



FOURTH SESSION - TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

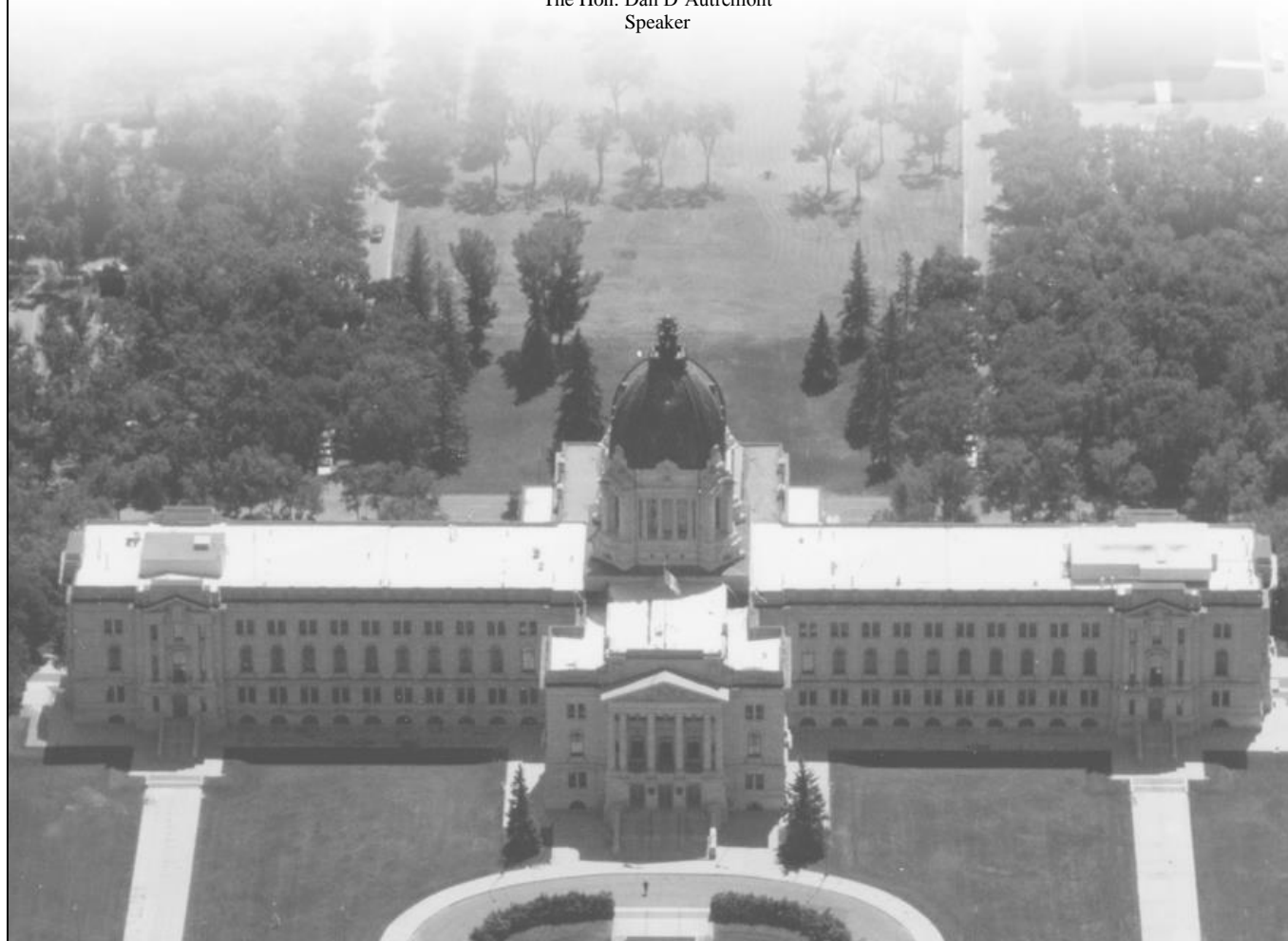
of the

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
D'Autremont, Hon. Dan	SP	Cannington
Docherty, Hon. Mark	SP	Regina Coronation Park
Doherty, Hon. Kevin	SP	Regina Northeast
Doke, Larry	SP	Cut Knife-Turtleford
Draude, June	SP	Kelvington-Wadena
Duncan, Hon. Dustin	SP	Weyburn-Big Muddy
Eagles, Doreen	SP	Estevan
Elhard, Wayne	SP	Cypress Hills
Forbes, David	NDP	Saskatoon Centre
Harpauer, Hon. Donna	SP	Humboldt
Harrison, Hon. Jeremy	SP	Meadow Lake
Hart, Glen	SP	Last Mountain-Touchwood
Heppner, Hon. Nancy	SP	Martensville
Hickie, Darryl	SP	Prince Albert Carlton
Hutchinson, Bill	SP	Regina South
Huyghebaert, D.F. (Yogi)	SP	Wood River
Jurgens, Victoria	SP	Prince Albert Northcote
Kirsch, Delbert	SP	Batoche
Krawetz, Hon. Ken	SP	Canora-Pelly
Lawrence, Greg	SP	Moose Jaw Wakamow
Makowsky, Gene	SP	Regina Dewdney
Marchuk, Russ	SP	Regina Douglas Park
McCall, Warren	NDP	Regina Elphinstone-Centre
McMorris, Hon. Don	SP	Indian Head-Milestone
Merriman, Paul	SP	Saskatoon Sutherland
Michelson, Warren	SP	Moose Jaw North
Moe, Hon. Scott	SP	Rosthern-Shellbrook
Morgan, Hon. Don	SP	Saskatoon Southeast
Nilson, John	NDP	Regina Lakeview
Norris, Rob	SP	Saskatoon Greystone
Ottenbreit, Hon. Greg	SP	Yorkton
Parent, Roger	SP	Saskatoon Meewasin
Phillips, Kevin	SP	Melfort
Reiter, Hon. Jim	SP	Rosetown-Elrose
Ross, Laura	SP	Regina Qu'Appelle Valley
Sproule, Cathy	NDP	Saskatoon Nutana
Steinley, Warren	SP	Regina Walsh Acres
Stewart, Hon. Lyle	SP	Thunder Creek
Tell, Hon. Christine	SP	Regina Wascana Plains
Tochor, Corey	SP	Saskatoon Eastview
Toth, Don	SP	Moosomin
Vermette, Doyle	NDP	Cumberland
Wall, Hon. Brad	SP	Swift Current
Weekes, Randy	SP	Biggar
Wilson, Hon. Nadine	SP	Saskatchewan Rivers
Wotherspoon, Trent	NDP	Regina Rosemont
Wyant, Hon. Gordon	SP	Saskatoon Northwest
Young, Colleen	SP	Lloydminster

[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave for an extended introduction.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — I recognize the minister.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure today to introduce to you and through you to this Assembly some very special visitors. They are officers from a number of policing agencies. They work together and with other enforcement agencies to keep Saskatchewan communities safe.

Today I'd like to welcome Saskatoon Inspector Dave Haye, officer in charge of the combined forces special enforcement unit, or CFSEU. Dave, can you give us a wave? Thank you. The CFSEU played an important role in a major drug takedown on November 6th of 2014.

A number of other agencies also took part in this investigation and have members also seated in your gallery today. Superintendent Corey Zaharuk with the community safety division of Regina Police Service. Corey? Superintendent Brent Schmidt of the criminal investigation division of the Regina Police Service. Superintendent Rob Cameron, the assistant criminal operations officer with RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] "F" Division. Chief Troy Cooper, chief of police, Prince Albert. And of course Dan Pooler, director of policing and community safety from the Ministry of Corrections and Policing.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in welcoming them to their Assembly.

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

Mr. Nilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to join the minister in welcoming these well-trained and well-respected officers of the police forces in Saskatchewan. We very much appreciate the work that you do. And I know that often it's not thanked. You're not thanked enough for that, and so I would say thank you very much on behalf of all of us. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister for Advanced Education.

Hon. Mr. Doherty: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker,

I'd like to join with the minister and members opposite in welcoming these police officers and ministry officials to the Legislative Assembly today, and in particular point out one, Mr. Speaker, who I know rather well. That's my brother-in-law, Mr. Troy Cooper, chief of Prince Albert Police Service, who I know the members from Prince Albert Carlton and Northcote tell me they run into him quite a bit over in Prince Albert at various functions. And I just want to welcome Troy to his Legislative Assembly, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Nilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to all members of the legislature, 14 grade 11 and 12 students from the law 30 class at Sheldon-Williams Collegiate in Regina Lakeview. And they're sitting in the east gallery. They're accompanied by their teacher, Mrs. Lindsay Vindevoghel. So I ask all members to welcome them here today.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition that calls for greater protection for Saskatchewan citizens from developers who default on fixed-price contracts with the Saskatchewan government.

And we know that in September of this year, this government walked away from a new 48-unit, low-income affordable housing project in Regina, allowing a private developer to instead take control of and then rent the units at full market price. And when asked to explain how the government could allow this to happen, allowing a developer to back out of a fixed-price contract without any penalties, the Minister of Social Services said, and I quote, "You're assuming that there's these desperate homeless people," showing how disconnected this government is from the realities within our communities. I'd like to read the prayer, Mr. Speaker:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the following action: cause the government to recognize that there are indeed desperate homeless people in our province and to immediately reverse its policy of now allowing private developers with whom the government has close relationships to default on fixed-price contracts for affordable housing projects.

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

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present petitions on behalf of concerned citizens as it relates to the unsafe conditions created by that government on Dewdney Avenue. They speak to the importance of the west bypass being completed in a timely way and they speak to the importance of urgent actions to ensure safety on Dewdney Avenue. And the prayer reads as follows:

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

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

These petitions are signed by concerned residents from across Regina as well as directly on Dewdney Avenue. I so submit.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition on behalf of Creighton, Denare Beach, and area. Many residents in these communities are struggling with disabilities and currently do not have the support services they need and deserve. And the prayer reads:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan should take the following action: to cause the provincial Government of Saskatchewan to establish and build a residential and day program in the Creighton/Denare Beach region to support the immediate and ongoing needs of the community, and so that persons with intellectual disabilities thrive in their respective community.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by many good people of northern Saskatchewan. I so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Once again I am proud to stand in my place today to present a petition on the second bridge for Prince Albert. And the petition reads as follows. The prayer reads as follows, Mr. Speaker:

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

A good commitment, Mr. Speaker. And the people that have signed this particular petition are from Moose Jaw. And I so present.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I present a petition today in support of safe staffing levels in long-term care. The petitioners point out, Mr. Speaker, that many aspects of long-term care are deteriorating under this government; that the Government of Saskatchewan actually recognize the need for

safe staffing levels to provide hands-on care to residents; that the government is failing to fix the basics in long-term care, including rejecting the further urgent requests from long-term care facilities for increased and needed staffing levels. They point out that the government has removed the regulations requiring a minimum standard of care for seniors, resulting in neglect; that chronic understaffing in long-term care facilities results in unacceptable conditions, including unanswered calls for help, infrequent bathing, and a rise in physical violence amongst residents. And they also point out, Mr. Speaker, that fixing the basics and achieving real improvement in long-term care services requires a firm commitment to actually listen to front-line health care workers, residents, and their families, as opposed to failing to properly listen to their concerns.

I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the following action: to cause the government to commit to the creation of safe staffing levels for all valued members of the health care team and to reintroduce actual numbers of staff to match the level of care needs and the number of residents under their care in long-term care facilities.

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

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by citizens of Saskatoon. I so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present a petition condemning this government's dangerous smart meter program. In the prayer that reads as follows the petitioners:

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 good citizens from Warman, Maple Creek, Saskatoon. I so present.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very honoured to rise today to present a petition from some of my constituents, and this is on a petition to support better health care in Saskatchewan. What they would like to do is bring to our attention the following: that emergency room wait times in Saskatchewan have doubled since 2010, and the government's own statistics show that patient safety is getting worse. We also know the government is spending untold millions of dollars on its lean project, including a \$40 million contract with an American consultant and flying in Japanese senseis for \$3,500

per day. The prayer reads as follows. They:

Respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the following action: to cause the provincial government to recognize health care is getting worse under its watch and begin fixing the basics by listening to health care workers, patients, and their families; properly maintaining hospitals and care facilities; and focusing its resources on front-line care instead of spending millions on its lean pet project.

Mr. Speaker, I so submit.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister for Rural and Remote Health.

Immigrants of Distinction Awards

Hon. Mr. Ottenbreit: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the first ever in Saskatchewan Immigrants of Distinction Awards were recently celebrated in Yorkton. Partners in Settlement and Integration, a division of the Yorkton branch of the Saskatchewan Abilities Council, collaborated to host this event in recognition of the significant contributions of newcomers to the east central region of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, the Immigrants of Distinction Awards recognized eight individuals and organizations that have increased the region's diversity and enriched the community's culture. Winners include Amitada "J.J." Chogata who won the Youth Scholarship Award; Mauricio Gomez who won the Business Award; Vivian Quan who won the Distinguished Service Award; Oksana Burbach who won the Volunteer Award; and Jobert del Rosario who won the Immigrant of the Year Award.

Organizations in the community have also stepped forward to support these new residents. Parkland Filipino Canadian Association Inc. won the Arts and Culture Award. Saskatchewan-Melville and Area Happenings and Gathering FiliCan won the Immigrant Group of the Year Award, and McDonald's restaurant won the Organizational Diversity Award.

Mr. Speaker, our government strongly believes that diversity and inclusion will have a central role in driving productivity, innovation, and growth in economic prosperity in our province. Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members join me in congratulating all of these outstanding individuals and organizations for their hard work and dedication to strengthening our growing province. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Agribition Is for Everyone

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to rise in this House to celebrate the start of an important week for producers, our city, and our province — Agribition. For nearly 50 years the Western Canadian Agribition has been a fixture in the calendars for people across Saskatchewan and around the world. It's a time for producers, entrepreneurs, and innovators

in our great province to show the world our excellence in agriculture.

The slogan for Agribition is, Agribition Is for Everyone. And that, Mr. Speaker, certainly is accurate. From livestock to agricultural equipment to the trade show and shops, to the rodeo, to the music, the dancing, and the food, there truly is something for everyone.

One of the most important parts of Agribition is the educational component. Thousands of lucky kids will be arriving on yellow school buses from all over Saskatchewan over the next few days. For some students it may be the first time they've seen livestock up close and personal. For others it will be an opportunity to expand and share the knowledge they already possess from life on the farm.

Mr. Speaker, our province has a long history of success in agriculture, and I know that our producers will continue to lead the world in technology, crop science, and stockbreeding for many years to come. I hope that all members will join with me in congratulating all the organizers and volunteers on what will surely be another successful Agribition. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[13:45]

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

Streamlining of Student Loan Process

Mr. Tochor: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Beginning this year, post-secondary students are benefiting from a new initiative to streamline the administration of student loans. In order to make it easier for students to apply for student financial assistance, a more manageable and time-saving process has been developed.

Mr. Speaker, the one-time signature for a student loan consent and Canadian Revenue Agency release will replace the current requirement for students to sign forms each year when applying for student financial assistance. It will also include one-time signatures for parents, guardians, sponsors, and spouses using the designated forms. Mr. Speaker, this is in addition to other improvements to the student loan process which include reducing interest rates to prime from prime plus 2.5 per cent, no longer counting vehicles as a resource when determining loan eligibility, and no longer considering part-time employment while in school.

Mr. Speaker, these improvements to overall client service delivery for student loan borrowers are the result of a lean process. Students will save time in the application process and will receive their assistance results more quickly.

Mr. Speaker, since 2008, the Government of Saskatchewan invested \$5.5 billion in post-secondary institutions and students. This includes student financial assistance supports to help students pursue their post-secondary studies and find a job in our growing economy. This is just one of the many ways that we are encouraging young people to stay in our great province and keep Saskatchewan strong. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Celebrating Saskatchewan Film

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, last night I had the pleasure of attending an event jointly hosted by the Saskatchewan Media Production Industry Association and Creative Saskatchewan to celebrate Saskatchewan film. Many folks from across Saskatchewan turned out to the Regina sound stage for evening screenings of *WolfCop* and *Big Muddy*, the last two films made in Saskatchewan under the film employment tax credit. It was great to see so many people out to support our local film talent here in Saskatchewan and to take part in the celebration of all their hard work.

As someone who grew up in southern Saskatchewan, I was filled with pride of place to see the iconic vistas of the badlands, Moose Jaw's downtown, and the prairie sunsets on the big screen. It was also exciting to see the names of many Saskatchewan people that I know in the credit reels at the end of the films.

I'd like to thank Nova Alberts and the rest of the SMPIA [Saskatchewan Media Production Industry Association] board for all of the work they put in to make the evening a success. Also congratulations to Lowell Dean, the writer and director of *WolfCop*, and Brian Paccione, the writer, and Jeff Moneo, the director of *Big Muddy*, for their amazing accomplishments as Saskatchewan filmmakers.

WolfCop 2 is slated to be filmed in the spring of 2015. And many are hoping that it too will be filmed in Saskatchewan, but much hinges on the funding available, and Alberta and Manitoba are making a pitch to have it filmed there. Here's hoping the province will find a way to make it happen here at home.

There was also considerable buzz about the film debut of *Corner Gas: The Movie* which will be showing in theatres soon. Mr. Speaker, there was much pride in the room last night, and hope — hope that one day the film industry in Saskatchewan will be revitalized and will be put back on an equal footing with the other provinces. Thank you.

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

SaskEnergy Service Achievement and Employee Awards

Mr. Steinley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I recently had the opportunity to bring greetings on behalf of the Minister Responsible for SaskEnergy to the SaskEnergy Service Achievement Awards and Employee Awards of Excellence. A number of long-serving SaskEnergy employees were honoured and recognized for their 25th, 30th, 35th, 40th, and even 45th years of service. Some SaskEnergy and TransGas employees, work groups, and teams were also recognized for going above and beyond their daily roles.

