



FOURTH SESSION - TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

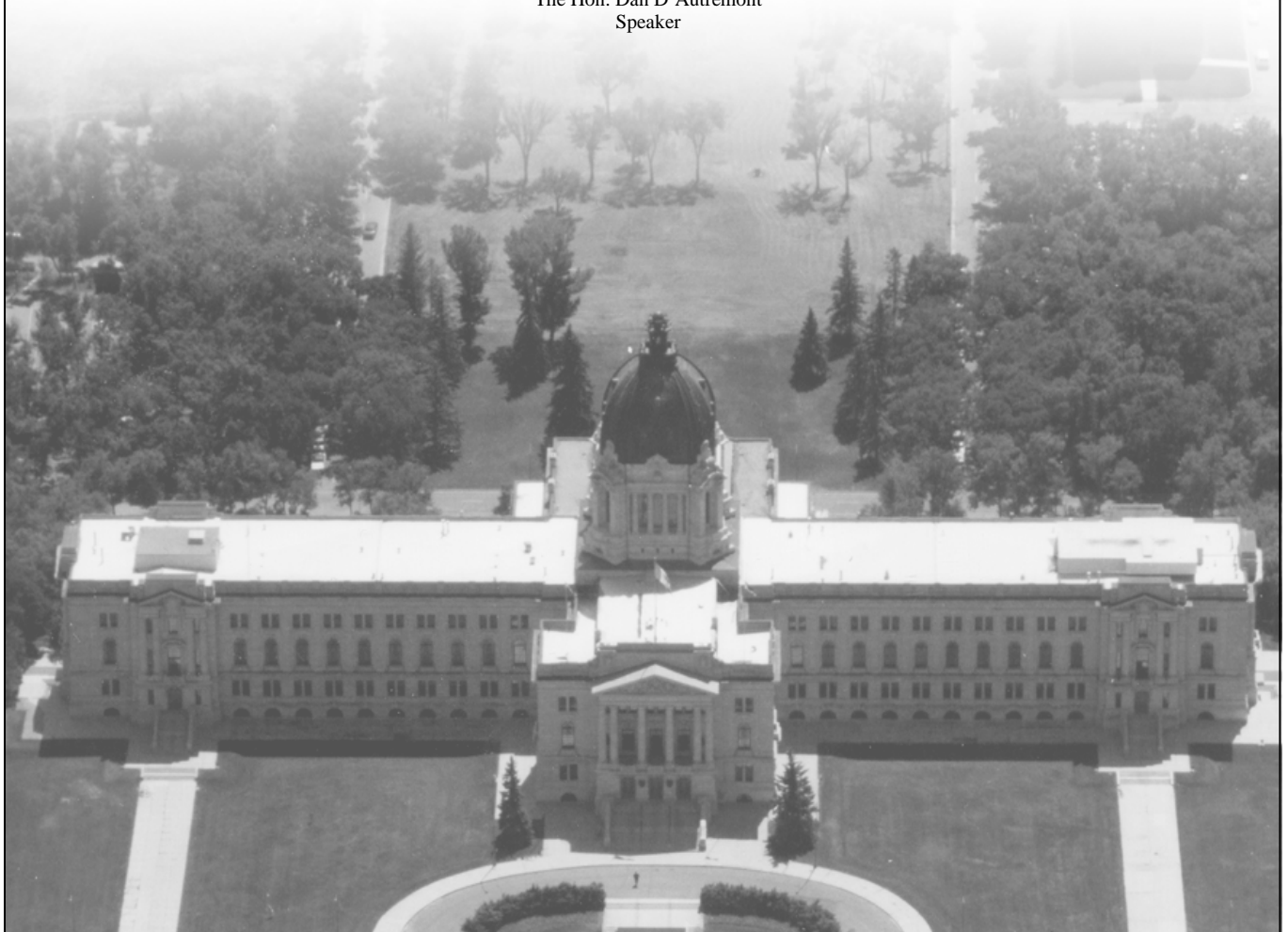
of the

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]

ANNOUNCEMENTS

New Table Officer

The Speaker: — I would like to introduce Ms. Kathy Burianyk as our newest Table Officer. For the last two sessions she has been at the Clerk's Table, participating in a career development program. Kathy has had the opportunity to learn skills that will serve her well in her new Table Officer role. Please join me in formally recognizing Kathy as our newest Clerk at the Table.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to all members of the Assembly, I'd like to introduce a number of, a large group, Mr. Speaker, that's seated in the west gallery. These are individuals who have come to the legislature today over their concerns about rural health care. Many are from the community of Craik, although there is Coronach and Central Butte and many other RMs [rural municipality] that are represented, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to welcome these individuals to the Assembly and let them know that their presence is noted and very much appreciated by all people in the province. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to join with the member opposite in welcoming the guests who have come from Craik and area who are focused on and concerned about rural health care, Mr. Speaker. I think that's a priority shared by all members in the Assembly today, but we want to welcome them for taking time out of their day and come to the Legislative Assembly. It's an important part of the democratic process. Mr. Speaker, I'd ask all members to join with me in welcoming them here to their Assembly today.

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

Hon. Mr. Ottenbreit: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to join with the member opposite and the Premier in welcoming the guests from Craik and surrounding area to their Assembly.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce to you and through you to the rest of the House, a person sitting in the east gallery, Tom Howe, who is with SEIU [Service Employees International Union]. And we know SEIU members provide outstanding service in our health care and other facilities around the province. They do an incredible amount of good work providing services to make sure our senior citizens, our young

people, all sorts of needs are met. And so I would ask all members to join me in welcoming Tom to his legislature. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the member opposite on welcoming this individual to the Chamber today. These are part of our democratic process; we like hearing from people regardless of where they stand on the political spectrum or their involvement in the trade union movement because those are all things that are an important part of the fundamentals of our democracy and should be welcomed and promoted. So thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Ms. Campeau: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, seated in the west gallery, I'd like to introduce my fiancé, Duron Nelson. Contrary to popular belief, I did not meet him on eHarmony or he is not a mail-order husband. We've known each other for 14 years. And it's been on again and off again, and it's on again with a ring. So I would like to invite all my colleagues to welcome to his future . . . [inaudible].

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

Mr. Michelson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the west gallery is a special person that has been in my life, and that was my former CA [constituency assistant], Denise Arnold is sitting there. Denise, if you want to just give a little . . . Denise is probably one of the best organizers that I've ever come across, just did an absolute job right from the '07 election, getting our office put together and handling all of the issues that came into the office.

And I certainly appreciate her coming in today. She said, we all need a little support sometime. And I think that goes for both sides of the House. I appreciate you being here, Denise. I ask all my colleagues to welcome her to her Legislative Assembly. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Batoche.

Mr. Kirsch: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to the rest of the members of the House, I'd like to introduce Krystal Lewis. Krystal, if you'd give us a wave. Krystal is my intern for this term. And we've both got a great interest in history, so she is now delving into, as deep as we can, into the life and times of Jennifer, the wife of Premier Walter Scott. Thank you, Mr. Premier. I'd ask all members to welcome her to the House.

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

Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, Mr. Speaker, I have the pleasure of introducing Shalyn Rousseau who is my intern for this year. She has got lots of enthusiasm and professionalism. It's a real pleasure to work with her. She has a double degree in political studies and

religious studies. She's had the opportunity to work here in the Legislative Building. And we're also going to be going to my constituency, and I know later she's going to be going to St. John's and Ottawa to do comparative study work there. So welcome to your Legislative Building.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And to you and through you, I would also like to introduce my intern for this session to the Legislative Assembly, and that is Mr. Damien Bolingbroke who's up in the gallery, the Speaker's gallery. Damien has a keen interest in everything that goes on here in the Assembly, and he's full of questions, Mr. Speaker. So it's always a good challenge for me to stay on my toes, and Damien's doing that for sure to date. We had a good visit in the constituency a couple of weeks ago, and I look forward to working with him on some important projects that we're working on in this session. So Mr. Damien Bolingbroke.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition that calls for greater protection for Saskatchewan citizens from developers who default on fixed-price contracts with the Saskatchewan government. And we know that in September last fall, this government walked away from a new 48-unit, low-income affordable housing unit project in Regina, allowing a private developer to instead take control of and then rent the units at full market price. Essentially this government allowed the private developer to back out of a fixed-price contract without any penalties, setting a dangerous precedent for this type of default.

Mr. Speaker, 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: cause the government to recognize that there are indeed desperate homeless people in our province and to immediately reverse its policy of now allowing private developers with whom the government has close relationships to default on fixed-price contracts for affordable housing projects.

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

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present petitions on behalf of concerned citizens as it relates to the unsafe conditions created by that government on Dewdney Avenue, inundating it with heavy-haul truck traffic, failing to plan for a safe route for that traffic. Of course this is a concern to all users and certainly to residents on this residential neighbourhood. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Legislative Assembly call on the provincial government to immediately take action as it relates to the unacceptable

danger, disturbance, and infrastructure damage caused by the heavy-haul truck traffic on Dewdney Avenue west of the city centre, to ensure the safety and well-being of communities, families, residents, and users; and that those actions and plans should include: rerouting the heavy-haul truck traffic, receive provincial funding, and be developed through consultation with the city of Regina, communities, and residents.

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

These petitions are signed by concerned residents from across Regina. I so submit.

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

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I stand to present a petition to protect health care services in the community of Craik. As I said, a number of people have travelled to the Assembly today, Mr. Speaker, and they have been circulating a petition in their community. The prayer reads as follows:

Cause the provincial government to immediately stop its plan to scale back health care services in Craik, refrain from turning the stabilization and observation unit into offices, and ensure that the Canadian-trained physician that wants to continue practising in Craik is allowed to do so without government interference.

Mr. Speaker, the individuals who signed this petition are from the community of Craik. I so present.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise to present a petition in support of retaining Yarrow Youth Farm. And the individuals who signed this want to bring to the Assembly's attention the following: that Saskatchewan currently offers a variety of facility options to house youth offenders according to the assessed level of risk to their communities; that Saskatoon has Yarrow Youth Farm, a facility for low-risk teens who benefit from an open custody home with a caring, supportive environment with programs to help residents live more productive lives. Saskatoon also has Kilburn Hall, a secure custody unit for youth considered a greater risk to their communities.

This government is planning to close Yarrow Youth Farm and build an open-custody wing attached to Kilburn Hall to accommodate Yarrow's residents. The provincial Advocate for Children and Youth has declared he cannot endorse this rationalization as low-risk teens could be influenced and pressured by close proximity with high-risk youth, and that Kilburn Hall has a much more institutional environment which could intimidate and alienate teens who have committed minor offences.

So the prayer reads as follows. They are respectfully requesting that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the following action:

To cause the government to keep Yarrow Youth Farm open, to ensure a caring home environment for youth who have committed minor offences, and provide support to help these young people redirect their lives by setting more positive goals.

And this is signed by individuals from the city of Saskatoon. I so submit.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Moose Jaw Hosts Tournament of Hearts

Mr. Lawrence: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The 2015 Scotties Tournament of Hearts was hosted at Mosaic Place in Moose Jaw from February 14th to 22nd. This major national event brought the country's best women's curling teams to Saskatchewan to compete for the chance to represent Canada at the 2015 women's curling championships.

Mr. Speaker, the city of Moose Jaw was pleased to host this year's tournament in their state-of-the-art facility, Mosaic Place. Curlers, TSN [The Sports Network] commentators, Canadian Curling Association officials, and fans all commented that Moose Jaw was an excellent host for this event. When asked about the venue, Team Canada skip Rachel Homan said, "It's perfect; it looks like a brand new facility and it's got everything we need."

The stands were filled for most draws with many fans cheering loudly for Team Sask, which was skipped by Stefanie Lawton. I am excited to announce that the total attendance for the week was more than 70,000 people.

Mr. Speaker, while helping out at the tournament, I saw first-hand the hard work and dedication of the volunteers, without whom the event could not have happened. With this tournament being such a success, Moose Jaw has further demonstrated that it is a great place to host major national events.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask all members to join me in congratulating the athletes on their spectacular performance, and I'd like to say a big thank you to Moose Jaw, the organizers, and the hundreds of volunteers for hosting this tremendously successful event.

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

Black History Month

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, on Saturday night I had the pleasure to attend the Black History Month Gala hosted by the Saskatchewan Caribbean-Canadian Association. The event was exceptional — amazing food, dancing, and music. People came together from all across our city to celebrate the rich culture, contributions, and achievements of Saskatchewan's Black community.

The inspirational Carol Lafayette-Boyd served as keynote

speaker. The impressive award recipients were Melodie McDonald, Desmond McAllister, and Nimone Campbell.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan's Black community is diverse and well established in our province. Even before Saskatchewan was founded, there were already Black settlers who came here and who have helped build and shape our province. And Black members of our community contribute and have contributed to all facets of our province — from health care to academia, civil service, civil society, sports, arts, culture, business, labour, and more.

Today it's exciting to see the Black community continue to grow from nearly every corner of the globe, newcomers that will help shape and build our bright future. I hope that all members will join with me in recognizing the important contributions of our province's Black community and will also join me in congratulations and thanks to the Saskatchewan Caribbean-Canadian Association on another successful Black History Month Gala. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[13:45]

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

Special Olympics Saskatchewan Winter Games

Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On Saturday, February 20th, I had the honour of attending a very special event in Regina. I and the member from Walsh Acres were asked to come to be part of the Special Olympics Saskatchewan Provincial Winter Games held in Regina over the weekend.

These games are held every two years to allow athletes to compete against each other from across Saskatchewan in several different sports including curling, snowshoeing, figure skating, and floor hockey. These competitions are also qualifiers for the athletes to represent Saskatchewan at the 2016 Special Olympic Winter Games which will be held in Corner Brook, Newfoundland.

As many of you know, Mr. Speaker, my daughter Courtney is a Special Olympian and this event is very near and dear to my heart.

There were 164 athletes and several coaches at the provincial winter games representing many cities and towns across Saskatchewan. Several athletes will be representing Saskatchewan in next year's Canadian Special Olympics Winter Games, including Regina's own Victoria Sarty, who won gold in the figure skating.

Mr. Speaker, we need to celebrate every Special Olympian for following their dreams, meeting their goals, and having fun.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in recognizing the athletes who participated in the Provincial Olympics Winter Games. We are all very proud of them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I too would like to rise and congratulate all the people who were involved in the Winter Special Olympics that were just recently held from February 20th to 22nd. And we know that here in Regina, the host, they were the host city to this year's 2015 Special Olympics Saskatchewan Provincial Winter Games.

These games provided the opportunity for 164 athletes from across Saskatchewan to compete with their peers in a variety of sports, and from there they're now able to qualify for the 2016 Special Olympics Canada Winter Games in Corner Brook, Newfoundland.

They competed in sports such as floor hockey, curling, figure skating, speed skating, alpine skiing, and snowshoeing. And of course congratulations go to all the medal winners, but I'd like to give a special shout-out to the gold medal recipients.

