



FOURTH SESSION - TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

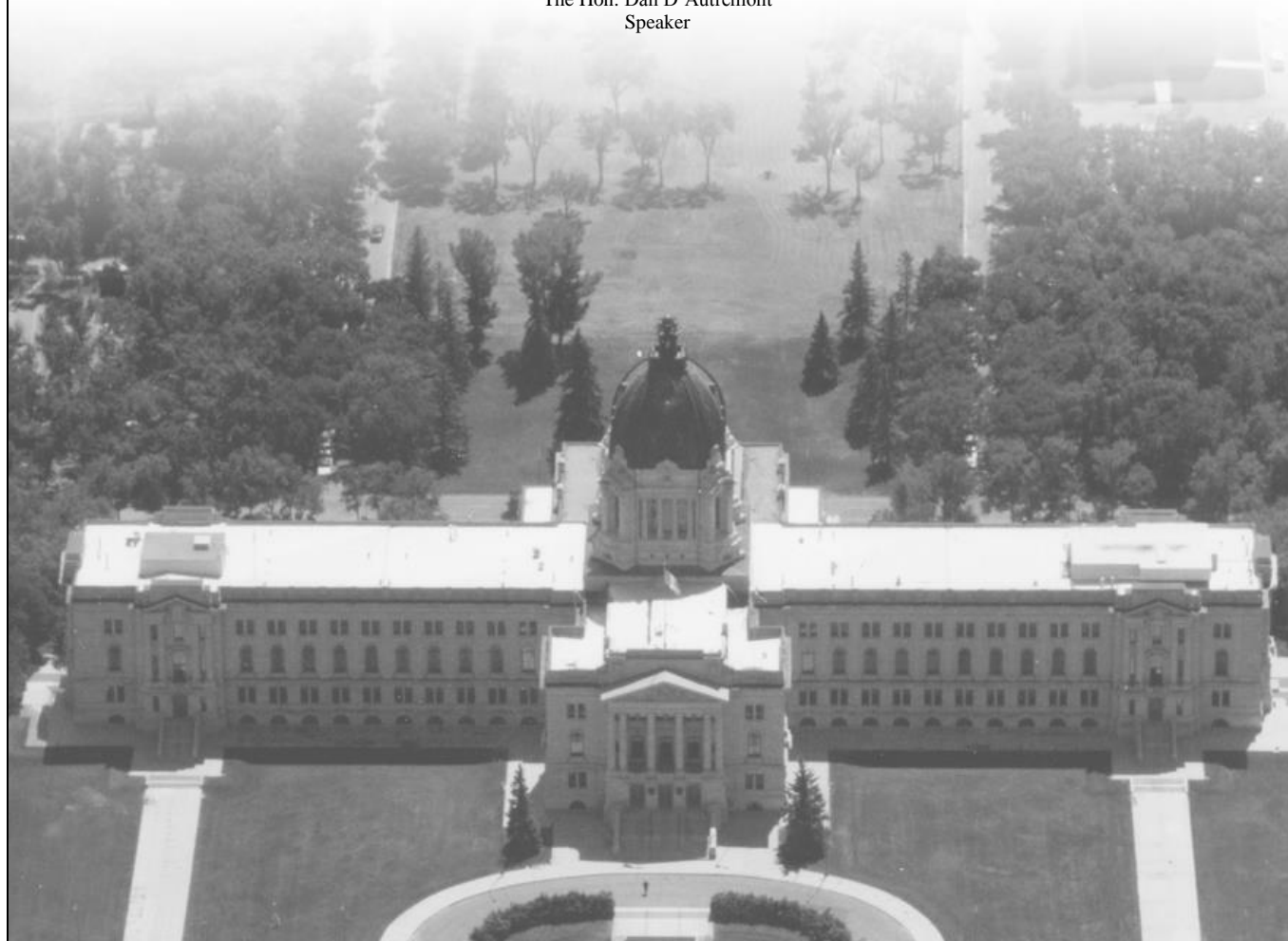
of the

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
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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
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Jurgens, Victoria	SP	Prince Albert Northcote
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Lawrence, Greg	SP	Moose Jaw Wakamow
Makowsky, Gene	SP	Regina Dewdney
Marchuk, Russ	SP	Regina Douglas Park
McCall, Warren	NDP	Regina Elphinstone-Centre
McMorris, Hon. Don	SP	Indian Head-Milestone
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Moe, Hon. Scott	SP	Rosthern-Shellbrook
Morgan, Hon. Don	SP	Saskatoon Southeast
Nilson, John	NDP	Regina Lakeview
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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
Vacant		Prince Albert Carlton

[The Assembly met at 10:00.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a real pleasure to introduce to members in the Assembly today and to our guests, some folks that have joined us who are very special to the province of Saskatchewan. In your gallery, Mr. Speaker, we have Jim Hopson, CEO [chief executive officer] of the Saskatchewan Roughriders, Brenda Edwards, his wife; and Tyler has joined us as well.

Mr. Speaker, later this day, this evening in fact, friends and family of Jim will gather together and roast . . . I should say pay tribute to him as he is marking his retirement from his position as CEO of the Saskatchewan Roughriders. And in a moment the member for Silver Springs will have a member's statement to say a few things about Jim.

But let me just say very, very quickly in the introduction how grateful we are in this province for his transformative leadership of this football team — this football team whose identity is synonymous with the province, this football team who have, well they've been to four Grey Cups while Jim's been the CEO. They've won two, doubling the output from all of the other CEOs and presidents before him.

Mr. Speaker, more than that, this football team he's led is better now off the field. They've always been great off the field, but what a heart the team has for causes and charity here, and it's because of the leadership by example of Mr. Hopson.

I think if you check the sports merchandising stats, you'd find out that either the Habs or the Leafs battle out for number one in terms of Canadian sports merchandising and the third place goes to the Saskatchewan Roughriders — amazing in a hockey country, and here too we credit Mr. Hopson.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would just ask all members to join with me in welcoming the Hopsons, Jim and Brenda, Tyler to their Legislative Assembly, and to thank him for his great leadership for the Riders and for the province of Saskatchewan.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a real honour to join with the Premier and welcome the Hopsons to their Assembly here today. And certainly Jim Hopson as president and CEO of the Riders has presided over a time and led a period of unprecedented success in building Rider nation, as the Premier has so rightfully attributed. You've been a major part of that. And the success, from merchandising to filling that stadium, to the success on the field and the two Grey Cups and the exceptional players that have been recruited and the world-class organization that you've built here in Regina, is something of pride for all of us.

And it's fitting in a way. It's sort of, it's a beautiful day outside. The melt is on. You start to think about spring camp coming along for the Riders. But also all across the province in small communities and in northern Saskatchewan, and certainly here in Regina, where football's alive and well, folks will be hitting, hitting the fields for some spring camps. It's a part of our culture. It's something we're proud of. And thank you so much, Jim, for joining us today.

Of course he also played for the Roughriders. He's also had an exceptional career in education as a teacher, as a director of education, has influenced so much in so many good ways in our province. We're just simply thankful for that. And we also have something else in common: we're both Thom Collegiate graduates, but he came from a generation I think along with my dad there at that point in time. But it's a pleasure to have him in the Assembly.

It's also nice to have Ms. Brenda Edwards in her Assembly, a leader in education and to her province as well. Thank you for joining us. And Mr. Tyler Hopson, someone who gives of himself to public service through a Crown here in this province, nice to have you here, Tyler.

So to the Hopsons, I join with the Premier to give a very warm welcome. Thank you.

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

Mr. Lawrence: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I'd like to give a special introduction to Ms. Caitlyn Dixon. Caitlyn is a resident of our fair city of Moose Jaw who recently competed in The Brush Contest for L'Oréal Paris in the next makeup designer. And I'm going to have a few more words to say about that in a member's statement in a few minutes; so with that, I'll cut it short. And I'd like to ask all members to welcome Caitlyn to her Legislative Assembly.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, I too would like to welcome Caitlyn to her Legislative Assembly. I've been following the contest on Facebook quite closely. And Caitlyn's mom and I used to play in a rock band back when I was in my 20s. So I've known her mom for a long, long time, so pleased to see . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . We were called the eclipse, if anybody's wondering.

But anyways, I know her mom's a beautiful lady, and I've been watching the work of Caitlyn and all the best for you when you go to Paris. So congratulations and we hope the best for you. Welcome to your Assembly.

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

Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I'd like to introduce in your gallery a lady who has been important in many of our lives here in the legislature. She has been instrumental in bringing a lot of teachers into the

legislature to learn about the parliamentary system, and we're grateful for your leadership and for all the work that you've done. Welcome to your Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I too want to welcome the Hopson family, a family of champions in many ways.

But we also have a couple of northern champions here today I'd like to introduce. One of them of course is Gary Tinker. As you all know, Gary Tinker is a champion for the disability community. He's walked a lot of miles to bring awareness to this, and I want to recognize him in the Assembly for his very special effort that he's undertaken on behalf of all people from northern Saskatchewan that have many varieties of disabilities.

And with Gary today is another champion, Randy Stomp. Randy is a vocational counsellor with the Gary Tinker Federation. He's a very compassionate and caring individual, very, very committed, and I want to recognize him today.

But, Mr. Speaker, I had the opportunity to play against Randy in a game of hockey. So, caring, compassionate, but do not get him upset when he has a hockey stick in his hands. My bruises have finally healed, Mr. Speaker, but I just want to say with all due respect to both Gary Tinker and Randy Stomp, keep up the fantastic work. You've done a wonderful job on behalf of the people, the disabled people of northern Saskatchewan, and I thank you for your service. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the government members, and all members quite frankly, we too want to welcome Gary and Randy to their Legislative Assembly. It's always a great time to meet and talk with Gary. I've never seen anyone that's so enthusiastic and positive as that gentleman, and we commend you for all of the great work that you've done on behalf of people with disabilities. So thank you so much, and welcome to your Assembly.

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

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to all members, I'd like to introduce two individuals seated in your gallery. The first is Mr. Nathaniel Cole, someone who is busy and active around the city of Regina. It's good to see him in the legislature today. And with Nathaniel also is Mr. Adam Duke, who is our candidate in the upcoming election in the constituency of Humboldt-Watrous, someone who is very committed and energetic and doing hard work. So it's a real pleasure to welcome both of these individuals to the Legislative Assembly today, Mr. Speaker.

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 calling for greater support for education. And we know that education is one of the most vital

services this government can provide to its citizens, but this government has failed to deliver a long-term plan and vision and the necessary resources to prioritize delivery of educational excellence. And we know that this government has failed to deliver a real plan to close the Aboriginal education gap, to support English as an additional language, to support community schools and their communities and students. And we know that we must build the best education system for today and for Saskatchewan's future. I'd like to read the prayer, Mr. Speaker:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly call on this government to immediately prioritize education by laying out a long-term vision and a plan with the necessary resources that provides the best quality education for Saskatchewan, that reflects Saskatchewan's demographic and population changes, that is based on proven educational best practices, that is developed through consultation with the education sector, and that builds strong educational infrastructure to serve students and communities long into the future.

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

And, Mr. Speaker, the people signing this petition come from the city of Moose Jaw. I do so present. Thank you.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise once again today to present petitions on behalf of concerned residents as it relates to the unsafe conditions created on Dewdney Avenue by that government when they failed to properly and safely plan for heavy-haul truck traffic. The petition reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly call on the provincial government to 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 today are signed by concerned residents of Regina. I so submit.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition Whip.

Mr. Vermette: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition. Homelessness is a major problem in La Ronge and in other parts of the North, and it is getting worse. Shelter is a basic need for everyone, but under this government it's getting harder and harder for people to find adequate housing, especially families, seniors, women and children who face abusive situations. The problem is getting worse because of the

rising level of poverty, skyrocketing home ownership costs. And the prayer reads:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the following action: to cause the Saskatchewan government to build a homeless shelter in the Lac la Ronge area to meet the needs of addressing homelessness in the Lac la Ronge area.

It is signed by many good people of northern Saskatchewan. I so present.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased today to present a petition in support of safe staffing levels in long-term care. The petitioners point out that many aspects of long-term care are deteriorating under this government; that this government is failing to fix the basics in long-term care, including rejecting the further urgent requests from long-term care facilities for increased and needed staffing levels. They point out that the government has removed the regulations requiring a minimum standard of care for seniors, resulting in neglect; and that chronic understaffing in long-term care facilities results in unacceptable conditions, including unanswered calls for help, infrequent bathing, and a rise in physical violence amongst residents. I'd like to read the prayer:

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

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

Mr. Speaker, this petition today is signed by folks in Melville, Prince Albert, Maple Creek, Saskatoon, Warman, Regina, and Wapella. I so present.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Monsieur le Président, je voudrais présenter une pétition pour appuyer les droits des élèves francsaskois et francsaskoises.