This recognition is part of the new Employee Awards of Excellence program which allows employees from across the company to nominate their peers to receive awards in four

categories: Service Excellence, Achieving Growth, Our Team, and Creating Value. Mr. Speaker, SaskEnergy employees and teams are recognized for the hard work that kept the province warm during the bitter cold of last year's winter, as well as for the quick response during the recent flooding in southeast Saskatchewan and for stepping up to meet the energy demands of our growing province.

SaskEnergy has grown along with the province, adding 7,600 new customers in over 300 communities last year. This brings the customer base to a total of 373,000 customers. The work of SaskEnergy employees has been crucial to meeting the challenges of growth, including increased energy usage.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members join with me in congratulating all the award nominees and recipients on these very well-deserved honours.

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

Police Officers Keep Our Communities Safe

Mr. Hickie: — Mr. Speaker, today I would like to take the time to recognize the men and women that serve in our police forces across Saskatchewan. These officers work to keep our communities safe through targeted policing initiatives like the missing persons task force, enhanced community policing, internet child exploitation, community mobilization, the serious and habitual offender comprehensive action program, and most recently, the dedicated traffic safety enforcement units.

Another important initiative is the combined forces special enforcement unit or CFSEU. This unit is responsible for investigating and dismantling high-level organized crime. In 2012-13, the CFSEU led 37 investigations resulting in 54 arrests and 126 criminal charges. By mid-year 2013-14, they had seized 1.6 kilograms of cocaine, 135 kilograms of cannabis, over \$71,000 in cash, and nine vehicles.

Mr. Speaker, on November 6th, 2014, the CFSEU was involved in a major takedown of a group of people believed to be trafficking cocaine and marijuana. This takedown was successful with the help of the joint forces operation team, Regina Police Service, the RCMP, safer communities and neighbourhoods investigators, and the Moose Jaw organized crime unit.

Mr. Speaker, our government understands the important and challenging work that is being done by our police officers. That is why we have committed to providing annual funding for 125 police officers through the municipal police grant program. This year's funding total is \$15.4 million.

On behalf of the Government of Saskatchewan, I extend my sincere thanks to all of our province's dedicated police officers. I look forward to working with you in the future. Thank you.

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

Quality of Long-Term Care

Mr. Brkich: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last Thursday in

question period the member from Saskatoon Riversdale said the reality is that poor quality of care is the norm in long-term care facilities in our province.

Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House, we completely disagree and feel that statement is an insult to the over 1,300 registered nurses, over 700 licensed practical nurses, and nearly 5,000 care aids who are performing compassionate and professional care in our province's long-term care facilities.

Mr. Speaker, I've been in many of our long-term care homes. My father lived in two separate long-term care homes, both Lucky Lake and Davidson. I found, in the five years my father was in both homes, the care was excellent. And those staff worked hard every day to make the last years of his life as comfortable as possible. Mr. Speaker, that's the norm.

We can certainly have a debate about the challenges facing long-term care facilities in our province, challenges that were largely created by the NDP [New Democratic Party] closing beds, closing facilities, and cutting staff. But that debate should be based on facts. And the fact is that the overwhelming majority of the staff is providing excellent care in long-term care facilities in our province. Poor quality care is not the norm, as the NDP want people to believe. The member for Riversdale should correct the record and apologize for that comment.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Provision of Long-Term Care for Seniors

Mr. Broten: — You know, Mr. Speaker, this government just doesn't get it. You know, we saw last week, Mr. Speaker, we saw two government members heckle while a grieving family was in the gallery, Mr. Speaker, as concerns about their mother's death were raised. That's the kind of approach we see. Well today, Mr. Speaker, I hope that this government actually listens, that they actually listen to the story of Emily Krushelnicki. And I hope they be respectful because her son Garry is here, and he's travelled a considerable distance.

You know, after a rough year of being moved around between facilities, Mr. Speaker, Emily Krushelnicki finally ended up in the Ituna care facility, her home community. But then, Mr. Speaker, the government moved her again, almost an hour away. And they did so, Mr. Speaker, contrary to the direction provided by her doctor.

My question, Mr. Speaker, is to the Premier. How is it acceptable for government officials to ignore the very clear direction given by a doctor and to put the health of a 93-year-old woman at risk?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — I want to thank the hon. member for his question, and the gentleman for coming forward today with the case of his mother, Mr. Speaker. It's something that I'm sure the minister will want to look into. Perhaps there's already been some correspondence, Mr. Speaker.

We obviously want the system to respond to the recommendations of doctors. We know that unfortunately in the province of Saskatchewan for many years, regardless of who has sat on this side of the House and who has sat on that side of the House, in some cases with respect to long-term care, residency has not been able to be provided in home communities.

We have also noted, Mr. Speaker, over the years in this province, over the long history of Saskatchewan, it has been the occasion that a couple who require different levels of care are not always together. This bothers, I think, every single member in the House, on that side and on this side. It's why we must continue to open new beds in Saskatchewan. It's why we must continue to provide more resources for long-term care, as the government has done. We must hire more nurses so that care could be provided. We must provide for more doctors. We must build, open more beds.

Mr. Speaker, we went through a time in this province not that long ago where the opposite was happening, where there was cuts in staffing resources and bed closures. This is something we must reverse. We're determined to do that. The work is under way. And with respect to the case of Mr. Krushelnicki and his mother, we'd be happy to look into it further. I'm sure the minister will meet with him if that's what is requested today.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, we're going through a time right now in this province where seniors' needs are not being met, where the quality of care on the front lines, Mr. Speaker, is suffering greatly. And as a result, seniors do not have the dignity, do not have the respect that they are most certainly entitled to, and Emily's case is an example. Her doctor, Mr. Speaker, wrote a letter, made it very clear to the government, Mr. Speaker, that her health was too fragile to move to another facility. This government, Mr. Speaker, ignored that letter and that's why Emily's son Garry is here today, because he is frustrated and he is scared because of what his mom has gone through.

You know, I met with Garry earlier, Mr. Speaker, and he talked about how seniors are moved like cattle, Mr. Speaker, how respect is not given to them and what their needs are. And, Mr. Speaker, Garry wants this type of treatment to stop.

Again my question is for the Premier. How is it acceptable for government officials to ignore the direction given by an individual's doctor, a doctor who said that a 93-year-old woman's health was too fragile to move to another facility? How is that acceptable?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The minister for Rural and Remote Health has provided me with a bit of a briefing. We are aware of this particular case in the minister's office and, Mr. Speaker, I can report to the House that the Ministry of Health staff have been in communication with Sunrise Health Region regarding this matter. I'd expect that part of that communication would be to determine an

answer to this very question that's been posed by the Leader of the Opposition and, even more importantly, by Mr. Krushelnicki.

Mr. Speaker, there's a certain protocol, as members will know, about first-available bed policy that's followed by the regions. It's been followed for some time in the province. If it has let down this particular family, this 93-year-old woman that is on the minds I think of all members now today, then it's something we should look into.

Mr. Speaker, though, for the Opposition Leader to paint the system in the general way that he has, I think, is unfair, as we heard in the member's statement from the member for Arm River.

Mr. Speaker, we've been talking about Santa Maria senior citizens centre, and I want to report to the House that the funds that have been transferred by this government to the Santa Maria Senior Citizens Home Inc. have increased 81 per cent since our government took office: 5.2 million under the last budget of members opposite, now \$9.4 million. In fact, Mr. Speaker, between '06 and '07, there was a \$1 million cut in that institution's funding by members opposite.

So, Mr. Speaker, we want to make sure that these resources — the additional staff, the additional money that's being provided — is actually benefiting families and benefiting the cases that the individual member raises today. And I think we are as determined as anybody on either side of the House to get to the bottom of it and to find out in specific cases why the people of the province are not getting the care that they richly deserve.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, if the Premier thinks that the concerns around seniors' care are isolated to Santa Maria and to Emily's situation, Mr. Speaker, he is dreaming. If he heard what the workers yesterday said, Mr. Speaker, about the case at Santa Maria, they say, well there's no end of resources for more bloated administration, but on the front lines, for care aids, for LPNs [licensed practical nurse], for cleaners, Mr. Speaker, there is a huge deficiency. And that is hurting the quality of care.

You know, in Emily's situation, Mr. Speaker, after a very rough year of being moved from facility to facility, Emily finally ended up in Ituna, in her home community. But then, Mr. Speaker, the government kicked her out and shipped her nearly one hour away. But get this, Mr. Speaker. They only left Emily in that facility for three weeks, and for much of that time, for a majority of that time, the bed that she left in Ituna remained empty. So then, Mr. Speaker, they moved her back again to that community.

Mr. Speaker, this decision not only defied the direction given by Emily's physician but also defies basic common sense. My question to the Premier: how is this acceptable?

[14:00]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, I want to deal with the

preamble to the hon. member's question here in a moment, but first let me say with respect to this specific case, it has been brought to the attention of the Minister of Health. The Ministry of Health has raised the matter with the Sunrise Health Region, and we would expect the very answers that are being requested now by the Leader of the Opposition to be provided to the family and certainly to the Ministry of Health.

Mr. Speaker, let's though talk about resources to the system, to the front-line of the system because the member gets up day after day and makes generalizations that are false about well, about resources to the system.

Here's what happened in 2006 at this particular nursing long-term care facility. The NDP cut funding between 2006, 2007 by \$1 million to 5.2 million operating funds for Santa Maria. It increased to 9.4 million by this last year. That's an 81 per cent increase. He says there's fewer staff. Wrong. The same complement of staff today as existed when they were in office, the same population in terms of residents. The ratios are the same.

Now this means . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Well the hon. member asks what's changed. We do need to find out what's changed in the case of this institution. The Ombudsman is going to be looking into the case that was raised last week and any other cases come forward because the fact of the matter is that funding has increased 81 per cent over what members opposite provided. The complement of staff has been preserved. There's actually, I think, three more total staff.

So we want to find out exactly what's happened, Mr. Speaker. This government's committed to ensuring that there are increased resources for long-term care. That's our record. We're just as committed to make sure that it's resulting in better care for seniors.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, this is the government that rejected and turned down health regions when they brought forward urgent requests for seniors' care throughout the province.

The Premier talks about dollars being spent. Mr. Speaker, \$40 million to John Black, the one US [United States] American consultant. Japanese senseis still being flown into Saskatchewan, \$3,500 per day; still recruiting interpreters. Mr. Speaker, \$17 million each and every year for the provincial lean kaizen promotion office. This is where the government has its priorities. This is where it's spending dollars, not fixing what matters on the front lines of health care.

Mr. Speaker, we saw this same approach that we see with Emily with Roy Armstrong, a 95-year-old veteran, Mr. Speaker, fighting three types of cancer, two heart attacks, 10 trips to the hospital by ambulance, Mr. Speaker. Roy's physician said that he needed to be in long-term care. Guess what this government said, Mr. Speaker. They said there wasn't a spot. Roy's family had to fight for Roy to receive the proper treatment, Mr. Speaker, the proper respect that he was owed.

This government, Mr. Speaker, shouldn't be fighting against

families. This government should be listening to families instead of dismissing their concerns, instead of heckling at the concerns that they raise, Mr. Speaker. They should take this seriously and they should start to act.

My question, Mr. Speaker, is for the Premier. Why doesn't he listen to the member from Regina Qu'Appelle Valley? Why doesn't he listen to her when she recommends the establishment of a seniors' advocate?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, just to again correct the record. The member gets engaged in some emotional hyperbole certainly in this Assembly when he would cast an aspersion on the motives on this side of the House. Mr. Speaker, he basically says to anybody who's listening that members on this side of the House are somehow purposely out to denigrate the care of seniors in Saskatchewan, when the record shows that we have significantly increased in every way possible for senior . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . No, no, for senior care in the province — more nurses, more care aids, more beds.

After those years of members opposite cutting those resources and closing beds, Mr. Speaker, we've begun to reverse it. When cases are brought forward, the hon. member asks about Mr. Armstrong, Mr. Speaker, the government reacts. What you won't hear on this side of the House when an individual case comes forward is what members opposite said when we were in opposition and raised a case. The member for Lakeview, the then minister of Health, called them Sask Party patients of the day. That has been the approach of members opposite when specific cases are brought forward.

We are going to take a different tack. We are going to deal with them earnestly and get answers. With respect to the question, the member has done a good job in terms of the long-term care report she offered to the government. The seniors' advocate was recommended. We felt we went a step beyond that with an actual independent officer, well a health care ombudsman, the only one like it in the Dominion of Canada. The only one like it whose job is not just to advocate for seniors, but to advocate for all people in the system who have a concern, and to do so completely independent of the ministry, independent of the government, and accountable only to the Legislative Assembly.

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

Support for Seniors in Care

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, this is the government that eliminated the minimum care standards that were in place, Mr. Speaker. This is the government that has been gutting seniors' care, has not been taking the right steps. And I think, Mr. Speaker, the Premier should be listening to the member from Regina Qu'Appelle Valley. It would have helped people like Emily and Roy, and it would help so many of the families, Mr. Speaker, that are coming forward. And it was something, Mr. Speaker, that, as I said, the Legislative Secretary for long-term care recommended. Here's what she said:

There is a need for a seniors' (or vulnerable adults) advocate. In particular, there was general agreement that

vulnerable adults need someone who can advocate on their behalf particularly when it comes to health services and navigating the health system.

That was the Legislative Secretary's recommendation in 2010. And today, Mr. Speaker, after all of the examples that we have seen come forward in the past months, Mr. Speaker, the need for it is even greater.

My question, Mr. Speaker, to the Premier: how could he possibly be against having an independent seniors' advocate?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, we created the position and funded that position of the health care ombudsman within the Office of the Provincial Ombudsman in part because of the inaction on specific cases from members opposite. In fact we campaigned on something quite different.

Mr. Speaker, the member for Regina Qu'Appelle Valley has recommended a seniors' advocate. We believe that the Provincial Ombudsman special resources to be a health care ombudsman is going to achieve the objectives that she's highlighted.

Now as a result of potential further cases that might come forward with respect to seniors' care, we would be open to that suggestion from the Ombudsman. If the health care ombudsman reports to the government and says, we probably need even additional resources to aid as the member wants, it's something we would absolutely look at.

The fact of the matter is there's only one province in Canada that has funded a separate health care ombudsman. It's this province. That ombudsman, that office, she is there to assist people who have cases with respect to the health care system, and certainly that includes those in long-term care.

With respect to standards that were in the member's preamble, we'll have to correct the record again. Here are the standards for the province of Saskatchewan for long-term care in Saskatchewan. Here's a quote from the first page:

The standards set within this manual are considered minimum standards and must be adhered to in all publicly funded facilities that offer long-term care services to residents in the province of Saskatchewan.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, we have clearly heard from this government how their own political advisers say that the guidelines that are in place are extremely general, Mr. Speaker. And we can ask ourselves, how in fact is this working? Well it's not working very well, Mr. Speaker, as seen by the Santa Maria workers who came forward yesterday, Mr. Speaker, as seen by Margaret's family sharing their story, as seen by Roy's, as seen by Emily's. Mr. Speaker, this government's approach to seniors' care is not working, and they need to take a different direction.

Mr. Speaker, we've heard stories, people coming forward,

about bandages — and the minister from the front is heckling again — about bandages, Mr. Speaker, bandages covered in feces and soaked in urine, Mr. Speaker. That's what we've heard. We've heard stories of seniors being malnourished because they're not being properly fed. We've had stories about falls and premature deaths, Mr. Speaker, where families don't know the full story because management has covered it up. These are just the concerns that have been made public, Mr. Speaker.

British Columbia has a seniors' advocate. Alberta has a seniors' advocate, and Saskatchewan needs a seniors' advocate too. My question to the Premier: why doesn't he take the leadership on this and make the call to have an independent seniors' advocate in the province of Saskatchewan?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Alberta does not have a provincial health ombudsman. BC [British Columbia] does not have a provincial health ombudsman. The health ombudsman is there to do precisely this job. If the casework requires some additional resources, we are prepared to look at that. Mr. Speaker, that recommendation hasn't come forward.

The member gets up again and says — and this is fine; we can go through all of question period and correct the record — that the guidelines, the standards that we have in place vis-à-vis the last quote I read are not specific. Mr. Speaker, the standards in place go to issues such as personal space and belongings. They go to the standards around the psychosocial needs of each resident, of good personal hygiene such as clean and healthy appearing skin, clean and trim fingernails and toenails, clean and neatly groomed hair, clean teeth and mouth, and an absence of cracked lips, that each resident is up and dressed in their own personal clothing for a reasonable time period every single day. Mr. Speaker, the list goes on from dental to podiatry to optical. Mr. Speaker, the standards are here. They must be adhered to and they are most assuredly very specific. Mr. Speaker . . .

An Hon. Member: — No they're not.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Well they are. He says they're not. We'll table the document and he can read them himself.

Moreover, Mr. Speaker, the institution that he's referring to that the workers brought forward concerns about now has us very concerned because we reviewed the funding record. And under the NDP, that institution that he's talking about, Santa Maria, received 81 per cent less funding than they do today under our government — same complement of staff, same number of patients, Mr. Speaker. So the easy answers he's advocating clearly aren't applicable in this particular case.

Moreover, Mr. Speaker, I do believe it's a bit of an insult to all of the other professionals across the province, all of the other care homes who are providing high-quality care for our seniors, doing so in part at least because of significant injection of new resources by this side of the House.

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

Ms. Chartier: — The government keeps claiming that short-staffing is not a widespread problem, but the workers from Santa Maria who spoke out yesterday are very clear. They say the only increase they've seen is in overseers and paper-pushers, not on the front lines providing direct care. And they say the quality of care has gotten worse over the last few years and that they're working short far too often.

