



FOURTH SESSION - TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

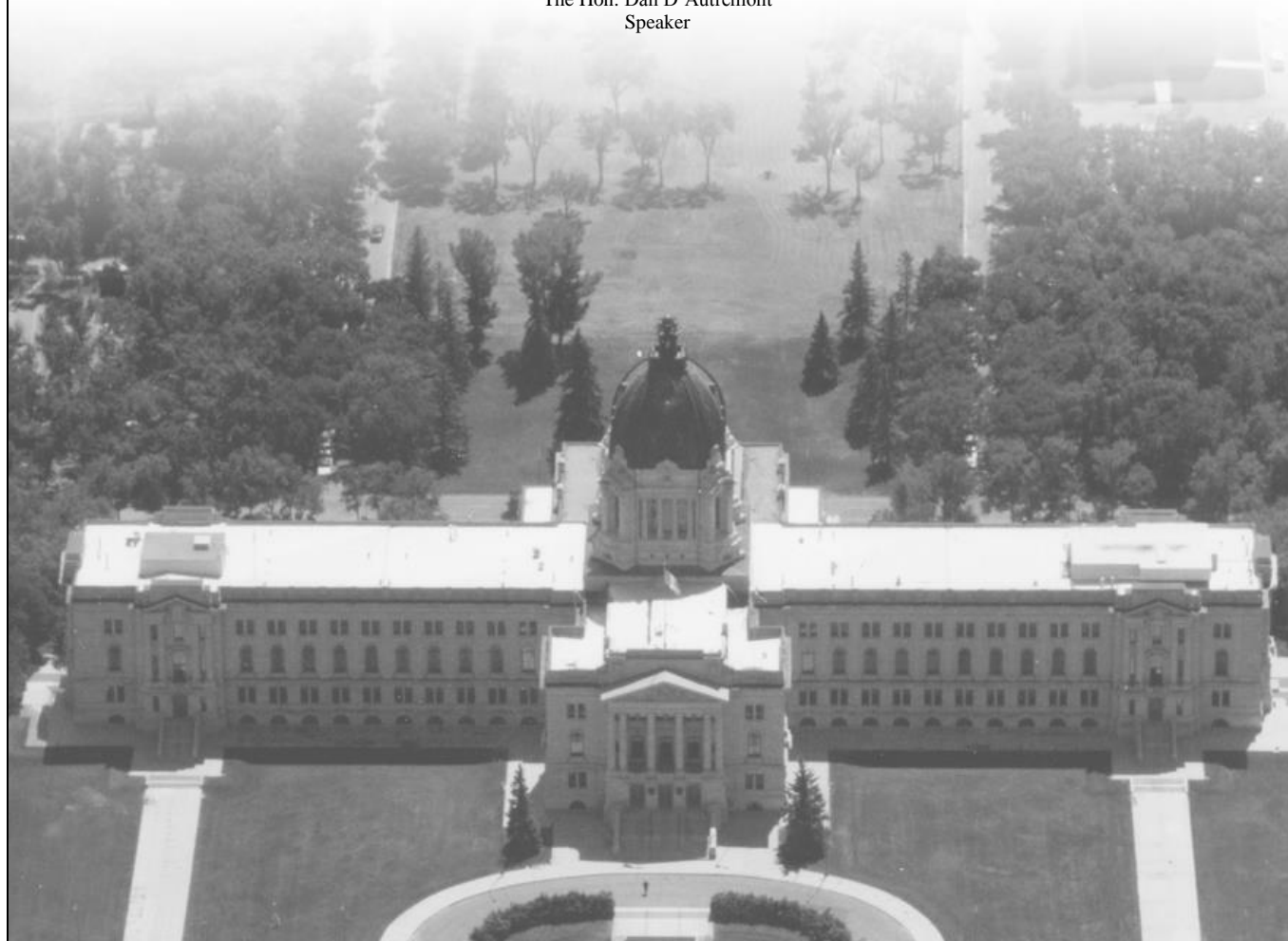
of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(HANSARD)

Published under the
authority of
The Hon. Dan D'Autremont
Speaker



MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN

Speaker — Hon. Dan D'Autremont
 Premier — Hon. Brad Wall
 Leader of the Opposition — Cam Broten

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

[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

Unparliamentary Language

The Speaker: — Before the commencement today, I would like to make a statement. On Monday, October 19, 2015, the Opposition House Leader raised a point of order about comments made by the Minister of Justice and Attorney General during question period. The Opposition House Leader indicated that the minister used the expression “continues to try to mislead” and that the language used by the minister be ruled unparliamentary. In response, the Government House Leader made reference that the Speaker had dealt with the issue earlier in the debate.

Upon further review of the verbatim and previous Speakers’ rulings, I would like to clarify how our Assembly has dealt with similar circumstances. I was precipitous in my ruling yesterday and upon further review of the *Hansard* record I will now rule on this matter.

I would like to draw to the attention of the members that on March 7, 2011, the comment, and I quote, “would like to mislead the public into believing” led to the member apologizing and withdrawing the statement. Further, on April 22nd, 2010, a member indicated that a comment was taken out of context in order to mislead the public. In this instance the Speaker ruled that the comments were out of order and asked the member to apologize and withdraw.

With regards to yesterday’s comments at page 7356 of *Hansard*, the Minister of Justice and Attorney General stated, and I quote, “the opposition continues to put, continues to try to mislead the public with respect to this project.” Speakers have ruled this type of language out of order. Therefore based on previous rulings, I find that the minister’s comments are out of order and ask that the minister apologize and withdraw the unparliamentary language.

I recognize the Minister of Justice and Attorney General.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — I retract and apologize for those comments, Mr. Speaker.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I have the honour of introducing two very special guests who have dedicated their lives to making life better for Saskatchewan’s children and youth. Mr. Speaker, this week is Foster Families Week here in Saskatchewan, a week that celebrates our dedicated and caring foster parents.

Joining us today from the Saskatchewan Foster Families

Association is the executive director, Deb Davies, and the board Chair, Kevin Harris. Kevin Harris has been a foster parent for over 15 years, Mr. Speaker, and has been chairman of the SFFA [Saskatchewan Foster Families Association] board since 2012 and has recently been appointed director with the Canadian Foster Family Association.

Deb Davies was a foster parent for 28 years, Mr. Speaker. Deb’s experience as a foster parent has helped her excel in her role as the executive director for SFFA. Deb has been putting in great work as the executive director for over 11 years.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask all members to join me in welcoming these outstanding citizens to their Assembly today.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would like to join the minister opposite in welcoming Deb Davies and Kevin Harris to their legislature. This is a very important week as we celebrate the contributions of foster families to Saskatchewan. They do such outstanding work. And I’ve always appreciated the insight from Deb in particular when we have our conversations about how we can do things better here in Saskatchewan. They’re very, very committed to making sure our children, all children in Saskatchewan, are safe every night. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I ask all members to welcome them to their legislature. Thank you.

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

Hon. Ms. Campeau: — To you and through you, Mr. Speaker, I’d like to also welcome Deb to her legislature. She’s been a long-time advocate for children in Saskatchewan and she’s also been a long-term resident of Saskatoon Fairview. So I’d like all members to please welcome Deb to her legislature.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you, I’d like to introduce five leaders in the agricultural industry seated in our west gallery: from the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities, president Ray Orb; from the Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan, president Norm Hall; Mr. Dwayne Anderson, Chair of the Farm Land Security Board; Mr. Noel Skelton, board member, Farm Land Security Board; and Mr. Mark Folk, general manager, Farm Land Security Board.

I would like to ask my colleagues to join me in thanking them for their leadership and contributions to our agricultural industry and welcome them to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and to you and through you on behalf of the official opposition, I too would like to rise and welcome these fine gentlemen to their Legislative Assembly. I know that they are all deeply committed to the agricultural community and the people that are involved in agriculture. I know Norm has been doing a good job

for APAS [Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan] for a number of years now and Mr. Orb for SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities]. And certainly for the folks from the Farm Land Security Board, we're looking forward to hearing what the minister has to say in regards to that today. So again, on behalf of the official opposition we would like to welcome these individuals to their legislature.

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

Mr. Makowsky: — Thanks, Mr. Speaker. In the west gallery is a group of grade 12 students I'd like to introduce to the House. They're from Campus Regina Public. They're learning about social studies. Their teacher is Mr. Blaine Duffield. I look forward to having a chat with them after question period. All members please help me welcome them.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I stand today to present a petition in support of GSAs [gender and sexuality alliance] in our schools. And we know that this province lags behind others in securing the rights of gender- and sexually diverse students. This government is not doing enough to create safe spaces in our schools for sexually diverse students or students bullied because of their sexual identity or sexual orientation.

And we know that gender- and sexually diverse students are four times more likely than their heterosexual peers to attempt suicide. And we know that this government must act so that under no circumstances are gender- and sexually diverse students denied the right to form GSAs or gender and sexuality alliances within their schools. The prayer, Mr. Speaker:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on this government to take immediate and meaningful action to pass *The Respect for Diversity — Student Bill of Rights Act* and enshrine in legislation the right of Saskatchewan students to form GSAs within their schools in order to foster caring, accepting, inclusive environments and deliver equal opportunities for all students to reach their full potential.

And, Mr. Speaker, I do so present this petition. Thank you very much.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm proud to rise in the Assembly today to present a petition on cellphone coverage. And the prayer reads as follows, Mr. Speaker:

To ensure that the provincial government improve cell service coverage for northern communities like St. George's Hill, Dillon, Michel Village, Dore Lake, Michel Point, and Sled Lake to provide similar quality of cell coverage as southern communities currently enjoy. This

would provide support to our northern industries as well as mitigate safety concerns associated with living in the remote North.

And, Mr. Speaker, the people that have signed this petition are from Saskatoon and Big River. And 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 again for a residents-in-care bill of rights. The petitioners, Mr. Speaker, point out that residents in care should have the right to dignity, respect, and safety, and there should be basic guarantees of the quality of care that they receive in long-term care, Mr. Speaker. And the petitioners also point out that this is the responsibility of the provincial government to ensure consistent standards in care facilities throughout Saskatchewan. I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan adopt Bill 609, *The Residents-in-care Bill of Rights Act*, which would provide Saskatchewan seniors with the right to quality, high-level standards of care in seniors' care homes.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by citizens from Prince Albert. I so submit.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present a petition from individuals concerned about the high cost of post-secondary education here in the province of Saskatchewan. And in their petition they point out that a report released by Statistics Canada labelled Saskatchewan as the province with the highest increase in tuition for the 2014-15 year, having increased by 4 per cent in the province for undergraduate students and over 5 per cent for graduate students, and that the average Canadian student in 2014 graduated with debt of over \$27,000, not including credit card and other private debt. In the prayer that reads as follows, Mr. Speaker:

They respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the following action: to cause the provincial government to immediately increase the funding for post-secondary education in this province, with a legislated provision that this increase in funding be used to lower tuition fees.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by young citizens from the city of Regina. I so present.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

India Supper Night

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, on Saturday, September 26th, Stephanie and I had the pleasure of attending the India

Canada Association of Saskatchewan's 33rd India Supper Night, along with the Leader of the Opposition; his wife, Ruth; the member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre; his wife, Theresa; the members from Coronation Park and Regina South.

This annual dinner was another huge success. It raised money for Mother Teresa Middle School in Regina and, Mr. Speaker, over \$50,000 was raised. Since 1999 this event has raised over \$600,000 for various charities and organizations.

The evening was filled with incredible food, great speakers, and fantastic entertainment, including an impressive performance from students who attend Mother Teresa Middle School.

My wife, Stephanie, and I enjoyed helping out with the dinner once again this year and I know Stephanie and others enjoyed putting their best Bollywood moves on display.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank all the people who dedicated their time and efforts to making this event a huge success. I especially want to acknowledge the organizing committee: Renu Kapoor, Anjana Kaushal, Rani Bilkhu, Indra Datta, Kavita Ram, Poonam Sood, Madhu Kumar, and Kanwal Pandher.

I ask all members of this Assembly to join with me in congratulating the India Canada Association of Saskatchewan on another successful dinner and to thank ICA [India Canada Association] and Saskatchewan's Indo-Canadian community for their ongoing contributions to our community and our province as a whole. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Foster Families Week

Mr. Lawrence: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise in the House today to ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Foster Families Week in Saskatchewan.