So in curling we have Melfort team no. 2; in floor hockey, in the various divisions, we had the Regina Vipers, the Humboldt Broncos, and Lakewood Wild Ones; alpine skiing, Adam Sanden; speed skating, Terry Livingstone; figure skating, Victoria Sarty; and snowshoeing, on the women's side, was Jordan Blomme, and on the men's, was Joey Phillips.

Mr. Speaker, Special Olympics provides year-round sports training and athletic competition for children and adults with intellectual disabilities. These activities give them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage — and my mike's off — experience joy, and participate in the sharing of gifts, skills, and friendship. Special Olympics is tackling inactivity, intolerance, isolation, and injustice that people with intellectual disabilities throughout the world face.

Mr. Speaker, I'm asking everyone to join with me today to congratulate all these folks as well and congratulate the organizers on another successful Winter Olympics. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government Whip.

North Battleford Citizens Recognized

Mr. Cox: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On January 30th, I had the privilege of bringing greetings to the annual North Battleford Citizen and Junior Citizen of the Year ceremony. This year's recipients were two very community-minded and deserving individuals.

Our Junior Citizen of the Year was Dylan Joachim, a grade 12 student at North Battleford Comprehensive High School. Although Dylan just recently moved to North Battleford, he's already made significant contributions to our community. Dylan is on his school's SRC [student representative council]. He played middle linebacker for the Vikings, teaches snowboarding, is in the yearbook club and involved in the Me to We movement. He is also a great track and field athlete, having competed in the Knights of Columbus national track and field competition in Prince Edward Island.

Our Citizen of the Year, Tammy Donahue Buziak, has been active in our community for many years. Many people have enjoyed listening to her playing the violin as well as attending the lessons she teaches. In her duties as a coroner, she also

gives caring support to grieving families.

Most recently, Tammy chaired the North Battleford centennial celebration committee. This was a monumental task, with events running from New Year's Eve to New Year's Eve and many functions in between. Committee members tell me Tammy always brings her cheery personality and infectious smile to every function and committee meeting.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask all members of the Assembly to join with me in thanking and congratulating Dylan and Tammy. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Provincial Secretary.

Prairie Women on Snowmobiles Ride to Fight Breast Cancer

Hon. Ms. Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to recognize Prairie Women on Snowmobiles 2015 ride to fight breast cancer. This non-profit organization has raised over \$2.3 million over the past 15 years. This year was no exception to their success. The group of 10 riders raised over \$113,000 for the Canadian Cancer Society, as well as an additional 29,000 for the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency, to purchase equipment.

This strong group of women passed through 32 communities across the province. The riders covered approximately 1800 kilometres worth of trails, ditches, and fields. Kicking off in Nipawin, the ladies travelled through Choiceland, Smeaton, Meath Park, Prince Albert, Hudson Bay, and Wynyard, to name a few communities.

The women were able to finish their journey in Meadow Lake. Along the ride, they also met up with the Saskatchewaner, Ashlyn George. They also attended many banquets, lunches, coffees, and raffles along their trip. Volunteers like this continue to raise awareness and the funds needed to help beat breast cancer once and for all.

I would like to thank all members for this Assembly and ask them to congratulate the Prairie Women on Snowmobiles for another successful and safe ride, and wish the Prairie Women on Snowmobiles many more to come. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mathematics

Mr. Bradshaw: — Mr. Speaker, they may have a different leader, but it's the same old NDP [New Democratic Party] math, and it still doesn't add up. The NDP is now saying that the government has been overspending, but at the same time, they can't identify any spending they would cut. And they have called for over \$4 billion in new spending since the member opposite became leader, and that's on top of the \$5 billion spending spree the NDP campaigned on in the last election. It doesn't add up.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan people deserve more than clichés and buzzwords from the NDP leader. He can't have it both ways. He can't say the government has spent too much and it

should spend \$4 billion more. It just doesn't make any sense.

Mr. Speaker, it is the exact same kind of faulty math Dwain Lingenfelter gave to us in the last election, and the only thing he cut was the number of the NDP MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly]. Nothing's changed, Mr. Speaker. They may have a different leader, but it's the same old NDP.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Provision of Rural Health Care

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, on Friday over 100 people rallied in Craik in order to save the rural health care services in their community. And, Mr. Speaker, they're incredibly frustrated by what this government is doing. They have invited the Premier to visit their community, to tour the health centre, and to see first-hand how incredibly valuable it is to their community and the entire region.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Premier has said he's too busy. On his many trips up and down Highway 11, he can't peel in for 30 minutes to pay a visit and to see it, Mr. Speaker. So today over 70 residents have come to the legislature to voice their concerns because they are sick and tired of this government's excuses.

My question, Mr. Speaker, is for the Premier. Will he today meet with these folks? Will he commit to visit their community and to tour their health centre?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I did meet with the citizens, with representatives of Craik, and with the doctor when they were here just months ago in the legislature, Mr. Speaker. And there was follow-up, from the perspective of the government and the health region, in terms of reaching out to the doctor in question with a contract, Mr. Speaker, or at least the invitation to begin negotiating the draft contract, Mr. Speaker. I don't know if that has been responded to by the doctor. My understanding is that it has not yet.

I will say this. Mr. Speaker, our government all along has committed to continuing health care services for the people of Craik and that includes as follows: a physician four days a week, nurse practitioner five days a week, 24-7 RN [registered nurse] long-term care, dietitian services, public health nurse, home care, lab and X-ray, and physiotherapy, Mr. Speaker. And not withstanding the difficulty of the budget that presents itself before the people of the province and the government of the province today, we intend to maintain, to continue those resources for the people of Craik.

Mr. Speaker, my understanding is the contract offer remains, the opportunity to negotiate that, with the doctor. However we need to move along so that we can ensure there is doctor coverage in the community to better serve the people of Craik and area, Mr. Speaker. That's our priority and it'll continue to be our priority going forward.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, if the Premier had the courage today to come out to the rally, to speak with the people from Craik and area, they would have heard them talk about the meeting they had with the Premier, Mr. Speaker, where they said that the Premier said the right words in the meeting, but then following there was no action. There was no resolution, Mr. Speaker, and that's their frustration. You don't have 70 people travel from Craik and area to the legislature because they're happy with this government's performance on this issue, Mr. Speaker.

The folks in Craik and area want what they have had in their community for 100 years. Here's a letter to the Premier and the two Health ministers that they say . . . They talk about the Saskatchewan Party government's plan that the Premier's boasting about:

It does not have the support of local leaders, health care professionals, or the community. It is being imposed without any consultation with those who will be most directly impacted. If pursued, it will inevitably result in the closure of the Craik health care centre and the removal of all medical services from Craik.

My question to the Premier: how can he stand there today, dismiss the very real concerns that they're bringing forward, and will he have the courage to visit the health care centre in Craik? Will he do that?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, I want to be very, very clear. There will continue to be health care coverage, important health care services, to the level that they are existing currently in the community of Craik, Mr. Speaker, that I think has been the case since 2012. Those include physicians four days a week, nurse practitioner five days a week, 24-7 RN long-term care coverage, dietitian services, public health nurse, home care, lab and X-ray, and physiotherapy.

In terms of the meeting that we had months ago, a major concern was about retention of the doctor. Mr. Speaker, an offer has been made to at least begin negotiating the draft contract for that particular doctor. We would welcome, I think the health region would welcome the chance to conclude those negotiations, to even begin them because, Mr. Speaker, my understanding is that that invitation has not been yet responded to.

Mr. Speaker, we want the best possible health care for the people of Craik and area, for people all up and down No. 11. Mr. Speaker, that remains the position of the government and we'll back it up with resources. Unlike what we saw from the NDP for years in government when it came to rural health care, we'll actually back it up with money in the budget to keep facilities operating, to provide funding for 2,600 more nursing positions across the province, 400 more doctors practising than under the previous government, Mr. Speaker. We'll continue to act with resources, with tax dollars invested in communities like Craik and communities across this province.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, this is ridiculous. It is this

government that in 2012 cut services, where ambulances stopped going to the community, Mr. Speaker, under this government. Why the Premier will not agree to meet with these people today and tour the health care centre is beyond me, Mr. Speaker. These are MLAs who represent much of rural Saskatchewan. Why are they afraid to go to Craik and to meet with the community and have some honest and true consultation, Mr. Speaker?

Unlike the Premier, Mr. Speaker, I've gone to Craik. I've met with them. I've heard and seen first-hand how vitally important this health care centre is to them and the entire region. And that's why it's baffling that this government would be putting up roadblocks, be putting up barriers, that would prevent a Canadian-trained physician from remaining in the community when he wants to practise there, Mr. Speaker. They have not engaged in true consultation. They've been forcing and jamming their approach upon the community, and that is the problem, Mr. Speaker.

Even the former constituency assistant for the member from Arm River-Watrous, Clark Puckett said this: "This is a very difficult situation for the citizens of Craik, and I would advocate that we get some full-time doctors there." Well that's what Dr. Karam thinks. That's what the community thinks, Mr. Speaker. Why is this government continuing its plan to pull services out of the community of Craik?

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

Hon. Mr. Ottenbreit: — Mr. Speaker, there's a whole host of statements over there that need to be addressed, but let me say first and foremost: this government's focus is on patient safety, patient care for the province of Saskatchewan, again as the Premier talked about, focusing on rural and remote areas because, as pointed out by the Premier, it was neglected terribly by the NDP for a whole host of years.

Our priority is to stabilize the services specifically at Craik. Not to roll back, not to scale back, as the member has stated, but to sustain the current level of services that are there. The Premier has outlined those very, very clearly, Mr. Speaker.

And when the member opposite mentioned somebody should come out and meet with the people and visit the facility at Craik, Mr. Speaker, I did that. In fact on January 27th we stopped in for a good hour. We got a great tour by the charge nurse. I met with the doctor. He was on call. They gave us a very in-depth tour of the facility, what was formerly the ER [emergency room], the current stabilization room, Mr. Speaker. So I'm welcoming more questions from the members opposite so I can get into more detail on this file.

[14:00]

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, they want to speak with the Premier because clearly their meeting with the member from Yorkton is not bringing any results, Mr. Speaker, because they're not listening. And that's the thing: you can stop but if you don't actually listen and hear what the consequences will

be of their actions, Mr. Speaker, then it's all for naught. And I don't know why the Premier will not agree to meet with them today and to visit the health care centre in Craik.

This isn't isolated actually to the community of Craik, Mr. Speaker. There are representatives who are in the Assembly who were at the rally today from Coronach, from Central Butte, and many other RMs. Residents from Central Butte have also . . . They are here because their hospital, Mr. Speaker, under this government's watch — the second Health minister there was just talking about this — they've had their services cut dramatically in Central Butte. For the past, Mr. Speaker, they've not had acute care or emergency services for about five years now. The Central Butte hospital has a doctor come in once a week for about four hours.

So despite record revenues in this province, Mr. Speaker, this government has turned the Central Butte hospital into a clinic that is open for four hours once a week. Residents, Mr. Speaker, say they've heard of doctors who want to come to the community but have faced more roadblocks from this Sask Party government.

My question, Mr. Speaker, to the Premier: why has his government turned its back on Central Butte? Why is the Central Butte hospital now just a clinic that operates for four hours once a week?

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

Hon. Mr. Ottenbreit: — Mr. Speaker, in fact I've committed to a meeting with representatives from Central Butte in the area on March 11th, and there is some other meetings planned with the health coalition that's developing in that area very soon, Mr. Speaker.

When it comes to the service at Craik, Mr. Speaker, it's very easy to answer some of these questions. The member brought it up in his petition, Mr. Speaker. He talked about scaling back services. That's the farthest thing from the fact, Mr. Speaker. We're looking at stabilizing the services that are currently there. He talked about the stabilization unit converting to offices. Mr. Speaker, I've talked to the health region about it. I've talked to the members, the citizens there. I've toured the facility. We've got a commitment, on behalf of myself and the region, that's not happening. The facility there has a stabilization unit that's very good and very, very adaptable to deal with emergencies that would present themselves and to be assessed by professionals at the time, Mr. Speaker.

He talked about a long-term doctor. Mr. Speaker, I want to correct the Premier on one point. He talked about the contract's been responded to. Mr. Speaker, it hasn't been responded to. In fact it hasn't been responded to. Multiple contacts with the doctor in Craik has gone unresponded on by his part. He's been resistant and not willing to negotiate a contract with the region or the area, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, this isn't about one contract with one doctor. This is about this government's approach to rural

health care. And to have that minister stand up and then have the member from Arm River-Watrous just nodding in agreement, that the member from Thunder Creek who sits at the cabinet table, Mr. Speaker, who has a say in these decisions, Mr. Speaker, for him just to agree is absolutely ridiculous. Because we look at the track record of this government, Mr. Speaker, we see them reducing services in rural Saskatchewan.

Now the second Health minister there talks about a meeting that he's going to have with the folks from Central Butte. Do you know what he committed to, Mr. Speaker? Fifteen minutes before SARM's [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities] bear pit — that's how much time he has available to meet with the good folks from Central Butte. That's how seriously this government takes health care in rural Saskatchewan.

It's no wonder, Mr. Speaker, at SARM's last convention, a number of resolutions were passed. One, "Rural Saskatchewan health needs are being bypassed." The other one said, "Regional health authorities are closing down services in rural Saskatchewan and are moving those services to the cities and in some instances are refusing to hire doctors that have offered to come to rural Saskatchewan."

My question, Mr. Speaker, is to the Premier, not to the second Health minister or the first Health minister. It is to the Premier: with record revenues, Mr. Speaker, record revenues, how can he justify the cuts to rural health care services that have happened under his watch?

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

Hon. Mr. Ottenbreit: — Mr. Speaker, this line of questioning is somewhat surprising, coming from that member. He's a member of the party that actually changed the designation, closed the designation to that hospital and converted it to a health clinic in Craik, Mr. Speaker, along with 51 other hospitals in the province.

He's a member of the party that closed 19 long-term care facilities totalling 1,200 beds. He's a member of the party, Mr. Speaker, that cut training positions at the College of Medicine, cut nurse training positions, chased medical professionals out of this province, Mr. Speaker.

We've been investing in long-term care facilities. We've been investing in new hospitals. We've committed to investing and stabilizing the facility at Craik for the better service of the people in the area, Mr. Speaker. We've committed to trying to sign a contract with the doctor in place. Mr. Speaker, the members of Craik want Dr. Karam there. I would like nothing better than to have the doctor sign a contract, Mr. Speaker, but to this date he has refused to sit down and negotiate a contract with the region.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, the baffle-gab coming from that minister, Mr. Speaker, and the way that he is insulting the community and the physician and the other physicians in the area, Mr. Speaker, who are not in favour of this approach, is

offensive, Mr. Speaker.

Now there are 70 people who have come to the legislature today, not because they're happy with what this government is doing but because they are frustrated. And yes, they're angry, Mr. Speaker, but they're angry because they love their community and they want the best for it over the long run, Mr. Speaker. They have come here today. They want to meet with the Premier. They want to talk. They want to convey their concerns with the Premier and engage in an honest discussion and to find a solution because the committee, Mr. Speaker, has good ideas. They know what they need to do to make health care work in their community.