These are the same kinds of concerns that were identified throughout the CEO [chief executive officer] tour reports last year. To the minister: how can he keep claiming that short-staffing is not a widespread problem when his own CEO tour report says that it is?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister for Rural and Remote Health.

Hon. Mr. Ottenbreit: — Mr. Speaker, I think the Premier made it very clear that the complement of workers across the province is at least at the same levels as they were under the members previous when they were in government.

I can also report that the staff complement at Santa Maria . . . There was a study done across the whole province, Mr. Speaker, by the University of Waterloo to determine the relationship between actual staffing in Saskatchewan of long-term care facilities. And when comparing it other provinces, Mr. Speaker, I can report that staffing levels in Saskatchewan are greater than provinces like Ontario. In fact Santa Maria at the time of that report was at 113 per cent of expected staffing, Mr. Speaker.

So that falls right in line with what the Premier just shared, that there was likely about three more complement, when we look back to 2006. And again, same amount, maybe a few extra in different areas, but 81 per cent more funding than under the NDP, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Perhaps the minister needs to be reminded of what the CEO tour report said. In Dalmeny: "Staffing levels are inadequate." In Duck Lake: "Staffing level is the main issue." In Saskatoon Convalescent Home: "The staffing levels are deplorable. They have not kept pace with the increased level of acuity of residents." In Porteous Lodge: "Need more people to answer buzzers. Buzzers' average wait time is 40 minutes. Need more staff."

To the minister: did he forget that this is the kind of feedback that is pervasive in the CEO tour report? How can he keep pretending that short-staffing is not a widespread problem?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister for Rural and Remote Health.

Hon. Mr. Ottenbreit: — Mr. Speaker, we realize that staff is very important in these facilities, and staff was cut to a lot of very low levels under the former government. We've been working very hard to increase these staff levels. I will remind the members across, when some of these issues did come forward, we were very quick to react with, firstly it was the

Urgent Issues Action Fund which complemented or gives the ability for these regions to purchase 700 pieces of equipment and address issues in long-term care, Mr. Speaker.

I'd also remind the members across that along with that went an additional \$3.7 million in annualized funding under the Urgent Issues Action Fund, Mr. Speaker. I'll also remind the members opposite, generally throughout the province, we've got over 420 more doctors than under their government. We have over 2,600 more nurses under all complements than under them. We currently have over 700 more CAs [care aids], LPNs, and RNs [registered nurse], full times, and LPCs [licensed professional counsellor], and additionally 50 more under the Urgent Action Fund, Mr. Speaker.

[14:15]

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

Ms. Chartier: — I guess the government needs to hear more from its own report. They're still not listening. From Rosthern: "Staffing levels are inadequate." From Samaritan Place: "Residents notice staff shortages. Continent residents have soiled themselves because of it." From North Battleford there are concerns about "length of time for call bells to be answered." From Stensrud Lodge: "They can hear people crying for help in the evening because of staffing shortages."

To the minister: how could he have forgotten about people being left to cry for help because of staff shortages?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister for Rural and Remote Health.

Hon. Mr. Ottenbreit: — Mr. Speaker, we realize there's challenges in long-term care and the health system, Mr. Speaker. That's why we're focusing all of our energies on these issues. I'll point to the 13 new long-term care facilities currently funded under this government, an innovative approach to seniors' care: 100 beds in Saskatoon in Samaritan Place; the new P3 [public-private partnership] project in Swift Current, 225 beds. I pointed out the increase in the complement of employees, Mr. Speaker.

I'll also point out that, under our health budgets, continually since 2007 we've seen an average increase of 5.4 per cent. That's far outpacing the cost of living index, Mr. Speaker: years as low as 3, 3.2 per cent; as high as almost 9 per cent, Mr. Speaker, again far outpacing that complement. If we look at health in our government, it's been a priority to us. And if you look at our health care budget, Mr. Speaker, over 50 per cent of our health care budget is directed directly at seniors, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Mr. Speaker, there are many more quotes. From Parkridge Centre: "Staffing levels are inadequate to meet the needs of the residents due to the increased level of acuity." From Oliver Lodge, a common theme throughout the CEO tour report: "Staffing levels are an issue. They have not kept pace

with the increased levels of acuity of residents." "Residents not taken out of chairs during the day because of a lack of staff." "30, 40, 50, 60, 90 minutes go by waiting to go to the bathroom. Very great loss of dignity when you have to just go to the bathroom in your pad."

To the minister: how can he not recognize that short-staffing is a widespread problem?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister for Rural and Remote Health.

Hon. Mr. Ottenbreit: — Mr. Speaker, there's no doubt there's challenges in some areas, and we recognize those. That's why we've appointed the health care advocate, the Ombudsman to look into these issues, Mr. Speaker. We're looking forward to the report coming back from them.

But I want to point out to the Speaker some of the experiences I've had. Long-term care facilities, and specifically in the North, where we look at some of the issues that they have had previously, but through continuous improvement processes, Mr. Speaker, what I can report back is amazing improvements. One example, one of the long-term care facilities in the North was an individual, Mr. Speaker, that had been falling almost daily as reported to us. But once the implementation of continuous improvement processes, the report back to us was, continue with this. Don't stop. Keep going. This individual hasn't fell once since implementation of this process, Mr. Speaker.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 163 — *The Education Amendment Act, 2014/Loi de 2014 modifiant la Loi de 1995 sur l'éducation*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 163, *The Education Amendment Act, 2014* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — The minister has moved first reading of Bill No. 163, *The Education 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. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the opportunity to say next sitting of the House.

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government Whip.

Mr. Cox: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the answers to questions 347 through 356.

The Speaker: — The Government Whip has tabled responses to questions 347 to 356.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 161

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Moe that **Bill No. 161** — *The Wildlife Amendment Act, 2014/Loi de 2014 modifiant la Loi de 1998 sur la faune* be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Nilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise to speak to Bill 161, *An Act to amend The Wildlife Act, 1998*. Mr. Speaker, this bill provides a number of changes to *The Wildlife Act*, and some of them are practical and some of them have some broader implications. I will speak to a number of these issues that are here.

I think the first part of the bill relates to the fact that our hunters and fishers in Saskatchewan, but for here the hunters, apply online for their licences, and these licences are obtained through an American contractor. The legislation that we have now doesn't accurately reflect the process, and so there's a change to the legislation to make sure what's being done is done appropriately. This is interesting that they do it after they've already implemented the new program, and it raises questions about whether this has got the accurate statement on how to do this.

Another interesting aspect of the area of licensing relates to the fact that presently wildlife research activities do require a licence but only when the wildlife is taken or captured or in fact killed. What the legislation does is expand the scope of wildlife research activities where a licence is required to include those type of passive observation situations where researchers go and observe animals, birds, in their natural habitat.

This is an interesting proposal, and I think it makes some sense in that it gives the officials in Environment information about all of the kinds of research that are happening in the province as it relates to the wildlife in the province. But it has to be carefully written so it doesn't affect the ability of those people who like to observe wildlife for recreational purposes. I don't think anybody is in a position where they want to charge a fee for people to observe the wildlife in Saskatchewan, and so that particular exemption is there in the licensing requirement. But it does raise the possibility that maybe at subsequent dates a government requiring revenue might want to put in some kind of a tax on the ability to view wildlife in Saskatchewan. But I hope that that's not what this provision indicates is going to happen.

Now another area that's dealt with in this legislation relates to

the convictions that people have received for wildlife offences in other jurisdictions, in other provinces, so in Alberta or Manitoba or perhaps in Montana or North Dakota or other places around the world. And that information is now transferable and recognized in Saskatchewan when offences are committed here so that the appropriate prohibitions or the appropriate steps are taken to keep a hunter who doesn't follow the rules in other jurisdictions from hunting in our province or at least having very strong restrictions placed on their ability to hunt.

Another aspect of the bill relates to the fact that prosecutions can be implemented up to three years after an offence, not just two years. And the request obviously comes from the prosecutor who works with Environment on prosecutions of wildlife cases where it's been recognized that the amount of work and the amount to get the evidence to prosecute these cases may take quite a while and that the two-year time limit just wasn't long enough to make sure cases were not dropped.

Now we'll see how that applies in actual practice because three years seems to be quite a long time after an offence for someone to be charged with an offence, but perhaps we can get an explanation from officials when we're with them in committee about some of the procedures that are involved in that particular issue.

Now another aspect of this legislation involves the penalties, and the penalties that are being implemented by this legislation are fairly dramatically expanded to be much harsher. And the penalties create prohibitions from hunting of various lengths of time, including a lifetime hunting ban if a person has been convicted on three separate occasions for serious wildlife offences.

What we know is that given the number of court cases involving *The Wildlife Act*, that this may end up with some further challenges. In Saskatchewan, *The Wildlife Act* applies to all residents of the province. But there are certain carve-outs, if I can put it that way, or certain areas where other rules apply. One would be with the First Nations people in hunting in the, following the terms of the constitution, and also clearly the rights of Métis hunters as they are being developed. And I'm not sure if there's any intention to affect some of the court cases that are presently before the courts or possible future court cases by this legislation.

I think that drafting the legislation to make sure that it isn't offensive to some of the provisions in treaties and some of the provisions in the Canadian Constitution can be a tricky effort. And so I think that we'll need to ask, on the record, about this so we understand why the lawyers who are advising on the drafting of this particular legislation have come up with the kinds of clauses that are here in the legislation.

We want to make sure that there's a fair system for the harvesting of wildlife in Saskatchewan, but we also want to make sure that it complies with the Constitution of Canada, that it complies with the treaties that we have entered into over the years, and that the discretionary parts are very clear so that we do not end up with further expensive litigation, both on behalf of the province and on behalf of those people who are caught up in the system.

Mr. Speaker, when *The Wildlife Act* is amended over the years and various changes are made, we know that the suggestions come from a number of different places. But practically, we have to make sure that it's an even-handed change, that it's a change that will be respected by all people involved.

Now the legislation itself has quite a few provisions. And as you will note, there's a very large regulatory clause which allows for all kinds of rules to be made by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, the cabinet, or the Premier and the cabinet, and I think that we need to be careful when we give that much power to the cabinet on a whole number of these kind of issues that are extremely sensitive. And so, Mr. Speaker, I know we will be looking at this in our caucus as we move forward. We'll be asking questions in committee. I know that other of my colleagues will have comments about this from other practical aspects but, Mr. Speaker, at this time I would move to adjourn debate on this, *The Wildlife Act*, Bill No. 161. Thank you.

[14:30]

The Speaker: — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 161, *The Wildlife Amendment Act, 2014*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 162

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 162** — *The Enforcement of Money Judgments Amendment Act, 2014* be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and I'm very honoured once again to be able to rise in the Assembly and enter into debate on the government legislative agenda. In this particular case, I have to say I don't think I can come near to the comments my colleague yesterday provided on this particular bill, and certainly he held the floor for a long time, raising some of the issues that are of concern and, I think, certainly commend him for those efforts.

Bill 162 is another example, and I've noted this in the past, of this government amending bills that it recently introduced. So *The Enforcement of Money Judgments Act* was in this Legislative Assembly in 2010, and it looks like once again there was some mistakes made, and they're using this opportunity in this legislative session to fix the problems that were with the bill when it was originally introduced.

There are a number of changes being made. The minister in his comments identified a number of amendments and changes that are being instituted at this point in time and, I guess, sadly I think this is another example of maybe going too fast when the bills were first introduced, not getting it right the first time.

But thankfully we have bills like this to even talk about, Mr. Speaker, because again what I would call the whole legislative agenda of this particular government is legislation light. There isn't a lot of substance to any of these bills. There's certainly no policy direction or leadership in terms of a legislative agenda. And we entrust that with a government. We want to see policy and new ideas coming forward, a leadership and a vision from this government, but all we see is them spending the additional monies that they're receiving as a result of the good economy, and we do not see any sort of exciting legislative agenda.

What we have seen over and over and over again this particular session is fixing old bills that they got wrong the first time around. And obviously our public servants have a list of things that they want to see corrected in a number of bills or updated or refreshed, and that's all fine and dandy. And obviously they don't have a lot else to do at this point in time because there is no new ideas coming from over there. There's no new policy. There's no excitement at all in terms of being a government that's responsible for introducing legislation.

So sadly we have something like this . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Oh I guess we do have one excited person over there. But that's unfortunate, Mr. Speaker, that we don't have more members that are bringing forward interesting and challenging new ideas to the people of Saskatchewan and showing leadership in the policy realm.

In terms of this particular bill, as I said earlier, there's just a number of corrections to a bill that was introduced in 2010. I suppose the one new change is that there's now a director of sheriffs for the enforcement of judgments and I assume, and I think the minister said this in his opening comments, that this came from the sheriff himself or the sheriff's office. So I guess they need a director over there. That's all fine and dandy.

A number of smaller changes that the minister pointed out, he said, well for example, a notice of seizure for employment income will now last for a 20-month period without requiring it to be renewed after 12 months. Highly scintillating, Mr. Speaker, but there it is.

Second thing, a revised process for the sheriff to provide timely clear title to a third party purchaser of land where the judgment creditors and the judgment debtor have agreed to payment out of the proceeds of the sale in order to address the judgment debt of the vendor. Again a really, a zip hummer of a change there, Mr. Speaker, but there you go. It's a number of these types of changes that we see presented here.

Again all the credit to the sheriff's office for finding these problems with this bill that was introduced in 2010. They didn't get it right the first time, but we know our public servants are there working hard to ensure that these bills are properly worded and properly operational. So we commend them for that work.

I know my colleague yesterday was pointing out some of the concerns with how people get into these situations to begin with, and when people are brought into court for enforcement of these types of judgments where they're being ordered to pay money by the court to another individual, obviously there's some serious financial concerns that arise. And I again

commend my colleague for representing the situations that many people are finding themselves in these days when it comes to debt because of the high cost of living, the high cost of rent. Even trying to buy a house for many, Mr. Speaker, is beyond their reach because of all the extra expenses that people are facing these days with this economy that we're in. And again these types of judgments are the unfortunate result I guess of a lot of these situations that people find themselves in.

At any rate, you know, there's not a whole lot more to say about it. Again my colleague yesterday covered a lot of territory. So at this point, Mr. Speaker, I would move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 162, *The Enforcement of Money Judgments Amendment Act*.

The Speaker: — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 162, *The Enforcement of Money Judgments Amendment Act, 2014*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 159

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Stewart that **Bill No. 159** — *The Family Farm Credit Repeal Act* be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to enter this debate about Bill No. 159, an Act to repeal the farm credit Act. Mr. Speaker, as you would know, this is an incredibly short bill, one page. It is the short title, *The Family Farm Credit Repeal Act*, and it's simply repealing the Act; and it will come into force on assent — three simple lines, Mr. Speaker.

As the Minister of Agriculture pointed out, he says that, the minister says:

This Act has long since become redundant. *The Family Farm Credit Act* was enacted in February of 1979. [And at that point] Its purpose was to make long-term credit available for the establishment and development of family farms. It also provided the basis for the intergenerational transfer of farms. [He points out that] At the time the Act enabled Co-operative Trust Company of Canada . . . to make loans to farmers. It also enabled CTCC to issue securities and raise money to lend to farmers. Furthermore the Ministry of Finance was able to purchase and guarantee those securities under this Act.

He points out, Mr. Speaker, that in 2012 and '13:

. . . the Ministry of Finance indicated that they were not aware of any present securities under this Act. Nor were they aware of any securities purchased by the Minister of Finance in recent years under this Act.

So while the government was reviewing this Act, they consulted agencies.

. . . and no issues were identified. The CTCC was the only lending institution that was an approved agency under this Act. [And CTCC] . . . has since restructured into Concentra Trust and Concentra Financial. [So there's] No other associated agencies [that] exist under this Act, and loan guarantees have not been offered for many years.

So again the minister points out that this is a redundant Act and so repealing it is a bit of housekeeping, Mr. Speaker. I would say, Mr. Speaker, though, to have one agricultural bill on the legislative agenda indicates a very weak agenda in terms of what this government is bringing forward for its agriculture agenda.

Mr. Speaker, they're heckling over there. Admittedly, Mr. Speaker, I am an urban kid. My roots, my farm roots go back to my dad who grew up on a homestead near Rapid View, Saskatchewan and moved to Saskatoon actually during World War II when his mother, with all the kids, had a difficult time maintaining the farm and my grandfather was away, Mr. Speaker, and so they moved to the city. So admittedly, Mr. Speaker, I'm an urban kid. I live two blocks from my childhood home where my parents have spent about 60 years, Mr. Speaker. But I know the one thing that I've tried to do in this job. I'm an MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] for Saskatoon Riversdale but I'm also an MLA for the people of Saskatchewan. I know a great deal about my own constituency but as I've been in this job I think we all recognize we specialize in certain areas but we are also generalists in many respects and try our very hardest to learn about issues that impact the whole province, Mr. Speaker.

So admittedly I am not a rural MLA but what I do know is I do know a bit about urban agriculture, Mr. Speaker, and urban agriculture is a growing area, Mr. Speaker. In 2012 there was an international urban agricultural conference that brought together many, many people. I grew up, Mr. Speaker, with a giant greenhouse next to my house. My parents had two lots, Mr. Speaker. And it's interesting. So I grew up with a greenhouse. My parents were some of the initial participants or vendors at the Saskatoon Farmers Market. They initially started growing bedding plants and then eventually they sold herbs and other specialty items like tomatoes, Mr. Speaker.

