



FOURTH SESSION - TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

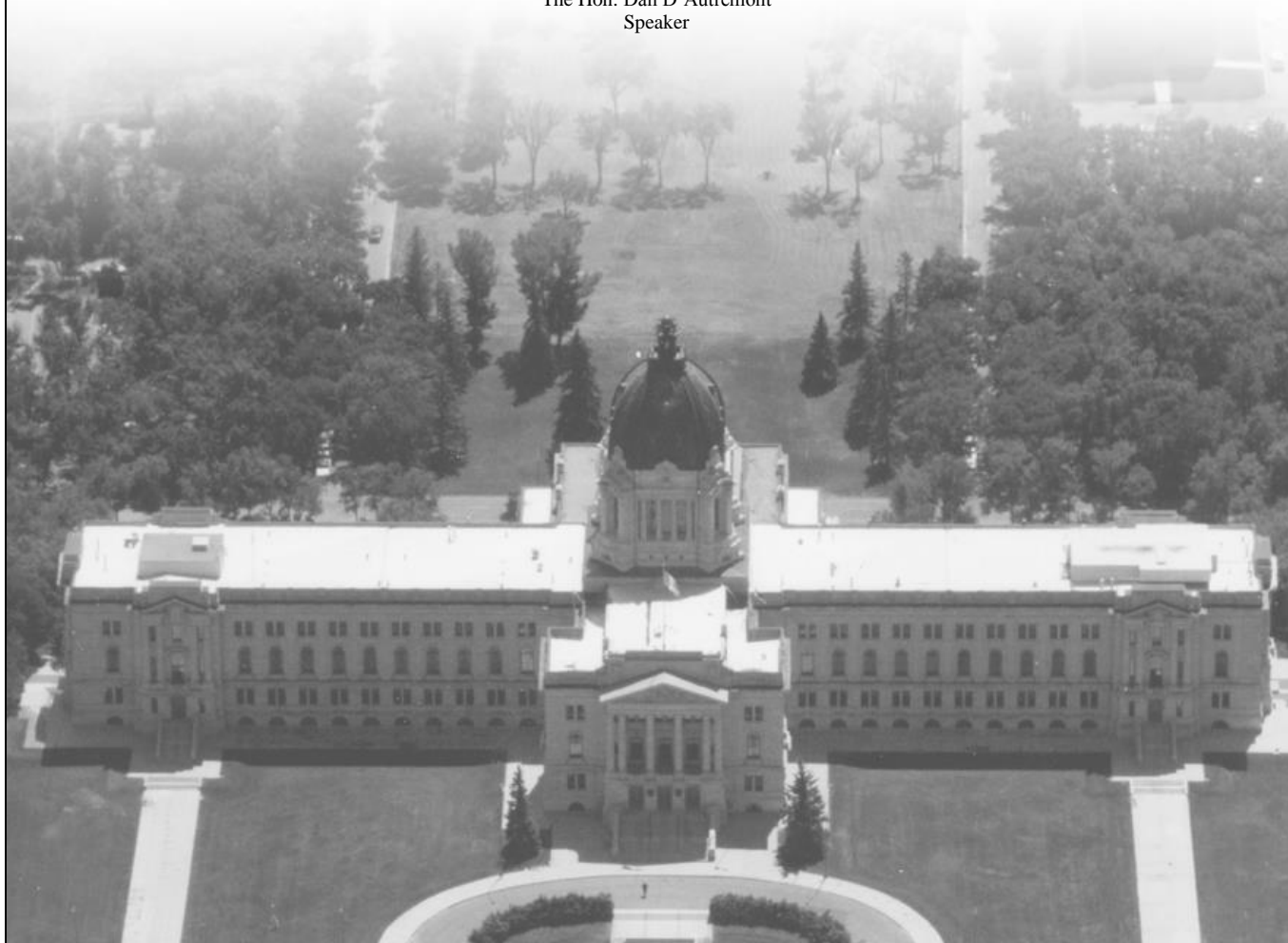
of the

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

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
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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
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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
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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 of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I've two sets of introductions to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Legislative Assembly. First of all joining us today, Mr. Speaker, in your gallery is Faye Katzman. Faye is a member of the Canadian Hemophilia Society. She's seated in your gallery. She serves on the federal HIV [human immunodeficiency virus] advisory council, sits on the national HIV hepatitis C committee for the Canadian Hemophilia Society, and is a past president of the Hemophilia Society.

Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Hemophilia Society is a national health charity with an important mission to improve the health and quality of life of people with inherited bleeding disorders and to find a cure. Mr. Speaker, today Ms. Katzman is here to commemorate the Krever inquiry which was released 17 years ago this month and to remember the many lives that were affected by this tainted blood tragedy. Mr. Speaker, I would ask that all members join with me in welcoming her to the Saskatchewan legislature and for her commitment to helping those in need in raising awareness of the Krever inquiry. So I'd ask all members to . . .

Mr. Speaker, while I'm on my feet, I'm also very pleased to introduce, seated in your gallery, members of the Regina Movember committee. We have a number of Mo Bros and a Mo Sista up in your gallery. And when I introduce them, I just ask them to give us a wave. Mr. Speaker, with us today are the Mo Chair for Movember Regina, is Adam Kletchko, Mr. Speaker; Melissa Fiacco, Nikkoli Hubic, Carey Smith, Brad Massier, Mark Hillmer, and Craig Zamonsky, who couldn't join us in the gallery but was here earlier as this morning members joined the Regina Movember committee in raising the official Movember flag at our Legislative Building.

And, Mr. Speaker, we should all take a little bit of pride in the fact that Saskatchewan's legislature is the first Legislative Building in our country to raise the Movember flag to recognize the attempts, feeble and otherwise, of some of us that are attempting to grow moustaches this month and to change the face of men's health in this country and in our province, Mr. Speaker.

So I would ask all members to join with me in welcoming members of the Regina Movember committee to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour to join with the Minister of Health, the member opposite, to welcome the Movember committee here, the Regina committee for Movember. And certainly I was proud to join in the flag

raising here this morning as well.

And you know, this committee has been working hard for some time to really make sure that the efforts here in Regina are significant and that we do our part to change the face of men's health, both prostate and testicular cancer — raising awareness, raising funds — and importantly, men's mental health which is a very important part.

I'd like to welcome a few of the members, the Mo Bros and the Mo Sista that are here with us here today: Mo Bro Adam Kletchko who's a Chair; Mo Bro Carey Smith, I see him there. It looks like he's going to start growing at some point. It doesn't appear there's any evidence of that yet, Mr. Speaker. And Mo Sista Melissa Fiacco for all of her leadership and as well of course the other committee members that are here. Of course this is a time for us to both grow, in my case not a very attractive moustache, but hopefully grow awareness and raise dollars.

And from this side of the Assembly, the official opposition, I'm joined by the member from Saskatoon Centre, the member from Athabasca, and then some staff in our caucus office that are also growing, by the names of Doyle Fox, Eric Anderson, and Mitch Bonokoski. So we're proud to do our part and thank you to those members of the Regina Movember community for all their work. Thanks so much, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to join with the Minister of Health in welcoming Faye Katzman with the Canadian Hemophilia Society here to her legislature today. All the work that the society does for improving the lives of those with inherited bleeding disorders is very important work, Mr. Speaker.

As well I'd also like to join with the minister and my colleague in welcoming the Mo Bros and Sista here today. I was very pleased a couple of years ago when Movember added the discussion around mental health to the piece. I think that that's huge. So with that, I'd ask my colleagues to join with me in welcoming these folks to their legislature.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am proud to rise to present petitions on behalf of concerned residents as it relates to the unsafe conditions on Dewdney Avenue created by that government's failure to plan appropriate and safe traffic flow. And they call on that government to urgently act to ensure the safety of residents and users of Dewdney Avenue, Mr. Speaker. And the petition reads as follows, 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 the consultation with the city of Regina, communities, and residents.

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

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

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition for minimum quality-of-care standards and appropriate staffing ratios in care facilities. The people who have signed this petition, Mr. Speaker, point out that residents in care have the right to dignity, respect, and safety; that they deserve basic guarantees of a quality of care that they ought to receive; that they have a right to individualized care that meets or exceeds minimum quality-of-care standards; that this government deleted minimum quality-of-care standards from the legislation; and that it is in fact the responsibility of the provincial government to ensure consistent standards of care in facilities throughout Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, the prayer reads as follows:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan require the government to reinstate minimum quality-of-care standards and establish appropriate staffing ratios in care facilities in order to guarantee a high quality of care for seniors and other residents in care.

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

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present a petition opposed to lucrative lean contracts. The petitioners point out that the government is failing to properly listen to front-line health care workers, patients, and their families. They point out that the government is spending many millions of dollars on an out-of-country lean consultant, including a \$40 million contract with an American consultant and flying in Japanese senseis for \$3,500 per day.

In the prayer that reads as follows, Mr. Speaker, the 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.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by citizens from the fair city of Moose Jaw. I so present.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present a petition condemning this government's dangerous smart meter program. The folks who have signed this petition want to bring to the attention of this Assembly the following. The government knew about major safety concerns related to its smart meter project. The government ignored those safety concerns and plowed ahead with its program, and we know the safety of Saskatchewan families was put at significant risk. And the petition reads:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the following action: to cause the provincial government to take responsibility for its failure to act on readily available information about safety concerns with its smart meter program, including through the immediate resignation of the Minister Responsible for SaskPower and a fully independent inquiry into the concerning chain of events that severely compromised the safety of Saskatchewan families.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by individuals from Moose Jaw and Regina. I so submit.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Moosomin.

Remembrance Day

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in the House today to remember the sacrifices made by the men and women who served and protected our country, our rights, and our freedoms. November 11th is Remembrance Day, and a time when we should all think about those who fought and died to allow us the freedom to stand here in our Legislative Assembly.

This year, Remembrance Day holds a special significance for all Canadians. With the recent attacks against our Canadian Armed Forces and the Parliament in Ottawa, we must give special thanks to those who protect us. Mr. Speaker, this Remembrance Day also marks 100 years since the beginning of the First World War and is the 75th anniversary of the start of the Second World War.

Yesterday we held the annual Service of Remembrance for Saskatchewan's civil servants. Wreaths were laid inside the rotunda of the Legislative Building and at the Saskatchewan War Memorial in commemoration.

Mr. Speaker, I believe it's important that we all take time on November 11th to remember the sacrifices of our Canadian soldiers and their families. We must never take for granted the freedoms and liberties that their lives have given us.

I ask all members to join me in thanking our Canadian Forces and their families for the sacrifices they make and they made in their preservation of the freedoms we sometimes take so much for granted. Thank you.

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

Defending and Protecting Freedom

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With this being the last sitting day before Remembrance Day, I would like to take a moment to recognize the sacrifices of our veterans and the sacrifices made by past and present members of our Canadian Forces for the freedoms we enjoy today in our great country.

The people of Saskatchewan have always answered the call to service whenever it's gone out. People from all over Saskatchewan have bravely served in every branch of our Armed Forces, and that service touches so many families. My grandfather for one served in the Second World War with the Regina Rifles and was wounded on February 18th, 1945 in the battle of Moyland Wood.

Without question or hesitation, our men and women in uniform do their duty to combat tyranny and oppression. Many of them have paid the ultimate sacrifice to protect and defend the freedom and democracy we enjoy and that we must protect.

Remembrance Day is a time for all of us to reflect upon this sacrifice and to say thanks. And as we remember and as we say thanks, may our resolve for peace be strong. I hope that all members, and those watching as well, will be reminded that there isn't any one day or any one season in which we need to remember, but this is something we should be mindful of every day. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Remembering Winston Knoll

Ms. Ross: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It was with great sadness yesterday that we learned about the passing of Winston Bernard Knoll on November the 2nd. Winston Knoll was a pillar in the education system as well as a prominent Regina resident and family man.

Winston Knoll was born on the family farm outside of Yorkton. After attending University of Saskatchewan to achieve his Bachelor of Commerce, Winston married his childhood sweetheart, Lorene Grunert. They settled down in Regina where they remained until 1995, working over three decades with the Regina Board of Education. Mr. Speaker, I had the privilege of growing up with the Knoll and Grunert families. In fact the first school I ever attended was named Grunert School.

Mr. Knoll fostered a culture of excellence and integrity in everything he did, eventually becoming the superintendent of business affairs. Mr. Knoll was a respected adviser, a mentor well regarded in the educational and business sector. It was his reputation that Mr. Knoll was remembered for.

After his retirement in 1995, the Regina school board named a high school Winston Knoll Collegiate in the constituency of Regina Qu'Appelle Valley. Winston Knoll was both delighted and honoured at this amazing tribute for his years of services. Mr. Speaker, we are proud that such an established, nurturing

school still remains in memory of this amazing man who contributed so much to the city of Regina.

