



FOURTH SESSION - TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

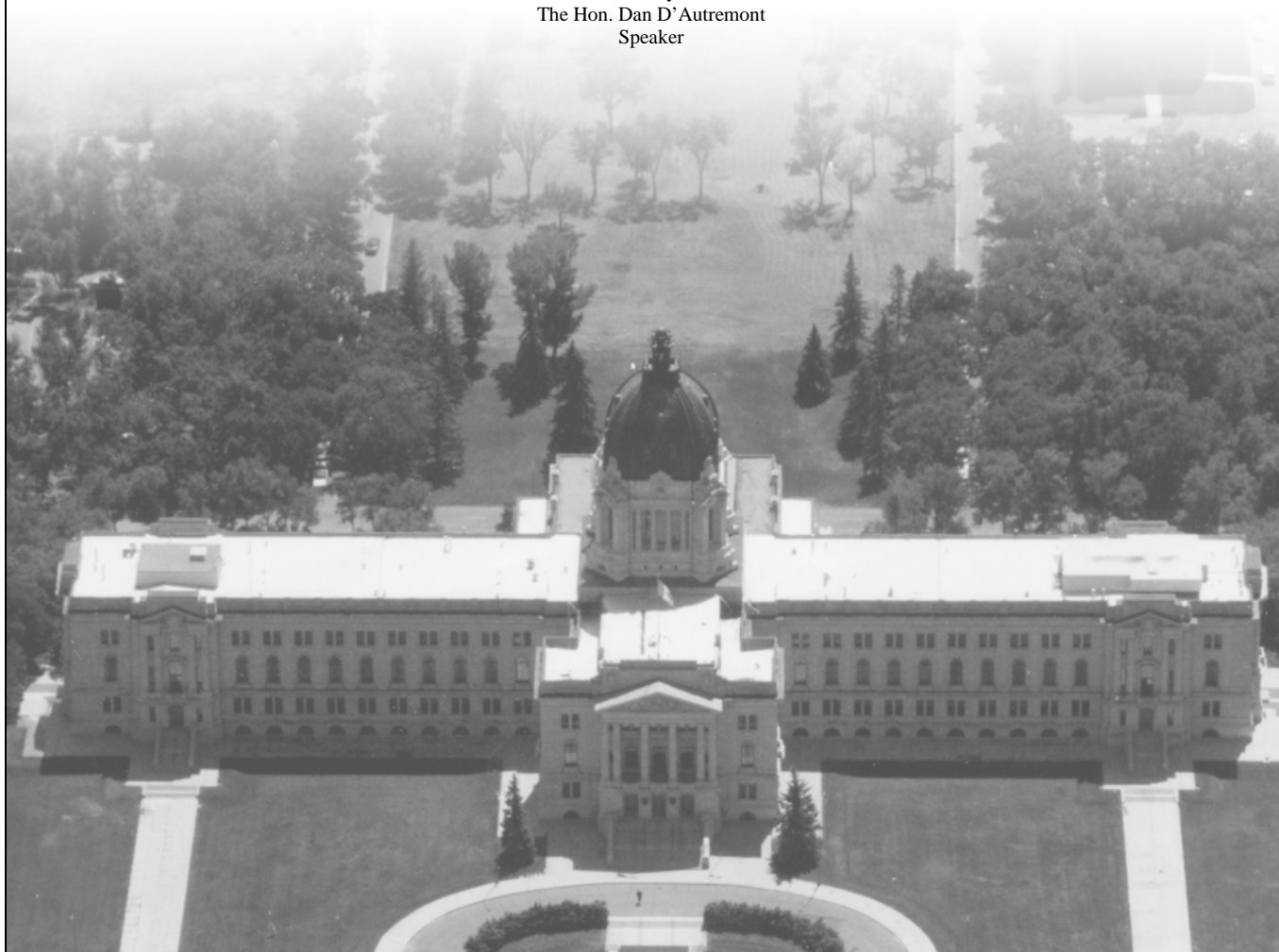
of the

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 member for Regina Dewdney.

Mr. Makowsky: — Thanks, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure this afternoon to introduce to you and all members of the Assembly, a group of students from the Fresh Start and the Quiet High classes, and it takes place at Campus Regina Public. They're in the west gallery today. Their teachers with them today are Karen McIver and Dana Sveinbjornson. I'd ask all members to help me welcome them to the Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to join with the member opposite and welcome these teachers and students that are here today, the students from Victoria campus. I actually had the honour to teach at Victoria campus for a few years at one point when I was teaching. It was a wonderful spot, and certainly I wish these students from Fresh Start and Quiet High nothing but the best in their studies, their time here today, and in their futures.

It's also a pleasure to welcome the teachers that are here today, Dana as well as Karen McIver. Karen is a friend. She's also married to Marc Spooner, Dr. Marc Spooner, an educational leader in the province. And Karen used to lead a very impressive Trek School as well. She's an avid outdoorsperson, an awesome canoer, and just a really good person. So it's a pleasure to welcome these fine teachers and these students to their Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to all members of this Legislative Assembly, I'd like to introduce in your gallery Evan Beaulieu from the W.P. Sandin High School in Shellbrook. Evan's a grade 12 student there, and he's part of the six-man football team that had an incredible year after about 25 years of not having a team. Four or five years ago we restarted it. They made it to the semifinal provincials this year, Mr. Speaker.

As well, Evan is the president of the Student Leadership Council at the high school there where they'll be hosting the provincial Student Leadership Conference next fall, Mr. Speaker. So he's busy with his group organizing that. And as well, Evan took part in the Forum For Young Canadians, where he spent five days in Ottawa, toured the parliament buildings, and spent some time with the Saskatchewan MPs [Member of Parliament] out there. And he most definitely would be one of Saskatchewan's finest young men and our province's next generation of leaders. So I ask all members to join me in welcoming Evan to his Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are some special guests seated in your gallery that I'd like to introduce to you and through you to all members, Mr. Speaker. Seated in your gallery is my wife, Ruth Eliason, who is here with our daughters Ingrid and Clara. Gudrun is in the legislature as well, but she's napping in the office, Mr. Speaker, and didn't want to be disturbed. They're in town to take in some of Agribition and to visit dad. So I'd ask all members to join me in welcoming Ruth, Clara, and Ingrid to the Assembly. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you to all members of the Assembly, I'm pleased to welcome and introduce in your gallery Ray Joubert, who's the registrar of the Saskatchewan College of Pharmacists. He's here today to hear introduction of *The Health Information Protection Amendment Act*.

Mr. Speaker, Ray played an integral part in the legislation and in the amendment. And I want to thank him, as well as all the members of the health records protection working group for working to, working hard to further protect people's personal health information. And so I'd ask all members to join with me in welcoming Ray to his Legislative Assembly.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to join with the Minister of Health in welcoming Mr. Joubert here today. He's been here a couple of times, a few bills before us with respect to pharmacists. And so I look forward to connecting with Mr. Joubert at some point in time, too. But I'd ask all members to join with me in welcoming him to his Assembly as well today.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, with apologies to my colleague.

I'd ask all members to join with me in welcoming an individual seated in the east gallery. I'm speaking of Mr. Benji Hazen. Benji is a director with the Regina Multicultural Council. Of course they've just had the 40th anniversary celebration of the multicultural Act.

He's one heck of a Romanian ambassador, Mr. Speaker. He does a lot for the Romanian community and, by extension, throughout the community here in Regina, but also takes a very keen interest in the world around him and is a good friend and neighbour of mine in north central Regina. So it's really good to see Benji Hazen here today in his Legislative Assembly. Please welcome him.

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 defaulting 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 and then rent the units at full market price. You know, Mr. Speaker, a local political commentator wrote this about the government allowing a private developer to default on fixed-price contracts, and I quote:

It's the latest indication that the Premier seems unwilling to do anything to displease business, even when he knows business is dead wrong and even if it means his government failing on its promise to deliver low-income housing.

Mr. Speaker, 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 as it relates to the unsafe conditions on Dewdney Avenue created by that government. The petitioners are . . . And you know, the members can shout from their feet if they want, but what I would do is take this issue seriously. What's needed certainly is a timely west bypass, but there's urgent interim actions that are required to ensure safety for all on Dewdney Avenue. And the risks that that government has created in their failure to respond has been entirely unacceptable. 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 from concerned constituents of mine throughout the riding. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition Whip.

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 and 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 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 Creighton, Denare Beach, and La Ronge. I so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

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

Wherefore the 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.

And, Mr. Speaker, the people that have signed this petition are all 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 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. They also point out 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 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 that 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 submit.

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. The petitioners in the prayer that reads as follows:

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

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by citizens from Regina and Saskatoon. I so present.

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

Mr. Nilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to present a petition on behalf of Saskatchewan people who are concerned about the privatization of jobs in the correctional service. We have a public correctional system. The government's wanting to privatize the food service jobs. We know that this is a first step in looking at how they can privatize other aspects of the correctional system, and we know that there are a substantial number of benefits of running a private system. So, Mr. Speaker:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly cause the government to cancel its privatization in the corrections and young offenders facilities in Saskatchewan.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to present a petition in support of better health care in Saskatchewan. And the people who have signed this petition want to bring to the attention of the Assembly the following: that emergency room wait times in Saskatchewan have doubled since 2010. The government's own statistics show that patient safety is getting worse, whereas chronic short-staffing is a problem throughout our health care system. Here is the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the following action: to cause the provincial government to

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, this petition is signed by individuals from my constituency of Saskatoon Nutana. I so present.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

[13:45]

Angels Corner Recognizes Victims of Violence Against Women

Mr. McCall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On Tuesday afternoon, yesterday, the Scott Collegiate school community gathered together to unveil a memorial called Angels Corner to recognize the victims of violence against women. Made up of four benches that were built and designed by the students in consultation with elders, it is a place for people to gather and to remember. At the school assembly marking the event, students and community guests talked about the cycle of violence that affects far too many women in our communities and took a pledge to never commit, excuse, or remain silent about violence against women.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize a number of the students who helped make Angels Corner a reality, including Jackson Ahpay, Alexandria Allary, Cree Crowe, Jeret Dustyhorn, Corrina Elliot, Thomas Giles, Marcus Hill, Justine Lonechild, Elyas Nippi, Keegan Oliver-Gress, Keshina Paquachan, Blake Sabit, Vincent Tapaquon, Maynard Whitehawk, and Adam Windigo.

I ask all members to join me in commending the students, staff, teachers like Ian Temple, Elder Noel Starblanket, Principal Shannon Fayant, and community members who have worked hard to ensure that those we have lost are not forgotten and for giving us all this opportunity to renew our commitment to ending the cycle of violence in our community, in our city, and in our province.

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

Solar Technology Projects

Mr. Lawrence: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in the House today to announce a groundbreaking green initiative between the Saskatchewan government and the First Nations Power Authority. Yesterday FNPA [First Nations Power Authority], along with its strategic partners, Lockheed Martin Canada and FHQ Developments, held a ribbon-cutting ceremony in Swift Current. This ceremony celebrated FNPA's first solar powered generation endeavour, a strategic off-grid and renewable demonstration project. We were at the Home Inn & Suites in Swift Current where the solar project will offset power consumption for the hotel. In the lobby of the hotel there is a monitor to watch exactly what the solar panels are doing.

This is a new solar technology and it is specifically designed to endure Canada's climate. The Government of Saskatchewan was pleased to provide almost \$45,000 for the project. This funding came from the Métis Engagement Projects Fund. The information collected in southern Saskatchewan will benefit projects planned in the North as well. This is both innovative and green. This project is just the first. The FNPA has just announced that they will be doing two school projects. They will be found in Fond-du-Lac and Hatchet Lake.

Mr. Speaker, I would invite all members of the Assembly in congratulating the FNPA, Lockheed Martin Canada, and FHQ Developments on their innovative work done in Swift Current. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Saskatchewan Farmers Awarded Transformation Business Prize

Ms. Sproule: — Monsieur le Président, je tiens aujourd'hui à féliciter deux fransaskois impressionnants, Dean and Sylvia Kreutzer. Agriculteurs à Over the Hill Orchards ici en Saskatchewan, ils sont les lauréats du prix Entreprise de transformation à la sixième édition des Lauriers des petites et moyennes entreprises. Les Lauriers sont présentés par le Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité du Canada, une organisation pour la promotion des entreprises francophones situées à l'extérieur du Québec.

Nous savons que les entreprises francophones sont une partie intégrale de nos communautés francophones. Je suis très fière de tous de ces entreprises et leurs accomplissements. Je suis une descendante des pionniers fransaskois. Je sais que les entreprises, les familles, et les écoles sont très importantes pour la préservation de la culture fransaskoise dans notre province.

[Translation: Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate today two impressive Fransaskois, Dean and Sylvia Kreutzer. Farmers at Over the Hill Orchards here in Saskatchewan, they are the winners of the Transformation Business Prize at the sixth annual Small and Medium Business Awards. The awards are presented by the Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité du Canada, an organization that promotes francophone businesses outside of Quebec.

We know that francophone businesses are an integral part of our francophone communities. I am very proud of all these businesses and their accomplishments. I am a descendant of Fransaskois pioneers. I know that businesses, families, and schools are all very important for the preservation of Fransaskois culture in our province.]

And, Mr. Speaker, for my hon. colleagues who might be wondering what I'm talking about, I am recognizing Dean and Sylvia Kreutzer of Over the Hill Orchards near Lumsden. They were recently awarded the Transformation Business Prize at the sixth annual Small and Medium Business Awards presented by the network of economic development and employability Canada, a group that promotes francophone businesses outside of Quebec, and they were the only Saskatchewan group that won an award.

So I ask that all députés [Translation: members] will join me in sending our félicitations [Translation: congratulations] to Dean and Sylvia and wish them many more years of success and awards at Over the Hill Orchards. Merci, monsieur le Président [Translation: Thank you, Mr. Speaker].

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Melfort.

Melfort Comets Win Provincial Football Title

Mr. Phillips: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, after a disappointing loss in the 2013 provincial semifinal, the Melfort Comets were committed to achieving their goal of a 2014 provincial championship. The returning players lifted weights and trained throughout the off-season, and two of the Comets played in the Football Canada Cup in July with Team Saskatchewan (White), while others attended the Huskie and Ram developmental camps.

Prior to the start of the season, the grade 12 students gathered with the coaches and decided Finish What We've Started is the theme for the season. Throughout the year, the players were committed to improve day in and day out on offence and on defence. During the season, the defence just allowed one touchdown per game on average, and the starting offence scored on average 40 points a game.

Following a victory over Carpenter High School Spartans at home in provincial quarter-finals, the Comets defeated the Rebels 48-14 in Delisle and the Wolverines 46 to 20 in Warman to claim the 3A nine-man provincial football championship. Mr. Speaker, I would ask that all members join me in congratulating head coach, Dave Rogers, and the entire 2014 Melfort Comets on a very successful year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Kelvington-Wadena.

Foam Lake Resident Receives Community Recognition Award

Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, Ukrainian people have been integral in the development of Saskatchewan and adding to the multiculturalism of our communities. Foam Lake in my constituency is known for holding the largest Ukrainian festival in rural Saskatchewan.

Recently the Saskatchewan provincial council of Ukrainian Canadian Congress held their Nation Builders and Community Recognition Awards Banquet. Established in 1995, these awards recognize individuals who have made significant contributions to the Ukrainian community, to the province, and to Canada as a whole. I'm very proud to say that this year the recipient of the Community Recognition Award for volunteerism was a constituent of mine, Sylvia Myall of Foam Lake, for her work on the Veselka committee.

Sylvia was key in finding and booking entertaining as well as volunteering at the annual Ukrainian festival. She worked at the Ukrainian Museum of Canada when she attended the U of S [University of Saskatchewan] where she obtained her B.A. [Bachelor of Arts] and her B.Ed. [Bachelor of Education]. Sylvia also taught Ukrainian in high school as well as summer

classes at the Mohyla Institute. She has translated documents of the archival departments of the Redemptorist Fathers in Yorkton and for the UCC [Ukrainian Canadian Congress] Saskatchewan into English for newly arrived immigrants. Sylvia has brought new displays of Ukrainian arts and crafts, costumes, embroidery, and tools to the Veselka festival. She has also ran workshops on pysanka writing and the baking of traditional breads.

I would ask this Assembly to join me today in congratulating Sylvia on her award and thank her for her many, many hours of volunteer work. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Saskatchewan Rivers.

Spruce Home Seniors Club Celebrates Anniversary

Hon. Ms. Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise to acknowledge the 25th anniversary of the Spruce Home Seniors Club who reside in the Sask Rivers constituency. On March 23rd, 1989, a group of volunteers in Spruce Home decided to form a seniors club that met frequently to socialize, exercise, and participate in numerous activities. That same year the club became incorporated as a non-profit organization under the umbrella of the Saskatchewan Seniors Association.

Mr. Speaker, that club is still running today with many active members. Some of the members of the Spruce Home Seniors Club are Louise Elliott, Delia Demetric, the Czychowski family, Geneva Chloarec, George and Alice Cheal, Ethel Cartier, Mary Bolton, Ron Fremont, Grace Fremont, and Dark and Diane Dempster. In recent years, these members have played cards, taken bus tours, attended dinner theatres, Rawlinson Centre shows, invitationals, and drama nights. As well they do regular exercising, bowling, and golfing.

