he viewed that countryside and the lives that were lost and the sacrifices that were made to protect the freedoms that we have in this House today. It was an absolutely poignant moment for me, and I didn't really figure it out until we got back to Germany and we started talking about that.

I'm reminded also of 1976-77. I was teaching school in Germany. Colleagues like my friend from Wood River were flying the CF-104 Starfighter, a plane that has all kinds of nicknames, one of them being the widow-maker. It was essentially a rocket with two little feathers on the side that they called wings. The aircraft would fly like light, but the one problem it had, it couldn't turn very easily, and I think the member from Wood River would concur with that. During those two short years in Germany, we lost three very close friends: Shaw, Danko, and Reid, who because of that aircraft and the flying conditions and the theatre that they flew in was a very crowded airspace, and they had difficulties.

I think about the trip that we made from West Germany into East Germany and then into East Berlin and standing on the Berlin Wall, a wall that was built by the East Germans to keep out the influences of the West. Imagine that. To try to keep out the influences of the West, they built a wall. All the anti-tank

devices and land mines were on their side, not ours. So I'm reminded of the importance that our protectors — our police forces, the security here at the building — provide for us so that we can maintain this democracy that we hold so dear and so that people like Cirillo and Vincent, my dad, and the member from Wood River's colleagues didn't lose their lives in vain. So I reflect on that from last week.

Again like my colleagues before me, I want to reiterate what a pleasure it is for me to be able to represent the constituents of Regina Douglas Park who saw fit in 2011 to elect me as their representative.

You know, as a boy, this building and these grounds were my playground. The dome, the park, they were an adventure. But over time as we all grow and learn, I came to understand that this building and what it represents is a beacon, and it's really gratifying to see the restoration of our dome.

I can only imagine Walter Scott when he began his thoughts and designs around this building. If you think about Regina in those days, there wasn't a house south of this building. It was just prairie. You could see Wilcox from 12 feet in the air on your ladder when you were doing your Christmas lights. You could see Wilcox. It was that close and that flat.

So to erect this structure on that land and the dome that Walter Scott forecasted would be the beacon for this province, a beacon of pride and a beacon of strength and a place that we would be able to call home . . . and as soon as we saw that dome and that building from whatever distance it was, from wherever we were coming from, we knew where we were and what we stood for. And that vision is second to none.

As I said, it became a beacon of leadership and a beacon of pride. And in fact last year it was green pride. The dome was green there for a while and of course we all beamed with Rider pride. And of course a beacon of strength where 100-plus years in this building, obviously it was built to last, just like our people.

Again, as is customary, I want to acknowledge my wife Karen who has shared with me this adventure of being an MLA and cabinet member and part of this great team that we have on this side of the House, and I thank her for that.

My sons, Chris and Cam and their five grandchildren; Michelle and her three grandchildren, the latest eight-week-old Scarlett Anne, and what a darling she is. I thank them all, and my daughter Melanie of course, for their support.

Becky Mason, Brittany, and Ron Naidu over in our constituency office, the three of them share that office and work together to help their two members, the minister from Regina Dewdney and Regina Northeast and myself, with our duties.

My brother Pat and Sharon, his wife — my older brother Pat, who is just so proud to be a part of all of this — my sister Lois and her husband Brian.

You know, Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan is strong and it's never been stronger. Strong leadership, Mr. Speaker, as witnessed again last week. We witnessed our resolve. We witnessed that

that resolve is solid, that we will not be deterred, that democracy will not be compromised, obviously expressed very eloquently, poignantly by our Premier in carrying on with the day, with the routine. We were not going to be deterred, Mr. Speaker, with the routine of the Throne Speech. And during his remarks, he just delivered a very genuine, again poignant, and moving message to this House and the people of Saskatchewan, the impact that that day had on all of us.

I want to acknowledge the members of our cabinet, who are leaders in their own right. Being a cabinet member has onerous responsibilities of leadership — the hours, the countless hours, the dedication that our cabinet members and members of treasury board put in to make sure that our views are represented and that the work of the ministries is completed is second to none, Mr. Speaker, that I've experienced. And so I thank them.

But to all of the MLAs, most importantly perhaps our MLAs, because without you the sacrifices that have gone before us would be senseless, absolutely senseless. So I thank MLAs on both sides of the House for putting your names forward, letting your names stand for leadership in your particular communities, in your constituencies to make this lifestyle that we have what it is today, Mr. Speaker.