Et ils disent, nous, les résidents et les résidentes de la province de la Saskatchewan qui ont signé ici, voulons vous faire prendre conscience des enjeux suivants. Les écoles francsaskoises sont très importantes pour l'avenir de la communauté francsaskoise. Beaucoup d'élèves arrivent en Saskatchewan en provenance des pays et provinces francophones. Le gouvernement de la Saskatchewan a une responsabilité constitutionnelle d'appuyer les élèves francsaskois et francsaskoises. Le Conseil des écoles francsaskoises ne devrait pas avoir besoin de lutter en Cour suprême pour défendre ses droits constitutionnels.

Nous, en la prière suivante, demandons respectueusement au gouvernement de la Saskatchewan de:

Respecter ses obligations constitutionnelles et d'appuyer le CÉF avec toutes les ressources et le support nécessaires pour la préservation de la langue et de la culture francophone en Saskatchewan.

Monsieur le Président, il était signé par les citoyens de Regina. Je vous présenter.

[10:15]

[Translation: Mr. Speaker, I would like to present a petition to support the rights of Fransaskois students.]

And they say, we the undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan wish to bring to your attention the following concerns. Fransaskois schools are very important for the future of the Fransaskois community. Many students arrive in Saskatchewan originating from francophone countries and provinces. The Government of Saskatchewan has a constitutional responsibility to support Fransaskois students. The Conseil des écoles francsaskoises shouldn't have to fight in the Supreme Court to defend their constitutional rights.

We, in the prayer that follows, respectfully request the Government of Saskatchewan respect its constitutional obligations and support the CÉF with all of its resources and support necessary for the preservation of the francophone language and culture in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, it is signed by citizens of Regina. I so present.]

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Agriculture Safety Week

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the snow in the fields is melting, and producers all across the province will soon be out seeding this year's crop and preparing to put livestock out into the pasture. So in the spirit of planting seeds for a great harvest, I rise in the Assembly today to recognize Agriculture Safety Week.

Every year, an average of 14 people are killed on the job in our province's agricultural sector. One death is one too many. Every one of these deaths is a tragedy, and every one of these deaths affects families and communities all across our province. In addition to these deaths, many others suffer terrible injuries that affect them for the rest of their lives.

However, Mr. Speaker, nearly every agriculture injury is a preventable injury. By wearing the correct personal protective equipment, taking the time to locate buried and overhead power lines, and by being cautious and careful when operating farm machinery, we can ensure that all farming families and farm workers will be able to make it home safe at the end of a hard day's work.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in

recognizing Agriculture Safety Week, and I hope that each member here today will do their part to ensure that, come harvest time, we will have zero deaths or injuries on our farms and ranches. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government House Leader.

Legacy of Roughrider Chief Executive Officer

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, it gives me great pleasure today to recognize someone who has made a significant contribution to our province. Jim Hopson, president and CEO of the Saskatchewan Roughriders is retiring, and I appreciate this opportunity to say thank you to Jim and wish him the very best in a well-deserved retirement.

Jim is leaving a lasting legacy of outstanding commitment and dedication, not only to the Saskatchewan Roughriders, but to our entire province. His career has been a model to follow. Jim has made the Riders the success they are today and has created a solid foundation to build on. His remarkable contribution has touched the lives of many in immeasurable ways through his talent and service.

On a personal note, I had the opportunity to work with Jim on the new stadium project. Every step of the way his vision, unwavering commitment, and patience was a strong, guiding force in moving the project forward. Jim set a standard in the Canadian Football League for doing things right and succeeded in leading the team to that point. Under his direction, the Saskatchewan Roughriders have achieved great stature, including bringing home two Grey Cups.

From becoming a financial juggernaut to sharing his philosophies on marketing, along with his sensible game day operations, Jim's legacy will continue. Jim, we sincerely hope that you enjoy good health and much happiness in your retirement. We feel extremely privileged to have had the pleasure of working with you and calling you a friend.

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

International Day of the Francophonie

Ms. Sproule: — Merci, monsieur le Président. Je me lève en ma place en reconnaissance de la Journée internationale de la francophonie. Chaque vingtième de Mars, nous célébrons la culture et la langue francophone avec tous des cinq cents millions francophones dans le monde.

La langue du français est une langue globale. Nous savons, c'est la langue de la diplomatie, la langue de l'amour, et c'est au cœur de l'identité pour les fransaskois et les fransaskoises en notre province. C'est quelque chose qui connecte des Canadiens et des Canadiennes en chaque région de notre pays.

Malheureusement, monsieur le Président, ce gouvernement choisit de couper le budget de l'office des affaires francophones. Cinq mille moins pour le petit office des affaires francophones, mais le gouvernement continue avec chaque dollar pour le bureau de le premier ministre.

Cette coupe est en plus des batailles ce gouvernement continue de combattre en la Cour suprême contre le CÉF.

[Translation: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in my place in recognition of the Journée internationale de la francophonie. Every 20th of March, we celebrate francophone culture and language with all of the 500 million francophones in the world.

The French language is a global language. We know it's the language of diplomacy, the language of love, and it's at the heart of the identity for the Fransaskois in our province. It's something that connects Canadians in every region of our country.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, this government has chosen to cut the budget of the office of the francophone business office: 5,000 less for the little francophone business office, but the government continues with every dollar for the office of the Premier.

This cut is in addition to the battles this government continues to fight in the Supreme Court against the CÉF [Conseil des écoles fransaskoises]].

This track record of cuts and underfunding certainly seems like a strange way to say *je t'aime* [Translation: I love you] to the francophone community, Mr. Speaker.

And so I ask all members on the eve of the Journée internationale de la francophonie to consider the important contributions of our Fransaskois residents and join me in calling on this government to respect its constitutional obligations to francophones in Saskatchewan. Merci, monsieur le Président. [Translation: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.]

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

International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, on Saturday our province will join the UN [United Nations] and governments around the world in proclaiming the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. The Attorney General will be joining Chief Clive Weighill and the community members in an event tomorrow in Saskatoon to mark the day.

Saskatchewan has a long history of protecting human rights. We have taken a number of momentous steps forward that has advanced the global campaign towards racial equality. In 1947 we became the first jurisdiction in North America to pass a general human rights Act. Along with promising such fundamental issues as civil liberties and process and freedom of worship, it also prohibited discrimination on the basis of one's race, colour, and ethnic origin.

Earlier in this session we celebrated the 40th anniversary of the Saskatchewan multiculturalism Act, the Act which enacted our province to be the first in Canada with legislation in support of cultural communities. Yet our past also presents opportunities to learn from the lessons of history. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon is asking all the world's citizens to be mindful of how

these lessons can help us continue in our global goal of ending discrimination.

Mr. Speaker, let us build on the work of generations of settlers, immigrants, and refugees and indigenous peoples who have fashioned Saskatchewan into one of the world's most vibrant cultural landscapes. I ask members to join me as we recognize the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Regina Douglas Park.

Saskatchewan High Schools Athletic Association Fosters Love of Sport

Mr. Marchuk: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With the school year moving along, this is the time of year when many high school sports move into playoffs. From badminton to wrestling to basketball, the Saskatchewan High Schools Athletic Association provides all high school sports with the administration and organization needed to allow competition between schools and participation in sport across this province. Working closely with the various boards of education, the SHSAA [Saskatchewan High Schools Athletic Association] plans and coordinates all playoffs leading to provincial championships in badminton, basketball, cross-country, curling, football, golf, soccer, track and field, volleyball, and wrestling.

Mr. Speaker, as you can imagine, this organization is always busy. Currently, regional basketball tournaments start this weekend, and Hoopla 2015, Saskatchewan's version of March Madness, kicks off March 28th in Saskatoon.

I'd like to give a special thank you to all 11 members of the SHSAA executive including President Roger Morgan as well as Executive Director Kevin Vollet and team for putting together another amazing year of competition in sport for our Saskatchewan student athletes. A commitment to fairness ensures the competition is genuine yet fosters the love of sport in all of our athletes. I'd ask all members of the Assembly to join with me in thanking Kevin and Roger of the SHSAA and all of our volunteer coaches for another successful year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Peacock Junior Boys Win Championship Title

Mr. Michelson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, it was an exciting day in Moose Jaw last week as the Peacock junior boys' basketball team captured their second straight Moose Jaw high school athletic league title.

Going into that final game, the boys were a little apprehensive about facing an old rival that they had lost to twice during the regular season. But Coach Dave Roney was confident that he had a team that was a strong team going into the matchup. The boys already had proved throughout the season, and Coach Roney credited the win with having an especially strong defence, defeating Assiniboia 43 to 40 in that championship game.

Mr. Speaker, the team is a tightly knit group that had been together for the past three years in either grade 9 or 10. With plans to move into the senior division next year so as not to break up the team, we should expect continuing to see great things from the Peacock boys' basketball team.

It's always exciting to see our young athletes put their heart and their soul into something they love, and it's even more exciting when that drive pays off in a championship title. Mr. Speaker, I would ask all members of the Assembly to join me in congratulating coach Dave Roney as well as the entire Moose Jaw junior Peacock boys' basketball team. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Moose Jaw Resident in Design Competition Finals

Mr. Lawrence: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to extend congratulations to Moose Jaw resident Caitlyn Dixon. Caitlyn recently entered The Brush Contest by L'Oréal Paris, a contest that will award one lucky contestant the position of L'Oréal Paris's next makeup designer and a trip to Paris for the finals.

In order to enter the competition, Caitlyn had to create a video under three minutes showing her creativity and personality while showcasing a daring and colourful makeup look. Contestants had to garner support with online votes, with the top five moving to the finals in Toronto this month. Caitlyn had the support of thousands of people across the province including Saskatchewan Roughrider quarterback Darian Durant.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the luck of the Irish shone on Caitlyn this past St. Patrick's Day. With over 6,000 votes, Caitlyn finished fifth place out of 50 contestants nationwide. Caitlyn now joins the other four contestants on March 26 to compete in the final part of the contest that will be nationally broadcast on etalk.

On a side note, Mr. Speaker, I found out today is her first visit to the legislature, and she is also a former classmate of my son. So I'm Dylan's dad. Mr. Speaker, I ask that all of my colleagues please join me in wishing Caitlyn the best of luck in Toronto on March 26th. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Funding for Education

Mr. Broten: — My question is for the Premier. Why is this government cutting funding for English as an additional language supports?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, we have over the years of our government been able to invest significantly more dollars with respect to education in the province of Saskatchewan, with operating grants increasing every year. That was the case in this particular budget we're talking about, Mr. Speaker. In addition

to that, our government's record includes massive increases in investments to education capital. That is also very, very much reflected in the budget.

Mr. Speaker, I would point out to members opposite as well and members of the House that this government is the government that's actually undertaken unprecedented moves in the middle of a calendar year, where we've noted pressures in a particular division, pressures in a particular school, to provide more funding for things like English as a second language, for more EAs [educational assistants] and more classroom supports than we've had in the past.

Mr. Speaker, this is reflective of the priorities of the government in terms of education and will be reflected in terms of our priorities going forward as well.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, the question was why this government is cutting funding for supports like English as an additional language. It's this government's record that causes a school division to send a flyer home with the kids talking about how their child will be affected. There will be fewer staff working directly in schools with students, less funds to support students with diverse needs, Mr. Speaker.

We know that the vast majority of our population growth has been a result of immigration. Seventy-six per cent of the people coming to the province, Mr. Speaker, has been through immigration. We know that many of the young newcomers coming to Saskatchewan require help learning English. Yet this government, Mr. Speaker, is slashing funding for EAL [English as an additional language] supports by 29 per cent. That'll put a significant strain on our already overstrained and under-resourced classrooms.

My question, Mr. Speaker, is to the Premier. How can he justify this?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, I think the flyer the member is referring to was sent out prior to the budget. Mr. Speaker, I think it's important to note, first of all, the record of the government, well, to point out the record of the government in that particular school division. Here's the record of the government. I think it's around an 18 or 19 per cent enrolment increase there since 2007 — the Minister of Education may correct me on the exact number, but it's around an 18 or 19 per cent increase in enrolment in that division — while operating funding from the government has gone up 23, 24 per cent. Operating dollars, well he . . . That's the fact of the matter. It's back to 2007. I invite him to consult the budgets of the province of Saskatchewan back to 2007.