Mr. Speaker, these members are very active, both in their community and in the activities in which they participate. This group engages its members to help with their physical and mental health. I am so pleased to have such healthy and enthusiastic seniors in my constituency. I ask all members to join me in congratulating the Spruce Home Seniors Club on their celebration of the 25th anniversary.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Melville-Saltcoats.

Study Shows Reduced Wait Times

Mr. Bjornerud: — Mr. Speaker, I'm proud to announce that our government's efforts to better surgical care is translating into shorter wait times for patients. According to a Fraser Institute study on wait times released today, Saskatchewan has the second-shortest wait times in Canada. Mr. Speaker, compare that to the NDP [New Democratic Party], who in 2007 had the longest wait times in the country.

Waits of 26 weeks or more are less frequent in Saskatchewan at 3 per cent of patients, compared to the most frequent in 2007 at 26 per cent. We have the shortest specialist-to-treatment waits in the country at seven weeks. In 2007 that wait was 16 weeks. We reduced the waits from referral by a GP [general

practitioner] to appointment with a specialist from 11 weeks to seven in only one year. We have half the wait from appointments with specialists to treatment, from 14 weeks to seven in only a year.

Mr. Speaker, surgical wait times in Saskatchewan are steadily dropping. Members on that side of the House have presented no plan for health care improvement but revert back to the tired NDP tactics of fearmongering and incomplete information. Mr. Speaker, there is more work to be done but our government's action to increase surgeries and drive down wait times is showing results for patients. We thank the health regions and health care workers for their work in putting patients first. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Fatality in Care Facility

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, Jessie Sellwood was 88 years old. She was living in Sunset Extencare here in Regina and she died in excruciating pain last Christmas. Her death was initially deemed a natural death, but her family fought for the truth to come out and the coroner, the coroner eventually ruled that Jessie's death was indeed premature. It was related to a fall and an initially undiagnosed broken bone and pain that wasn't properly managed. Mr. Speaker, Jessie's family is here today because they want accountability for her and they want the system to be fixed. And I hope, Mr. Speaker, I hope that this government will finally, finally listen.

My question is for the Premier. Why do we keep hearing about families who have to fight for the truth about how their loved ones died in care facilities?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member opposite for the question. And our thoughts are with the family, especially if they indeed had to go through a process to determine the actual cause of death.

Mr. Speaker, these questions the Leader of the Opposition asks are important ones. They're ones that the government would ask. Mr. Speaker, I would note as well, I'm sure, the Minister of Health has already indicated to me he would be happy to meet with the family to discuss this further. The questions that the Leader of the Opposition has asked are questions that we often ask as well. For example, Mr. Speaker, we ask the question about individual cases like this in the context of the additional resources that the government has provided. And these are points of fact now, Mr. Speaker, that our government has invested in more care aids, that we've hired more nurses into the system, many more, over 2,000 more nurses.

The fact of the matter is we have increased capital spending in long-term care. And so to the extent there are any situations like this, it's always unacceptable, but I think there's even more questions prevalent when we know that additional resources have been provided. I don't know in particular about Sunset Extencare for example, Mr. Speaker, about their funding or its

resource historical situation, but I do know in the case of Santa Maria we were able to point out yesterday that the government, our government has increased funding to Santa Maria by 81 per cent. There's roughly the same complement of staff there for the same patients.

And so these questions are very important, and we need to continue to invest more in the resources. We need to talk also about model of care in all of the institutions and how we can ensure this isn't happening. We'll talk a little bit about what we're doing in government with respect to falls in long-term care in answer perhaps to the next question I anticipate from the member opposite.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, it's not a question of if they needed to fight, they had to fight. They had to fight to get to the truth and to have the record corrected. On Christmas Eve last year Jessie fell while not being properly transferred. She had two separate trips to the hospital by ambulance. They missed a broken bone in her leg the first time despite complaints of pain.

Mr. Speaker, her family wrote to the government and this is what they said: "Staff were unable to manage her pain yet it took 18 hours for new medication to be ordered and administered. Jessie's pain remained extreme until she passed away 12 hours later." Mr. Speaker, I met with this family earlier today. And they say they can't understand how this isn't a big deal, how this isn't a concern. And I fully agree with this family.

My question's for the Premier. When someone falls, when broken bones are missed, when someone dies prematurely in extreme pain, shouldn't that be a big deal? Why did her family have to fight to put this on government's agenda?

[14:00]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Well, Mr. Speaker, no one's debating about whether this is a big deal. It doesn't take the fight to determine the cause the death to get it on the government's agenda. It sounds like the process very much let the family down, the family that lost Jessie in the end, Mr. Speaker, and we'd want to find out the details around that.

The Hon. Leader of the Opposition references that there was a transfer involved, so I'm not sure if there was an ambulance service that was on hand at the time of the fall. I will say this: falls for our seniors has been a priority for the government in the system when, in 2011, the government together with the health regions implemented a province-wide protocol to reduce falls. We're seeing some progress now. We're seeing 25 per cent less falls across the province. Obviously still too many, but we are seeing progress.

With respect to the situation that's been presented today, the case of this family, obviously it is a big deal. I think the Minister of Health would be happy to meet with the family immediately after question period. We would like to assist them in getting answers to their questions.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, the Premier and the Health minister have repeatedly argued that every resident in care facilities has individualized care plans. But we think back to earlier this week, Mr. Speaker, when the care aids from Santa Maria came, and they said that those care plans are not even kept up-to-date.

And that's exactly what happened in Jessie's case, her care plan wasn't updated even though her needs changed significantly. There were changes in Jessie's mobility, but her transfer protocol was not adjusted. And on Christmas Eve, Jessie fell while being transferred inappropriately. This is what her family also wrote, Mr. Speaker: "The circumstances around her death were preventable, yet she died in excruciating pain, and there's just something morally wrong with that."

My question is for the Premier. Is he hearing the same pattern of events in our health care system as I'm hearing? When will this government finally start taking this seriously?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this is something that we do as a government take very seriously, certainly with our partners in the Ministry of Health, the Regional Health Authorities, and individual facilities, Mr. Speaker.

That's why for example, as the Premier has mentioned, in 2011 we put forward a falls collaborative to every health region, in partnership with the health region that is seeing significant reduction in falls in our facilities. But we know that we still have work to do on that, Mr. Speaker. That's why we've invested in the dollars to help equip our long-term care facilities more properly when it comes to having the equipment required that is necessary to lift and reposition people, Mr. Speaker. But certainly we take this very seriously.

We are also going to be sending out a reminder to all facilities, in all regions, of what is the expectation when it comes to things like transferring so that they can properly ensure that their staff know what is required of them when doing things like transfers.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, we know that the needs are great on the front lines. But Jessie's family came to the legislature today because of their concern, Mr. Speaker, with what they had to go through to get to the bottom of what happened to their mother. Initially, they said Jessie died of natural causes, Mr. Speaker. But her family fought for the truth and the coroner eventually ruled that Jessie died prematurely. Her death was related to the fall, the initially undiagnosed broken bone, and the excruciating pain that wasn't properly managed.

Mr. Speaker, even while Jessie's family tried to get information about the cause of her injuries, the facility claimed that Jessie must have tried to have gotten up on her own. This is what the family wrote: "The Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region failed her and so did her province."

My question is for the Premier. Why should grieving families have to fight to actually get the facts about how their loved ones were injured and how they died in care facilities?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Again thank you, Mr. Speaker. Certainly this is a case where I would be pleased to learn more from the family. I don't have prior information to the specific circumstances around this case, Mr. Speaker. I'm not able to therefore speak to what happened in terms of misdiagnosing after the fall, Mr. Speaker, or even in fact what happened, that the fall did take place in the first place. But I can tell the members of the House and the public that this is something that we do take very seriously.

As I said, we not only have put forward a falls collaborative as one of the things that we know that we need to improve in long-term care — since 2011, a 25 per cent reduction — but we know that there are still too many falls within long-term care. That's why this is something that in our long-term care facilities we manage and we monitor and we measure on a daily and on a weekly basis so that our staff, our administrators and our region and the system can keep track of how we're doing in this regard and try to get those numbers down to what people should expect in our facilities, Mr. Speaker. And ultimately our goal is zero.

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

Mr. Broten: — Jessie Sellwood's daughter-in-law was a care aid in many facilities, including Santa Maria and Pioneer Village. That's why she knew how to fight to get the truth in her mother-in-law's death. Many families, Mr. Speaker, don't have that experience and don't have that knowledge to rely on to get to the bottom of the truth.

But it shouldn't be a fight. Jessie's daughter-in-law confirms everything that the Santa Maria care aids raised on Monday about short-staffing, about bloated administration, about the government's misplaced priorities, and about a quality of care that is getting worse.

My question is for the Premier. How many people need to come forward from different facilities before he will admit that there are major problems in our seniors' care system that are spread out throughout the entire province and that are systemic?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again I would be happy to work with the family and work with the regional health authority. I'm not sure who the fight was with in terms of changing how the death was . . . the certificate of death in terms of the cause of death, Mr. Speaker. I don't know who that fight was with, but certainly I'd be happy to have more details from the family.

But, Mr. Speaker, in terms of this government's approach to long-term care, that's why I think this government took the unprecedented step last year, in mid-year, Mr. Speaker, to allocate \$10 million to improve staffing levels within the system, improve equipment. That's why in fact that work didn't just begin last fall, Mr. Speaker. It began when this government

took office, to the point now where there are more than 750 full-time equivalents working directly in the front lines of long-term care in this province, Mr. Speaker. This is something that is a priority of this government. This is something that we need and want to make changes, Mr. Speaker, and that's why we have invested the dollars that we have, Mr. Speaker, but admit that there is more work to be done.

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

Cost and Value of Public-Private Partnerships

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Education minister and it has to do with his costly P3 [public-private partnership] rent-a-school scheme. Is the minister aware of the recent BC [British Columbia] auditor's report that raises major concerns about costly debt and interest rates on P3 projects like schools?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice and Attorney General.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Well, Mr. Speaker, we have been pursuing P3 projects with respect to the schools in Saskatchewan. There's been some unprecedented growth in Saskatchewan that's given rise to a critical need for schools, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as far as value for money is concerned, we do a value-for-money calculation, Mr. Speaker, to ensure that we're returning value to the taxpayers of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, not only now, but in the future, Mr. Speaker. And as long as these projects continue to show positive value for money, Mr. Speaker, we'll continue with these projects.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, I mean the same suggestions were made in BC, the same sort of claims before they entered into these deals. And then when the BC independent auditor looked into the actual interest rates for P3s, the average rate was actually seven and a half per cent on average and they were as high as 15 per cent. The average rate for government itself owned and operated projects in BC was just 4 per cent, probably even a little bit lower here in Saskatchewan. So the average rate for P3s was a full three and a half per cent higher.

To the minister: what does he have to say to Saskatchewan people who are wondering why this government is just plowing ahead with its P3 rent-a-school scheme when it's certain that it's going to cost taxpayers more?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice and Attorney General.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Thanks, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, our procurement process aligns with the Provincial Auditor's recommendations on best practices when it comes to transparency. And to ensure that the public has access to the value-for-money calculation, Mr. Speaker, that will be released to the public once the procurement process . . . once we get to financial close, Mr. Speaker.

But dealing specifically with the interest rate, Mr. Speaker, those numbers are calculated in the value-for-money calculation, Mr. Speaker. And that number will be made available to the public so that the public and the opposition can see exactly where the value for money is as we proceed with these projects.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — The BC auditor's report is clear; P3 capital projects cost a lot more. On average, the interest rates are three and a half per cent higher, and sometimes interest rates are 11 per cent higher. Even if this government's P3 schools are financed at the average P3 interest rate found in this report, this government scheme would cost at least \$300 million more than if the government built and operated these schools — \$300 million. That's huge money. That's money that should go to where it matters in education, not wasted on high interest. It's no wonder that Alberta has recently scrapped their P3 rent-a-school scheme.

To the minister: why won't this government release the full details, all the costs of this costly rent-a-school scheme so Saskatchewan people can see exactly how much more it will cost?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice and Attorney General.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Thanks, Mr. Speaker. I'm not sure how much clearer I can be. A report, transparency reports in terms of value for money, Mr. Speaker, in terms of fairness reports will all be released.

Mr. Speaker, it's our view, and I think it's the popular view with respect to P3 projects across the country, that P3 projects are more transparent to the taxpayers than traditional procurement, Mr. Speaker . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Well they can argue about it, Mr. Speaker, if they want, but we follow the auditor's recommendations with respect to best practice, Mr. Speaker. Saskatchewan is being held out as an example across this country when it comes to best practices on P3 procurement, whether it's with respect to value for money and throughout the whole process, Mr. Speaker.

But everything will be made available as we move forward with the fairness opinions, which are provided, and the full value-for-money calculation, Mr. Speaker. And that will be clear for the taxpayers of this province.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, it's almost laughable, the premise of how this minister's approaching this file. We put forward legislation for transparency and accountability and full disclosure of costs, and that government voted it down, Mr. Speaker. That's how much they care about transparency. And the kind of reports he speaks of now are the kind that I suspect are going to be shared with the public after the ink is dried and taxpayers are committed for the long time.

We also know, I mean we know these cost more, and we know they have the impact of shutting out community. We know that

they have an impact of shutting out the local construction industry.

My question to the minister: why can't he look to a report like this, save the \$300 million, put them to work where they matter, and stop this wasteful process before any more dollars are wasted?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice and Attorney General.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, we're committed to transparency in this process, Mr. Speaker. We're committed to providing value for money to the taxpayers of this province, Mr. Speaker. We do that by providing the value-for-money report calculation, Mr. Speaker, and we do that by providing two independent fairness reports as we move through this project, through these procurements, Mr. Speaker.

So, Mr. Speaker, I reject the premise of the member's question because certainly we are going to save money for the taxpayers of this province. When we can show value for money with respect to the calculation for the taxpayers of this province, Mr. Speaker, we'll proceed. But there is value for taxpayers, Mr. Speaker, and we'll continue to show value for taxpayers. And as long as these projects are showing that value, Mr. Speaker, we'll continue with the P3 projects in this province.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader, unless other debate wants to carry on.

Expenses Incurred by Lean Initiative Consultant

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. A further question on the theme of accountability and transparency: Saskatchewan people were outraged to learn of the fat stacks of cash being handed over to John Black, this government's American lean consultant. My question to the minister: has this government decided whether it will table the John Black receipts so Saskatchewan people can see what we've been paying for?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. This government, as members will know and the public will know, are embarking upon a four-year process. About three and a half years, in fact, it will take to further embed lean within the health care system. This is something that the members opposite will know and that started as a pilot project under their government in Five Hills Health Region, Mr. Speaker. We also then moved forward with some small projects, Mr. Speaker, before deciding that this was something that we wanted to further implement in the health care system.

Mr. Speaker, in terms of the question that the member asked, certainly that's information, in terms of the totals, that we have provided. And it's been provided, Mr. Speaker, through the answers to written questions. Mr. Speaker, we've provided that number in the past. Thank you.

[14:15]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Mr. Speaker, the very contract this government signed with John Black says, freedom of information legislation and pay disclosure policies apply to this \$40 million American lean consultant. So there's nothing that prevents the release of all John Black's receipts, except for the fact of this government ragging the puck. Again to the minister: why won't this government table all the receipts today? What doesn't it want Saskatchewan people to see?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Well again, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this is certainly the totals that we've provided, and it's been information that's been provided to the House and to the members of the public. This is certainly, Mr. Speaker, in keeping with past practices when the Government of Saskatchewan is engaged to work with consultants, whether it be under this government or under the former government, Mr. Speaker, and that's the path that we're going to take.

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

Inquest Into Death and Shelter for Homeless People

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we asked this government last week for an inquest into the death of Jerry Peeququat. Jerry was 42 years old. His family says he was cut off social assistance despite being desperate and homeless. And Jerry died in a makeshift shelter on the 500 block of Avenue K South in Saskatoon.

The Social Services minister said last week it was too early to commit to an inquest. So my question is to the minister: is this government ready now to call that inquest and will it be taking any action as a result of Jerry's tragic death?

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

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you. Mr. Speaker, the normal process is the coroner would call an inquest. The coroner has not yet determined a cause of death. There is still some test results that he is waiting for, so we will be waiting for those results and the determination from the coroner.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Mr. Speaker, last week we also asked the minister for an estimate of how many others are desperate and homeless but not even receiving social assistance. She didn't have an answer then. Does she have an answer today?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Social Services.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, as we've said before, there is a cold weather strategy that is in place, so our communities work together. They are in constant communication so that if anyone identifies a homeless person through our cold weather months, that they should be reporting it to the CBOs [community-based organization] that has emergency shelters.

We've doubled the number of emergency shelters here in the province, Mr. Speaker, and we encourage all of those in the community — family members, or anyone, even if it's a stranger — if you see someone on the street that is in the cold in our weather months, please call the emergency numbers and there will be shelter provided.

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

Poverty Reduction Strategy and Children Living in Poverty

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We were hoping for better answers to our questions last week and today, but we'll keep coming back to this because Jerry deserved better and we have to make sure these kind of tragedies stop happening.

Now, Mr. Speaker, new information this week shows that Saskatchewan's child poverty rate is getting worse. One in four Saskatchewan children live in poverty — one in four. That's shocking and heartbreaking. My question is to the Social Services minister: what does she have to say about this?