I ask all members to join me in recognizing the tireless contribution of Winston Knoll to the city of Regina and to education. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

[10:15]

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

Veteran Honoured With Knight Medal

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to rise today and to pay tribute to Roy Armstrong. Roy Armstrong's a 95-year-old veteran. He was a member of the Regina Rifles. He was on Juno Beach on D-Day, and he was one of the Canadian soldiers responsible for liberating the threat in the Netherlands. And, Mr. Speaker, France has just honoured Roy Armstrong with a Knight medal in the National Order of the Legion of Honour, France's highest decoration. It's a well-deserved honour for a man who served his country and lost many friends at war.

After the war, Roy worked on the railroads. He served as brakeman on the Queen's train and was the conductor on the Diefenbaker funeral train. He certainly had an interesting life. But Roy's story also reminds us of the need to better look after our veterans and all seniors. Despite having major health challenges, Roy was deemed too fit for seniors' care, and his family had to fight to change that. So, Mr. Speaker, I'm extra pleased that Roy Armstrong has been awarded France's highest honour because the last few months have been tough.

I ask all members to join me in congratulating and thanking Roy. But I ask all members to join me in committing ourselves to looking after and honouring our veterans and all our seniors. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Growing a Mo in Movember

Mr. Tochor: — Mr. Speaker, members are aware Movember is upon us once again. It's the time of the year when the ability to grow facial hair provides an opportunity to raise awareness about men's health, raise funds for research, and support related to men's cancer.

I'm happy to announce that the Minister of Health, the Minister of Rural and Remote Health, the Minister of Finance, member from Moose Jaw Wakamow, member from The Battlefords, and myself will all be fundraising by growing our mo for men's health. This year our thoughts will be with the Minister of Agriculture as he fights through his own battle with prostate cancer.

Mr. Speaker, it's too often men are reluctant to take prompt action on our health. This year an estimated 670 Saskatchewan men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer. It is very important to schedule regular checkups with your doctor as early detection is vital. As such Saskatchewan has developed a prostate assessment pathway to make it easier to get timely information,

diagnosis, and support.

Mr. Speaker, I ask members to use Movember as an opportunity to engage in discussions about men's health and to encourage the men in their lives to take steps towards better health. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Public-Private Partnership Project Receives Award

Mr. Steinley: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. For years the people of Saskatchewan have recognized the importance of introducing innovation into our public sector as a means to both improving services and making better use of taxpayers' dollars. Therefore I'm very pleased to rise today to inform the House that the city of Regina was, at a ceremony earlier this week, given the prestigious C.W. Chuck Wills Award for municipal infrastructure for their success in using a P3 [public-private partnership] model to deliver the new waste water treatment plant.

The recipient of this national award is a testament to the potential that P3 projects hold not only for the provincial and federal governments but also for municipalities looking to leverage the forces of competition and innovation for the benefit of all taxpayers. As the citizens of Regina know, opting for a P3 approach has resulted in the savings of \$138 million, which can now be used to address other pressing infrastructure issues.

The advantage of P3s have been afforded to cities across the country, to residents of Edmonton, Moncton, Ottawa, Saskatoon, Sudbury, Winnipeg, and many more cities. Canada now boasts 49 municipal P3 projects, making the city of Regina's accomplishment all the more meaningful.

The Minister for SaskBuilds participated in the conference at which this award was bestowed and had the opportunity to congratulate Mayor Fougere. On behalf of our government, I would like to commend the city of Regina on this well-deserved honour and invite all members of this Assembly in joining me doing the same. Thank you.

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

Community-Based Organization Workers Appreciation Day

Mr. Lawrence: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the province has proclaimed November 6th as CBO [community-based organization] Workers Appreciation Day in Saskatchewan. This proclamation is in recognition of the tremendous work being done by the thousands of staff in the many community-based organizations, or CBOs, across our great province.

Mr. Speaker, CBOs are an integral part of the Saskatchewan human service support system, and these workers deserve our utmost respect and recognition. They provide hope, dignity, and compassion to some of the most vulnerable citizens in our

province. Mr. Speaker, the work they do supports our province's children, people living with disabilities, the homeless, those struggling with addictions, families in crisis, and women experiencing abuse.

Mr. Speaker, emergency shelters, group homes, daycares, crisis units, and many much needed other programs and services across Saskatchewan are staffed by 2,400 CBO workers. The Ministry of Social Services supports these CBOs annually with an investment of over \$235 million.

Mr. Speaker, our government hopes that the proclamation of this special day will help raise awareness about the important role of CBOs and their staff in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members of this Assembly to join me in applauding the proclamation of November 6th as CBO Workers Appreciation Day in Saskatchewan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Health Quality Council and the Lean Initiative

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier: why did this government allow its \$40 million American lean consultant to meddle with the Health Quality Council's mandate and operational structures?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this government determined that we wanted to put a major focus on quality improvement. That was work that had been being done by the Health Quality Council for some time, since its creation. They've been focused on quality improvement, on metrics within the health care system.

Based on the work that we wanted to do in changing how we deliver health care, how we manage the health care system in this province, the determination was made that the Health Quality Council would be a good place for where lean deployment would be located so that we could deliver it in a system-wide fashion throughout the health care system. This was a decision that the government made. Certainly we take advice from outside experts, but certainly this was a government decision.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, the Health Quality Council is supposed to provide objective information, not simply be a cheerleader for this government's lean pet project. Now, Mr. Speaker, it spends most of its time cheerleading. This government has made it into the provincial kaizen promotion office.

Why, Mr. Speaker? Because John Black wanted it that way. Here's an internal email that talks about John Black deciding which functions would move to the Health Quality Council. It says:

Communication. This one John has clearly put with HQC, as he expressed his dissatisfaction with follow-up from our communications branch internally.

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier: why didn't he stand up to John Black? Why did he let John Black dictate that the Health Quality Council would simply become the cheerleader for this government's lean pet project?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the past, health regions in this province and the Cancer Agency would have had departments called quality departments, quality improvement offices, quality and safety, quality and efficient management. Quality has been a focus of the system for some time, but we certainly have put a more increased focus on quality improvement.

Mr. Speaker, in terms of the recommendations that would have come, in terms of how to deploy lean across the entire health care system — knowing that it is a system with over 250 individual facilities, over 43,000 employees in the system, 12 health regions, the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency, and other organizations — we took certainly advice, but ultimately the decision was the government's decision on how to deploy lean throughout the system.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, the record is clear what we've seen with John Black. He threw a tantrum. He didn't like the communications that was coming out of the ministry, and he said the Health Quality Council is going to become the mouthpiece, is going to take over the communications, will be the cheerleader for this government's lean pet project. John Black decided that the Health Quality Council needed to be the provincial kaizen promotion office. He decided that it would be responsible, Mr. Speaker, for the communications.

My question to the Premier: how can the Health Quality Council possibly fulfill its mandate to provide objective, independent information, Mr. Speaker, when it is forced to be the cheerleader for this government's lean pet project?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, certainly other health organizations in this province — the regional health authorities, the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency — have found out what members on this side of the House have known for some time, that what members opposite, and the Leader of the Opposition in particular, what he says in this House isn't always factually correct, isn't always the entire story, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, it was the decision that was made by this government in April of 2012 that we would have a province-wide focus when it came to quality improvement. We felt that we needed to have a central location for that to take place. Mr. Speaker, the Health Quality Council is an organization that is focused on quality improvement. That is the work of lean, Mr. Speaker, and that is why it was decided that

that's where the provincial office would be located.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, the Health minister and this government, this Premier, doesn't have to just take my word that cheerleading has become the obsession and the project that the Health Quality Council now is all about. The board Chair of the Health Quality Council says this: "Our work this past year was primarily focused on understanding and executing the functions of the provincial kaizen promotion office."

And an internal copy, Mr. Speaker, of the transition plans shows, it clearly shows that this government knew that that project was cutting into the work that the Health Quality Council is mandated to do and should actually be doing, Mr. Speaker, cutting into important work like listening to patients, like tracking patients' opinions of their experience, Mr. Speaker. Well I guess we know very clearly that this government is not very interested in hearing how poor patients' experiences are in our health care system.

My question, Mr. Speaker, is to the Premier: how can he think that it is acceptable? How is it acceptable that the Health Quality Council is all consumed with promoting the lean pet project while it's scaling back the important work that it's legislatively mandated to do?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that work will continue. The Health Quality Council will continue to do that work. They will also be the provincial quality improvement office through kaizen promotion office, Mr. Speaker. That work can . . . will take place. It'll go forward.

I'm glad that the Leader of the Opposition raised the Chair of the Health Quality Council. I hope he wasn't implying that the Chair of the Health Quality Council is dissatisfied with the fact that the Health Quality Council will be further engaged with lean as it's deployed because that's certainly not the indication that Dr. Susan Shaw has given to me when I've spoken to her. In fact I know that Dr. Shaw, a very respected physician in Saskatoon, has made the offer to the Leader of the Opposition to join with her to see lean in action. She's made that offer on a number of occasions. He has said no. I would offer to him, would he take that offer up again?

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

Mr. Broten: — Well, Mr. Speaker, the Health minister is reading the *Hansard* that the Premier used yesterday. I was invited by nurses to go to lean things, Mr. Speaker, and guess what? The health region and this government didn't allow it to happen. That is how open, that is how transparent that this government is when it comes to their lean pet project.

The board Chair, Mr. Speaker, is saying that their primary focus, their primary focus has been with the kaizen promotion activities. And, Mr. Speaker, that is taking away from the work . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order on both sides, please. I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Broten: — That is taking away from the work, Mr. Speaker, that the Health Quality Council needs to do and should be doing: providing objective information.

It wasn't enough, Mr. Speaker, that John Black insisted that the communications and all of the lean promotion, all of the go-team activities be moved from the ministry into HQC [Health Quality Council]. That wasn't enough for John Black. Then he had to meddle in the activities of the HQC.

Internal emails that we've obtained, Mr. Speaker, show that John Black expressed frustration when he learned that HQC staff members were working on things other than lean promotion. How dare they? How dare they fulfill their legislative mandate, Mr. Speaker?

My question to the Premier: will he at least recognize, will he at least admit that forcing the Health Quality Council to be lean cheerleaders is putting a major strain on what they are supposed to be doing?

[10:30]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Mr. Speaker, with respect to the Leader of the Opposition in saying that he was denied access to speak to front-line staff or to visit facilities, frankly, Mr. Speaker, I don't believe it. Mr. Speaker, I know that the Chair of the Health Quality Council has offered on several occasions to . . . has invited the Leader of the Opposition. He has said no each and every time, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the Health Quality Council does good work. Mr. Speaker, they do good work on quality improvement. They do good work on bringing forward the metrics, doing that evaluation, and they do good work on lean deployment, Mr. Speaker. And they will continue to do that work in this province.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, that is simply not correct. Mr. Speaker, what we see from this government is a control and a fascination all around the optics, and this government, Mr. Speaker, love to have their dog-and-pony shows. They love to orchestrate the photo ops. They love to go in, polish the floors, and have all the yes-people sitting around, Mr. Speaker.

But if this government was actually interested in tours, actually interested in finding out what's going on in our health care system, they would pay some surprise visits to health care facilities and speak with the people on the front line: the health care workers, Mr. Speaker, that are run off their feet; the health care workers, Mr. Speaker, who don't have enough time to clean the emergency rooms, so they're filthy; the maintenance workers, Mr. Speaker, who don't have the resources to make the repairs that they need to do.

My question, Mr. Speaker, to the Premier is: will he visit with

the front-line workers and actually find out what's going on on the front lines of health care in Saskatchewan?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this is what I like to do. This is what I like to do. I like to be able to report to the House and to the people of this province that the time spent in Royal University Hospital in Saskatoon for an X-ray has gone from one hour down to 22 minutes. That's what I like to talk about, Mr. Speaker. I like to talk about the fact and I love to be able to report to the people in this province that the cancelled MRIs [magnetic resonance imaging] have gone from 12 a week in Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region to one a week, allowing us to do 650 more scans a year without adding a single dollar as a resource.

Those are the things I like to report on, Mr. Speaker — reducing wait times, increasing care, improving access — unlike the members opposite when they were in government and they made all sorts of promises, like they were going to reduce wait times for surgeries. In the 1999 election, they were going to reduce wait times for surgeries by 30 per cent. What happened between 1999 and 2003? Wait times increased 61 per cent. That's the record of the NDP [New Democratic Party], and I'll take no lessons from them.

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

Smart Meter Program

Mr. Wotherspoon: — At every step of the way of that government's smart meter debacle, the media and the opposition have had to drag information out of that SaskPower minister and of that government, continually showing that he hadn't been forthcoming. And his story just kept changing. But now he hides every day after question period and won't even speak to the media on this file, hides behind his officials. That's absolutely unacceptable.