But my dad has always been a huge proponent of urban agriculture, whether it's beekeeping . . . There's beekeepers in my constituency, Mr. Speaker, and urban agriculture. You see the landscape changing. You see instead of giant lots, empty vacant lots sitting there for parking, Mr. Speaker, you see organizations and individuals suggesting that perhaps we look at food security and how we feed people in our own communities locally, Mr. Speaker, ensuring that they have this knowledge and the skills to grow their own food and to be able to purchase food locally as well, Mr. Speaker. And I would like to commend actually the Saskatoon Food Bank as one of those organizations who has taken over a giant patch, a giant vacant lot, Mr. Speaker, a few years ago and has done a really good job. They started out with just potatoes, I believe, Mr. Speaker, but have expanded that.

There are many, many individuals and organizations who are interested in rooftop gardening. I go back to my own family. My dad is a bit of a unique individual, Mr. Speaker, but he is a man ahead of his time. Urban agriculture has been something that I've known about, or my father has sort of ingrained in me, for a very long time. Food production and food security is absolutely imperative.

And so we grew up with this greenhouse, but over the years it transitioned and changed what it looked like, Mr. Speaker. And in recent years the greenhouse . . . My parents about five years ago stopped vending at the farmers market. My parents are aging as we all are, Mr. Speaker, and I think it was getting very difficult to attend the farmers market every Saturday, which had been something my family had done since the time I was a small child, Mr. Speaker.

But what my dad, like I said, is kind of an interesting fellow and so when the city of Saskatoon decommissioned their giant garbage bins and cleaned and sanitized them and cut them in half, my dad thought they'd make great raised beds. So what he did in his greenhouse, stripped down the whole greenhouse and turned the whole greenhouse into a urban garden, Mr. Speaker. It was interesting.

So the food production that my parents produce is quite phenomenal. He's taken over . . . I used to cut the grass, Mr. Speaker, at my yard and it's a large city yard that my parents own, Mr. Speaker. And that grass was the bane of my existence, Mr. Speaker. And I'm happy to report, despite the fact it's not all their land — it's city property, the boulevard — my dad had taken over that complete boulevard for food production, Mr. Speaker.

So you'd think about, you think about food production and urban . . . They're heckling over there, Mr. Speaker. Urban agriculture actually is an incredibly important wave of the future, Mr. Speaker. I would be the first person . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . The member there, I'm being told that no one is heckling. As she tells me, she's heckling while she's heckling, Mr. Speaker.

The reality is I would be the first to fess up and say I'm an urban kid. But urban agriculture, urban agriculture is absolutely imperative and it might have been nice to see something in terms of their, this government's agenda encouraging and supporting the development of urban agriculture, Mr. Speaker.

And I'm sure that there are many rural MLAs on that side of the House that probably could have identified some interesting issues around what needs to be improved in terms of rural Saskatchewan and supporting farms in rural Saskatchewan as well. But like when you think about urban agriculture, Mr. Speaker, you think about, Mr. Speaker, you think about urban agriculture, you think about rooftop gardens. You think about community gardens.

[14:45]

I think one of the most exciting things that I've seen in my own community is the popping up of all these community gardens, Mr. Speaker. There's one two blocks away at St. John Bosco School. There was one a block away from my home adjacent to

Abbeyfield seniors' home. There is one at Saskatoon French School, and throughout the constituency, Mr. Speaker. In Fairhaven a few years ago, they started one; in King George in Riversdale.

People are starting to realize that this land that we have can . . . And some of it is parkland, but some of it, they were in fact vacant lots. There's a way to turn that into productive lands, and also to regain some of the skills that we lost a generation or two ago when people, when families started moving to the city and stopped having gardens, Mr. Speaker.

So urban agriculture is something I think that, although I'm not a rural kid, I do know a little bit about urban agriculture and I would've liked to have perhaps seen the government thinking about how we continue to support that kind of measure, Mr. Speaker, how we ensure that food production happens locally and that our young people have the skills and the ability to be able to grow their own food. There is nothing better.

I know when I look at my own kids who've had an opportunity . . . I don't have a garden myself, but I live two blocks away from my parents, so my kids have garden space at my parents' place. And that feeling of when you see something coming out of the ground that you planted and tended and that yields and bears fruit, Mr. Speaker, is pretty exciting.

So I think with respect to this bill, as I said, it's a one-page bill, Bill No. 159, and it's simply their agriculture agenda right now, Mr. Speaker. Their legislative agenda is simply to repeal a bill, Mr. Speaker. I would've hoped that there would've been a little bit more vision and creativity over there. They have many rural members who I'm sure could've brought forward water issues, Mr. Speaker, some increased support. Last spring we saw this government's inability to stand up to its federal cousins when it came to grain transportation. Perhaps we could've seen something like this, Mr. Speaker.

But I know that I will have colleagues who will be willing and very interested to speak to Bill No. 159, *An Act to repeal The Family Farm Credit Act*. With that I would like to move to adjourn debate.

The Speaker: — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 159, *The Family Farm Credit Repeal Act*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 155

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **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* be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And I'm

very pleased to rise today to speak about the Bill 155, *The Health Care Directives and Substitute Health Care Decision Makers Act, 2014*.

Many in the Assembly will remember back in 1993 when Sue Rodriguez, who was a woman from British Columbia suffering from ALS [amyotrophic lateral sclerosis], and she appealed to the Supreme Court to allow her to have medically assisted suicide. And back in those days, we know that the Supreme Court of Canada denied her request, saying that it was a criminal act and that the right to medically assisted suicide would not be provided to Canadian citizens.

Let's fast-forward now. That's already over 21 years ago and, Mr. Speaker, I remember that case a lot because I was a law student at the time. And this was a story that was making the news when Sue Rodriguez, I mean a very intelligent woman, a very articulate woman who pled her case as best she could to the Supreme Court of Canada . . . And it raises a host of ethical issues. But at that time, that's when we started hearing talk about health care directives and advanced health care directives.

And I remember in law school working on some of those and actually preparing one for myself and one for my parents. And it's something that I think has become a bit more of the norm these days, is for people to think about some advanced directions to their loved ones in the event that they can't make their own health choices and decide about some of the things that will happen to them if they're incapacitated and unable to make those decisions.

There's something happening in Quebec right now that I think might be of interest to this government if, you know, perhaps they are looking for leadership in policy circles. And I know our Premier likes to come out in front of the parade on a number of things in Canada. Sometimes there's nobody following him, in the example of the film employment tax credit, which is unfortunate, and maybe he'll stop that parade at some point. We'll see. But in the case of the advanced health care directives, there's a minister, a junior Health minister in Quebec, who has passed North America's . . . or has shepherded North America's most radical end-of-life legislation to all-party support in Quebec's National Assembly.

And this was just recently, Mr. Speaker. I want to tell you a little bit about what the Quebec Assembly has done in relation to this topic. Again it's a very highly emotionally charged topic and certainly one that has a number of ethical issues, and the debate continues around that.

But the woman who's done this, her name is Véronique Hivon. And she was a law student at McGill University in Montreal in 1993 when Sue Rodriguez was advancing her case through the courts. She was a student just like I was back then. I guess our paths have taken somewhat similar paths or route because we both ended up as legislators. But anyways she brought . . . She was very interested in medical law. And we see her approach is quite different than Ms. Rodriguez; Ms. Rodriguez chose the path of the courts, but what Ms. Hivon has done has taken this issue through the legislature.

And we now know there's also a Supreme Court hearing that happened in October on a case in British Columbia. And this

was another woman, her name was Gloria Taylor, and she was also afflicted with ALS, and another woman, Kathleen Carter, who wanted help dying because of a degenerative spinal condition.

So what Ms. Hivon has argued in terms of the legislation that they've passed in Quebec is saying that medical aid in dying is simply a part of health care. It's part of the continuum of health care, Mr. Speaker. You know, she's avoiding the argument about the human right to end our own lives if and when we choose to do so. And the question is, is this just a health care issue? Is medical aid and dying part of the health care continuum or is it a human rights issue or is it a bit of both?

And there's an article in *The Globe and Mail* from October 3rd, 2014, written by Sandra Martin where she's talking a lot about the, sort of, the dichotomy of the issues and all of the complications that are involved in this kind of discussion; whether or not a person has the right of life, liberty, and security under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, whether or not that goes as far as deciding when you want to die. It is a key question. And of course that was the crux of the case back in 1993.

Ms. Rodriguez could commit suicide because attempting suicide was removed as a Criminal Code offence in the 1970s, but because of her condition and the advanced condition she was in, in ALS, she couldn't end her own life without help. And the Supreme Court said, that's illegal. It's illegal to have someone help you end your own life.

They agreed that her rights to autonomy under the Charter were violated, but the court ruled in a narrow 5 to 4 ruling that that type of discrimination under your rights was justified because making assisted suicide legal for the disabled would imperil vulnerable people and deny the supremacy of the sanctity of life.

So as you can see, Mr. Speaker, these are some pretty heavy issues that the Supreme Court had to decide on. It was agreed by all in the Supreme Court that her rights to autonomy of her own person were being violated. But to make a law that would allow people to assist others to die — and we think of the case of Robert Latimer and his daughter Tracy — that the vulnerable people who aren't able to speak for themselves might have their rights violated by having someone think they want to die, helping them die. And then you don't know for sure if that was actually the wishes of that vulnerable individual. Often in those kinds of extreme health situations, they can't speak for themselves; they don't have an advanced health care directive, particularly young children, obviously.

So the ethical issues are incredibly complex and very, very sensitive issues, but we brought it to the Supreme Court. And back in 1993 the Justice John Sopinka who wrote for the majority of the court at that time said nobody else is doing this: “. . . nobody else was decriminalizing assisted suicide, and to do so would allow a constitutional right that goes beyond ‘that of any country in the Western world.’”

So at that point she was denied her right to have someone assist her in dying when she wanted to die. Ms. Rodriguez then chose to do exactly that, but she had to do it in secret. Less than a year

later she died with the help of an anonymous physician. So it's a rather tragic case, Mr. Speaker, and when you think about the agony she went through just to have the right to do that without being declared, and putting that physician at risk of being a criminal, having to do it secretly and anonymously must have been a very, very difficult time for her.

Now this article goes on to say that the world has changed dramatically in the years after that decision was rendered in 1993. We now know that:

Assisted suicide and euthanasia are legal under strict criteria in the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxemburg; physician-assisted dying has been implemented in several American states; and for those who can afford it, assisted suicide has long been available for foreigners . . . [to] travel to Switzerland.

This article is claiming that public attitudes have often also evolved. They state that opinion polls consistently say that a large majority of Canadians support medical aid in dying. And even late this summer the Canadian Medical Association voted overwhelmingly in favour of allowing physicians to follow their own consciences in caring for dying patients.

Now what happened in the meantime is these two different routes are being followed, one through legislation and one through the courts. So we have a political process in Quebec and we have a challenge in the BC courts that's going forward to the Supreme Court or has gone forward to the Supreme Court.

So the Carter case in British Columbia is the one that's being brought forward now. And what they're doing is challenging again the prohibition against assisted suicide, and at the trial level, they were successful in arguing that. So the case was heard by Justice Lynn Smith in the BC Supreme Court. She listened to massive amounts of evidence from scores of expert witnesses and reviewed protocols and data from several jurisdictions, and she gave her judgment in June of 2012.

She wrote a very long, thorough judgment and gave ample support for her decision. And what did she decide? She decided to strike down the assisted-suicide law and the euthanasia law in Canada. She's saying that the prohibition against the physician-assisted suicide was unconstitutional. She gave parliament a year to introduce new legislation and gave Ms. Taylor an exemption to seek medical help in dying. Now of course that was appealed, not surprisingly. And also unfortunately and unexpectedly, Ms. Taylor died of a bowel infection in October 2012. So her ability to make that choice was taken away from her, and she died prematurely of a bowel infection.

But that wasn't the end of the legal case of course. A year later this case was overturned in the BC courts, BC Court of Appeal. And they're saying the problem is on jurisdictional grounds because the Supreme Court ruled in 1993 that although it violated your rights, it was still — what was the word? — justified because of the vulnerability of people in that situation. And they say that you can't reopen issues that the Supreme Court had settled in the Rodriguez case.

So right now the court is hearing, it's on a technical issue actually, and it's whether or not a lower court has the authority to declare a law unconstitutional. And of course this is a key issue when the Carter case is being heard. And it was just last month when it was heard in appeal. Other issues that were heard in the final appeal at the Supreme Court were questions of individual autonomy and jurisdiction. And they have a quote here. And I don't know if you remember seeing this, Mr. Speaker, but I certainly remember Ms. Rodriguez in the news from 1993 and her quote. The quote that is in this article says: "If I cannot give consent to my own death, whose body is this? Who owns my life?"

So the question that's being raised in this article is, what has changed in the last 20 years? How has public opinion changed? What are the legal issues? How have the ethical opinions changed? And one of the professors of law at Dalhousie University, her name is Jocelyn Downie. And she says, "The principle of respect for autonomy has gained strength in Canada and abroad."

[15:00]

So, Mr. Speaker, what's being suggested by this particular law professor is that the idea of the autonomy of your own body, of being able to make that decision and decide not only whether you want to continue to live or whether you choose to die, is gaining strength in a number of jurisdictions. And there's another professor, Professor Sumner, has also said, "Denying a person the right to determine the course of their own dying is an invasion of their autonomy over their own life and very often an invasion of their dignity."

And certainly, Mr. Speaker, with all the discussion we've been having lately in this Assembly in terms of seniors and some of the end-of-life issues that we're talking about for seniors in level 4 care, we know the level of acuity has increased dramatically in these types of care homes and that people are living longer with much more complicated health issues. So whether or not you can determine the course of your own dying, and whether that is an invasion of autonomy is certainly one that's very current in the affairs of Canada.

The Canadian government itself has refused to consider any easing of the physician-assisted death rules in the Criminal Code. But what Quebec has done, and now I'm going to go back to what's happening in the province of Quebec where the government, on a proactive level at the legislative level, rather than going through the court has taken a . . . They call it a jurisdictional end run around the Criminal Code. And what have they done is they chart a political route within the provincial law ". . . to provide a continuum of care ranging from palliation to euthanasia for people who are facing imminent death."

So the question that Madame Hivon raised at a conference in Chicago a couple of months ago, she said:

"The . . . [opinion] we took was one of health care. We should not leave anybody suffering" at any stage, so why "would it be okay at the end of life?"

So the bill she said is ". . . about people who are ill and who are

suffering and need to have their pain alleviated.” So the focus of the Quebec legislation is on the alleviation of pain. Death may be a result of that alleviation of pain. It may not, but the focus is on the alleviation of pain. And this woman who has brought this bill forward in the Quebec legislature, in the National Assembly, said she watched some of her own family suffer before dying. And she’s convinced that when these issues come up it’s the duty of parliamentarians to face these issues and not wait for the courts to tell you what to do.

Mr. Speaker, that’s a very courageous position to be taken by a legislator, and I think it’s one that should be applauded. So we’re certainly going to keep an eye on this legislation in Quebec. And again I want to note that the way it was introduced was a motion in the National Assembly, and it got all-party support for public consultation to hear ordinary people’s thoughts and experiences about end of life. That was the beginning, and then there were several steps that went through, and Bill 52 in Quebec was passed just this last June.

Obviously to get any bill passed with all-party support is a significant achievement by any government, Mr. Speaker. And I think she’s being recognized for her ability to do that, although there were obviously protests. And in Chicago there’s a disability rights group called Not Dead Yet, and they actually went into the hotel and protested quite vociferously. But what happens is that this raises the public discussion, and I think that is something that is worthwhile and something that we will continue to discuss here in Canada.

Now she is waiting to see what happens with the Supreme Court and whether or not they will use the Carter case, which they are hearing as we speak, or they’ve heard the arguments and they’re deliberating. Will this be an opportunity to rule on the constitutionality of Quebec going it alone on end-of-life care? Both of these balls are up in the air right now, Mr. Speaker, and it will be very interesting to see how the courts come down on this.

The end of the article here, it talks about:

If the Supreme Court agrees that the Criminal Code prohibition against assisted suicide is unconstitutional, [like the BC trial judge ordered] . . . it will have “to weigh in on the issue of jurisdiction, so that the federal government knows what it can and cannot do in drafting the new legislation that will be necessary.”

But Madame Hivon, the article says, is thinking, well, we’ll see what happens. She said, “Our approach is very different. Our jurisdiction is over health care.” So you can see two very different approaches to this issue that inform I think any health care directive that any individual may be thinking about.

I wanted to find out exactly who in the United States has bills that have legalized physician-assisted suicide. There are three states that have legalized it. Oregon, Vermont, and Washington have legalized physician-assisted suicide through legislation, and in Montana they also have legal physician-assistant suicide, but that was through the courts, where it became a law in courts. So only four states have actually legalized it, and of course 46 states have not. That’s the status in the United States right now.

We have the situation in Quebec where the bill has been introduced. And of course we know the Supreme Court heard the appeal on the Carter case last month, and I suspect it’ll be a few months yet before we get their final ruling on this, but it’s something I think that we need to be aware of.

Interestingly also, Mr. Speaker, on March 27th, 2014 in the House of Commons, an MP [Member of Parliament] named Steven Fletcher tabled legislation that amends the Criminal Code to allow physicians to assist individuals to end their life where there’s a certain set of criteria followed; and secondly, establish a Canadian commission on physician-assisted death to produce public information on physician-assisted death and to support law and policy reform with respect to physician-assisted death. So that bill is on the order paper, I believe, federally. And certainly that’s something else I think that we’ll see more debate in legislatures and in the House of Commons, that we’ll see how this discussion is going across Canada.

There are a number of other countries that have also legalized assisted suicide: Belgium, Colombia, I believe Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Switzerland. So those are a few of the jurisdictions where physician-assisted suicide is allowed.