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

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, the member opposite is referring to a Campaign 2000 report. And they admitted that they were struggling with getting data this year because of the different data collections that's been discontinued by the federal government. So they are using a different method in which to gather data, and it is questionable whether we're comparing apples to apples. However, if we use Stats Canada data, we have the lowest rate of poverty within Canada here in Saskatchewan.

We are moving in the right direction. We know that there's more work that needs to be done. That's why, Mr. Speaker, we have completed a housing strategy, why we're working on a disability strategy. We have a violence against women strategy. We'll be releasing soon a mental health and addiction strategy.

And, Mr. Speaker, we have just launched a poverty strategy, and we're going to be working with the stakeholders within the communities to formulate that strategy. There's names that the member opposite should know, such as Cory Neudorf, Alison Robertson, and oh, his friend, Dr. Ryan Meili.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Well, Mr. Speaker, it's disappointing to hear the minister dismiss the reports that have come out this week because we all should be stepping up when we know that children are living in poverty here in Saskatchewan. We all have to step up. And she has, and we think this is good news about the poverty reduction strategy. But we've been waiting now for weeks for an actual announcement about how this poverty strategy will be implemented. It's been well over a month since she's announced that. What will she do to get that happening right away so no children will be living in poverty here in Saskatchewan?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Social Services

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And again

I'm glad that our province is moving in the right direction and our poverty levels are going down. However we know there's more work that needs to be done, and we'll be working with the stakeholders to get that committee put together and get started.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Mr. Speaker, I find it passing strange this minister will stand up and declare that poverty rates are going down here in Saskatchewan when my questions last week, my written questions last week that are normally answered every six months, has been ordered by this minister. Yet she has the gall to stand up and say they're going down, yet she has no proof. She has no proof they're going down. So our question to her: will she get that strategy happening right away, get on it this week, and announce how it's going to be implemented right away?

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

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — You know, Mr. Speaker, Stats Canada has the answers. And according to Stats Canada, there is 36 per cent less children in our province on poverty than when that member sat in cabinet when the NDP were in government. Thirty-six per cent fewer children living in . . .

The Speaker: — Order. I recognize the minister.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, yet again . . .

The Speaker: — Order. The member asked the question. Now listen to the answer. I recognize the minister.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Yet again, just so that everyone can understand. According to Stats Canada, 36 per cent fewer children in Saskatchewan living in poverty than when that member sat around the cabinet table when he was in government. What was he doing then? There was no poverty strategy then. There was no announcement. We waited for 16 years for an announcement from that member and we heard nothing, Mr. Speaker.

We have done a lot, and we know that there's more that needs to be done, but we are going in the right direction. We're going to work with the people on the ground. We will get a strategy, and we will have initiatives in due course.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 164 — *The Health Information Protection Amendment Act, 2014*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 164, *The Health Information Protection Amendment Act, 2014* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — The Minister of Health has moved first reading of Bill No. 164, *The Health Information Protection Amendment Act, 2014*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Principal Clerk: — First reading of this bill.

The Speaker: — When shall this bill be read a second time? I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — 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 order the answers to questions 357 through 485.

The Speaker: — The Government Whip has ordered responses to questions 357 through 485. I recognize the Government Whip.

Mr. Cox: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the answers to questions 486 through 521.

The Speaker: — The Government Whip has tabled responses to questions 486 through 521.

GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Support for Energy East Pipeline

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I think we've had some discussion between House leadership on either side of the House about a motion involving some recent developments around the Energy East pipeline proposal by TransCanada. Mr. Speaker, the recent developments I mention is the joint press conference held by the Premier of Ontario and the Premier of Quebec regarding this proposed pipeline.

Mr. Speaker, among the requirements now being requested by Ontario and Quebec in terms of the process, in terms of what might be their official and more informal standing in the process, has included Ontario requesting a separate environmental review for that particular province for the pipeline, also Quebec wanting the licensing assessment to include upstream GHG [greenhouse gas] emissions. And so our understanding is that this is part of their joint position as well.

Mr. Speaker, these two issues are a bit of a concern. A number of other requests they've made around the process, around consultation that's required with First Nations, with communities along the pipeline, environmental assessment, safety assessment, these are completely reasonable requests on the part of the people of Ontario and Quebec. The pipeline will certainly go through those provinces, and we think that these answers to these very reasonable questions will come in the

National Energy Board process that actually deals with this very specific issue.

I welcomed in the past the Leader of the Opposition's comments that what was good enough for our provincial NDP here was this sort of triple net process that NEB [National Energy Board] provides for assessment of these kinds of projects. We would say to our counterparts, our friends in Ontario and Quebec: let that National Energy Board process occur because they will have answers to all of those reasonable questions.

The request for separate environmental reviews in any particular jurisdiction is a concern, however. And the request for some sort of upstream GHG evaluation of the pipeline is of deep and abiding concern. It should be to all members of this House. It should be to the people of the province of Saskatchewan. It should be a concern to Albertans. It should be a concern to all Canadians.

Mr. Speaker, ostensibly what is being requested here I think from our friends in Ontario and Quebec is that this pipeline, its approval should at least contemplate some sort of an evaluation of the greenhouse gases related to the pipeline. What's unclear in terms of this ask is whether or not they're referencing just what will be conveyed in the pipeline or the pipeline itself. Because there's going to be a CO₂ footprint that went into the manufacture of the steel for the pipeline, and all the construction process will certainly have its own footprint. And so if it's truly a life cycle of the oil and also of the pipeline and all of the work, you're going to have a very significantly higher number on the GHGs than you would if you just narrowed it to any one of those things.

The problem is, is that nobody really knows. The problem is the precedent that this would set, for other projects across the country would also carry this feature of no one really being familiar with what is being required of governments. How will any project get done like this in the future? How will we ensure the transportation of other goods and services if this somehow becomes a precedent in other provincial capitals? Because what we see here is a bit of pattern, Mr. Speaker, where provincial capitals are bringing to bear what seems to be some, not contrivances but some previously heretofore unimplemented ideas around assessment of these particular projects, things that just, measures that have never been requested of these particular . . . of these projects. And I think that should concern us all.

We should begin this debate, Mr. Speaker, in the House with a summary of what the Energy East pipeline is and what it is not. It has been described by some as the ultimate recycling program. Why would it be described in this way, Mr. Speaker? Well two-thirds of the pipeline exists already; it will not have to be constructed anew. It exists already and it is carrying, for the most part, it's carrying natural gas. It's a gas pipeline.

About a third of the total pipeline will be constructed. When it is complete, it'll carry 1.1 million barrels of a variety of petroleum products. And I talked to TransCanada yesterday. At the beginning of the projects, we're talking about conventional oil. In the case of Saskatchewan's contribution to the pipeline, it'll be light, sweet crude from the Bakken. In fact it doesn't get much lighter or much sweeter than the crude we have in

southeast Saskatchewan.

[14:30]

So let's make that very clear because those who are opposing this in other parts of the country, by the way, NGOs [non-governmental organization] especially, they're trying to paint this as somehow directly related to the oil sands. It's true that a diluted bitumen may form a part of the oil in the pipeline, but at the beginning, at the outset and for the most part, we're talking about conventional oil, conventional oil that will head to Eastern Canada.

So that's the first point, Mr. Speaker, for the NGOs that are opposing it: we're not talking about the oil sands. We happen to think responsible development of the oil sands, by the way, is fine. We don't have a problem with that on this side of the House. We have about 10 000 square kilometres of potential oil sands in Saskatchewan and the previous NDP even set up a regime, a royalty regime for that. We hope one day that it's possible to develop that resource in a sustainable way and in concert with the area First Nations that are in that part of northwestern Saskatchewan.

But some in Canada certainly have real concerns about oil sands. So let's be clear: we're not talking about oil sands oil in the pipeline. We're talking about conventional oil. This is perhaps the most important point in the debate: the oil in the pipeline from Saskatchewan and from Alberta will replace oil that's currently imported into Eastern Canada from Iraq, from Algeria, from Venezuela, where, by the way, the GHG footprint around that oil is very significant. Venezuelan oil comes at some GHG cost that you wouldn't find in the Bakken, for example; never mind the transportation CO₂ that comes with shipping that oil to Atlantic Canada.

It would also replace oil currently imported to Canada from Saudi Arabia and the United States of America. And I think most people in the country, whether they live in Montreal or Swift Current, Saskatchewan, might be surprised to find out that a big part of our country imports oil from places like Saudi Arabia, Algeria, Iraq, Venezuela, the United States of America. That just doesn't seem to make a lot of sense because I think they also understand that this country is a world leader in the production of oil. We have the third-largest known proven reserves of oil on the face of the Earth, and are an exporter of oil. Why would that country, why would large parts of that country, communities of some size, industries of some size rely on oil from Iraq and Saudi Arabia and Algeria and Venezuela and the United States to consume or to refine? It just doesn't make any sense, Mr. Speaker.

But that's what's happening today, and it's been like that for a very long time in Canada. The Energy East pipeline seeks to stop that. The Energy East pipeline would bring Western Canadian oil to Eastern Canada so that we no longer need to import oil. I don't know how you can be opposed to that. I don't know how you could want to put up more barriers to that, as we seem to see coming from the capitals of Quebec City and at Queen's Park. This is a very positive development. By the way, it's why New Brunswick, New Brunswick's Premier, the new Premier there, is very much in favour of the pipeline. It's why, to his credit, Thomas Mulcair, the Leader of the New

Democratic Party and the Leader of the Opposition, is in favour also of the Energy East pipeline.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to the replacement of foreign oil, I think there's one other point I'd like to make. I've seen some comments on social media that need to be challenged, and we need to clear these up on the record. Some have somehow introduced parts of the Gateway pipeline debate into this particular debate, and specifically the part they try to introduce is around tankers, oil tankers. They're trying to raise the spectre of now oil tankers off the East Coast because of the Energy East pipeline bringing oil to that part of our country. And it's true that a lot of it will be refined for consumption in Atlantic Canada, creating value-added jobs here in the country, by the way, for our oil. Some of it might find its way to export.

And so I've seen some trying to paint this picture that, well now we're going to have tankers off the coast that we otherwise wouldn't have. Really, Mr. Speaker? And where do these folks think the oil from, how that the oil from Iraq and Venezuela and Algeria, how it got here in the first place? It wasn't an oil fairy; it was tankers, Mr. Speaker, tankers that are in the sea today. Arguably you could make the case that if we are displacing the oil that they both refine and consume in Atlantic Canada, we should see a reduction in the tanker traffic. You could also make the case that if we are replacing oil in Atlantic Canada, if we are displacing oil from Venezuela, the GHG footprint is likely less than it should be. Mr. Speaker, I actually hesitate to get into that whole argument because GHG assessment should have nothing to do with approval for this pipeline.

And we encourage the federal government to go ahead with a very rigorous process that's in place, a process, Mr. Speaker, that has already resulted in TransCanada, in the earliest stages of their effort to get approval, having already contacted 5,500 landowners, having already had consultations with 155 First Nations and Métis communities. And I think they've signed 55 agreements already with First Nations.

The process is under way. The National Energy Board process is under way. And it will ask questions around safety and it will ask questions around environmental concerns and it will engage the communities. It already is engaging communities who need to be consulted on this particular proposal. In fact as a result of the assessment process, \$2.5 million will be provided for those who wish to make submissions but can't afford the cost of making a submission. So all who want to make a case to the NEB about the pipeline — good, bad, or indifferent — I believe are going to have the chance and they'll be supported financially in doing this.

Mr. Speaker, I've also heard people raise some sort of spectre of danger around pipeline transportation of oil, not just the environmental piece, but danger. Mr. Speaker, here again, let's get some facts on the record. We don't have this pipeline currently in effect, obviously. That's why we're having this debate. And yet oil from Saskatchewan and Alberta is moving to Ontario and Quebec and points east, not to the degree we need to, not to the degree we could displace the need for foreign oil, but it is. How is it moving, Mr. Speaker? Well it's moving in part by rail. Mr. Speaker, we know that with respect to the rail transport of oil, there are significant risks. In fact, we have seen those risks manifest themselves in an unspeakable tragedy

in the province of Quebec.

The risks, by the way, Mr. Speaker, as you will know — you're from southeast Saskatchewan — increase with respect to the nature of the oil that those railcars are carrying. The lighter the oil, the sweeter the oil, the more incendiary the oil, and the risks increase. What we're proposing here in Saskatchewan and in Alberta and in New Brunswick and across the country to our friends in Ontario and to our friends in Quebec, is let's displace foreign oil. Let's do that. Let's add value to the oil at home. Let's perhaps reduce the extra cost of oil to Atlantic Canadians who are paying the Brent price, not the West Texas price, and let's make sure that as much oil is moving in not the perfectest method but the safest method we know to move oil, which is in a pipeline rather than perhaps in a truck or on a rail. We know that's just simply not as safe.

These are the basics of an argument that . . . I have to admit, Mr. Speaker, I know that Gateway has been in trouble for some time as a potential pipeline. Keystone has been in trouble for some time, as we know, that it's an intractable problem, it seems, and an interminable debate that's going on.

I honestly, Mr. Speaker, did not believe that Energy East would be in jeopardy for the reasons we've talked about, for the multi-partisan support that exists for it — Liberals, New Democrats, federally Conservatives; provincially here, Saskatchewan Party provincially; and Alberta, Progressive Conservatives, Wildrose . . . I mean I didn't anticipate this concern. But I am worried now.

And that's why we have asked for this motion to be debated. That's why we've asked this legislature to send a signal to our friends in Ontario and Quebec. Learn the facts of this pipeline. Understand the environmental, frankly the reduction of environmental risks that come with the pipeline if you're not moving it by railcar. Understand that we want for this country to be energy independent, that we want for this country to not need oil from Algeria or Iraq, Mr. Speaker, or Venezuela or Saudi Arabia. This just makes a lot of common sense.

And, Mr. Speaker, we are hopeful to have a unanimous support not just for the motion that's before us, which I'll read right now, Mr. Speaker, but also for a change we might even want to do to the motion to make sure we characterize the GHG part of their assessment for what it is, which is unnecessary, and frankly, Mr. Speaker, unworkable. Because the precedent that it sets, maybe for Quebec steel coming this way, doesn't make a lot of sense, won't be good for the country in terms of internal trade, and it needs not to be a part of what Ontario and Quebec are discussing, Mr. Speaker. And so I'm going to move at this time:

That this Assembly supports the Energy East pipeline and the massive economic activity and benefits it will bring to all regions of Canada, which includes significant economic growth, tax revenue growth, and job creation in Ontario and Quebec.

I so move.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Premier:

That this Assembly supports the Energy East pipeline and the massive economic activity and benefits it will bring to all regions of Canada, which includes significant economic growth, tax revenue growth, and job creation in Ontario and Quebec.

I recognize the member for Lloydminster.

Ms. Young: — Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise and take part in this very important debate on the Energy East pipeline. Mr. Speaker, as the Premier has said, the Energy East pipeline shall be the ultimate recycling program. Two-thirds of this pipeline, as he stated, is already in the ground. This is a project that will benefit not only the people of Saskatchewan but Canadians in general.

Mr. Speaker, there have been two comprehensive reviews of Energy East done by Deloitte and the Conference Board of Canada. Deloitte estimates \$35 billion in additional GDP [gross domestic product] over the 40-year life of the Energy East project. Deloitte also notes there will be about \$10 billion in additional tax revenues to all levels of government over the project's lifetime.

Mr. Speaker, 2,341 additional direct full-time equivalent jobs during the 2013, 2015 development phase will be created from this project; 7,728 annual direct full-time equivalent jobs during the 2016, 2018 phase; with an additional 1,087 annual direct jobs to be sustained during the operating period of the 40-year lifetime of the Energy East project.

Mr. Speaker, this is why this is an important debate. We cannot lose sight of what this project could mean to not only the people of our province but Canadians as a whole. So I hope the members of this Assembly will forgive me if I sound repetitive, but I truly believe this is an important measure that will have a benefit for people across our nation.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan's oil and gas producing industry contributes a significant share of Saskatchewan's real gross domestic product, accounting for an estimate 14.6 per cent of the total. The oil and gas producing industry continues to be the largest contributor among primary industries to our provincial GDP. Industry investment in new exploration and development in 2013 was approximately \$5.6 billion, and in 2013 the upstream oil and gas industry accounted for approximately 36,000 direct and indirect person-years of employment.

Saskatchewan is the number two leading oil producer and number three gas producer in all of Canada. On average during 2013, Saskatchewan produced 487,400 barrels of oil per day and 539 million cubic feet of gas per day. The combined value and gas production for 2013 was \$14.1 billion. Mr. Speaker, oil, gas, and related revenues including Crown land sales for the 2013-2014 fiscal year was \$1.6 billion, and approximately \$1.9 billion is forecast for 2014-2015.

Mr. Speaker, there are approximately 300 oil and gas companies that operate wells in Saskatchewan today. To tie this back to home, the Lloydminster area in October 2014 produced over 165,000 barrels per day of heavy oil from just over 5,600 wells, and 29 million cubic feet of natural gas from 431 wells. Drilling activity from January 1st of 2014 to October 31st of

2014 consisted of 356 vertical wells and 300 horizontal oil wells. There is currently 22 enhanced oil recovery projects approved in the Lloydminster area, of which 13 are currently operating. Of the operating EOR [enhanced oil recovery] projects, 10 are thermal projects using steam.

[14:45]

Mr. Speaker, the Energy East project is required to ensure that the heavy oil production from the Lloydminster, Saskatchewan area is able to reach markets.