We proclaim this special week to celebrate the contributions of foster families to at-risk children, their families, and our communities. Foster families open their homes and their hearts to children and youth to provide a safe and caring place for them.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan, like all other jurisdictions across North America, has had a decrease in the number of foster homes over the past five years. Foster families remain an extremely important resource for families in crisis, and work is being done to better recruit and retain them. The Saskatchewan Foster Families Association has been very instrumental in this work. The SFFA provides prospective and established foster families the education, guidance, and support they need so they can give the best care for our most at-risk children and youth.

There is not a more selfless way to give back to other families and communities than become a foster parent. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask all members present to join me in thanking all foster families and the Saskatchewan Foster Families Association for this vital service to our province. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Celebrating the Legacy of Gordon Tootoosis

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this time to speak about the Gordon Tootoosis gala which I attended, along with the member from Saskatoon Centre, on Friday, October 2nd. The Saskatchewan Native Theatre Company hosted the gala and celebrated the legacy of Gordon Tootoosis. Throughout the night, eight new bursaries and scholarships were announced, and the theatre company unveiled their new name.

Over the past year and a half, the theatre company consulted with members of the community regarding future directions of their organization. In consultation with the Tootoosis family and through ceremony, the Saskatchewan Native Theatre Company changed their name to the Gordon Tootoosis Nīkānīwin Theatre. The name honours Gordon Tootoosis, a Cree icon and one of the founding members of the theatre company.

Nīkānīwin is a Plains Cree expression for leadership, which appropriately describes Tootoosis's lifetime of work. When Gordon Tootoosis from Poundmaker First Nation began working in theatre, there was an incredible void of indigenous actors. He set out to fill that void and create supports for the development of young, aspiring indigenous actors. In doing so, he has had a profound impact on both the indigenous and wider theatre community in Saskatoon and across the province and country.

Mr. Speaker, this is an exciting time for the Gordon Tootoosis Nīkānīwin Theatre as they move forward into the future as a company grounded in culture, language, and history. I ask all members of the Assembly to join me in congratulating the Gordon Tootoosis Nīkānīwin Theatre and wish them all the best for a bright future of indigenous theatre. Thank you.

[13:45]

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

Police Officer Recognized for Act of Bravery

Hon. Mr. Cox: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to speak about an RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] officer in my home constituency of The Battlefords.

Mr. Speaker, on July 17th, 2014, Constable Jan Indenbosch responded with another officer to a call about an intoxicated man on a roof. Constable Indenbosch pursued the suspect, eventually following him up on to the roof to arrest him. Once on top of the building, Constable Indenbosch pursued him by foot. However the suspect made an almost fatal mistake by jumping over the edge of the building. With the suspect barely holding on to the side of the building, Constable Indenbosch risked his own life by grabbing the suspect's hands, saving him from a nearly 45-foot fall.

Mr. Speaker, for his act of bravery, last night the Lieutenant Governor presented Constable Indenbosch with a bronze medal

from the Royal Canadian Humane Association. I ask all members to join me in thanking Constable Jan Indenbosch for his bravery and for going above and beyond to ensure that North Battleford is a safe and healthy community.

I'd also like to thank all RCMP and municipal police force members across this province who risk their lives every day to make this province a safe place for all of us. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Habitat for Humanity Dedication Ceremonies in Prince Albert

Ms. Jurgens: — Thank you. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the House to talk about two Habitat for Humanity dedication ceremonies that recently took place in Prince Albert.

First we celebrated a key ceremony with Delores Pocha, whose dream of one day owning a home is now a reality. Now Delores has her own home where she, her three kids, and her grandchild can begin making memories. We then celebrated a sod-turning ceremony where Lu Paw, Mar Taw, and their two children broke the ground where their new home will be built.

Mr. Speaker, Habitat for Humanity is a great example of what happens when we work together to make good things happen in our community. Now two more Saskatchewan families are embarking on a brighter future for themselves, beginning with a home to call their own.

Since March 2009, our Saskatchewan Party government has provided an overall commitment of \$7.85 million to Habitat for Humanity. We support builds in 13 communities across the province, and we now provide \$65,000 in funding for each home starting construction. Mr. Speaker, each home is special because it represents a new beginning for a hard-working family seeking a safe, quality, affordable home.

I would like to offer my congratulations for both Prince Albert families on achieving their goals of home ownership. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

University of Regina Honours Red Cross

Mr. Steinley: — Mr. Speaker, last Thursday I had the honour of attending the University of Regina's President's Community Award. The President's Community Award recognizes those who have a strong history of working hard to better the lives of people across Saskatchewan.

During the award presentation, University of Regina president and vice-chancellor, Dr. Vianne Timmons, said, and I quote, "I cannot think of a more deserving organization to receive this award." The Red Cross has such a long history of giving back to Saskatchewan residents.

Cindy Fuchs, provincial director of the Canadian Red Cross,

accepted the award on behalf of all the hard-working staff and tireless volunteers, quoting, "This award is a tremendous honour for our staff and nearly 400 volunteers across the province."

While the Red Cross works in our community every day, this year the organization went above and beyond with their tremendous response to the wildfires in northern Saskatchewan. The Red Cross provided assistance and relief on behalf of the government during the province's largest evacuation which saw more than 13,000 people forced from their homes by the fires. Red Cross staff and volunteers worked 24-7 to manage the seven shelters during the four-week evacuation.

Mr. Speaker, I'd ask all members to join me in congratulating the Saskatchewan Red Cross on their well-deserved award and thank them for their commitment to the people of Saskatchewan during times of need. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Wholesale Trade Record Set in August

Mr. Parent: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm proud to rise in the House and say the numbers have come out, and Saskatchewan wholesale trade set a record in August. During August, Saskatchewan saw the highest percentage rise among the provinces with a gain of 12.9 per cent, year-over-year basis. Mr. Speaker, this totalled 2.3 billion in August, the highest ever for the month. This is also well above the 3.8 per cent of wholesale trade recorded nationally.

Mr. Speaker, in August we saw gains in Saskatchewan wholesale trade because of the strength of our agriculture sector, which had the largest increase. And the Minister Responsible for the Economy said, "Increases in wholesale trade are a good sign that Saskatchewan's economy is making gains." Further, "While there is no doubt these are challenging times for the resource-based economies, we are still confident that the diversity of our economy will help us create jobs and provide opportunities for businesses to prosper as we move forward."

Mr. Speaker, we are moving forward, strong as ever with a strong economy and a strong agriculture sector. It is because of our emphasis on moving forward with a strong economy that the province continues to show gains. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Emergency Room Wait Times

Mr. Broten: — Does the Premier know how many people leave emergency rooms without ever seeing a doctor because the waits are simply far too long?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for his question. We've been having some debate about

emergency room response and emergency room wait times in the province of Saskatchewan since the session returned. Mr. Speaker, I will again point out for members of the House that on the first day that my honourable friend raised the matter of emergency room waits, we'll all recall that his comparisons were inaccurate. He was comparing the Melfort hospital with Saskatoon, Regina, and Melfort combined in subsequent years. And so we know that the statistics he presented were not correct.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, emergency room waits remains a priority of the government. That's why we have increased resources with respect to emergency room delivery service, delivery right across the province — more nurses, more doctors — with the recognition that more needs to be done. The goal that we've set remains. We may not get there on the timeline that we first set out, but we remain committed to the goal we've set to eliminate waits for emergency care in Saskatchewan facilities, Mr. Speaker. And again, we're going to continue to properly resource the system so we can achieve that goal.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, if the Premier doesn't like the stats, he should speak to CIHI [Canadian Institute of Health Information] and take that up with them, Mr. Speaker. But more importantly, he should speak with Saskatchewan patients, Mr. Speaker, who will indicate that the current waits for emergency rooms are nowhere near acceptable. And for the Premier to try to pretend that he's taking this seriously is absolutely laughable.

My question, Mr. Speaker, to the Premier was whether or not he knows how many people leave emergency rooms because the waits are simply far too long, Mr. Speaker. The Premier clearly doesn't know the answer, but he should know the answer because it is disturbing, and it ought to be a wake-up call to this government. Thousands of people who go to emergency rooms in Saskatchewan end up leaving before they're ever assessed by a doctor because the waits are far too long.

In Prince Albert, Mr. Speaker, in P.A. almost one in ten patients leave the ER [emergency room] without seeing a doctor. That means about 2,700 people left the ER over the last year because the waits were too long in Prince Albert alone. What does the Premier have to say about this?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, the member gets very agitated when he's confronted with the fact that he hasn't necessarily been presenting all of the facts with respect to this very important debate.

An Hon. Member: — Oh please, Brad.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Oh he just said, oh please, Brad. I'll present him with the facts.

The claim that he made that emergency room wait times have doubled since 2010-11 is simply incorrect. Melfort was the only reporting hospital with respect to the stats he was citing in 2010-11. And the CIHI data, so we are using the same data, compared it to Regina and Saskatoon hospitals in subsequent

years. Mr. Speaker, that's apples and oranges.

Moreover, the CIHI data would also show members on both sides of the House that emergency room wait times for teaching in Saskatchewan, in Regina and Saskatoon, are consistent with teaching hospitals across the country, consistent with wait times across the country. Still unacceptable, more work needed to be done, and that's why we're putting more resources into the system.

But I invite the member, I invite the member to deal in fact, Mr. Speaker, so that we can in fact have the debate that the issue deserves.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, the facts show that this government has made no real progress when it comes to reducing waits for emergency room care. We have a case, Mr. Speaker, of 2,700 people leaving the Prince Albert emergency room because the waits are too long and it's not being taken seriously by this government.

It's not just people whose situations are deemed non-urgent that are leaving the emergency rooms due to these lengthy waits. In Prince Albert, there have been several months over the last year in which over 15 per cent of the people needing urgent care ended up leaving, and 10 per cent of those needing emergency care ended up leaving the ER.

Patients needing emergency care are supposed to see a physician within 15 minutes, but many of them ended up leaving the ER because they were left sitting in the waiting room for far too long. My question to the Premier: what is his explanation for this?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, it is important to note that wait times in Saskatoon and Regina, in emergency rooms, is consistent with teaching hospitals across Canada. That's not to say that anybody on either side of the House is satisfied with any wait time at all in emergencies. And, Mr. Speaker, that's why our government has committed, in this current budget, \$4.7 million additional in '15-16 for emergency wait time initiatives. That's up \$3 million over last year, Mr. Speaker.

We note there have been, because of population growth, significantly more emergency room visits in recent years, Mr. Speaker. That's why we've been piloting the hot-spotting concept, that's why there have been more home pilots in the province, all funded by the province of Saskatchewan. Funding for emergency room initiatives up across the board, funding for more health care professionals significantly up: 3,000 more nurses practising of every designation now in the province over what members were able to deliver when they had the chance, 500 more doctors, more specialists in every discipline.

We recognize there's more work that needs to be done. We've laid out the foundations for a plan with recognition that more needs to be done, Mr. Speaker. It would be interesting to hear from the member opposite now, four months away from an election. More than just pointing out the problem, what would

he do?

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

Mr. Broten: — Well, Mr. Speaker, this is the Premier who gave a pledge that there'd be zero wait times for emergency rooms. And what did this Premier do, Mr. Speaker? He turned around and drove millions and millions into a failed lean experiment, Mr. Speaker, that's not working throughout health care, and it's not working, Mr. Speaker, for the many patients who need urgent medical attention.

This is a widespread problem in our province. At the Battlefords Union Hospital almost 2,500 patients left the ER over the last year. Twenty-five hundred people went to the hospital in North Battleford needing help, but the waits were so long that they left without even being assessed by a doctor. That is unacceptable. When Saskatchewan people are sick or injured and go to an emergency room, they should be able to expect timely assessment and treatment. They shouldn't be left waiting, Mr. Speaker, for so long that they give up, go home, and perhaps dangerously self-medicate.