My question is a yes or no one for the Premier. Will he meet with the people who have travelled to the Legislative Assembly today? Yes or no?

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

Hon. Mr. Ottenbreit: — Mr. Speaker, to answer the last part of the member's question, I would be pleased to meet with designated numbers of the people here today as well. But, Mr. Speaker, let me reiterate. Our priority is stabilizing care at Craik facility, which means a commitment to the primary health care and health care in this province, Mr. Speaker. That means stabilizing current services. It means signing a doctor to perform permanent services in the facility at Craik, and if that's the current doctor, I'm happy to do that. But, Mr. Speaker, we will be signing a permanent doctor to perform services in that community in the near future to make sure we stabilize the services and continue health care in Craik, Mr. Speaker.

But again, there's no plan to close the facility, Mr. Speaker. There's no plan to renovate the facility. We've committed to hiring a permanent doctor four days a week in the facility. The Premier has talked about the other services available through the nurse practitioner and a number of other services there, Mr. Speaker. And emergencies that present themselves to the facility can be addressed by the professionals at hand or designated with EMS [emergency medical services] or STARS [Shock Trauma Air Rescue Society] if the need arises.

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

Maintenance of Educational Facilities

Mr. Wotherspoon: — My question is for the Education minister. How many schools in Saskatchewan are structurally unsound?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, we maintain the facilities in our province. We have a record investment that we've made in our province's schools. We have, since we formed government, spent over \$700 million on the schools. The 2014-15 budget includes \$96.2 million.

If we become aware of problems, if we become aware of issues, we try and deal with those as quickly as possible. We try and work in partnership with the divisions around the province to

make sure that we do everything that we possibly can. The most precious assets that we have in our province are the students that go to our schools, and we want to make sure that we do everything we can to make sure that the schools are safe, secure, and are doing everything that they can. Mr. Speaker, opposed to the members opposite who closed 176 schools, we're continuing on.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, my question was a pretty straightforward question. I don't know if the minister didn't hear it. But we know that the schools in Aberdeen, Delisle, Hague, Hanley, and Rosthern are literally propped up with posts, with two-by-fours and two-by-sixes because they're structurally unsound and there's real fear of roofs and structures falling in.

The Prairie Spirit School Division said those problems would not have been identified with a routine inspection. Engineers went through schools built from the '50s through the '80s and had to drill into ceilings to see where support beams have degraded, but that's just in one school division with a special engineer's inspection. So to the Education minister: have schools in other areas of the province been properly inspected in light of this and, if so, will he release those findings?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, the facilities people within a division will continue to work with the ministry and will continue to try and make sure that we do everything we can.

Mr. Speaker, the member opposite raised specifically Prairie Spirit School Division, and I want to reiterate again, Mr. Speaker, that the safety of students and staff is absolutely paramount. We saw the media coverage a while ago; we've been in contact with that school division to ensure that precautions are in place and the safety needs of the students and staff are being met at the affected schools.

Mr. Speaker, since 2007, we have invested over \$700 million into school infrastructure. Prairie Spirit has had projects such as the new Warman middle year school, an addition and renovation of the Martensville High School, and multiple relocatable classrooms throughout the province. Mr. Speaker, preventive maintenance funding has increased by 28 per cent over last year to \$21 million. In the past two years, Prairie Spirit School Division has received more than \$2 million in preventative maintenance funding alone.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, the minister brags about supposed spending but, you know, in light of the fact that schools are being propped up with two-by-fours and two-by-sixes and have been found actually unsafe, it's absolutely senseless for that Education minister to get up and speak like that. We've heard that this issue is at least as big as \$1.5 billion in this province when it comes to education infrastructure, the needs of our students.

We put in a freedom of information request asking for any

analysis, any reports about those infrastructure needs, about schools that are structurally unsound, not safe, and schools that are desperately in need of renovations. But this government refused to release any reports, any analysis, claiming that it's all some big state secret that is only there for the eyes of the Premier and cabinet.

To the minister: how on earth is that acceptable? How is it acceptable that only the Premier and cabinet ministers should know the true state of our schools and whether or not they're safe for students across Saskatchewan?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, when we formed government, we inherited a \$1.2 billion capital deficit in our schools. Mr. Speaker, we've spent \$700 million on capital in our schools, and we still have a long way to go because of the deficiency and the defects that we got from the members opposite.

Mr. Speaker, I want to go back to Prairie Spirit school again, Prairie school division. Mr. Speaker, preventative maintenance funding has increased by 28 per cent over last year to \$21 million. In the past two years, Prairie Spirit School Division has received more than \$2 million in preventative maintenance funding alone. Mr. Speaker, I can also point out that Prairie Spirit has \$5.8 million in unrestricted reserves. We want them to spend the money wisely. We think spending the money on the capital in their school division is a good thing to do.

Mr. Speaker, we have an emergent funding program this year. There's \$3 million available in that. Prairie Spirit has received funding from that for structural projects at Langham, Delisle and Hanley. We will continue to do that, Mr. Speaker, unlike the members opposite that scared people out of the province.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, the bragging and boasting of the Education minister is totally counter to what one hears from school divisions from across Saskatchewan who have been very clear that the funding and the so-called preventative maintenance funding of this government has been entirely inadequate.

The simple fact is that students and parents and teachers and educational supports that work directly in these schools deserve to know the true conditions of those buildings, at least whether or not they're safe or not, but this government won't even say whether all schools have been properly inspected. We hear that here today. And it refuses to release any reports about infrastructure problems in schools because it says that information is a big state secret only for the eyes of the Premier and the cabinet. That's nonsense, Mr. Speaker.

To the minister: what does the government know about the state of our kids' schools that it so desperately wants to keep secret?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, we continue to work with our school divisions across the province. There's good trustees

and good people that are working hard. We inherited a \$1.2 billion deficit from the members opposite. We will do everything we can to remedy that as quickly as we can. But, Mr. Speaker, the record of those people was they closed 176 schools. We built 40 schools. Mr. Speaker, they neglected the schools they didn't close. We've invested almost four times what the NDP did in schools across the province.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP drove 35,000 students out of our province. They underfunded school divisions to the point where there were tax revolts across the province. The ratepayers had to pick up the tab after the fact.

Mr. Speaker, we'll make no apologies for the hard work that we've done. We have more work to do, but we'll take no lessons from the people opposite. Mr. Speaker, we've increased operating funding by 26.5 per cent; we have increased capital funding by 268 per cent.

[14:15]

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

Trip Taken by Creative Saskatchewan Executive Officer

Ms. Sproule: — Well, Mr. Speaker, this year's Oscar for wildly misplaced priorities has to go to this Sask Party government along with the Oscar for extreme hypocrisy in dealing a death blow to an entire film industry and then heading off to Hollywood to whoop it up at this year's Academy Awards.

This is the government that shamefully decimated our province's film industry, taking a major step backward in economic diversification and a vibrant arts and culture scene, and yet this is the same government that sent its Crown corporation's CEO [chief executive officer] to Los Angeles to attend an Oscar's party, even though there's supposedly a freeze on any travel that's not essential.

To the minister: does he have an answer yet? Does he really think that trip was essential? Does he really think Saskatchewan people should pay for it?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Parks, Culture and Sport.

Hon. Mr. Docherty: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I find myself in a position where I'm going to have to correct the member opposite's rhetoric in relation to all things it seems. But the CEO of Creative Saskatchewan met with . . . went to Los Angeles to investigate the market opportunities within the Los Angeles region in the fine art and fine craft areas for Saskatchewan.

So travel decisions are decided by the board of Creative Saskatchewan. This specific trip was approved by the board. Given the restraint measures, the board reviews all travel on a case-by-case basis for agencies like Creative Saskatchewan that have a greater reliance on travel in carrying out their mandate. This will present some challenges, but the same criteria should generally be applied. They've already reduced their travel by 50

per cent as . . . [inaudible]. Thank you.

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

Ms. Sproule: — According to the government, one of the reasons why the CEO of Creative Sask flew to Los Angeles was to plan a big Saskatchewan-sponsored Canada Day party in Hollywood.

Schools in our province are being held up by temporary posts. Our hospitals and the senior care facilities are seriously understaffed. People from rural Saskatchewan have to come to the legislature to demand basic health care services in their communities. Yet this government is choosing to spend money on a party in Hollywood. To the minister: how can he justify such misplaced priorities?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Parks, Culture and Sport.

Hon. Mr. Docherty: — Mr. Speaker, I can correct the record again. The CEO of Creative Saskatchewan didn't go to an Oscar party, didn't go to the Oscars, period. So went to meet with the fine art and the fine craft communities in order to market Saskatchewan fine art. That is absolutely the record. And I appreciate the fact that they like to spin and make up little stories here, Mr. Speaker, but in this particular situation and in all situations, Creative Saskatchewan is going to market the creative industries for Saskatchewan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 145

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

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

Mr. Nilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We're all getting back into the swing of things, I think it's clear. But practically, this particular piece of legislation is government's response to suggestions that have come to the government from the Law Reform Commission of Saskatchewan.

And, Mr. Speaker, I had a chance to speak at length about this particular legislation as it relates to how the various parts of the bill respond to that particular report. It's clear that much of the response will come in the regulations and we don't have those regulations yet at this time. But practically it looks as if it's the type of bill which will allow for waiver of fees in certain situations where people can no longer or can't afford the fees in either their application to court or their application to various tribunals. But, Mr. Speaker, I have no further comments to make on this and I suggest that this matter be moved to a

committee.

The Speaker: — Question before the Assembly is the motion by the Minister of Justice that Bill No. 145, *The Fee Waiver Act* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel: — Second reading of this bill.

The Speaker: — To which committee shall this bill be referred? I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that Bill No. 145, *The Fee Waiver Act* be moved to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

The Speaker: — This bill has been moved to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

Bill No. 146

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 146 — *The Fee Waiver Consequential Amendments Act, 2014/Loi de 2014 portant modifications corrélatives à la loi intitulée *The Fee Waiver Act**** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Nilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This particular bill obviously relates to the ones that we've just moved to the committee. It basically is a bilingual bill that deals with amendments to *The Court of Appeal Act*, *The Queen's Bench Act*, and *The Small Claims Act*, as all three of those bills are bilingual bills. And so practically what it does is make sure that any of the fee waiver provisions of Bill 145 also will apply to Bill 146 and will comply with the provisions that we have around bilingual legislation.

Mr. Speaker, we have been moving along at some would say a glacial pace — others would say it is a fairly reasonable pace — to have as many bills prepared and available for people in both official languages. And it's a long-term project in response to some judicial pronouncements around the constitution or the provisions of the constitution as it relates to legislation that needs to be in bilingual form. We know that there have been some more cases recently that have addressed this issue in other provinces around the numbers of bills and the speed at which this has happened. I don't think it's an issue for us in Saskatchewan yet, but I know we need to be very careful that we're doing this work and we're doing it in a very considerate way.

The importance of this, Mr. Speaker, is that under our legislation for Canada, and especially the legislation as it relates to the creation of the provinces of Saskatchewan and Alberta, incorporated some very clear accommodations or agreements at a national level around the use of both official languages. And

clearly it was a discussion between Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, around what would happen in Western Canada.

And what we know is that many of us in Western Canada know some French but we're not totally bilingual. Well maybe our children are. But what we also recognize is that we have very strong French-speaking communities throughout Saskatchewan, throughout Alberta, and clearly in Manitoba. And it's important that our laws are in a form that can be used by them. It's also clear that it becomes a very difficult task for the lawyers who operate in French languages to make sure that all of these cases are argued appropriately.

I know that we now have many more judges and many more clerks who are able to handle totally French court cases. This will allow for more . . . This particular legislation will allow for fee waivers in some kinds of cases and it's very clear that these fee waivers will also be in the French language.

But, Mr. Speaker, I don't have any further comments about this and I don't think any of my colleagues do either, so we suggest that this matter be moved to committee. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the motion by the Minister of Justice that Bill No. 146, *The Fee Waiver Consequential Amendments Act, 2014* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel: — Second reading of this bill.

The Speaker: — To which committee shall this bill be referred? I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that Bill No. 146, *The Fee Waiver Consequential Amendments Act, 2014* be moved to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice. Thank you.

The Speaker: — This bill stands referred to the Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice Committee.

Bill No. 141

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Docherty that **Bill No. 141 — *The Archives and Public Records Management Act*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I'm pleased to rise again to speak to this Bill No. 141. We've had an opportunity to comment on it a few times here in the fall session. We do have some questions that have been brought to our attention in the intervening break, and I just want to

highlight some of those here today.

First of all, some of the clarification that people have received is that the intent of this bill is to retain the Provincial Archives as a third party agency, and as far as we know that's very unique for Canadian provincial archives. Archives need to be able to make an independent assessment of what records have archival value.

So there's been some concerns raised about one of the clauses, particularly 6(3), and we certainly want to ask a few more questions about that once we get this bill into committee. And that is, particularly 6(3) gives the minister some discretion in the archives now, and that's concerning I think on a number of levels, Mr. Speaker.

It says that:

The minister may give directions that must be followed by the Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan, the Provincial Archivist or both in exercising their powers and fulfilling their duties and purposes pursuant to this Act and the regulations.

But this is concerning because we're wondering how far this direction applies. Does it apply to all the powers and responsibilities? Does it apply to areas where the Provincial Archivist's judgment is required?

Another example is clause 18(2)(a), and I'll just take a look at that right now, Mr. Speaker. In the new bill, 18(2)(a) says:

... the Provincial Archivist may do all or any of the following ... acquire records or obtain the care, custody or control of records that the Provincial Archivist has determined to be of archival value.

So in that case, can the minister now order the Provincial Archivist to destroy records contrary to the Provincial Archivist's own advice?

And another question that's been raised is, why doesn't this refer only to direction to the Provincial Archives board? It does seem to introduce the potential of a dual reporting line for the Provincial Archivist. And this may be a question that would require some legal interpretation. So we're certainly going to want to be able to raise some questions in committee about that.

Of course bills are bills, but what we know this government is particularly good at in some ways, Mr. Speaker, is spending money. However we really question the misplaced priorities that they're doing that in. And I think Archives is an example of perhaps not being properly funded and mandated, or not being properly funded to meet its mandate. We know that the role of the Archives is incredibly important, and it's a framework for all government institutions and Crown corporations. That's what the minister said in his comments back in November.

[14:30]

That's fine, but will the resources be there to enable the Provincial Archives to carry out their mandate? Right now it's only open three days a week and we know that there could be

... The concern is that I've had constituents, actually university professors, contact me, concerned about the length of time that it takes to acquire some of the information that they've been asking for. These are research projects that are time sensitive and in some cases they've been told that they have to wait up to six months to get some archive material.

I think some of the changes in the Act will make it easier, though, because we know now that there's provisions for release of documents that may have had some particular health information from the past, and in this case the person receiving the documents has to basically promise that they won't release any personal information. So I know that will free up some of the archivists' time because currently they have to go through every document to ensure there is no personal information that could be released.