What's also unacceptable is hiding relevant information. When the media and the opposition tried to get information about the smart meter debacle, the government threw up a \$60,000 roadblock to reporters and a \$20,000 roadblock to the opposition. To the Premier: why won't this government release all the information on the smart meter debacle? Why is it throwing up roadblocks?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister for Crown Investments.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, certainly the smart meter issue in this province hasn't gone the way this government wanted to see it go. Absolutely not. But this government, Mr. Speaker, has taken action. It stopped the program, Mr. Speaker, when we knew that there were problems.

We not only stopped the problem, but we had CIC [Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan], which I'm the minister responsible of, do an independent review, Mr. Speaker. All the information is in this report, whether it's PricewaterhouseCoopers, Mr. Speaker, whether it's Robertson Stromberg law firm, or Ritenburg & Associates, Mr. Speaker.

All the information was made available to those professional firms. They produced the report.

Mr. Speaker, day after day the opposition will come in here with half-truths, Mr. Speaker. They come in here with half the information. We saw that again yesterday, Mr. Speaker, when the member opposite started to say that people no longer use Sensus, Mr. Speaker. Absolutely wrong. Every time they stand on their feet, Mr. Speaker, we have to listen to the question and then find out the true facts because they're not in that question.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, to even consider what the Minister of SaskPower in this smart meter debacle has been saying, to consider it as a half-truth would be generous, Mr. Speaker. That minister knew full well and was briefed of safety concerns, and that government continued to strap dangerous, fire-prone smart meters on the homes of Saskatchewan people. Absolutely unacceptable.

And the opposition requested complaints about smart meters and records of dangerous smart meter incidents. That's a pretty simple and straightforward request. And I think Saskatchewan people deserve to know the full facts and all the concerns on this smart meter debacle, but this government won't release that information. So it demanded \$20,000 before it would turn over that information. That's utterly ridiculous. Again to the Premier: why won't this government release all the information on the smart meter debacle? What is he hiding?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister for Crown Investments Corporation.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, as I said in my earlier statement, as well as the Minister for SaskPower and the Premier have been very clear on this issue, Mr. Speaker, it isn't the way the government wanted to see this project rolled out. It is one of the biggest projects SaskPower has ever embarked on, touching every house in the province, Mr. Speaker. And, Mr. Speaker, things haven't gone the way we planned.

That's why we had an independent review by three well-known firms in this province, Mr. Speaker — PricewaterhouseCoopers, Robertson Stromberg, and Ritenburg & Associates — that have looked at all the details, Mr. Speaker, that are available through SaskPower. Mr. Speaker, they realized where the problems have laid. The meter itself of course allowed moisture in. We had one of the rainiest springs we've ever had, hence the problems that we saw.

When we saw those problems, Mr. Speaker, the government acted immediately. Stopped the program, started removing the smart meters, Mr. Speaker, regained money, all the money that was put out, Mr. Speaker. The CEO [chief executive officer] president, Mr. Speaker, resigned. This government has been very accountable and very transparent on this issue.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, we have a new minister speaking to this issue today. We have a Minister of SaskPower who should no longer be the minister, who was briefed two

years ago, before they strapped those dangerous, fire-prone meters to homes of Saskatchewan people, that told him that there was direct major safety risks, and they ignored it, Mr. Speaker.

But here's what government also said. There are about 2,505 pages of complaints about smart meter problems and records of dangerous smart meter incidents, 2,505 pages of complaints. Saskatchewan people have a right to that information. They have a right to know the whole truth, the full picture about this government's decision to strap dangerous, fire-prone meters to the homes of Saskatchewan families. To the Premier: will he release all those pages of complaints here today?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister for Crown Investments.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, what the people of this province deserve is an opposition that comes in with facts, Mr. Speaker, not half-truths, Mr. Speaker, facts. Because yesterday, Mr. Speaker . . . The member opposite a couple days ago said, you know, it's not for a politician to get into the technical part of these smart meters, except yesterday he was saying that we should have used the meter that Saskatoon made. Obviously he's a politician that thinks he knows more than the experts at SaskPower. The experts at SaskPower have come out and said that absolutely would not have worked across the province. I wish the opposition would do a little bit more research before they came in here so we don't have to correct 90 per cent of what they have to say.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — You know, Mr. Speaker, we have a minister that no longer speaks to the media. We have a Premier that's defending a minister and a government that sold out the safety of Saskatchewan people, and now we see an attack from a new minister here, Mr. Speaker. It just gets uglier. We have a government that's gifted \$23 million of Saskatchewan people's hard-earned money to a company that can't deliver and that has put the lives of Saskatchewan people at risk.

How is any of that unacceptable? Surely if this government believes in any level of transparency, there should be no issue to release the thousands of pages of complaints and incidents to the people of Saskatchewan. Surely they can take out a little bit of the personal information. The only cost should be a little bit of photocopying. This \$20,000 roadblock that was put up by this government to evade accountability and hide from transparency is simply unacceptable.

To the Premier: if he simply won't release these records here today, it simply highlights an important fact that all these records need to be put into the hands of the independent Provincial Auditor for a full investigation.

The Speaker: — I know that both sides of the House . . . that it's Thursday and everybody's anxious and excited to get home, but let's keep the tone down a little bit if we can, please. I recognize the Minister of Crown Investments Corporation.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we know that the auditor, if they so choose, can look

into this, Mr. Speaker. That is the purview of the auditor.

We feel that as government we certainly have gone one step further. Through CIC, we've conducted a full investigation. I know the opposition was worried that it was too internal and it would be too slanted one way because it would be government reviewing government. I don't think they would say that about this report, Mr. Speaker. This report was done by three very professional organizations that are not going to lean a report to favour government. And I think if you look at some of the report and some of the findings in this report, that is absolutely true. They are very straightforward. They had their information they wanted.

Mr. Speaker, this report is certainly not flattering to SaskPower, and it certainly isn't flattering to the government. We take this report very seriously, Mr. Speaker. We take these recommendations very seriously. That's why we're going to be following through.

If the auditor wants to look into this, they certainly are able to. But, Mr. Speaker, I wish we had an independent review of some of the facts that they used because they're absolutely not true.

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

Saskatchewan Environmental Code

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, this government's shiny new Environmental Code doesn't even mention greenhouse gas emissions or climate change. There was a chapter on greenhouse gases in an earlier draft of the code, but this government left it out of the final version, and the Environment minister refused to give any timeline on when this government will get around to finalizing that very important chapter. Even when he was asked if it could take 25 years, he wouldn't rule that out. Perhaps he'll have a more acceptable answer for the people of Saskatchewan today.

To the minister: when will this government finally get around to finalizing the greenhouse gas emissions chapter of its Environmental Code?

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

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thanks to the member opposite for the question. Mr. Speaker, the Environmental Code that was released earlier this week provides better environmental regulation and better environmental protection for the people in the environment of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, this is a framework that can be added to in the future, and the work of the code development committee does continue to go on.

Mr. Speaker, the feedback from our stakeholders and the public will inform any new chapters that go into the Environmental Code. And, Mr. Speaker, the reduction of greenhouse gases is an important aspect of the environmental protection, Mr. Speaker, but it's not the only aspect. Keeping our environment healthy also means keeping our forests healthy, Mr. Speaker, responsible management of land, and ensuring our water and air quality remain pristine.

Mr. Speaker, this government is committed to balancing environmental protection and economic growth in the province of Saskatchewan. That's why we introduced the Environmental Code earlier this week. That's why we've done innovative, world-renowned projects like the carbon capture and storage in Estevan, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, everyone knows that as a resource-producing and trade-dependent province, it's incredibly reckless for us not to be smart and diligent on environmental protection, environmental assessment, and doing our part to address climate change. Saskatchewan people get that, but this government just doesn't seem to get that. It has cut climate change funding by 82 per cent since 2009, and it left the entire chapter on climate change and greenhouse gases emissions out of its shiny new Environmental Code.

To the minister: does he actually believe that climate change is a problem, yes or no?

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

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And our government is committed to balancing the environmental protection of the province of Saskatchewan with the growth that we've been experiencing. The fact is, Mr. Speaker, that this province has experienced unprecedented growth in the last number of years. Saskatchewan is a leader in job creation. We're a leader in exports, and we supply Canada and the world with natural resources, Mr. Speaker.

And, Mr. Speaker, in Saskatchewan, greenhouse gas emissions have stabilized. It's this government that takes action in our environment, Mr. Speaker, with responsible regulations that were introduced earlier this week such as the Saskatchewan Environmental Code and as well as with innovative investments in carbon capture project, Mr. Speaker, at Estevan. That's reducing the emissions of Boundary dam 3 by 90 per cent, which is equivalent to taking 250,000 vehicles off the road.

[10:45]

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

Ms. Sproule: — Well, Mr. Speaker, this minister certainly knows how to read from the notes his staff prepared. But we want to know what's going on with climate change. Mr. Speaker, there's a pattern going on with this government. They promised back in 2009, four Environment ministers ago, that would have put a price on carbon for large emitters and the money would go into a Saskatchewan Technology Fund to finance investments.

Five years later, the Technology Fund still isn't up and running. And it's not for a lack of planning, no. We've got the internal business plan for the Technology Fund. It was prepared by Meyers Norris Penny back in 2010. The fund is ready to roll. It's got 100 pages of very specific details on how this fund is going to operate. But four years later, Mr. Speaker, four years

later, still no follow-through.

To the minister: when will we see your famous Technology Fund in action?

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

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank the member opposite for the question. As I said, this government is committed to balancing environmental protection in the province of Saskatchewan with our unprecedented growth that we have, Mr. Speaker. We have an innovative, world-renowned investment in the carbon capture and storage project, Mr. Speaker, in Estevan, that is reducing emissions from Boundary dam 3 by 90 per cent. As I said, that's equivalent to taking 250,000 vehicles off the road, Mr. Speaker. We've stabilized emissions in the province of Saskatchewan, as acknowledged in committee last spring, Mr. Speaker, as I had a look at *Hansard*, and it goes like this, and I quote:

And I certainly do want to put on the record that we are thankful for the stabilization in the emission rate. Certainly that's a huge step forward, and I don't want to minimize the efforts that have been made on that front.

Mr. Speaker, that was the member from Nutana.

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

Mr. McCall: — Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Will the member please state his point of order.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. McCall: — Mr. Speaker, in one of the exchanges just taking place here in question period, the Minister for CIC used the expression, absolutely not true. That's unparliamentary language and certainly, Mr. Speaker, this is a member that has apologized to the House in the past for such sort of activity. So I'd ask the Speaker to call that member to order. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I've listened closely to the member. I certainly did not hear anything that was unparliamentary or anything unacceptable. We'd ask that the Speaker, you know, review the record. I know the member said half-truth and that's something that has been used in parliament for decades. So again we'd ask that the Speaker review. Thanks.

The Speaker: — I was listening carefully to the comments of both the Opposition House Leader and the Government House Leader as well as during question period. I heard the comment that the minister made when he said, it's not true. He did not accuse the member of lying or that she was not telling the truth. It's relevant to the tone and to the implications as to whether it's deliberate or not. In this case the point of order is not well taken.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Family Matters Program Established

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to recognize the launch of a new program that assists Saskatchewan families experiencing separation or divorce. The Ministry of Justice, with financial support from the Law Foundation of Saskatchewan, has developed a program called Family Matters, assisting families through separation and divorce.

The goal of the program is to help minimize the effect of separation and divorce on all family members, especially children, by allowing access to an early, affordable, and informal opportunity to resolve issues. This is a three-year pilot project that has received nearly \$1.3 million in funding from the Law Foundation. It has been launched in Saskatoon and Prince Albert with expansion to Regina and Moose Jaw in April of 2015. A province-wide expansion will occur in April 2016.

The dispute resolution office and family justice services will jointly deliver the program. Family Matters will coordinate work that is currently being done by a number of other agencies and help families access better resources. The dispute resolution office and family justice services have over 40 existing qualified service providers for this program. These include experienced social workers and mediators with backgrounds in social work, law, and human justice.

Prior to the program's implementation, extensive consultation with the legal community took place. Among those consulted were the judiciary of the Court of Queen's Bench, Public Legal Education Association or PLEA, Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission, Pro Bono Law Saskatchewan, Community Legal Assistance Service for Saskatoon Inner City or CLASSIC, the Canadian Bar Association Saskatchewan branch — family law Regina, and Saskatoon collaborative lawyers. All provided valuable input into the implementation of the Family Matters program, and I thank them for their contributions.