To the Premier: after nearly a decade of record prosperity, unprecedented prosperity in Saskatchewan, how on earth is this state of emergency rooms remotely acceptable?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as the Premier has indicated, and I have indicated in the past, we are certainly moving on a number of initiatives to improve the wait times in the emergency departments, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we have set a very bold, ambitious goal for wait times in the emergency department. We know we need to make progress, and we are seeing some new initiatives being rolled out. For example, in Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region, using some of the tools that the members opposite are very much against, a new process for patient treatment and assessment in Regina Qu'Appelle has led to a 27 per cent average reduction in the time for an assessment from the initial time they walk in to a physician assessment for non-emergent visits. Mr. Speaker, that's real progress.

What also is real progress is ensuring that people have access to primary health care. Where does that happen? Ensuring that you have the right number of nurses, the right number of nurse practitioners, the right number of physicians — over 500 physicians in this province, compared to the members opposite where they actually lost 173 family physicians across this province and closed 52 emergency rooms across this province.

[14:00]

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, I understand why the Premier hands off the responses to the Health minister, because this is the Premier, this is the Premier, Mr. Speaker, that with lots of fanfare, with tons of hype, Mr. Speaker, he made a promise that there'd be zero wait times for emergency rooms. That was his

promise. And then, Mr. Speaker, they bury this in an annual report, sweep it under the rug, when they're clearly breaking that pledge to Saskatchewan people. That is the record, Mr. Speaker, of this Premier: made a commitment over and over. The government records and documents show that they've made no real progress on reducing wait times.

And now we learn that ER wait times are so bad that thousands of people leave emergency rooms without seeing a physician. In Saskatoon, almost 6,600 people who went to the ER needing help last year ended up leaving because the waits were far too long. In Regina the number is 5,700 people. In just four health regions, Mr. Speaker, four regions, over 18,000 patients registered with the triage nurse were put on a list to see a doctor, but were left waiting so long in the waiting room that they left the emergency room. My question to the Premier: is that enough to finally get the Premier's attention?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I look forward to the Leader of the Opposition handing off some questions perhaps to the Health critic on the opposite side of the benches.

Mr. Speaker, I can tell the members opposite that there are 10,000 more visits in the last year to emergency departments to the previous year. That's why we need to look at improving not only the flow within the emergency departments through our triage assessment program that's seen real reductions here in Regina, but as well through some additional programs.

For example, in Saskatoon Health Region, Mr. Speaker, an event using lean methodology at RUH [Royal University Hospital] has seen a reduction by 58 per cent in ER wait times for cardiac patients presenting to RUH — the most emergent, urgent issues for cardiac patients, and we're seeing a real reduction, 58 per cent reduction, in their wait times.

We have more work to do. That's why we've invested \$4.7 million. That's why we're setting targets, unlike the members opposite and their record where there was no investment. There were no targets. There was just closures.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Suicide Prevention Measures in Northern Saskatchewan

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Northern Saskatchewan has one of the worst suicide rates in all of Canada. Our loved ones are dying at a time and at a rate that far exceeds the rest of the province. Keewatin Yatthe Health Region has a suicide rate that is three and a half times higher than the provincial rate.

Mr. Speaker, I attend far too many funerals of family members and constituents who have lost hope and chose to end their lives. And this is heartbreaking, and it needs to stop. Does the Premier recognize that much more needs to be done to prevent suicides in northern Saskatchewan? And when can we finally expect this government to act?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Certainly this is a very serious issue for I think all members of the House. Certainly I know a number of members including, I can consider myself in this, have been touched by the impact of completed suicides or even suicide attempts.

Mr. Speaker, there is I think nothing more heartbreaking to think of an individual in our province who can no longer think of a future that includes themselves in it.

And, Mr. Speaker, that's why we have embarked on a lot of work in terms of our mental health and addictions review. The work that we do have in place, that does put a high focus on suicide prevention. I can say that one of our health regions had been contracted to provide some suicide prevention material that's going to be rolled out into all of our health regions. That work is taking place. In fact suicide risk identification measures are being made a part of standardized screenings and assessment tools that are being used by all of our mental health and addiction services. That work is being rolled out, Mr. Speaker. This is a very serious topic, and that's certainly why the health care system has put such a high priority on it.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Mr. Speaker, the number of youth that are hospitalized for suicide attempts in northern Saskatchewan is almost 300 per cent worse than the rest of the province. In the Far North it's 635 per cent worse, Mr. Speaker. And I say again, this needs to stop.

And there are many things that need to happen. We need accessible mental health services in the North. We need addiction programs, Mr. Speaker. We need to give northern residents the hope that comes with good housing, strong communities, a vibrant economy, and lots of opportunities for education and employment. We need to give them hope.

Mr. Speaker, does the Premier agree? And what's he going to do about this problem?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Certainly we do take this very seriously on this side of the House. I can inform the House that the Ministry of Health, working with five of our health regions, are working on spreading mental health and addictions services, prevention, policies, and protocols in fact into other areas of the health care system, whether that be into the emergency department in our hospitals, as well as long-term care, ensuring that there are proper protocols and procedures in those areas of the health care system where perhaps in the past we have perhaps overlooked those avenues.

I would certainly encourage anybody in this province that is experiencing depression, suicidal thoughts, suicide ideation to contact a health care provider, certainly to call HealthLine 811. We're ensuring that there is a mental health worker that is staffing 811 at all times. In the past we had that for part of the time; we want to ensure that that's happening at all times so that individuals can have that immediate access. And I would certainly encourage anybody to avail themselves of those

resources.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Our province has had a decade of unprecedented prosperity, but people in northern Saskatchewan haven't felt the benefits of the boom and thereby feel disregarded. And, Mr. Speaker, that's not acceptable.

The last report on mental health in northern Saskatchewan found that northerners in our province reported a worse state of mental health than anywhere else in all of Canada, including the territories. We are losing far too many people in northern Saskatchewan and far too many of our youth to suicide, Mr. Speaker. And I want, and I say it very clear, I want this government to act now. Mr. Speaker, what will it take for the Premier to do that?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there is a significant focus that's being put in place, particularly in northern Saskatchewan. I'll go into a little bit more depth in that. Keewatin Yatthé Regional Health Authority plans to continue to provide suicide prevention and intervention training six times a year across that health region. Mamawetan Churchill River is continuing to provide the same training to staff in various organizations throughout its health region.

Sandy Bay and Pinehouse developed critical incident trauma response teams. Sandy Bay opened a family resource centre which is focusing on early childhood development for parents. And I know certainly the education system has significant resources as well. Beauval and Ile-a-la-Crosse each have a community-based, multi-agency committee that is focused on suicide prevention activities.

Certainly we recognize, Mr. Speaker, through our mental health and addictions action plan that this is not just a health issue. This involves health. It involves education, social services. It involves the community. It involves other agencies of both government and non-governmental organizations, and we are dedicated and committed to working with all of those to find solutions to these problems.

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

Provision of Child Care Spaces

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. According to a new report by the Childcare Resource and Research unit, Saskatchewan is last among Canadian provinces in terms of regulated child care spaces. Just 12 per cent of kids age five and under have access to a regulated space. The Canadian average is 24 per cent, more than double the rate here in Saskatchewan. This government has had almost a decade of record revenues, yet it has failed to significantly improve child care, and that is not acceptable.

To the minister: is it acceptable to the Sask Party that just 12 per cent of young kids in this province have access to a child

care space when the national average is double that?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can advise the member opposite that we are committed to families. We are committed to early learning. We are committed to child care.

Our budget this year provides over \$70 million for early learning opportunities. That includes \$3.9 million for early childhood intervention programs, four and a half million dollars for KidsFirst, \$19 million for pre-kindergarten programs, and \$51 million for child care spaces. Since forming government, we've increased child care spaces by 53 per cent, pre-K [pre-kindergarten] programs by 104 per cent. Early childhood intervention programming funding has increased by 40 per cent. Mr. Speaker, we've made a major commitment to the children in our province. There's more work to do but, Mr. Speaker, we're moving in the right direction.

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

Ms. Chartier: — I guess, Mr. Speaker, last might be the right direction for this government. They remain in last place, Mr. Speaker.

There are 18,000 more children in Saskatchewan now than there were in 2007. The number of children with moms who work outside the home has jumped by 15,000 during that time. But despite nearly a decade of record revenues, the Sask Party government has managed to add about 4,400 child care spaces. So the Sask Party hasn't even come close to meeting the growing need.

To the minister: when will the Sask Party shelve the tired excuses and get serious about expanding the number of child care spaces here in Saskatchewan?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, for the benefit of the members opposite, we made a commitment last election to add 2,000 new spaces in the second term. Mr. Speaker, we're well under way to meeting that target, and in fact, Mr. Speaker, we've committed to 90 spaces in each of the nine joint-use schools. Mr. Speaker, that will add an additional 810 spaces. That will exceed our target by some 310 when those are completed, and those are on track, Mr. Speaker.

We are committed to having sufficient and adequate child care for our province. Our plan is to continue to expand pre-K programs, with an emphasis on improved support for children at risk, in addition to increasing early learning and child care spaces.

Mr. Speaker, we have more work to do, but we're continuing to do that, and we're continuing to make significant progress in that area. It is wrong for the members opposite to say we are not making progress when in fact, Mr. Speaker, we made a commitment for 2,000 spaces. And, Mr. Speaker, we're exceeding that commitment.

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

Ms. Chartier: — I guess all those parents looking for child care should just disregard the few spaces that there are in national rankings, Mr. Speaker.

With this kind of record revenue that the government has raked in over the last eight years, they should have made huge improvements to child care in this province, but they have not. Eighteen thousand more children, 15,000 more children with moms who work outside of the home, but just 4,400 more child care spaces — they have not even come close to keeping up with the growth and need for child care spaces. And parents in Saskatchewan are sick and tired of the Sask Party's pathetic excuses.

Will the minister just admit that the Sask Party government dropped the ball and let Saskatchewan people down on child care?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, I think we better have some comparison about what took place under the NDP [New Democratic Party] government.

Mr. Speaker, under 16 years of the NDP, the total licensed child care space in the province only increased by 2,856. Mr. Speaker, under this government it's increased by more than 5,000. That's a big difference between eight years here and 16 years over there. And, Mr. Speaker, I'll tell you some more specifics on that. Mr. Speaker, the NDP did not add any new pre-K programs in '96-97 and, Mr. Speaker, they didn't do any more in '98-99, '04-05, or in the '05-06 budget. And that's the reason why those members are sitting opposite because they made no commitment to that whatsoever.

Mr. Speaker, I can quote from some of their members opposite, Pat Atkinson, *Hansard*, May 9th, 2011: "Because I agree that this has been a significant ramping up of child daycare." That was after the Sask Party formed government. That's their member recognizing that this is what's taking place here and the members there now ought to continue to do that, Mr. Speaker.

[14:15]

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

Maintenance Agreement for Regina Bypass

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, this is the Sask Party's maintenance plan for the Regina bypass. Government-owned snowplows will reach the edge of the bypass, they'll lift up their plows, and they'll drive through this. Maybe they'll wave at a Paris snowplow driver as they go and then they'll hit the end of that bypass. Then they'll put their plows back down and start moving snow again. How does this make an ounce of sense?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Highways.

Hon. Ms. Heppner: — Mr. Speaker, as per usual with the NDP

when they come into this House, the information they bring in is not always correct. The member opposite makes it sound like there's going to be absolutely no maintenance, no snow removal, no mowing around the bypass, which is absolutely incorrect, Mr. Speaker.

He sat through a technical briefing about two weeks ago. I find it incredibly unfortunate that he came out afterwards and said that he didn't get any answers, which is a huge insult to the public service members that were there answering his questions, and they answered every single question he asked. He should be apologizing to them.

But, Mr. Speaker, as he was told, part of the agreement for the \$1.88 billion project is maintenance for the next 30 years, Mr. Speaker, which includes snow removal.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Right, Mr. Speaker, as the minister states, it's not just Paris snowplows, it's also sanding and mowing. And they're going to have a conglomerate from France, from Paris, France that's going to deliver this for 30 years for the people of the province for this very short portion of highways. It doesn't make any sense at all. You know, meanwhile the conglomerate from France will be making a profit off of that maintenance contract for 30 years.

You know, it's remarkable, Mr. Speaker. The Sask Party never fails to find the most expensive and most convoluted way to do something, Mr. Speaker. And time and time again they're sending piles and piles of taxpayers' money out of country to corporations as a result.