Currently, Mr. Speaker, the Lloydminster area produces 32 per cent of Saskatchewan's oil production. This has greatly contributed to the economic growth of our province and has allowed the government to return investment to the people of Saskatchewan. Taxes are lower.

We have invested in highways, education, and health care: 94.2 million alone has been invested in highways in the Lloydminster area; 20.5 million invested in schools, including the building of two new schools, Ecole St. Thomas and College Park; and a 58 per cent increase in funding to the Prairie North Health Region. This has amounted to over \$70 million in the Lloydminster area alone.

Lloydminster is currently experiencing a development boom. For three years construction values have reached or surpassed \$180 million, and includes the largest construction values ever recorded in the city of Lloydminster and totalling well over half a billion dollars of investment. The Canadian Federation of Independent Business has ranked Lloydminster the number one mid-sized Canadian city to start and grow a business.

From this economic growth, Canada and especially Saskatchewan has become an attractive destination for immigrants across the globe. Newcomers to my constituency are bringing business, ideas, and a diverse culture. As Canadians, we need foreign talent to sustain the country's demographic and economic growth, and we have just the labour market to attract it. Canadians need immigration just as much as immigrants need a destination such as Canada. Immigration, as it turns out, is the key to Canada's future prosperity.

These immigrant families do not solely provide skilled labour and the creation of new businesses. Economic growth means that these families have the opportunity to settle down and establish their roots in a country, a community, and a province blessed with so many advantages. Mr. Speaker, our provincial motto is "from many peoples, strength," and I am proud to say this has never been more evident than it is today in the Lloydminster constituency.

In Lloydminster the average age of the population is 27 years of age. Mr. Speaker, this is a city with a population of just over 31,000 people. This is a community that is growing, and we need to ensure that they stay in our province and continue to contribute.

The job opportunities for our young people coming out of high school have never been more diverse or greater because of the growth created by the oil and gas industry. Even the realm of fields of study they can enter are vast, exciting, and push their

entrepreneurial skills.

We also have an aging population, and we need to ensure that we take care of those who put in the work before us. That is why, with a strong economy, these seniors can benefit from the dividends of the growth in our province.

Mr. Speaker, in my constituency, Onion Lake is a very progressive First Nations community. The respective leaders in Onion Lake have been able to create job opportunities for their community members due to investments from the oil and gas industry as well as a strong and diverse provincial economy.

Also, Mr. Speaker, in my constituency, Husky Energy has been a positive presence in the community. Recently, Mr. Speaker, Husky Energy, one of Canada's largest and most established integrated energy companies, located in Lloydminster, made a significant investment of \$1.125 million in 2013 to polytechnic to upgrade their power engineering technology lab, enhance their power engineering program, and provide scholarships to students. Husky employs power engineering program grads in its thermal facilities and in its upgrader and asphalt refinery in Lloydminster. This probably would not have been possible if the industry was not experiencing growth and prosperity in a Saskatchewan economy.

Mr. Speaker, an opportunity such as the Energy East pipeline is one we cannot afford to miss. It is imperative that we keep our economy strong so we can maintain the Saskatchewan advantage.

Mr. Speaker, that is the extent of my comments, and I wish to move that the motion be amended as follows:

Add the following words after "Quebec":

And that this Assembly calls on Ontario and Quebec to recognize the National Energy Board as the appropriate body to review that pipeline proposal; and further

That these provinces should not be creating unnecessary barriers by imposing additional processes and conditions, such as effect on greenhouse gas emissions.

I so move.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the member for Lloydminster to:

Add the following words after "Quebec":

And that this Assembly calls on Ontario and Quebec to recognize the National Energy Board as the appropriate body to review that pipeline proposal; and further

That these provinces should not be creating unnecessary barriers by imposing additional processes and conditions, such as effect on the greenhouse gas emissions.

I recognize the member for Regina Rosemont.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Energy East project certainly is an important one for Canada and

certainly important to our province. We've long been a supporter and an advocate for the Energy East pipeline from Western Canada to Eastern Canada. Certainly our oil and gas industry's an important part of our province, a driver within our economy, and this is an important project for, we believe, not just Western Canada, not just for Saskatchewan but for Canada as a whole.

And what we're looking at, as has been mentioned by the Premier and the member from Lloydminster, is that we're actually utilizing an existing pipeline, transforming the utilization of that pipeline and then extending another distance and, in the process, adding some really good refinery jobs, adding value to our resources. Something that's certainly important to our province and something that has been mentioned as well that's certainly important to us is, as a nation, reducing our reliance on foreign oil and working towards energy independence — something that should be a greater priority for governments, provincial and federal. So when we're looking at projects that add value to our resources, add opportunities for Canadians, these are important projects.

Now I would say that, you know, we're a tad disappointed with the Premier's approach on this project to date. And I think that it's important to note that the Premier has lacked some of the maturity, I would argue then, as to how he's engaged in this process than say the Premier of Alberta.

You know, when we're dealing as a federation, there are concerns that other jurisdictions, other provinces may have, and those concerns should be dealt with in a very thoughtful, direct, smart sort of a fashion. And you know, I've noticed that the Premier of Alberta has recognized those concerns as concerns that are important to be addressed and has offered of himself and his province direct time to work through some of those issues.

Now we believe as well, you know, that this Premier, our Premier, has gone at this in a bit of a different approach. And what we have to be cautious about this approach is that this is an important project, and if one's not cautious in how they engage in this process and how we're watching a bit of the approach of our Premier, there's a risk of inflaming division as opposed to getting the job done for Saskatchewan people and all Canadians in a responsible and direct fashion with our other provinces.

So we would urge a level of caution. You know, a Twitter attack is probably not the best way to deal with such an important project. What probably will be important is rational discussions, facts and information, and some good direct listening with provincial counterparts. And I think that's how you can sort of build the kind of consensus, hopefully, the kind of co-operation that allows projects like this to be advanced as opposed to pitting regions against regions because it really shouldn't be about that within a federation, and it's not going to serve the best interests of getting this project in place.

We're also disappointed on the front of the environmental record of Saskatchewan, and we note that in the Environmental Code they have excluded even a chapter on climate change. Now these are important facts because we as a resource-producing, trade-dependent province have a

responsibility to be taking the environment seriously and making sure we have measures forward. And we believe that in doing that, and doing that responsible resource development, having those policies in place, it allows and strengthens the argument for our province to go down east and certainly to make the case for important projects like this. So these are a couple of the areas we caution.

While we support the motion, while we support the project, we urge the Premier to not inflame divisions but to work towards building understanding on a nation-building project like this that's important to Saskatchewan, so that we ultimately can get the job done within our federation. And certainly as well, certainly not neglect our own responsibilities here in Saskatchewan on the environmental front, which allows us to be I think more effective in connecting with our entire country.

Just a few notes on this project again and why we've been pushing for this. This is a value-add opportunity for our resources. This is something that we see that should be a higher priority for our provincial government, for our federal government, in allowing Canada and Saskatchewan to be as strong as we can be. Certainly this brings about good refinery jobs. I've seen numbers that have been put forward for Ontario, for example, that look to be really good, strong numbers of good jobs that should and could be created. And we know that this Energy East project would bring 1.1 million barrels of Western oil per day to refineries in Eastern Canada.

And we recognize right now that that oil is getting to market and we would argue that the pipeline itself is a more efficient and safer way to move that oil than putting it on to rail and other options that exist. So we see this as a responsible project. We see it as a good economic project. And we urge some caution now with the Premier to make sure he engages in good faith with provincial partners to get the job done for Saskatchewan people and for Canadians. That's all I have to say at this point in time, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, we all agree that it's important that we get our oil to the market, wherever that market is. And this is another aspect of providing access for Saskatchewan products to the world.

I think one of the things that this motion is a small piece of is the overall trade policy for Saskatchewan. We're a landlocked province like Alberta. We don't have access to the oceans and so we end up having to rely on our neighbours when we transport the goods that we produce, the goods that we take out of the ground, and the goods that we grow. And, Mr. Speaker, this type of a motion relates to that particular question. And so I think that we need to be very careful because it also then relates to what it means to be a province in the federation of Canada, the Confederation, because it's about those relationships and how those things work.

We know that in times where it's absolutely crucial that grain was to get to eastern markets, the federal government stepped in and basically took over the legislation for grain transportation. We know that when uranium was important for a war effort, the federal government stepped up and basically took over control

and ended up putting in legislation around uranium. We also have seen in the last year what it means when the transportation of wheat, the transportation of other products, potash, are hampered by the capacity of our rail system. And all of these things directly affect our local economy. So this pipeline is another piece of that and I think it's a good thing for Canada to work on this effort.

[15:00]

Another good aspect obviously is the fact that more of our Canadian oil will go to refineries that are located in Canada. And I think that's a positive thing as well. So practically we support an east-west pipeline.

But one of the more difficult aspects of this particular issue is where and how will the review take place of the pipeline project. We see the role of the National Energy Board and we want them to do a good job of assessing what's necessary. And that process is ongoing and so we recognize that.

One of the points that our new premier to the west has identified, as Premier Jim Prentice has become the Premier of Alberta, is that there's a perception problem and an actual problem around how and what has been done by our Western provinces as it relates to the environment, as it relates to greenhouse gases. And frankly we have a problem in Saskatchewan on the environmental record here which does affect projects like this. We know that we have to be smart. We have to be diligent. We have to make sure that environmental protection is right up the top of the government agenda. We know that we have to address climate change. Mr. Speaker, we were very disappointed when the new legislation was introduced in the legislature this fall around the Environmental Code. It did not include a chapter on climate change.

Now that's the place where the Premier could have shown leadership of his government, to go right directly to the issue of climate change — which has been promised for many years, frankly — and deal with that here so that we can then argue from a position of strength here in Saskatchewan. And so it ends up being a situation where I think that the Premier of Alberta has recognized that he has to go back and work in that area to make sure that he can go and speak to the world.

Now when I was the minister of Environment, I worked with Minister Prentice, at that time, and he was the minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and then subsequently became the minister of Industry. And there were a couple of files here in Saskatchewan that were environmental ones where he brought a very practical approach, and we actually resolved some of the issues along the water in the Qu'Appelle Valley with all the different dams.

I think that that's the kind of leadership we need on a national level as we deal with this bigger issue, which is about confederation. And unfortunately we don't have a base on the environmental side right now in Saskatchewan, and that's causing us some difficulty. We also maybe don't have as clear a perspective from our Premier as to how to be part of a bigger operation or a bigger country as it relates to some of these national issues.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I know that we on this side support an east-west pipeline. It's important to get oil to market, but we need to do that from a place of strength. So we want this government to take climate change and environmental protection seriously, and we want our Premier to show leadership in making sure that the Environmental Code includes climate change issues like has been promised for many years so that we can actually then go forward and say, well this is what we're doing here; this is how we're going to respond. We're going to be part of a serious discussion in Ontario and Quebec because they have raised some concerns about this.

So practically, this is about how Canada works. We want it to work well and we want our government to show leadership there. So here today we'll be supporting this motion because it's important for our oil industry. It's important for sending the message to Canada that we need to work with everybody to make sure our products go to other Canadians but also to the world. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I will conclude my remarks. Thank you.

The Speaker: — The motion before the House is the amendment moved by the member for Lloydminster:

To add the following words after "Quebec":

And that this Assembly calls on Ontario and Quebec to recognize the National Energy Board as the appropriate body to review that pipeline proposal; and further

That these provinces should not be creating unnecessary barriers by imposing additional processes and conditions such as effect on greenhouse gas emissions.

Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Speaker: — Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. The question will now be the main motion as amended. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Speaker: — The question will read, as moved by the Premier:

That this Assembly supports the Energy East pipeline and the massive economic activity and benefits it will bring to all regions of Canada, which includes significant economic growth, tax revenue growth, and job creation in Ontario and Quebec; and

That this Assembly calls on Ontario and Quebec to recognize the National Energy Board as the appropriate body to review that pipeline proposal; and further

That these provinces should not be creating unnecessary barriers by imposing additional processes and conditions

such as effect on greenhouse gas emissions.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. With leave, to put forward a motion of transmittal.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government House Leader.

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

That the Speaker, on behalf of the Legislative Assembly, transmit copies of the motion and amendment as well as verbatim transcripts of the debate to the Prime Minister of Canada, the Premier of Ontario, the Premier of Quebec, and the Premier of Alberta.

I so move.

The Speaker: — The Government House Leader, by leave, has moved:

That the Speaker, on behalf of the Legislative Assembly, transmit copies of the motion and amendment as well as verbatim transcripts of the debate to the Prime Minister of Canada, the Premier of Ontario, the Premier of Quebec, and the Premier of Alberta.

Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Speaker: — Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

SECOND READINGS

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: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to move second reading of Bill No. 163, *The Education Amendment Act, 2014*. The Act being brought forward has four amendments in it being proposed to *The Education Act, 1995*, which will be in place by September 1, 2015. In addition

regulatory amendments will also be required to support these legislative changes.

The first change being proposed is to amend *The Education Act, 1995* to rename section 4.1 to the Education Scholarship Fund. The newly renamed Education Scholarship Fund will include the Prince of Wales and Duchess of Cornwall Scholarship and also the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Scholarship in alignment with the Premier's announcement on May 23rd, 2012.

As many of you will remember, the Prince of Wales Scholarship was renamed the Prince of Wales and Duchess of Cornwall Scholarship to honour the Diamond Jubilee visit by the Prince of Wales and Duchess of Cornwall to Saskatchewan in 2012. It is a scholarship of \$500 and can be awarded to up to 20 students. The Queen's Diamond Jubilee Scholarship is for \$1,000 and is awarded for up to six students. These scholarships will be consolidated into one fund and renamed, which will allow for the addition of future scholarships. We are focused on meeting the needs of students and we want to ensure that we have flexibility in place to support students' success in a variety of ways.

The second change being proposed is to amend two expressions used in the French version of *The Education Act, 1995*. The first one is to change "home-based education program" from "programme d'études à domicile" to "programme de scolarisation à domicile." And also to change "pupil with intensive needs" from, and I quote, "élève bénéficiant d'un programme de soutien intensif" to "élève à besoins particuliers." The change is to capture the nuances of the language in the Act so the roles and responsibilities laid out are clear and properly representative of expectations.

The need to amend these two expressions was identified in April 2013 by translation services unit, Ministry of Education, legislative drafting, Ministry of Justice in consultation with their respective legislative translators.

Mr. Speaker, the third amendment being proposed is to amend *The Education Act, 1995* to allow school divisions to start the school year prior to Labour Day when it occurs on or after September 5th. Current legislation provides that school divisions are required to commence instructional time no sooner than the day following Labour Day and to end no later than June 30th. This amendment will provide the Minister of Education with the authority to choose a start date from the school calendar prior to Labour Day in years where it falls on or after September 5th.

This change is in response to the school divisions, who have responsibility for creating the school calendar, and concerns they have expressed with fulfilling the 950 hours of instructional time within the current framework of starting after Labour Day and ending on or before June 30th. The divisions have expressed that in years where Labour Day is not at the very beginning of the month, such as September 2015, a start date after the statutory holiday would result in the loss of four instructional days for teachers and students, which would make it difficult to fit in enough instructional time. Accordingly the start date in 2015 will be September 1.

Mr. Speaker, the final amendment is a proposal to streamline

the borrowing powers of boards of education and the conseil scolaire. Currently school divisions must acquire a lending rate and receive ministry consent to borrow funds in order to proceed with major capital projects. However, financial institutions hold interest rates for a short period of time and the turnaround time for providing school divisions with consent is not meeting financial institution deadlines. This is resulting in school divisions having to re-tender for loan rates and getting new resolutions passed by boards of education or the conseil scolaire.

This amendment will require board or conseil resolutions to include only the amount proposed to be borrowed and the purposes of the expenditure, with good faith that they will seek out the best repayment terms and interest rates. Consultations have occurred with school divisions in respect to borrowing powers with the proposed changes and the proposed changes are reflective of what we heard.

Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to move that Bill No. 163, *The Education Amendment Act*, be now read a second time.

The Speaker: — The Minister of Education has moved second reading of Bill No. 163, *The Education Amendment Act, 2014*. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Once again I am pleased to stand and give the initial response to some of the bills being introduced by the government. And once again, Mr. Speaker, we notice under Bill 163 that there are a number of changes. And while all the changes that are being proposed are certainly important, the one particular change that we wanted to focus on, Mr. Speaker, is the whole notion around section (6), which allows the minister to set the beginning of the school year before Labour Day when Labour Day falls on or after September 5th.

And, Mr. Speaker, we pointed out once again, and this is one of the points that we raised in our caucus discussions, is the response was, well, well, well, it looks like the Saskatchewan Party is back to the drawing board in their legislative agenda and their bills. Because quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, one of the fundamental rules that they didn't put in place, they didn't put in effect was the whole notion of consultation. And what we've seen often, Mr. Speaker, is this government begins the whole process of trying to govern by polling. You do what people think is an appropriate, a fun thing to do. Then you make it as part of your policy without any consultation. And then what happens, Mr. Speaker, is here we are in this pickle, in this mess that the minister has started.

[15:15]

And now we're seeing, Mr. Speaker, now we're seeing that this minister, again in his confusion as to how to get the job done, he's now in a situation where he has to come back and do an amendment to their amendment to the consequential Act that was amended last year, Mr. Speaker, and is now covered under a different bill that was also amended. So to the average layperson out there, they're getting confused. What are you amending your amendments for? Like haven't you got this thing figured out?