And again, you know, when we're talking about misplaced priorities, we see, we see it again. We know that the Archives are not adequately funded and yet we see this government opening up a Premier's library. Again, you know, is this really what's important when we know that Archives needs more support and more funding to carry on their actual legislated mandate? So again we see the kind of misplaced priorities and a government that hasn't got its head on right when it comes to what's really important to the people of Saskatchewan.

So those are some of the concerns. I think we are going to have more questions in committee, but I believe at this point, as far as the debate goes here in the House, my colleagues have had an opportunity to comment and so I'm going to conclude the debate on this Bill 141.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the Minister of Parks, Culture and Sport that Bill No. 141, *The Archives and Public Records Management Act* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel: — Second reading of this bill.

The Speaker: — To which committee shall this bill be referred? I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that Bill No. 141, *The Archives and Public Records Management Act* be moved to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

The Speaker: — This bill stands referred to the Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

Bill No. 142

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Docherty that **Bill No. 142** — *The Archives and Public Records Management Act, 2014/Loi de 2014 portant modifications*

corrélatives à la loi intitulée The Archives and Public Records Management Act be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Now this bill that I'm speaking to now is basically a secondary bill in relation to Bill 141. So we know that occasionally there have to be consequential amendments made separately in a separate bill to bills that are being amended. In this case, *The Archives and Public Records Management Act* which I just spoke to, that we're looking forward to asking the minister questions in committee, in this case there's a couple of other Acts that are affected by this change that's being proposed by the government.

First of all, *The Education Act*, there's a requirement to substitute section 369(3). And then section 37 of *The Evidence Act* has to be struck out and amended as well just to reflect the new name. So this is something where we see it's a very short bill. There's only two bills that need to be changed. And part of the reason for that is the fact that *The Education Act* and *The Evidence Act* are actually prepared in both official languages in this province. And so the law that changes them also has to be done in deux langues officielles du Canada [Translation: Canada's two official languages]. And I think that's something that's very important to note.

We know that the francophone community is really pushing hard to continue to see bills translated into both official languages. And there's a case actually before the Supreme Court from Alberta right now where a gentleman has pushed his cause all the way to the Supreme Court to require the Alberta government to translate their laws into both official languages.

Now we don't know whether this government is prepared to do the same. Certainly back in the day when it was originally challenged, there was basically an out for the provinces because all they had to do was remove a certain clause in their bills to say that they're bilingual, or sorry, unilingual. And that has worked for the last two and a half decades, but that's currently before the courts again. If that happens we know this will be a huge expense, and I don't know if it's showing up as a liability in the government's books right now or not, but if this court case is successful this government will need to ensure that the law as interpreted by the Supreme Court is properly implemented in the provinces.

We've seen the Premier muse about constitutional proclamations by the Supreme Court in another recent instance relating to the right to strike, and the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour has successfully brought a case before the Supreme Court which, for the first time in Canada's history, we've seen our highest level of court declare that the right to strike is a constitutional right. And I think for the workers from the province of Saskatchewan who need to access that right from time to time, it's a very important part of our workers' tool box, shall we say, in order to ensure that they're protected, that they're given proper and due care.

And it was saddening for me. I was at the SUMA [Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association] convention,

and I happened to hear the Premier's remarks as he mused out loud about whether or not he would respect the Supreme Court's decision. And he made some interesting comment about how he represented the people of Saskatchewan but, Mr. Speaker, last time I checked, most of the workers in Saskatchewan are people in Saskatchewan, so I'm not really sure who it is the Premier is actually representing when he makes comments like that in public. It's quite, I think, distracting and disturbing to hear those kinds of comments being made. And certainly as far as workers' rights go, I think this is a monumental decision that I hope our government will respect and implement as soon as possible.

When it comes to the French language challenge before the Supreme Court, I mean that's another example of we'll wait and see what this government does once the Supreme Court has made its ruling. Obviously the people from the Ministry of Justice will need to do their interpretation as well, and we may be seeing more bills such as Bill 142 or a longer list of bills I guess when we do the bilingual bills that are now required for that shorter list of bills that have been translated into French.

So again we know that *The Archives Act*, we do have a number of questions for the minister when we do get into committee. I look forward to asking him those questions at that time and just to determine exactly what extent the minister intends to intervene in the decisions of the Provincial Archivist and the decisions of the provincial Archives Board because I think that's something we have to be very clear about so that both the archivist knows and the board also know what lengths the government will go to interfere in what should really be an independent third party body, Mr. Speaker.

So again we just have a couple of small changes in Bill 142 to *The Education Act* and *The Evidence Act* to correct those bills, which are bilingual bills. And at this point there's no further debate from this side of the House on this bill.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the Minister of Parks, Culture and Sport that Bill No. 142, *The Archives and Public Records Management Consequential Amendments Act, 2014* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel: — Second reading of this bill.

The Speaker: — To which committee shall this bill be referred? I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that Bill No. 142, *The Archives and Public Records Management Consequential Amendments Act* be moved to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

The Speaker: — This bill stands referred to the Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

Bill No. 143

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Doherty that **Bill No. 143 — *The Degree Authorization Amendment Act, 2014*** be now read a second time.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Pleasure to join debate on Bill No. 143, *The Degree Authorization Amendment Act, 2014*. This of course follows up an earlier effort on the part of this government that had been in effect since October 29th, 2012, and again that particular effort had followed on the heels of a fair amount of consultation with the sector and, more broadly throughout the province, students, faculty, administrators throughout the post-secondary education sector.

And again, Mr. Speaker, there's always a balance to be struck when it comes to questions of education, but post-secondary education in particular, between access and trying to cast that net as broadly as possible, and the assurance of quality.

And it's certainly . . . One of the things that it's occasionally remarked upon, Mr. Speaker, as regards post-secondary education in Saskatchewan, that one of the biggest barriers that students confront when trying to access post-secondary education, one of the biggest barriers is geography. And through different means, Mr. Speaker, we've sought to break down that barrier to provide the educational opportunities to the learners, take the learning opportunities to the learners, Mr. Speaker. And be it through distance education being offered by the universities of Regina or Saskatchewan, be it through the regional college system, be it through the great work done by the Saskatchewan Polytechnic, again be it through the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies or the First Nations University of Canada, be it through the work that is done by the Gabriel Dumont Institute or the Gabriel Dumont Technical Institute, there are different ways in which different generations of those seeking to educate Saskatchewan people have sought to get over that barrier of education. And again there's always that balance to be struck.

And one institution that this particularly deals with, Mr. Speaker, and I should be, I guess, straight up right off the bat — and perhaps I've mentioned this on the record before — but my late mother was a graduate of Briercrest Bible College, and my late brother was a graduate of Briercrest Bible College. And both of them very proud of that association, and both of them valued very much the education that they secured at that institution. So in terms of the way that this legislation has extended degree granting, a broader measure of degree-granting authority to an institution like Briercrest Bible College or BBI [Briercrest Bible Institute], I think from a personal standpoint, Mr. Speaker, is something that I was very interested in. And I know that from a broader provincial perspective, it would seem to be a good move.

But again, Mr. Speaker, what we need to do is make certain that we're striking that balance between ever seeking to extend the opportunity, the access that is there for learners, but also to make certain that the quality provisions are looked after, that

we're making sure that the degree is up to standards and is well recognized throughout not just the province, Mr. Speaker, but the country. And indeed this is something that we're sending Saskatchewan grads out into the world, and we need to have their credentials recognized, so we need to take the steps to secure that.

The work that the sector has undertaken along with the ministry, we'll have more specific questions about that in committee, Mr. Speaker. But certainly the establishment and then the ongoing work of the Saskatchewan Higher Education Quality Assurance Board, again a body that's very distinctly mandated with the job of seeking assurances around quality, we'll be interested to ask some questions about the experience to date of that body when we get to committee.

[14:45]

We'll be interested to see how the question of the grandfathering period that was initially brought forward in the first legislation but which has been dealt with in this legislation, we'll be interested to ask further questions on the specifics of that and to get a further take from the minister and officials on the impacts for Briercrest and, as the minister had referenced in his second reading speech, the Cape Breton University in partnership with the Great Plains College or Athabasca University and Lakeland College. So how the grandfathering impacts those situations, we'll be very interested to seek further clarification, Mr. Speaker.

And of course we've been consulting with the sector. It would seem that so far this is largely well received, but we'll be doing our own quality assurance on that appearance of the situation, Mr. Speaker, as well.

But with that, I would conclude my remarks just stating that I know many of my colleagues have weighed in on this legislation in terms of the staging and the process that we go through around the legislative process, Mr. Speaker. We're getting ready. Again we look forward to a greater opportunity to question and to discuss the merits of this bill in committee. And with that, Mr. Speaker, I conclude my remarks and welcome the Government House Leader taking care of this legislation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion of the Minister of Advanced Education that Bill No. 143, *The Degree Authorization Amendment Act, 2014* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel: — Second reading of this bill.

The Speaker: — To which committee shall this bill be referred? I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that Bill No. 143, *The Degree Authorization Amendment Act,*

2014 be moved to the Standing Committee on Human Services.

The Speaker: — This bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Human Services.

Bill No. 144

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

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

Mr. Nilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise to speak to Bill No. 144, *An Act to amend The Victims of Domestic Violence Act and to make a consequential amendment to The Adult Guardianship and Co-decision-making Act*.

Mr. Speaker, right off the top I think it's important to recognize that this particular bill actually changes the name of the legislation that we've had in place now for about 20 years, and the new name for the legislation will be *The Victims of Interpersonal Violence Act*. And, Mr. Speaker, according to the minister, and I think it's probably clear from the legislation, the purpose of this is to recognize that there are situations of violence between individuals that don't always fit in to a description of domestic violence, and so that means that the attempt is being made here to broaden the scope of the legislation to provide protection to Saskatchewan citizens in other relationships.

And you know, what are some of these other relationships? Well clearly there are situations where people do live together, but it's not necessarily a traditional domestic relationship, but they are involved in violence.

Also the legislation is intended to extend to the whole world of the Internet and the electronic contact between people. And, Mr. Speaker, this as we all know has quite a number of very difficult issues involved, whether it's the issues like the Rehtaeh Parsons case in Nova Scotia where a young woman is harassed as a result of an incident in the community, and we know from reading our paper that the repercussions of that particular incident are continuing on a monthly basis as the community tries to deal with some of those particular issues. And, Mr. Speaker, I know that this topic has been a discussion of the federal government and of provincial governments through the ministries of Justice in an attempt to see if there are some other ways to deal with some of the very difficult issues that arise.

And it appears that this legislation is our Saskatchewan attempt to try to set some kinds of boundaries around some of this activity, and we'll, I think, want to hear more about what's intended, because clearly the legislation or the changes aren't extensive but also it will, I think, include a number of regulatory changes which we haven't seen yet. And so how those all interplay are going to be crucial in how this legislation protects Saskatchewan citizens.

1994 I think was the year that Mr. Mitchell introduced this legislation in Saskatchewan. It was, I think, quite a challenge for the policing community, the social work community, others

to understand how it might work and how it would provide protection for victims. What we know over the years is that there have been further refinements on the emergency protection orders and all of the related kinds of orders that can be made under this legislation, and all of them have responded to particular situations where maybe the original legislation wasn't quite the right fit to deal with a particular problem.

And so I think it's important to recognize that this particular amendment that's coming forth now is based on the original legislation, the experience of many of the people who have been involved with the use of the legislation — whether it's police, prosecutors, defence counsel, and the judges — and also responses from individuals who have been caught up in this particular system. And practically nobody wants to be involved in a situation where they are the victim or, for that matter, the perpetrator of assault in an interpersonal situation, in a domestic situation. And often it's fuelled by alcohol or drugs or something else, but other times it has nothing to do with that either. And ultimately the question becomes, what kinds of assistance can be provided? What kind of protection is there? What kind of mental health services are there to supplement these interventions that this legislation allows?

And, Mr. Speaker, I think that most people in Saskatchewan who have been involved using this type of legislation, even though they may have complaints at specific places or times, recognize the necessity to have these, in effect, extraordinary powers to intervene into, you know, family situations or interpersonal situations.

And so I think that what we need to do in the legislature is understand from the minister and from the officials what specific instances they are responding to when they make the changes in this legislation. It's hard to speculate exactly where certain things have happened but I think we can get a general idea from the legislation. But sometimes it's helpful to have laid out for us what kinds of problems have been run into, usually by judges who are looking back and trying to sort out what happened in a particular situation.

And we all want to make sure that there's the appropriate balance between the protection of rights of individuals and the protection of people, their protection in a sense of their safety. And clearly the safety of people will sometimes end up meaning that the rights of certain individuals will be curtailed, whether it's by use of incarceration or restraining orders or what other kinds of things that are necessary.

Now this particular, the particular amendments that are coming here also relate to a broader review of legislation as it relates to vulnerable adults, and I think just the recognition right in the title of the legislation that we'll also be amending, *The Adult Guardianship and Co-decision-making Act* recognizes that whole area of work as well is something that does relate to this particular legislation.

And what we often have is a situation where some of the mental health issues interplay with the family issues or the relationship issues and with the Criminal Code. And unfortunately, sometimes, as has been identified by many of the mental health groups, we don't end up having the services available in as timely a fashion as they should be, such that it falls on the

police or on the criminal court system to deal with some individuals where they really do need the psychiatric or mental health help. And as a result, many of the rules around guardianship and taking care of the actual physical person also then, you know, move over or are covered by some of these types of orders.

And it's always been a difficult area for lawyers who are involved, because clients will come in to see you and they end up having their own particular perspective, but they're also maybe not as cognizant of their own role in causing all of the problems that are there.

Now this legislation I don't think intervenes and does a lot for that, but what it does try to do is make sure that there are very appropriate protective orders in place to protect individuals who may be caught in a relationship, domestic or otherwise, with someone who needs boundaries set and restraining kinds of orders put in place.

This area of legislation is one that I think we should all recognize as one that continues to evolve and continues to respond to the situations that arise. Now what we're all concerned about in our community is, any time that this kind of violence creates a level of fear, that makes it difficult for people to live fulfilling lives. And many times these orders, under this type of legislation, are actually an attempt to protect the children or others within the situation from some of the violence that has taken place. And I think that we need to recognize that as well.

I know the legislation ends up talking about emergency shelters, and sometimes there are words that describe these things, but maybe not as many physical spaces for the people who need to be protected. And so we need to make sure that we understand what the budget implications of this legislation is, what the budget implications are, and what kinds of dollars the Ministry of Justice will be putting forward as it relates to the courts and to the police and to the others. But also on the social services side, what other kinds of funding will be available to provide some of the services that are referred to in the legislation.

[15:00]

Now often the first sort of response to a particular incident is by the police approaching a Justice of the Peace in a community who . . . And that person ends up having to make some of the initial orders, often with not as much evidence as anybody would like for them to have. And so I know that the legislation appears to set out criteria and the scope of factors to give a bit more flexibility, but also a bit more power to the justices of the peace so that they can respond very quickly when issues arise. We will want to understand how that interaction is going to be described and how it's going to be funded.