With this program, Justice is trying to change the culture, change the default setting in divorce and separation. We need to change the perception around what divorce and separation looks like. Separating couples can be assisted to see this process as a normal transition for a family, and not see it as an all-out war on their former spouse. By taking part in the Family Matters program, it is hoped that these couples will share their experiences with their friends, neighbours, and families, which will influence the way others may approach their own separation and divorce in future years.

The program has the potential to influence people beyond just the direct participants in the program. The current challenge for many individuals going through a separation or divorce is to identify what information is available, access it, understand it, and use it to make quality decisions. Family Matters will assist clients by providing them with information, support, and guidance.

Early intervention has a positive effect on assisting separating

couples through this transition. The needs of separating and divorcing couples in our province continues to grow, and it is important that we address these needs. It is preferable to resolve these issues through early intervention rather than the traditional court process. In the court process, there are many unrepresented or self-represented people who are separating or divorcing. These are people who do not hire a lawyer. These individuals cannot resolve basic issues, and if they are able to resolve them it is for a less than optimal outcome. This group will be the primary beneficiary of the program.

The earlier separating parties are able to address the issues between them by getting good information and engaging with each other in a constructive way, the more likely it is that they will be able to reach resolution of their issues and minimize negative impacts. By doing so, stress is alleviated both financially and emotionally on all family members, providing more security and stability for children. For many couples it is very hard to believe that there is a light at the end of the table when it comes to separation or divorce. The Family Matters program may offer that light.

On behalf of the Government of Saskatchewan, I extend my thanks and appreciation to the Law Foundation of Saskatchewan for their financial support of this program. The government continues to strive to make Saskatchewan the best province for all citizens. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd first just like to respond to the ministerial statement, but I'd like to say thanks for having been provided an advance copy of the minister's remarks. It's good to get those to have a bit more information in terms of what's being considered here.

Again, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the Family Matters, assisting families through separation and divorce, work that is being done out of the Ministry of Justice, we're glad to see that this is work done co-operatively with the Law Foundation of Saskatchewan. We're glad to see the fairly significant work that's been undertaken to consult broadly throughout the community, Mr. Speaker. And we're glad to see the goal of the program being to help minimize the effect of separation and divorce on all family members, especially children, by allowing access to an early, affordable, and informal opportunity to resolve issues, quoting from the minister's remarks, Mr. Speaker.

We're glad to see that the dispute resolution office and family justice services will be delivering the program. And we're also glad to see that again this is something that has been, consulted everything from the judiciary to the Public Legal Education Association or the Legal Aid Commission, Pro Bono, CLASSIC up in Saskatoon, the bar association, and the collaborative lawyers.

Certainly collaborative approaches to matters that are otherwise, that are adversarial enough, Mr. Speaker, that are contentious, we think is a step in the right direction and certainly this would seem to be a good program coming forward here today. So we're glad to see the efforts being made, and we'll look to improved results and outcomes at the efforts of this program. So

thank you, Mr. Speaker.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 153 — *The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2014*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 153, *The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2014* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — The Government House Leader has moved the first reading of Bill No. 153, *The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2014*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Clerk: — First reading of this bill.

The Speaker: — When shall this bill be read a second time?

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Next sitting of the House, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

Bill No. 154 — *The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2014 (No. 2)/Loi no 2 de 2014 modifiant le droit législatif*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that Bill No. 154, *The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2014 (No. 2)* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — The Government House Leader has moved first reading of Bill No. 154, *The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2014 (No. 2)*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Clerk: — First reading of this bill.

The Speaker: — When shall this bill be read a second time?

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Next sitting of the House, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

Bill No. 155 — *The Health Care Directives and Substitute Health Care Decision Makers Act, 2014/Loi de 2014 sur les directives et les subrogés en matière de soins de santé*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that Bill No. 155, *The Health Care Directives and Substitute Health Care Decision Makers Act, 2014* be now introduced and read for a first time.

The Speaker: — The Government House Leader has moved first reading of Bill No. 155, *The Health Care Directives and Substitute Health Care Decision Makers Act, 2014*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Clerk: — First reading of this bill.

The Speaker: — When shall this bill be read a second time?

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Next sitting of the House, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

Bill No. 156 — *The Health Care Directives and Substitute Health Care Decision Makers Consequential Amendments Act, 2014*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that Bill No. 156, *The Health Care Directives and Substitute Health Care Decision Makers Consequential Amendments Act, 2014* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — The Government House Leader has moved first reading of Bill No. 156, *The Health Care Directives and Substitute Health Care Decision Makers Consequential Amendments Act, 2014*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Clerk: — First reading of this bill.

The Speaker: — When shall the bill be read a second time?

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Next sitting of the House, Mr. Speaker.

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

MOTION UNDER RULE 61

Smart Meter Investigation

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Before orders of the day, I stand to seek leave under rule 61 to move a motion of urgent and pressing necessity simply to request that the Provincial Auditor perform a special assignment pursuant to section 16(1) of *The Provincial Auditor Act* to investigate the

smart meter file. If there's unanimous consent, I'm prepared to move that motion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — The member for Regina Rosemont is requesting leave to move a motion regarding the Provincial Auditor and the smart meters. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — No.

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Leave is not granted.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government Whip.

Mr. Cox: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the answer to questions 61 through 67.

The Speaker: — The Government Whip has tabled responses to questions 61 through 67.

[11:00]

SEVENTY-FIVE MINUTE DEBATE

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

Canadian Armed Forces Primary Reserve Co-op Program

Mr. Huyghebaert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very pleased to rise today to discuss the co-op program, military training within our school systems. And, Mr. Speaker, I think it's very appropriate at this time considering the events of the last few weeks when we've seen catastrophic effects in our country from terrorists and how our military really come to the forefront. We really appreciate what our military is doing for us in Canada and abroad.

At the end of my comments, Mr. Speaker, I'll be moving a motion that confirms the Government of Saskatchewan, confirm its continued support of the Canadian Armed Forces primary reserve co-op program which is scheduled to be offered to students in the Regina public and Catholic school system starting in February 2015.

Mr. Speaker, in my capacity as military liaison for the province of Saskatchewan, I frequently meet with senior members of Canada's military, specifically those in the province, but also from those that have jurisdiction within our province such as the commander of 38 Brigade, who is actually in Winnipeg, but he has a lot of units here in Saskatchewan.

He and I spoke about a co-op program for the province and how it may enhance the military reserves, but it provides an opportunity for some of our students in our schools with some options. And I'm one that likes stuff on paper as much as possible. So when I spoke to the commander, I said to him to give me something that I can put forward to our government. And I'm going to read parts of his letter, Mr. Speaker, that he

had sent to me. And I will quote:

... 38 Canadian Brigade Group's area of operations span Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Western Ontario up to Thunder Bay. Within Thunder Bay itself, we have conducted a very successful Co-op Programme for several years. As negotiated with the local school boards, based on the policies and procedures stipulated by the Minister of Education for the province's Co-operative Education program, this program provides school credits for high school students towards their graduation diploma, conducting class work about careers, and subsequently being placed in a work site related to a career field they wish to explore.

One such opportunity we would wish to pursue would be for career opportunities within the Canadian Armed Forces, with the provision of the Primary Reserve Basic Military Qualification ... and Basic Military Qualification — Land ... Courses as part of the school board's Co-op Program.

Not only can this Co-op Program provide excellent work experience and employment skills opportunities, but military ... in general stresses teamwork, discipline, physical fitness and safety training, all skills highly transferable to the civilian sector, and useful to any student about to graduate from the high school environment to future endeavours. As part of this Co-op Program, potential candidates will need to accept a job offer with the Canadian Armed Forces as a member of the Primary Reserve, and complete basic training requirements, those being the Primary Reserve ... Courses [and the land course] ... which are required for soldiers and officer candidates alike. The BMQ course is 23 full training days and the BMQ ... [land] is 20 full training days in duration, which would be conducted during weekday afternoons, plus would also include an occasional weekend for the completion of field type training requirements. These courses are designed to teach the core skills and necessary knowledge to succeed in a military environment. The training emphasizes basic military skills, weapons handling, first aid, leadership fundamentals, ethical values and physical fitness training. At the end of training, each participant would be able to function effectively as a member of a small team in simple operations in both garrison and field environments.

After my receiving this letter from the commander of 38 Brigade, we set up a meeting with the Minister of Education and Minister of Advanced Education to discuss how this project could go forward. It was later discussed with the school boards and the school boards in Regina, both Catholic and the Public School Board, were very receptive to the idea.

And, Mr. Speaker, just as a side note, since we have introduced this program, which will start in 2015, there have been several other jurisdictions now that are calling us, calling the commander of 38 Brigade, to ask how it's being done here. And they're looking at setting this up in other jurisdictions.

Mr. Speaker, our government has a deep respect for our Canadian Armed Forces and their commitment and dedication

to serving our country. Now high school students in Regina area will have the opportunity to receive military dual credit recognition through the co-op program. The agreement has been between the Government of Saskatchewan, 38 Brigade Group, Regina Public Schools, and the Regina Catholic School Division. They have allowed this program to happen.

The primary reserve co-op program will help students learn life skills and leadership skills. We recognize that the value of those skills are very transferable. Under the program, students who complete the requirement of basic military training will receive one dual credit and recognition as a member of the Canadian Army Reserve. Schools offering the program are doing so in conjunction with Canadian history 30.

Mr. Speaker, this addresses one of the goals in the Saskatchewan plan for growth that by 2015 there will be an expansion of alternative credentials for high school completion through partnerships with school boards, teachers, training institutions, business, and industry. The Government of Saskatchewan supports alternative pathways to graduation by allowing high school students the opportunity to earn high school credits and post-secondary credits or other program recognition at the same time in the same course.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to read a letter from an individual that had sent it to the *Leader-Post* September 29th, 2014. Now I'll quote the letter, Mr. Speaker:

As a proud spouse of a Canadian sailor, with a long military lineage in her family, I feel Verda Petry's Sept. 23 letter missed the mark on our military.

Military training is much more than training for war — though, with the state the world today, we can all benefit from Canada's military preparedness.

Yes, the Canadian Armed Forces is trained for specific duties in conflict. But its personnel are also trained to give and follow orders, and learn leadership, teamwork and respect.

Basic training covers first aid, ethics/morality and codes of conduct. Those taking it are taught that use of force is a last resort, but may be a necessary one.

They also learn sacrifice. HMCS Regina, for example, has just returned from a nine-month deployment, protecting shipping lanes from pirates and showing Canada's support for the people of Ukraine.

Canada's armed forces also serve at home. The air force provides aircraft for land/sea searches. The army helps fight flooding in the Prairies or assists in the aftermath of natural disasters. The navy responded to the SwissAir disaster on the east coast, and its ships will alter course to respond to a maritime distress call.

So why would we not want our young people to learn about sacrifice, leadership, teamwork — or give them a sense of pride in being part of something larger than themselves?

Joining the Canadian Armed Forces is a choice. While not for everyone, it should definitely be offered in high school as a rewarding career option.

And this is signed by Gail Carney of Regina, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I think that's a great letter and really hits the tone of what we're, our motion is proposing today.

Mr. Speaker, we've been very supportive of the military, as we know, and some of the initiatives that we've brought forward as government, I'll just read a few of them to you.

Qualified military granted Saskatchewan resident status for fishing. Regular members of the Canadian Armed Forces who are Saskatchewan residents at the time of their recruitment or deployment from the province will now be considered Saskatchewan residents when fishing in the province.

We know that the military service pin that the Lieutenant Governor has had produced symbolizes the gratitude of the Crown and people of Saskatchewan for those who have served with honour and valour.

Mr. Speaker, the Highway of Heroes between Moose Jaw and Regina has been named Saskatchewan's Highway of Heroes as a permanent tribute to Canadian Forces personnel from Saskatchewan who have lost their lives in service to our country.

We also have produced Support our Troops stickers.

Legislation to improve provincial electoral process. The Act also makes Saskatchewan the first jurisdiction in Canada to provide special residence recognition to voters serving in the Canadian Armed Forces. Active members of the military from Saskatchewan will retain their Saskatchewan residency while serving outside the province.

And, Mr. Speaker, as we just highlighted earlier this week, the Scholarship of Honour.

Mr. Speaker, as we know, there are many, many people that are very supportive of our position with the military and very supportive of the co-op school program. But, like everything, there are some people that are opposed to the program. A pamphlet was sent to me that outlined some people that are opposed to this. And to me, Mr. Speaker, it's one of the CAVE units, and CAVE stands for citizens against virtually everything.

Mr. Speaker, in this pamphlet it has some key facts which seem to be correct. There's a lot of questions that are asked in this that make people think. The goal of the program, questions to reflect on, it says. The goal of the program is to revitalize the reserves. Should we be turning our high schools into military recruitment centres? Well, Mr. Speaker, it's providing an opportunity for students. Students at the age of 16 or 17 can join the reserves anyway. What this has done is provided them a credit in school for doing something that they could walk outside and do. So it actually is beneficial to the students in school.