Now back to Saskatchewan. Of course it is not allowed at this point in our law. We don’t have legislation tabled by this government to make it a health care issue and an end of life . . . not end-of-life issue but one about the continuum of care. But we do know that there are ways within your health care directives to certainly indicate to your loved ones and to your family and to your physician what your wishes would be when you are in that situation, when you are at an end-of-life situation or terminally ill and unable to communicate your wishes to your loved ones and to your physician. Then a health care directive is something that is available under this bill, and it’s one that I believe is being taken very seriously by the medical community. And certainly I would think, in the case of any families where these directives exist, that the family members would take it seriously.

It’s funny, you know, Mr. Speaker. I’ve had a health care directive for 20 years now, and certainly have encouraged, used language in my own health care directive that says, in the event where I’m in pain, to use any means necessary to provide me comfort. And that’s as far as the law will allow me to go in terms of directing my care in the event of sort of the incapacitated end-of-life kind of situation. But that’s as far as the law will allow us to go. I know that my ex-husband is quite the opposite from me. He says, keep me alive at all costs. Do whatever you can. I don’t care if you have to freeze me and put me in a cabinet, but keep me alive and, you know . . . And so at any rate, that’s his choice, and certainly I would expect that his family would respect those wishes. And I hope and wish that my family will respect my wishes as well. So that’s the whole point of the health care directives.

And as a trend, it was obviously . . . became very popular when the Sue Rodriguez case was being heard in 1993, and I think many, many people take advantage of that. And I would certainly encourage all members, if they haven’t done already, so to think about this and decide what it is they would like to see in their health care directive in the event that they become

incapable of making their own health care directives.

Now there's two types of things that individuals should think about in this and while they're thinking about this situation. First of all is the living will or the health care directive — I use the word health care directive; many people refer to it as a living will — and then durable powers of attorney for health care.

So what is the difference between the two? A living will is the health care directions. And there's a definition here from Merck Manuals, which is online, and it says:

A living will expresses, in advance, a person's instructions or preferences about future medical treatments, particularly end-of-life care, in the event the person loses capacity to make health care decisions.

The second definition . . . That's the end of the quote. Now the second definition is, what is the power of attorney for health care? So this is how it's described:

A durable power of attorney for health care appoints a person (called a health care agent or proxy, health care representative, or other name depending on the state) to make decisions for the person (the principal) in the event of incapacity to make health care decisions.

So you can see that the power of attorney is appointing an individual who will make decisions for you if you are incapable of making those decisions. That's one thing. And then of course the living will or the health care directive advises your family or anybody that's responsible for your care in terms of what your wishes would be if you are at an end-of-life situation.

So you know, it's interesting, Mr. Speaker. I just had a constituent call a couple of weeks ago, and her husband is in a . . . I think he . . . I can't remember what his health situation is, but he is becoming sicker and sicker all the time. His care is becoming much more difficult all the time. He's in long-term care right now. He's a fairly young man. And she needs power of attorney in order to make some health care decisions. And it's very difficult for her right now without that because she's very upset about some of the care decisions that are being made on his behalf by the physicians.

So I would again advocate to all folks, including people at home, people that are listening today, but certainly this is something that we all should be thinking about, is that you think about those things before you come to a point of incapacity. You think about who it is you want to be making those decisions for you and how it is you want those decisions to be made. So I can't stress that enough.

In terms of a living will . . . I mean it's a living will because you haven't died yet so it's something that you are incapacitated, you're not able to make decisions for yourself, but you're still alive. So it's a living will. Now it's not the same kind of legal force and effect as a will upon your death, which has a whole set of legal precedents and laws that are associated with a will once you die. But some cases, you know, the living will is in flux probably. There's a lot of different varieties of what they look like. Sometimes it's called the medical directive. It's

usually about end-of-life care but it could actually apply to any kind of care or treatment, especially when you have lost capacity to make a health care decision. Sometimes you could talk about only end-of-life decisions. You could talk about the whole continuum of decisions.

It says in this article by Merck that people believe death is preferable to being perpetually dependent on medical equipment and others feel the opposite, like my ex-husband, that extreme heroic measures and technology should be used to extend life as long as possible. So again it's very important for people to know what your wishes are if you end up in that situation.

There's examples of language, and certainly if anybody's interested in preparing one of these, there's a number of good precedents or examples on the Internet. The Canadian Cancer Society also has a page on their website called advanced directives and there's different things they tell you you should think about in terms of a living will. What about the use of breathing machines or ventilators? What about the use of CPR [cardiopulmonary resuscitation] if your heart stops or if you stop breathing? What about artificial feeding? Are you willing to be tube fed if you are incapacitated? What about things like treatments and antibiotics, pain, anti-nausea medicines? What about continuing or not continuing with treatment such as chemotherapy or radiation therapy?

And one very important thing that I know we've heard our Minister of Health talk about recently as well is organ or tissue or body donations. And certainly with the discussion on some positive legislation that's on the floor right now regarding cornea transplants and different types of transplants, it's very important that individuals let those wishes be known before they are incapacitated.

And one of the things they note here on the Canadian Cancer Society page is that people with advanced cancer have the right to refuse treatment. And I think again we saw a case recently in the courts, I believe it was in Quebec, where a family with a young daughter were able to refuse treatment, chemotherapy treatments. And that certainly is people's right to do so.

[15:15]

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think that's sort of a very brief summary of where we're at with the law in relation to health care directives and things like physician-assisted suicide. Certainly health care directives have become very popular and been legalized and enshrined in legislation for many years.

What the Minister of Justice indicated in the terms of the bill that's being introduced right now is quite straightforward, actually. This is part of the work of the Legislative Assembly to ensure we have as many bills translated into French that we can. And so what's happened with the tabling of this particular Bill is that it's now been translated, and it's being provided in both official languages.

The minister indicated in his very brief comments that there really isn't any substantive changes in the bill. It's just been translated. I think there's a few that are kind of interesting, and I just want to point them out.

This is about using plain language, Mr. Speaker. And certainly when I was in law school that was sort of a trend as well, back in the early '90s, about cleaning up the language. Legalese is exactly that: legalese. It's very difficult to understand. It's often obscure and obfuscatory, I would suggest as well, because the idea is to make it so that nobody can understand it. And I don't think it's intentional on the part of lawyers, although in some cases it certainly is. And if you want to be obscure, you certainly can choose words that would make you obscure.

There's a few phrases that are being reinserted in the English portion of this bill that I find kind of interesting. One is in clause 2(2), where there's an addition to the existing English wording which currently says, "a decision in a directive . . ." Or sorry. I should start with the full subclause. Subclause (2) reads:

(2) Nothing in this Act authorizes:

(a) a decision in a directive, by a proxy appointed in a directive, by a personal guardian or by a nearest relative, that is prohibited by the *Criminal Code*.

Now they've chosen to add an additional phrase here, and it's ". . . with respect to an act or omission that is prohibited by the *Criminal Code*." The phrase "with respect to," I was told in law school, is one that should never be used anymore. It's three words when you can use one. And so it's very strange that they're actually going back to that language in 2014 when 20 years ago it was the style to not do that.

Another example of that it is in section 2(1)(b)(iii), and it currently reads:

(b) [reads] "**capacity**" means the ability:

(iii) [reads] to communicate a health care decision on a proposed treatment.

And now they've crossed out the word on, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and they've added the three words, with respect to. And I find that a very strange way to make an amendment in a bill when it was perfectly fine the way it was. And using archaic language, going back to archaic language doesn't make any sense to me.

Another interesting thing I've noted is that in section 5 and in section 6 of the existing bill, quite often the clauses start with the word where. So for example, "**5(1)** Where a health care decision in a directive . . ." And then it goes on. "**(2)** Where a health care decision in a directive does not clearly anticipate . . ." And then it goes on. And **(4)** says, "Where a directive is made by a person who is the subject of a certificate . . ."

What they've done here is they've struck out the word where, and they are putting in the word if. So it's not earth shattering. It's certainly not going to change the direction of the universe or anything. But it's interesting that they've taken upon themselves to make that change in clause 5.

Now in clause 6(2) we have the same language: "Where a directive is signed pursuant to clause (1)(b)." And they've changed the word where to the word when.

And again the inconsistency here I find is kind of interesting.

I'm not sure what the legislative drafters are looking at here and why they feel that that's necessary, but I just wanted to point out some of these interesting changes that are being made to the English version despite the fact that the minister was talking only about the fact it's being translated into French.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think I've exhausted my comments on this particular bill, so at this point I would like to move that we adjourn debate on Bill 155, *The Health Care Directives and Substitute Health Care Decision Makers Act, 2014*.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Nutana has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 155. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 156

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 156** — *The Health Care Directives and Substitute Health Care Decision Makers Consequential Amendments Act, 2014* be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Bill 156 is a very short bill that deals with some consequential amendments to other bills in relation to the bill I just spoke to, Bill 155. So there's only four different bills that are being amended, and all they're doing is taking out the name of the Act that exists right now. Any of the bills that refer to the previous Act are now going to be amended to reflect this Act, and really all it's doing is adding the word 2014 at the end of the bill.

So I've exhausted all my comments on the topic at this point, and so I would just move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 156, *The Health Care Directives and Substitute Health Care Decision Makers Consequential Amendments Act, 2014*.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Nutana has moved to adjourn debate on 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 Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 157

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Duncan that **Bill No. 157** — *The Human Tissue Gift Act, 2014* be now read a second time.]

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition Whip.

Mr. Vermette: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, Bill 157, *The Human*

Tissue Gift Act, 2014. I guess before I get into some of the comments . . . And I realize, you know, members of this province, different reasons, may go on dialysis, and I want to talk about some of that stuff. Whether it's heart . . . There's different transplants that individuals go through because their family members are sick, and they're there supporting them. And I guess we have many people who are on dialysis, and I think about those family members who do all the travelling and the cost to the family for the travelling.

And I know in the North we have many people that travel for dialysis and, you know, they have to travel to P.A. [Prince Albert], whether it's Saskatoon, and sometimes it's three times a week for dialysis and they're exhausted. They're tired. And actually, it was interesting. I know we've had people back home who are concerned about that and, you know, their loved ones, and they've asked — and we've actually requested from the health region, from the Minister of Health, from his ministry — to give us the numbers on how many individuals in the three health regions are travelling for dialysis currently that they know about. And we've got those numbers and, you know, it's very concerning.

And I know that for the family members that struggle, and it's not only the cost but it's about, you know, they're already exhausted. They travel down for hours and they have their treatment and then they travel all the way back to the North. And I know that there's been challenges there when we look at that also, but I wanted to talk a little bit about that because I know some of the family members have asked us — and we'll continue to work on their behalf — but maybe we can have dialysis machines or some type of a . . . We have to look at that. And they've asked too, could it be in the North? Are there units where they're portable or you can move them into some of the communities? And I think it's interesting to look at, and we're going to be pushing on that.

I know some of the family members, you know, that are faced with that dialysis are going to talk. If they can't get the transplant, of course, for a kidney, there's not a kidney available and there isn't the opportunity for different reasons whether it's a match, whether there's enough kidneys . . . And I think from some of the ministers and people speaking and hearing out there when it's coming to organ donation and transplant to go on, you have to have obviously those that are giving a gift, a donation, you know. Some people sign the cards with your driver's licence that say, yes, I would like to donate their organs, and they're willing to do that. And we have many people in the province that, you know, that go ahead and do that.

But I guess at the end of the day, you have to make sure the organs that are harvested are ones that can be, I guess, transplanted into individuals, that they're a match. There's different reasons and I mean, I guess those professionals out there will know what those are. And I don't know who requested the change that they're making to this Act. I'm not sure. But I know back home, for those that are travelling and those that need a transplant . . . And there's many different reasons why, medical reasons, whether it's young children, whether it's, you know, a mom or a dad. It could be a grandparent. And there's different transplants they need, not only, you know, when we look at hearts. You look at lung transplants.

I know individuals that have been in the North and have had the opportunity to go and have a transplant, and some of them, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it has given them an opportunity at life, to spend many years with their family and has been successful. And we know that. That's the gift of life. And you know, when you're hearing somebody who's gone through a transplant and they talk about it, what it's given them, you know, and I know there's many individuals that have been very successful and, you know, get to spend more years with their grandchildren, with their loved ones, because of a transplant. Somebody gave that gift of life so that they could have I guess the added years of comfort and without pain and, you know, whether you're breathing, whether it's heart.

So those individuals that do that, again I want to say to all those . . . And some of them, it's very emotional when you have a child or, you know, you have someone who's ill and maybe they're in a coma, or for whatever reason. And you decide. And there's a way to . . . that I guess our doctors approach individuals. There is probably a process that's the right timing. I don't know. It's up to the professionals, up to I guess social workers. It's up to the health professionals to decide when you want to approach a family and if you approach a family.

I've been fortunate, you know, and I'm grateful and thank the Creator that I have never had to have that come before me with one of my loved ones, my grandchildren and children, to say we're faced with that, having to make that decision of giving that gift of life or having to have a transplant where one of your grandchildren need it. But for those that are doing it, I know that . . . and are waiting in the lineup, and some individuals, unfortunately, you know, their life, they lose their life because they need that organ transplant and they don't receive that. And there are those sad stories and my heart goes out to them with that, you know.

But having said that, having said that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, having said that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's opportunities for I guess the professional. And the bill's talking about going a little further than that, than just somebody donating. And it isn't just about donating. It isn't about the gift of life. They're talking about giving provisions in the regulations, and that's where we're going to want to watch these, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

We're going to want to watch the regulations, because it's like there's a change. And I ain't going to say that I understand all of it, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but I do know this: that you're now talking about giving powers to the minister and the ministry and to have certain provisions in the regulations, and it's going to come out in the regulations. And we have to make sure we understand what is in the regulations.

And as they move this forward . . . And sometimes we bring in legislation that's good legislation. It makes sense. People have requested it, whether it's physicians, whether it's family members out there. There are many reasons why legislation comes in. It's the government's job to bring in and introduce legislation, and it's up to us to debate the bills, look at them. Have they consulted? Have they done what's needed? Have they made sure that they've talked to the professions? Have they talked to individuals? Who requested that? Who's asked the government? Is it an initiative the government has decided they want to move forward?

So on this bill, it goes into the regulations. And we're going to have to pay close attention to that because we're not sure where this is going.

I talked about, Mr. Deputy Speaker, those individuals who have given the gift of life. But they're now talking about moving, with the regulations, into a different area and an area of purchasing, you know, corneas and different things, different . . . And we don't know where it's going to go. And where does it end up? Is it those that can afford to pay for a certain organ that's being . . . I guess you can purchase them. We're concerned about, where does this go?

And in the regulations, the minister will have the power and the ministry will have the powers. You're giving certain powers. When it comes to regulations, who will be involved in deciding those regulations? Will it be, you know, doctors? Will it be family members? Will it be those individuals who have given the gift of life? Is it those individuals who have received the gift of life? Is it those family members that will be consulted? Who will be consulted, Mr. Deputy Speaker? Who will be talked to? And we want to be clear, because if this in the end . . . and I know my colleagues will ask questions wondering, will this be if you can afford to purchase . . . And we talk about the cost. Yes, you want to encourage those to give the gift of life.

[15:30]

And you know, changing those regulations, and I realize it starts with, you know, paying for corneas. And they're going to start it . . . If that's where they're going to start, where else will they go? And what is going to open it up, Mr. Deputy Speaker? Are they going to be those that can afford come before those that are waiting in line, waiting for the service, waiting for that gift of life from somebody who is donating if you can buy it?

So there's going to be a lot of questions, and no doubt those individuals that are waiting for the gift of life . . . And we know that whether it's a kidney, there's many . . . a lung, there's many different . . . a cornea, there's many different reasons why. Family members are sick, and the reason why we have to have organ donation.

But now we're talking about changing it, and that's concerning, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We want to be very cautious that it isn't about leaving the most vulnerable behind because someone can purchase. And we've seen those discussions when we talk about MRIs [magnetic resonance imaging] and different things. If someone can afford to pay, then they get in front of the line. And some people who have struggled to make ends meet and take care of their loved one because of that loved one is ill, and they've spent a lot of their resources and money and can't afford maybe the purchase, if that's where this goes . . . And we're not sure about that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, where the government is going with this. We're going to be watching it closely, but I know there's a lot of questions need to be asked.

Saskatchewan people, you know, the good people that we are, we want to help each other out. We help out our neighbours. You know, we want to make sure that people aren't left behind. I know the members of this House want that. And I hope we all work together, and sometimes it means working together, making sure we understand what's going on and when there's

needs. And we've co-operated sometimes, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But sometimes, I'll be honest, it hasn't been good co-operation by that government for whatever reason.

But in this bill and the regulations, they're introduced and they're going to give certain powers. And I want to make sure, and I know back home people that are the most vulnerable, whether they're in this province, whether they're . . . because they have limited resources at their disposal, for whatever reasons. Maybe it's been medical costs that it's cost them for years and they've been paying maybe for hotel rooms, and maybe there isn't a system where they're getting covered, their expenses, hotel rooms and the mileage and the meals. And we know that the cost, the cost of, you know, not everything is covered. Some people have private insurance. Some people don't. Some people, the Saskatchewan Health covers their costs. But there are many individuals who do not have coverage and support, so they're on their own.

And some organizations, we know that there's many organizations, whether it's the . . . We have all kinds of community organizations, whether it's . . . you know, there's so many of them, you know, to mention. The Elks. Kinsmen. There's so many different groups. United Way. There's so many different groups that fundraise to help individuals who need the help and supports so that they can bring their loved one. And some of them have to travel, we know, out of province. Some travel out of country to have organ transplants, and the cost of it is great.

But we go back again and I want to say that those, you know, we wish . . . I don't wish that on any family member out there or any Saskatchewan resident, having to deal with the decision of organ transplant or having to deal with the illness where you have to make those decisions.