Funding for that particular division has increased greater than enrolment has increased, Mr. Speaker. Moreover the amount of capital investment, new schools and school repairs and maintenance in that particular school division is unprecedented, Mr. Speaker. It's unprecedented. And in the budget that the member's referring to is referenced more education capital, new schools, in that particular division.

Mr. Speaker, there are more EAs today than there were previously under the previous government. There are classroom supports that we have continued to fund in the province of Saskatchewan, in the growing province of Saskatchewan. And as I've mentioned, unlike any government previous, including theirs, when pressures present themselves in a year — we've done this on a couple of occasions now — the government was there to provide additional support.

That's the record of the government. And it's our intention to continue to support education at levels never seen in the history of the province, including under members opposite, so that we can continue to maintain the education advantage that we have in Saskatchewan.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, the school division sent this piece of paper home with the students because they were already frustrated with the funding that has not been coming from this government, Mr. Speaker. And Saskatchewan people certainly won't be happy with a 30 per cent reduction in English as an additional language supports.

[10:30]

It's not just school divisions that are frustrated. The teachers in this province are frustrated, and rightfully so, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday the vice-president of the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation had this to say:

They talk in this budget about the increasing population. We've got a lot of diverse needs in the classroom, a lot of intensification of work, and teachers are trying to do the absolute best job they can to ensure student success. But they need the resources and the supports to do that.

We have increasingly diverse needs in the classrooms. We have the intensification of work for teachers. We have desperately needed resources in classrooms in order to ensure student success. Yet this government, Mr. Speaker, cuts funding for English as an additional language by 30 per cent. What does the Premier have to say to the province's teachers who will be incredibly frustrated by this short-sighted decision?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, there's been no cut to ESL [English as a second language] of 30 per cent. That's certainly the information we have before us in the House. That needs to be clarified on the record.

Secondly, with respect to this newsletter and with respect to Prairie Spirit, I invite the Hon. Leader of the Opposition of the NDP [New Democratic Party] to consider the facts. Since 2007 this division has received a 27 per cent increase in operating funding, outpacing their enrolment growth, which was 18 per cent — 18 per cent enrolment growth — 27 per cent, up till yesterday, in increased operating funds. And with the Minister of Finance's budget brought down yesterday, the numbers have only increased.

For 2015-16, there will be . . . the number would actually be a

30.7 per cent increase since 2007 in operating funds for this division, while their enrolment has gone up 18 per cent. Mr. Speaker, these are the facts of the matter. And you could go through the province and to different school boards and find very similar numbers.

Now, Mr. Speaker, school boards — quite rightly — across the province and other third parties will say, well we would like more. And we understand that in government. Mr. Speaker, this budget was about choices. We put a priority on Education and on Health and Social Services. Those ministries went up 1.9 per cent in total, but all the other ministries were cut on average a total of point six per cent.

And that brought us, Mr. Speaker, to a balanced budget. A balanced budget that does not increase taxes on Saskatchewan people. A balanced budget that continues to build infrastructure in the province of Saskatchewan at a record level. A balanced budget that will keep Saskatchewan strong, that will maintain a AAA credit rating. And they don't like any of this, Mr. Speaker, because these are the facts, and these are the reasons why the people of this province support the budget brought down yesterday by the Finance minister.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, the choice that this government made was a 30 per cent cut in English as an additional language supports, making it more difficult for students to learn, making it more difficult for teachers to teach. That is the record. That is what we see from this government.

The Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation, Mr. Speaker, has concerns about the quality of school buildings. And I definitely share those concerns, especially since this government, Mr. Speaker, especially since this government is keeping the \$1.5 billion list of desperately needed repairs a secret. They won't share that information. They say it's a cabinet secret, Mr. Speaker. But here's what the STF [Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation] vice-president has to say yesterday:

We know the school plants need a lot of work in a lot of areas in the province. But really the heart of education is the people inside those buildings, the teachers doing the jobs with the students, the support people working with students. It's direct supports for teachers and students that we're most concerned about.

Yet this government cuts supports for English as an additional language, and it's not adding any new educational assistants, Mr. Speaker. My question to the Premier: how on earth can he justify cutting direct supports for teachers, for students, despite the growing needs in our classrooms?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. How on earth can the Leader of the Opposition stand in his place and make stuff up? Here are the facts, Mr. Speaker. We have responded to the needs in school divisions by increasing operating funding by 31 per cent.

Here now is the section I'd like to invite the member to

understand about the people in those schools. Because he's right — that's the most important part of the system. The regular teacher numbers in the province, 614 more under our government. Student support teachers, 200 more under our government. Psychologists for the classroom and the students, up 45 per cent. Speech language pathologists, up 24 per cent. Occupational therapists, up 53 per cent. Social workers, up 14 per cent.

And when it comes to our newcomer students, Mr. Speaker, I can inform the House and the member again, to clarify the record, this year, this year the number of English as an additional language teachers is up 8 per cent. These are the facts of the budget — not just this budget, but budgets previous. They don't like the fact, Mr. Speaker, that we have invested unprecedented money in education in those human resources, in teachers, in classroom supports. We're building nine joint-use schools in this budget, many other capital improvements and rural schools being built by this government. Mr. Speaker, the record on education of this Saskatchewan Party government far exceeds anything we ever saw after 16 long years of New Democratic government in Saskatchewan.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, we saw misinformation from the Corrections minister just recently, Mr. Speaker. And the Premier might not like what's in the budget, and I can understand that, but here is the reality. Funding for EAL supports last year, \$588,000. This year, \$420,000, Mr. Speaker — a 30 per cent drop for EAL supports — making it more difficult for teachers and students in our classrooms.

With the kind of windfall rate resource revenues that we've had in this province, Mr. Speaker, year after year after year, we should have some of the best resourced classrooms in the country, Mr. Speaker. We shouldn't have schools propped up with two-by-fours as we do in Prairie Spirit. We shouldn't have cuts to EAL when we know that there are more and more students who need those supports. We shouldn't be hearing these stories, Mr. Speaker, but that's what we are hearing from this government. It is ridiculous to not be adding educational assistants, and it is short-sighted and it's wrong-headed absolutely to be cutting funding for EAL supports in the classroom. Teachers will say that. Parents will say that. Students will say that. I wish this government would say that too, Mr. Speaker.

My question is for this Premier. How much is his government spending on implementing lean into the education sector? Will he scrap that and properly support EAL supports?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I've read down the list of classroom supports that have massively increased under the government. I have noted that the number of English as an additional language teachers in the province this year is up 8 per cent, Mr. Speaker. These are the facts of the record.

But this budget was about choices. Mr. Speaker, we had unprecedented revenue shortfalls from oil. We had some other pressure points on the revenue side, and so this government

made choices.

It's interesting to note what members opposite did when they were in government, when they were faced with a revenue challenge. They also made choices. They raised taxes 17 times. They raised the PST [provincial sales tax] three times. They raised income taxes twice. They raised business taxes four times. That doesn't even count all the education property tax hikes because they weren't properly funding education.

They'd stopped investing in infrastructure. They closed 176 schools when they had a revenue challenge. We're building them. They closed 52 rural hospitals. They closed the Plains hospital. They closed 1,200 long-term care beds, Mr. Speaker. That's the choice they made. And what happened as a result? It was a decade of decline from '96 to '06. We lost 30,000 people, many of them young people.

Yesterday the population numbers are out. We're up 120,000 since this government got elected. These are the choices the NDP made. We chose to keep taxes low, to continue to build infrastructure including brand new schools, Mr. Speaker, and to continue to keep this province in leadership in the country.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, he can huff and he can puff, Mr. Speaker, but he needs to provide this answer to the parents and to the teachers in the province. Why did this government . . . And now he's passing it off to the Education minister. Isn't that typical?

Why is this government dropping EAL supports from \$588,000 to \$420,000? Why is he doing that?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my privilege to rise in the House today, and I want to give some facts and I want to give some figures. Mr. Speaker, there has been an increase in each and every year to the overall operating grant for school divisions, over 31 per cent since November 2007. Total funding for pre-K to 12 [pre-kindergarten to grade 12] education in our province is now approximately \$2 billion. This funding is over and above our almost \$1 billion capital investment, over and above the \$878 million that was a reduction to education property tax.

Mr. Speaker, the total budget for education since 2007 has grown by 112 per cent. Mr. Speaker, in 2007 the education budget was \$943 million. Mr. Speaker, this year, over 2 billion.

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

Quality of Care and Staffing Levels in Long-Term Care Homes

Ms. Chartier: — We have heard story after story after story about a quality of seniors' care that is far from adequate in this province. And the independent Provincial Ombudsman has heard those stories, too. One of the biggest complaints which the opposition and the Ombudsman are hearing is about

extremely low staff-to-resident ratios. Just this week we had family members travel from Swift Current to raise concerns about inadequate staffing levels. Yesterday's budget had just \$1 million for non-capital needs in seniors' care facilities. To the minister: why so little?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this government has added over the last seven years nearly 800 full-time equivalents to long-term care staff in our integrated facilities, Mr. Speaker, all across this province. Mr. Speaker, that is for roughly the same number of residents. So in fact, each and every year the resident-to-staff ratio has improved under this government compared to where the members opposite left it when they were the government, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, this budget does invest \$10 million in additional funding on top of what had already been previously announced, Mr. Speaker. Some of those dollars will go towards long-term care and improving the care that we provide to our residents, both with providing purposeful rounding, training for every single facility, every single health region in this province, Mr. Speaker. We've seen some positive benefits from that program already in some facilities. As well, Mr. Speaker, a dedicated dementia behavioural unit, both in Regina and Saskatoon. There's capital dollars to begin that so that our health regions can address those really complex, challenging cases of dementia, Mr. Speaker.

As well, we want to ensure that for the vast majority of seniors that do not live in long-term care, may never live in long-term care, Mr. Speaker, that we have the supports to provide for them in their own community. And this budget does include that in the HomeFirst/Quick Response, to expand that program and to eliminate the wait-lists when it comes to individualized funding for people that are on home care, that want to choose their own version of home care, whether that be through a community-based organization or whether that be through a private nursing organization, Mr. Speaker. So there is much in this budget for seniors of this province, Mr. Speaker, to help support them.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Except if you're a senior who lives in long-term care, Mr. Speaker.

This government has spent \$3 million on the Premier's American lobbyist. It has spent \$4 million on John Black's travel and accommodation. It has handed a \$5 million research grant to the failed American smart meter manufacturer, but it only has 1 million for seniors' care.

What about the \$8.5 million of urgent request which this government rejected last year for desperately needed staff, for lifts, for tubs, for facility repairs? To the minister: where is the money for those urgent needs?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we have identified \$10 million that are in this budget on top of what already had been identified in last year's budget that is going to continue forward. So that's over \$14.5 million, Mr. Speaker, directly related to seniors.

I think it's also important to note, Mr. Speaker, that the health budget of the province of Saskatchewan, nearly half of it — in fact I believe it is over half of it today — directly relates to seniors' care and providing health care for seniors in this province, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, in terms of the budget, the line item for our health regions, over 50 per cent increase since this government took office, Mr. Speaker: a significant increase, far greater than the rate of inflation, far greater than the rate of population growth, Mr. Speaker. This government is dedicated to not just the seniors, but all the citizens that we serve, Mr. Speaker.

In terms of the equipment purchases, we did provide dollars to the Urgent Issues Action Fund, Mr. Speaker. I can report in terms of our life safety and critical equipment, that budget is \$27.8 million, up four and a half million dollars. Regions are free to use that money. As well, block funding for equipment purchases is \$11 million and regions are free to use that in long-term care, surgical, or wherever . . .

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

Climate Change

Ms. Sproule: — Does the Environment minister believe that climate change is a myth that is based on witchcraft reasoning?

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

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I would like to thank the member opposite for the question. With respect to lowering greenhouse gas emissions in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, this government's actions and investments have been unprecedented: \$70 million, Mr. Speaker, invested in Go Green funding and low-carbon innovation and technologies. Mr. Speaker, there's been in excess of \$5 billion in investment, public and private investment, in the province of Saskatchewan in low-carbon technologies.