And, Mr. Speaker, the point that we're trying to raise is that obviously this government thought it would be a popular thing to do. They were quite frankly trying to govern by polling. They were trying to govern by polling when people told them, we should tinker with the school year. And, Mr. Speaker, what happened here is once again the minister decided, and the Premier as well decided, this would be a great thing to do. The people of Saskatchewan would be happy with this. It sounds like a logical thing to do. So they implement it, made it part of their provincial campaign, Mr. Speaker.

And here we are a number of years later, and they are now coming back and saying, oops, we made a big mistake here. Now the minister's leaving the Assembly, Mr. Speaker, because obviously he doesn't want to hear about the fact that we've been imploring him to make sure that he consulted with the appropriate people, to make sure consultations were undertaken. And that minister didn't do it. He assumed that he knew better than the school boards, Mr. Speaker. He assumed he knew better than the teachers, Mr. Speaker. But the fact of the matter is they told him, and they implored this government not to do this, to consult. Let's figure this out together. But, Mr. Speaker, that government, that minister, and that Premier didn't do it because once again they wanted to make sure that they're able to govern by simple polling, Mr. Speaker, and that doesn't work on many, many occasions.

Now what's happening is that teachers are telling the government that, why didn't you consult with them? Why didn't you consult with the teachers and the school divisions? Why didn't you come along and recognize and respect those partners in education by saying, look, we're thinking of doing this. We want your advice. We want your input.

But, Mr. Speaker, here we are back to the drawing board for the Saskatchewan Party legislative agenda, trying to figure out how you clean up this mess that they created, Mr. Speaker. So here we are today, speaking of an amendment to their amendment to *The Education Act* that they did no consultations on, and now they're back to square one. Now they're saying, what do we do from here on in to fix this problem, Mr. Speaker?

And the opposition warned them. The opposition warned them not to tinker with the school year, not to tamper and try and influence the school year for petty politics because, Mr. Speaker, the important thing was to sit down and negotiate your way through these matters with the appropriate partners, and that includes the teachers, the school divisions, the students, and of course the parents impacted by this, Mr. Speaker.

So one of the biggest points that we would raise here on this side of the Assembly is we find on that side of the House there's total confusion on how to get the job done. On one minute, on one second, on one hand they want to be able to be able to do the popular . . . or govern by polling, but on the other hand, they have the whole matter to deal with when it comes to respecting the teachers and the education system and of course all of the people impacted by that.

So, Mr. Speaker, this is what this bill is about. Really it is a bill that the Saskatchewan Party government want to put forward without highlighting, without highlighting the simple fact that they made a mess of this process to begin with. And now here

we are, a number of months and a number of weeks later, that they are now having to come back and they've got to fix this problem because once again the whole notion that it was part of their election platform, and they never consulted with the appropriate people. It's one of the points that we want to raise this afternoon as a result of this particular bill.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I've met with many teachers over my time, you know, as an MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly]. And certainly as somebody that's been in government and somebody that's been in opposition, we have got the continual message from teachers that they're fed up with this government. They are fed up with this government because they have not afforded many of the teachers that due respect that our teachers should be afforded, Mr. Speaker.

And one more evidence of that was of course when they tried to tinker with the start of the school year. And from what I can understand, Mr. Speaker, is that all the school divisions, they have a 950 hour of instruction time that they have to follow, and they've got to try and balance those hours that the government dictates into a number of days over a span of a number of months, over a number of courses, and of course over a number of schools.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that's a very complex thing to do. But the minister and the government decided when they're going to change the school year as to when you're allowed to start because in their opinion it is the proper thing to do. Logistically it was very difficult to do. But they once again chose the easy way out and said, oh if the people like this, we'll do this.

And they did it, Mr. Speaker. They put in a policy where they didn't start the school year till after the Labour Day celebration, Mr. Speaker. And then lo and behold, a number of months later they're coming back and they are getting grief from the people involved with education saying, you made a mistake here. We asked you not to do it. We asked for you consultation, and you refused to consult.

So that's one of the things that I think's really important on this particular bill, Mr. Speaker, is the government is retreating. The government is making an admission today that they made a big mistake here, Mr. Speaker. And we continue seeing those same mistakes, Mr. Speaker. As long as you're governing by polling, you can never provide the solid leadership that is required, especially on bills of this sort.

You've got to engage your partners. You've got to communicate with a number of people being impacted by this, Mr. Speaker. And this is just one example of how the government has made a big mess of this particular bill, and now the minister comes back and simply tries to portray this as an administrative process when we in the opposition know it's an admission of their guilt of not being able to sit down and consult with the teachers, the school divisions, the students, and the parents impacted by the decision to move this start of the school year around the Labour Day celebration.

So, Mr. Speaker, it is something that we need to talk about on a regular and a consistent basis, is that we're seeing that this particular government has made a number of errors. Legislatively when you bring bills forward here, they have to

follow certain processes. And we always advocate as an opposition, we always advocate that they do a lot of consultation, especially to the impacted parties and people of any particular bill.

We advocate that because, you know, as a government, they should be at least receiving a number of viewpoints, a number of organizations' position on certain issues. All that advice is helpful to government. But this government chooses on a regular basis to not even consult nor seek advice, Mr. Speaker. And that is a shame because there are so many people in Saskatchewan that can offer so much advice and good, solid direction on a wide variety of issues, Mr. Speaker.

And that's why on this side of the Assembly we say to people and we also encourage the government to consult with people. And this is one example of why that consultation is so vitally important to the operation of government, is because it talks about sound process. It speaks of making sure that you administer education in a very professional way and it really, really moralizes the people that are engaged with this particular service to the Saskatchewan people, and that is educating our young people. And on all three fronts the Saskatchewan government failed.

The Saskatchewan Party government failed on this, Mr. Speaker. And now we're seeing the government come back — the minister, the same minister who wouldn't take advice — coming back and saying we made a mistake on this bill. We're going to have to redraft the bill. We're going to have to rename the bill. We're going to have to change certain policies on the bill. We're going to amend this bill. And the list goes on as to the number of amendments they made to other amendments to other amendments and, Mr. Speaker, finally the average layperson out there gets confused. What amendment are they amending now today?

And once again, Mr. Speaker, we are pointing out that this government just doesn't have it figured out when it comes to working with our teachers and trying to build a solid education system for the people of Saskatchewan. It has been a failure and an abject failure right from day one, especially in light of the fact that they've had record, record revenue, Mr. Speaker. Record revenue and they can't get it figured out.

And that's one of the important points that we in the opposition, we always make this position, that we tell people this government has not been able to figure their way out. They have not been able to even get their legislative agenda in order, Mr. Speaker, never mind the finances. But they are making mistake after mistake after mistake, and the people of Saskatchewan can no longer afford these mistakes because it creates a lot of division, disruption, and it creates a lot of confusion, Mr. Speaker.

And that's one of the examples on this particular bill that we're speaking about today, Bill 163, where they intervened and where they decided in their own interests that they would alter the school year. And, Mr. Speaker, the teachers fought back. The school divisions fought back, and the system fought back against the government that was simply trying to govern by polling. They're trying to govern by polling. They thought this was a popular thing to do, Mr. Speaker, and obviously it was

not. And now we're seeing a number of months later, he is now sitting here today saying, oops we made a mistake. We've got to go back to the old system because the old system was correct. And that's exactly what the teachers and the people impacted by this decision, the school boards and the opposition have been saying to this government. And they refused to hear that particular argument.

So, Mr. Speaker, it's important to note, it's important to note that that's the reason why we encourage consultation. We've always maintained that consultation is very, very key to being a successful government. And as I said on many occasions, consultation does not constitute agreement.

And even though, Mr. Speaker, even though the minister tried to confuse the facts at the time by saying that they consulted with various people, we know that was not the case. The fact of the matter, there may have been discussions with them, but there was no agreement. And certainly there was pushback from the teachers, whom we should all respect as MLAs and of course as people who have children or grandchildren going to school.

So, Mr. Speaker, what this is, what this is, this particular bill is a full admission by the Saskatchewan Party government that they made a big mistake altering the school year to accommodate the celebrations around Labour Day, Mr. Speaker. And the reason why they put that in place is they had done some polling, they thought people would like it. So they come along, made the decision to start the school year after Labour Day, Mr. Speaker, just to try and look popular, Mr. Speaker. And now we're back to square one.

They've got to go back to a different system because they made a full mistake on this one, Mr. Speaker. And we in the opposition are smiling. We're enjoying this because obviously we were right to begin with. They should have consulted with the people that they're trying to ignore, Mr. Speaker, that they're trying to ignore. And, Mr. Speaker, once again we are remind them, you need to have consultation on these matters, Mr. Speaker.

So on one hand, the Saskatchewan Party government decides to do this polling and find out they want Labour Day free for families to enjoy this. And we're trying to find out, Mr. Speaker, who gave them that advice? Who gave them that advice to do this, Mr. Speaker? And where are those organizations and people today?

So you look at the teachers' perspective: here you are, you're working with the number of kids in your classroom as a teacher. And you have your prescribed time in which you have to work with the students — you have to have a certain amount of time to instruct students — that's identified. The Government of Saskatchewan have put those standards in place. And you must have X amount of hours of instruction per student each year. I think the amount of instruction is 950 hours, Mr. Speaker. The school divisions have to fit that time frame or the necessary 950 hours within the school year, Mr. Speaker. And of course the school year spans a number of about 10 months, and as a result of that, many school divisions, and planners, teachers, administrators, they all have to work together to try and find the right balance to ensure that they have the proper time frame,

they have the proper students doing the proper amount . . . or giving them the proper amount of instruction over a defined period of time, Mr. Speaker. And this was their challenge.

Then along comes the government saying, oh we're going to change the school year on you, and we're not going to give you any consultation. This is something that we want to do. We think it's a popular thing to do. Well, Mr. Speaker, as was noted on many occasions, sometimes doing the right thing isn't the most popular thing in the world. Sometimes doing the right thing is difficult, Mr. Speaker. And in this instance, the government should've realized that, and they would have realized that had they consulted with the teachers, the school boards, the parents, and especially the students.

So, Mr. Speaker, if you look at the northern part of the province where we have a number of schools that are operating, they have a great amount of challenges in terms of trying to make sure they do their very best with what they have. Now I know in the northern school division that there is a number of days that they negotiate locally through their collective bargaining agreement that talks about prep time, that talks about professional development days, that speaks of how we're able to balance those needs of those teachers in northern Saskatchewan.

[15:30]

And we all know that the school divisions operate totally different from each other. They have this collaboration; I'm not arguing that they don't have that. I'm pointing out that they operate their school division in different ways. There's a myriad of processes in one school division that's totally different from another school division. And, Mr. Speaker, they could be neighbouring communities, and yet they may operate their schools in different ways.

So my point being, is that when you have this complex relationship and complex planning process in place when it comes to trying to educate or educating our children and trying to fill all the requirements that government's put on you, and of course the parents put on you as well, it's a very difficult task, Mr. Speaker. It's a very difficult task. And you have students and teachers and school divisions working overtime to try and figure this out. And they put a lot of time and effort into figuring out the annual plan to educate our kids and to balance all that within the budget and within the constraints of the region.

So it's not one size fits all, Mr. Speaker. There are just a different style for every school division. And that's the complexity, Mr. Speaker, that we talk about on this of the Assembly when we say, when you're trying to meddle into the school year, you're having a dramatic, drastic, negative effect if you don't consult with the people that are doing this job. And that's a fundamental point that I want to make today. They didn't consult with the teachers, the school divisions, the parents. And as a result of this, Mr. Speaker, we're back here to day one.

We're back here where the minister sheepishly introduces this bill, saying he made a mistake. And now we've got to go back to the drawing board because, Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan

Party government can't figure out their own legislative agenda, Mr. Speaker. They can't figure it out, so now we're back here again doing another amendment to *The Education Act*. And how many more amendments are we expecting over the next number of months? Probably more amendments upon amendments upon amendments.

We would argue you need to get it right from day one. You've got to get this thing figured out. And, Mr. Speaker, once again we're seeing a failure on the Saskatchewan Party side to do the proper consultation and to provide sound leadership on issues that are important to Saskatchewan such as education. They are not providing that leadership, Mr. Speaker, not providing it in any way, shape, or form, from my vantage point. And I say shame on them because the teachers have been telling them, the school divisions have been telling them, and many students are suffering as a result of their lack of leadership and really not being able to figure out the process that is necessary to govern accordingly.

So, Mr. Speaker, this is a bill . . . Section 6, once again as I mentioned, allows for the minister to set the beginning of the school year before Labour Day when Labour Day falls on or after September 5th. Now, Mr. Speaker, again we go back. The minister still has the right to determine what day they start. And they're tinkering with this again. They're trying to cover up the mistake they made. They're trying to cover up this huge error, this huge lack of consultation. And once again they're positioning the minister to figure this out. We again implore the minister that if you haven't got it figured out in the start, you're not going to figure it out now. So go back to consulting with the school divisions because they are radically different from how they operate from each other.

That's the fundamental point we're trying to raise today. The minister should not be able to determine when, where the school division's year can start unless he has that consultation and agreement from the school divisions that are out there and from the teachers, Mr. Speaker.

We in the opposition really sense, and we know there's a lot of anger out there from the teachers on this government. A lot of teachers are not very happy because a good example, a good example, Mr. Speaker, is they started this standardized testing. Well that was scrapped, Mr. Speaker, because we have confidence in our teachers in the province of Saskatchewan. We have full confidence in our teachers, Mr. Speaker.

And you look at how they tried to intervene in the school year. And it's amazing, Mr. Speaker, it's amazing that they're able to dictate the amount of hours that the teacher has to instruct their students, but yet they determine when the school year starts. Like how does that connect when it comes to being a good government? It doesn't connect, Mr. Speaker. It doesn't connect in any way, shape, or form. And that's why it's important that as an opposition we point this out.

So whatever teachers out there that are listening to this program, they know. They know that the Government of Saskatchewan has treated them terribly. They know that the Government of Saskatchewan has treated them badly, Mr. Speaker. They have treated them badly in the sense that they have not respected their position. They have not sat down and

negotiated many things in good faith, Mr. Speaker. They have not figured this out at all. And so once again we're back here doing an amendment to their amendment from a different Act from a few years ago where they made a big mistake on trying to alter the school year without consultation. We're doing it again, Mr. Speaker.

We've seen this as full evidence, as full evidence that the Saskatchewan Party government doesn't know what they're doing, Mr. Speaker. They don't know what they're doing. And that's kind of where I stand here in saying, telling people we've got to get these guys straightened out. The Saskatchewan Party government can't even figure out their legislative agenda, much less how to respect teachers, much less how to fund education, Mr. Speaker.

Now we're sitting here talking about the school divisions overall, and certainly the teachers and the demand that they have, the demands they have for respect from the government, but the demands that are placed on the teachers, Mr. Speaker. And I do a lot of travelling, Mr. Speaker, and I've sat with a number of teachers from Buffalo Narrows to Beauval, La Loche, Mr. Speaker, the Far North. And I can tell you right now, in many of these communities — La Loche being a good example of that, Beauval being another great example, Buffalo Narrows — of how the teaching staff and administrative team in each of these schools are doing a tremendous job to not only improve students' outcomes, Mr. Speaker, but to strengthen their community.

And I can tell you right now that as I travel through my community and I go to some of the schools — like for example Twin Lakes School in Buffalo Narrows, it is being administered by local people — many, many of the staff there are highly dedicated, Mr. Speaker. They know why they're there and they know their purpose. And they're doing their job above and beyond their call, Mr. Speaker. And I look at that and I say to myself, why are we not supporting these teachers more? Why aren't we doing our part as well, Mr. Speaker, as a government to try and support them? And this is where the Saskatchewan Party government has just failed the teachers time and time again. And I think the teachers' anger is not only strong, Mr. Speaker, it is building, Mr. Speaker. It is building against the Saskatchewan Party government.

And again, some of the examples that I've used in my own communities, Mr. Speaker, is that had it not been for certain schools . . . La Loche is a good example, Mr. Speaker, of how their schools have done a tremendous job in strengthening that particular community. As you walk in the school, they have very solid staff that are there every day. They have rules. They have different support mechanisms for the students. They will follow the provincial guideline for the number of hours that is necessary to teach these kids. They have high standards in teaching our children.

So the Dene high school and Ducharme elementary school in La Loche, I want to say to their staff that you are doing a tremendous job. Keep that up because these are the shining lights in many of our communities. The centres of excellence is what I call them when it comes to schools in northern Saskatchewan.

And Beauval is another good example, Mr. Speaker, that as you go to some of these communities, you'll see the staff. They spend hours and hours on their own time volunteering in that school. You know, Valley View School is one of the schools that, when we travel there and go visit, the school is well maintained. The staff are very professional. They're very friendly. And the students are disciplined and they're taught, Mr. Speaker. They're taught a lot of good, valuable lessons in that school system.

And that's my fundamental point. Not only are some of these students getting quality education from really dedicated teachers, Mr. Speaker, they have the added pressures of trying to jump through the hoops of a Saskatchewan Party government who, by polling, decided to alter the school year without consultation.

Now the Premier really wants to be popular all the time, so he does a lot of polling. And they said, give us an extra day off or an extra couple of days off so we can celebrate Labour Day longer. So he said, okay, that sounds good. So they've done it.