Our economy, Mr. Speaker, is strong. And you've heard it already in the House: Moody's AAA rating; record employment, 577,000 employed; balanced budgets; 63 per cent increase in exports; \$16 billion on infrastructure, Mr. Speaker. No question that we've demonstrated that our economy is strong. However as has been said many times in this House, our greatest strength of course is our people — 1.125 million strong. Never been higher, never been stronger, Mr. Speaker. We are strong individually. We are strong as a community and we are strong as a province.

A couple of stories about strength on an individual level. Two of my constituents are Denis and Edith Chisholm, married 61 years young — 61 years. Denis Chisholm, of course, having served as police chief when he retired. Before that he was an RCMP member, and before that he served in the second war.

[20:30]

A very interesting story was told to me, and I know that there will be some more words on this in the future in terms of a member's statement, I believe. When Denis Chisholm was in France waiting to come home, he and a buddy were standing on the French side of the English Channel, looked across and said, I wonder if we could swim that. Well, last summer, 2014, his granddaughter Meghan swam the English Channel, swam the English Channel for her grandfather.

Mr. Speaker, we will hear more about that, but that is an indication of the individual strength of Saskatchewan people, the resolve that we have to get things done.

Another short story on a somewhat sadder note. A good friend of mine, Doug Gillespie, in Saskatoon passed away about two weeks ago. His obituary was in the paper on October the 6th. Doug died from cancer. Doug was an example of strength; he was given six months and he lasted six years. He fought and

fought and fought, and through all of that struggle he worked with young entrepreneurs. He worked with young people. He coached soccer. He never missed a beat. And through all of that, he founded the Saskatchewan chapter of beads for glory, an organization that helped families whose children were perhaps struggling and suffering from severe sickness. And so, another example of Saskatchewan strength and Saskatchewan courage, and we thank Doug for that.

We are strong at the community level. The Throne Speech articulated the situation in Carievale and how people came to the support and help of a family. I think about the strength of North Central in Regina, and how after a *Maclean's* article they were rated the most violent crime-ridden community in the country — in the country — and how they have turned that around. Violent crime is down 18 per cent, and property crime is down 12 per cent in North Central Regina. That's because community got together, demonstrated their strength, and were able to move forward.

I think about Pinehouse Lake and how they turned their community around, and how thriving they are now. I think of Sandy Bay and Yorkton's family resource centres, Mr. Speaker.

Sandy Bay, I met a young mother of five children who, up until the establishment of the family resource centre, she claimed she was basically confined to her house, afraid to come out. Why, Mr. Speaker? Why was she afraid to come out of her house? Not because of what was happening in the community. She was embarrassed she couldn't read. She couldn't articulate. She was illiterate. But because of the family resource centre and the tentacles that reached out into the community, she was able to overcome some of those literacy fears, some of those personal engagement kinds of apprehension, and was able to face her community, is actively involved in that family resource centre, and is now helping out there. That's a story of community strength, Mr. Speaker. Over 40 per cent . . .

[Applause]

Mr. Marchuk: — Thank you. Over 40 per cent of the families in Sandy Bay are utilizing that resource centre where they learn parenting skills; coping skills; skills on how to touch, talk, read, and play with their babies so they can provide the proper kinds of parenting skills and modelling that children need.

The family resource centre in Yorkton is another example of proactive planning by a community. Our family resource centres are a direct product of the work done by the child and youth committee, Mr. Speaker. In one building in Yorkton, there are 20-plus community-based organizations that have come together in one building to eliminate silos so that it's a one-stop shop where parents can come with their families or with their children, with their issues, and not be turned away to go to another building or another street or another venue, Mr. Speaker. It's all in one place. Another very fine example of the work that our child and family committee has done, a proactive approach to solving some of our issues.

Of course, Mr. Speaker, we're strong provincially, and one only needs mention the efforts of Telemiracle and the funds raised by Telemiracle to help — the most productive Telemiracle per capita anywhere. And of course our motto, Mr. Speaker, "from

many peoples, strength" is all about the strength of our province.

Specifically about the Speech from the Throne and its contents, Mr. Speaker, I really want to just spend a couple of minutes talking about the list of must-haves that our opposition has proposed. I think it's called a list of must-haves, and I kind of coined that as an NDP warm and fuzzy way of saying a list of demands. And we would say a list of demands, whereas the warm fuzzy is an initiative that I've had some experience with, Mr. Speaker, and it really doesn't work. I call it the cardiac method of measurement. If it feels right, it must be right. We don't need to measure. If it just feels good, it's good.