The program includes instruction in weapons handling. Is this what we want young people to learn in school? Well, Mr. Speaker, there's many things you learn in school that you could relate to in such a way that could be looking at it in a different light.

Like one of the other ones in here, it talks about, 162 Canadians lost their lives in Afghanistan and many more are struggling to cope with their injuries. Well this is precisely why we want a military and a strong military, to protect our freedoms here at home.

And another question: is the army training program compatible with the UN's [United Nations] view of education as enabling individuals to live and learn better in a world characterized by diversity and pluralism?

But, Mr. Speaker, and here's one that really hits the core. Wouldn't it be better for society if students were to be paid \$2,000 to take math, English, or biology? And this kind of struck me, Mr. Speaker, because if this individual or individuals that wrote this had said, why don't you take biology rather than study weapons, if you look at it carefully, biological weapons are made by whom? People that have a degree in biology. Chemical weapons are . . . people that have taken chemistry in school. Nuclear weapons are created by people that took physics in school and went on to nuclear physics. So if somebody wants to look at it in that context, no matter what you take in school you could relate to something as a military weapons production, even math. You have to have a very strong course in math to be able to produce any of these other weapons or build fighting machines.

Mr. Speaker, we talk about students being paid \$2,000 for the program. And the individual has a bit of the gall to say we're going to be enticing low-income families to take this course. Well, Mr. Speaker, again it's a choice. Students have a choice. Now they can get a credit for taking their choice and joining into the military co-op program.

[11:15]

Mr. Speaker, I would now like to read the motion into the record. The motion reads:

That the Government of Saskatchewan confirms its continued support of the Canadian Armed Forces primary reserve co-op program which is scheduled to be offered to students in the Regina public and Catholic school system starting in February 2015.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — The member for Wood River has moved:

That the Government of Saskatchewan confirms its continued support of the Canadian Armed Forces primary reserve co-op program which is scheduled to be offered to students in the Regina public and Catholic school system starting in February 2015.

I recognize the member for Regina Rosemont.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's at this time of remembrance that we enter into this discussion here today, and certainly it's important for none of us to take our minds off that important role of remembrance. And certainly the NDP is supportive and proud and eternally grateful for the Canadian Forces — their contributions historically, their contributions currently, domestically, internationally — and value that role and value the service. And certainly the co-operative program discussed here today would be an acceptable program that presents an opportunity for students to learn about the Canadian Forces, what that service may look like, and also what a career may look like.

It's important to note that this provides choice for students. I understand that there is parental consent that's required, and I also know that a student who engages into it can depart at any point and can also choose to not be a member following their service. But as I say, we're entering into this discussion about a program at a time of remembrance and certainly at a time where all of our minds need to be with those veterans, with those that serve, and providing the respect that they deserve.

We would like to, as it relates to education itself, like to see extended opportunities in a host of areas for students. This is an acceptable program that presents an opportunity to learn and an opportunity to engage in a hands-on way. I believe it's that sort of learning that can be rather valuable for students in a whole host of areas, whether that be through other avenues, the arts, sports, cultural offerings, and many, many other areas which can enrich the learning of students, but also provide that hands-on experience and hopefully make students draw a greater connection to their learning, to their choices, to their future, and make learning more relevant. And so we, while we see this as an acceptable program, we certainly would want to see support for enrichments to the education program and choices for all students in a whole host of different areas.

I'm a grandson of a Second World War veteran. I know some of that story of a young farm boy from Saskatchewan going over to serve in the Second World War, landing on the beaches, and serving through to, until 1945, on February 18th where my grandfather was shot in the Battle of Moyland Wood, was wounded, and returned to Canada. I know that from his perspective, to remember certainly was a very humble thing, and there was little glorification of the actual battle. In fact in his case, no glorification of the battle and, in fact, returned to Canada both proud of his service — rightfully so — but also wounded, not just physically, but emotionally as well.

And I think that those families that have histories of service, those members that are currently serving, those families that are impacted, will know that there are many, many impacts. And you know, the respect that we pay to our veterans and to those that serve cuts across an entire province, cuts across political divides, and is something that we simply need to really be respectful in how we remember.

It's important to recognize that in this program that there's choice and information. It's important that parents need to also be supportive of this activity, as I believe that they are, and I believe as well that students do need to be empowered to make decisions as to the kind of learning they're going to engage with, the kind of opportunities they'll engage with, and it allows

students to take ownership and be empowered as they take steps forward.

Note, we understand that communities and Canadians in every community across, you know, our country and certainly across Saskatchewan, that there's a diversity of views as it relates to military service as well. And I think it's very important for us to remember that in that range and diversity of views, that that is the democracy in action that we believe to be so important. In fact I would believe that the democracy and to allow for the diverse views to be shared, for questions to be asked, and for answers to be forthcoming are part of what has been fought for and part of what we cherish. So certainly on this program, there have been questions raised and concerns noted by some within the community. And I wouldn't want to dismiss those questions or those concerns. In fact their very presence is part of what reflects the healthy democratic state of our province and something that we need to be ever-mindful.

I know that for many when they look at the role of our Armed Forces, of military service, it can often be a matter of deep conscience, and that many come at these views as well through their own personal experience, through the experience of their families, and many through the lens of their own family or the potential of their family to be involved in that service. I have family members who currently serve with Canadian Forces. And as I've said, my grandfather not only served, he fought in the Second World War and was wounded. I know what that experience is.

And it's through that lens as well that I look to the engagement and the mandate of our Armed Forces, our Canadian Forces. And I think it's incumbent on all of us — and I look to my little, new son, William, when I'm looking to this in respecting the role of the Armed Forces and the choices he'll have to engage in a whole wider range of careers — that we must, when we look at the men and women of the Canadian Forces who currently serve and the mandate and the direction and the engagement that we choose to have them engage with, that we look to those men and women as our own sons and daughters. And that's a really critical lens for us all to come at.

You know, so as I say, there's questions and concerns from community members that's a reflection of a healthy democracy, something that should be not discouraged and certainly they . . . you know, that as we move forward with a program like this, we'll be working with our educational partners, with the school boards, with the teachers, with students and parents to make sure we fully understand if there's any unintended consequences as they move forward.

I know there's already paid internships into the trades which are providing opportunity. I know that students are provided apprenticeship hours into high school. These are programs that I also support, providing opportunity. I do believe we need to do a better job of providing hands-on learning, relevant learning, and opportunities for all students in a whole wide-ranging host of areas. So those are aspects that we'll continue to track.

And I guess importantly for us and for the NDP, at a time of not only remembrance but a time every day that a discussion about our Canadian Forces cannot occur without recognizing the need to support those that have served — our veterans, not just those

from years before but those that are returning — and recognizing the emotional stress and strain, the realities of depression for many, the challenges of PTSD [post-traumatic stress disorder] that many are facing, and that we need to recognize that when those that have served come back to their families, come back to their provinces, come back to their country, that they're provided the supports they deserve, which is why we as the NDP have been so concerned by the cuts by the federal government to those supports that veterans deserve and that they require. And I hope that while we stand in this Assembly here, that we stand unanimously, as well, opposed to those cuts to very important programs.

Our Canadian Forces have an important role domestically by way of safety, by working on our coastlines, by tending to floods and potential crisis domestically, and they too engage internationally, both through peacekeeping and humanitarian missions but also through direct combat.

And I simply say it's a time of remembrance. Let's do just that, and let's look at the men and women of our Canadian Forces as we would think of our own sons and daughters as we look at these missions. So it's a time where, as I say, we must remember. We must think of that service. We must think of that sacrifice, and we must be there to support the men and women who support us through the Canadian Forces. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Steinley: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And it's with great honour that I rise and join this debate today regarding the Regina Public Schools and Regina Catholic School Division allowing a primary reserve co-op program to come into their school divisions in February of 2015.

I think at this particular time and this time of year, it's with great respect that we honour the men and women who are part of our Armed Forces across the country. And they're doing great work here, abroad, protecting our interests and protecting the democracies that we hold so dear that allow us to have these types of debates right here in the Legislative Assembly.

And I want to thank my colleague from Regina Rosemont who added, I believe, added his support to this program. I think he's said many times that opposition's role is to oppose and propose and to support the government when they bring forward good programs. And I think on this side of the House and I believe most of the members on that side of the House think that this co-op program is a very good program to allow the youth of Regina and maybe — who knows how the program rolls out? — but allow the youth of Regina to be able to enter into some co-op programs with the military, with the reserves.

And for the young men and women who decide to take part in this program, I think what they're looking to get from this program is, some things that they want to get a good grasp on is leadership. I think they can get some leadership training, some of the sacrifices they have to make to make sure they make it through this program, Mr. Speaker.

And this program came about in an interesting way, and how I

think a lot of good policy is made, is some people brought the idea to the member from Regina South, I believe; I think is how this came about. And I want to thank the member from Regina South for helping in developing this program.

The reserve co-op program idea did come when 38 Canadian Brigade Group Commander Colonel Ross Ermel approached the MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] from Regina South with the idea of offering high school credit to students in the reserves. He then met with the Education minister who put him in touch with the Ministry of Education in the Regina public and Catholic school divisions, who also saw the benefits of alternative credits in military training.

Colonel Ermel spearheaded this initiative and provided the vision and leadership to make it a reality, and I would like to thank him for all of his hard work and effort in bringing this to reality. I think he deserves a round of applause.

[Applause]

Mr. Steinley: — Mr. Speaker, I think it's great when you add alternatives to the public school divisions. And not all students are looking for the same type of education when they're going through the school division, and that's not a bad thing, Mr. Speaker. I think that when students . . . There's no cookie-cutter mould for any particular student, and all of our young people have different views and they have probably different career choices that they want to chase. And any time that you can broaden the education spectre and allow different opportunities for our children and our youth, I think it's a very good thing.

The member from Regina Rosemont talked about his son, and I think we would be in agreement when any opportunity and all opportunities are afforded to young people into the future is a good thing for young people. And I think that students are going to appreciate that. And I know that . . .

Just a couple of information about the program which, I think, I'm very supportive, Mr. Speaker, is that military training will be delivered at the Regina Armoury. To be eligible, a student must be a Canadian citizen with a minimum grade 10 education and be 16 years of age. If successful, students may choose to continue on with their service with the Canadian Army Reserve.

"The Canadian Armed Forces are proud to provide employment and career exploration opportunities to our Saskatchewan youth," said Colonel Ermel. "A career in the army reserves is an excellent opportunity for students to experience service to Canada while experiencing part-time military occupations that provide direct skill transfers to . . . government and educators, we will achieve diversity in learning and growth while building tomorrow's leaders."

[11:30]

And I think that hits the nail on the head, Mr. Speaker, when he says, in partnership will we ". . . achieve diversity in learning and growth while building tomorrow's leaders."

And I think diversity is a good thing, and we're seeing more and more of it throughout our province — diversifying our

population, diversifying . . . The young people are taking the opportunities here for growth and for employment, Mr. Speaker. And I would like to say that “This is an exciting initiative that will allow our students to attain credits while accessing unique training and paid employment,” the Regina Catholic Division’s superintendent of education says, Cheryl Exner. Providing an opportunity is a big focus of our government within the education sector.

And I think, over seven years, we’ve provided a lot of opportunities for growth within the education sector. We’ve put in over \$700 million in capital infrastructure which is, on the basis, what we see as providing opportunities for young people throughout the education sector.

The hard-working men and women that are teaching our students, we appreciate the work they’re putting in, and I think it’s incumbent on any government to provide as much money as possible in infrastructure in education so that they have the tools at their fingertips to continue to do a great job in educating our young people across the province, Mr. Speaker.

I’d really like to say that, on the last couple of weeks, the military has been front and centre in Canada and definitely in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. We think of Corporal Nathan Cirillo and Warrant Officer Vincent and the tragedies that happened in Ontario and Quebec, Mr. Speaker.

And we had a few celebrations over the last couple of years here in Saskatchewan, and one of them where we had some World War II veterans in. And the member from Wood River does an excellent job as a liaison with the Armed Forces. And to have men of that stature — and many people have said it, it’s the greatest generation — have those men that fought in World War II in the Assembly, I think every time I see them, it just makes me think of the commitments they made to freedom, to their country at a very young age, at the age of 19, 20, 21, and the commitment they made and the sacrifices they and their families made to ensure that we have the opportunity to live in a free country, a free and democratic country. Every time I see them, the least I do is say thank you and shake their hand. And they just, with a smile on their face say, it’s kind of what we had to do. I think we think a lot more of the commitments they made than they did at the time, Mr. Speaker.