What happened, Mr. Speaker? To me, today, as a result of this bill coming forward, it shows that there was a lack of leadership at the time on that issue, and today it's proof that the opposition, the teachers, and the school divisions were right. They're saying this is not something that the government should meddle in. Before you make changes to our education Act, you should ask for our advice as well. That was their message, Mr. Speaker, at the time, and this government chose to ignore it. And that's why this minister is here today to amend *The Education Act* once again because he made a big mistake. He made a big mistake, Mr. Speaker.

So it is something that I think overall that we take great pride in as an opposition. It is a victory for us. It is a victory for us that go right to the top, to the Premier's office. He wanted the school year altered, and the Premier got his wish because he thought it was the popular thing to do.

But it is not the right thing to do. Leadership is not about doing the most popular things at the time. It's about doing the right thing, Mr. Speaker, and the right thing at the time was to not tinker with the school year until he had consultation and agreement from the school divisions, from the teachers, from the parents, and the students, Mr. Speaker, because it does create a big, big problem.

Now going back to my schools, Mr. Speaker, the schools in my constituency because I can speak about them fairly well because I visit the schools often, and I talk to a lot of the teaching staff. And, Mr. Speaker, I can tell you right now that many of the staff in the northern schools, they are the saviour of our community. Mr. Speaker, these are the staff that are making a tremendous difference in their community.

And I look at the examples. For example, there's a number of teachers in Buffalo Narrows that are teaching the kids basketball, and basketball's really picking up a lot of steam. So Buffalo Narrows children are benefiting from the extra effort from these teachers that are teaching, that are teaching the kids the game of basketball in their spare time, Mr. Speaker.

La Loche, as I mentioned, is another good example, Mr. Speaker, of how they have made the extra effort of working with the students, respecting the students, protecting the students, and ensuring the students are there learning each and every day. And when I say protecting, Mr. Speaker, from the acts of bullying, you know, as a good example of how teachers have gone above and beyond their job to make sure that children aren't bullied in school.

So these are some of the things I think that are really important overall, is that the quality of educators in northern Saskatchewan is very, very high. And I'm very proud of them. I often tell the teaching staff, not only in my home community but Buffalo Narrows, Beauval, La Loche, Pinehouse, Green Lake — the list goes on — and all the communities in my constituency, Mr. Speaker.

I talk to a lot of teachers, and a lot of teachers are not happy with this government. And if I was a teacher in northern Saskatchewan, I would be absolutely angry with this government for the simple reason that, as a result of them altering the school year, as a result of how the collective bargaining agreements have been discussed and negotiated, many teachers in northern Saskatchewan are now working 100 hours more, Mr. Speaker, as a result of some of the government's rulings with this particular bill when they altered the school year.

The teachers negotiated that deal with their school division. And as a result of the government coming along, changing the dynamic of when the school starts, it really impacted their overall contract discussions. So now we have teachers in the North working harder and longer hours, and at the very least the government should respect them for that and acknowledge them for that. And they should not have interfered in the school year issue when they brought the bill forward soon after the 2007 election, Mr. Speaker.

So it is a celebration for us in the opposition. We were very, very concerned, Mr. Speaker, when this came forward. We had great discussions. And to see the minister come along today and to make an amendment to *The Education Act* is a victory for the school divisions. It's a victory for the teachers, and it's also a victory for the opposition because we knew they'd made a mistake then. And, Mr. Speaker, what they won't do today is admit to that error.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the other section I want to briefly talk about — I'll come back to the whole notion of section 6 — but section 8 gives the school divisions more flexibility when it comes to spending money on schools, housing, and other facilities. As many people may not know, the northern school divisions offer housing to teachers, which is really acceptable because northern Saskatchewan needs to continue to attract and to retain professional people and for teachers to come north.

It is a tremendous complement when I see local teachers working closely as a team with other teachers that came from other parts of the country, if not the world. They come together and they build an education system for local kids. It is absolutely a marvellous thing to see. It's an amazing thing to see, Mr. Speaker.

[15:45]

So in order for us to continue having that mix of good local teachers and bringing in new teachers with new concepts, it is important that we respect both of those partners in developing this particular school. And some of the opportunities that the local school division will do is provide the teachers with necessary housing because housing of course in northern Saskatchewan is always tough to find. And what section 8 does, it gives the school divisions more flexibility when it comes to looking at how we can support some of the teachers that are in need of housing or facilities of some sort.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I know in northern Saskatchewan it is always a challenge to try and balance the demands of education on what the resources that the province affords many of these northern school boards. There are some school divisions that do well and other school divisions that don't. There are some school divisions that count heavily on a grant from the province, where other boards don't need a grant from the program, just based on the royalties and the taxes associated with their certain community.

So there are some boards that are what you would consider non-grant boards and other boards that are grant boards. And, Mr. Speaker, the premise being is that there's — again, going back to my earlier point — different school divisions have different ways of operating their schools and different schedules and different days in which they would alternate the start of the school year, and it goes . . . as well as funding, Mr. Speaker. Some school divisions have extra funding for things like housing and supports for the teachers on other fronts.

Well section 8, again, provides school divisions with more flexibility. And, Mr. Speaker, what we should know, what we should know is that many of the school divisions, no matter if they're a zero-grant board or a grant board, is that they manage their money well. Many school divisions in northern Saskatchewan and throughout the province, they manage their money well. And there should be a reward, at the end of the day, saying that if you do have excess money left over, the government doesn't come along and take it from you or put other demands on that money, that you should have the flexibility to determine where you want to spend that money and when you want to spend it, Mr. Speaker. And in northern Saskatchewan, supporting the teachers through providing housing is one aspect I think many school divisions were smart to invest in, and we needn't interfere with that particular process or that particular service as well.

So, Mr. Speaker, we need to look at all the other challenges the school divisions have. And if they have the ways and means in which they can be innovative and exciting and continue building a solid education system at their local level by using extra dollars and giving them more flexibility in how they use those saved dollars, Mr. Speaker, it's something that we would certainly want to see happen as an opposition because local boards have a lot of insight. They have a lot of knowledge.

And if you can imagine for a moment, Mr. Speaker, that if we do, if we do take the local boards out of the equation and the government just simply runs the school divisions from, you know, the government centre, Mr. Speaker, that doesn't do

anything for local needs and local aspirations. Imagine for a moment if all the school boards said, okay, we've had enough of this government disrespecting our teachers, not engaging us. So if the government wants to control education, we'll walk from this whole exercise. You take care of the education system. Imagine the chaos, Mr. Speaker. Imagine the problems that would create, that would be created if you didn't have local school divisions helping this government and guide education at the local level.

So that's why it's important that we respect our school divisions. That's why it's important that we respect our teachers. That's why it's important that we respect the students and the parents that benefit from their work, Mr. Speaker, by simply consulting them on something as important and vitally important as the start of the school year and how they're able to spend the extra dollars that they're able to save or able to negotiate for the betterment of their school division overall.

Now, Mr. Speaker, it also talks a bit about section 9, in which they remove the requirement for a board to get a quote on a loan before passing a resolution to borrow money. Mr. Speaker, I know that all the school divisions throughout the province and some of the towns and villages as well, they are, by law, they have to get their books audited. They have to present their audited books. They have annual general meetings and all the scrutiny that is attached to operating school divisions or local government. All the rules are there, Mr. Speaker, so it's not as if people are not following the rules. It's not as if the school divisions in the towns and villages are not getting their audits done in a timely fashion. They are all following the rules.

So why did . . . The government comes along and says, oh we need you to get a quote on a loan before you borrow money. Now, Mr. Speaker, that's probably an age-old policy that probably needs to be looked at. And certainly from my perspective we would encourage one thing, is that you consult with the people impacted to ensure that what you are doing here is something that they want and they support and they would embrace. And you need their agreement to do so, so we would encourage consultation on that as well.

Now, Mr. Speaker, what we find a bit troubling . . . We talk about the school divisions and borrowing money, and borrowing money. The whole notion around P3, we were talking about that quite a bit, you know, as an NDP opposition. And the P3s, Mr. Speaker, the question you've got to ask . . . This is where we get angry in the opposition. We get just as angry on the P3 model that the government is forcing down people's throat because, Mr. Speaker, they tried to meddle with the school year. They tried to disrespect our teachers. They disregarded our school division. Now they're bringing in the P3 school model.

And we sit back as an opposition and we say, my goodness. You know, if you are requiring the school division to be accountable on how they are spending their money, well should you not be accountable as well on how you're spending your education dollars that you received on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan? Come to account. Be transparent in that particular model. It's the same principle that applies to the school division should apply to the province as well. Exactly what are you spending on P3s? We want to know.

And I think the other thing that really upsets a lot of the school divisions I think, Mr. Speaker, I think, is that once these P3 schools are established, these rent-a-school schemes that we are talking about, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the problem is, who has the right for accessibility? Who has the right to make changes? Who has the right to determine use in that facility? Is it the contractor? Is it the school division? Or is it the government?

And, Mr. Speaker, that's the fundamental argument that we would have that as you go through the P3 model: we've got to figure out who owns this asset. Who owns the assets? Who controls the assets? And who has accessibility to the assets? And that's the biggest argument that we have on this side of the Assembly. We want to know what we're spending.

And the second point is, is who determines accessibility and who determines whether that school is used at 7 o'clock at night or not. Is it the private contract, the people that own that school, or is it the school division? These things need to be worked out, Mr. Speaker, and I don't think the province has any clue as to how this is going to work for the local school division because they didn't consult to begin with.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the other thing that's really confusing a lot of people in the province of Saskatchewan — and I certainly have my own theory on this one — but we're saying they have had record revenue, Mr. Speaker. This government has had record revenue. In 2007 when the NDP left government, they had a budget of \$8 billion. Today the budget that the Saskatchewan Party has is over \$14 billion, Mr. Speaker. Unprecedented record revenue.

And, Mr. Speaker, what concerns us on this side of the Assembly, when you talk about education, we've been asking them to invest in education. And the best that they could do with unprecedented revenue, Mr. Speaker, almost twice the amount of money the NDP had to operate in 2007, is . . . Why is it now they have to go to a P3 model to build our schools despite the fact that they've had record revenue? Where'd the money go, Mr. Speaker? You got almost twice as much money each and every year than we had when we were in government, and yet you're still punting the debt to P3s down the road, Mr. Speaker.

Now the question that we have is that we want . . . That's one of the reasons why we're asking for accountability and transparency. We want to know, how is it you get record revenue? You get record revenue. You got almost twice the money in your budget each and every year, and you have to go to this P3 model to build schools. What is up with that? We just can't figure that out, Mr. Speaker. It is totally beyond me how they can have record revenue and yet they had to go to a P3 model to build schools and to build bridges for the people of Saskatchewan.

And, Mr. Speaker, that also lends credence to our argument that this government hasn't got it figured out. They do not know what they're doing because, once again, as I mentioned at the outset, we have an amendment to their amendment from some other consequential amendment that they amended last year to impact the bills that they're amending this year again. Like, all these amendments has one confused. So I almost thought maybe we should go to an FOI [freedom of information] as to

what their objective is, so we can help them achieve their objective to get the right bill in place. And had they done consultation, Mr. Speaker, we would be prepared to help them. We would've helped them out.

Because why would we help them out, Mr. Speaker? Why would we help them out? Well because we don't want the teachers and the students to suffer. And we don't want the school divisions to suffer as well because they have a government that's inept and doesn't really, doesn't know how to take care of the business properly on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan.

So, Mr. Speaker, once again, the question that I have for the government, and that includes the Minister of Education . . . in the future my advice to you is to not meddle with the school year until you've got full consultation and co-operation and agreement from the teachers, the school division, and the students impacted by your decision. Because if you're governing by polling numbers, by polling, Mr. Speaker, if you're governing by polling, that does not, that does not, to me, describe leadership. That does not describe to me leadership in any way, shape, or form, Mr. Speaker. So if you can't figure it out, go to the people that know what they're doing. Go to the school divisions and they'll give them some advice.

And today, Mr. Speaker, today we ask the same question and that's why my colleague, the Regina Rosemont member, he's been asking for accountability and transparency on the P3 model. Do you know why he's asking for that? They want to know how much extra that they're paying for these schools. Now on this side of the Assembly the NDP want these schools, but we can't figure out why they're going to a rent-a-school scheme, Mr. Speaker. Like they've got twice the amount of money, twice the amount of money to work with and yet they're still putting the Government of Saskatchewan in debt through these P3 models. They're still putting Saskatchewan people into debt on these P3 schemes, Mr. Speaker. And we're going to pay more. We're going to pay more for those P3 schemes. We're going to pay a lot more.

But you know what, Mr. Speaker, the number of members across the way are laughing and they're giggling away in the back over there, Mr. Speaker. Do you know why they find it so funny, Mr. Speaker? Because 10 years from now when it is time to pay these bills, I can guarantee you that 80 per cent of those guys across the way will not be around. We would argue, we would argue that what they're doing with P3s is they're putting us further into debt. They're putting us further into debt when we needn't go into debt, Mr. Speaker. They have enough resources to work with and they're putting us further into debt and they're also adding interest on that debt.

So what I think is going on, Mr. Speaker, is they're punting that debt down to our grandchildren and our children, Mr. Speaker, because they can't provide leadership even on the simple process of when you start your school year. They couldn't figure that out. Well, Mr. Speaker, we have no confidence from our side of the Assembly that they can figure out the finances of this province to ensure that Saskatchewan stays strong for 20, 30, 40 years. They haven't got that figured out, Mr. Speaker.

So I think there's going to be a lot more discussion on this

particular item from a lot of my colleagues, Mr. Speaker. And I look at the money . . . and I had a great conversation with a former premier, Premier Calvert. And him and I were having discussions on what the Saskatchewan Party government enjoys today — a 14-and-some-odd billion dollar budget, 14-plus billion dollar budget — and words that Premier Calvert used was, I could only dream of having a \$14 billion budget when I was the premier. We knew we were building up and we knew that the economy was coming on strong. But from his perspective, he can't figure out why is it we have to go into greater debt, to P3s, when we have almost twice the amount of money in the annual budget that the Saskatchewan Party enjoys today, Mr. Speaker, than the NDP enjoyed in 2007.

So we want to know, as the opposition, we want to know on P3s. At the very least, tell us what we're going to spend, what we're going to owe, how long is that debt for, who has control of these assets. And this government won't tell us. So what the problem that we see on this side is they want all the glory of announcing these schools, and they're punting that debt down the road. So 10, 15 years from now we'll be still paying that debt thanks to this minister, that Premier, and that government, Mr. Speaker, because they refuse to come forward and be responsible, to tell the people exactly what we're going to owe on those P3 schools, Mr. Speaker. Who's paying that bill?

[16:00]

So from our perspective, Mr. Speaker, when we talked about P3s, P3s as an example of how they've assaulted, they've assaulted the education organization overall, they've insulted the teachers. And, Mr. Speaker, when you talk about P3s, from our perspective, we don't look at it as a 3P from the perspective of them saying we're going to get these private companies to build these schools. Really, to us the P3 is the Premier's pricey projects. That's what they call them.

And that's what's going to happen, Mr. Speaker, is that every taxpayer, whether it's a municipal taxpayer or a provincial taxpayer or a federal taxpayer, that you're going to be paying for all the P3s in this province, the Premier's pricey projects, because he wants the glory. But guess who gets the bill? Guess who gets the bill, Mr. Speaker? Guess who gets the bill? Taxpayers are going to get that bill. The taxpayers are going to get the bill and yet the taxpayers are sitting here saying, well my goodness, you know, these guys are getting almost twice the amount of money than the previous NDP government did. Why is it we're still going in debt? It doesn't make any sense to them. So to the average layperson, the average layperson sitting there saying, well let's see. If I had a job and I got twice the amount of income, I'd be happy. So why am I going into debt more? That's exactly my point, Mr. Speaker.

The average person can relate to this, Mr. Speaker. If they had their income almost doubled, if they had their income almost doubled, Mr. Speaker, they'd say, well why would I have to go in debt? Well that's exactly what the Saskatchewan Party is doing on P3s, Mr. Speaker. They have almost twice the income than the previous NDP government had, and yet we're still going into debt. Figure that one out, Mr. Speaker. And that's exactly my point. The backbenchers chirp from their chair, Mr. Speaker. What's going to happen is eventually, you know, all this is going to come to roost. All this is going to come to roost.

And we in the NDP opposition are going to hold those guys to account. We're going to say, you were sitting there on your hands; you were sitting on your hands while the debt was ratcheting up and you're just sitting there clapping away. And guess who's going to pay the bill later on? It's going to be the Saskatchewan taxpayers. They're going to pay more and more under this government, Mr. Speaker.

And you have a bunch of backbenchers that don't know what's going on. They're sitting there clapping because they're told to clap, Mr. Speaker. And on this side of the House, we refuse to applaud the demise of Saskatchewan when it comes to debt. And we refuse to applaud the importance of our teachers, unlike the backbenchers across the way, Mr. Speaker.

And that's exactly our argument today. We can't figure out from the education perspective why you would interfere, why you'd interfere with the start of the school year. Why would you disrespect the school board association? Why would you disrespect the teachers? Why would you not sit down and consult with them?

And, Mr. Speaker, then you'd shove the P3 model down their throat, whether it's a bridge in Prince Albert or whether it's schools, Mr. Speaker. And we can't figure it out. You have twice the amount of income. You almost have twice the amount of income. You have over \$14 billion in your annual operating budgets. Why are you going further into debt? Why can't the backbenchers stand up and tell their front bench, that doesn't make any sense? You have twice the amount of income, almost twice the amount of income.