Mr. Speaker, these investments include successes such as the carbon capture and storage project at Boundary dam 3 which is reducing those emissions by in excess of 90 per cent, Mr. Speaker. That's equivalent to removing 250,000 vehicles off the road. Mr. Speaker, that also includes successes such as with SaskPower, and investments in SaskPower's power supply right now, Mr. Speaker, is 25 per cent coming from renewable sources.

[10:45]

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

Ms. Sproule: — Year after year after year this government has

cut funding for climate change programs. Just since the 2013-14 budget, climate change funding has almost been cut in half, so it's no wonder why more and more people are starting to question whether this government even believes in climate change. After all, the newly minted Sask Party candidate for Stonebridge-Dakota says climate change is a myth based on, her words, witchcraft reasoning.

To the Environment minister: does this government believe that climate change is a myth based on witchcraft reasoning, and is that why we've seen cut after cut to climate change programs?

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

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, there's been controlled spending across the board, Mr. Speaker, across government. And with respect to climate change, there's some controlled spending measures there that are as a result of reduced use of outside consultants, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, this government's record when it comes to reducing greenhouse gas emissions in Saskatchewan is strong, Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned. It includes public and private investments such as a carbon capture and storage facility at Boundary dam 3. It includes SaskPower's power supply coming 25 per cent from renewable energy, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, this is in contrast, this is in contrast to just not that long ago, Mr. Speaker, when a third of those present caucus members were a minister of this file, Mr. Speaker. And that was at a time when policy decisions were being made that caused the economy in this province to stagnate. People were leaving this province by the truckload, Mr. Speaker. All the while, greenhouse gas emissions increased by 70 per cent.

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

Cancellation of Move From Community-Training Residence

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, two days ago the Corrections minister was proudly touting this government's plan to move an adult correctional facility into a Normanview neighbourhood, even though they didn't consult one bit. The community was outraged, but the minister said the community just needed to hear "factual information." Well it turns out it was actually the Corrections minister that didn't have factual information. She said repeatedly that the lease on the current facility was ending, that the owner of the facility wasn't interested in renewing the lease, and that offenders being moved into the residential neighbourhood were extremely low risk. Despite her saying all of those things very definitively, all of it was inaccurate. To the minister: how can she explain this?

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

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll repeat the words that I said yesterday. As soon as I became aware of the facts surrounding this particular move or initiative, I immediately asked our officials to cancel this move from the current community-training residence to Dales House, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to, you know . . . Proper community consultation is important, speaking . . . you know, answering

the member's question and comments. Of course they are. And we didn't do a good enough job when we first started. We can do better and we will do better in the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — It's just so disappointing, Mr. Speaker, and appalling that that government would push forward with a plan for which they had no consultation with the people as a government, with the people of the community, Mr. Speaker. It's just so disappointing that that minister was unwilling to ask the questions within her own portfolio, is just so unwilling, Mr. Speaker, that anyone on that side is willing to do their homework.

What we're aware of, Mr. Speaker, is that renovations have been completed within that facility, Mr. Speaker, for this purpose. So not only did they not consult, Mr. Speaker, not only did they not know whether there was dangerous sexual offenders or violent offenders in that facility, Mr. Speaker, they proceeded with spending a whole bunch of money, Mr. Speaker. They finally have done the right thing and shelved the plan. My question to the minister: can you tell us about how much was spent on those renovations that's now utter waste?

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

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Mr. Speaker, after I was informed of the facts surrounding this particular move, I immediately asked the officials to cancel the move from the current CTR [community-training residence] to Dales House, Mr. Speaker, as soon as I became aware of the facts, Mr. Speaker. With respect to the cost, my understanding is that the only thing that has been done within current Dales House, or Dales House that is currently vacant, is painting, Mr. Speaker, and that's what I know to date. Thank you.

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

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

The Speaker: — Please state your point of order.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Earlier in question period, the Premier used language that he ought to know was unparliamentary language in referring to the Leader of the Opposition. I would ask you to make a ruling on the use of the expression, "making stuff up," which in point of fact, Mr. Speaker, we've already had a minister of that Crown apologize for and withdraw that remark previously in the life of this government. So if you could please enlighten the House on that, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Certainly I listened very closely to the debate that happened on the floor of this legislature, and certainly I saw

information come forward that us on this side of the House have no basis or reason to believe that it is indeed factual. So it was part of the debate and I would urge the Speaker to rule that the point of order is not well taken.

The Speaker: — I will review the tapes and the words to make a determination and come back to the House with a decision.

Why is the minister on his feet?

Hon. Mr. Docherty: — I'm requesting leave to introduce guests.

The Speaker: — The minister has requested leave to introduce guests. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Hon. Mr. Docherty: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to all members of the Legislative Assembly, I'd like to introduce a group of special guests sitting in the west gallery that are with us today. Sitting in the gallery we have more than 50 grade 8 students from Hillcrest Public School in Estevan, St. Michael School in Weyburn, and St. Augustine School in Wilcox. Can you give us all a wave there?

These students are accompanied by their teachers: Cat Billesberger from Hillcrest, Joanne McLeod from St. Michael, and Bill Sherven from St. Augustine. They're here today to participate in a program called A Day in the Legislative Assembly where they will learn about the province's democratic governance system and have an opportunity to tour this beautiful building. This is a biannual event planned by the Provincial Capital Commission to welcome students and teachers from across the province to their capital, home of the seated government in Saskatchewan.

I look forward to meeting with them this afternoon, sharing some of my experiences as an MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] and a minister, and I'll be joined by the member opposite from Saskatoon Centre.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to please join me in welcoming these guests to their Legislative Assembly. Thank you.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government Whip.

Mr. Cox: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the answers to questions 676 to 717.

The Speaker: — The Government Whip has tabled responses to questions 676 through 717.

SPECIAL ORDER
ADJOURNED DEBATES

**MOTION FOR APPROVAL OF BUDGETARY POLICY
(BUDGET DEBATE)**

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Krawetz that the Assembly approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.]

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to enter back into the budget debate. Certainly I hit the points yesterday, some of the very important ones where this budget really has failed Saskatchewan families, despite the fact that this government is spending more money than ever before, well over \$14 billion, Mr. Speaker.

The members opposite want to get loud and start heckling, and I hear the member from his seat in the very back from Walsh Acres. It's interesting that he wants to shout across the floor here today, Mr. Speaker, when he sat just as quiet as possible when he had a plan that he had rubber-stamped to have a correctional facility moved within his riding, Mr. Speaker. You know, he sat quietly until it was raised on the floor of this Assembly. So I'd suggest to that member, if he wants to start shouting across the floor of the Assembly, that's fair game. That's fair game. I'd urge him as well to start returning phone calls, to start speaking with his constituents and start standing up for the people of his riding, Mr. Speaker, but he can choose whatever approach he wants in this Chamber.

What I would like to talk about is just the lost opportunity that has, you know, occurred again in this budget, Mr. Speaker. Well over \$14 billion in spending and, you know, it just hasn't made an impact into where it matters for Saskatchewan families, Mr. Speaker. You know, we laid out in advance of this budget very specific priorities that needed to be addressed, Mr. Speaker, in education, in health care, in seniors' care, and these are all issues for which we just saw insignificant and inadequate investments from this government.

We know, Mr. Speaker, that if we fail this current generation of students for example, that we limit their opportunity as individuals and we limit our potential as a province. So there should be no excuses, Mr. Speaker, within a big spending budget like this of over \$14 billion to not make the investments that are needed into the classrooms here in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. These are the kinds of things that we've been focused on.

It's been disappointing as well to see the government breaking the promises with Saskatchewan people. I think of the students that are impacted by the changes to the graduate retention program, Mr. Speaker, the tax credit. You know, these are students that have gone to school at a time where they have an extremely high cost of tuition — second highest in fact I believe in Canada, Mr. Speaker — high cost of housing. Students that have taken on borrowing, Mr. Speaker, many that are graduating, working hard throughout, graduating though with some debt, they were counting on the government to keep its

commitment so that they could establish themselves as they make those steps, Mr. Speaker. So it's unfortunate to see that in a budget of well over \$14 billion that this government chose to take back from people like students, Mr. Speaker.

It's disappointing that this government has kicked out over 6,000 seniors, middle-class seniors, from the seniors' drug plan, Mr. Speaker, coming with it a significant cost for those seniors. And if you think about it, with a progressive income tax system, those seniors have paid into that program their entire working lives, Mr. Speaker, their entire working lives. They're not getting something for nothing here, Mr. Speaker, as government may want to characterize. They actually very much have invested and paid into this program, and they deserve a government that will keep its commitments, Mr. Speaker.

I look at the active family benefit as well and, you know, this one here has been eliminated for households with an income being the threshold of over \$60,000, Mr. Speaker. Well if you think about it, that accounts to ... If you have two hard-working people making \$30,000 each, Mr. Speaker, that active family benefit is now being clawed back from them, Mr. Speaker, is now being taken away from them. Well this issue in itself and that threshold just speaks to me, Mr. Speaker, in that this government really doesn't get the affordability pressures that families are facing. So on many fronts, Mr. Speaker, we're disappointed with what we see in this budget.

I know on a local level, Mr. Speaker, within Regina Rosemont what people were looking for was something that would recognize that cost of living has been jacked up in a big way on far too many. They look to their power bills, Mr. Speaker, and the covering for, in many ways, the mismanagement and errors and waste of this government, Mr. Speaker, through that power bill and those increases, and we see it through many other measures with the cost of living. Now this budget doesn't go any distance to make life more affordable. It actually makes it more expensive, Mr. Speaker, and it's disappointing that government won't recognize this important reality.

I know throughout the constituency as well, we have many schools that are overcrowded and pressured, Mr. Speaker, which is why we need to see meaningful commitments to infrastructure, ones that are understood and are transparent and work directly with school boards. But that hasn't been the approach of this government. The approach of this government has been to ignore working with school boards and with the education sector, Mr. Speaker. And you know, it's caused certainly a failure for this government to understand the realities that are going on in classrooms.

[11:00]

Certainly we know they've also disrespected teachers and haven't listened on that front, so what we have is a very strained environment in classrooms. What we have is a government who's not a full partner in education, in fact is a poor partner in education, Mr. Speaker. And a result of that is that we have classrooms, Mr. Speaker, that are over capacity. We have insufficient resources where they matter. When we look at the growth within the province, something we should all champion and be proud of, Mr. Speaker, it's also important for us to champion where those needed investments need to occur.

Today there was a discussion about English as an additional language, Mr. Speaker. These are really important areas to support, Mr. Speaker. And if this government would identify the realities of today's classrooms, would listen to partners in education like the teachers, like the school boards, they'd recognize that the plan of this government and approach of this government is insufficient on this front, just the same as they're not enabling and supporting the needed supports and professionals within classrooms, Mr. Speaker.

I also know that within Rosemont, people definitely wanted to see action on seniors' care. We've spoken in a broad sense about the crisis that's occurring within seniors' care in this province, Mr. Speaker, the inadequate action of this government to even identify and take that issue in the serious light that it should. We saw a couple of investments in this budget, some progress in home care, which is good. We have a distance to still go on that front, Mr. Speaker. We saw some dollars towards seniors' care, but it wasn't even sufficient dollars to ensure that the urgent issues that were identified by health regions over a year ago would be addressed, Mr. Speaker.

We see emergency rooms that I know are lined up, Mr. Speaker, and too many that are forced into hallways within our hospitals. That just doesn't provide the dignity to patients that they deserve.

I know Pioneer Village, Mr. Speaker, is just well past its useful life as a facility. It has some of the best workers within that facility, Mr. Speaker. It serves individuals and families from all over this province. It's important provincial infrastructure and service to all of us, Mr. Speaker. Every one of our constituencies are impacted by this facility, Mr. Speaker, and it's disappointed not to see any mention or any sort of a plan as to how and when that facility will be rebuilt.

You know, if you go in there, it has issues with water leaking through the facility. It has issues with duct tape on floors. The facility is quite literally falling apart. And thank goodness for the exceptional workers throughout that facility, Mr. Speaker, in providing the best care they can provide, but the facility itself needs a commitment and a plan from this government to be rebuilt.

We saw no action as well . . . We see a time where this government is spending big, record in fact, Mr. Speaker, over \$14 billion, but we see government in our constituency actually taking back things like the rec room over at Regina Village, Mr. Speaker, something that was essential to those within that facility, something that provided quality of life, something that provided health, Mr. Speaker. And we see this government continue to just stand by those sorts of decisions where they're taking, you know, a room like that back from those that live at Regina Village, something that just totally isn't acceptable.