And if you didn't have the dollars to cover the costs and somebody else could pay for it because . . . for whatever reason. They've had an opportunity where, you know, they've done well. And I don't disagree that some individuals have done well, whether it's education, whether they're in business, entrepreneurs, they've done really well for them and we're glad for that. But I hope our system, our health system doesn't turn over where those that can afford to pay get to go in front of, you know, the line of others that are needing life-saving and the gift of life. And we hope that never happens.

So I'm a little concerned with the regulations, and I know my colleagues have shared some of their concerns. And you know, when you think about it, you know, one of my colleagues I was asking a little bit of background, and I know here like I talked earlier, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you have to sign the donor card. And if you do that, you know, you're donating your organs should something happen, a misfortune of, you know, where someone loses their life. And if they can retrieve those organs to assist in saving someone and giving somebody else the gift of life, that's great. And I know that many people in our province do that because we are a caring province.

But having said that, they have to sign that donor card. And if they don't, and I mean . . . I know my family, even we've talked about it, you know. It's a good thing to do and you should do that. But I wonder how many of them and, you know, a

checklist for ourselves, wondering how many have signed the donor card to do this, to make sure that, you know, if something would happen that individuals have signed their cards so that if something should ever happen to a loved one, that they have that.

So having said that, but I know one of my colleagues I was asking and giving me a little background information, in some countries, my understanding that I got, that it works the other way, Mr. Deputy Speaker. If you don't sign a card that says you didn't want to donate your organs, that that can happen that way. You know, he was explaining that to me. And I've never heard of that but he was explaining that to me and I was like, well that was different from what we have in our system here in the province of Saskatchewan where you sign that card.

But having said that, I know that there are so many people who need — yes, and we will say that — organ transplants. I know I've had community members like I talked about, and I know some of them have kidney dialysis and go down . . . I've had someone who we would call back home as a friend of ours. She needed that and she used to travel lots. You know, unfortunately she passed away. She got older and she passed away. But it goes down to the travelling for, you know, when she would go down for dialysis, the travel and how exhausted she was. And there's others that talk about how exhausted they are.

And I've talked about the portable units, and hopefully maybe there's opportunities under Health for those individuals in northern Saskatchewan and the rural areas, because they have to do so much travelling, to have these portable devices. And that's one way I realize of alleviating because they need that. It saves their life, and that's the process that's there.

But having said that, they have to travel to the bigger centres to have that. Maybe if we had more portable units for the rural area, for the North, for isolated communities, we could have that where those individuals who have to have dialysis three times a week are exhausted. You know, you're already exhausted going, and then they have the treatment, and they have to travel all the way back. And they're exhausting. It just must seem like you get done . . . You go through the process, and then you go back home exhausted, whether it takes four hours, eight hours, you know, whatever it takes to go through it. And I think probably it would be a good exercise for all of us as members and community members to go through somebody and make sure we understand what they have to go through for dialysis.

And you know, that's important, but it's not just that. We think about transplants, and we think about who will be . . . who will get in line.

And when I talk about the regulations — and I was going to go back to that, and I'll finish up when we get into the regulations — there's going to be certain powers that the minister will have, that the ministry will have, and to bring out the regulations. We've talked about it sometimes. It has to be clear. Where's this going? Who asked for these changes, and what's the purpose of them? Like I mean is it going . . . Where are they going? Like is this going to open it up where they look at so many options? Is it going to be consulting, talking with

individuals, talking with Saskatchewan residents, doctors, whoever? Like I said this earlier, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this dialogue and consultation needs to happen.

And we want what's best for Saskatchewan people. We do. We all do. We do want to see . . . Saskatchewan people, I know that we're good at heart. We care about our neighbours, and we look out for one another.

And you know, sometimes it's showing respect. And we have to make sure that we work together and that we achieve what's being asked when people come, whether it's this side of the House or the government side, whether bills are introduced by government on the request of individuals, by organizations, whether it's by groups, whether it's by government. The opportunity for us to talk about those bills, discuss them, ask for clarification, not always for ourselves. Sometimes we have individuals, Mr. Deputy Speaker, who want us to ask on their behalf. And we need to make sure that we do our due diligence, that we're doing what we need to do to preserve that.

Now nobody's trying to, on our side of it, you know, I hope and I would never want to stop a process, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that's going forward to help individuals in this province. We want to work, and I've said that earlier. We'll work with government, but also we've got to make sure that it's clear from our side and from government, whether it's debating the bill in that process or it's in committee. And we asked . . . [inaudible] . . . And we've got to do our work too, and I realize that. Sometimes we encourage people to get a hold of us to talk, as opposition. And I know we have our Health critic, the member from Riversdale. She's always asking people if there's issues facing with health, to get a hold of us, as opposition we are.

If there's bills or if there's issues that are facing, and whether it's . . . And there's many bills. I've had somebody who's going to get a hold of us on a number of bills. I've mentioned it to them. When it comes to violence against women, they have some good input, and domestic . . . And they have some good advice. And they have some recommendations that they would like to share, and they're going to share that with us so we can use that to get into the debate and share some of those challenges and concerns that they have.

So having said that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are many challenges in all kinds of situations with families. But my heart again, I want to as I close, I want to, you know, my heart goes out to those individuals who have to or who are waiting in line for a transplant. And there's so many of them waiting for different organ transplants, and we have to, you know, we hope that all individuals get that. But we know that's not happening by the numbers that the minister is referring to.

You know, those that are waiting are waiting for a kidney transplant, many different . . . you know, corneas. So they're going to go to a different area, and like in one area, they're going to purchase corneas. And I think . . . I'm not sure if it was 100, or I'm not sure if that's the correct number, but they're going to start that. They're going to harvest, go to a place, and I guess you purchase them, and you bring back. So that starts it off, and we don't know where else it's going to go.

But the only concern, you know, and when I think about it from

. . . Well there'll be many concerns. But one that comes to heart for me is those that are most vulnerable, those that are most vulnerable, Mr. Deputy Speaker, are not put at the back of the line because somebody could afford to pay for them.

If this is where this goes with the regulations and if this is the change that this government is going and the direction they're going by, you know, doing some of the changes and bringing this in, they might be making changes that are being requested to make it easier. But I also want to really stress that it has to be that it can't be that someone that can afford to have the surgery or afford to buy organs can, can go ahead of anyone else. There has to make sure that process doesn't happen, that the most vulnerable and those that can't afford it . . . Like I said, there's many reasons why they can't maybe afford it.

So we have to make sure that the regulations again . . . and in committee we ask the tough questions. We go out, and government, on both sides of the House make sure we're getting the information that we need from our Saskatchewan residents, those that are most vulnerable, those that are waiting in line, and the physicians and the transplant teams and all those individuals.

So at this point, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know that my colleagues will have more questions about the bill. And there'll be more opportunity, but they'll also have an opportunity in committee to ask a lot of questions when we get there. But right now we're going to go through, and we're going to go through. Mr. Deputy Speaker. We're going to go through. I know the members want to get in on it. They'll have their chance. They can come to committee and take part. So they can ask questions in there. But at this point, I know it will go to committee.

We'll ask the tough questions. We hope people will get a hold of my colleague, like I said, the critic from Riversdale who's the Health critic, if they have issues, the minister as well, to make sure any issues or concerns they have, that they're heard. There's many people out there that could share some good advice on the things that do work, don't work. There are many. At this point, I have no further questions. I adjourn debate on Bill 157, *The Human Tissue Gift Act, 2014*.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Cumberland has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 157, *The Human Tissue Gift Act, 2014*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 158

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Krawetz that **Bill No. 158** — *The Saskatchewan Pension Plan Amendment Act, 2014* be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. As always,

it's a privilege to be able to arise to enter in debate, this time on Bill No. 158, *The Saskatchewan Pension Plan Amendment Act, 2014*.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is a bill actually in large measure that we passed, that was passed about a year and a half ago and proclaimed actually in 2013, Mr. Speaker. It repeals Bill No. 82, which:

. . . predominantly dealt with the legislative changes that would be required for Saskatchewan Pension Plan to accept transfers in from Saskatchewan-based locked-in pension plans and locked-in retirement accounts, LIRAs, by bringing Saskatchewan Pension Plan in line with provincial pension benefits legislation.

So we had a bill before us about a year and a half ago, Mr. Speaker, that passed and was never proclaimed. And so Bill No. 138 contains — and the minister goes on to say this — contains much of that, well all that material, Mr. Speaker. So my question around that is, there are additional amendments, but why the government didn't do its homework in the first place . . . Everybody's time is valuable here, Mr. Speaker. And I don't know. I don't think so much has changed in that time period that these are things that the government couldn't have foreseen when they . . . had they done their homework initially with Bill No. 82.

[15:45]

So the few additions here to this that built on Bill 82, the amendments, the minister points out, “. . . the amendments include an update to survivor benefits so that married members must name their spouse as beneficiary of their account unless the spouse waives that right.” He points out that:

Also retiring members who are married and who choose a Saskatchewan Pension Plan annuity at retirement will have to choose a joint and last survivor 60 per cent annuity unless the spouse waives that right.”

And he says that “The proposed amendments are in line with provisions in *The Public Employees Pension Plan Act*.” So I don't know why they didn't catch this or see this when Bill 82 was before us a year and a half ago, Mr. Speaker.

He points out, the minister also points out that, “The Act . . . clarifies the language around the board's authority to offer prescribed pension benefits to members. This language [he says] simply clarifies the duties of the board,” and says that “Any new pension benefit would still need to be set in regulation.”

He also, the minister in his second reading speech says that:

The amendments introduce the term “specialty fund,” which is similar wording to that included in other government pensions plans and will allow the board to introduce unitization, which is a standard in the mutual fund industry.

And yet another amendment here is allowing “. . . funds payable to a member of the Saskatchewan Pension Plan to be

transferred to the General Revenue Fund [or GRF] in the event that the member can not be located.” He says that “This would only be done after all other avenues have been exhausted, and the funds would continue to be held in the member’s name.” And he says that, “This protocol is similar to the process used by the financial institutions when clients cannot be located.”

As well:

Amendments [he says] will allow members to object to a marital division of their account on certain grounds. The Act has been silent on the issue. [So these] amendments modernize the language in the Act as well as clarifying the board’s duties and responsibilities.

I’m interested in the language around modernizing the language in the Act because it was just a year and a half ago that the bill was before us, so I don’t know how much modernization happens in a year and a half, Mr. Speaker. But I think this shows that the government doesn’t always do its due diligence when bringing pieces of legislation before us, Mr. Speaker.

The issues . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . And the Minister of Finance is saying that’s why they’re reviewing, but we had this bill, a very similar bill, which contained all these, many of these elements before us a short while ago, Mr. Speaker. So again the question is, why did we not have these other amendments that are being added, Mr. Speaker, to Bill No. 82 a year and a half ago? What did the government miss in doing their homework, Mr. Speaker? So I don’t know what’s changed in a year and a half, but apparently a lot, Mr. Speaker.

But pensions and retirement, Mr. Speaker, is a growing concern for more and more people, Mr. Speaker. And the Saskatchewan Pension Plan, Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Pension Plan is incredibly important, but by no means is it the cure-all for the retirement woes that will be facing many people as we age, Mr. Speaker. The Saskatchewan Pension Plan . . . And the minister points out . . . I’m not quite sure why it’s so noisy in here, Mr. Speaker. I can barely hear myself speak, Mr. Speaker. So the importance of the Saskatchewan Pension Plan, by no means am I diminishing that. That’s incredibly important to many people, but it is not the panacea to the retirement woes that will be impacting many people, Mr. Speaker.

There are great benefits to the Saskatchewan Pension Plan, and the minister points that out. It’s “Simple: the Saskatchewan Pension Plan takes pride in being easy to join and understand. Paperwork is kept to a minimum.” It’s “Consistent: the plan’s philosophy is to invest cautiously over the long term, which is an attractive approach for many people but especially for those with little or no investment experience.” It’s also voluntary. He also points out that it’s flexible and you can make a contribution at any time of the year. And it’s “Portable: it is always your plan regardless of where you live or what you do.” And it’s professionally managed, which is incredibly important. “Investments are handled by a professional investment firm.” The minister has pointed out it’s true, “It’s the only plan of its kind in Canada offering members professional investment management at institutional costs.”

But I think these changes and ensuring that we’re supporting the Saskatchewan Pension Plan, which is really great often for

seasonal workers or students or people who don’t have regular income or don’t have that opportunity to contribute all the time . . . But the reality is we have some really serious retirement issues facing us, Mr. Speaker, and people being able to not live in abject poverty as they approach their supposed golden years.

I think some numbers . . . I don’t have the numbers here for Saskatchewan, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but in Canada only one in three working Canadians belongs to an employer pension plan. And when we look at private sector workers, or pulling the public sector workers out of that, that ratio slides to one in five.

And although I think many experts have pointed out that it may not be such an issue obviously for more affluent Canadians who are able to sock away a little bit extra money, and I’ve heard some experts say even for lower-income individuals who would have CPP [Canada Pension Plan] and maybe the guaranteed income supplement might help them as well. But there’s really . . . Some of the argument has been around middle-class earners, or lower middle-class earners with household incomes of 35,000 to \$55,000 a year face incredibly bleak retirement prospects here. Just looking at this article from the *Calgary Herald* that if you look at an income, if a homeowner . . . Actually, it took a look at the median Nova Scotian income in 2012 was \$68,000. If your household income is 25 or 35 per cent below that, you are going to have a tough time saving for anything, including retirement.

It points out that if you’re a homeowner with two kids, a mortgage, a gross household income of \$50,000 per year, and you forgo eating out, having a computer, watching cable TV, gift-giving, drinking alcohol, smoking, supporting a church or charity — which many of us like to do even if we have a lower income — or going on a vacation, whether it might just be a couple of hours away to Waskesiu, Mr. Speaker, or something a little bit more grand than that, many people are very hard pressed to come up with substantial retirement savings.

I see this in my constituency, Mr. Speaker, in talking to people. With the rising cost of housing, with the rising cost of utilities, groceries, Mr. Speaker, all those kinds of things, those median-income earners are having a harder and harder time finding money for those extras, let alone those things that most of us or many of us take for granted, let alone having money to set aside for retirement. It’s not that people don’t want to, Mr. Speaker. And I think we all know that it’s very important. But when you look at the numbers, in 2005 only 6 in 10 families had RRSPs [registered retirement savings plan] with a median value of \$25,000.

And there’s also a gap actually around gender, Mr. Speaker, which has some big concern for me. When it comes to pensions and RRSPs, median 2011 pension income in Canada for men was \$31,700, but for women was only \$22,400. And so many retirees live on much less or must go back to work.

And I see that, Mr. Speaker. I was actually at the gym this morning and there was a woman who had her transportation device . . . Why can’t I think of the name? It wasn’t a wheelchair, but a scooter, Mr. Speaker. And she was talking in the change room about she was feeling very proud about all the baking that she’d been doing since September: initially muffins, and now she’s got tons of Christmas baking lined up. This is a

woman who's in her 70s who loves baking, but has been forced to do that. She was talking about the cost of the batteries for her scooter, and she just doesn't have any money. There is no money, Mr. Speaker, for this woman to be able to afford batteries for her scooter. So she is in her 70s now trying to make extra money by baking, which is great if that's what you want to do, Mr. Speaker. But when that becomes what you have to do in your 70s, that is incredibly unfortunate.

We hear, see more and more elders or more mature adults working in restaurants in the service industry. And you know, occasionally, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's because they want to be getting out of the house. But many people I talk to, they'd much prefer to be getting out of the house to do volunteer work, things that they love that engage them. But in many cases, it's because they need more income, Mr. Speaker.

And so when we think about pension income, I know CPP, there's been many people, many Finance ministers across Canada who've called for the enhancement of CPP. We've got Prince Edward Island, Ontario, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and Labrador, Manitoba, and Quebec all calling for some kind of enhancement to our CPP program. There's many pension experts that say expanding CPP is the cheapest and most effective way to improve retirements and address that pension gap, Mr. Speaker. It's an efficient system with low fees and enough capital to mitigate market risks than those with smaller cash pools. But our Finance minister, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is not in favour of doing that. He's not keen on boosting the CPP, Mr. Speaker.

And we'd argue on this side of the House that, although enhancing the Saskatchewan Pension Plan is a good idea and one tool, Mr. Speaker, we really need to look at the universality and what we could be doing to ensure that all Canadians retire with a decent standard of living, Mr. Deputy Speaker, which isn't the case right now and will become even worse into the future.

So again I have to point out that it's again odd that we had a bill before us a year and a half ago, and the government failed to do its homework to ensure that all those pieces around the Saskatchewan Pension Plan were addressed in that bill. And that's why we find ourselves here with these additions, Mr. Speaker. But I would encourage . . . It is disappointing, Mr. Speaker, that ours is one of the few provinces or one of the few Finance ministers who does not think expanding CPP is a good idea.

In Ontario, in Ontario, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Kathleen Wynne, the Premier there, is proposing a made-in-Ontario top-up to CPP. So different provinces are doing what they have to do to ensure that their, to ensuring that their citizens have a decent standard of living upon retirement, Mr. Speaker.

Again the benefit of CPP is that it is efficient. It's got low fees and enough capital to mitigate market risks. It's about universality and making sure that all Canadians, Mr. Speaker, have a secure retirement. And that is not the case right now.

So I know I will have colleagues who would like to speak to Bill No. 158, *The Saskatchewan Pension Plan Amendment Act, 2014*, and as well we'll have questions in committee, but at the

moment I'd like to move to adjourn debate.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Riversdale has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 158, *The Saskatchewan Pension Plan Amendment Act, 2014*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 153

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 153** — *The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2014* be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. McCall: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's a real pleasure to join the debate on Bill No. 153, *The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2014*. You know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, sometimes in this political life of ours the work that we do can coincide with history. Sometimes there are events where it's like the passing of Halley's comet. It's almost a millennial event, Mr. Speaker.