So again to the Highways minister: how on earth can the Sask Party pretend that it's cheaper for the French conglomerate to plow our roads, to mow our ditches while government-owned plows and mowers drive by the bypass just to get to the other side?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Highways.

Hon. Ms. Heppner: — Mr. Speaker, as was explained to the member opposite, part of the contract with the project company is for maintenance for 30 years. Mr. Speaker, it's all been worked into the costs.

But if he's concerned about money, Mr. Speaker, the NDP keeps sending out press releases asking us to delay this project. The proposal that was put forward by the member opposite would cost us \$1 billion more, take four years longer to take. Mr. Speaker, we'd lose \$200 million from PPP Canada [Public-Private Partnership Canada]. We would lose all the design work that's been done.

If he's worried about this project going ahead, if he's worried about safety on Highway 1 and interchanges that are needed along Highway 1 East, Mr. Speaker, he should get behind this project because his proposal will take longer, will cost more money, and will keep endangering people while they wait for the NDP to come up with a solution.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 187 — *The Saskatchewan Farm Security Amendment Act, 2015*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 187, *The Saskatchewan Farm Security Amendment Act, 2015* be now introduced and read a first time.

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — I gather everybody must have gone home and gone to bed early, didn't watch the game or the election because they're full of vim and vinegar today.

The Minister of Agriculture has moved first reading of Bill No. 187, *The Saskatchewan Farm Security Amendment Act, 2015*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to approve the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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

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

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

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 184 — *The Automobile Accident Insurance (Motorcycles) Amendment Act, 2015*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak on Bill 184, *The Automobile Accident Insurance (Motorcycles) Amendment Act, 2015*.

Mr. Speaker, earlier this year in May I had the pleasure to announce that for the 2016 riding season, SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance] will be introducing a third choice for injury coverage for motorcycle owners in addition to the current choices of tort coverage or no-fault coverage. The additional option is to reduce . . . is a reduced package of no-fault benefits which will provide the same level of benefit as the tort product, but with a limited ability to sue.

This new choice is for motorcycle owners who feel they require fewer benefits in the event of a collision, and because there are fewer benefits, it allows for a lower cost or a lower premium. On average, opting to the reduced no-fault coverage will result

in savings of 20 to 30 per cent for most motorcycle owners. We feel this provides a good balance between cost and coverage, because it ensures that all motorcycle riders continue to receive some level of insurance coverage if they are injured.

As members of the Assembly may know, these changes are a result of motorcycle coverage and injury coverage reviews undertaken by SGI. Both reviews involved the stakeholders from the motorcycle community as well as a consultation with the public at large.

Mr. Speaker, I make it very clear when I announced this additional option last May that motorcyclists need to think long and hard about their injury coverage options and which is best for them and their family should they be injured in a motorcycle collision. No one ever thinks that will happen to them, but it does. One of our injury review committee members had himself been seriously injured in a motorcycle collision, and he had made the point very strongly that people shouldn't make the choice with their wallets. He makes it a very valid argument, Mr. Speaker, and I just want to convey that to the Assembly today.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to say that the changes we announced were received favourably by the motorcycle community. They are looking forward to having this additional option in place by April 1st, 2016. As a result of the new options, Mr. Speaker, there is a significant number of wording and update amendments required in the Act which are reflected in the bill before us today.

Mr. Speaker, to conclude, I am pleased to move second reading of Bill 184, *The Automobile Accident Insurance (Motorcycles) Amendment Act, 2015*. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — The minister has moved second reading of Bill No. 184, *The Automobile Accident Insurance (Motorcycles) Amendment Act, 2015*. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm once again pleased to stand up this afternoon to give our initial comments on Bill 184, *The Automobile Accident Insurance Act*, Mr. Speaker.

This really has a lot of history to it as we look overall in the last number of years, in particular the last decade, and some of the changes made around no-fault insurance and of course the option of tort and the option of the personal injury protection program that SGI sometimes offers, Mr. Speaker. There's a number of options that many vehicle owners have as it relates to the ability to not only go through the trauma of an accident but to remain sure that their family's protected from further challenges that may result from that accident.

And, Mr. Speaker, we know that over the last decade there's been a lot of discussion around the option of PIPP, the personal injury protection plan, versus the legal option of course called tort, Mr. Speaker. It's something that really takes a lot of time to begin to try and understand because of the complex nature of the insurance industry, Mr. Speaker. What happens here is you've got to have a lot of consultation with a lot of groups, and of course SGI themselves certainly have to be able to run an

automobile insurance business because obviously it's government-owned and something that the people of Saskatchewan want to protect.

So there's really a lot of challenge to try and mix and match the demands of both parties. By both parties, I'm talking about SGI as the insurer and, Mr. Speaker, the people that drive our automobiles, including the motorcycles in this case. Certainly also have the issue of affordability and of course protection in the event that there is some incident or some accident that they're involved with, Mr. Speaker. It's something that is really, really, as I said at the outset, a complex relationship. It's an affordability issue. It's also an issue of trying to sustain the service for years to come.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I know from some of the discussions we've had in the past that there was a lot of debate, there's a lot of argument around the option of tort, of actually suing the other party or other people that may be involved in your accident versus just taking the no-fault insurance, Mr. Speaker. There's all kinds of twists and turns to the insurance industry and we've got to be very, very careful that when we make changes to it that consultation must occur and that you certainly have to be able to consult with some of the groups. And I'm pleased to say that there has been some discussion with the automobile owners, and certainly I think there was an opportunity for motorcycle owners to provide feedback, Mr. Speaker.

So what we see as a result of this particular bill, Bill 184, is that you have the tort option as one option; you have the no-fault option as a second option, and of course, as the minister explained, the third choice of no-fault with some limited benefits. And of course also the trade-off here is a limited ability to sue.

Now, Mr. Speaker, as we all know that there was an outcry from the motorcycle industry. I believe the association or the group that was born out of the anger by a lot of motorcycle owners that looked at the rates that SGI was looking at charging them for keeping their motorcycles on the road, I believe that organization was called R.A.G.E. [Riders Against Government Exploitation]. They were quite angry about the rate that was being proposed and obviously they wanted to make sure that they were consulted, Mr. Speaker. And we want to, as an opposition, also ensure that there is that discussion with groups like R.A.G.E., with groups that are involved with the use of motorcycles as a hobby or as a means of transportation. And, Mr. Speaker, we certainly think that consultation and co-operation and discussion is something that ought to be afforded to this process.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I understand from the minister's comments that there was general acceptance overall from the motorcycle owners as we make reference to them today. And, Mr. Speaker, we need to know a number of regions, I guess, the number of uses of the motorcycle owners themselves. Like as I mentioned at the outset, there was recreational users. There was people that actually use it to transport themselves back and forth to work. Others do it on the occasional weekend. Others do it as a summer trip, Mr. Speaker. So there's a wide variety of uses and users of the motorcycle in the province of Saskatchewan, and I think we need to have some very good serious discussions with some of those groups to ask them their opinion on their advice

on the issue of the third option, Mr. Speaker.

So there's a lot of different scenarios here that we have to be careful of. As I said at the outset, you have SGI wanting to do the affordability issue. You have the motorcycle drivers that need the protection of insurance in case there is an accident. And of course, Mr. Speaker, you've also got to be able to look at how SGI operates their Crown corporation to ensure that there is a profit when it comes to the insurance process, Mr. Speaker. Because you can't have a vibrant Crown sector in the province of Saskatchewan without the bottom line called profit, and I think that's something that SGI takes into account when they do these consultations. And, Mr. Speaker, I think that I want to make sure that all these factors are included in these discussions.

And that's why it's important, the Legislative Assembly process, as I indicated from time to time, is the minister's going to introduce the bill and what the intended changes are, and as an opposition member we have the opportunity to have a first crack at this particular bill just to make sure that everything's aligned and properly thought out, Mr. Speaker — something that we've from time to time not expected from that particular minister. And once again he's in a different portfolio, Mr. Speaker, so we're trying to find out and make sure that he knows exactly what he's doing in this particular bill.

And there are times that I said at the outset that we really want to take our time to study the bill, talk to the impacted groups and organizations that are out there, and really read in between the lines here and read what could possibly happen, look at all the different scenarios that could occur, Mr. Speaker.

But as I said, I'm quite pleased that there is discussion with the motorcycle owner themselves, Mr. Speaker. And this is something that we're going to pay very, very close attention to. So as we proceed in this fall sitting, I would say that there's going to be a lot more feedback from my colleagues. We have a number of issues that we want to talk about in this particular bill. So on that note, Mr. Speaker, I move that we adjourn debate on Bill 184, *An Act to amend The Automobile Accident Insurance Act*. I so move.

[14:30]

The Speaker: — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 184, *The Automobile Accident Insurance (Motorcycles) Amendment Act, 2015*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 185 — *The Traffic Safety (Miscellaneous Measures) Amendment Act, 2015*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise to speak to Bill 185, *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2015*. Mr. Speaker, the most significant amendment to this Act protects data gathered through facial recognition technology

used with driver's licences in Saskatchewan. Saskatchewan is the only province not using this technology. Having it in place will bring our province in alignment with every other jurisdiction in Canada.

We announced late last year, Mr. Speaker, that we were seeking a vendor for driver licence production. Facial recognition technology was part of the request for proposal or RFP. This is very interesting technology, Mr. Speaker. Your photo is taken. Your features are measured electronically by the facial recognition software and then compared to other images in the database. It's pretty sophisticated. Mr. Speaker, facial recognition software provides better security. It helps prevent fraud. It will protect Saskatchewan residents from identity theft. It will prevent people from obtaining multiple driver's licences or IDs [identification]. It will also improve road safety by preventing suspended drivers from using a false identity to get a licence.

Mr. Speaker, we will take privacy of our citizens very seriously. People trust us with their information. They want to be comfortable that we are using advances in technology for the right reasons. I want to assure the Assembly that facial recognition technology will improve the security of Saskatchewan driver's licences and ID cards. We will also ensure that privacy of individual residents is maintained. This technology will be used only for the specific purpose of detecting fraud with the goal to maintain the integrity of the Saskatchewan driver licences and ID system. I will add, Mr. Speaker, that the office of the information and privacy officer was consulted on the draft of this legislation and agrees with how SGI is proceeding.

Mr. Speaker, this bill also puts forward a number of housekeeping amendments and, with the indulgence of the Assembly, I would like to highlight those briefly. You may recall, Mr. Speaker, that in the spring of 2014, *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2014* received Royal Assent. The Act introduced significant changes to improve safety on our roadways and highways and helped bring down the number of people being killed and injured in vehicle collisions. It's a serious issue, Mr. Speaker, and we are very proud to implement those law changes last June.

This next amendment, Mr. Speaker, imposes stronger consequences for drivers under the influence of drugs and alcohol. Changes to the Act allow for immediate roadside licence suspension and vehicle impoundments for drinking, drugs, and driving. As a result of a drinking and driving offence, *The Traffic Safety Act* requires a driver to complete an approved educational course. If this course is not completed within 90 days, the driver's licence will either remain suspended or another suspension will be added until the course is completed. This bill before us today proposes to increase the length of time to complete the course from 90 days to 100 days, Mr. Speaker. This will make the time frame consistent with other SGI programs.

In some cases, prior to the reinstatement of the driver licence after a drinking and driving offence, a driver must attend an addiction screening or drug or alcohol abuse course, Mr. Speaker. Drivers will not get their licence back until an addiction counsellor indicates to SGI the driver is deemed low

risk of reoffending. Industry changes have resulted in addiction counselling no longer providing SGI with a low-risk offence rating; therefore the legislation needs to be updated so customers may be properly reinstated as drivers.

Mr. Speaker, a further amendment proposes changes to the Act to allow for the impounded vehicle's licence plate to be cancelled. Over 50 per cent of the vehicle owners make monthly insurance payments. When the vehicle is impounded, SGI continues to take monthly . . . money from their bank accounts. Customers are unhappy with the process and this amendment seeks to improve that.