We know that sometimes the distances in Saskatchewan are a factor in this particular legislation. I know that there are some opportunities to get orders over telephone or other electronic communication, but it also adds a further challenge around getting the protection orders in place and in a situation that will provide for the protection for families, children, and others who are involved.

And so, Mr. Speaker, the legislation itself is pretty straightforward. It builds on the '94 legislation. It makes sure that the definitions include same-sex relations and relationships and others in a way that is entirely appropriate. It makes sure that the relationship itself doesn't — and how it's described — doesn't move it outside the Act. And I think that's one of the reasons for changing the word domestic to interpersonal, to make sure that people can be protected. So these are all important ways that the legislation will take effect.

Now one of the interesting aspects of the legislation is how detailed it is about a lot of the personal property issues — identification, you know, cheque books, bank cards, all these . . . children's clothing. Because from experience, people working in this area know that it's often those things which are the most difficult to resolve. And it makes it pretty clear in the legislation that's existing that there can be some very specific orders made, and these provisions are expanded. And as I said earlier, the Justice of the Peace has been given further powers to give them a little more flexibility in dealing with some of the issues that immediately arise.

Now one of the other, you know, factors that's involved is that sometimes the people that may be affected by the order may actually have a personal guardian, and that's been in the legislation up and to this point. And that means that the individual may not have full capacity. What this also reflects, I think, is some recognition around the dementia, Alzheimer's, issues that are part of our broader society. And sometimes the methods of providing care, providing control of people who aren't fully in control of their own capacity can be a huge challenge.

I think this legislation has aspects of it that can be used in some, I would think, extreme cases to deal with some of the problems that arise with the violence that may or may not be associated with dementia. And I think it'll be also interesting for us in committee, to understand how that interaction will take place, how it will work in relationship to some of the other orders that'll be made under various adult guardianship legislation. Because ultimately the goal is to protect those people who need the protection, and quite often in those dementia cases that includes the person who is the perpetrator, the one who is victimizing someone else. And it becomes a major, major challenge.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this legislation also has broader consequences into some of the other discussions that are happening in our community around violence against women, and it's important to recognize that that was the place where some of this legislation was originally of most use and it will continue to be of use. But ultimately it's really about education of the public, of young people, about what is the role of violence in any kind of a relationship. And, Mr. Speaker, this becomes an ultimate protection, but we've got much work to do in some other areas to make sure that the next generations of our young people will end up having a solid base.

And as identified, all of the harassment issues that come out of electronic media become another area where this may or may not be the appropriate remedy, and we'll want to understand what's intended here and whether or not we're in a position where we're being proactive or whether we're just being

reactive to some of the things that are happening right now.

But, Mr. Speaker, my colleagues have had a chance to speak about this particular legislation and provide some of our concerns at this level. I know that we will continue to have questions as the matter goes to committee. It's important legislation for the province; it's important legislation for the people of Saskatchewan. And at this point I would ask it be moved to committee.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the Minister of Justice that Bill No. 144, *The Victims of Domestic Violence Amendment Act, 2014* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel: — Second reading of this bill.

The Speaker: — To which committee shall this bill be referred? I recognize the Minister of Immigration.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I designate that Bill No. 144, *The Victims of Domestic Violence Amendment Act, 2014* be referred to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

The Speaker: — This bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

Bill No. 147

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 147** — *The Class Actions Amendment Act, 2014/Loi de 2014 modifiant la Loi sur les recours collectifs* be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Nilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise to speak to Bill No. 147, *An Act to amend The Class Actions Act*. And effectively this legislation changes the rules around costs in class actions. And what happens is that there's a new section 40 under the legislation, under the heading "Costs," and it effectively ends up making a couple of changes to the legislation to effectively give more discretion to the courts around their ability to award costs in class action proceedings. And it also adds some, you know, in subsection (2), that the court may take into account various factors when determining whether to award costs, including the public interest, whether the action involved a novel point of law, whether the action was a test case, and access to justice.

And, Mr. Speaker, I think the Minister of Justice would agree with me that these additions to the legislation are effectively what judges have always used when they're looking at whether they should award costs in any type of litigation. But it appears here that the changes have been made to I guess clarify and make sure that there's much more discretion for the court to award costs or not award costs. In other words it's . . . They do

have the ability to make that decision.

As you know, when *The Class Actions Act* was initially introduced into Saskatchewan law, there was quite a bit of consternation I guess, if I can put it that way, among various groups. I think the legislation was brought in just after I had been the attorney general although I think I might have been the attorney general a little bit in the year 2001 when the legislation was introduced because I kind of bumped back into that role a couple of times.

When this legislation was introduced, the concern was primarily from defendants, not from plaintiffs. And the class action is a situation where a person, on behalf of a class — in other words on behalf of a whole group of people who have suffered a similar wrong — that person can start a lawsuit and then the others can be included in that lawsuit. And interestingly enough, the group or the institution that was most afraid of the legislation was the Government of Saskatchewan because often they will be the target of a class action lawsuit. And included in that would be Crown corporations or other government bodies. And the concern was that you're giving ability for the little guy to take on the big guy. And effectively the legislation did have some concerns raised that way but ultimately we, as government, decided that we would go ahead with this legislation because we thought it is important that certain kinds of cases need to get to the courts to be dealt with appropriately.

And we can look at the kinds of litigation over the years which have used class actions to right wrongs, whether it's breast implant cases or cases involving defective automobiles or cases involving overcharging of fees within certain commercial operations. All of these kinds of things are ones where one individual might only suffer a few hundred or a few thousand dollars damage but a whole group of people, whether it's 5,000, 10,000, or 300, suffer as a group a substantial amount of damage. And what the legislation does is allow for these cases to be brought forward.

[15:15]

And as you know, we have in Saskatchewan lawyers who are expert plaintiff lawyers who have brought forward these cases, and we've seen that on a number of places, and there are a number of law firms that do that. By the same token, we also have expert defence counsel who handle the other side of these kinds of cases, often on behalf of some fairly substantial defendants.

But practically, one of the questions that always arises in the litigation is the question of costs. And especially when you have indigent litigants or litigants with not very much money, the threat of having an order for costs given against them at the end of a particular lawsuit can often be quite a substantial deterrent. And I think that's what this legislation is trying to deal with, is to make sure that the courts have the ability to, even in a case where somebody loses their class action lawsuit . . . It may be that the case was in the public interest or involved a novel point of law or was a test case or it was a question of access to justice or some other factor. All of those things can be used by the court to say, well even though you lost this case, we're not going to award any costs against you. In other words, the large defendant, the one, the well-heeled, the defendant with a lot of

money isn't going to be able to then further punish you even though they may have won the case. And that seems like pretty reasonable legislation to me, that we would expand that.

Now maybe there's some other things that are in this kind of short bill that affect this, and we will obviously have a chance to ask some more questions when we get into the committee. But practically it appears to be a situation where the courts and lawyers involved in these cases have said there just needs to be a few more remedies. There needs to be a little bit more discretion to make sure that, even though a group or a class of people loses a case, they maybe shouldn't get dinged with a huge amount of costs involved in the case. And so, Mr. Speaker, I think that on the face of it, we're in favour of this type of legislation. We're in favour of fixing what may be places where it needs to be tweaked a bit, and this appears to be an area where that is true. I think the best place to get further information about what triggered the amendments and why we're doing them now will be in committee and so at this point I think it makes sense that the bill go to committee. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: — Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Deputy Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the motion by the Minister of Justice that Bill No. 147, *The Class Actions Amendment Act, 2014* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel: — Second reading of this bill.

The Deputy Speaker: — To which committee shall this bill be referred? I recognize the Minister of Immigration.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. To the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

The Deputy Speaker: — This bill stands referred to the Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

Bill No. 150

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 150 — *The Residential Tenancies Amendment Act, 2014*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's a pleasure to stand today and enter into the debate on Bill No. 150, *An Act to amend The Residential Tenancies Act, 2006*. This is an important piece of legislation, and it's an important one that we get right.

Really this Act speaks to the balance of power of those who are in a situation where they're renting their housing, a basic human need, and those who are in the business of renting those properties out. So we need to get the balance of power right. We need to make sure that the interests of the owner, the business, is considered, and that they have their rights protected. Clearly it's important this important function that we know around the world is thriving and alive and is well. That's a critical, critical point. But at the same time, the other point of the balance of power are those tenants, the ones who are actually renting something that is so, so, so important to health and well-being. It's critical that we recognize that.

Now we know tenants come in various ways, whether they are in extreme poverty; whether they are actually escaping family abuse, domestic abuse; right to the very, very wealthy. And we just get amazed at what people can afford to pay for rent. But it is the world in which we live in which many people can afford certain things that are their choices.

And the same can be said on the other side when you come to the landlords. Landlords come in a wide range as well: those who are just the mom and pop operation, not really professional in it, but have decided that this is a good way to invest some money to buy a second home and rent it out once. Maybe they did it for a child maybe who's going to university or a post-secondary institution and then decided that they would continue on because of the stream of income that was a good one. Maybe it was a handyman who decided that he was a bit of a fixer-upper and didn't mind looking after a few houses and getting some rent, and that's an important thing. Or somebody just renting out a basement suite. We see now, we hear about granny suites. We see all sorts of different arrangements for housing, and some of them are very interesting. And some really meet unique needs of tenants, and we sure appreciate that.

And of course we go to the multi-national landlords, the REITs [real estate investment trust], the residential e-i-t income trusts. I'm not sure what the "e" stands for, but these are large conglomerates who made it their business to enter into this kind of market. And we really respect that, very important. And we've seen that change in Saskatchewan in the last 8 or 10 years where we've seen some of the large properties being bought up in all our cities, in all our communities. And really now it would be very interesting actually . . . And I don't know, this would be an interesting thing, and we'll have a chance to ask in committee as this kind of bill generates many, many questions.

But one of the questions is do we know what kind of concentration we have in terms of landlord concentration in Saskatchewan? We know for example that one of the biggest landlords, if not the very biggest of course, is Sask Housing. But I think that it's important that we do get this balance right, and we do understand that this is a basic human need. This is not an extra; housing is critical. Housing is very critical.

Likewise, we recognize the landlord's investment is significant. These are not small investments that you can just walk away from. You clearly have to have some ground rules that meet both the tenants and the landlords. And so when we take a look at a bill like this, we want to make sure we get it right.

Now I see that the minister — and I will talk a little bit about his comments in a few minutes — does talk a bit about what drove some of the recommendations. But I would like to challenge him and the folks in the Ministry of Justice as to how can they do . . . How do they feel about the consultations?

We've not heard much on this side from different community groups or others. Sometimes we worry about that because we worry that maybe people are a little afraid of coming forward. You know, you don't want to put yourself in a precarious position because you've put an idea forward that might challenge somebody. It's not meant to hurt or tip that balance of power as I say, but it might be a better idea, a better way to fix the mousetrap so to speak. But in fact, there might be repercussions, and they would say, I'd rather not say because I just want to keep my head low and not antagonize anybody. And that way, I can keep paying my rent, and all I want to do is make sure my rent doesn't go up.

And of course we know what we've seen in Saskatchewan in terms of rents and what they used to be and what they are now. The big question of course is around affordability, and that's a big, big challenge. And of course, we've talked many times on this floor about *The Residential Tenancies Act* and the weaknesses in it to really protect the affordability of rental units.

And so it's really, it's a concern because quite often we'll have this government say that in fact it feels the housing situation is quite well; in fact it's thriving. And really we have to challenge it, challenge them on that because we really don't know.

They will point, they will point to the vacancy rate that the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation, CMHC, releases twice a year and say look, it's over 3 per cent or it's floating around 3 per cent. Fair enough. That is one indicator, but it's not a very strong indicator. And in fact, in many ways if you just take it by itself, it can be really misleading. And we know that; we can go on at length about stats that are misleading.

And probably that is one of the worst misleading stats when people use that to say this is a healthy housing marketplace, though it just tells us the vacancy rate. You know, you've got to be clear; it tells us what the vacancy rate is. And even when they start to average it out . . . You know, I was just at a CMHC housing conference when they do their housing outlook. It was just a few weeks ago here in Regina. And of course there's many concerns about the rental market, but one of them . . . obviously we talk a lot about vacancy rates.

And then you can drill down into different areas of the cities and you can say, so why is it, for example, on the west side of Saskatoon, the vacancy rate floats around 6 per cent? Why is that? Why is that? And people would say, well it must be a very good housing market. Well actually it's not because the question is it's because of affordability. People cannot afford to have their own units so they double up and that means a lot of units are left open. And that's a real tragedy that people can't afford their own place.

Now it's not just a vanity thing that we all want to have our own place. We know and we know that there's much research in terms of housing and how important it is to have adequate

housing that fits your family. And if you have three children and a single or a household headed by two people, you know, you need more than one bedroom. You need to have more than one bedroom, but once we started to get into two- or three-bedroom houses or rental units, all of a sudden the price starts to go way up, and you have some real, real challenges.

So you have affordability and CMHC has done a little bit of work in this area but clearly not enough. And we think this is a problem both of the federal government and the provincial government, and it shows up in *The Residential Tenancies Act* that we really don't know what's going on with the rental marketplace as much as we should. We don't know how affordable it really is for families, especially those who are in low income or mid income who are hoping to save money so they can now enter into buying a house that is affordable to them. And this is a big, big challenge.

[15:30]

The third dimension of good housing stats really is around the core housing need. Now as I said, when you get into the west side of Saskatoon for example, the housing vacancy rate is higher than 3 per cent. I believe it's in the 5's per cent. But it could be because of affordability. It could be because people just can't afford to have a place on their own.

The other reason that unit may be vacant, other than being too expensive, it's just too run down. It may be a place nobody would live in, but it's still on the marketplace because we know that people, if they're forced to, may have to live in a place that is below standards, below standards in terms of adequate space for their family, adequate heating, which is a big deal in Saskatchewan, you know. When we get into winter, you don't want to have windows that are super drafty.

It's very important that we have good heating, a good structural building in place, all of those things, good water, adequate water so people can bathe. They can use the toilets. They can use the water to cook. We want to make sure it's not problems with the plumbing that's maybe causing health problems. These are all issues.

And so we don't have that data, and we really need to have some good, solid data. And when the government hangs its hat on vacancy rates and says, listen, the housing problem now is solved. It's at 3 per cent. Everything is A-okay. No it's not. And we owe it, we owe it to people to make sure they have good, safe, affordable housing. It's not just a saying, but we want to make sure the housing is safe.

And of course clearly in Saskatchewan, you know, we've seen this over the last few weeks, but the story is much longer, much longer when we talk about fires in homes. And whether we're talking on First Nation reserves, that's a big, big issue. But I can tell you in my own riding of Saskatoon Centre, when we have house fires, it's a pretty serious issue. The housing stock in my area is older and sometimes in tough shape, and we have issues. And I do need to say that the inspectors from Saskatoon fire service have done an outstanding job of making sure homes that aren't fit to live in are actually placarded and people are no longer in those homes.