It's in that sort of sense of awe and just wonder, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that I rise to join in this debate, bring attention to the way that this Minister of Justice and this government has declared clear and unequivocal war on the hyphen, the way that they've finally got around to, you know, solving the judgement versus judgment debate. Is there an "e"? Is there not?

You know, these are some of the things that you wonder about in this life, Mr. Speaker, and finally, finally we see a government that's willing to get tough on hyphens. We see a government that's willing to get down to business when it comes to, you know, extra-long words, just running them all together. It's really a sight to behold, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in terms of this piece of legislation.

[16:00]

Now of course irony doesn't translate terribly well in politics, Mr. Speaker, which is too bad because, you know, there's rarely any shortage of irony in politics. But this particular bill, Mr. Speaker, if you'll pardon my introduction to my remarks here, this bill is largely about housekeeping, and it's largely about the kind of housekeeping that happens but once. I think in this case since 1978 some of these things have been rattling around in the books just waiting to be taken on by a government.

So, Mr. Speaker, it's an interesting bill in terms of sort of the, I don't know, the dendrochronology of the thing, in terms of the tree rings that grow up in legislation and the way that different words come into favour and words go out of favour. It's interesting in that respect, Mr. Speaker, but it is hardly a clarion call to legislative action. It's hardly the signal being shot off by this government that's, you know, finally this is a legislative agenda that you can really get excited about.

Certainly, Mr. Speaker, there's some words that are updated

and, you know, a greater attention being paid to gender-neutral language. Fair enough. That's great. But in terms of the way that this has gone through the books and finally, again, you know, is there a hyphen to be inserted in pipeline? Does judgment have an "e" or does it not? I mean . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Oh brother. Oh brother. My colleague from Greystone is wondering if I'm being ironic. And yes, yes to make that clear, I am being ironic. I don't know if that was clear enough from the start but . . . And also to be clear, this isn't quite the passing of Halley's comet. It's not of that import, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Again there's some fine, fine efforts in here, Mr. Speaker. And there's like 100-plus pages of explanatory notes where it goes through how the great facsimile versus fax debate has finally been wrestled to the ground, and you know, the minister in his remarks introducing this piece of legislation. And you know, it's not just enough that there's one piece of legislation like this, Mr. Speaker, there's also its twin piece of legislation. We'll get to that soon enough. Don't you fret.

But in terms of the minister's second reading speech, ". . . an inter-ministerial committee with representatives from ministries of Justice, Social Services, and Health provided a report with recommendations on potential amendments to the legislation." You know, I can imagine the rush that took place to get on that committee, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I can imagine the sort of hot, hotly contested fight that would have gone on to say, you know, I want on that committee in the worst possible way. Because you know, who doesn't want to get in there and take on the, does pipeline have a hyphen or does it not? Who doesn't want to get in there and take on the judgment versus judgement?

It reminds me of the old *Kids in the Hall* skit where there's the guy that liked to introduce himself as, no it's DeRill. You know, so is it judgment or is it judgement? I mean, are these the things that this government is seized with in terms of trying to paper together a legislative agenda, Mr. Speaker? Well apparently so, apparently so.

And again there's some fine efforts here in terms of, you know, some updated language around the use of lunatic or the use of incompetent or questions of competency. Fair enough. The greater attention paid to more gender-neutral language, again fair enough.

But again I think it signals that this is one of the larger bills being brought forward by this government, one of the more substantial bills. But of course, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to the force in effect in today's society, the unsubstantial character of this legislative agenda I think is this particular piece of legislation provides a significant window into that fact.

So, Mr. Speaker, my colleague, the member from Saskatoon Centre, I don't think I could do better than him in terms of this debate, in terms of this second reading discussion of Bill No. 153. And I'd certainly urge all members, you know, if you haven't had enough of this debate, I'd refer them to his remarks because he really brings out the sort of ridiculous quality of the kind of things being taken on in this legislation like I certainly couldn't do here today, Mr. Speaker. So hot *Hansard* reading tip for the reading audience out there: Saskatoon Centre, Bill 153, a great read. It was even better to see it go down live and

in concert, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

But this is a pretty thin piece of legislation coming forward, and again I think representative of, on the whole, a pretty thin legislative agenda on the part of this government. So with that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 153, *The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2014*.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre has moved to adjourn debate on 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 Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 154

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 154** — *The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2014 (No. 2)/Loi no 2 de 2014 modifiant le droit législatif* be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. McCall: — It's sort of like this, Mr. Deputy Speaker: but wait, there's more. In terms of the sort of thin legislative left being brought to the table under 153, 154, well it's all that and more, Mr. Deputy Speaker, again in terms of taking on the great facsimile becoming fax endeavour, electronic mail becoming email. You know, thank goodness for that, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Safe-keeping, hyphenated, becoming safekeeping, no hyphen. Very interesting. Pipe-line, hyphenated, becoming pipeline, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Again, the great old judgment versus judgement with an "e" debate. I'm finally glad to see a government with the guts to weigh in on that. And chairman becoming chairperson — great, fair enough.

Extra-provincial becomes extraprovincial, no hyphen. Again, you know, it's the war on the hyphen continues. I'll give them points for diligence, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Data-base, hyphenated, becomes database, no hyphen. Again you know, thank goodness there is a government had the guts to take that one on. Subject-matter, hyphenated, becomes subject matter, two words. Two for the price of one there, Mr. Deputy Speaker, trading in that hyphen, bringing two words forth. I mean it's really great to see a government really going at it like that.

But this one's more of a three for one. It's sort of the eight ball, three banks to the corner. Insofar, all one word, becomes in so far, three words. You know, it's like the trinity of nitpicking, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Anyway, you know, they've also cleaned up some typos, but I think you get the gist of what we think of this particular piece of legislation, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Again fair enough. Some of these things have to be done once every 25 years, whether you need to or not. It's important to update language, absolutely. But in terms of what this piece of legislation and its predecessor have to say about the heft of this government's legislative agenda, Mr. Speaker, it's kind of laughable.

So with that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'd move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 154.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre has moved to adjourn debate on 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 Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 149

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Duncan that **Bill No. 149** — *The Health Administration Amendment Act, 2014* be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Nilson: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise to speak to Bill No. 149, *An Act to amend The Health Administration Act*. Mr. Speaker, this bill continues in the trend of being rather thin in its content and it sort of fits with the whole fall agenda of legislation, that it's all very thin or it seems to come from scraping the bottom of the barrel, if I can put it that way.

But this particular legislation, all it does is add one part of a clause in *The Health Administration Act* to deal with some of the changes that have already taken place in government around who issues basically the health cards for individuals in the province. And so what for many years was an operation handled by staff within the Department of Health or the Ministry of Health was then moved to effectively another agency, and finally now it's rested in what's called eHealth Saskatchewan, which is effectively the digital part of health administration.

Unfortunately when it was moved there, officials realized that there wasn't actual authorization to move it there, in the legislation. And so what we have here is another kind of oops bill. Well we made a little mistake. Let's fix it. It's not maybe going to cause too much trouble, but let's fix it.

So what's happening here is it gives authorization to the cabinet, the Premier, on the recommendation of the minister which . . . [inaudible] . . . would be the Minister of Health, to effectively transfer the functions that are to be handled by the minister to a Crown corporation or an agency of the Government of Saskatchewan. And I think practically the eHealth Saskatchewan operation is a separate agency handling the digital side of the health system. But in the process of doing some of the things they've already done, they realized there are a number of responsibilities that are not accurately covered by the type of legislation that we have now.

Mr. Speaker, one of the goals of this Premier a few years ago was to reduce the number of civil servants. And we know that some of this shell game that we see of moving employees out of departments into other places is an aspect of that reduction in the civil service. And so we continue to ask how many

employees are in different agencies or in different corporations, whether it's the registry officials over at ISC [Information Services Corporation of Saskatchewan] or officials that are in an operation like this.

What we need to do obviously is compare apples to apples. Like how many people were doing this kind of work before? How many are doing that kind of work now? And practically, this work is being handled by an internal or a Crown agency. For a while it was handled by another agency which specialized in registries, which had the name of ISC. When the government made the decision to privatize ISC or sell off a fair chunk of that, they were caught then with having a non-governmental agency handle the crucial private information of individuals in the health system, and so arrangements were made to quickly transfer that responsibility to the eHealth organization. And now we have, as I say, the catch-up bill or the correct the responsibility bill or make sure that things are done appropriately bill, and so this one is what we have here right now.

And so practically what information eHealth is able to have in their system can now be managed to the full extent of the powers of the minister. Mr. Speaker, we need to watch very carefully what is happening as it relates to this, as we know that individuals in Saskatchewan are concerned about the privacy of the information that they have provided to the system so that they can get a health card so that they can get services here.

There have been so many incidents, including an incident today, of tax information that the federal government had in a very private file being released to the public. Concern also then arises with even more crucial information, that information related to our health, and to how is that being protected. And so, Mr. Speaker, I think every time there's another layer of responsibility moved farther out from the minister, from the government, we need to raise some questions about how this is being done and why this is being done. And so we have this particular legislation that ends up talking about how that change can be made.

[16:15]

Now eHealth is an initiative that gathers together much of the work that was done over many years in creating a digital health record or an electronic health record. It has many different names. The importance of that is that it does provide a coordinating or a coordinated spot where our individual health information can be gathered. But it's absolutely crucial that the public have 100 per cent confidence in that system and how it works.

We know that many of the initiatives of the Health department over the years — I know a number of the initiatives that were part of the Health plan which is already 13 years ago — included managing chronic diseases, watching and getting a sense of public health issues, other issues that could be monitored with de-identified information within the community of Saskatchewan. And I applaud those kinds of things that can be done. But let's make sure that how we're doing this is done in a way that carefully protects our health information, and makes sure that all of us as patients in the province of Saskatchewan who are covered by this system feel confident

that everything is being dealt with appropriately.

Now the way the legislation is set up, it gives the cabinet, the Premier, the power to transfer this responsibility to a Crown corporation or an agency of the Government of Saskatchewan. It doesn't specifically name eHealth Saskatchewan. It gives a general transfer of power. I mean that's simpler for obviously some of the administrators, but once again it removes a layer of protection for what I would say is some of the most crucial information that we have as citizens. And I think that we'll want to understand why they've gone to this sort of generic transfer of information rather than having a very clear protection in the legislation around our health information. It's always troubling when there's a fuzziness or there's not very much clarity in the legislation itself.

But practically, Mr. Speaker, this is something that's already been done. They're trying to figure out how to make sure that it's covered appropriately by the legislation, and they may have been overly generous in the power given to the Premier and cabinet. And I think that's a question that we will want to discuss with the officials when we see them in committee.

But at this point, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have no further comments, but I know some of my colleagues will have some comments later. So at this point I would ask to adjourn debate. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Regina Lakeview has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 149, *The Health Administration Amendment Act, 2014*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 144

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 144** — *The Victims of Domestic Violence Amendment Act, 2014* be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and it's my honour to rise to address this particular bill which deals with some very important and serious issues facing a lot of people here in Canada today, victims of . . . It used to be called *The Victims of Domestic Violence Act* and this government is making the change to refer to it as victims of interpersonal violence, which I think is a very appropriate move as we know that violence against women happens in all sorts of contexts, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And the work of legislators in trying to deal with this issue is very serious work and certainly work that needs to continue.

As the minister pointed out in his commentary, the first domestic violence legislation in Canada was introduced here in Saskatchewan back in 1994. Again I remember when the bill was introduced. I was finishing up law school and was dealing

with a lot of issues of women in law, and this was something that was seen as a very progressive piece of legislation at the time and certainly still is. So I'll get into the substance of the bill in a few minutes, Mr. Speaker.

But I just wanted to sort of generally address the issue of interpersonal violence and particularly violence against women as it now is reflected in our society. And as you'll know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, certainly issues of violence against women have been front and foremost in the news recently, first of all starting with missing and murdered Aboriginal women. And we know that there's several hundred, several hundred women who have gone missing over the last few decades, many of whom we don't know what happened to them. They're simply gone. And of course the fear is that they met a violent end at the hands of a perpetrator, and this is borne out in a number of circumstances where the actual perpetrators have been found and brought to justice.

In particular it's touched me in a direct way because one of my very good friends, her daughter-in-law was murdered about 10 years ago now and was missing for several years. And her body was finally located through good police work, and the Saskatoon Police Service worked really hard on finding the perpetrator and the trial is now still ongoing after several years.

I've seen though what's happened when . . . Daleen was her name, Daleen Bosse. She was born Daleen Muskego, and she was murdered. I don't know. I was at her wedding 15 years ago and then when she got murdered it was a real tragedy for the family and certainly for our community. And she left behind a daughter and her name is Faith, and I've been fortunate to see Faith grow up to be a lovely young woman. She just started high school this year and a very talented dancer and a really smart girl and really a nice girl, a pleasant girl to be around. But she's had to grow up without a mother, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and so the victims of violence is a broad reach. Many people are affected by this.

Certainly the whole justice procedure now with bringing the accused to trial has been almost a revictimization. The family, in many ways they've been dragged through a long, tedious court process. Certainly the accused is entitled to his day in court and his rights to be tried appropriately are necessary in the justice system that we currently have, and it's one that I think is required by law, but the victimization of people continues. And then this is just one example of when Daleen was murdered, her body was desecrated and left in a garbage dump basically, and it took four years to find her body. But as I say, it was through the incredible police work that they did and sort of got a confession and actually were led to the location of the body.

I attended her funeral at the Onion Lake First Nation — boy, that's already about six years ago now — and the pain in the community was evident. And her parents are amazing people, Herb and Pauline Muskego, leaders in their community. And Daleen was a university student when she went missing. So I think a lot of times we don't hear the stories about these women who have gone missing and the women that have been murdered.

And it's a serious, serious issue in this day and age when we think we should be protecting people even better than before.

And we know that Aboriginal women are still going missing, that they're still being murdered. And it's hard for me to understand how this can happen, and what is it in the perpetrators' minds when they conduct this kind of violent action against a woman?

And we know Aboriginal women are being singled out. They're marginalized more than any other group in our society, and they're the most vulnerable as well. Many of them are engaging in lifestyles that leave them even more vulnerable, and that's certainly I think something that we need to take more responsibility for as a society and one that we need to step up to the plate, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And certainly these kinds of legislative actions are one step forward, but I feel that when it comes to this kind of violence, interpersonal violence, sometimes legislation is like trying to thread a needle with a bat. Like, we are trying to use the tool of legislation as best we can, but I believe this situation actually goes beyond what we can do in legislative assemblies. It's about how we raise our children. It's about our attitudes towards women and marginalized women. And certainly the fact that men think they can do this is to me terrifying and appalling. And it continues, and we don't seem to be able to stop it.

We can have inquiries and I think inquiries are important vehicles for us as a society to react to issues, but we have had inquiries on this and still the violence continues. So we're missing something somewhere. And I know that as far as the Legislative Assembly is concerned, we are limited with what we can do in the Legislative Assembly. But I just think this is one of the big tragedies of our day when we live in what we consider free society and yet women are being terrorized, victimized, violated in the worst imaginable ways.

And the stories just keep coming up. Another young woman last month in Manitoba, they found her body in the river. We have stories like popular entertainers, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We all know the story of the former host of the radio show *Q*, Jian Ghomeshi, who has just today dropped his lawsuit against his employer, CBC [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation]. Women coming forward with allegations of incredibly violent actions on the part of Mr. Ghomeshi. Again, he hasn't been tried in a court nor has he admitted guilt with these things, so we have to be careful when we talk about it.

But that's part of the problem when it comes to the reporting of these kinds of interpersonal violent encounters that people are experiencing. And as we know, almost all of these experiences are women at the hands of men. There are certainly men against men and women against men, but by and large the large part of violent encounters in our society is the acts of violent aggression by men against women.

We have the story again in the news this week, the sentencing of Clint McLaughlin who pled guilty to kidnapping basically his ex-fiancée when she returned her engagement ring. He took her away for three days, beat her, took her into the woods, and it was through her own stamina that she survived and beat him at what he was trying to do. And she escaped and he eventually succumbed to dehydration, but she escaped and managed to find safety. Again, this was someone who loved her. And it's

always a mystery to me how love can turn into violence in that context.

We hear new allegations against the famous comedian, Bill Cosby. I was listening to a radio program the other day about stories that everyone knew. Everyone knew that there were these women who were experiencing violence at the hands of Mr. Cosby through date-rape drugs, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And the whole notion that a man of his stature, a beloved comedian that was respected by people all over the world, you know, that he was resorting to, according to the allegations of course, he was resorting to the use of date-rape drugs to have sexual encounters with women, it's almost beyond understanding. And I don't know where we've gone wrong in our society where men think that that's okay.

I just want to refer a little bit to an article that was in the, I think it was on CBC's web page. And this was on November 4th, 2014 and it was in response to the allegations that were coming forward against Jian Ghomeshi from CBC. They interviewed a woman that I want to talk about a little bit. This is one of my very, very good friends. Her name is Heather Pocock and she is the assistant director of the Saskatoon Sexual Assault Centre. I've known Heather for I think 26 years now. We've been friends for a long, long time, and Heather has always been involved in work that circles around women's rights and protections of women. And she worked for a long time at the Interval House in Saskatoon, which is where women can go when they are in a dangerous situation and need to leave their homes. So she's been involved in the Sexual Assault Centre for many, in various capacities, for many years.

[16:30]

And currently Heather works with a program that I think is something very, she can be very proud of and certainly has been an invaluable tool for educators in the Saskatoon school system. And what they've done is they've developed a puppet show for grade 4 students and the . . . I'm trying to think of the name of the puppet show. But it's about three young children as puppets who discover that each of them are experiencing things that aren't right. And I think it's either called *It's Free to Be Me* or *It's Okay to Be Me*. And what the puppet show does is it tells grade 4 children that if someone is doing something that makes you uncomfortable, touching you in the wrong way, telling you not to tell anyone, to hide it from your parents, hide it from people that care about you, that it's okay to say this is wrong and to actually disclose it.