Moving on, Mr. Speaker, chances are we all know someone who has been injured or even killed in a vehicle collision. Sometimes it's their fault, sometimes the other driver's. Sometimes it's caused in the commission of an offence. An innocent party is killed or injured, for example by a stolen vehicle or an impaired driver. The next amendment addresses those circumstances by allowing additional Criminal Code offences to be reported to SGI. Those offences are: causing death by criminal negligence, causing bodily harm by criminal negligence, and dangerous operation of a motor vehicle while street racing. This amendment aligns with proposed changes to *The Automobile Accident Insurance Act*. The intent, Mr. Speaker, is that convictions for those offences would trigger the ability to sue the responsible driver for pain and suffering or bereavement damages. This brings more fairness to the type of scenario.

Mr. Speaker, we are also making an amendment to the Act around vehicle ownership. In the Act, "owner" is identified as a person with a vehicle registered in Saskatchewan. The proposed changes indicate that an owner is a person registered with a vehicle in any jurisdiction. This change adds clarity for issuing of tickets to out-of-province vehicle owners for automatic enforcement or red light or speed offences, speeding offences. This amendment is retroactive to July 1st, 2006, the date that the original Act came into force.

Mr. Speaker, an additional change moving into regulation requires some motorists to wear helmets and eye protection. This allows quicker licensing and registration changes as new vehicles become available on the market without compromising safety for operators and passengers. Vehicle manufacturers are getting more creative all the time and we want to be able to ensure people are travelling safely. This change will allow us to respond more nimbly when a new vehicle type is introduced.

Mr. Speaker, that's quite a variety of housekeeping amendments. The main purpose is really to ensure consistency, assist customers, and improve road safety. Mr. Speaker, to conclude, I am pleased to move second reading of Bill 185, *The Traffic Safety (Miscellaneous Measures) Amendment Act, 2015*. Thank you.

The Speaker: — The minister has moved second reading of Bill No. 185, *The Traffic Safety (Miscellaneous Measures) Amendment Act, 2015*. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Once again I'm pleased to stand in my place today to give initial

comments in relation to this particular bill, Bill 185. And, Mr. Speaker, there's a number of amendments and there's a number of Acts that are being impacted by this particular bill. And obviously there are some that are housekeeping bills and other certainly more serious parts of the bill that we have to take the time to understand what the bill is trying to achieve, Mr. Speaker.

As I look down some of the lists and some of the comments that the minister basically made as to what the proposed changes are, Mr. Speaker, we look at the whole notion of the facial recognition technology. I understand from the minister's comment that this is a very interesting technology and that there is certainly other jurisdictions that obviously may have experimented with this technology. It would be very interesting to know what the other jurisdictions are, what their results were, and of course how is that going to impact SGI and how's that going to impact the people of Saskatchewan. Because obviously at the outset, you would assume that facial recognition technology is something that is basically a very valuable tool when you look at the whole notion of trying to ensure that people aren't using your licence and that there isn't that threat out there.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we talk about driver licence integrity as part of the process. We talk about safety on our highways. We talk about some of the challenge as it relates to amendments around the immediate suspension on the highway if somebody is suspected of being intoxicated either through drugs or alcohol, Mr. Speaker. We look at the notion or the comment as it relates to the 90 days to 100 days for training, Mr. Speaker, some of the arguments around the addiction screening that was made, the minister made, and the added component where an addiction counsellor will determine whether you get your licence back. These are some of the issues I think, Mr. Speaker, that really will take a lot of time for us to discuss and certainly take the time to determine how this is going to impact the motorists of Saskatchewan overall.

There's no question from the opposition perspective that we are after safe highways, that we are after reasonable insurance rates, and that we are trying to ensure that the people that may have been involved with an accident, that they're properly covered and they're properly cared for, Mr. Speaker. That all goes, you know, without saying. And of course obviously we have to make sure that SGI's able to respond to these challenges, these ever-growing challenges as it relates to motor traffic, motor vehicle traffic in the province of Saskatchewan.

Now, Mr. Speaker, some of the other amendments that the minister briefly alluded to was basically that vehicle ownership . . . in terms of providing clarity as to vehicle ownership in the province of Saskatchewan, as well the materials for eye protection and helmets.

So as you look at all these issues, Mr. Speaker, we have to really, really take the time to understand what Bill 85 is all about. We obviously encourage people that are out there that have some information, some people that have been following some of the parts of the bill, Mr. Speaker, we've got to make sure that they have an opportunity to explain to them what the strengths are of some of the changes, Mr. Speaker. Even though they're housekeeping, I think it's really, really important that

we take the time to get their opinion and get their input as to how these changes are going to affect the automobile insurance in the province of Saskatchewan, and certainly the safe flow of traffic throughout all parts of our province.

Now, Mr. Speaker, what is a bit confusing to us over here, and we kind of were wondering about the timing, about the timing about this particular bill, Mr. Speaker. We had this issue dealt with last year and here we are six months before the next provincial election and all of a sudden this particular bill, Bill 185, comes before the Assembly, Mr. Speaker. So we're kind of wondering why wasn't this implemented a year ago. Why is it being done in the fall sitting, the last six months before a provincial election is called?

So the timing is suspect here, Mr. Speaker, because these issues and a lot of the discussion around automobile safety . . . I understand that a couple of my colleagues, the member from Cumberland and the member from Saskatoon Riversdale, were on this committee and they done a tour throughout the province of Saskatchewan studying and talking and consulting about traffic safety, Mr. Speaker. And this was done a year ago, just over a year ago.

And none of the changes that they were implementing, or they were suggesting as the opposition members, to strengthen our laws and to really protect the people of Saskatchewan and to make the highways a lot safer, well a lot of the discussions that were brought up by my two colleagues were disregarded, Mr. Speaker. The Saskatchewan Party government disregarded some of their very compelling arguments and some of the arguments that were supported by documentation from some of the various industries or people or groups or organizations out there that participated in that public process.

So one of the things I think Bill 185, the most compelling thing that we see, Mr. Speaker, is the timing of presenting this bill in the Assembly. The timing is suspect. There is something obviously very wrong here, Mr. Speaker, when some of the work and some of the most compelling ideas and concepts were fresh on the minds of the people of Saskatchewan a year ago and it wasn't dealt with at that time, Mr. Speaker.

So really, as you look at the bill itself . . . Again as I mentioned, facial recognition technology, ensuring that the integrity of the driver's licence system is in place, like these, safety on our highways, these are all motherhood statements. But some of the tough decisions and the tough choices that were to be made as a result of those hearings on safety on our highways, the committee that went throughout the province . . . Well, Mr. Speaker, a lot of those issues weren't dealt with.

So again we go back to, we fast-forward to the fall sitting of 2015 and the minister is now bringing these issues forward. And, Mr. Speaker, again as we said at the outset, we've got to make sure we know what the agenda is of the Saskatchewan Party. That's our role as an opposition. So therefore again we would point out to the people of Saskatchewan a simple point, that the timing as a result of some of the amendments on Bill 185 is suspect, Mr. Speaker. They could have done some of these changes last year.

And the question you have to ask yourself: why didn't they

present these amendments and these changes a year ago when the committee was fresh off their hearings, Mr. Speaker? They try and move it over a year. And what I would point out, Mr. Speaker, is some of the changes and some of the recommendations and some of the harder penalties that are being proposed for people that drink and drive, as a good example, Mr. Speaker, none of the issues were accepted by the general committee that undertook these public hearings except for the two members, from Cumberland and of course the member from Saskatoon Riversdale. They had some very good ideas, Mr. Speaker, again supported by the organizations and the groups out there that are committed to traffic safety in our province, Mr. Speaker, all kinds of groups and organizations. A good example would be the MADD [Mothers Against Drunk Driving] chapters in the province, mothers against drunk drivers. Mr. Speaker, these are some of the organizations and the groups and the people that came forward, again, a year and a half ago.

[14:45]

It took a lot of time and energy and a lot of time away from their families and their work and their other pressures to participate in this very important public hearing process. And what did the Sask Party do, Mr. Speaker? They enacted very few recommendations as a result of that study, Mr. Speaker. They delayed some of the issues that were pressing as a result of some of that committee work. And now, Mr. Speaker, a year later, they're introducing a few more changes at the fall sitting six months before the next provincial election, Mr. Speaker.

So really people begin to ask the question is, why are they doing that? What is the logic behind there, Mr. Speaker? Why are they delaying and bringing pieces and bits and parts of the bill, or the changes that were recommended to come forward to bills such as 185, Mr. Speaker? We don't know the answer to that. We have our suspicions, Mr. Speaker, but the big thing on Bill 185 really is the timing is so suspect that we are starting to think that there was a political agenda on that side of the Assembly that trumps common sense. There's a political agenda on that side that really trumps what we think is a solid plan to ensure safety on our highways, Mr. Speaker.

And, Mr. Speaker, we see bits and dribs and drabs of what the hearings, public hearings had to say about how you strengthen our Acts and how you position Saskatchewan people to benefit of the number one concern, safety on our highways, eliminating some of these threats on our highways, Mr. Speaker. And none of that work and none of those issues certainly have come forward.

And this is the reason why it's important that the opposition is . . . that we do our job here to hold this government to account and to ask the questions of why the delays, why the timing here. You had all this information a year ago. Why didn't you implement it then? Why is it six months before the next election that they're proposing it now?

And, Mr. Speaker, I would suspect that they didn't have the courage to bring forward some of the recommendations that the members of the opposition had that would really strengthen the hand of SGI and strengthen the hand of the law enforcement people for really doing the number one thing that the committee

was set up to do, and that is to ensure and to increase the level of safety on our highways, Mr. Speaker.

It is a job that the member from Cumberland and the member from Saskatoon Riversdale took very seriously. They spent a lot of time away from their own constituents and from their families and from their time at home to go on the public hearing trail to hear what people are saying out there about some of the dangers, Mr. Speaker. And they committed a lot of time.

So these are some of the things that's really, really important as we look at the notion around how we make our highways a lot safer, Mr. Speaker. And as I said at the outset, the minister basically explained some of the points and some of the Acts that were impacted as a result of this Bill 185.

We want to make sure that all the issues that they're talking about or he's talking about is certainly vetted and that we're able to go through a number of organizations and/or legal advice from a number of lawyers that might be paying very close attention to what SGI does around Bill 185, Mr. Speaker.

It is something that is keenly interesting, and it's something that is keenly watched by a number of groups and organizations. And we in the opposition would invite those groups and those organizations to do what they can to share some of the information with us. Because rest assured we will certainly use the information to the advantage to make sure that Bill 185 really does what it's supposed to do, and that is to maximize safety on our highways through appropriate measures of dealing with those that are driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or those that want to use a false licence. These are some of the things, Mr. Speaker, that's really important to the opposition.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would hope, given the current practice of the Saskatchewan Party, that what's not next on the agenda as the result of what's in front of us, Bill 185, is they don't try and use the facial recognition technology during the election process, Mr. Speaker. Because they have done a lot of things to deter a number of people from voting, Mr. Speaker. It's that old voting suppression trick and tactic.

So I hope and I would warn people that as a result of Bill 185, when you do the facial recognition technology, please don't transfer that over to your fair elections Act, whatever you decide to do, Mr. Speaker. I think a picture on a licence plate would be sufficient, Mr. Speaker, because according to them there's a huge problem of voter fraud. So they put in all these measures and, Mr. Speaker, those measures were, quite frankly, to try and stop a lot of the Aboriginal community from voting, to try and stop a lot of the immigrant community from voting, and a lot of people, the elderly people from voting, Mr. Speaker. It's a common tactic of the conservative, right wing Saskatchewan Party ilk, Mr. Speaker.

And so I hope that if we use these to do the facial recognition technology for vehicle purposes, Mr. Speaker, to Bill 185, we think that it's probably appropriate to use it there. But please don't expand it to your fair elections Act so to speak, Mr. Speaker. Keep it under the vehicle security and keep it under the driver's licence integrity. Keep it under the safety on our highways argument. Please don't bring in another measure to

deter another huge amount of voters, Mr. Speaker. Because people of Saskatchewan don't like that kind of action, and they certainly don't like that kind of manipulation overall.