The Deputy Speaker: — There seems to be a lot of conversations across the way. Members will have ample opportunity to enter into the debate, but currently the member from Athabasca has the floor. I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Now, Mr. Speaker, what's really important here is that the average person . . . This is how I'll do the analogy. The average person out there, if I told him today you would have twice the income, twice the income in your home as the Saskatchewan Party is now enjoying, almost twice the budget that we enjoyed when we were last in government, would it make any sense to you to go further into debt? And the average person, the average person would say, well no, if I'm getting twice the income, I shouldn't have to go into debt. Well that logic doesn't apply to the Saskatchewan Party, Mr. Speaker.

And we can't figure out on this side of the Assembly, where in the heck is the money going? Why is it you have to go into debt? And while that thing is happening, Mr. Speaker, by the time they're done government, they're going to clean out the bank account. They're going to put all these debts down for years and years and years so the next government coming in won't see daylight for another 10 years, Mr. Speaker. And that has always been the conservative plans for the people of Saskatchewan. We see it on a continual basis, Mr. Speaker. They want to make sure, they want to make sure the cupboard is bare.

And I'll say the backbenchers over there, they're really helping

that. They're really helping achieve that, Mr. Speaker. They're really helping achieve that, Mr. Speaker. As a result of their mismanagement, we're going to have debt piling up for a number of years. Through the P3 school model, we're going to have that debt apply each and every year. They're hamstringing future governments and the future of Saskatchewan by pushing P3s down people's throats, Mr. Speaker, that are more expensive. They don't want to come forward with the information. And we lack control over these facilities because the private sector is building it. And guess who's paying the bill? Guess who's paying the bill, Mr. Speaker? It's the taxpayers of Saskatchewan, the school divisions, the people that use the education system. They're paying the bill.

And that's why the backbenchers over there, the backbenchers over there should have a backbone. The backbenchers should have a backbone, stand up, and tell their front bench, how is it? We need to know to represent our constituents properly. Instead of getting up and being told when to get up and what to say, get up and say, how is it we have almost twice the income, we have almost twice the income and we still have to go into debt for years and years?

And the reason being, Mr. Speaker, is they can't manage the money that they're getting right now properly. They can't maintain the boom. We're going to see evidence of that fairly shortly. And above all else, Mr. Speaker, their job is to make sure that Saskatchewan is knocked down and kept down for years and years and years, Mr. Speaker. And who's going to come back and clean up another mess, Mr. Speaker? It's going to be the NDP, Mr. Speaker.

So I'm going to tell the people of Saskatchewan this. You cannot afford the Saskatchewan Party anymore. You simply cannot afford . . . They've interfered in many, many things. They have confused many organizations. And despite the booming economy and unprecedented revenue, why are we still going into debt on projects like the expensive P3 school projects, Mr. Speaker, the model that they're pushing down people's throats?

So from my perspective, I maintain and I'll continue saying this: they want the glory of today's announcements on some of these schools that they're putting through the P3 model. They want the glory today. That's the Saskatchewan Party. But guess who is paying the bill tomorrow? It's the Saskatchewan taxpayer, Mr. Speaker. It's going to be the Saskatchewan taxpayer. You're going to pay through your personal income tax. You're going to pay through an entertainment tax. You're going to pay through land taxes. You're going to pay through some of your elevated power bills. And the cost of living is going up. You're paying those bills. The Saskatchewan Party, lacking leadership, wants all the glory today. And they're punting that debt down the road so future generations can pay year after year after year after year for the PPP [public-private partnership] deal we're getting from that government, and that's the Premier's pricey projects, Mr. Speaker.

And I say shame. Because we've seen this act before, Mr. Speaker. We've seen this act before. And I can tell you right now that as a result of the 1980s, when the NDP took over in 1990s, it took us 12 of the 16 years that that government . . . or that government's backbenchers are yelling out every now and

then to clean up the last mess, Mr. Speaker. And today I'm warning the people of Saskatchewan: don't let the Saskatchewan Party get away with creating another mess that's going to take another 16 years to clean up, Mr. Speaker. That is not fair to the future generations, and people ought to be held to account on that front.

So once again, almost twice the amount of revenue on an annual basis, almost twice. Almost twice, Mr. Speaker, almost twice. And yet they still have to go to a P3 model to fund schools. Why, Mr. Speaker? It's because they want the glory today and somebody else can pay the debt later down the road. And to me that does not describe leadership, Mr. Speaker. That does not describe leadership. It lends credence to my argument, to my argument that all they were about is the same issue on Bill 163, was they are polling . . . they're governing by polling, Mr. Speaker. And the polling at one time said, maybe the long weekend could be tampered with to accommodate families who want to take a couple of extra days off school and, Mr. Speaker, here we are again today finding out that the government was wrong to do that.

And the minister is standing in the Assembly today, presenting a bill that says we're now going back to square one. Why, Mr. Speaker? Because they didn't consult. Why, Mr. Speaker? Because they wanted to govern by polling. Why, Mr. Speaker? Because they didn't get it figured out from day one. And, Mr. Speaker, the damage doesn't just stop there. It stops on promoting the expensive P3 model that many people including our children and grandchildren that will be paying for their expensive P3 models for years and years to come.

And rest assured, Mr. Speaker, some of the backbenchers that are chirping over there, they won't be around here to be held to account. They won't be around here to be held to account. But history, history will not be altered. Their names will be attached to this, Mr. Speaker. Each and every one of them, their names will be attached to this. And then when people come ask them, as they will, why did you allow that to happen? Why did you have twice the revenues and you still put us deeply into debt? What kind of vision did you have at that time?

And, Mr. Speaker, I'm giving them notice that those questions are coming to them in the future. And from our perspective, from our perspective, Mr. Speaker, they had enough resources to do this on their own. They didn't have to go to expensive P3 models. They could have done this on their own. And, Mr. Speaker, they refused. They took the easy way out, and that's one of the things that I think is important when it comes to education and how Bill 163, how Bill 163 affects and impacts us all, in many, in many, many, many ways, Mr. Speaker.

So I think it's important that we look at all aspects of the bill. And while the bill talks about renaming section 3, renaming the Prince of Wales Scholarship Fund to the Education Scholarship Fund, those are housekeeping items, Mr. Speaker. And yes, you want to make sure you coordinate that well. And also, the bill also makes changes to the French version of the Act. And I want to explain the bill a bit longer, Mr. Speaker, and really, the only thing when you want to do the changes in French is the French version must reflect more respective language use and terms.

That rounds out what the bill's all about. But the key thing here, the key thing for us, Mr. Speaker, is the fact that the Government of Saskatchewan, the Saskatchewan Party government, is coming back to the Assembly on their knees on this whole issue, asking for a mulligan if you will, saying that they made a big mistake. And they may not dress it up, but we know in opposition this is a victory for us. This is a victory for a lot of people throughout the province, that if they had consulted properly they wouldn't be here in this Assembly trying to fix the problem that they made, Mr. Speaker. Because they should be humbled by this. They should be humbled by this and the fact that people out there were willing to explain to them why they shouldn't do that, and they chose not to listen to them.

So many teachers now are going to do that come next election, Mr. Speaker. They're going to turn their back on this government and they're going to choose not to listen to them at that time, like they have so callously done time and time again.

So, Mr. Speaker, I know other colleagues want to enter the debate on this particular bill. We have a lot more to say on this bill, but it's nice to be able to sit here today and explain to people the value that our teachers contribute to our children and to our school divisions. It's nice to really herald the importance and the role, and dominant role, that the school divisions are playing in many of our areas, Mr. Speaker. It is really nice to pay tribute to the educators in the school division, and the students out there that are really making Saskatchewan a great place to educate your children, Mr. Speaker.

And that's one of the things that we think is paramount. It's something that we should recognize as a government. And all we've seen from the Saskatchewan government is disrespect, disrespect, disrespect and no consultation on very important issues like the start of the school year.

So, Mr. Speaker we have a lot more to say on this particular bill. But at this time I would move that we adjourn debate on Bill 163, an Act to amend, *An Act to amend The Education Act*.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Athabasca has moved to adjourn debate on Bill 163, *The Education Amendment Act, 2014*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

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 Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm glad to rise and join debate on Bill No. 161, *The Wildlife Amendment Act, 2014*. I guess to start off, Mr. Deputy Speaker, again, as we gain a better appreciation for the evolving legislative agenda of this government as it's brought forth in this fall sitting, there are certainly some bills that are pretty much in the housekeeping vein, Mr. Deputy Speaker. There are some bills that are fixing past mistakes as my colleague, the member from Athabasca, was just referring to. There are some that are about repeal in terms of leaving . . . I think of the farm, family farm credit bill, essentially repealing an Act.

[16:15]

But there are some that are actually . . . contain some legislative action. And it would certainly seem on the face of it, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that Bill No. 161 would fall into that latter category. So it's good to have something to actually sink your teeth into, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in terms of the legislative agenda of this government. It's getting to be some pretty slim pickings through the roster there, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but we're glad to see a piece of legislation come forward like this today. And I guess we'll see what comes out over the remaining days in this session, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Certainly the mind casts back to when they brought in the three more MLAs bill in the last day of the first session back after the 2011 election, Mr. Deputy Speaker, a bill of course which, you know, they didn't have the decency to talk to the people of Saskatchewan about. They weren't out there on the hustings saying, you know what this province really needs, Mr. Deputy Speaker? It's three more MLAs. They weren't saying that from door to door. They had a lot of other things to say from door to door. They had a lot of other things to say through the phone banks and through the paid media, but they didn't say anything about that, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So again we're always sort of interested to see how the agenda rolls out. Are they saving the big ones for the end, Mr. Speaker, and then just sort of drop it and run? Or are they, you know, in the case of today's education Act amendment, are they trying to sort of camouflage what is an admission of fault? And again we're glad to see that, you know, they're finally coming around to that admission. Or is it about genuine action that's connected with the lives and workplaces of Saskatchewan people or what's actually going on in the province?

Again this would seem to be, this particular bill, 161, would seem to be more connected with what's going on in the province, so we're glad to see this particular piece of legislation come forward. And we'll be looking to see . . . Of course we'll give it the full scrutiny it's due, and we'll certainly reserve the right to consult more broadly on it in terms of undertakings that have been made by this government as to who's been consulted and who's in favour of what.

But certainly on the face of it, it looks promising. The early support coming forth from the Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation, glad to see that in terms of the legislation coming forward, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And we'll be again doing that work of due diligence. For myself there's a . . . I don't know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if you know too much about the wildlife on 12 block Cameron where I hang my hat in north central

Regina. But certainly wildlife in the province of Saskatchewan is something that is part of our collective heritage, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's part of our collective common wealth, I would suggest.

And certainly the great outdoors and the steps that we need to take as a society to protect and to ensure that wildlife is being well conserved and well taken care of and well approached in terms of the way that we as society do so is very important. And it's as important, I would suggest, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if you're on 12 block Cameron or if you're on the home quarter out by Montmartre or up, you know, on the Churchill River or, you know, pick your place in this beautiful province of ours in terms of the wildlife, in terms of the animals and the fish and this tremendous natural patrimony that we have here in this province.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I'm also informed in this kind of a debate by the fact of while I grew up in the city, certainly my father comes in off the farm. And instead of a paper route, he had a trapline as a kid growing up, Mr. Speaker, and was an avid hunter, fisher. You know, be they ducks or be they deer, he was very actively engaged in hunting and fishing.

And certainly as kids we got to experience some of that in terms of the trapline or duck hunting or what have you. And it's maybe not a daily sort of interaction for myself, but again it's something that we, wherever we are in the province, should all be paying attention to. And certainly I think of the kind of engagement that my colleague, the member from Rosemont has as an avid fisher, hunter.

I also think of the opportunities that I've had to, you know, being I'm more of an avid paddler than I am a hunter, Mr. Deputy Speaker, paddler in a canoe, of course. And in terms of I certainly enjoy the people that have those skills and bringing home the, be it deer sausage or the pickerel cheeks or what have you. It's certainly lots of tasty ways to enjoy the wildlife from my perspective, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

But in terms of the legislation that we have here before us today, again one of the stated intents for the legislation is the desire to crack down on poaching of wildlife. And this is from a CBC [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation] news story from November 18th of 2014, so just earlier this month. It's entitled, "Saskatchewan toughens wildlife law to crack down on poachers." This is from the director of compliance with Saskatchewan Environment. It says:

"If it's a world record set [of antlers] I've heard there's been blank cheques for people trying to get a hold of those," Ken Aube, director of compliance and enforcement with Saskatchewan Environment, said Tuesday. "So there's some pretty serious collectors out there."

"If you found an animal that was shot and left, for example, when you're investigating that scene, there are only certain points where this animal could have been shot from. And when they could be shooting up to a kilometre away it just increases the odds that you'll never be able to find where the shot was taken from."

What Mr. Aube is referring to of course is the fact of, you

know, trophy hunting for trophy hunting on its own. And the idea . . . There are few more sort of directly wasteful and disrespectful practices I would suggest, Mr. Deputy Speaker, than the notion that you would shoot, say a white-tailed deer and just take it for the antlers and not make use of that deer's meat that should be there to be taken advantage of, but that you'd rather leave it in the field to rot and just take the horns and go or take the trophy and go. And that, Mr. Speaker, is something that I think we can all agree on on either side of this House, is something that needs to be cracked down on, is something that needs to be taken on because there are few more wasteful and disrespectful and destructive approaches to mother nature than can be . . . I can't really imagine.

So when somebody like Darrell Crabbe, executive director of the Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation, comes forward and says:

Trophy sets of antlers are probably still the number-one concern out there and probably the easiest poaching opportunity that there might be: where you can shoot an animal, harvest the head or take the head off and escape.

We take note of what Mr. Crabbe has to say. And certainly if this bill does help to crack down on that kind of behaviour, then we are very interested to see how this proceeds.

In terms of the other components in the legislation, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it talks about the most serious conservation offences carrying an automatic two-year suspension. Again on the face of that, it would seem to be a good move. People failing to pay wildlife-related fines will be prohibited from buying a licence until their fines are paid. Again, Mr. Speaker, a common sense measure, it would seem. People who are suspended from hunting activities in another jurisdiction will not be able to purchase a licence in Saskatchewan. Again, Mr. Speaker, common sense it would seem in that regard.

Those convicted on three separate occasions for wildlife offences will have a lifetime ban prohibiting the purchase of hunting licences. Again, Mr. Speaker, it points out the fact that some of these things, they're not rights, but they're in fact privileges. And with these privileges come responsibilities. And again, if someone is abusing their hunting licence and the privilege that is involved in that in such a way, Mr. Speaker, in such a chronic manner, then certainly the pursuit of a lifetime ban would seem to be a fair punishment for that, especially upon three separate occasions of wildlife offences.

And again this is another measure in the legislation building on earlier work that the government has engaged in where, in collaboration with the Ministry of Justice, people who are in arrears for maintenance payments will be denied the opportunity to purchase a hunting or angling licence. Again, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that would seem to be fair enough and builds on earlier legislative efforts from this government.

And then lastly, Mr. Speaker, there are certain updates made in the legislation to accommodate the new single-vendor electronic licensing process that this government has engaged in. And again, Mr. Speaker, that's something where we've seen some questions arise in terms of how that's working out in the community, how that's working out in the field, and that's one where we'll have more questions on for sure. But it seems to be

more about this government seeking out new ways to privatize various functions of government instead of doing it right for the people of Saskatchewan.

But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in terms of the legislation overall, it seems to look like a pretty reasonable effort. We'll of course have more questions to ask and more consultation to engage in. One thing that we're particularly interested in is where in the second reading speech from the minister he refers to the fact that:

These amendments to *The Wildlife Act* can be implemented without affecting existing First Nations and Métis hunting rights in our province and these changes will not add to resources or training needs for Saskatchewan's conservation officers.

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that's one we'll be consulting on more generally. We'll be interested to see what consultation or what sort of confidence or clarity that the government has sought out in terms of the impact on the balancing of those rights under the constitution. And we'll be, I'm sure, having some good consultation on that with the broader public but particularly with representative groups out of First Nations and Métis circles.

I guess that's about it for my remarks at this time, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Again to recap, it would seem to be a fairly decent piece of legislation. We'll have more questions as the consultation evolves. And then certainly in terms of gaining greater clarity come committee time, we'll certainly avail ourselves of that. But in terms of the legislation, we hope that it's as, indeed as good as it looks. But with that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would move adjournment on Bill No. 161, *The Wildlife Amendment Act, 2014*.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member has moved to adjourn 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 Deputy 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 Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Riversdale.

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I am as always pleased to enter the discussion in this Chamber, this time about Bill No. 162, *The Enforcement of Money Judgments Amendment Act, 2014*.

I'll talk a little bit about the bill. And I think it's important to point out actually that before us today, before the legislature at this point in time we have, actually I think it's three bills in the last couple of years that have been passed and this government

has come back to amend, to make changes, which is always . . . I think it's important when you create legislation to always be open to realizing that there will be things that you discover about it that need to be improved and enhanced and changed.

But I think it's telling that this government has three bills before us. Actually one that was just read for the second time today, *The Education Amendment Act*, I believe. It's always good to be open to amending and improving things, but when you bring a bill before this legislature you should really have done your homework fully, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And in doing that homework it involves real and meaningful consultation with all parties who are and will be impacted by that particular legislation.