But we've had many, many situations, and it's very sad because I can tell you of fires on Avenue E in Saskatoon. Actually it was 400 block South and 400 block North one winter where young families, two houses, people died. And they were rental properties and it was this tragic . . . One situation where smoke detectors were not in place. And the progress we've made in smoke detectors now, I know I might get off topic if I start to talk about some of the new smoke detectors, but clearly, clearly this is an important issue.

And you know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is a critical issue because I know that we, both sides of the House, did meet with firefighters, the international association of professional firefighters in December, November-December, to talk about how we can have safer homes in our communities.

So all of this ties back to making sure the balance of power is at the right point, the right point so that we are as a government building, creating, sustaining the kind of society that we want in our communities right across this province. And this bill, this Act, *The Residential Tenancies Act* is a main, main tool. It's a main, main tool, and so we have to get it right. And so when we wash our hands of housing responsibilities and say, ah, everything's A-okay; we're just tweaking here. No, I've got to tell you, we've got a long, long way to go, and we'll have more questions about this in committee.

But I have a bit more to say about this bill because I think there's some really interesting quirks in it that I don't quite understand about how we got to this place here today with the bill before us. And I know we can go at length on this, but I do want to make sure that if some people did not hear me talk about consultation, that how important consultation is, and we've got to do it in a safe, safe way. Because we know, for example, the landlords have the Landlords Association. Fair enough, many groups of professionals have associations. We applaud that. We think that's quite appropriate, no issues with that. But we know that there is no equivalent for tenants. And it's a very difficult situation, particularly those who are most vulnerable or in a very precarious position where they feel like they just want to keep their head down and get the rent paid and stay on the good side of a landlord, and that's very, very important.

But we know that there are challenges out there. We know there are challenges out there. So we want to emphasize how important it is in terms of consultation.

But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, one of the areas . . . This looks like a bill that's relatively straightforward, and I'll get into the minister's remarks in a few minutes, but I do want to talk a little bit about just to . . . And I think I may end up coming back to this a couple of times because I do want to underline how important some of the language is.

And you know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think I gave one of my better speeches early in November about how important language is in our legislation, how important it is to be consistent, and how important it is to mean what you say and say what you mean and create the legislation around that. Once you start to . . . I mean maybe the housing metaphor is like a . . . We see this with problems, and people fix roofs on houses and they just patch and patch and obviously you don't know where

the real roof is and sometimes it's better to pull the whole thing back and roof it the right way and make sure it's all done right.

But here are the two pieces that I find really kind of interesting. Now the first one calls for section 2 being amended this way: 3, section 2 amended, 3(b) by adding the following clause after (e), (e.1), and I'm quoting:

'housing program' means a program offered pursuant to an Act or an Act of the Parliament of Canada that provides rental living accommodation to individuals during their participation in this program"; **and**

So they've added a new definition in there. And I checked: what does this really mean? It means they're defining what the word "housing program" means and some list of definitions in *The Residential Tenancies Act, 2006*. So that one's really straightforward. So what they're really just talking about is housing program means a program offered by, pursuant to an Act or an Act of the Parliament of Canada, so it's a federal piece of programming that provides rental living accommodation to individuals during that participation program. Seems relatively straightforward. So we need to know more about that. What does that mean? What caused this to come forward?

But then further on down the road, section 58 is amended. Section 58 is amended and:

12(1) Subsection 58(1) is amended . . .

(b) in clause (1) by striking out "social housing program as defined in the regulations" **and substituting** "housing program".

So what does that mean? What does it mean to be moving out of social housing? What does that allow the government then to do? You know, and I think this is a very interesting thing and I have questions about that because of course we've seen some changes in the Minister of Social Services, what she has done recently, where she has effectively ended affordable housing in our large cities, saying everything now will be social housing for Sask Housing units. But here you have a situation where *The Residential Tenancies Act* is being amended by taking out the words "social housing." So in legislation we've now got rid of the words "social housing" and all that it means.

And I think this is an important thing when we think about, you know, we've seen over the past many years a lot of housing summits and a lot of speakers get up and they talk about the housing continuum and what does that . . . And we see how people move through that. Not everybody starts at one end and goes to the other end, but they travel along the continuum in many ways.

And whether you start at one end where we know where people's super basic needs are being met, safe houses or shelters, that type of thing, fleeing from abuse to social housing, and then you get into affordable rental housing and then you get into the marketplace, market rents, and then from there people may end up staying there. And they may find that rental is the thing that they want to do, so they may end up staying there and that might be good. That may be what they do for the rest of

their lives. Or they may be there to save money and move into home ownership, and then you get into what all that means, whether that's condos or whether that's semi-detached housing, that type of thing. Or you then get into seniors' housing.

But we saw a change in government policy this January which really left a lot of questions, and of course we will look forward to estimates, about what does that really mean. People were confused about what that really means. And of course the government at the time talked about, and the minister at the time talked about how she really wanted to meet the needs of those most in need. And I think we can all support that. We can all get behind . . . Those in most need clearly need it most and so let's get behind that. But that doesn't mean the government can only juggle with one ball in the air. You can do other things. You can look at that housing continuum. We can look at shelters. We can look at social housing. We can look at affordable housing.

And that is the role of government, and along that way we can see that. But we've seen what this government really does think. We know, for example, the minister in the fall talked about how she didn't really think there were these desperate, homeless people. And clearly that was a thing that she then thought a little bit more about and made some further comments to that effect. But then we saw Lloydminster. The candidate then, soon to become the MLA up there, had the same feelings about affordable housing. The government had no role in that. And clearly she wanted to clarify her remarks because she let it slip what she really, maybe she really felt.

And we have some real problems with that because we think the government has a clear responsibility when it comes to housing and making sure people have good, safe housing. And as I keep saying — I keep coming back to this — that really this is the issue when we talk about *The Residential Tenancies Act*. This is the one tool people are counting on to make sure their rights are protected because they're in . . . [inaudible] . . . very vulnerable position where they don't know.

But I was really concerned about what the minister had talked about in terms of the social housing and affordable housing because we've seen over the past couple of years a lot of confusion in terms of Sask Housing. Because people actually appreciate Sask Housing and they do because it's safe, it's stable and affordable and predictable and, generally speaking, the landlord is a pretty good landlord.

But clearly people have questions because when you change the rules and you're not explaining them very well or you get into a bit of what this government likes to get into, a bit of bafflelegab and not meaning what it says but really trying to confuse people, people really worry about that — really worry about that. And we see real concerns by some of the tenants who've come forward, and we had to explain that they may have some legitimate questions or no, they're actually okay. But we need to really do better than that. I think the government needs to do better than that.

But you know, I want to talk a bit about when we see the elimination of affordable housing from Sask Housing. We have some serious concerns about what that really means for the government's intention. You know, for example, last August,

August 26, we got this press release from the federal government and the Government of Saskatchewan about a \$92 million investment in affordable housing, and this was an extension to the Investment in Affordable Housing Agreement. We thought this is great but we thought at the time, so where's the plan? Where is the plan? We're still, you know, several months later wondering, where is the plan? And we see this language being changed in *The Residential Tenancies Act* where, you know, in January we got rid of affordable housing. Now we're getting rid of the words "social housing." What is the government up to?

[15:45]

And I think a lot of people have a lot of questions, and we really want to know what is up. What is the real vision of this government when it comes to providing safe, affordable housing for those in the rental markets? We think this is a big, big concern. And we know that this government, it can manufacture numbers that would really seem to indicate that they're doing a lot of investment, but we know, for example, Sask Housing itself, and I'd like to see the minister produce numbers, but when we ask for it in questions we get stonewalled and we won't get answers back, but what has Sask Housing built themselves in the last several years? What have they built themselves? You know, we just haven't seen that. We've seen partnerships with other groups, and that's fair enough. That's good, and that's a good way to leverage money. But what is Sask Housing doing themselves about their own housing stock?

Other than, you know, of course we saw the fixed-price Deveraux fiasco last fall where the minister allowed a private company just to walk away from a fixed-price contract, over \$400,000, and where, you know, it's unanimous from all sorts of points of view, that's a bad business practice to get into, to allow people to walk away from a fixed-price contract because it gives all sorts of bad signals, bad signals to the marketplace. And you know, this is a time where the government had to have a little spine, had to stand up and say, you've got to build those units, those 48 units. You've got to build them. The contract is this. And now we see that the government really doesn't have a spine and really caved in, really caved in.

This is a problem. And so here we have it and I think this is a critical piece where we see, what does the legislation really, really mean and what will be the impact of programs like this for the \$92 million? Now the government will say, don't worry; we've got it covered. We'll be able to use that money. But we're wondering what for. Will it be used for affordable housing? Or will it be used for something else under the guise of affordable housing and not really meet the needs of tenants who are looking at the price of rental that's way, way out of line?

And so we have some real deep concerns about that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because we know that the minister and some of the others in the backbenches have let it slip. They don't really believe the government should be in this market. They really believe they just should step back and let the marketplace have its way and they'll hang their hat on the vacancy rate, which is no indication of what's really happening in rental housing at all because, as I said, it doesn't measure affordability

and it doesn't measure core housing need, two very important dimensions to providing safe, good, affordable housing for our citizens here in Saskatchewan. So there is some real challenges here and, as I said, the consultation piece is pretty critical.

So I want to take a minute and take a look at what the minister had to say when he introduced this back in November, and he thought it was an important piece of legislation. And some of it is fair and we think it's worth getting behind. Talks about "Some proposals benefit tenants specifically, such as . . . expanding the time for claiming the return on a security deposit from 120 days to two years." And you know, it's interesting because this came out of some of the concerns, issues that were raised by the courts and landlords, some by tenants, in the Office of Residential Tenancies. And of course we'll have questions about that. Who did they consult with and what were some of the . . . What was left on the floor when they were making the piece of legislation? And I think this is important.

Another one is ". . . the benefit of tenants [apparently] is found in the amendment to section 60, which allows landlords to evict tenants if the landlord wishes to demolish or renovate the premises or has other uses . . . Currently the notice period is one month. The proposal is to extend it to two [months]." And so we'll see how far that goes. We know . . . And ". . . in situations of demolition or renovation, the landlord must always return the entire security deposit," which makes sense.

But we'll follow that as well because we know there's been certain circumstances where people have tried to circumvent the legislation. They get very creative in this and empty an apartment building if they're converting it to condos. In some ways the cities have stepped up with their own legislation to make sure that they have some control over that, and that's very important.

Now landlords will be able to do some other things. It talks about tenants' use, occupancy, or maintenance of the premises or the tenants' use of services. Some rules may concern smoking or pets. Smoking is a really interesting one because this is a very important one that we see, and it will be interesting to hear from the Minister of Justice what this means in terms of, say for example the Sask Housing, how do they enforce smoking and what will be there? I think this is an important issue, and I think that we'll have some debate on this and this is really important.

The other thing for the landlords, the ability to evict tenants who violated municipal bylaws or fail to pay municipal changes, and we'll have to get more information about that. So this is really, really an interesting piece of legislation before us, and I know that we have lots of work to do today and I want it to get on the record that we think that what's really important when we do this type of legislation that we do have the balance of power and we do respect the fact that it's not easy for people to come forward and raise legitimate concerns.

And while the Office of Residential Tenancies I think does an admirable job, I think that . . . It's not an officer of the legislature so we don't, people don't have the same protection as say going to the Ombudsman or the Children's Advocate. And I'm not advocating there is a limit to how many officers you can have. You can have a whole squadron I guess, but I do

think that it's important that we need to look at how people feel free enough to speak about their concerns without of course, you know, without penalty of harassment through their house, their rental property, this is important. Of course we understand likewise for the landlord.

But I think it's important that we really consider the strength of the Residential Tenancies office, and are they arm's length enough to say, hey, this is a problem; we need to do more? Or do they feel all handcuffed because they do report to the Minister of Justice? We'll have that conversation. I think that's important to have some ways of being able to stand up for people.

As well I think it's important to stand up for the landlord. I think sometimes landlords feel they may get the raw end because we talk an awful lot about tenants, but clearly there's a lot more tenants than there are landlords so their stories come forward. But you know, we do hear. And you know as a few years ago, we see the rental market just explode and the shock of high rents. People may be getting a little used to it but the fact of the matter is they're still really high rents and they're still really unaffordable. And because of that, they cause all sorts of problems.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I know we've got much work to do here today and I wanted to get a few comments on record about this piece of legislation. We will be asking many, many questions in committee on this because this is an important piece of legislation. I'll be asking about what the impact is on federal programs, what does that mean, and how we can ensure that the funding for housing programs, for affordable housing, really was affordable and not be siphoned off into other areas. That's critically, critically, critically important.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I would like to move adjournment of this bill. Thank you very much.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Centre has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 150, *The Residential Tenancies Amendment Act, 2014*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 151

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Duncan that **Bill No. 151** — *The Pharmacy Amendment Act, 2014* be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Nilson: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It is my pleasure to rise again and speak to Bill No. 151, *An Act to amend The Pharmacy Act, 1996 and to make consequential amendments to other Acts*. I'll speak for a little while and then I'll send it to committee.

Mr. Speaker, this particular legislation makes some

amendments to add pharm techs and others into the legislation so that there can be obviously better regulation, better understanding of their role in the legislation. It ends up doing that in a fairly straightforward fashion. It's obviously legislation that has been prepared in consultation with the various pharmaceutical professions. And we can tell that by the legislation itself because the actual name of the Act will be changed to *The Pharmacy and Pharmacy Disciplines Act*.

Now we all know that the role of the pharmacist has changed quite dramatically from the corner drugstore role, which we still have. But when we have large international corporations, many times food stores that have large pharmacy components to their business, all of a sudden the role of a regulator within a province ends up being much more challenging. And I think that what the legislation is trying to do is to make sure that this legislation in Saskatchewan moves forward, along with the legislation of all the other provinces and territories in Canada, to make sure that the professional role of the pharmacist is maintained and also that it is appropriately regulated in a manner that will protect the public. And so, Mr. Speaker, I know that that particular legislation has a number of those aspects.

And when I had a chance to talk about some of this before, it was clear that the next part of this will be dealt with as we move into committee, because there are many aspects of the legislation that are dealt with by regulation and by bylaws within the community itself. And so what we need to understand is that as the profession itself provides the regulation, it needs the assistance of the provincial government to make sure that it has the powers to protect the public.

We also end up having the regulation of pharmacists, pharmacy technicians, and pharmacies and drugs all related to this particular aspect, and we all know that there are even bigger corporations that are involved in the production of the pharmaceuticals and are involved in their promotion and in their education around their use. And so what that means is that the pharmacists are very much the centre of this operation of delivery of the drugs to the people, but practically they are one piece in a bigger puzzle.

[16:00]

And it may be that this legislation does capture this role of regulation in an appropriate way. But I think that we'll need to ask some questions in committee about this, because the world of delivery of pharmaceuticals is changing fairly quickly.

Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to talk at length today, but I am going to suggest that this matter be referred to committee. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: — Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Deputy Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the Minister of Health that Bill No. 151, *The Pharmacy Amendment Act, 2014* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel: — Second reading of this bill.

The Deputy Speaker: — To which committee shall this bill be referred? I recognize the Minister of Immigration.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would designate that Bill No. 151, *The Pharmacy Amendment Act, 2014* be referred to the Standing Committee on Human Services.

The Deputy Speaker: — This bill stands referred to the Committee on Human Services.

Bill No. 153

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

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It will be my intention to send this bill to committee after my brief comments. So I think that I have thought about this piece of legislation, and it's so important, you know, as I was just saying earlier. And this is Bill No. 153, *An Act to amend the Statute Law*. And it's one that really I think about, that really shows the clarity of the work that we do in terms of meaning what we say and say what we mean.

And we've gone through this, and clearly this is an issue that this government has some difficulty with. Because when we get into some of the spin that they have, and it shows up in the legislation and then we're back just very quickly thereafter to really correct mistakes — intentional or unintentional — that we really have to do better than that.

And you know, it reminds me of a saying that I've just heard, and I think that it's one that I think a lot about with this government, that ink never . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — The member of Saskatoon Centre currently has the floor. Although he's situated quite close to the Chair, I'm having some difficulty hearing him. I would ask the government members in the back, if they are discussing a policy, that perhaps they may want to do that outside. I recognize the member from Saskatoon Centre.

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As I was saying, that there is a phrase out there that really represents this government and it's one that goes, ink never refuses paper. And I think . . . Ink never refuses paper. And I think when you think about that, and they're saying we'll be into the season where we're going to be reading a lot about what this government really thinks, what its priorities are, and what it really intends to do. And when we think about a bill, like as simple as *An Act to amend the Statute Law*, that we get it right. We get it right and

we be as straightforward, with clarity, as much as possible. And I think that's an important thing.

And as we look through some of the changes that have happened here — whether we talk about “lunatic,” “insane,” “mental incompetent” becomes “lack of capacity,” “lacking capacity” — we want to make sure that that actually does mean what it's supposed to mean and the varying degrees of those terms.

I worry about that and I worry about some of the changes that we have before us. But having said that, I know that we've struggled hard and I think it's important that we get it right. I have talked on this before, at length, but it's my intention now with these two Acts . . . but I think with this one we've all had a chance, a good go at it, and we think we'll have more questions in committee on this. So it is my intention now to move Bill 153 to committee.

The Deputy Speaker: — Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Deputy Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the Minister of Justice that Bill 153, *The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2014* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Clerk: — Second reading of this bill.

The Deputy Speaker: — To which committee shall this bill be referred? I recognize the Minister of Immigration.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. To the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

The Deputy Speaker: — This bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

Bill No. 154

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

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to enter into this debate as well, as this is really what we're all about here. It is our assigned task to build and create the best legislation possible and, as I said, mean what we say and say what we mean. And I think that now 154 really speaks more to the bilingual nature of the legislation and making sure we've got that corrected.

And so with that, this bill though is relatively non-controversial except for the fact that, you know, when we were talking about this earlier, we were wondering when the government was going to set its real agenda, and we're still waiting to see that though. But we are at a point right now where I know that it's important to get these pieces of legislation moved forward, so with that, Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to move 154 to committee, and we'll pursue it in committee from there. Thank you very much.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the motion by the Minister of Justice that Bill No. 154, *The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2014 (No. 2)* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Clerk: — Second reading of this bill.

The Speaker: — To which committee shall this bill be referred? I recognize the Minister for Immigration.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I designate that Bill No. 154, *The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2014 (No. 2)* be referred to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

The Speaker: — This bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

Bill No. 155

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 155** — *The Health Care Directives and Substitute Health Care Decision Makers Act, 2014/Loi de 2014 sur les directives et les subrogés en matière de soins de santé* be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I enter into discussion of Bill No. 155, *The Health Care Directives and Substitute Health Care Decision Makers Act, 2014*. This Act's fairly straightforward changes that have been brought forward by government here simply relate to a Supreme Court decision of 1988 and its impact on ensuring that our Acts, our legislation are also translated into French. Certainly it's important for us to be compliant with that decision and making sure that the francophone community of Saskatchewan is provided changes as well. So this is very housekeeping in nature and doesn't have any changes to the Act itself or any substantive changes.

What I would mention is that when you see the effort and energy that's gone into translating this Act into French, you would look to that time as well as a bit of a lost opportunity to not first strengthen some of the legislation related directly to health care and seniors' care in our province. And it's unfortunate that this government didn't see it fitting or a priority to take this opportunity to ensure basic protection's in place for the seniors of this province for example by enacting appropriate minimum care standards and legislation to protect

the seniors across this province. We see crisis far too often in the current system, Mr. Speaker, and we see a government who wants to stick its head in the sand instead of doing the important listening and the hard work required to serve all Saskatchewan seniors and all Saskatchewan families.

We see as well so many other issues in health care. We see the erosion of services in rural Saskatchewan. We saw the massive rally that came to the legislature today with common sense leaders speaking about the cuts and failure to support rural health care here today, Mr. Speaker. And we see a government that seems disinterested with anything other than their own self-interest or political interest, Mr. Speaker, certainly not focusing on what really matters to Saskatchewan people in health care, whether that be in rural services, as discussed here today in question period, or whether that be in the emergency rooms that are crammed across this province with waits that are far too long. The reality that many families are facing is that they can't access family doctors or primary health care, not just in rural Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, but in urban Saskatchewan as well. And these are all important measures which require this government's attention, and certainly I'll take every forum that I can to press the government to do what they should in serving all Saskatchewan people and making improvements on these fronts.

But as it relates to Bill No. 155, *The Health Care Directives and Substitute Health Care Decision Makers Act*, there's no substantive changes to or not any changes to this legislation at this point other than a translation to French, and certainly that's a housekeeping measure that we would support. But we, along with Saskatchewan people, are looking to this government to do so much more on all those other fronts I spoke of. But at this point in time as it relates to Bill No. 155, I adjourn debate.

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 member for Regina Rosemont.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As it relates to Bill No. 156, which is simply the consequential amendments that support the bill I just spoke to, Bill No. 155, this again doesn't change anything substantive by way of the legislation. The original bill is unchanged. This is simply a translation to French, and this is the practical measure, the consequential amendments to allow that to occur. So at this point in time, Mr. Speaker, I adjourn debate of Bill No. 156.

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 Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Again a fair number of colleagues have participated in the debate on Bill No. — here we are; I'm going to have to get some glasses, Mr. Speaker — Bill No. 157. Nothing wrong with that of course. Some great people are wearing glasses. But in terms of Bill No. 157, *The Human Tissue Gift Act*, obviously there's a better job to be done in this province around lining up donors and giving that gift of life. I've already had the honour of participating in this debate.

There are some fairly significant ethical questions that are raised by certain of the approaches in this legislation, and certainly those are questions that we feel would be better addressed at the committee stage. And as such, Mr. Speaker, I would conclude my remarks on Bill No. 157 at this time.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the motion by the Minister of Health that Bill No. 157, *The Human Tissue Gift Act, 2014* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

[16:15]

Clerk: — Second reading of this bill.

The Speaker: — To which committee shall this bill be referred? I recognize the Minister for Immigration.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the Standing Committee on Human Services.

The Speaker: — This bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Human Services.

Bill No. 159

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

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to speak to Bill No. 159, *The Family Farm Credit Repeal Act*. This bill in itself is simply addressing the fact that the original legislation and the current environment that we operate in for farm financing in Saskatchewan have changed significantly, and the original legislation no longer has purpose in the current environment. It's redundant, Mr. Speaker, as I understand and as I interpret this bill.

Certainly we'll make sure we fully understand all aspects of this and do some consultation on this front, but this would be a practical change if in fact this legislation is redundant, as it would appear to be when you're talking about the changes of the former Co-operative Trust Company of Canada which no longer exists in that form or in operating the way that it did. I believe that's now Concentra Financial, Mr. Speaker, and plays more of a wholesaling type of a role within the borrowing and the financing environment. But we'll make sure we've done our due diligence and consult with impacted stakeholders to make sure that our interpretation that this is now redundant legislation is correct.

Certainly when you look to the lending environment, the borrowing environment for farms in Saskatchewan, there are many important providers, many important institutions. You know, certainly I think of the many that were developed right here in Saskatchewan, our credit unions playing a very important role.

And while this change here brings forward . . . simply I guess removes legislation that's now become redundant, what we will be continuing to observe is what sort of response this government will be bringing forward to the current farm pressures, the current agricultural pressures that exist. And I know there are many, whether that be the grain transportation challenges and transportation challenges in general, which this government has been very weak on addressing, Mr. Speaker, or whether it comes down to some of the important supports and structures that need to be in place.

We know right now we have a very high water table. We have concerns for producers across Saskatchewan. We know that many producers aren't going to be able to get seed in the ground where they traditionally have, and certainly that erodes their bottom line as well, along with the higher inputs and the challenges around transportation. So we'll be continuing to listen to producers across Saskatchewan bring their voice forward on these important issues, Mr. Speaker, and we'll consult as well to ensure our current understanding of the legislative changes brought forward by this government are in fact addressing something that seemed to be redundant at this point in time.

But with that being said, I will adjourn debate of Bill No. 159. Thank you, 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. 148

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Duncan that **Bill No. 148** — *The Vital Statistics Amendment Act, 2014/Loi de 2014 modifiant la Loi de 2009 sur les services de l'état civil* be now read a second time.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Again I'm glad to rejoin debate on Bill No. 148. When I'm finished with my piece here, Mr. Speaker, I'll conclude my remarks and enable the government to move it on to committee stage. And indeed there have been a number of my colleagues that have participated in the debate on this piece of legislation, and certainly we look forward to gaining greater clarity and providing greater scrutiny at the committee stage of the consideration of Bill No. 148.

Now, Mr. Speaker, in the second reading speech from the minister, there was a fair amount of reference made to the different stakeholders that had been consulted on the legislation. And again the minister talked about:

Proposed amendments to the current Act include: enabling nurse practitioners to sign medical certificates of death and stillborn, and enabling the potential future addition of prescribed practitioners to also perform this function, enabling the minister to disclose vital statistics information in unique circumstances not provided for in the legislation, providing vital statistics customers with the option of submitting birth, death, stillbirth, and marriage statements electronically, and addressing some housekeeping amendments.

Mr. Speaker, again those would seem to be fair enough. The minister had referenced a great number of groups that had been consulted on this, but one question that I know remains outstanding, Mr. Speaker. This House took the positive and much-welcomed step of amending our Human Rights Code to bring in transgendered folks to have their rights protected under the Human Rights Code.

So we will be interested to know what consideration has been given to the vital statistics of other jurisdictions — I'm speaking primarily of provincial jurisdictions — whether or not that information was considered in the preparation of this legislation, and then specifically how that works with the question of enshrining the rights of transgendered people in the Human Rights Code, and how that is in turn been taken up on, around consultation with folks that are interested in human rights questions, with the Human Rights Commissioner himself, Mr. Speaker, and again with other parties. But those are questions that we'll certainly be following up on, come committee. And with that I would conclude my remarks on *The Vital Statistics Amendment Act, 2014*.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the motion by the Minister of Health that Bill No. 148, *The Vital Statistics Amendment Act, 2014* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Clerk: — Second reading of this bill.

The Speaker: — To which committee shall this bill be referred? I recognize the Minister of Immigration.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would designate that Bill No. 148, *The Vital Statistics Amendment Act, 2014* be referred to the Standing Committee on Human Services.

The Speaker: — This bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Human Services.

Bill No. 149

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

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to enter into discussion and debate as it relates to Bill No. 149, *The Health Administration Amendment Act, 2014*. Mr. Speaker, as the comments have been laid out by the minister, and taking those comments at face value, this change seems to make some sense. This would bring the registration of health cards over to eHealth, which seems to make sense. We know that there's been challenges under this government in getting eHealth into full operation. We know that there's been significant dollars spent there, Mr. Speaker. I'll reserve comment on, I guess, the failure of this government to get the job done on this front. But certainly the concept of eHealth is very important.

So we'll be tracking the progress of eHealth and making sure that Saskatchewan citizens receive the value that they should. But certainly the change to have your health card registered over at eHealth would seem to make sense, granted that they have the proper provisions in place to protect the privacy and security, as I'm sure they've ensured over at eHealth. But it's very important with this kind of information that you have robust protection for the people of Saskatchewan. Under this government we've seen breaches of that sort of private health, private information, Mr. Speaker, and that's something that Saskatchewan people shouldn't have compromised.

So certainly on this front and these changes, we'd want to make sure that the government is following through in a process that's reflective of the public's privacy concerns and making sure that they're doing so, with some guidance from everyone from the Privacy Commissioner to IT [information technology] professionals through to all those in the world of security, to make sure that there's not any breaches through this process.

But the health card of Saskatchewan people, I believe, there's over 1.1 million health cards in Saskatchewan. I always think that that's a pretty important card. In many ways we stick it into

our wallets or carry it with our other identification, but that's a powerful card and something that we should be incredibly proud of in this province, understanding the changes that were led from this very province to ensure the kind of health benefits that Saskatchewan people receive with that card.

Certainly that's setting aside the very important improvements and concerns that we've brought to the legislature and will continue to as it relates to the health care needs of all Saskatchewan people, whether that's the cuts and erosion to rural health services as we've discussed here today with a large rally that came to the legislature to cause this government to quit dismissing the concerns of their cuts in rural Saskatchewan, or whether it gets down to the long waits in emergency rooms; or the inadequate access to primary to health care or family doctors; the challenges and crises in seniors' care across this province. These are all areas for which we'll continue to focus on.

But certainly this seems to be a practical measure. As I say, it's going to be important for government to get eHealth up operating to its full potential in an efficient way that provides value to citizens of this province. And certainly I think it's important for us to recognize the value of that health card.

I think I recently stuck my renewal on my card, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for getting my renewal sticker out to me and to all Saskatchewan people, and it is an important reminder of the value we receive in working together to make sure that the health of Saskatchewan people is a priority, Mr. Speaker. So with that being said, I don't have any more comments on Bill No. 149, *The Health Administration Amendment Act*. We'll be following up with direct consultations. And at this point in time, I'll be adjourning debate. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 152

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

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. This is an interesting bill. It actually is part and parcel with Bill No. 144, but it seems to have got separated in the order somehow, and so we do want to speak to this bill. A couple of times, I know the companion Bill 144, we just recently moved to committee. But I do want to just speak briefly about this bill.

Again this is one of the ones where we have an impact on other legislation caused by the new victims of domestic violence amendment Act. And as is the case when you have French, or bills that exist in both official languages, the bills that change them also have to be written in both official languages. So here we have the *projet de loi n° 152 — Loi portant modification corrélative à l'édiction de la loi intitulée The Victims of Domestic Violence Amendment Act, 2014*.