And it was really, Mr. Speaker, while I'm on this facial recognition technology aspect, it was really nice just to be able to see the turnout in the federal election overall through all our province, Mr. Speaker. So what happened here was, as you can see, Mr. Speaker, that there was a lot of people that came out and voted, and despite the best efforts to try and use what I think is activity that would deal with voter suppression. My only argument is, please don't use the aspect of facial recognition technology as another means to try and suppress votes, Mr. Speaker, because these are some of the things that we worry about. When they have an idea on Bill 185, it becomes more relevant to us because every bit of technology and every bit of . . .

The Speaker: — I would ask the member to talk about the relevance of the bill, not some other discussion that he may want to have in another venue. I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So getting back to Bill 185, the facial recognition technology, it's appropriate in determining the licensing and the operator of the vehicle, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps the technology is interesting. My only point being, Mr. Speaker, is that they don't use it in some other venue and don't . . .

The Speaker: — I've asked the member to maintain his remarks relevant to the bill, not to some other topic, and I won't correct him again on this issue. I recognize the member.

Mr. Belanger: — Mr. Speaker, on that note, I move that we adjourn debate on Bill 185.

The Speaker: — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 185, *The Traffic Safety (Miscellaneous Measures) Amendment Act*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Adjourned.

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 179

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Duncan that **Bill No. 179** — *The MRI Facilities Licensing Act* be now read a second time.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm glad to take my place in this Assembly and join debate today on Bill No. 179, *The MRI Facilities Licensing Act*.

I guess off the top, I'd like to say a few things about just some

observations around the timing of this particular piece of legislation that I find interesting, Mr. Speaker, a little bit about some of the context that we see this bill coming forward in. I'd like to say a few things about the bill itself and certainly, you know, how this does or does not address the problem that it sets out in front of it, and then of course, Mr. Speaker, just some getting into the bill itself, and the reaction from different commentators throughout Saskatchewan and indeed commentators that have some national standing and experience when it comes to issues like this.

But certainly, Mr. Speaker, I join this debate in a spirit of . . . Certainly I'm very cautious and very sober in terms of how I approach a question like this, because when it comes to the question of getting timely access to MRIs — you know, the gold standard of what is required in terms of trying to identify what a problem is in a person's health — I know that it's not just a debate that we're having in this Assembly, but this is an issue that has a very real impact in a lot of people's lives.

And certainly as we approach this session, an old friend of mine who's has different health concerns reached out and was looking to bring forward the topic to make sure that we're considering the topic of MRIs being done correctly in the first place, and making sure that the information being gathered was being assessed correctly, read correctly, and that in terms that that would appropriately inform the diagnosis and prognosis for an individual with a health emergency.

And certainly there are a lot of different ways that this topic impacts people's lives in Saskatchewan, and I know that in our own family the whole question of MRIs, as the McCall family have had a chance to contemplate this very question under some very trying circumstances. And so I understand first-hand something of the desperation and the anxiety and the worry that comes with people that need an MRI to find out what is wrong with them, to get a better picture, a better analysis of what is their health situation and then in turn being able to move on to some course of treatment and to try and take on the health problem as it's presenting.

And, Mr. Speaker, people that are in that lurch of not being able to get access to that diagnosis, it's a wrenching place to be, Mr. Speaker, and I know that for a fact. And I guess the question that I'd have as regards to this bill, Mr. Speaker, is this about honestly trying to set out and provide a cure for those that are confronted with long wait times or lack of capacity around MRIs in the province of Saskatchewan, in the public health care system in the province of Saskatchewan?

You know, I assume that it is, but the politics or the kind of timing that enters into this equation, Mr. Speaker, in terms of this being something that has been bandied about in a few different ways by this government over the years and then over the last year in particular, Mr. Speaker, is more than a little passing strange in terms of how they're trying to set up the timing for this. It's pretty plain that, you know, they wanted to set it up as a debate last fall to try and again, I think, placate the right wing base of the Saskatchewan Party that's always looking for, you know, what are they doing to privatize different of the public systems that we have in Saskatchewan and in terms of trying to set themselves up with some kind of point of differentiation heading into the next election.

So why else would that be the case in terms of the timeline that this bill has been put forward on, Mr. Speaker? Certainly introducing it in the closing days of the spring session, after having raised the topic last fall as something worthy of consideration, is more than a little suspect, Mr. Speaker. It's pretty clear that the intent of the timing on this legislation, and then of course this fall serving as a continuation on the spring sitting, the way that they're trying to usher this legislation into being on the eve of an election slated for April 4th, that's pretty plain to see, Mr. Speaker.

[15:00]

So I guess it raises a number of questions about, if this is a good idea that's going to make a meaningful improvement to health care in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, then what's with the timeline? Why are they trying to use it as some kind of trumped-up hobby horse to ride into the election? Why would they play those kind of games with people's concerns about, when they are out there — and I notice again for too painful a fact, Mr. Speaker — when they're out there desperate, confronted with long wait times, and what that means for not being able to get to a proper diagnosis?

So is it about a genuine fix to a problem that presents in the health care system, Mr. Speaker, or is it about some very cross politics? I think it's pretty plain when you look at the timeline how this issue's being used by the Sask Party government.

And when you look back over the record, Mr. Speaker, this is something that's been considered by that government and dismissed, and I'll get into that further in my remarks. But that they've revived it on the eve of an election again, I think speaks to the need to placate their right wing base, their conservative base, and to make sure that they've always got something they can point to in terms of furthering the privatization agenda instead of doing what they should be doing, which is putting forward a basic, fundamental fix to the system.

So is this about providing better capacity in the system? Is this about providing better access to MRIs [magnetic resonance imaging] for all Saskatchewan citizens? Or is it about setting in some kind of convoluted pay-as-you-go approach where again you can't help but be queue-jumping with the wallet in your back pocket, Mr. Speaker, where it depends on the ability to pay as opposed to the need for care?

And again, these are things that have been ruled out by those members opposite. So that they're bringing it forward now, I think, relies on two things: (a) that this is going to be very interesting for their right wing base heading into the election, but moreover, Mr. Speaker, it's relying on short memories on the part of Saskatchewan people in terms of pledges that they'd previously gotten on the record with in terms of what they would and would not do as regards private MRI access, Mr. Speaker.

So there's a few different ways to look at the timing of this legislation, but certainly from the opposition's perspective, from the Saskatchewan New Democratic Party's perspective, Mr. Speaker, we'd like to see work towards increasing capacity so we can fix MRI wait times for everyone. And again, Mr. Speaker, I have no end of sympathy for folks that are already

looking to get that information and are doing so by going out of province or going out of country to get that information. Because again, it's this very critical pass in our health care system where, if you don't have that information and, you know, you're desperately trying to find out what's wrong, it's a horrible situation to be in.

So I have a lot of sympathy for the motivations around folks that would be looking to avail themselves of the existing options. But I think the answer that this government's come forward with is, you know, where they're playing political games, where they're bringing forward a solution that will arguably make the systemic challenges worse for everyone. The answer is to have, you know, better access to good quality MRIs for all Saskatchewan citizens, to increase the capacity and fix this situation for everyone. Again, not to engage into some kind of convoluted formula that, you know, has people putting out the money to get access to the care.

And again the argument is made that, well it's just to the MRI. It's not about buying access to the surgery. Well, Mr. Speaker, again if you gain access to the information, then it's going to impact what happens with the availability and the access to the surgery. It's just the way it works. Another thing that this government has said that they, you know, it wouldn't have any impact on the existing capacity of the public system, which of course on the face of it is ridiculous. In terms of the highly talented health care professionals that are there to do these jobs, Mr. Speaker, it can't help but increase the competitive aspect of what is already a hugely competitive situation around making sure that you've got that appropriate complement of health care professionals to get the job done on this very important file, Mr. Speaker.

So I guess we see this as a situation where, with the Sask Party's plan, most patients will wait longer so that a few can jump the queue. We see it where parents have been told that their child needs an MRI. They will face a difficult decision under the Sask Party's plan: come up with the money, rack up credit cards to pay for that MRI, or wait even longer while people who have the money get to go first.

And again, Mr. Speaker, this is not sort of speculation. You know, the greater private component you have in your system and the more it relies on people's ability to pay as opposed to the need for care, it's not for nothing that up to very recently the leading cause of personal bankruptcy in the United States is personal health costs, Mr. Speaker, or that historically we've seen that very same thing take place in . . . see that very same thing be a fact of life in places like our Saskatchewan. So, Mr. Speaker, you know, that they bring it forward at this time is more than a bit strange.

Now there might be two lineups for the MRI scans, but there's only one line for surgeries. So it's not just the MRI line that queue jumping will be allowed in. Those who don't pay will be at the back of the line for surgeries too.

And again, Mr. Speaker, this is something where they're pointing to Alberta, and we'll see how long this carries on in Alberta in terms of the situation there. But again if this has been such a great solution for Alberta, what happened there? Well patient-pay MRIs didn't shorten wait times; it made them much

longer. In Saskatchewan 90 per cent of people get their scan within 88 days. In Alberta 90 per cent of people wait up to 247 days. Mr. Speaker, why would we want to go down that path if that's what it's going to lead to for Saskatchewan people?

Instead of making the public-paid system much worse, as privatization does, obviously we should be looking at making the public system much better for everyone. Again, Mr. Speaker, it's not like there's an inexhaustible supply of health care professionals. If the highly skilled, highly valued technologists and health care professionals that are working in the one system are being poached off to do the high-grade work in the private system, guess what? That's going to decrease capacity and worsen the situation on the public side. So again to settle for a system where someone simply pulls out a wallet, figuring out what they can afford, is I think a bad way to go when obviously what we should be doing is making sure that we've got again better access to good-quality medical resonance imaging for everyone.

You know, we've had discussion in this Assembly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in terms of other issues that are presenting where this government has said one thing and then something very different is playing out on the ground. We've seen that with ER wait times. We've seen that with access to specialists. And you'd think that that would provide enough of a challenge for them in terms of things that they should really be putting the shoulder to the wheel on. But instead, Mr. Speaker, we see the obsession with John Black and Associates and lean and converting the Health Quality Council into the kaizen promotion office and stacking the managers up when they should be worried about the care being given on the front lines.

And, Mr. Speaker, I guess we see this as one more example of misplaced priorities in a way that, instead of addressing the real challenges, the real problems that present in the health care system, we see this government doing something totally different, doing something that's more, it would seem, about ideology, about pretty questionable political gains instead of actually providing real solutions to the problems that exist, like improving the capacity in the system as a whole. So that's something we find to be more than a little strange, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

In terms of what this government's bringing forward with the licensing bill that we have in front of us, again it's part of a longer historic debate that we've had in this province, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and certainly a debate that has been informed by those that fought against medicare, that stood out in front of the legislature kicking the door to register their disapproval of the medicare coming in to begin with, and the way that the right wingers never sleep when it comes to medicare, Mr. Speaker. They always see it as an opportunity for privatization instead of a success to be built upon, Mr. Speaker. And it's not about common sense so much as it is about ideology. And again I appreciate there's an election coming up and that members opposite have got their own right wing base to get excited about, you know, what's going to be privatized next.

But again to get into this convoluted path on MRIs, Mr. Deputy Speaker, instead of working to increase capacity across the board for Saskatchewan citizens, is again quite questionable. And it's also, Mr. Deputy Speaker, interesting coming forward

at a time where we'd had certainly, you know, in 2008, not very long after the 2007 election, where members opposite took the pledge on support for all kinds of public endeavours and, you know, saying no way would there be privatization of different public services, Mr. Speaker.

At the time, and it wasn't so much of their own choosing, but there was a proposal came in in early 2008 around a private MRI. And the approach was considered at the time, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I'm sure you remember it well. But it was interesting that at the time, and this is to quote from an article entitled, "Proposed MRI project renews privatization debate," dated February 15th, 2008, where the Premier himself said, "offering medical services such as an MRI for a fee 'seems to be a bit outside the Canada Health Act' and is an area where the government doesn't want to tread."

And, Mr. Speaker, I guess the interesting thing about that is that, you know, that was 2008. Time has marched on. It's seven years past. So this, you know, considered by the government, but not engaged in. And again, Mr. Speaker, I think it has more to do with trying to beat the drum for their right wing base heading into an election, to play on an issue where frankly there's a lot of concern and fear on the part of the individuals that are confronted with MRI wait times, that is being used in a fairly unseemly way, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So considered 2008 and then ruled out.