[16:30]

So it's interesting to me that we have these three bills at this point in time before us that have just been passed in recent years. So this particular bill, *The Enforcement of Money Judgments Amendment Act, 2014*, is amending an Act that came into effect in May of 2012, *The Enforcement of Money Judgments Act*. And that particular Act that we're amending today introduced, as the minister points out, a major revision in judgment enforcement law in Saskatchewan.

And the minister points out that implementation of the new program had been going well, but it's proposing minor amendments to address practical and technical issues he says that were identified by the sheriff's office and the public as lessons learned through their experience. So I'm curious, and I know we'll have an opportunity in committee to find out a little bit more. It's very clear, issues identified by the sheriff's office, but I'm interested to hear a little bit more about the feedback that he's received from the public. And when we talk about public, to whom are we speaking? Are we talking about the credit companies? Are we talking about individuals? I'd like a little bit more information about this.

Bill No. 162, what does this amending bill do, Mr. Speaker? The minister points out "It will introduce amendments to provide that a notice of seizure of employment income will last for a 24-month period of the enforcement instruction without requiring it to be renewed after 12 months." He also points out that it includes:

. . . 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.

It will ensure that the sheriff is not considered to be an account debtor by reason of receiving funds from a debtor. It will provide additional direction on the payment of premiums to initiating creditors. [The minister says and points out that] It will revise certain seizure provisions and enforcement instruction provisions to facilitate operations of the sheriff's office . . . will provide appointment of a director of sheriffs.

And the minister also in his second reading speech says that:

It will address technical priority issues regarding advances and consistency of language with *The Securities Transfer Act*. It will allow the director of sheriffs to waive the enforcement of small amounts such as fees that remain due after judgment distribution. It will remove the forms from the regulations and allow the director of sheriffs to provide the required forms. It will update the language in the Act to reflect the wording in the new Queen's Bench rules.

But in simple language, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this bill makes it easier for those who are owed money to collect their debts.

I think that when we think about that, you always have to think about the two sides to the coin, Mr. Speaker, and who is on the one side, those to whom the money is owed. So we can think about banks, credit card companies, sometimes parents if there's a maintenance enforcement order, Mr. Speaker, perhaps an employer who had an employee steal money — any number of people you think about on that creditor side, Mr. Speaker. And on the other side of the coin you have the debtor, the person who owes the money, and different circumstances in life. Obviously if you owe money, Mr. Speaker, there should be a responsibility to pay that money back. Of course that should be a given; if you owe money, you should be paying that money.

But I think sometimes when we think about this legislation and that fine line between striking a balance for fairness, Mr. Speaker, making sure that there are individuals who perhaps want to pay the money back but are maybe in a tight financial circumstance, and you need to think about it being, money being paid back in a timely fashion but also giving people an opportunity to have time to pay that back.

So I think one of the questions that we need to ask about this particular bill is how is this going to speed up the process of having people pay their debts, Mr. Speaker. Are there any unintended consequences of this? And I think we need to think about the environment, the economic environment right now, Mr. Speaker, where we have inflation. And we've had remarkably low interest rates for an extended period of time now, and there was the feeling that the Bank of Canada, that interest rates would not be changing at least for another year, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But I know in listening to many financial folks these days that they're talking about the reality with inflation, that interest rates might go up soon. So the fact of the matter remains, there are many people in Saskatchewan, and in Canada for that matter, who are carrying a fair amount of debt, whether it's bank loans on their cars, their mortgages, those kinds of things, but credit card debt as well. Unfortunately there's a high level of credit card debt that people are carrying.

So what does that change in interest rate look like for those people who are carrying some debt, Mr. Speaker? And how will this . . . Again that striking of the balance between ensuring creditors are being paid and debtors have an opportunity to fulfill their responsibility and pay their debt. Does this bill strike that right balance in ensuring that people are afforded that opportunity to pay their debts?

I know the original bill that we're amending, *The Enforcement of Money Judgments Act*, was proclaimed just a short while ago, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But a piece of the Act involved updating

the procedure for seizing bank accounts, property, and employment . . . [inaudible] . . . which strengthens the collecting of child and spousal support. And I know the Minister of Justice . . . well the former minister of Justice and I believe the previous minister of Justice has talked about how Saskatchewan's maintenance enforcement office has one of the highest collection rates in Canada.

But one of the challenges . . . And I've seen this in my office actually, sort of both sides of the coin here again. I've spoken to mothers who have been owed money. I'm saying mothers because these are the individuals who have come to my office, but mothers who have had some serious challenges in collecting money for their children from their former partners, and despite the maintenance enforcement officers' high percentage of ability to collect, there are still some really hard-to-collect-from clients. Often being self-employed makes that incredibly difficult.

So the fact that this bill, the previous bill that we're amending, makes this a little bit easier to collect money is a good thing. But I've also heard from the other perspective. I've spoken to, in this case, one dad in particular who flags some concerns that he had some serious financial pressures and was not in a great position to be able to support his children as well as the maintenance order had dictated, Mr. Speaker, and had some added stress and strain. So again this particular bill is about making it easier to collect when there is a judgment, Mr. Speaker, a court judgment. And so I think we always need to think about striking that balance of fairness of allowing people the opportunity to get their money back but also making sure that those who owe the money have the opportunity to pay and not be put at a severe financial disadvantage.

I mean I'm thinking about someone perhaps who has high credit card debt, which isn't necessarily a smart thing, Mr. Speaker, but it is a reality for many people today. And perhaps they have a small car that they . . . So the credit card company perhaps, that can't get their money back that's owed on the credit card, but with this legislation, from what I understand, let's say the person owns a \$3,000 car outright. This makes it easier for that credit card company to seize that \$3,000 car which may be a link to employment for that individual, Mr. Speaker.

So I think it's really important when we talk about this kind of legislation that you need to strike a balance. I know that there'll be some good opportunity in committee to discuss whether or not this is the right balance, and again who, in the time that the original bill was proclaimed, who has pointed out these difficulties and why these amendments are before us. But I know I have colleagues who will also want to speak to Bill No. 162, *The Enforcement of Money Judgments Amendment Act, 2014* and we'll also talk about it when it gets to committee.

But I just want to point out again that I think it's an interesting thing that we have three bills before this legislature that are amending, repealing two of them, I believe, or parts of them, and rolling them into new bills. But when you bring bills before the legislature, Mr. Speaker, it's incumbent upon the government to do the necessary homework to get that right in the first place, to think about unintended consequences, to ensure that all stakeholders who will be impacted by the bill

have been thoroughly and meaningfully consulted, Mr. Speaker, in order to get that right in the first place.

But I think it's important too for a legislature to be open to changing, making changes when we realize that something isn't working as well. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I would like to move to adjourn. Those are my comments for now and I would like to move to 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 Opposition Whip.

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To join on the Bill No. 159, *The Family Farm Credit Repeal Act*. Looking at it, it's a housecleaning item here, and looking at the bill itself, it doesn't talk a lot.

But I want to give a little history I guess from the co-operatives, and that's exactly what this bill that was set up in I believe the '70s, to lend money as a co-operative of Canada, a trust company of Canada, to lend money to I guess farms, individual families who wanted to apply, had that ability to do that. So it did that.

Today that has changed over time and it's now a company that, you know, does I believe wholesale financing services to credit unions throughout the province. So they're no longer a company that actually lends money to individuals whether it was a farm, family farms, individuals. It repeals that bill. And that's exactly what it does so really there isn't a lot of detail to this, other than talk . . . I could go on, Mr. Speaker, talking about co-operatives and the good work that they're doing. Many of us belong to co-ops.

But having said that, having said that, Mr. Speaker, this bill at the end of the day, this bill at the end of the day repeals a bill that was introduced in about 1970. It's housecleaning. That's all it is, so that's interesting to see.

So, Mr. Speaker, at this point I don't have a lot of discussion about this bill. In committee it will go eventually, once my colleagues have had a few comments to say. And that'll be interesting to see what happens, Mr. Speaker, with that. So at this time I have no further questions on this bill. And I will actually move that this bill . . . I adjourn on this bill at this time, Mr. Speaker.

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 Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Hello again, Mr. Speaker. Glad to join the debate this afternoon on Bill No. 155, *The Health Care Directives and Substitute Health Care Decision Makers Act*.

Again, Mr. Speaker, this is sort of a variation on the theme that is generally emerging as regards to this government's legislative agenda. And actually this is fairly important, Mr. Speaker, in terms of . . . To quote from or to reference the minister's second reading speech for this Act, it regards bringing the legislation of Saskatchewan into translation, of course, in respect to the Mercure decision of 1988 with the Supreme Court of Canada, where in terms of making sure that Saskatchewan's francophone community — certainly the Fransaskois being in the first rank of the francophone community, Mr. Speaker — to make sure that the laws of this province are respectful of the French fact here in Saskatchewan, respectful of the official bilingualism that is enshrined in our constitution and in our Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

It's again good to see on the one hand action being taken for bringing yet another piece of legislation into translation to have it available in the French language. But again, Mr. Speaker, in terms of . . . And beyond that, to quote the minister's second reading speech, "There are no changes in substance." And I guess is another way to say it's not beyond the . . . Again we think it's a good thing that the French language is being recognized and utilized and brought into yet another statute here in the province of Saskatchewan. But that there are "no changes in substance" I think speaks to something else, which is again the character and the substantial or not question as regards this government's legislative agenda.

[16:45]

So in terms of what might come up for substance, again, Mr. Speaker, in terms of *The Health Care Directives and Substitute Health Care Decision Makers Act*, in terms of things that we do around this Chamber, Mr. Speaker, in terms of legislation that is brought forward, some of them are fairly pedestrian. Some of them are substantial and of consequence. And some of them are actually related to life-and-death matters and that certainly would be the case for health care directives because of course we're talking about the steps that individuals take to ensure that their rights are safeguarded at end of life. And that in and of itself is a field of fairly significant evolution these days, Mr. Speaker. There are other jurisdictions where these questions are

being grappled with more fully, both on the provincial level and at the federal level, Mr. Speaker.

But back to this piece of legislation, it's again, to quote the minister from the second reading speech, "There are no changes in substance."

So, Mr. Speaker, we're glad to see the French translation moving through the statutes of Saskatchewan. We're glad to see that such a fundamental piece of legislation with, again quite literally, life-and-death questions being grappled with in statute, we're glad to see that being made available in la langue française [Translation: the French language]. But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, beyond that there's not a whole lot more to talk about as regards the bill in and of itself.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I'd move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 155, *The Health Care Directives and Substitute Health Care Decision Makers Act*.

The Speaker: — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 155, *The Health Care Directives and Substitute Health Care Decision Makers Act, 2014*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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 Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Merci, monsieur le Président [Translation: Thank you, Mr. Speaker]. Again, good to join debate on a bill that is largely seized with the consequential amendments arising from Bill No. 155, the translation into French of *The Health Care Directives and Substitute Health Care Decision Makers Act*. These of course are consequential amendments and again, good to see them ushering forth into *The Adult Guardianship and Co-decision-making Act, The Electronic Information and Documents Act, The Health Information Protection Act, and The Public Guardian and Trustee Act*.

Again, Mr. Speaker, in terms of a, you know, unilingual Act being replaced with a bilingual Act, we're glad to see that happen. There are necessary consequential amendments that usher forth into the other affected pieces of legislation. But in terms of this being a matter of stop the press, again, great to see that expansion of the accessibility in la langue française [Translation: the French language], but in terms of being a substantial and new and novel piece of legislation, again it's a bit of a comment on the legislative agenda of this government and the way that we see these things sort of . . .

You know, if they're not repealing something, Mr. Speaker, it would seem that they're amending amendments or perhaps

having a combined piece of legislation coming forward with yet further combinations. It's not exactly groundbreaking, Mr. Speaker, but I guess it beats some of the alternatives. So if it weren't for housekeeping, and if it weren't for correcting the mistakes that they've made in law, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it'd be an even skinnier legislative agenda on the part of this government.

But again, consequential amendments flowing forth from Bill 155 and the translation of *The Health Care Directives and Substitute Health Care Decision Makers Act* into other effective pieces of legislation, fair enough. And I guess I'd conclude my comments on it at this time, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

The Speaker: — The member has moved adjournment of 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 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 Speaker: — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Centre.

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to enter into the debate on Bill No. 157. And the title's quite long actually. It's longer than several of the bills that I've had a chance to rise in this House and debate. But it's actually, the title for the folks at home and in the House here, *An Act to Facilitate the Donation of Certain Tissues from One Living Person to Another for Transplantation and to Facilitate the Donation, after Death, of Tissues, Bodies or Body Parts for Transplantation, Medical or Scientific Purposes and to make a consequential amendment to The Adult Guardianship and Co-decision-making Act*. That's the title.

Of course, we talked about the short title is *The Human Tissue Gift Act, 2014*. But as I have said just a few minutes ago, that title is longer than many of the Acts this government has put forward, particularly when I've had a chance to talk about their agricultural agenda. The title is longer than their farm agenda, for sure.

But this is an important piece of legislation, and one that we'll have a lot to say, a lot to say about because clearly one of the great breakthroughs, great innovations we've seen in the last half of the 20th century was the whole transplantation, particularly the heart or the kidney, and what that's done in terms of giving people new hope, new hope for their lives.

And we know there are challenges here though, and there are challenges in Canada particularly around . . . I know when I've talked to people about lung transplants and how do you get . . . You're on a waiting list, but the chances of getting a healthy lung or heart, kidney, can be challenging. And it's a tough,

tough, it's a tough time for families, as they have so much hope, and they're waiting for someone else's tragedy when someone dies. And the odd thing from . . . And we've talked to many people about this and it'll be interesting to hear when we talk to organizations about how they feel about this piece of legislation because there's been challenges around, how do we have this on a driver's licence? How do we make sure we up the rates of donation?

But in Canada the challenge has been actually how . . . And it's a bit of an irony from what I understand that the fact that when you compare how we die in Canada to, say, how people die in some other countries, we don't die in the quick, tragic sense of accidents at the same rate, say, they do in other countries. And therefore when we die, often it's because of disease and where later on, whether it be cancer or that type of thing, other heart diseases, so really it puts our body parts, to be blunt, not in a very good place for use in terms of transplants. And so there's some real, real challenges here, but it's one that we have to come to deal with because in reality this is a very effective way to help people live longer.

Now this is an interesting piece of legislation before us for a whole host of reasons, but I do want to review the minister's comments. And of course one of the comments, and it was brought to our attention, and the minister alluded to it in sort of an interesting way, but that in fact that there will be this . . . This Act now changes the rules around organ donations and allows for the purchase of tissues. Now it hasn't been quite completely spelled out, but this is something that has caused a lot of debate in the ethics and particularly health ethics of, how do we deal with that? And of course this is a big, big issue that we have to talk about.

So he talks about how "Unfortunately the current legislation prevents Saskatchewan's health system from being more innovative in finding matches . . ." And so we need . . . And that's fair enough. We need to challenge, rise to that challenge. That's hugely important. So we have to modernize the legislation to take a look at this.

And we're wondering what's happening across Canada, and we know that it's a bit of a mixed bag out there in terms of what other provinces are doing. But this is something that, particularly in our new Canada where we see people living right across the country, and you may be feeling that your family . . . Someone's living in Toronto, but somebody is living in Vancouver. Someone's living in Calgary. Someone's living in Saskatoon. But they're all under different rules, and they're all of the same family. It would be nice to have something consistent right across Canada.

So it allows now the Lieutenant Governor in Council to make regulations — talking about standards, practice, procedures — that will improve access to transplantation. This is important, allows some flexibility. But we have to think through this and say, so what are they unintended consequences? And this is the irony of this particular government that they don't often think through their legislation.

We saw this just earlier today in *The Education Amendment Act*, where the minister just a few short years ago, this government was saying, we need to make sure kids go back

after Labour Day. They hadn't looked at a calendar to figure out that, you know, that can be quite late in the first week of September. Nobody mentioned this in that learned group over there, or maybe they were too busy talking about whether insofar is three words or is it two or one. But really now they're backing up.

So really for this government, they need to pay attention to the unintended consequences and think further than just a short-term plan. But that's the legacy of this government that we probably will see many pieces of legislation come back before us because there's problems. There's problems, and they didn't see it, but we talked about it. We talked about it, and we warned them, but clearly they didn't heed that advice.

The minister talks about the need for organ and tissue transplants in Saskatchewan and how it far exceeds the number of donors. "For the approximately 90 people waiting for a kidney transplant," the minister tells us, "... [it] can mean months and years of intense, tiring, and time-consuming dialysis treatment three times a week." So this is really tough, and we appreciate that. We appreciate that.

We're not sure how this will have an impact, and those are the kind of questions we'll have in terms of, what is the impact here for really upping the number of donors? What can we do to make that happen? So this is really, really important that we talk about how can we make this program of donors even more attractive to ... when people are able to make the choice for donations, that they can do that and do it easily and understanding the consent that they have given.

But you know, this is always a challenge, particularly now, and will be a challenge as we move forward with the driver's licences or other ways identifying that you agree to be a donor. But how will that continue on, and how will that be on your person when in fact you do pass away? And often, as I said, it's tragic circumstances that we find ourselves in, and we have to make those decisions, especially if you're a relative who can make a decision on behalf of someone and they're in a coma or ...

The Speaker: — It now being after the hour of 5 o'clock, this House stands adjourned to 10 a.m. tomorrow morning.

[The Assembly adjourned at 17:00.]

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