And those men and women deserve nothing but our utmost respect, and we should honour them more than just on November 11th. Like the member across the way and the member from Wood River said, we should honour them each and every day for the sacrifices they made. Which, going on with the theme, Mr. Speaker, is that we have done some honouring the last couple of days. And yesterday was a fantastic celebration with the memorial licence plates that we gave to Ben and Margie Walsh and the Callaghans.

And I got to know Ben quite well. I’d like to call him a friend. It’s an honour to call him a friend actually. And the ability he has to just take the small things, I feel the small things that we’ve done for members of military families who have lost loved ones and giving them the memorial licence plates is something that Ben was very, very honoured and moved when he received it. And for me, I feel it’s something so small, but I think in remembering and honouring his son’s memory it’s

never a small thing when it’s just a licence plate or something like that. And I think it’s fantastic. Every time we get to see Ben come in carrying the Black Rod, I think it’s just one of the better things that we get to see in this Legislative Assembly. And I think it’s an honour for us to see him come in and carry that rod.

And to speak with the Callaghans and some of the memories they shared, I just want to say thanks to them for the ultimate sacrifice they made when some of the loved ones that were sent off just never returned home, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And the Shipways as well from Churchbridge, Mr. Speaker, I was able to talk to a couple of them. And they said they used to live in Walsh Acres but then they moved to Churchill. And it was fantastic to have a conversation with them. Just the utmost respect for the families that made the trip down to the Legislative Assembly to receive those licence plates yesterday, Mr. Speaker.

One more thing is the Scholarship of Honour. And I’m just tying all these in with some of the abilities we have to say our thanks to the military. Not only that, but allow the young people in Saskatchewan to realize the commitments that the military has made on our behalf to make sure that we’re free and we have the ability to make these choices and have these freedom of choices even within the education sector. And I think that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Scholarship of Honour is another small thing, a \$5,000 scholarship for people who have fallen loved ones or have had military service and been injured.

And I think that tying all this in, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the ability for our government to do some of the small things to honour the military and to make sure that our generation realizes and the next generation realizes the commitments that our men and women make in the military service is one of the things that we must never forget. And I hope the people join in Remembrance Day ceremonies across the province to celebrate our armed forces.

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

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It’s always an honour to rise to join debate in this Chamber because of course, you know, there’s so many that contribute to why we’re able to do this work in the name of democracy. But it’s particularly an honour that we’re reminded of here today, that these rights and freedoms and responsibilities that we enjoy in Saskatchewan and in Canada, it’s not that folks had some great ideas and it was just handed over for free, but that in fact these rights and freedoms were paid for in the blood of those that would defend them — those that bore arms, those that put on the uniform.

And in particular, Mr. Speaker, at this time of year, those that came forward, I think of those that came forward in World War II. And in the McCall family, Mr. Speaker, this is a time that, as the Minister from Crown Corporations yesterday gave a great talk yesterday at the public service commemoration ceremonies, talked about how these times affect all families and that there are stories in all families. And certainly I found his remarks to be true with our experience, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the McCall

family.

And this time of year we think in particular of people like my great uncle Roy Calder McCall. And Uncle Roy was the ripe old age of 30 when he was shot and killed in action in northern Italy as a corporal in the Royal Canadian Signal Corps. And he's buried in the war cemetery at Gradara in northern Italy, and I've had the very humbling experience of being there to pay my respects to Uncle Roy.

And it's a terrible story, Mr. Speaker, in that, you know, at the age of 30 he was sort of an old man in terms of the troops that he was serving with. And we're reminded of that today with the tragic passing of Corporal Nathan Cirillo, who was all of 24. He was very cowardly and tragically killed just short days ago in our nation's capital.

But Uncle Roy was 30. And when he shipped out overseas, Mr. Deputy Speaker, he left behind a pregnant wife, and his wife ultimately gave birth to my cousin, Daryl. And of course Daryl never knew his father. And for me that always stands out as what . . . There's some hard sacrifices that are made in the name of the defence of these freedoms and rights that we enjoy here in Canada. And it always seems to me that, you know, in terms of what Uncle Roy paid with his life, it was all the more tragic for having never known his son and to never have had the opportunity to hold that boy in his arms, and let him know that he loved him.

And when we come through this season of remembrance, Mr. Deputy Speaker, these are some of the things that I think about. And I think about how heavy a burden it is, how grave a responsibility that we have as legislators when it comes to approaching things like sending citizens into harm's way, sending them to places where they may be injured either in body or in mind and spirit or killed, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And that's a huge responsibility that we have in terms of our part of the bargain, in terms of how we conduct ourselves in this wonderful Canadian democracy that we hold so dear.

And we have with that a responsibility to make sure that when those troops are coming home, that . . . When they're sent out in the first place, that we do so with the utmost of caution, and with a grave sense of what the stakes are. But when those troops come home, Mr. Speaker, or when they don't come home, the responsibility that endures to those individuals and their families, it's important to remember and to never forget — particularly as we come up on November 11th, Mr. Deputy Speaker — but as my colleague the member from Regina Rosemont had said earlier, that there's a responsibility to remember all the year through.

And again, there's some good initiatives that this government has undertaken to help out those efforts in terms of properly honouring and supporting individuals who have paid those prices, who have made that sacrifice for us here in Saskatchewan that we might live as we do. And you know, again it's particularly acute this time of the year, and it's very hard to separate out the particular merits of an individual program from this time of remembrance. So again, Mr. Speaker, I wanted to state that first before I proceeded to the actual program itself, and some of my thoughts on it.

But certainly, you know, I'm here because 30-year-old Roy Calder McCall is not. And his name lives on in the chamber of remembrance in Ottawa or in the War Memorial here outside the legislature or on the cenotaph in downtown Montmartre, Saskatchewan. And it's to the names of the fallen and to those that carry it forward that we owe that respect, we owe that tremendous, terrible humility when we approach these questions of how the military is supported, how the Canadian Forces are supported, how they are administered here in Canada, and how they are deployed, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And in doing so we honour not just those that have gone on, and again in our family on either my father's side of the family, we had uncles that served in the navy in the South Saskatchewan Regiment, and again with Uncle Roy in the signal corps. On my mother's side, my uncle Sid was a tail gunner in a Lancaster bomber and made it home but died of a heart attack at far too young of an age. And it's arguable that again that trauma that was undergone by so many of those people, this is the way it evidenced forth. But those are the people I think of when we come to this season of remembrance, and those are the people I think of when we come to this debate today.

In terms of the program, this is, in and of itself, Mr. Speaker, it would seem to be an acceptable offering. We'll be watching as it goes forward to make sure that it lives up to its stated intent. In terms of the expansion of co-operative education experience, this is something that we're not just on record of supporting, but certainly there were initiatives undertaken, certainly the carpentry apprenticeship program enabling that dual-credit principle to get high school students a leg up in the trades.

Mr. Speaker, this is a progression of that. And I guess that it's come in for some question, is again, Mr. Speaker, I think signal to the democracy that we live in. It's signal to the rights and freedoms that our military has gone forth in the world to secure with their lives at risk. And so I don't have a problem with people having different opinions about this program but I think, Mr. Speaker, the main point is to see how this unfolds, how this engages young people, and how, whether or not the outcomes that are entailed in this program are lived up to.

[11:45]

So we'll be watching closely, Mr. Speaker, but again in terms of the choice that is inherent in this program, it's not the draft, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would submit in terms of the way that it expands on the already existing co-operative opportunities that are particularly rich and for which I know the Regina Public School Board and Regina Catholic School Board have been leaders in the province for. There are a lot of things that we'll be looking for, Mr. Speaker, but again in this context it's certainly a program that we find acceptable on its face. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Lawrence: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. First and foremost I want to start off with, that I fully support this motion. When it comes to the Canadian military's ability to teach leadership, I believe that it's truly unsurpassed. I have a

little — and I don't want to make this about me — I have a little experience with the Canadian military, being a reservist myself before this job, working with cadets within the CIC. The CIC is the Cadet Instructors Cadre which is part of the Canadian Armed Forces reserves, and we work with young folks that are school age from ages 12 to 18. Very good program and I believe it teaches true leadership, teamwork, all the things we like to see in our young folks here in Canada.

When it comes to teaching leadership, one of the definitions that I've come across that the Canadian military has is they define it as "effective leadership in the terms that evoke the concepts of duty and honour, directing, motivating, and enabling others to accomplish the mission professionally and ethically while developing or improving capabilities that contribute to a mission's success." We can take that, or the young folks that join the reserves can take that and apply that to everyday life. When we're talking about accomplishing a mission professionally, when you take a look at how they do a report in school, so if you take that . . . Their mission is to accomplish a report. When you take that ability that they're going to be trained within the reserves, to be able to apply that to everyday civilian life, it will be unsurpassed.

This program I truly believe will be raising some of the future leaders of this province when they have the ability to step up and get the training that the Canadian military will afford them and work with them and lead them to this, down this path where we work as a team. And this side, I know my colleagues on this side of the House, we truly believe in teamwork. We truly believe in leadership.

We have a member that served the greater part of his adult life in the Canadian military. The leadership that the member from Wood River is able to provide some of us younger folks is unsurpassed. Having the ability to work with the reservists in our province, in hopefully working with the kids in Regina, taking that leadership role, that teamwork, that excellence that the Canadian military is able to provide them in the training, will be great for the city of Regina. I'm almost jealous of my colleagues. Well I'm actually jealous of my colleagues here in Regina that they have this rolled out through the Regina public and Catholic school system and we don't have it available to us yet in Moose Jaw. So it looks like a great program.

I've worked with the cadets. I went through the cadet program myself, took their leadership training all the way through from grade 7 to grade 12, so that was five, six years, doing the math. I've got to think. So from '77 to '84, I was in the cadet program and they've even expanded it now so you can start when you're 12 if you're going to turn 13 that year. And I've worked with some cadets that transitioned from the cadet program into the military reserves right in Moose Jaw. And I watched these young folks. They developed from shy, insecure, almost those kinds of kids that would hide in the back of the room, wouldn't put their hand up when they were asked a question or a question was asked of the class, and I watched them develop from being that shy person in the back of the room. And both boys and girls developed into that confident, confident in themselves, confident in their ability, confident in their knowledge of what it takes to be a leader. These are the type of young folks you could give a simple task like you could walk in and say, okay we need the classroom set up for 25 cadets. And you'd be able

to go in and it's set up for 25 cadets. You don't have to follow them around to make sure that that job is done. That takes leadership. That takes teamwork. That takes training.

This is the kind of training that will be afforded the young people right here in Regina. I'm sure that this program's going to be full. We're looking at, I'm sure, some of the people that come out of this program might be sitting here 10, 15, 5 years from now. We're not sure where that leadership that they've been trained in, Mr. Deputy Speaker, will take them.

I want to talk a little bit about the program itself, as my colleagues have. Our government and the opposition today, and over the last couple of weeks, has expressed our profound, deep respect for the Canadian Forces and what they've done for us. And during this time of remembrance, and I agree with the member from Rosemont that this is something that's not something that just happens on November 11th, these folks . . . And I'm finding myself agreeing with them on this point, is at some times surprising. However when we talk about respecting our Canadian Armed Forces and the sacrifice that these people have laid down before us, is amazing the fact that my boys, had they been born 50 years ago, 75 years ago, would have taken part in these conflicts.

My grandfather served in World War II as an aircraft mechanic in England during the entire Battle of Britain. And as the member from Wood River would know, we celebrate the Battle of Britain early in the fall every year. The sacrifices that those airmen put forward when they faced insurmountable odds, unbelievable odds against what was happening in Europe, and facing that over England . . . And you had people patching the runways, people . . . Not just the pilots, not just the gunners, not just the bombers, but you had the people on the ground patching those runways, patching those planes, getting those folks back up into the air so they could do the job that was laid out.

And when we take a look at the leadership that they provided for us, the sacrifices they laid down before us, I can do nothing except support this motion fully. The primary reserve co-op program will help students learn valuable life and leadership skills. And we truly and fully recognize the skills that they will have.

Under the program, the students who complete the requirements of basic military training will receive one dual credit and recognition as a member of the Canadian Army reserve. When they put on that uniform, when you put on that uniform, the amount of pride that you have representing your country, representing the history that's behind it, these young folks that have been afforded this opportunity in Regina are lucky.

And I just want to go on the record one more time that, with our motion:

That the Government of Saskatchewan confirms its continued support of the Canadian Armed Forces primary reserve co-op program, which is scheduled to be offered to students in the Regina public and Catholic school system starting in February 2015.