But I guess something I'd like to provide a greater quotation for the House too, Mr. Speaker, is from an individual from here in Regina, Mr. Simon Enoch who is a director of research with the Saskatchewan chapter of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. And I'd like to quote at length from the article that he had written just over a year ago, dated October 17th, 2014. It's entitled, "Get back in line, Mr. Premier," and it's from a regular sort of series that the Saskatchewan CCPA [Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives] puts out called *Behind the Numbers*, where they provide the analysis on what's being put forward.

And again please bear in mind, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm quoting from this article so please keep that in mind that October 17th, 2014, "Get back in line, Mr. Premier":

Saskatchewan Premier Brad Wall once again stirred the privatization pot yesterday when he took to social media to ask: "Is it time to allow people to pay for their own private MRIs in Saskatchewan like they can do in Alberta?" The Premier's twitter trial balloon suggests the government will argue that allowing private, for-profit MRIs will help reduce wait times in the public system. The Premier himself added: "It does make sense that the wait list is going to shrink because those who want to pay will come off that public wait list and they'll get their MRIs and thereby shortening the wait list for all, whether they want to pay or not."

[15:15]

Carrying on with the article, Mr. Speaker:

This certainly is a rather radical re-direction for the Saskatchewan government on the healthcare front. While

always a champion of private, for-profit clinics, the government has always been at pains to reassure the public that these experiments with private healthcare would . . . [also] remain within the ambit of the public system — paid for by public dollars and used to relieve stresses on the public system. Indeed, faced with the question of a proposed private MRI centre in 2008, the Premier "said offering medical services such as an MRI for a fee 'seems to be outside the Canada Health Act,' and is area where the government doesn't want to tread."

Where I'd referenced that earlier, Mr. Speaker. Carrying on with the article:

Moreover, government officials "said patients would not be able to jump to the front of the queue by paying out-of-pocket, but rather that the proposed centre would work with the existing system." Indeed, Mr. Wall . . .

And again carrying on with quoting the article, Mr. Deputy Speaker:

Indeed, Mr. Wall has made the queue-jumping promise himself, telling reporters in 2009 [following after the debate] that his government's health reforms would not allow anyone to "use a bulging wallet to jump the queue." In light of this history, Mr. Wall's about-face is surprising, particularly given this government's historical vulnerability on the privatization question.

So again, Mr. Speaker, if I could add parenthetically, commenting now on this article by Mr. Simon Enoch, again you've seen the Premier be very definitive in terms of saying that private, for-profit MRIs were not on previously. And I guess, you know, folks can make up their own mind, but that's not something I'm making up, Mr. Speaker. That's the record. That's what the Premier has had to say on this. And now of course what they're doing is something very different indeed.

Returning to the article, Mr. Deputy Speaker:

Notwithstanding Mr. Wall's rather abrupt reversal on this issue, the threat of private MRI clinics to our public system is very real but maybe not readily apparent. So let's take a look at why one might oppose the establishment of private pay-for-access MRI clinics in Saskatchewan.

First of all, as the Premier rightly observed in 2008, private pay-for MRIs undermine the accessibility criterion of the Canada Health Act which states that "access to medically necessary services should be based on need — not on means — and on uniform terms and conditions."

Persons who have the ability to purchase private MRIs end up getting faster access to health services in two ways. First of all, they gain access to the test itself. Secondly, they can then return to the publicly funded system for treatment, should such care be required, one step ahead of patients still waiting to obtain publicly funded diagnostic tests.

But it's not just that those people who can afford it gain

access to quicker care. Those of us who cannot afford to purchase private MRIs may see our access undermined. For example, there is a very real problem that if for-profit clinics are opened they will have to steal staff from the public system, making it harder for the public system to operate efficiently. There is considerable anecdotal evidence to support this position. As the Ontario Health Coalition reports:

One Calgary hospital lost three of five diagnostic technologists to a new MRI clinic that offered signing bonuses of up to \$10,000. Similar pressures are being reported in Nova Scotia and technologists and radiologists working in Ontario's hospitals are already being approached by companies hoping to open up private clinics. The question of how these clinics are to be staffed has already been raised by the Ontario Association of Radiologists which says the system could currently use an extra 150 professionals.

Even the Saskatchewan Ministry of Health is concerned about losing staff to Ontario if the 20 for-profit clinics open. Dr. Normand Laberge, president of the Canadian Association of Radiologists, suggested that private clinics may exacerbate the problem of waiting lines. In his view, governments may assume that the private clinics will "solve the problem" rather than governments being proactive and taking the steps necessary to provide timely access to needed diagnostic services.

Moreover, if the Saskatchewan government believes that emulating Alberta's private model will "solve" our wait-list problems, it may be in for a surprise. According to the Canadian Institute for Health Information [CIHI, Mr. Deputy Speaker] Saskatchewan posted typical waiting times for MRIs at 28 days. Whereas in Alberta, even with pay-for-service private clinics, typical wait times for an MRI scan was 80 days. Moreover, the Alberta experience with pay-for-private clinics has devolved into a litany of queue-jumping and preferential access to such an extent that it is undermining public confidence in the health system. Indeed the College of Physicians and Surgeons in Alberta has proposed to ban private imaging diagnostic clinics altogether because of the damage it is doing to the public system in that province. This would not seem to be an experience that any province should be eager to match. So rather than follow Alberta's lead, how about we invest in greater capacity and more efficient utilization of MRIs in our current public system?

Again thanks to Simon Enoch in the Saskatchewan chapter of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives for providing that rather timely commentary

And again, Mr. Speaker, that came onto the public records back last fall when this was first being mooted around by the government, only to be introduced as actual legislation in the closing days of the spring session, again leaving us with certain questions about the timeline of how this government has gone about approaching this legislation.

Now I'm not on Twitter, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I don't know if you are either. But given that the Premier wanted to, you

know, restart this debate via his Twitter account — which is of course, you know, the hallmark of a great debate coming from the Sask Party is when they tweet out about a great new idea, and again, Mr. Speaker, an idea that that Premier had said wouldn't be proceeding, that they weren't going to do it — and lo and behold, here we are with this particular piece of legislation in front of us. Given that that was brought forward in Twitter, I'd like to provide some thoughts from an individual named Tom McIntosh that he provided via Twitter for the debate.

And of course Tom McIntosh is a very well-informed, very interested observer in terms of the political scene and, you know, head of the political science department at the University of Regina, associate director of the Saskatchewan Population Health and Evaluation Research Unit, SPHERU, and also, Mr. Speaker, a past director of research into the future of health care in Canada, more commonly known as the Romanow Commission, Dr. McIntosh served as the director of research for that commission.

So what does Dr. McIntosh say via Twitter about private pay MRIs? "Thoughts on Private-pay MRIs: A Twitter Essay" #skpoli So:

(2) #skpoli has approximately 5,000 people waiting for MRIs currently delivered in two sites (soon to be three) in the province.

(3) We know that simply opening up private pay MRIs doesn't reduce wait times in the public system (Alta has both private MRIs and longer waits).

(4) Gov't proposes that if an individual buys MRIs privately and one for a person on a public list then the waits will shrink.

(5) But they offer no evidence that this will work. There is no jurisdiction that has tried this, so it is at best an assumption.

(6) And, I think, it is an assumption that is based on a number of faulty premises which I will discuss in turn.

(7) It assumes that the reason for wait times must be that we're not "buying" enough MRIs in the public system.

(8) Their proposal, in effect, is to have wealthy individuals buy more MRIs for the public system rather than have the gov't do it.

(9) Yet all wait time evidence . . . [that Mr. McIntosh has seen and he's done research on it himself] shows that 'throwing money' at wait times doesn't work.

(10) This indicates that "we're not spending enough" is rarely the cause of waits for diagnostics, surgeries or other services.

(11) Thus, solution to wait times lie in other areas — capacity (both technological and human) and organizational issues in system.

(12) Nothing the government proposes would solve those issues and might actually make them worse.

(13) It isn't evident that there is a surplus of qualified personnel to operate these machines just waiting to move into system.

(14) Which means they would likely, in the first instance, come from the public system and thus reduce capacity there.

(15) Could we train more? Yes. In time. We're training pretty much at capacity now and health care training is not a tap.

(16) You can't just turn it on and off at will. Building increased training capacity takes time and (mostly public) resources.

(17) Could we import more people? Yes we can. Assuming they're out there and qualified.

(18) But there are also ethical issues raised by such a move. We're asking other jurisdictions . . . to solve our problem.

(19) Western gov'ts have repeatedly been asked to quit the active recruitment of scarce human resources from developing . . . [countries].

(20) So at least we have to confront the issue of where the human resources will come from in both the short and longer term.

(21) There are other issues raised by this proposal as well. At the forefront of course is the idea of queue jumping.

(22) While queue jumping already exists in parts of the system (e.g. WCB claimants) this would certainly increase it.

(23) That the system already has a queue jumping problem is not a rationale in my view to make it worse.

Again, Mr. Speaker, if I could add parenthetically, the proposed solution on the part of this government making the problem worse.

(24) The principle of "need not ability to pay" remains key to our commitment to medicare and is a cornerstone of public support for it.

(25) This proposal is now saying that ability to pay (and pay twice) will get you better preferential access to the system.

(26) The claim is that the rich have to take a poor person along with them so it's all for the good — indeed it's altruistic.

(27) But it comes back to the assertion that underlies the proposal, that this is a "not enough money" problem.

(28) But, again, there's no evidence to suggest that lack of spending on MRIs is what is causing the public . . . [wait times].

(29) And lots of evidence to suggest that the problem lies elsewhere in how we organize the delivery of services.

(30) Ironically, if lean is supposed to teach us anything it is that how one organizes the system matters.

(31) But for some reason gov't is now . . . looking at organizational solutions and instead just throwing (private) money at the problem.

(32) It's ill-thought out, lacks an evidence base and, like past money throwing instances, likely to make things worse.

To close off the citation of the Twitter essay on just how ill-informed this government's approach is on MRI wait times, again I thank Tom McIntosh for that contribution to the public discourse on this legislation.

Again, Mr. Speaker, if they're seeking to solve a problem, this would . . . Again, you've got a very well-informed individual looking at what they're about and saying that this, their proposed solution that's represented here by this legislation, could well indeed make the situation worse. So, Mr. Speaker, why would they . . . Again it's, you know, we like to think we're all reasonable people. We're rational people. Why would it make sense that they're bringing it forward at this time if it's actually going to make things worse? Well it's because of ideology and it's because of ramping up and jacking up the right wing base of that party in advance of an election, is what I would submit, Mr. Speaker.

And again it's not just people like Dr. McIntosh that are questioning the proposal put forward by this party at this time, Mr. Speaker. We've also got, and this is an article from *The StarPhoenix* dated May 8, 2015, byline Jason Warick, *StarPhoenix*, "SMA president questions private MRI plan." And to quote from the article:

The president of the Saskatchewan Medical Association is skeptical of a government plan to allow private MRIs, saying the proposed cost structure may not be viable . . .

Dr. Dalibor Slavik, whose term as SMA president ends today, said the two-for-one plan would make it difficult for radiologists to cover their costs. As for passing the added cost to the patient, he said most people would rather get a cheaper scan in Alberta.

And again, Mr. Speaker, it's sort of a bad joke in that, you know, seeking to emulate the bad path that Alberta's gone down, that they wouldn't make improvements on the Alberta model. They'd in fact make it worse.

[15:30]

So it's interesting that again we see somebody that is a doctor, that is, you know, past head of the Saskatchewan Medical Association, questioning what this government's, whether or

not their approach will work, and saying a lot of doubts about what's going on.

You've also got health care expert Steven Lewis saying that the Saskatchewan MRI plan could create a two-tiered system. And again Steven Lewis, a well-known, well-regarded health consultant raising questions about what this does to the capacity in the public system and what it does in terms of greater private influence in the public system as a whole.