We see no action from this government as it relates to the unsafe conditions that have been created on Dewdney Avenue, Mr. Speaker. It seems no recognition of the need to get those heavy-haul trucks off of Dewdney Avenue. And of course the long-term plan has to be, you know, a proper west bypass, but there needs to be immediate actions and urgent actions to get those trucks off the road and rerouted in an appropriate way. And you know, we've worked with community and, supported

by our local councillor, I submitted proposals to government well over a year ago, but we see no recognition of this issue. It just simply is something that they're dismissing. But it's a massive safety issue that's causing significant damage as well, Mr. Speaker, so I was disappointed not to see anything that front.

I spoke yesterday to just where this budget didn't hit the mark in education and health care and seniors' care, making life more affordable for families, and how it just really missed the mark for families.

I do want to just touch one last piece around the education portion, and that's that boards right now are forced into a situation where they have significant shortfalls. We were quoting, I guess, today the shortfall that's been identified by Prairie Spirit. They've communicated to their students and to their families the consequences of that: larger class sizes, fewer supports, lack of ability to support extra programs, lack of ability to ensure that students with diverse needs receive the supports that they need.

But that's not isolated to Prairie Spirit, Mr. Speaker. I know as I go across the province and meet with school boards, I know as I listen to the trustees across this province, I know as I chat with teachers across this province I hear about the conditions that are inadequate across the province. And when I speak with boards, what I continue to hear is that there are big shortfalls when it comes to the supports for learning funding, and that leaves boards shortchanged to the tune of millions and millions of millions of dollars, Mr. Speaker, each board.

I know it's significantly pronounced in our urban centres. I know that in Regina, for Regina Public and Regina Catholic, this is a big issue, Mr. Speaker. And we're growing as a province. This provides exceptional opportunity, but if this government shortchanges education and creates shortfalls in our school boards, Mr. Speaker, it has an impact on students.

I know the same to be true in my meetings with Saskatoon, both Saskatoon Public and Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools, Mr. Speaker. They have massive shortfalls within the needed dollars around supports for learning, Mr. Speaker, and these are areas that quite simply the government needs to commit to. I know the same is true up through Prince Albert and through the Sask Rivers school board, Mr. Speaker — left with a big shortfall. And what this means is boards are left with very tough decisions. These are our leaders and educational leaders and trustees and teachers who want to see the best for students, who are committed in a common sense way to improve education, but their hands have been tied by this government with inadequate funding and big shortfalls from making that happen, Mr. Speaker.

We would have liked to have seen the waste cut, Mr. Speaker, that we've identified. I spoke about that yesterday. We didn't see any real action on that front. It's unfortunate this government was unwilling to cut waste, Mr. Speaker, the tens of millions of dollars it continues to dole out for lean, its unprecedented amount of money that it doles out for consultants, Mr. Speaker, that the auditor actually says which haven't, you know, had defined purpose, haven't had objectives, haven't had job descriptions. That's not good

management, Mr. Speaker, and it's fraught with the risk of wasting all sorts of money.

We see the government continuing to be adamant, to go down this ideological, costly P3 [public-private partnership] route, Mr. Speaker, on all fronts, Mr. Speaker, basically denying common sense and denying any of the objective information around P3s on this front — the cost of them, Mr. Speaker, the impacts for the future. And what this government should be doing at this point in time is learning from circumstances in places like British Columbia, certainly Alberta as well and in Ontario where these just haven't worked out well, Mr. Speaker. I know in the cases of Ontario and British Columbia, the auditors have weighed in and have identified actually billions of dollars of wasted taxpayers' money as a result of this ideological pursuit of P3s, Mr. Speaker.

Now we need infrastructure in this province, Mr. Speaker. We need it in a big way. But we need to make sure we get best value, best bang for our buck when we address that infrastructure, Mr. Speaker. So if we're doing infrastructure in the way this government is, with wasting dollars along the way and shutting out local construction companies and contractors here in this province through that process, Mr. Speaker, which certainly P3s have the impact of doing, Mr. Speaker, then we're really failing to provide that full benefit, economic benefit that we should get from infrastructure, or best value for taxpayers, Mr. Speaker. So we'd urge government to look at this in a different light and hopefully come to some sense on this front before they go further down the road of wasting more money in this ideological pursuit, Mr. Speaker.

And we'd also laid out in advance of the budget . . . We've been working on this front. We've been working with business leaders. We've been meeting with companies. And we've put forward legislation to improve procurement in this province. The government has just been far too slow on this front, Mr. Speaker. They first denied there was even an issue. Now their response is insufficient and slow. What companies deserve in this province is a fair shot, not some special deal but a fair shot, Mr. Speaker, in being a part of the infrastructure of this province. We know the economic benefits of that. We know these are the very companies that are investing in Saskatchewan, that are placing capital in Saskatchewan, that are hiring in Saskatchewan the very workers that are building their lives in Saskatchewan, paying taxes in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, and so it's an area that needs to be addressed. They deserve a fair shot at procurement, Mr. Speaker.

We also know that we need to do this through the lens of ensuring maximum value for taxpayers. And the simple, naive process of government right now doesn't make that as its focus, Mr. Speaker, and it needs to be that focus. And in far too many, in far too many cases, Mr. Speaker, of infrastructure, we just don't see the fair opportunity for Saskatchewan companies to engage on a level playing field. We know the consequences of that, Mr. Speaker.

And I mentioned yesterday but, you know, an example of this would be the Swift Current long-term care P3, Mr. Speaker, where that thing is being built, Mr. Speaker, with Alberta rebar, Ontario mechanical, and Quebec steel, Mr. Speaker. And you know, now we hear some new awarding of contracts that also

are to Quebec companies, Mr. Speaker, and you know, we don't even have reciprocity with Quebec on the trade front, Mr. Speaker. So we need to level the playing field and provide a fair shot for Saskatchewan companies who have skin in the game, who are driving our economy. And this would allow us to be stronger as an economy as a whole.

We didn't see in this budget, and it doesn't even necessarily need to be as a budgetary item, but what we don't see as an item of important priority from this government is addressing the rail transportation issues, Mr. Speaker. And this is an important time for us to do so because when this economy, Mr. Speaker, once again is fired up on all cylinders, Mr. Speaker, it's going to be critical that that system is able to perform. It's going to be critical that it's able to get farmers' product to market, to get grain to market, Mr. Speaker, but also all of our manufactures, all of our potash, all of our goods, Mr. Speaker. And we know that that system is inadequate; we know that it's failed to perform. And we know it's something that needs real leadership, Mr. Speaker, and I'm disappointed just to see this not being resolved because this has a big economic impact to the future of Saskatchewan. And it's not even a budgetary item that comes by way of cost, Mr. Speaker.

We also didn't hear from this government . . . And you know, the melt is on. We recognize some of the flooding that was going on in Moose Jaw yesterday, very hard for residents there, Mr. Speaker. We know we have a saturated water table. We know that there's pressures of high water all across this province, Mr. Speaker, but we just haven't seen the leadership required to address the actual potential flooding and, more importantly, a water management strategy that's preventative and addresses these pressures.

There's great concern right now with the growing Quill Lakes, Mr. Speaker, and the potential for them to breach the banks, but also the continued I guess growth of those lakes onto agricultural land, Mr. Speaker, and the impacts of such as well where they're saline lakes, of course, Mr. Speaker, and have significant degrading impact onto agricultural land or other watersheds that they come in contact to. We know there's high water and pressures all through the sort of the east central side of the province and all up north of Humboldt. There's some very significant pressure points right now, Mr. Speaker, and we need to make sure we're planning of course to mitigate against damage this year. But we need to take a better water management — preventative, proactive — approach as a province as a whole, and I personally was very disappointed to not see that there.

You know, as we look across the province, it would be wrong not to identify the pressures on families and the need for child care, Mr. Speaker, accessible child care. It was disappointing that in this growing province this government chose to scrap its commitment to grow the number of child care spaces, Mr. Speaker.

And you know, if you think about this and you want to . . . And if you think about the actual cost of doing so, Mr. Speaker — members can heckle all they want — but this is the same government, Mr. Speaker, that rammed forward to increase the number of MLAs by three, Mr. Speaker, increase the number of MLAs by three, a cost of almost \$1 million a year, Mr. Speaker,

moving forward. Something that we absolutely don't need, Mr. Speaker. There's no need for three more MLAs. But if you think of the cost of \$1 million a year, that in itself is 250 new child care spaces, Mr. Speaker.

[11:15]

So it just speaks to a government that's sort of lost their way, lost their focus, focus more on themselves, Mr. Speaker, maybe their partisan interests, and not focused on what really matters to Saskatchewan families. And that's certainly where we'll continue to have our focus, Mr. Speaker.

And I guess, you know, we've come through a pretty special, almost decade-long run of economic growth and boom, Mr. Speaker. We've had record revenues. And it's disappointing to many, Mr. Speaker, to see that, you know, through that period of time, that at the, you know, towards this 10-year period now, that we actually have higher debt as a result of choices of this government. We have no long-term savings plan established, no plan in sight, Mr. Speaker, on that front, to make sure we're planning in a prudent way for the next generation as well, Mr. Speaker. And in fact, a rainy day fund that was depleted during the best days, Mr. Speaker, by this government — that was back in 2009 and 2010 — was well over \$1 billion, I believe, over 1 billion, 1.3 billion, Mr. Speaker, now down to, at the end of this year, Mr. Speaker, almost just \$200 million, Mr. Speaker.

We certainly see, it seems, a bit of an overreliance on the Crown sector in this budget, which could be fraught with risks. When you look at pulling an extra \$250 million out of the Crown sector, as this government is, Mr. Speaker, we have to remember that the Crowns are all of us. Crowns are our constituents. There's one place, the place those revenues are coming, are the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. So this is one where, you know, Saskatchewan people are going to watch with some level of caution, but that's a big increase to what this government is counting on out of the Crown corporations.

So draining the rainy day fund again, did so last year; an increase in the utilization and reliance on the Crowns, Mr. Speaker; and big debt growth, Mr. Speaker. In fact if you look back to the debt of this government when it was elected in 2011, it was just over \$8 billion for the public debt that's reported in the summary, Mr. Speaker. That debt has now increased to over \$13 billion. That was just a few years, Mr. Speaker. So we're talking about a \$5 billion, \$5 billion of debt growth, well over 60 per cent, Mr. Speaker, over a very short period of time.

So, Mr. Speaker, these are aspects which we need to pay attention to. Saskatchewan people are common sense when it comes to their finances. They're common sense when they come to what they expect from their government on the financial side of the equation. They're prudent, they're responsible, and they expect, I think, Mr. Speaker, that through the best days, through record revenues, they expect their government to make improvements in the financial position of the province, not degrade it, Mr. Speaker.

So this is something that is important for us to continue to observe, watching this government crank up the debt for

Saskatchewan people, Mr. Speaker, and it's important for us to keep an eye on. And it's important that as we come through periods of lower oil price that we plan in a better way, Mr. Speaker, to make sure we can fully capture the opportunities that will present themselves through progress and through development, Mr. Speaker, and make sure that the next time we are able to experience bounty and windfall, Mr. Speaker, that we have structures in place that allow us to improve our fiscal position, to put dollars away for the future, and allow us to make the meaningful improvements that's required in the infrastructure of this province as well in the services for Saskatchewan people.

So with that being said, Mr. Speaker, I've entered into this debate yesterday and some time here today. It's been a pleasure to do so. Certainly I'm disappointed, as are Saskatchewan families, with what's been brought forward in this budget, a budget that's spending in a record way — over \$14 billion — but taking back from Saskatchewan families and asking them to pay more for less, Mr. Speaker. So at this point in time I won't be supporting the budget, and we'll be moving the following motion:

That all the words after “that the Assembly” be deleted and the following be added:

disagrees with the government for tabling a budget that increases spending to a record level but is full of waste and fails to deliver opportunities for young people, fairness and affordability for families, and dignity and security for seniors.

And with that, Mr. Speaker, I know this will be seconded, or I understand this will be seconded, I hope it will be seconded by the member from Saskatoon Nutana. And I look forward to her entry into this debate here today — always smart, always strong — and at this point, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the member for Regina Rosemont, seconded by the member for Saskatoon Nutana:

That all words after “that the Assembly” be deleted and the following be added:

disagrees with the government for tabling a budget that increases spending to a record level but is full of waste and fails to deliver opportunities for young people, fairness and affordability for families, and dignity and security for seniors.