So with that list of demands, their must-haves, they talk about stop ignoring the \$2.2 billion in needed repairs to hospitals and care facilities. There should be a bracket behind that which states, which we created. In response to that, since 2008 the ministries and Crown corporations of Saskatchewan have spent close to \$16 billion, \$16 billion on a range of capital projects including hospitals, highways, schools, and power plants. This year alone, Mr. Speaker, \$3 billion has been committed to renew and expand the province's infrastructure.

Another demand, build much needed schools in a responsible and transparent way rather than the government's current flawed, expensive P3 rent-a-school plan. Again a bracket that might say, after we closed 176. So in our response to that, over the last seven years we have spent over \$700 million in education infrastructure, a 268 per cent increase since 2007. Forty new schools have been built or are in the planning stage. And this year new schools have opened or will soon open in Swift Current, Lloydminster, White City, Regina, and Saskatoon.

Another, work with First Nations and federal government to swiftly solve the unacceptable inequities in education for First Nations children. Well I can quote here, "Aboriginal enrolment in post-secondary institutions is increasing." Government will continue to support the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technology, will continue to support the First Nations University of Canada, will continue to support Gabriel Dumont Institute, and all post-secondary institutions. And, Mr. Speaker, we've also instituted the shared services initiative, which allows First Nations to enter into partnerships with local school divisions so that they are able to provide the same kind of services to children on First Nations as our provincial students are getting, Mr. Speaker, a significant investment in our Aboriginal children on-reserve. I couldn't be more proud of that initiative, Mr. Speaker.

And finally, focus on diversifying our economy by supporting programs that encourages business development and job creations. It's the old more eggs in more baskets. Well, Mr. Speaker, over the past seven years there have been 70,400 new jobs created in Saskatchewan. Of those fewer than 10 per cent — 6,600 — were created in the resource sector. Let me break that down: construction, 18,000 jobs; health care, 10,700; resources, 6,600; science and technology, 6,200; education, 5,800; agriculture, 5,300; all other sectors, another 17,800. And if you divide that by 13, that's a baker's dozen basket. That's 5,415 baker's dozens. That's a lot of eggs in a lot of baskets, Mr. Speaker. I rest my case on that.

Just very quickly, Mr. Speaker, one of the foundational principles of course of our democracy is having the freedom to speak and of providing individuals with that opportunity. Tonight is one of them. This government wants to provide the people of Saskatchewan the opportunity to discuss MRIs [magnetic resonance imaging]. We want to discuss them. That's one of the features of our democracy, one of the principles of our democracy — discussion. Privatizing liquor sales, we want to have a discussion. And the P3 approach to funding infrastructure, we want to have that discussion. And, Mr. Speaker, we're going to do that.

p.m. — not a.m., p.m. — tomorrow.

[The Assembly adjourned at 20:42.]

Mr. Speaker, the members opposite are interested, and it's on the record, in the status quo. No discussion, just the old father knows best. We all know about father knows best. That was about a 1950s TV program. No discussion on MRIs, for example, just the status quo.

So, Mr. Speaker, what is the status quo? Well simply, if you want an MRI, go to Alberta, get one. Go west, get one. Come back, give the results to a doctor. Doctor doesn't care where that MRI came from. You've got your MRI and you can get on with your treatment. Status quo. What kind of a system do you call that one? If that's the status quo, we're for it.

No discussion on liquor sales, Mr. Speaker, status quo. The warm fuzzy might be, don't rock the boat, baby; don't tip the boat over. Another '70s probably disco tune. All that's missing is the white belt.

No discussion on P3s, Mr. Speaker, just the status quo. Let's wait another 20 years for a new school.

Interesting though, interesting question to ask, and I'm sure they're thinking about this. If they could only find a way to do something with all those new people moving to Saskatchewan, that would be something.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, I think I'll leave that at that. The old Saskatchewan, we don't want to go back to that, Mr. Speaker. We're very, very comfortable with the direction we're heading. And with that I'll turn out the lights. Mr. Speaker, I move to adjourn debate.

The Speaker: — The member has moved adjournment of debate. 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 move that we adjourn the House.

The Speaker: — The Government House Leader has moved adjournment of debate. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt . . . Excuse me, the House. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. This House stands adjourned to 1:30

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