And basically it's got only one change that's being dealt with here. And the minister indicated in his comments when he introduced the bill — let's just have a quick look here — back in November, on November 5th, he indicated in his comments that all we're doing here is amending the bilingual Queen's Bench Act to update the reference there to this new Act. It used to be called victims of domestic violence, and now we're calling it the victims of interpersonal violence. I know my colleague just spoke at length about that other bill. And we know that interpersonal violence can happen in many, many contexts and situations.

And so I believe the intent of the bill, no. 142, which is the . . . or 144, the companion bill to this, speaks to that particularly. However at this point that's really the only comment . . .

[16:30]

The Speaker: — The members should not be playing with the mikes. Yes, you. Leave it alone. I recognize the member for Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Sproule: — Why thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think at this point I don't really have anything much else to add to this. I would like to move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 152, *The Victims of Domestic Violence Consequential Amendment Act, 2014*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 158

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

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Everybody's got the back-to-the-session shakeout going on. We're no exception, certainly, But again, good to join debate on Bill No. 158, *The Saskatchewan Pension Plan Amendment Act, 2014*. Now it's interesting, Mr. Speaker, because there's an amendment in this bill that will repeal Bill 82, *The Saskatchewan Pension Plan Amendment Act, 2013*, a bill that was given royal assent but never proclaimed, Mr. Speaker.

And in many ways, what I could do is say, you know, please refer to my speech on that debate. And certainly a number of the points that we've made on this side in that debate stand. But as has happened with a number of pieces of legislation with this government, Mr. Speaker, it's sort of like *Groundhog Day*, the movie starring Bill Murray, where, you know, you seem to be caught in this perpetual loop. And there's some in this legislation, Mr. Speaker, where it seems like, you know, here we go again.

And again there's some fine items in this particular piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker, some good things in this legislation. But it still begs the question when it comes to income security for seniors; again some very important people in any society, Mr. Speaker, are the seniors. But as regards the pension income and the security of income for seniors, it begs the question of what's happening on that broader front in terms of the work that this government should be doing to make the case around the Canada Pension Plan, around old age security, and around the Guaranteed Income Supplement — the three legs of that federal approach to income security for seniors.

And certainly, Mr. Speaker, we'd like to see the benefits in those programs strengthened, broadened. We'd like to see the work under way. And instead of those objectives moving forward, Mr. Speaker, we see a federal government that is seemingly not interested in standing up for seniors in that regard, instead is moving the age for eligibility for CPP [Canada Pension Plan] back from 65 to 67. That's the kind of action we see from our federal government.

And when it comes to this provincial government standing up and saying that, you know, federal government, this is something that's made Canada a better place, that's made a difference in communities and families, and when that three-pronged approach was brought in in the '60s, Mr. Speaker, lifted many seniors out of poverty, which is as it should be, instead of seeing action from this government with their federal cousins in the Stephen Harper Conservative government, we don't see that action. We see instead inaction, and we see this government pointing to things like the Saskatchewan Pension Plan, which is fine enough, Mr. Speaker.

And this gets back into my . . . You know, I could refer you to my earlier debate where I made mention of the fact that once upon a time as a young worker I didn't have access to a pension plan in my workplace and had the good fortune of starting up as a subscriber in the Saskatchewan Pension Plan. I am a member of the Saskatchewan Pension Plan and have been now for, I imagine, better than two decades, Mr. Speaker . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Now I've made the mistake, and perhaps I'm going to get some financial advice from the Finance minister. So we'll see how that works out, Mr. Speaker.

But again there are some fair measures in this piece of legislation but it still begs the question of what the broader front of action is on the part of this government and, you know, how different of . . . This legislation is again subject to that Groundhog Day phenomena where, you know, here it is again. It's déjà vu all over again, Mr. Speaker.

So there are a fair number of my colleagues I know are interested in this legislation, and certainly this is a matter of

great interest across the province. We've undertaken some consultation on this, on this legislation, Mr. Speaker, how it works with other pieces of legislation. What are the real changes that are entailed in this bill? So we'll be following that up, Mr. Speaker. But at this time I would move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 158, *The Saskatchewan Pension Plan Amendment Act, 2014*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 161

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

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to enter into the debate on Bill No. 161, *An Act to amend The Wildlife Act, 1998*. And this is a very important bill, Mr. Speaker, a very important bill before us. It's one, you know, it's interesting as we travel about and we run into people, and it doesn't matter where you are. It's always somebody you run into who knows of Saskatchewan. Probably the thing that they know is hunting. And it's funny how that goes.

It's something that we are well known for and we have a lot to be proud of in terms of our abundance of wildlife and what that means for hunting and fishing and our reputation, right across, right across North America and even into Mexico. You know, I mean it's amazing what people think of when they think of Saskatchewan.

I mean really it's interesting now because we are so diversified, whether it's the farming aspect, whether it's the mining, the oil, some of our amazing people who've gone on to do amazing things around the world. But somehow the wildlife in Saskatchewan just connects the natural beauty of our province, connects with so many people around the world. And so this is an important piece of legislation before us. And it's important that we get it right. And I know that I'll take a minute to talk about the minister's comments to make sure we don't miss something. And it's one that we'll have a lot of questions in committee.

It's one of those bills that we have to make sure we have the appropriate and due process in terms of consultation. This is above and beyond what would be mandatory in a usual sense of making sure we talk to the stakeholders, that that makes sense whether it's wildlife advisory committee or whether it's Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation. All of these folks have an important stake, and there's so many of them. But of course as well, we need to make sure that we consult with our First Nations and Métis constituents because this is a basic right for

them, that they have the ability to continue to hunt and fish in a sustainable way. And so the implications for this are very strong, and so we want to make sure we get that right.

Now we understand that the intent of the bill really in many ways is to modernize some of our older habits, and some of these include requiring scientists studying animals to get a licence from the government. Now we'll be watching this carefully to make sure that there is no impediment and no barrier in place. I know that sometimes people feel that when you . . . The science or the research particularly on species at risk can be an impediment to progress. We want to make sure that people have the best practices so that we have the best science and the best information. That's really, really important.

We also know this bill updates the . . . And now it reflects the fact that licensing has been outsourced to a single electronic vendor, which has caused issues, and we've often wondered whether this is the best practice going forward. The debate is still out there on that. I think that we sometimes overlook the ability to buy licences from a local vendor and what that meant for the local economy. We'll have questions about that. Has there been a study about the impact of going to a single electronic vendor? What has been the pros and cons? Now that we've done that, what has been the impact of that? And we really worry about that, so we want to make sure that information's out there.

So it also increases the limitation period for prosecutions to three years, and this gives more time for the province to press charges against poachers — hugely important. I think this is important when we know that we don't want to see any legislation, any court proceedings lost because of inadequate time to prepare cases, particularly when there may be a delay in getting information. These can be quite complex cases, and we want to make sure we have cases that go before the courts in a really solid, solid manner. And that's really hugely, hugely important that we don't inadvertently lose these cases. But I think, you know, I mean it sends a mixed message, and so we want to make sure that's really important.

It changes the rules around hunting licence suspensions. Under the current Act, a person who breaks the law has their licence suspended for a period of time and has to pay the fine once the suspension period is over. And it seems the offender now could purchase a licence even if the fine is unpaid. So we now make sure it's clear and that it is the law that the offender must wait until the suspension is over and pay the fine before they can buy another licence. And it also creates a lifetime ban on hunting for people with three serious offences, and we'll be watching how that plays out. That's a hugely important piece of legislation and what that means.

We'll be interested to know, and I have some questions about how the information sharing will be between provinces, whether there's an implication of cross-border infractions, whether somebody who breaks the law here two times, then goes over to Alberta and does their hunting, whether there's been any communications back and forth about that. And what were those discussions about that? And it really is an important one because wildlife does not respect borders. Obviously they're moving across border, so it only makes sense that we have legislation that would follow that.

[16:45]

And so while it seems the bill has a lot of good pieces, again this is one around consultation. Were there other pieces that groups asked for, and what did they bring forward? In terms of public consultation, was there any public consultation on this? And were there things that were left out that now that we have the opportunity to amend the legislation, amend *The Wildlife Act*? You don't want to be opening these things up every year and response, like a knee-jerk response to a lobby group. Clearly this is one where you might say, yes, they're very, very worthwhile pieces of, well-informed pieces of legislation, but is it the complete package? Are there some unintentional consequences here? What was the consultation process like? Is it, was it full? Was it complete? Did people get a chance to really think about the implications of this legislation? And as I said, while the government says that there may not be any implications for First Nations and Métis in this bill, I think that they would like to put that opinion out themselves as opposed to wait for the government to say that. And so we have some, we'll have some questions about that.

I just want to make some, a quick review of what the minister said because I think it's important that his comments give us a sense of the direction of the government. And I think it's an important piece of legislation. And so it talks about, he talks about "The proposed amendments considered today will clarify the licensing authority for scientific permits to ensure wildlife research is conducted responsibly." Now he talks responsibly. I know that the university has used the word "ethically." I wonder if there's a choice in that language. It would be interesting to know where the universities are coming down on this in terms of what do they do when they're proving doctoral work or master's work or ongoing work like this? So it will be interesting to see how this plays out.

And you know, when I think and I look back at the Great Sand Hills research study — that was one by the Canadian plains research unit at the University of Regina; outstanding, outstanding work there — I'm not sure what the story was about licensing there, and it would be interesting to hear the narrative on that, whether that was done without licence, and is that something they've learned from. Or is this something that's maybe done, say, for Ducks Unlimited? Is this something that Ducks Unlimited would be doing for their own private research that may not be publicly released? So it will be interesting to hear more about that.

Interestingly when we did the Great Sand Hills research, we tasked the First Nations and they stepped up and did a major, significant part of this study in terms of the implications for First Nations. And it would be interesting to know how this would fit into that in terms of the interconnections between wildlife and First Nations. Because I mean the interesting thing about this is the implication that wildlife exists only by itself and how it might grow, how it might flourish, that type of thing. But clearly it's part of an ecosystem and whether that involves the First Nations, Métis, or whether it involves being close to an urban setting, all of that takes some consideration. So I think it'd be very interesting to hear more about that. The minister spoke just briefly about it. We'll have questions at length about that. So I think we'll look forward to committee on that.

It talks about improving legislative authority to manage vendor responsibility, hunting and angling issuance, and the implementation of additional hunting suspensions to increase the protection of wildlife resources here. And it also, and I've talked about this, lengthens the amount of time wildlife officers have to bring charges forward for wildlife violations.

So again I want to just flag this, that I'm curious, and I know we're curious on this side: what has been the impact of the out-of-province automated licensing from a single vendor? And what has been the cost implications, whether it's been positive or negative? What has been the impact it's had on local communities across our province in terms of those mom-and-pop operations that used to issue fishing licences and hunting licences? What is the impact on that?

And what has been the impact in terms of privacy? You know, I mean my good colleague here from Regina Rosemont raised the issue around the *PATRIOT* [Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism] *Act*. Once we start shipping our information out of the province, particularly into the States, and particularly when it comes to information around guns, the American government may have, may have some interest in that. And so we would like to hear if the government's done any study on that and whether they have any information about that to share or whether that was an ideological thing that this government did in terms of their budgetary processes a few years ago.

So I think this will be very, very important, you know. It talks about prescribing licensing provisions for scientific or research processes that require the taking or disturbing of wildlife. Many research surveys, especially those involving species at risk, using non-obtrusive detection efforts such as monitoring songbirds, passive wildlife observation, use of presence-absence surveys, the Act didn't really speak to that and now it will so it will be . . . But he chooses the language of responsible and undistruptive manner and I'm just curious because in an academic setting the word would have been an ethical process and I would throw out this word, sustainable. But ethical is a big part of academic research and whether you're dealing with human research or otherwise, there's always the ethical approach and I think this is an important way.

And it would also be interesting to know in terms of the social impact of these studies, will there be an opportunity for the public to have access? As I said, sometimes there is private research that might be done and whether it's done by an NGO [non-governmental organization] like a non-government organization like Ducks Unlimited that's doing their own work for their areas or the Wildlife Federation or the Nature Conservancy, whether these will be done in a way that there is some social impact that the rest of us will understand.

And then he talks about the government entering into an agreement to deliver Saskatchewan automated hunting, angling, and trapping licence and sales and now it's authorized and so they're working on that. But again I would like to know whether there's been any kind of business review of that.

He goes on and talks about the suspension of hunting privileges for most wildlife violations includes one-year suspensions from

hunting or trapping and whether that's now been increased. That's really, really important.

Now he talks about a key message from hunters during the red tape reduction committee which took place in the spring of 2012, was to do more to conserve our wildlife resource. And so this is really, really important that they talk about the implications of making sure your fine is paid and your suspension is carried out. And individuals who are suspended from hunting activities in other jurisdictions will not be able to purchase a licence in the province of Saskatchewan.

So again, this will be interesting to know how are they tracking that and if it's an out-of-country, an American vendor who's looking after this tracking, it makes for an interesting position that we find ourselves in that we have an out-of-country vendor looking after us, keeping track of our violations. And so that'll be of some interest for sure.

And I think this will be interesting because then does that block us from having a different vendor than Alberta or Manitoba or British Columbia, Ontario? Because if it's just an automatic, you're blocked if your licence is suspended, how does this work? Is there one national vendor for all of Canada? How do we enter into this, bids for the right to be the vendor if there has to be some interprovincial connection? So this will be interesting to hear how this plays out.

Now he talks about the final measure proposed to demonstrate commitment to our wildlife, but they're talking about making sure that we do more and that we can collect evidence and making sure that we have the evidence all well in place.

Actually interesting, he talks about poaching gangs are becoming more and more sophisticated, difficult to catch, often requiring undercover operations to collect evidence to support prosecution. So this is an evolution that is a challenge. And we have to make sure we rise to that challenge, and we have the proper tools that our enforcement agencies can use.

And he goes on to talk about that we won't have to really do much more in terms of training for our wildlife conservation officers, that it will be in place. We want to make sure that it is the best that we can have right across Canada, that it is outstanding legislation. And so we'll have many questions about this. And as I said, he talks about how amendments to *The Wildlife Act* can be implemented without affecting First Nations, existing First Nations and Métis hunting rights in our province. So that's a pretty major statement, and we want to make sure that it's accurate and that actually First Nations feel much the same.

So, Mr. Speaker, I know that this is a piece of legislation that really talks about how we think of our natural environment, our ecosystems, and that we do have the best protection in place and we do have the appropriate tools that the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Environment feels they need to have in place, and our conservation officers who do an amazing job, an amazing job, feel that they can carry out the tasks that they are required to do.

And as the minister alludes, and we'll hear more about this in committee, about the challenges, whether it's poaching gangs

that we see now and interprovincial travel between hunters who've lost their licences and may be suspended — all of this is one that we feel really requires our attention.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I know that we'll have much more to say on this over the course of time. But from my point of view . . . There will be others that will want to speak to this Act for sure, and so I'd like to move adjournment now of Bill No. 161, *An Act to amend The Wildlife Act, 1998*. Thank you very much.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. The time being now close to 5 o'clock, this House stands recessed to 7 p.m.

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

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