This school program has been in existence for probably five or six years now, and I can tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there have been disclosures of abuse from young children as a result of this puppet show. And it's also educating teachers as well because teachers don't really know how to handle it when their young charges are in these kinds of circumstances. So the work of this puppet show is incredible and I think is something, it's in huge demand now. They go back to a lot of schools and they have volunteers who go in and act as the puppets and produce this show in the schools. So I think that kind of work is, maybe will help turn the tide to the kind of horrible, horrific things that are happening to women in our society, in our modern, civilized society. It just blows me away.

Heather also talked about what has happened as a result of the allegations coming forward against Jian Ghomeshi, and what she said is that has triggered a lot of other women to come forward. And certainly there's been a lot of news stories about this since the allegations started. A lot of women are now coming forward with these stories and part of the problem we have . . . And people say, well why don't women just come forward? It's because they don't think they'll be believed, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I heard one prosecutor from the United States talking about a case where a woman had alleged violations by Bill Cosby, and he wasn't able to bring the prosecution forward because there wasn't any evidence other than her word. And when you're . . . You know, there's been a lot of talk about the celebrity types of abuses that are going on. These people feel like they're untouchable. And they want to bring forward or they want to take advantage of women. And again it's beyond me why anyone would want to use a date-rape drug to drug a woman and then take advantage of her sexually. It's just sort of beyond belief, but I know it happens.

And again back to my friend Heather. She deals with the calls that come in at the Sexual Assault Centre. This happens on a regular basis where young women find themselves at a party and they wake up with their clothes off and they don't know what happened. And it's horrifying and it's disgusting, and I can't believe it still happens. But Heather and the work that they do at the Sexual Assault Centre is amazing. They help these women go to the hospital. They work with doctors. They work with police officers.

They talk about date-rape kits where the proper evidence can be gathered when these things happen. Of course the evidence is very time sensitive, but we know that we can use DNA [deoxyribonucleic acid] now to actually identify the perpetrators. And there's more tools available now for women who suffer from those kinds of horrific assaults.

So I really want to pay kudos to folks like Heather Pocock who works at the Sexual Assault Centre and all the other dedicated volunteers and employees from that agency, and of course the police agencies as well and the hospitals and the doctors in the emergency centres. When they have a rape case that comes forward, that work is incredibly important, and we certainly need to support it.

So what this bill actually does in terms of the technical substantive law portion of it, it makes a few changes. And I think these are again reflective of our time, some of the changes that are being made. And certainly the change of the name from domestic violence to interpersonal is very appropriate. We are adding in the definition of interpersonal violence a few new aspects of what it means.

So previously interpersonal violence would mean "any intentional or reckless act or omission that causes bodily harm or damage to property," and of course we're not talking about strictly sexual assaults anymore. Under this bill it's all forms of violence including hitting and physical violence, but it also includes acts or threatened acts that cause a reasonable fear of bodily harm, forced confinement where people are not allowed to leave, sexual abuse, obviously, but the new definition that's

being added is harassment or deprivation of necessities.

I think, Mr. Speaker, you can well imagine those kinds of circumstances where a woman is being violated against just by being deprived of the necessities of life. And this is something I think Heather could tell you story after story about. So I think that's appropriate to add those new clauses to the definition.

We see that subsections (1) to (3) of section 3 are being changed, and in particular these deal with emergency intervention orders where an individual can go to a court without having had a trial saying, that person assaulted me. You can get intervention orders when you are fearful. And I know this was the innovation in 1994 that came in. Before, the assaulter would have had to have been found guilty before you could get an order protecting you. But in this case, you can go to a judge and get this emergency intervention order.

It's been a useful tool, although limited in certain applications because many of the violators don't give a dang whether or not you can get an order against him or not. I mean they'll go ahead. And I think Clint McLaughlin is an example of that, where I don't think the idea that he could get an intervention order would have even entered his brain at that point. But it is a tool and it's available. So what the amendments are now is, they're adding some things that the Justice of the Peace can consider when ordering one of these orders.

He can also now consider the exposure of a child to interpersonal violence and, Mr. Speaker, that's a huge issue because, you know — and I think Heather could tell you many stories about this — most men who commit interpersonal violence were victims of interpersonal violence as children. And that's a known fact. And it's one where children, if children see that behaviour when they're small, the likelihood of them committing that kind of activity is much greater. So this type of order will prevent, will allow a person to be removed from that violent situation if children are being exposed.

There's also other factors: recent change in circumstances for the respondent such as loss of employment or release from incarceration. So I think that's a good addition to the list. And I mean really, often when somebody loses their job, they're much more emotional and distraught. And if it's a respondent who has a history of a violent connection with another person, then that might be a time when an order is necessary.

They've also added a controlling behaviour by the respondent and a particular vulnerability of the victim. Now, Mr. Speaker, you can again imagine circumstances where that would happen. I think of newcomers to Canada where language is a barrier for many people who are victims of interpersonal violence. And so I think this type of order where we can, the judge can order intervention and remove the respondent from the situation is . . . These are good additions to the list.

There's a new section 2 that's being created here, section (2.1) in section 3, and it's saying when the Justice of the Peace is deciding whether or not an emergency intervention order should be made, he is allowed, he must not be precluded by making the order in a number of circumstances, for example, whether the respondent is temporarily absent from the residence at the time of application for an order. And I can see where this could be a

problem for somebody who needs an intervention order. If for whatever reason the respondent is away for a couple of days, maybe that's the perfect time to get the order, and not when there's an immediate threat. But it gives the victim some time to sort of protect themselves from the respondent.

"Whether the victim is temporarily residing in an emergency shelter or other safe place." If the victim has left the home or left the residence because of the violence, that shouldn't prevent a judge from considering making an order.

"Whether criminal charges have been or may be laid against the respondent; whether the victim has a history of returning to the relationship or of cohabiting with the respondent after occurrences of interpersonal violence." Mr. Speaker, this is an incredibly important part of the cycle of violence. Very often victims go back to the place where the violence occurred. There's reams of social science about why that happens. And what this bill is saying is that that shouldn't be held against them. That isn't a reason to not give them an order to protect them if the Justice of the Peace feels that it's appropriate to provide that order. It's certainly something I think that causes consternation with the people that deal with these.

And I know even at Interval House, I remember Heather talking about women who had been back three, four times after having been beaten by their partner, and the same partner. And the questions arises, why does she go back? Why is this happening again? And much has to do with the cycle of violence. And again the victims are also part of the cycle. I mean they've been the recipients of violence, but they may have also seen it as children going back. And I don't think we can confuse that with feelings of attachment to someone. And certainly if you have children together, if you're economically tied to that person, you want to make it work and women go back for various reasons.

So I think that's really important that that is included and I think this new addition of subsection (2.1) to section 3 is a valuable tool for justices of the peace, as limited as these orders can be.

The other change that's made in subsection (3) was to include electronic communication as a form of prohibited communication. So very specifically now we are saying in the bill that they are restrained from communicating even through electronics. And you can imagine nowadays with all we've heard about violence, like Rehtaeh Parsons from Nova Scotia who was bullied through the Internet, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it was through the Facebook comments. And I mean that kind of thing is very likely to happen in the situation where you have a victim and a respondent where texting — they have each other's cell number — that can happen, or Facebook or emails and that kind of violence, and that kind of continuation of the violence can occur through these electronic communications. I think it's a very important addition to this particular clause.

There's a new clause in subsection (3), and this is interesting. It says, "An emergency intervention order may contain any or all of the following provisions." And this is:

(e) a provision restraining the respondent from attending at or near or entering any specified place that is attended

regularly by the victim or other family members, including the residence, property, business, school or place of employment of the victim or other family members.

So now not only is the respondent prohibited from going to the residence of the victim, but also where the victim and his or her family members attend. And I think that's another tool of intimidation that respondents have used, where they would go to the school where the children are or maybe the church and they would continue the harassment and the violence through attending at these places. So I think this is a good addition to the bill as well.

There is a few minor changes in subsection 7(1). The process that's being followed here is the entire section is being repealed and a new version is being substituted. But really, the changes are quite minor to that subsection. Again I don't know why but the drafters have decided the word where is inappropriate and they've changed it to if. So that's one of the substitutions. They also include electronic contact in subsection (c) of 7(1) which is, as I indicated earlier, I think something that is appropriate.

And there's a change to subsection (g) which grants . . . This is a subsection where the victims can get an order for assistance so it can make the respondent pay for some of their expenses. It can allow them to be accompanied to go back to the residence to gather their things. And in this case, they can give possession of things like a vehicle, a chequebook, bank cards, children's clothing, medical insurance cards, identification documents, keys, other necessary personal effects. And the change that's being added here is, "or other banking instruments." So not just bank cards but other banking instruments. So I would imagine safety box keys, perhaps credit cards, or maybe chequebooks, I would assume. So I'm not exactly sure what the other banking instruments would be but there was obviously a request for that kind of addition to the section.

[16:45]

So again, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think the issue of violence against women is one of the most difficult and threatening issues facing women in Canada and across the world, of course. But where we think we're a civilized and modern nation and we still have women going missing and getting murdered just because they're women, it's disturbing. And I think it's something that, I'm appreciative of the minister bringing this bill forward. I think, you know as I said, legislation only goes part of the way. And we need to find ways to actually cause a change of thinking or something. I don't know what it would take to have men stop beating on women.

I struggle with that and I give great kudos to the folks like my friend Heather in the sexual assault services in Saskatoon, certainly all of the shelters that are now being provided. And I know in Melfort a new shelter was opened last year. I think it's a great addition to the services that women have access to. And I, like you know, I can't say enough about providing women a safe space. Many women feel helpless. They feel nobody will listen. They feel that nobody will believe them when they talk about these things that are happening to them. We see that coming out in the news.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I think we have to continue to fix it. I

don't know how else to describe it. At that point I think, I know my other colleagues are going to want to comment on this as well, and so I would like to adjourn debate at this point on Bill No. 144, *An Act to amend The Victims of Domestic Violence Act and to make a consequential amendment to The Adult Guardianship and Co-decision-making Act*.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Nutana has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 144, *The Victims of Domestic Violence Amendment Act, 2014*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 152

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 152 — *The Victims of Domestic Violence Consequential Amendment Act, 2014/Loi de 2014 portant modification corrélative à la loi intitulée The Victims of Domestic Violence Consequential Amendment Act, 2014*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm just going to rise now to speak to Bill No. 152. As we know, a number of these bills that are being brought forward that are being amended affect other bills. And in this case we see that it wasn't able to be included in the bill I just spoke to, Bill 140.

I'm not sure about the numbering of this because we were going from 144 to 152. Normally these bills follow, so I don't know if something happened and maybe in the Ministry of Justice there was a realization later . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Maybe it was the Finance minister. That could be. Although we know the Finance minister's pretty busy these days with the mid-term report that we're anxiously waiting to see how we're doing. If it ever comes, of course. We're not sure when the mid-term report will be made available. I think it comes usually sooner than now, so it's definitely overdue.

But in terms of this, the amendment to *The Victims of Domestic Violence Amendment Act*, what we see is that there's a bilingual law that's being impacted by this, and that is *The Queen's Bench Act of 1998* or, in French, *Loi de 1998 sur la Cour du Banc de la Reine*. And of course because it's in a bilingual format, we know that a separate bill needs to be created to deal with the bilingual nature of that. And all that it's doing is amending section 2 of *The Queen's Bench Act* which is referring to the previous bill that I spoke to, and the title is changing. So rather than the victims of domestic violence, we are talking about the victims of interpersonal violence in that Act.

Again I just can't help but make one comment on the importance of this issue and the fact that we are using legislation to deal with it as best we can. I think it behooves all of us to go beyond the actual legislative tools that are available

to us and work with groups like Sexual Assault Services of Saskatchewan. And victims of crime, I mean generally there's good agencies out there. There's some good NGOs [non-governmental organization] out there that are really working hard to make lives better for people who are suffering from this type of behaviour.

As I said, it's a systemic problem, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's one that comes from being children that are exposed to violence. So if we can somehow protect children, I think maybe eventually the adults will stop displaying and continuing with this type of behaviour. And maybe that's it. It's getting at the children. I know I have friends who work with Social Services that have to apprehend children and put them in safe places, and it's a disturbing piece of work that has to be done.

But at this point I know we want to get through some more debate here today, so I think I would move to adjourn debate on Bill 152, *The Victims of Domestic Violence Consequential Amendment Act, 2014*.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Nutana has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 152, *The Victims of Domestic Violence Consequential Amendment Act, 2014*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 145

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 145 — *The Fee Waiver Act*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Thank you for allowing me to enter here this afternoon into debate on Bill No. 145. I've read both the minister's comments and I've also spent significant time reading the member for Nutana's comments respective to Bill No. 145, *The Fee Waiver Act*.

And in fact I noticed that the member from Nutana had an awful lot to say on this matter and some awfully thoughtful items. And you know, I thought it was good, because certainly the premise of this bill or the objective that's set out by the minister seems to be an important one, which is to improve access to the justice system for Saskatchewan people.

I thought, though, that the member for Nutana sort of put the broader context into this whole piece which is that, you know, while those are important pieces and we need to make sure we understand what's specifically being put forward by government, that there is more meaningful actions in a coordinated fashion around poverty in general and making sure that individuals aren't in these marginalized, very difficult positions that make the legal system not accessible, but also life very difficult and in many ways not healthy for so many people. So I thought those comments around poverty were important ones.

And I know it's important too that, you know, there was mention of a poverty reduction strategy in the Throne Speech, something I was actually pleased to see, but somewhat skeptical of, Mr. Speaker. And certainly what we're looking for now on that front is the meat on the bones as it relates to that plan, and then the actions that really can't be delayed for many families that are marginalized, many families that are vulnerable.

And I think of the justice system in general. Certainly it is very important for us to find ways of making sure that it's accessible to all, because in the end that's your ability to have your own sets of rights. It's about dignity. It's about freedoms, and very critical for all people to have access to that system. And the reality right now is that's simply not the case. So certainly if this bill, because the bill is not very clear right now on the specific actions that are being taken, but if this bill makes improvements on that front, that's a good thing.

But what we'd like to see is, you know, a broader discussion and movement around poverty. That's important. But we'd also, on this bill specifically, we'll be engaging with stakeholders within the legal community to ensure that this opportunity to open up this Act has allowed government to be as meaningful as they can be in making the changes.

So what else was considered? What are some of the other approaches that could have been taken? What are other provinces doing on these fronts? And were all those aspects considered in bringing forth this piece of legislation? Certainly far too often we see this government simply ramming forward with their own legislative agenda, their own ideas, and then having to recognize that they didn't understand the consequences of some of those decisions, not working with those who are directly involved.

So it's our expectation that the Law Reform Commission was involved in this. It's our expectation that the legal community, it's our expectation that those that represent those that are dealing with poverty, those that are marginalized, those that are vulnerable, those that need better access to the courts would have been engaged in this process.

We see some of those consequences of legislation that's derived but without consultation here today, where we see the Minister of Education now having to retract a promise that they had made around . . . in education, because they hadn't bothered to check with teachers or school boards or the education sector as to the consequences of that. And so they're making some changes there.

Certainly, you know, on this front, I was surprised that the government didn't also fix the big mistake that they made in going forward and monkeying around with the school day and hours of work and creating a bunch of disparities for educators across Saskatchewan, instead of working in a collectively bargained fashion with the educators of this province, and instead of having the more meaningful discussion about engagement as a whole. But that's another point, but it speaks directly to the importance of front-end consultation to get right legislation that's put forward.

Certainly when we're talking about accessibility of the justice system, there's many organizations, many people that support

that accessibility. And I think of, certainly Legal Aid plays a very important role in Saskatchewan. I know CLASSIC [Community Legal Assistance Services for Saskatoon Inner City Inc.] plays a very important role. I know Pro Bono Law society and Nicole Sarauer and the leadership they provide to so many is very critical and very important. And of course many of these endeavours are enabled and supported by both the Law Society of Saskatchewan, Law Society of Canada, and many, many lawyers in private practice across Saskatchewan who give of their time to ensure some accessibility to many.

But certainly the access to the legal system isn't sufficient as it stands. It needs to be improved. There's changes that are brought forward here, but we need to make sure that they're right. It's going to be very important to understand very specifically what the regulations are on this front, because they haven't been spelled out by the minister. That's going to be an important piece that we'll be tracking, and doing so with stakeholders to make sure we get this right for Saskatchewan people.

And it's also important that an element of flexibility is left within the justice system and to make sure that what's put in place isn't too prescriptive and preventing common sense in special circumstances to be considered.

So those will be the pieces that we'll be tracking as we move forward, and we'll be certainly engaging in consultation with the legal community. Certainly we support the premise of making the legal system more accessible, because right now it's highly unfair. But you know, I just don't . . . you know, in judging from the comments from the member from Nutana in understanding some of the circumstances that many are facing. I'm not sure that this bill provides the kind of accessibility that Saskatchewan people truly deserve, recognizing how important access to the justice system is to families across our province and to those that are vulnerable.

And I heard the member from Nutana speaking directly to domestic violence as one example, and certainly it's an example of a circumstance into . . . that victims of domestic violence certainly need to have a very accessible justice system that's responsive to their needs. And we need to do a better job of removing those barriers to access that justice system.

But at this point in time I'll adjourn debate on Bill No. 145, certainly looking forward to engagement with the legal community and stakeholders and partners, and time as well for some specificity from the minister through committee.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Regina Rosemont has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 145, the fee waiver amendment Act. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion? Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Agreed. Carried. It now being very near the time of recess, I think this Assembly will recess until 7 p.m. this evening.

[The Assembly recessed from 17:00 until 19:00.]

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