Why is the Premier on his feet?

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, I would ask leave of the House to make a statement regarding a point of order put earlier in the day.

The Speaker: — The Premier has requested leave to make a statement. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

STATEMENT BY A MEMBER

Withdrawal of Remarks

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, thanks to members on both sides of the House for leave, and apologies for interrupting the member for Nutana. Mr. Speaker, upon reflection, the point of order raised by the House Leader opposite, the Opposition House Leader, with respect to that point of order, I would like to withdraw and apologize the remarks referenced to question period.

The Speaker: — I would like to thank the Premier for his apology and withdrawal, and that resolves the matter. There will be no need for a decision. I recognize the member for Saskatoon Nutana.

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

MOTION FOR APPROVAL OF BUDGETARY POLICY
(BUDGET DEBATE)

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Krawetz that the Assembly approves in general the budgetary policy of the government, and the proposed amendment to the main motion moved by Mr. Wotherspoon.]

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And indeed I would like to second the motion that was made by my colleague from Regina Rosemont. And it's always a bit of a difficulty for me to get up and speak after him since he gives such fine remarks and such a thorough review of a lot of the problems that we find in this particular budget that was just presented yesterday here to the House and to the people of Saskatchewan.

Just at the outset, I want to thank the Premier for his words. It's always appreciated when those kinds of things are dealt with reasonably. But at this point I'm going to focus my comments on the budget.

It's hard to believe, Mr. Speaker, that this is the fourth budget that I've had the opportunity to speak to. I can't believe how time flies, and I think that's a sign that, you know, we're busy in this legislature doing the things that we need to do. And I think certainly as the official opposition, our role as always is to shine a light on the activities of this government, on the decisions made by this government, and certainly where our role is to reflect what we're hearing from the voters in our constituencies and certainly the people in Saskatchewan around the province. Because we know a lot of people are already contacting our office with respect to concerns about this budget, and I'm going to be addressing a few of those today.

Before I start though, I think it's appropriate for me to give a few thank yous to the people that support me in my position as an MLA for Saskatoon Nutana; and first up, definitely my CAs [constituency assistant]. I have had two CAs over the course of this year. First of all, Deborah Aitken who is on maternity leave right now. She had a young son in November, so she's taking

time to be with her son. And in her absence I have the good fortune of having Mr. Cody Gieni keep the office running in my absence. And certainly he's an incredibly capable person who has done a great job for me, and I always know he's got my back and Deborah as well. So it's always great when we have these solid constituency assistants who are dedicated to the people in our constituency and certainly to the work that we're doing as MLAs.

I also want to thank my provincial executive for my riding. Certainly Cary Schaefer who's our president and Tim Hutchinson who has been a long-standing supporter and contributor to the hard work that we do as our constituency.

We just had our annual fundraiser on the weekend. It was an Irish ceilidh. And we had a lot of fun, Mr. Speaker, and an art auction was a highly successful event. Lots of people came out to join in. And what really made me happy was the number of kids that showed up to dance. We even had the Leader of the Opposition doing the chicken dance with his two girls. So that's always a joy to me. Perhaps Mr. Speaker might want to come next year and do the chicken dance with us. Oh he's saying, no. So it's really a lot of fun. We do the Virginia reel, and it's an example of community. Mr. Speaker, don't get me going on the actions for the chicken dance. We do have a good time there.

And I think part of the thrill for me is when we have community events where people come of all generations. So we had at our dance, we had some great musicians. We also had some older couples who know the old dances like the polkas and the waltzes, but then we had the younger kids doing their thing too. And then we did a Virginia reel where, you know, in some places the arch that we used was a little wee person and a great big tall person, and it was just a lot of fun. So I think those kinds of events build community, and certainly I want to thank my executive and the good people from Saskatoon Nutana and Saskatoon Southeast as well who were very active and partners in that event.

Finally I just want to say a shout-out to my friends and my family for their support. My two boys are thriving these days. My one son, I just found out yesterday, we were talking — he's in Montreal — and he's highly involved in a student protest at the University of Concordia. And so he's planning a student action, day of action, and I know he's really engaged in the political process there. He's quite frustrated with the Liberal government of Quebec and their allegiances with the corporate world that he's concerned about. So I'm very proud of him for being political and taking that stand as a young man, because his biggest frustration, Mr. Speaker, is that so many students are not willing to engage in the discussion. They're scared. They're worried. They don't want to affect their studies, and so they're not . . . He's concerned about the future of democracy if people don't take a stand and stand up for what they believe in. I'm very proud of him.

My other son is off to New Zealand these days. And he is now hiking in southern New Zealand and sent some photos last night as well of beautiful terrain. He's enjoying the youth. So I'm so proud of my two boys, and certainly I want to say thank you to my friends as well and all my family who support. I know my dad just wrote a letter to the *Leader-Post* the other day, the old farmer. And it was a blistering letter, Mr. Speaker, and he still

is, he's not pulling any punches. He's very disappointed in the direction that agriculture's going. And he wrote a letter to the editor of *The StarPhoenix*, at 88, that I think is such a good letter. So I'm very proud of my dad and his farm activism as well.

So that keeps me going. That's what sort of motivates me to continue to do the work that I do. And that's why, Mr. Speaker, I'm so disappointed in what this government tabled for the people of Saskatchewan yesterday.

We've been asking for, we've been looking for a number of things, but the three main things I think that we were hoping would be in this budget were this, Mr. Speaker: we're looking for more opportunities for young people, for my children, for them to be able to come back to Saskatchewan and have a career, have the graduate retention program to rely on. All of those things.

We were looking for affordability for families. And quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, this budget goes the other way and makes life way more unaffordable for families, which is really disappointing.

We were also calling for dignity and security for seniors. In times of record revenues, Mr. Speaker, we have a government that still fails to recognize the crisis we have in seniors' care. They're not taking it seriously. They're dismissing it, and they're choosing instead to have this wasteful spending on other pet projects.

So what did we get? What did we get in yesterday's budget? Well first of all we see that this government has no shortage of revenues. The revenues keep coming in. Our non-renewable resource sectors are strong. Agriculture is strong. We know that both grain farmers and producers are doing very well. We know that communities are doing their part in paying their taxes and getting the job done.

But what happens when this government gets higher revenues? We don't know. We're saying, where does all this money go? It's certainly not going into the pockets of the families. What do we see here? Families are paying more and they're getting less, Mr. Speaker. And that's really hard for people with young families for sure. And we know that the cost of housing has gone up. We see utility costs going up, Mr. Speaker. We see food costs going up. And yet we see that we now have an income test for the active families benefit. I mean, that is such a regressive move. And really, the active families benefit could've been strengthened and bolstered, but this government chose to do the exact opposite and actually cut it pretty much in half.

Having had two boys who were active in soccer and music lessons, Mr. Speaker, I mean, I was always fortunate enough I guess in my position to be able to do those extracurricular activities, but we know there are many, many families who can't. And when you look at the income testing level that this government chose, we're certainly going to have plenty of questions for the minister in committee about how they came to that determination that 60,000 was appropriate.

[11:30]

But I think if you look at some of the numbers when people are trying to pay for their home, trying to keep down two jobs if they're fortunate in their family to be able to have both parents working, paying for child care, looking after all the needs of their kids, plus trying to get ahead a little bit, and then on top of that having this imposed upon them is a blow. It's nothing less than that, Mr. Speaker, and we're very disappointed in that.

What else do we get? We get the walking back of the graduate retention program. As I said already, we're getting calls from concerned people who were reliant on this program and had great need for it to help them get forward, and here we see it now being attached to the income tax program. Many of these students are still seeking positions of employment or gainful employment, and it just seems like a real sort of step backwards that we see in this budget.

Now I guess what the question that this government didn't ask is, what do families really need? What are they looking for? And we've been calling for some of these things but we see that instead . . . You know, we know that there's an infrastructure deficit in hospitals and schools in this province, but instead of dealing with the deficit for the hospitals — there's a \$2.2 billion deficit — right now we get 27 million for that infrastructure deficit. That's one-tenth of what's required, Mr. Speaker.

We've called for but we did not get any relief for the highest ambulance fees in the country, Mr. Speaker. That's something that terrifies people with sick children or with sick parents. This is an area that, you know, when you look at the overall scale of the budget, this is one area that we can't understand why that this government didn't take a look at it. We presented the case. We had a very strong case presented by some individuals in the province here, but they chose to ignore that. And indeed with the changes to the employment assistance benefit, we know the families that are being cut off from that are also going to be cut off from the coverage for ambulance services. So anyone with health issues, with children who are dealing with serious health issues, complex health issues, that's going to be a real step backwards.

What else do families need? Well we were asking for a simple one: more staff in senior care homes. We know what the deficit is. We continually see this government refusing to even put in minimum care standards and regulate them because we know that they just don't want to deal with the deficit that exists in staffing.

The urgent needs, we talk a lot about the urgent needs that the health care regions have identified in long-term care homes, the number of physical aids that are required or lifts and things like that, and also of course care aids, Mr. Speaker.

And so the failure to actually take these problems and address them head on is very concerning, and I think . . . We use the expression head in the sand, but it really is appropriate in this case because we don't think this government is taking it seriously.

Another thing we've been calling for and we don't see is any reduction in class sizes or sort of a maximum cap on class sizes. School boards are struggling with this. Families are struggling with this. Teachers are struggling with this. And with the

complexities and the intensification of issues that the Leader of the Opposition raised today in terms of English as an additional language and other complex needs of today's student bodies, Mr. Speaker, this is a problem. And this is something that we will continue to press this government on and shine a light on because they need to take it seriously. And I think at this point they're just too happy to push it onto the school boards.

The school boards are starting to push back, Mr. Speaker. I mean generally we understand school boards need to be appreciative of what government does, but at some point I think we've already started to see the breaking point for some school boards. And when they actually speak out, I think that's something, Mr. Speaker. And I really wish this government would take note of that and acknowledge it and realize what it takes for a school board to actually do that.

I have so many people come to me and say, I'd love to say something but I can't because I'm worried about my job. I'm worried about the repercussions. And this is not an uncommon comment that I get, Mr. Speaker.

Another issue that we talk about — and we've been asking and asking; this is for many years now — is an increase in EAs. And I know there was some talk today about numbers and how those are happening. But it's the funding for the EAs that I think is still not sufficient and needs to be addressed seriously.

What else do families need? More child care spaces, Mr. Speaker. And again we see a stepping back and a pedalling back in this budget of the need for creating those spaces and making sure that there are staff that are available to actually work in those child care spaces. The wage levels for child care workers is abysmal, and when we think that we're putting our most precious thing in daycare — our children, the most precious commodity we have — and we have situations where we can't get people to work in daycares, there is a problem. And I think it's an issue of prioritization of values, and we see the misplaced priorities that this government has.

We do see some stuff in this budget that we will continue to bring to the attention of the Assembly, and that's under the heading I have of wasteful spending. So this is the misplaced priorities that we've been talking about, Mr. Speaker. Obviously top of our list is the whole John Black lean program where we have this American consultant who's coming in and imposing a theology, basically, on the health care system that so many people have said, this is not working, this is not right. And the waste is incredible.

We know we have a bloated administration in our health care system. We need that addressed, but this government is unable to take care of that problem. We have consultants charging more than \$120 million a year and no record on the part of this government as to what the work is.

Mr. Speaker, I did a freedom of information request on one consultant that comes out of Regina here. They've done more than \$35 million of work for this government over the last seven years. That's a lot of money; it's almost as much as the John Black lean contract. And every request for information that I got, they blacked out the statement of work that this company is doing. So we have no idea what this company is

doing. We know that they got \$35 million to do it. But it's really difficult, as a member of the public, to not be able to access exactly what the contract was and why we're spending \$35 million for one company, one contractor here in Regina.

There's a . . . the ambulance . . . oh sorry, I've already talked about that one.

The P3 rent-a-school scheme, I mean again we've highlighted in this Assembly the difficulties with that kind of process. And what concerns me most, having two young adult sons, is the fact that the debt that this government is incurring as a result of these P3 schemes, it'll be . . . Probably the debt will be as much as the cost of the schools themselves, by the time it's all done, because they're pushing it off for 30 years. So who's going to be dealing with this debt problem? It won't be us; it'll be our children. This is a generational form of debt, Mr. Speaker. And I think for a government that has as much money as this government has — record revenues, the most revenues of any budget in the history of our province — and yet they're still needing to punt debt into the future on my children's backs. I don't appreciate that, Mr. Speaker, and I think a lot of people are going to find it very disturbing.