I fully, 100 per cent, support that program. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I am happy to wade into this discussion today. I'm incredibly grateful too, and proud of the women and men of Canada's Armed Forces, both those who are serving our nation today and those who have served our nation in the past. I am the granddaughter of two World War II veterans, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

My grandfather, Napoléon Champagne, lied about his age, as we often hear, young men who would sign up before they were eligible. But, Mr. Speaker, my grandpa was almost 40 and felt that that would be an impediment to his ability to serve so he in fact lied about his age and said he was younger than he was, Mr. Speaker. My Grandpa Champagne served with the Yorkton LAA [Light Anti-Aircraft] Battery, RCA [Royal Canadian Artillery] CASF [Canadian Active Service Force]. He left Canada in 1940 and returned in August 1944. He served in Italy and Sicily. He spent some time in Africa.

And he came home actually in August of 1944 because my grandmother was very ill and had surgery, and one of my grandmother's friends had actually written a letter to the army asking if compassionate leave would be appropriate. My mom actually remembers someone from the military coming out to visit them in Melville and checking on the family. And the decision was made that he could come home, Mr. Speaker.

And my mom tells me that she was so very excited about his impending arrival on the train home, but he got off the train and she didn't recognize him, Mr. Speaker. He was a gaunt, weary individual, Mr. Speaker, who had contracted malaria when he was in Africa. And my mom talks about my grandmother lovingly every night taking time and picking shrapnel out of my Grandpa Champagne's neck, Mr. Speaker. I never had an opportunity to meet my Grandpa Champagne. He passed away a month before I was born.

My Grandpa Chartier also was a World War II veteran. He joined the Royal Canadian Air Force in April 1941 and was a corporal actually assigned to ground duty. He never went overseas. He actually helped build the Alaska Highway. After the attack on Pearl Harbor and at the beginning of the Pacific theatre, the building of that Alaskan highway became incredibly important, Mr. Speaker.

So make no mistake, I'm incredibly proud of all those folks who are willing to put their lives on the line for all of us and the freedoms that we have here in Canada, Mr. Speaker, those who've done it in the past and those who continue.

This program, this co-op program that we're discussing today is acceptable, but I'd also like to talk about the options our children have as they reach the end of their secondary education.

I think of my older daughter, Hennessey, who is now in grade 11. She's a smart young woman — I think so — and she's thinking quite a bit about the career opportunities that interest her, those things that capture her imagination and challenge her. She's thinking about the post-secondary education that would suit her learning style and, most importantly, her interests. It's

hard to imagine, Mr. Speaker, that young people only 16 or 17 years old are making decisions that will impact their futures so much. As a mother, I know I want to give her guidance and support, but I also want to let her take the lead when it comes to making decisions that impact her own future.

What's really so important to me, Mr. Speaker, is that my daughter's options aren't limited. She's expressed interests and talents in a number of areas. She's athletic. She's been on student council and understands the value of serving her peers. She's academically inclined and excels in several subjects and she's also expressed her creativity through dance for many years, Mr. Speaker. She has chosen during her grade 11 year to pursue a media program. The program is giving her an inside view of what pursuing a post-secondary education in media production and working in media production might be like. Sadly, Mr. Speaker, it would be very difficult to pursue that career here in light of the government's decision to end the film tax credit.

[12:00]

I have to tell you, in the short time that she's been in this integrated learning program, it's been a wonderful experience for her and for me, and for her to come home and tell me about some of the things she's experienced. She's developing leadership skills, organizational skills on top of all the things that she's learning about media production, Mr. Speaker. She is truly getting prepared for university. And I think this decision of hers to pursue this was brilliant, Mr. Speaker.

But in order to register my daughter in this media program, her dad and I wrote a cheque for about \$400. I am fortunate that we are able to do that. My daughter is fortunate to have parents with enough money in the bank account to write that cheque. But I want to talk about the families who may not have that money in their accounts. Let's not create a system in which a young person's options are limited by his or her family's bank accounts. Let's create a system which only a young person's determination, her potential, and her aptitude opens the door to the choices available to her.

For a young person only 17 years old or so to have educational or training options cut off from them merely because of their parents' ability to pay, I don't think that is right, Mr. Speaker. And I see so many kids who could be benefiting from some of these amazing programs that don't have that opportunity, Mr. Speaker.

So I would think that if a program could be created for young people to join cadets and consider a potential future with the Armed Forces reserves, surely we want to be the kind of nation that also offers young people a chance to excel at sports without costs being a barrier to accessing that education.

Surely we want to be the kind of nation that offers young people a chance to learn about a career in public service without making that kind of education only available to those whose families can afford it. Surely we want to be the kind of nation that offers young people a chance to learn about a career in the arts, in education, or in a trade, without cost barriers that prevent some families from accessing that for their child. Surely we don't want the financial situation of a 17-year-old and that

child's parents or guardians determine the type or suitability of the high school education they receive.

Mr. Speaker, the official opposition believes Saskatchewan's youth have to be given access to information and be trusted to make decisions about their own future with the guidance of their families. I know first-hand that if you give a young adult an opportunity to make a mature and reasoned decision, you'll often find that maturity that young person shows you to be more than you would've ever imagined, Mr. Speaker. I think we should do our best to consider these young people, grade 12 students preparing for independence, as capable of wise decision making, providing they have all the options, all the opportunities, and all the information that they need, Mr. Speaker.

Today we are talking about a co-op program that asks if young adults are interested in considering learning about the Armed Forces. I am confident that this discussion would not be complete without a conversation about how we are doing when it comes to caring for those who serve and those who have served.

We are learning even more as a society about the brutal and devastating effects of PTSD or post-traumatic stress disorder and how members of our Canadian Armed Forces have suffered in silence for far too long, and even now without the proper care and support. PTSD is an illness and it can kill you. It can take your life. It can devastate a family and ravage the promise of a young person.

I don't think we've scratched the surface on how to care for and support those who have PTSD. From mitigating the effects of trauma during a person's services to treating the illnesses, to offering support services for an Armed Forces member and her or his family, we've got to do better on all fronts. One of the first greatest steps we can take, Mr. Speaker, is for the Government of Canada to fully acknowledge that this illness is an epidemic among Armed Forces members, first responders, and law enforcement officers, and to commit to making dramatic progress without delay.

I also have to point out that veterans, including seniors who fought for democracy in the Second World War, have faced a reduction in Veterans Affairs Canada service recently, including the closure of the Veterans Affairs office in Saskatoon this year, Mr. Speaker.

Our country made promises to those veterans, and these things we've promised have become less stable and more difficult to access. And that's unacceptable. Canada's veterans kept their promises to our nation. It's saddening to think that our federal government would break their promises in return. And it's not acceptable for provincial governments to sit silent and allow that to happen.

The Speaker: — Time for debate has expired. I recognize the member for Regina Rosemont.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Certainly at this time of remembrance, it's important for us all to reflect on and thank those that have served and sacrificed, both in the past and currently. It's been noted by many that coming back from

service can be a very difficult process. And many come back wounded in many ways, and many are veterans. All require the services and supports that they deserve.

We know that post-traumatic stress disorder and that depression, that all sorts of pressures on an entire family and an individual can be significant. And I'm sure that for many of us, we can only fathom what that can actually be like. So I guess it's important for us to stand together and to support those veterans who are returning from missions, and as such I ask the member from Walsh Acres to join with us and to state as well his opposition to the cuts to veteran services in Saskatchewan.

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

Mr. Steinley: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And at this time, I think our side of the government would just like to say that we have the deepest and utmost respect for veterans, the men and women that do the hard work abroad and at home to keep us safe and keep our democracy protected.

And I feel that we were talking about a provincial program, Mr. Speaker, and I think it does neither of us a service right now to try and score political points on a debate like this. I want to talk about what we're doing for the youth of our province and how we're going to give them the opportunity to gain some leadership skills, get them to realize what the sacrifices our men and our women have made to keep our country safe, Mr. Speaker. And I think that question was out of order, and I just want to say that we should have more respect for democracy, that people put their lives on the line for, than that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our government has been making great strides in ensuring the students of Saskatchewan receive the best education. Since 2007 we have increased the operating funding for school divisions by 26 per cent. We have invested over \$700 million in capital funding which includes 22 brand new schools as well as nine new joint-use schools that will be built by 2017.

We are glad that the NDP is supporting our plan even if they don't have one of their own. We appreciate the support of the military education program. To the member from Saskatoon Riversdale: in this new-found spirit of co-operation, can we count on your party to work with us and support this government in the education sector strategic plan?

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today we're talking about a specific program, a co-op program which we find completely acceptable. But it's also important to make sure that all those resources are in place to ensure that cost is not a barrier for those students who have many different interests and aptitudes, and ensure that those resources are in place. Every day in Saskatoon Riversdale, I hear stories about the fact that there are supports that are not in place that so many students

need, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Certainly we've heard in different of the speeches, different of the measures that have been undertaken by this government in terms of support for veterans, for those that have paid a significant price in terms of taking up arms to defend our rights and freedoms here in Canada and Saskatchewan, and certainly this program is brought forward as part of that. We've provided our opinion on it.

But part of that approach, Mr. Speaker, it would be interesting to hear from the member from Moose Jaw Wakamow what he and his government have done to communicate with the federal government their opinion around the cutbacks to supports for veterans and the inadequacy of support for those that have come back wounded not just in body but in mind and spirit as well. So my question is to the member from Moose Jaw Wakamow.

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

Mr. Lawrence: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The member from Saskatoon Riversdale said it quite well. We're talking about this motion, this motion that this government put forward. And it's a great motion, you know, that the Government of Saskatchewan confirms its continued support of Canadian Armed Forces.

And to go off to try and again score political points for their cronies during this time of remembrance when, you know, when we've all had members serve — like we've all had family members serve in the Canadian Armed Forces — and we hear this line of questioning when we're talking about working with our youth, teaching them leadership, teaching them teamwork. If you fully support this, I don't understand why they're taking this line of questioning, Mr. Speaker. Obviously they don't.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Carrot River Valley.

Mr. Bradshaw: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the NDP's tree book, their former policy clearly stated that they wanted to work with educators, parents, students, and officials to review the current curriculum. It also states that we need to make chances for students to learn more about society, government, and the rights and responsibilities that are part of citizenship.

Serving our country and strengthening our province's military cannot be closer to the core of our Canadian duties and responsibilities. To the member from Saskatoon Riversdale: can we rely on you to stay true to the policy-developed document penned by your leader and work with this government to ensure that our students learn about rights and responsibilities of citizenship?

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't think any of those members opposite listen to any of our speeches, Mr.

Speaker. We find this program completely acceptable.

I think one thing we have to keep in mind, Mr. Speaker, is that there are many different interests and aptitudes of our children here in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. And we need to ensure that we have programming in place that makes, that fosters individual student's aptitudes and skills, Mr. Speaker, and that cost is not a barrier, Mr. Speaker, that cost does not keep children out of learning and pursuing what they love and would love to do, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, we've stated that the program is an acceptable one which provides opportunity and choice to students, that provides important learning to students . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . I'm not sure why members would be heckling at a time of remembrance on an issue like this, but I find that a tad tacky.

But I will say that this is an important opportunity that, you know, we all have of course the support and respect for those that have served and the value of our Canadian forces. And this is an important offering. Offering enrichments and hands-on learning to students is something that's really important. I'm just wondering if government is focusing in on any other areas of dual-track opportunities or other hands-on learning that they'd like to report to the Assembly here today? Maybe to the member from Wakamow here today.

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

Mr. Lawrence: — Well, again I thank the member for the question. Let's talk about this motion. We'll talk about how it addresses the Saskatchewan plan for growth. *The Saskatchewan Plan for Growth* says that:

By 2015, there will be an expansion of alternative credentials for high school completion, through partnerships with school boards, teachers, training institutions, business and industry.

So we can add one more to that list, the Canadian Armed Forces, that we're going to partner with to help teach our students — our students, all our students, your students, our students — leadership, teamwork. And again, it's just one more plank in the plan for growth within the Government of Saskatchewan.

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

Ms. Jurgens: — Mr. Speaker, effective Canadian Forces leaders get the job done and look after their people, notes the national defence manual on leadership in the Canadian Forces. Leaders in the military also think and act in terms of the larger team and anticipate and adapt to change. A career in the Canadian forces not only teaches students how to work together as a team, but also how to lead teams with a sense of duty and honour. To the member from Saskatoon Riversdale: will you support an innovative co-op that not only prepares our students to work effectively in teams, but to be better members of

society and leaders in their own communities?

[12:15]

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Once again I don't think any of those members opposite have listened to a word that we've said on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker. We think this is an acceptable program and would agree that there is definite merit in providing opportunities where our young people learn hands-on leadership skills, Mr. Speaker. So again we find this to be an acceptable program. And learning leadership skills is important, but costs should never be a barrier for any child in Saskatchewan . . .

The Speaker: — Time for the 75-minute debate has expired.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS AND ORDERS

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 607 — *The Buy Local Day Act*

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

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure this afternoon now, shortly after the lunch hour, to be able to enter into the debate this afternoon and speak to a piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker, that I'm very pleased and very happy to be able bring forward to this House for the consideration of members on both sides of the aisle, Mr. Speaker.