We can't get accountability on the process. We don't know what SaskBuilds is up to; it's kind of a mystery right now. I think if there's . . . they're floundering in terms of trying to get a plan together. We hear about these nine schools but . . . and certainly those are schools that were imposed on the communities. There wasn't any consultation with the school boards. And so there's a lot of concerns there about this whole scheme.

Further to that and something that my colleague from Regina Rosemont has raised in the House, and in fact we've introduced legislation to deal with that, is the procurement policy that this government is adhering to right now. The one small example I can give of how this isn't working is some colleagues of mine or friends of mine in the Big River area who have been doing tree planting, reforestation in the Big River area . . . which on a side note, reforestation was cut this year yesterday, and there was some young journalists here who were very concerned about that.

But reforestation as it is, is now being . . . The tendering policy, the procurement policy is such that large, mega tree-planting companies are coming in and getting these contracts because they can lowball the price. But what we're not getting is that sort of care and attention and I think the local flavour that my friend's company brings to the table, and I think my colleague from Regina Rosemont has indicated that on a number of occasions. And certainly when we speak to that bill, we want transparency and we want that clarity of where's the fairness. How do we ensure that the local people are getting jobs and that we're protecting the folks from Saskatchewan as much as we are ensuring that the government is getting a good deal? It's not just about the bottom line, Mr. Speaker, and that's the flaw in this policy.

I think for me the biggest concern, and this is one that may not get as much attention in the public because it deals with understanding the provincial finances . . . And certainly when I look at the budget and now with the change this year, I'm just

barely keeping above water when I try to figure out exactly what all these numbers mean. But what I do understand, what I do understand, Mr. Speaker, is that, in spite of the shortage of almost \$700 million this year from oil and gas revenues, this government has chosen to go into debt to the tune of 700 million just in its general operations for the future. And that is something that really worries me.

How can it be? How can it be that we have a government whose revenues have doubled in the last few years, that cannot put money away, a government that drains the rainy day fund — I think it's called the Growth and Financial Security Fund — this is a government that is spending like drunken sailors, Mr. Speaker? And yet they can't . . . They're putting us further into debt.

And I think what I want to share right now is just a blast from the past. I want to share something that's in the *Canadian Encyclopedia*, but I will save that for a few minutes down the road. But I don't want to forget, so I'll remember to do that.

Anyways, back to borrowing 700 million, that's what reminds me of . . . The next step I guess I want to mention in terms of numbers was the Growth and Financial Security Fund. This is again, in a time of record revenues, we see this government still taking from the Growth and Financial Security Fund. It was 1.35 billion at its height, and it's now down to 200 million. What's going on, Mr. Speaker? Again this government has record, record revenues, and they're draining the Growth and Financial Security Fund.

We see them pulling out the sale, privatization of our Crowns. We have the privatization of Information Services Corporation, a corporation that was making good money for the taxpayers of Saskatchewan, paying into the general revenue. That revenue's gone now, and now they're taking the 107 million, I think it is, from that sale and using the privatization proceeds to manage their affairs. That's not what we need to see from a government with record revenues. And we see the comments today in response to the budget from the potash corporations about their plan to take the money now instead of in the future. I mean so they're grabbing money that should be saved for the future, and they're spending money now that will be debt in the future. And I don't think that shows any signs of a responsible government. And I'm sure people are going to start asking questions about this, and they already have on some of the programs.

But on the larger scheme, I mean we can't hide the fact that there's debt. And it's just, it's the silliness of the Minister of Finance smiling and proudly pronouncing that this is a balanced budget. I mean the ridiculousness of it is beyond belief, Mr. Speaker. But I mean the people are paying attention. People are watching this and they're starting to wonder where the money is going.

Just to speak specifically on a couple of my areas of responsibility as a critic, I just want to talk a little bit about the environment, Mr. Speaker. In this budget alone we see a 6.3 per cent cut in climate change and of course that's added up to the 82 per cent overall.

And earlier today I asked the Minister of the Environment . . . And we know that one of the new Sask Party candidates has

printed an article about calling climate change witchcraft reasoning. I think that kind of language has got to be alarming to a lot of people in Saskatchewan who see the changes not only here in the province as a result of global warming, but also around the world. And when we see cities like São Paulo in Brazil, 2 million people with no fresh water; with the state of California and Phoenix, Arizona, and Las Vegas all dealing with no water, not a shortage of water but no water in the very near future, these are things that people are paying attention to. And when we see this kind of response from this government, there's concerns. And I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that's something that as the Environment critic I do get a lot of comments on.

We know that total spending on climate change since 2009 was \$64 million. That's about 4 per cent of the cost of the CCS [carbon capture and storage] project. And we know, Mr. Speaker, the CCS project is only going to deal with less than 2 per cent of the emissions that this province produces. There's nothing else on the table, Mr. Speaker.

In terms of environmental protection, I mean the minister spoke the other day about how robust that program was. It's down 30 per cent this year — 1.7 million. And it was actually, it's now only \$34 million and it was 40 million in 2009. So we see a cut of \$6 million just in environmental protection alone, Mr. Speaker.

In 2009, the total expenses for the ministry was 200 million. It's now \$162 million. So we see a cut of \$40 million overall from the budget. In 2009, staff was over 1,000. It's now down to 866, so it's about a 15 per cent cut in staff. We see no change or chapter for the climate change part of the new Environmental Code, something that I think three or four ministers have been working on since this government came into power. We still don't see the chapter on climate change. We see no strategy for dealing with the serious drainage issues that I get calls on from across the province. So the only question we have left for this approach to the environment, Mr. Speaker, is, where did the money go? If they have so much money, why are they cutting \$40 million from this particular ministry's budget? We don't know where it is.

[11:45]

In tourism, we see a cut of 11 per cent in the fairly small tourism budget. It's down 1.73 million and it was at 16.172 million. It's now down to \$14.442 million. Only question I have, Mr. Speaker, is, where did the money go? They have record revenues but we're still seeing cuts to areas like environment, tourism, also Parks, Culture and Sport.

We see a number of small cuts and I think some pundits were referring to this as a budget of a death by a thousand cuts. Well here we have a cut to the Provincial Capital Commission of \$145,000, down 5 per cent.

We also know there's no further money for the Meewasin Valley Authority and, Mr. Speaker, that's something where this government has completely dropped the ball. We see a beautiful part of Saskatchewan, an urban park in Saskatchewan that has been basically left in the lurch by this government. And we see the city of Saskatoon stepping up to the plate. We've seen some

federal funding, but the value for the dollar that that organization receives means they have to really shut down some of their operations and stop providing the services to the citizens of Saskatchewan that take advantage of that beautiful urban park.

We see the community infrastructure fund being cut by 70 per cent, Mr. Speaker. That's something that communities have relied on to build in their communities and a 70 per cent cut seems pretty harsh when you have record revenues.

I talked a bit earlier about the active families benefit cut of approximately \$6 million. That's half, half of the people that were taking advantage of this cut or this tax break in order to make sure that their kids are getting the activity that they need and the cultural training that they need.

Mr. Speaker, I do a lot of shows around the province with old-time music and every time we go to these schools, we ask the kids, how many of you want to learn these instruments? And of course they all want to learn the instruments. But when afterwards we ask, is there anyone teaching in this area, this kind of music or any kind of music, we find out that there just isn't enough instructors and people available to teach. So that's a sad thing. And if there's no demand for lessons, then we'll have less and less teachers as well. It's kind of like a vicious circle.

We're ever hopeful. I guess maybe we're optimists, but we were really hoping to see the reinstatement of the film employment tax credit. It's kind of painful this year because we see the final, the end, the completion of the film employment tax credit in the budget. It's now 100 per cent gone and so is our film industry, Mr. Speaker. We have a lot of people doing very good work in the province but, in terms of an industry, it's been decimated. And we're still hopeful at some point this government will see reason.

And the new tax rebate for manufacturers and export remains to be seen, and we'll certainly have questions for the minister and his staff on how this new rebate will help out the creative industries. We know that most creative industries don't even have full-time employees, but rather they're contractors; they work on multiple projects per year. And certainly individual artists and musicians don't have staff. So we're not exactly sure how that's going to help the folks in the creative industries.

Again with all these cuts to Parks, Culture and Sport and the fact that we have record revenues, record revenues and cuts to all these line ministries, I'm left with one question. Where did the money go?

Same with agriculture. We're going to look at agriculture. We see a number of cuts to crop insurance premiums. I know part of that is explained by the fact that premiums are lower, so that will help producers. But also AgriStability is down 6.4 per cent. Again the minister and his staff have explained that that's in relation to an evening out of the federal funding that goes along with AgriStability. But even yesterday in the rotunda, Mr. Speaker, I was speaking to a farmer who's concerned about AgriStability and the confusion around that. Nobody really knows what's going on. So those are issues I think over and above the actual budgetary lines that we see in the budget itself.

But in terms of agriculture, again in 2007-08 there were 518 full-time equivalents in that ministry; this year, 392 — a 25 per cent cut in the services and the programs that have been provided to the people of Saskatchewan in the agriculture area. So again we have record revenues but we see a 25 per cent cut in the number of public servants that are providing services to the people. So with record revenues and all these cuts, where did the money go? We have to keep asking that question. We see a steady, gradual erosion, Mr. Speaker, of programs, services, staff. Where has the money gone?

This government is going to spend a record amount of money this year, more than any other year, but families aren't feeling the love, Mr. Speaker.

This is one of the concerns we see. We know this government could choose to do the right thing. They could choose to fix seniors' care. They could choose to legislate and deal with the number of children in classrooms and make sure that the classroom sizes are responsible and reasonable and allow for learning. We know that they could choose to make life more affordable, but the sad part of it, Mr. Speaker, is that they choose not to. They have record revenues. They choose to go into further debt, and that's something I think that's very disappointing.

Perhaps electioneering . . . I know there's some comment in the pundits again today about whether or not is this an election budget. And so when we see this massive amount of infrastructure spending this year as a result of debt, people aren't going to see the debt. They're going to see the activity and think, oh isn't this great. But I think people also know that when we have debt, it's going to bind the hands of our kids and our kids' generation, and that's what concerns me about all of this punting of debt, Mr. Speaker.

We see a government that decides to keep spending on their favourite pet projects and, as a result, Saskatchewan families need to dig deeper in their own pockets for housing, for utilities. Seniors need to now make decisions regarding whether or not their medications should be purchased or whether they should buy food because again, the threshold for the seniors' drug plan has been drastically lowered.

Parents need to decide whether or not their kids can go into the sports programs that their children are interested in because of again an arbitrary limit placed on families of \$60,000.

So there's certainly . . . It's a disappointing budget, Mr. Speaker. Despite the fact that we are doing so well as a province, we don't see people doing well. We don't see families doing well. We don't see seniors doing well. We don't see students doing well. So I think again, and I know we say it a lot, but I think we have to keep asking this question, Mr. Speaker: where has the money gone?

And so as a result of that, I am very honoured to be able to second the motion that my colleague made, and I would like to adjourn debate at this time . . . I just conclude my remarks, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Lloydminster.

Ms. Young: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour and privilege to rise in the Assembly today to support the Minister of Finance and second our 2015-2016 budget, which is a balanced, fiscally responsible, and accountable summary budget.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to begin my remarks with a few acknowledgments. I have only been a member of this Assembly for a very short time, but I've quickly come to recognize and appreciate the valuable role my constituency assistant, Ms. Tracy Patterson, plays. I know she is back home in my constituency watching this, and I want to say thank you for all she does. She is an amazing and wonderful person who surprises me with her many talents and abilities. She does an outstanding job in handling the everyday tasks of answering phone calls, visitors to my offices, inquiries of constituents, and giving helpful and pleasant direction, all while keeping me in the loop and keeping my schedule organized and coordinated. Thank you, Tracy.

As well, Mr. Speaker, I want to say thank you to my husband Kim and eight wonderful children who continue to be my rock and solid foundation of support. They continually encourage me and are there when called upon to take care of things back home that need to get done while I'm away, and they are always looking after one another even with their own busy lives at work and school. I know that all members of this Assembly can relate to the strength and support of family they need and get while doing their work as elected representatives.

Mr. Speaker, this is the first budget that I have had the opportunity to take part in under the Saskatchewan Party government, and by looking at its fiscally responsible and accountable design, I know it won't be the last one for me to participate in. I know the people of this province and I hope all members of this Assembly will support it.

Keeping Saskatchewan strong, what a catchy and self-esteem-building motto for the people of this province, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday our Finance minister tabled a budget that definitely speaks to the strength of this province and the tenacity with which the people of Saskatchewan push forward, continue to work hard, and are committed to investing their lives and livelihoods in this province even during challenging times. Mr. Speaker, the 2015-2016 budget tabled yesterday shows this Saskatchewan Party government's commitment to ensuring Saskatchewan remains strong, grows as a province and as a leader economically within Canada and on a global scale.

But I must take this opportunity to reiterate important points made by the Finance minister because the response from the opposition left me wondering whether they were even in the room and listening. I don't believe they were hard to follow or understand, so I will once again tell everyone in this Assembly the Saskatchewan Party government's plan for keeping Saskatchewan strong: (1) keeping taxes low, (2) controlling operating spending, (3) continued investment in infrastructure, (4) creating new jobs, and (5) continuing to provide a balanced budget.

Mr. Speaker, this is the government's plan for keeping Saskatchewan strong, a hard-pressed reality for the opposition to grasp and understand as their record for 16 years did not

show any of this. Their record left the economy weak: no jobs for our young people, an out-migration of many of our citizens. Investors took their businesses to other provinces. The people were paying higher taxes, and there was a full stop on infrastructure needs, leaving behind a huge deficit on multiple levels to be dealt with. The 16 years of NDP governance depleted our province in so many ways.

Mr. Speaker, when the Saskatchewan Party took the reins in 2007 we began seeing just the opposite. The people of Saskatchewan once again experienced hope and optimism, and in eight years I can certainly say, we've come a long way, baby. We have seen an extensive resurgence in our economy and our population, and this 2015-2016 budget will and has not let them down. Mr. Speaker, we will never go back to the way the NDP left this province.

The investments that the Saskatchewan Party government has made in its people and its economy have placed our Premier and this province as a force to be reckoned with. Mr. Speaker, it is not an easy task to get a AAA rating as a province, but this government's good public policy and leadership from an outstanding Premier has put our province in the driver's seat, with many of the other provinces riding in the back seat.

Mr. Speaker, because of the commitment by the Saskatchewan Party government to develop a strong growth plan and stick to it, I personally have seen and experienced the benefits of progress and prosperity in my community and constituency. Reduction of business taxes, SaskBuilds grants, and changes to regulations created a development boom on the Saskatchewan side of Lloydminster.

Our city saw development of housing and commercial property in the past three years over and above anything they've ever seen. For three years now construction values in Lloydminster have reached or surpassed 180.4 million, which includes the largest construction values ever recorded in the city and totalling well over half a billion dollars of investment.

I have lived in Lloydminster for 28 years on the Saskatchewan side and, I can assure you, under the NDP no development ever occurred on the Saskatchewan side of Lloydminster in their days of governance and leadership. Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Party government, through their deregulation, lower taxes, and business incentives has allowed my community to grow and prosper like never before.

[12:00]

The Canadian Federation of Independent Business has even ranked Lloydminster as number two of the top 10 mid-sized Canadian entrepreneur communities and recognized it as a strong place for business and development opportunities. Development companies out of Calgary are looking at investment in the area, and oil and gas companies and farm implement dealers are expanding and investing in infrastructure on the Saskatchewan side of Lloydminster.

Mr. Speaker, my own children saw this growth and career opportunity after leaving the province for a while and have come back to their home community to work and start their own successful business and careers. My daughter Nevada teaches

grade 11 and 12 biology and chemistry at the Lloydminster Comprehensive High School. My oldest son, Dr. Casey Young, is a radiologist working for the health region and has two of his own successful diagnostic imaging clinics, and my two sons, Dr. Chester Young and Dr. Riley Young, are practising dentistry. And I'm happy to say that this June my son Fraser will graduate from the University of Saskatchewan and also return as Dr. Fraser Young, participating in the Westlake Dental clinic in Lloydminster Saskatchewan.

It may seem obvious, Mr. Speaker, but one of the sure signs of an entrepreneurial hot spot is the presence of a high concentration of entrepreneurs and a high business start-up rate, and that's exactly what Lloydminster has. It is also important that business owners have high levels of optimism and success in their operations. Good public policy, supportive fair government taxation and regulatory policies, and business incentives is what this government gave to help create the success and growth of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, the price of oil has affected our budget, but our government's commitment to supporting families and communities across this province will not waiver in the 2015-2016 budget despite this. We have a very diverse economy and can continue to rely on other commodities and investments to weather the storm and continue on the path of keeping Saskatchewan strong. Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Party's growth plan for the province's natural resources is to work to mitigate the affects of commodity swings. We can't just rely on oil and gas.

This year we are experiencing growth and strength in our mining and potash industry. As the Minister of Finance noted in his budget speech, the province is changing the way in which potash companies can claim capital expenditures as tax deductions. The deferring of these deductions will increase provincial potash revenues by 150 million this year alone and, with a broader review of the entire potash production tax regime, we should see a more consistent and ongoing increase of potash revenues in the future. Strong investments from our mining and potash industry tells us that they like the way we provide and support opportunities for business growth and development, and so they continue to work with us to bring strong revenues, jobs, and business to our province.

Many of you may not have counted, but there are 13 potash mines in Saskatchewan. None of them were built under the NDP government. Following the 1975 election, and without mentioning a word of it in their campaign, the NDP government took steps to expropriate all of the potash mines by the end of 1976. Since that time, international investors have been petrified of NDP government. Now that they are out of office, we have an expansion of Mosaic and a brand new potash mine at Jansen, Saskatchewan. This is a true mega project, as the Jansen mine is projected to produce more potash than all of the 13 mines combined. Mr. Speaker, this would never have happened under an NDP government because of their past actions.

I also want to point out, the valuable industry that began our province has seen its ups and downs but continues to surprise us when we need it most — our agriculture industry. Agriculture commodities and exports have held strong and remain

encouraging: over 13.9 million in food exports alone this past year, and it shows no sign of slowing down.

I was born and raised on a mixed farm in Saskatchewan. My parents still own the farm although it is strictly grain now. My father is 94 and my mom is 91, and if they had their way, I know they'd still be on the farm. But my five brothers continue to actively farm and manage the annual cycle of seeding, summerfallow, spraying, swathing, harvesting, and taking the grain to market.

Mr. Speaker, many areas of my constituency are strong agriculture communities. The Lloydminster Exhibition Association hosts many agriculture events year-round with people traveling from all over the world to attend livestock and farm shows. That is why this government supported and invested in the construction and renovation of a modern exhibition facility that can now hold its own on the world stage. Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Party government has been there to support our agriculture industry through thick and thin and will continue to do so with many of the initiatives and incentives put in place over the past eight years.

Mr. Speaker, it has been hard to watch the oil prices drop drastically, knowing the effect it would have on our budget, and admittedly it has created a challenge for us to find the revenues needed to support the people of Saskatchewan. But we should not negate the industry completely. Our Minister of Economy and this government has worked hard to develop a positive investment climate for oil and gas industry over the past few years and will continue to do so moving forward.

Saskatchewan does remain one of the best places for oil and gas companies to invest. This is important to note, as the Fraser Institute's annual global petroleum survey has ranked Saskatchewan as the number one place in Canada and third globally for oil and gas investment. The Lloydminster area alone saw 2014 December sales of \$973,220 and \$5.3 million in land sales just recently in February. This is a positive sign that this government is doing all the right things to keep and maintain the interest of oil and gas companies interested in investing and doing business in our province.

Mr. Speaker, as the Minister of Finance stated in his budget speech yesterday, investing in the infrastructure of this province has been and will continue to be a priority for this government. The 2015-16 budget commits \$3.3 billion in highways, schools, health facilities, and Crown sector capital.

In 2007 the Saskatchewan Party inherited an astronomical infrastructure debt load from the NDP government. They had 16 years to invest and support infrastructure needs in this province, but instead they took the quick and easy way out. They closed doors and shut down highway equipment operators. They closed schools. They closed hospitals. They closed long-term care homes and other health facilities across this province, and they stopped fixing holes and paving our highways.

Mr. Speaker, we won't do that to the good people of Saskatchewan. They deserve better, and we plan to give them better. You will see new schools where needed in high student population growth areas. You will see needed renovations and

repairs where absolutely necessary in schools and health care facilities. You will see new hospitals and you will see highway construction and paving. But, Mr. Speaker, this commitment and activity for improved infrastructure needs in this province from the Saskatchewan Party government isn't new. It's just ongoing.

I know this Assembly hears about the many new schools, hospitals, and health care facilities that have been built or are being built across our province. But just let me share with you some infrastructure investments the Saskatchewan Party government has already made in the last few years in my constituency alone.

In health, 1 million to the Lloydminster Hospital for immediate structural and space deficiencies; 533,000 to the Lloydminster Hospital for a third operating room; 250,000 for the introduction of the Home First/Quick Response. In highways, 28.5 million for paving of Highway 55; 5.1 million for resurfacing Highway 3; 4.1 million for repaving Highway 17. In education, 5.4 for a new École St. Thomas Elementary school; 7.4 million for a new College Park elementary school; and 6 million for the Hillmond Central high school gym replacement.

In social services, \$866,703 for five units to the Lloydminster senior Métis housing; 11,033 for the Lloydminster affordable home ownership program; 350,000 for seven units to Habitat for Humanity; and 770,000 for a five-unit condominium complex to the Headstart program.

Mr. Speaker, delaying or stopping spending on infrastructure like the NDP did does not fix the problems and most certainly would cost the taxpayers of this province more in the long run. With the highest credit rating in North America and low interest rates right now, it is the best opportunity to borrow what is needed to get the work done. As part of this investment, we will assure the taxpayers of this province good, prudent fiscal management by setting aside revenues each year to make our payments on the borrowed dollars. We do not want to leave our future generations with any debt.

Mr. Speaker, investment in our future generations is a high priority of this government as well, and the 2015-2016 budget most certainly assures us of that. The Saskatchewan Party government recognized the need for more physicians, nurses, and front-line care workers in this province and decided to do something about it. They began recruiting more nurses, more specialists, and more physicians. They put in place an educational and assessment program for foreign physicians to assure the people of this province that they are receiving quality health care. More importantly, this government increased medical and nursing seats at our universities so that we can retain our very own brightest and best physicians and nurses. I'm happy to say my community of Lloydminster just recently received four more of these newly licensed physicians.

Mr. Speaker, education and job creation for our young people are valuable and important investments made by this government and will continue to be a priority. The Minister of Finance highlighted in his budget speech the continued investment of adult basic education seats and other training to keep our skilled labour force strong. With a growing population and strong industry and business growth, we need to have a

vibrant and growing workforce that we can rely on.

Mr. Speaker, finally just as I wrap up my comments, I understand someone from the opposition tried to give the Minister of Finance a shoe during his pre-budget media scrum the other day. I was told it was an older, somewhat shiny shoe on the outside with most of the sole cut out of the bottom. I am now certain, Mr. Speaker, that the shoe belongs to the opposition member from Regina Rosemont because based on his comments about the budget yesterday and today, it's the same old tired NDP shoe with only a rough shine and a bit of spit polish on the outside, empty and smelly on the inside, and certainly no sole left for the people of Saskatchewan. He can keep it. We have two brand new ones right full of great plans and a vision where they are headed and fresh soles to give to the people of Saskatchewan. We are ready to dance and show our great moves.

Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Party government has a vision and a plan for this province, and we are on a mission to accomplish that by 2020. We will never, never let the people of Saskatchewan down like the NDP did. We are committed and driven to keeping Saskatchewan strong. Mr. Speaker, I am proud and honoured to second the motion to accept this government's 2015-2016 budget as presented by the Minister of Finance on March 18th, 2015, and I further ask all members of this Assembly to vote in favour of the 2015-2016 tabled budget. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I move that this House do now adjourn.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried. This House stands adjourned until Monday at 1:30 p.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 12:15.]

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President of the Executive Council
Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs

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Minister of the Economy
Minister of Energy and Resources
Minister Responsible for The Global
Transportation Hub Authority
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Power Corporation

Hon. Jennifer Campeau
Minister of Central Services
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
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