The piece of legislation that I have the pleasure to give second reading to today is *The Buy Local Day Act*. And this piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker, is a fairly straightforward bill, and I don't think, Mr. Speaker, it should be overly controversial or prove to be overly controversial. You know, from time to time, Mr. Speaker, as different pieces of legislation are brought forward either from members of cabinet or, Mr. Speaker, through private members' bills, some pieces of legislation are contentious because they speak to different discussions that are going on in the province, and there will not be agreement on both sides of the House and nor should there be agreement on certain types of bills, Mr. Speaker.

But there are other types of legislation that we bring forward that really are about finding common ground and doing what is the right thing, doing what is the common sense thing, doing what should be done. And we saw that, Mr. Speaker, with Howard's law as one example, the asbestos right-to-know legislation, which was important. And I was pleased, Mr. Speaker, to have government support on that piece of legislation; not at first but, Mr. Speaker, they eventually came around and realized that it was in fact a needed and important piece of legislation.

In this instance, Mr. Speaker, this is a piece of legislation that should be unanimously endorsed by every single member of this House, whether on government or opposition benches. What the legislation does is simply to proclaim the first Saturday of every month as Buy Local Day. So, Mr. Speaker,

not overly controversial.

Of course each of us in the Assembly, when we give our responses to either a budget or to a Throne Speech or, as we're in adjourned debates talking about issues, you know, we often reflect upon our home communities. We reflect upon the people we know, and we reflect upon the businesses that are operating in our home communities, either providing services or selling goods, whatever the case may be.

And so when we look at the notion of having a day a month that is designated as a buy-local day, I think that's something that every member should be able to relate to because they can think of those businesses in their home communities, those local businesses, some that may have been around for many years and some that may be new businesses. But they can think of those businesses and contemplate on how they could benefit from a day once a month where there is increased profile. There is increased awareness of the benefits of buying locally. So it's a common sense thing to do, and it's simply a way to promote the value of local businesses in our province's economy and in all of our communities that we represent.

You know, the statistics for the benefits of shopping locally are pretty clear. It's something like for every \$100 that are spent at a local business, \$73 stay in the province. And those dollars that stay in the province do important things for our local economy and for our constituents. They do things like pay local suppliers. They pay wages. They pay taxes, something that of course is important. And, Mr. Speaker, they, of course, those dollars are put into paying for other services, supporting other businesses, and that's simply a smart way to do things.

You know, if you contrast that with the \$100 spent at a business that's not Saskatchewan owned, only \$43 stay in the province. So we know if we shop locally, support local businesses, \$73 stay in the province, but if it's making a payment to a business that is not Saskatchewan owned, we know only \$43 stay in the province.

So this is a good thing. It would be a great step, and it would encourage that ripple effect that we all want to see, Mr. Speaker, of businesses doing well, of creating jobs, of providing opportunities for people, of paying taxes municipally or provincially in order to provide the good public services that people rightfully expect and rightfully need. So, Mr. Speaker, that's why I think this is simply a common sense thing to do to promote the value of local businesses. Not a controversial notion, but that's how we can put Saskatchewan first, Mr. Speaker, and promote greater economic sustainability in our province.

And again I will ask members to reflect upon, you know, the responses to the Throne Speech when we talked about our local communities. So I think it's important to think about those local businesses that would benefit and those local businesses that give back already in such a big way.

The idea for this piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker, *The Buy Local Day Act*, came from a group called Sasklandia. And I would like to take a moment, Mr. Speaker, to pay a special tribute to a few individuals who are among some of the leaders of this grassroots movement. I'd like to pay tribute to Fred

Reibin, to Kurtis Muench, and Roshan Hoover that started up the Sasklandia group and are working hard through their team efforts and connecting with many folks to help build a buy-local movement here in Saskatchewan.

What Sasklandia has laid out are a few key pillars for building a buy-local movement. And, Mr. Speaker, I think they're a definitely good foundation and a good approach that members should be aware of. The first goal that they have, Mr. Speaker, is that they want to connect local businesses and the local community because as we get to know one another, Mr. Speaker, as we make those connections, we know that that's a big part of ensuring that the fabric is there to support a buy-local movement here throughout Saskatchewan.

And we can think of, again, of those local businesses in our constituencies, in our home cities and towns, in our RMs [rural municipality], Mr. Speaker, where people are connected. There's a track record. There's a relationship. And the children of those businesses are going to the same schools, are involved in the same community organizations, the same churches, the same volunteer groups. And so it's important to have those local connections between the local community and the local business. It can happen organically, but it should also be fostered where appropriate and where possible.

A second pillar that they have, Mr. Speaker, is that they want to incentivize and celebrate buying locally. I know they have some thoughts and some plans under way on how there could be good opportunities, how it can make sense to the consumer, make sense to citizens to support local businesses, and there's some good efforts that they have under way, and to celebrate buying locally. You know there are some groups that do this already and we can think of the business improvement districts. I think of my home city, whether it is on Broadway or whether it's the downtown group or whether it's the more nascent on 33rd Street, which is part of my constituency. It's important to celebrate buying locally and raise awareness, and that's one of their pillars.

A third component that they have, Mr. Speaker, is that they want to increase the supply of locally produced goods, which will mean more access to local options.

So it's about making the connections. It's about providing a bit of a carrot, perhaps an incentive as to why it's good to buy locally. And then, Mr. Speaker, it's also about increasing the supply of local produced goods in order to allow businesses to thrive. So those pillars are important.

But when we look at them, they're also in some ways complicated and take some time to put together. So I would like to commend the Sasklandia group for their efforts, commend them for what they're doing, and to thank them and to let them know that members in the Assembly, at least on this side of the House and I would hope all members, Mr. Speaker, are appreciative of the efforts that they have been making.

But we do know it takes effort. It takes some work. It can be complicated. And that's why, Mr. Speaker, their first plank in the Sasklandia platform is to gain support from the top. They recognize, as we've seen in other jurisdictions, in other examples, and other causes, that the most effective movements

have strong supports from governments and legislatures as well as from the citizens.

So it's important to have I suppose that two-pronged approach. It's important to have the grassroots movement, the people coming together, which Sasklandia and many other groups are working on. But it's also important, Mr. Speaker, that we as legislators take the opportunity to say this is a good thing. This is something we support. This is common sense. This supports every community throughout the province and this is something that we want to see progress, something that we want to see thrive, something that we want to see to bring benefits to Saskatchewan people. And that is precisely why, Mr. Speaker, Sasklandia started pushing for the proclamation of a monthly buy-local day.

So back in July, I was actually in Saskatoon . . . or pardon me, Mr. Speaker. Back in July, Fred Reibin was quoted in the media as saying, and this is the quote:

We've all travelled to other places: Vancouver, parts of Europe, Montreal, where there's really strong local culture and local business environment.

And that, Mr. Speaker, is what Fred, Kurtis, and Roshan want to help bring to Saskatchewan.

And, Mr. Speaker, we know that there are many great individuals and entrepreneurs and businesses that are committed to having Saskatchewan do well, having a strong local economy. And, Mr. Speaker, I believe, as do these three individuals and many others, that it could be even stronger. It could be even better. We could ensure that we have a strong local buy-local movement as we see in other jurisdictions, and the benefits of that, Mr. Speaker, would ensure that those dollars that are spent locally, that more of them stay in Saskatchewan, stay in our province and are then put back into the economy in supporting other businesses.

I was intrigued when I saw the news coverage of the Sasklandia group as they launched their media campaign. So I contacted them and asked to meet with them. And we actually met up in Saskatoon at a good local business, at the Broadway Roastery at five corners, or what was five corners, so the Broadway Roastery on Broadway, and we had a good discussion. We had a good discussion about what a local movement could mean for communities throughout the province.

I listened to their plans. I listened to their observations from other jurisdictions and, Mr. Speaker, I thought this was a great idea. I appreciated their passion and I appreciated their determination and the concrete steps they were doing in spreading the word at the local level throughout the province. And I said, well I would like to support this. I think this is something that the provincial legislature should in fact get behind.

I also encouraged them, Mr. Speaker, to reach out to government as well. I said, it's important to talk to opposition and we will lend our voice. It's also important, Mr. Speaker, to speak to government members. That's part of the work that groups do when they do some campaigning and have a good idea. And so that, Mr. Speaker, is what they did.

They actually wrote to the Minister of the Economy. You know, buy-local movement, support your local economy. You'd think the Minister of the Economy would be the right person to reach out to. And, Mr. Speaker, they did hear back from the minister, but it really wasn't a supportive letter. It wasn't buying into their view of the importance of supporting local businesses, and it wasn't really offering any support. I guess there's different terms for that type of letter, but it certainly wasn't one that could be characterized as encouraging.

What the Minister of Economy did is, he simply referred them to the Canadian Federation of Independent Business who put on a Small Business Saturday once a year in October. Well, Mr. Speaker, once a year in October on a Saturday, that's great but that's not the point and that's not the point that these individuals are pushing for. And it's not the point that we should be concerned about here in the Assembly.

As it turns out, Mr. Speaker, the CFIB [Canadian Federation of Independent Business] actually supports the idea of a monthly buy-local day. It was just yesterday, after I had provided first reading of this piece of legislation, then following that, not too far long after, Mr. Speaker, Marilyn Braun-Pollon who is CFIB's vice-president of prairie and agri-business tweeted, Mr. Speaker, that the CFIB is pleased that I introduced *The Buy Local Day Act* in the Assembly.

So, Mr. Speaker, it doesn't work for the Economy minister. It doesn't work for the Economy minister to pretend that the CFIB's once-a-year day is good enough. It certainly doesn't because the CFIB is saying that government should support Bill 607, *The Buy Local Day Act*.

[12:30]

So what does this legislation do, Mr. Speaker? If passed, it would simply proclaim the first Saturday of each month as Buy Local Day. Of course, Mr. Speaker, we would expect, and I think Saskatchewan people would expect and Saskatchewan people would want that the government would seize opportunities around each buy-local day to promote local businesses.

We know there are many people at the grassroots level that are behind us, and it would be a great opportunity to build those bridges and to ensure that local economies benefit as they should. We would expect, Mr. Speaker, that the government would encourage families to shop at Saskatchewan-owned businesses. I know I certainly do, and we do, and certainly hope that government members would do the same.

And we would also expect and hope that government would provide information to help families make informed consumer decisions about the benefits of shopping locally, about highlighting some of the strong local businesses that we have. So, Mr. Speaker, that would all be a logical extension of proclaiming a buy-local day.

But the first step of course would be for the government to determine what it would look like and what resources it would devote to it. I hope the resources that it would devote to it would be effective and would be appropriate for the importance of this type of issue.

Passing this bill simply means that the first Saturday of each month would be proclaimed as Buy Local Day. So again this is simple. It is straightforward. It should not be controversial in the least bit, Mr. Speaker. It should be unanimously endorsed by every single member of this House. Here on the opposition side, we are fully supportive. And I truly hope, Mr. Speaker, that government will also support this bill.

There's no question, Mr. Speaker, that we have seen problems with this government's approach to business. We see that with the government's lazy procurement policies that only look at initial price and don't look at other things like quality, product history, supplier experience, warranty, delivery schedule, final total price, vendor performance, and local knowledge and a local net benefit.

Local . . . [inaudible] . . . business, Mr. Speaker, tell me that they're concerned with the actions that this government has taken or failed to take. And I think that's frustrating and it simply isn't right. And that should be a wake-up call to this government that its very short-sighted view isn't working well for Saskatchewan businesses.

We shouldn't, Mr. Speaker, have to wait for frustration. There are positive things that we can do now to support local businesses. And, Mr. Speaker, we'll be talking more about that, I would think, probably on another day. But right now there is something concrete and good that this government could do.

This government could support this piece of legislation, which isn't controversial, which isn't something that should cause a whole lot of debate, but it should be something where we recognize the common ground. We recognize the good benefits that would come of it and we would make it happen, Mr. Speaker.

So, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to move second reading of *The Buy Local Day Act*.

The Speaker: — The member has moved second reading of Bill No. 607, *The Buy Local Day Act*. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's certainly a pleasure to rise and participate in the debate on Bill No. 607, *The Buy Local Day Act*. I can't wait for the first Saturday of each month, Mr. Speaker, to be proclaimed as such. And certainly this is a worthy initiative going forward. Glad to see it here today.

There is an agreement between the sides in terms of the time that we're going to be taking to debate here today, Mr. Speaker, and with that, I would move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 607. Thank you.

The Speaker: — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 607. 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 this House do now adjourn.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

[The Assembly adjourned at 12:34.]

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