And again, you know, they like to pick and choose what the guy has to say in the public debate, but I'd recommend for members opposite if they could look into the opinion of one Dr. Ryan Meili who's written in op-eds, again dated 2014 from October 28th last year where his op-ed, they ran it across the country. But this one is from the province, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the op-ed entitled, "Private MRI clinics do not shorten wait times." And again, Mr. Speaker, it's, you know, they have this occasional relationship with Dr. Meili in terms of things they like to cite. They were very happy to have the good work of Dr. Meili on offer in the anti-poverty strategy committee that was struck. But since that committee reported out in the end of summer, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the silence in terms of the response of that government on the important work, the valuable work that was done by that group of people that are very well rooted in the community and know what they're talking about when it comes to poverty reduction, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the response from this government has been deafening.

So as regards whether or not they'll, you know, do themselves a favour and see what Dr. Meili has to say about MRIs not shortening wait times, private MRIs not shortening wait times, I don't have a lot of hope for, Mr. Speaker, if indeed . . . You know, I don't know if they're on an off-cycle where they can't, you know, first they can't get enough of what Dr. Meili has to say and now, you know, when the anti-poverty committee has made its report, they somehow want to stop listening to what an individual has to say. It's a bit strange, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

But what Dr. Meili has to say, again citing the situation in Alberta and what has in fact made the situation worse there in terms of the question of equity, quoting from the article, Mr. Deputy Speaker:

If an MRI scan is the limiting factor for getting a surgery, and I can pay for my scan, I get to have my publicly funded surgery before someone in as much need but less able to pay out of pocket. This is the principal reason the existence of patient-pay MRI clinics, as Wall has pointed out [again quoting from the article, Mr. Deputy Speaker], is against the Canada Health Act.

This is also the reason that Alberta has, in recent years, moved away from the patient-pay model. Many of the private clinics charge the public system for the scan and charge the patient a premium on top. Alberta was also forced to repay some patients who had paid for medically necessary scans out-of-pocket.

With no financial savings, and no increase in accessibility, there is actually little real impetus for provinces to promote patient-pay imaging centres. In fact, Alberta has

moved in the opposite direction, increasing public capacity and ending the practice of contracting out services to private facilities.

And again I think this government and indeed the people of Saskatchewan would do well to pay heed to the wise advice offered there by Dr. Ryan Meili, someone who knows a lot of which he speaks and brings a very thoughtful perspective to matters of public policy generally, but certainly health care in particular.

But I guess ain't it just like the Sask Party, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to show up and proclaim the virtues of an approach just when Alberta is moving in a different direction, having learned the lessons. And I guess it's, you know, one of the points in public policy, Mr. Speaker, is to look at precedent, look at the situation in other jurisdictions, and try to learn from the experience of those jurisdictions.

And again, Mr. Speaker, we thought that the Premier and the Sask Party government had been doing that when this was raised for public consideration in 2008, 2009, and then dismissed. But of course, Mr. Speaker, I guess they've got a right wing base to placate and they've got to bang the drum heading into the election. So here we are again with a big debate about private MRI access in this province instead of how we could improve the situation both in terms of access and quality for all the people in Saskatchewan, not just those, Mr. Deputy Speaker, not just those, to use the Premier's phrase, those with the bulging wallets, to close that quote.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in terms of what we see as the merits of this legislation, both the timing is sort of suspect. We've heard back in terms of some questions that are out there around the consultation process that's gone forward on the regulations and who's got special access when it comes to that, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Again, you know, sort of a case in point of what I think we can expect from this approach, this privatization of health care approach for the whole province in terms of, you know, pretty good access for some, Mr. Speaker, but not for all the citizens, which again is the point of public health care, is to get it to people when they need it and in the way that they need it, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So to, I guess, wrap up my intervention in this debate, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in terms of what we see this government doing, we think it has more to do with a pretty doubtful kind of politics. We see it more about electioneering and what's important for their right wing base as opposed to what makes sense for Saskatchewan people. We see them, even worse, Mr. Deputy Speaker, seizing upon a policy approach that would make a problem worse. If we can, you know, please, dear Lord, learn from the experience in other jurisdictions. And in that regard, Mr. Speaker, I think that when people get to know more about what this government is doing with this piece of legislation, they'll have a very similar opinion of it as well.

So privatizing MRIs, Mr. Speaker, and privatizing ever greater swaths of the health care system all in the name of ideology as opposed to, you know, squarely at odds with common sense and what works for people, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is not something that we'll support. And certainly we'll have more questions to ask in the days and weeks ahead. But that being said, Mr.

Speaker, I would move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 179, *The MRI Facilities Licensing Act*. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 179, *The MRI Facilities Licensing Act*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 183

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 183 — *The Saskatchewan Employment (Essential Services) Amendment Act, 2015*** be now read a second time.]

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to stand up today and respond to Bill No. 183 in relation to the, as we indicated, *An Act to amend The Saskatchewan Employment Act and The Saskatchewan Employment Amendment Act, 2014*.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we all know that the challenge we have in Saskatchewan is one of the issues that we talked about as it relates to the relationship between this particular government, Mr. Speaker, and all the working men and women and young people throughout the province of Saskatchewan. And quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, we've seen that there's been this relationship that hasn't been positive at all in many ways, shapes, and forms.

Now I understand, Mr. Speaker, that some of the provisions in this particular bill relates to the really tragic event where the Saskatchewan Party brought forward what they thought was an essential services Act, Mr. Speaker, and they come along and they try to bully their way to working . . . to determine what were some of the essential services in the province of Saskatchewan.

And I want to give a bit of perspective, Mr. Speaker. The fact of the matter is that in the province of Saskatchewan there is a number of issues that people in Saskatchewan ought to be aware of. Now one of the things that we take great pride in, in any part of the province, is that we do have a respected civil service, Mr. Speaker, and that we really count on men and women from all walks of life, from all stripes, and from all corners of the province, to provide public service to the people of Saskatchewan overall. We've always maintained that they are the livelihood of any government, that they are the people that make government work.

And yes, as politicians we sit in the Assembly, and we certainly do what we have to do to go through bills and certainly go through the finances of our province, deal with the issues of people that are coming to the Assembly to look for ways and means in which we could assist them, Mr. Speaker. That's our role. But we know largely, as soon as we stand in this

Assembly, that there are a number of organizations, groups of people that really ought to be recognized on a continual basis, and that's our civil service, Mr. Speaker, our servants that are out there doing the many, many types of work that they do.

Now one of the things that we found amazing, Mr. Speaker, as a result of *The Public Service Essential Services Act*, is the Saskatchewan Party, as soon as they became government, they went to war with our working men and women of the province, and they tried to force their way, to bully their way in doing what they want with the civil servants. And, Mr. Speaker, I can tell you today, that was a complete waste of time. It was a complete waste of energy, Mr. Speaker. It was also a complete waste of finances because obviously, in order for us to be able to do some of these Acts, you have to make sure that you have all the bills in place. You have to make sure that you dedicate the amount of time necessary to do up the consultation of the particular bill. You've got to sit down, and you've got to talk with some of the unions that are impacted, Mr. Speaker.

So all the history behind this particular bill, Mr. Speaker, really results from one fatal flaw as it relates to the attitude of the Saskatchewan Party government towards our working families, Mr. Speaker, and that effect is that they didn't do this properly. And now here we are, Mr. Speaker, talking about Bill 183, to really, really start talking about the relevant legislation when you talk about the whole notion around the union sector, the working men and women of our province, Mr. Speaker. I think it's quite important that people in the province really begin to be informed as to what this bill is all about and the history of this particular bill and the list goes on as to what we think are some challenges.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the bill itself, Bill 183, the Saskatchewan employment amendment Act, 2015, amends the essential services portion of *The Saskatchewan Employment Act*. In January of this year, the Supreme Court of Canada brought down a precedent-setting decision on essential services, and it goes to my earlier point that it'll likely have an impact on all jurisdictions of Canada, including Saskatchewan. And what happened, Mr. Speaker, is the ideology of the Saskatchewan Party government trumped common sense. It trumped the complete waste of taxpayers' money in trying to put in an essential services Act that really didn't have any backbone to it, Mr. Speaker. It was primarily just a reaction to, quite frankly, the political climate that the Saskatchewan Party wanted to create with our working men and women.

Now, Mr. Speaker, when the Supreme Court of Canada brought down this decision and said basically that the action of the Saskatchewan Party government was not proper:

. . . we took the time we needed to analyze the decision and consider how it may affect our current essential services legislation and the amendments made in Bill 128 which was passed last year, but not proclaimed. [Mr. Speaker].

We committed to working with the public sector employers and the unions that represent their workers to find common ground . . .

is according to what the Saskatchewan Party tried to do, Mr.

Speaker. It is quite frankly a lot of discussion that they brought forward. And some of the comments that they made as a result of what they're doing here, Mr. Speaker.

They went on to thank a number of members of the working group, Mr. Speaker. And I'm quoting here, they required the parties to include a notice of impasse whether there are essential services to be maintained. And this was excerpts of some of the discussion in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker. So I think it's really, really important that when we hear the Saskatchewan Party government using words in their documentation, "We committed to working with the public sector employers and the unions," Mr. Speaker, we find that this is not exactly what was done. And these are documentations that was used by the Government of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, and some of the speeches and some of the arguments that they made.

[15:45]

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to go on . . . And I should have noted at the start that these were the minister's notes, and I didn't do that. But he stands in the Assembly, as I said in the outset, and he said he was pleased to rise in the Assembly, talk about Bill 183, talk about the Supreme Court of Canada, talk about all the decisions that they ended up trying to make, Mr. Speaker.

And I can share with the Assembly the . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Exactly. I can share with the Assembly some of the other wording, Mr. Speaker, that the minister used. And he used the words, "These amendments are largely based on the effort of a working group." And he talked about, Mr. Speaker, "These consultations concluded on September 30th, 2015." And then he talked about, "These amendments will enable Saskatchewan essential services legislation to address the concerns of the Supreme Court" of Canada.

Now, Mr. Speaker, all the language in this particular speech, as I said at the outset, spoke about the Government of Saskatchewan response to the essential services bill, Mr. Speaker. Here is the entire text of what the minister said. And what I'm wanting to point out to the people of Saskatchewan is all of this work, all of the comment that was made in the minister's opening statements as a result of this bill were quite frankly made, Mr. Speaker, out of desperation and certainly because they weren't prepared to actually respect what a lot of the union sector had to say when it comes to essential services.

And they didn't do what the Manitoba government had done, Mr. Speaker, when they sat down, because often you'll hear the Saskatchewan Party . . . And I'm not certain if the minister mentioned that in his particular speech here. And what happened, Mr. Speaker, was they said, well you have essential services in Manitoba, which has an NDP government, is one of the comments made by one of the Saskatchewan Party members. And I'm not certain if the minister actually alluded to that.

But the fact of the matter, in his entire speech, Mr. Speaker, he didn't mention the fact that in Manitoba the essential services legislation was basically under the principle of consultation with the public sector union, Mr. Speaker. It was agreed upon in terms of which were defined as essential services. They actually negotiated their way, Mr. Speaker, not unlike the minister's

statement here when he wanted to respond to the challenges that were identified, Mr. Speaker, as a result of some of the ill-advised excursions into the realm of trying to bully a lot of the civil servants in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

So quite frankly, in Manitoba the reaction and the action of the Manitoba government was radically different in the sense that, yes, they do have essential services but it was negotiated in good faith between the public sector unions and the province of Manitoba, Mr. Speaker, unlike what happened here in Saskatchewan where the Saskatchewan Party arbitrarily tried, Mr. Speaker, arbitrarily tried to force this . . . the whole notion around the essential services, to determine which are essential services and who cannot go on strike, Mr. Speaker.

Now again I don't want to share at length what was said by the, you know, by the minister but, Mr. Speaker, I can point out that it was a lot of fancy wording. And some of the wording here, Mr. Speaker, he mentioned requiring the parties to include in a notice of impasse.

And again, "The new essential services legislation meets the constitutional requirements set out by the Supreme Court." Well, Mr. Speaker, had they consulted with the Supreme Court, had they done some of these works, some of the work that was necessary to identify some of the challenges, legal challenges of the essential services bill that they tried to put forward, I think, Mr. Speaker, quite frankly that they would have saved a lot of money and they would have saved a lot of time and they would have saved a lot of heartache when you sit down and deal with the working men and women of this particular province, Mr. Speaker.

So I think there's a lot of work that is necessary as it relates to rebuilding, rebuilding a relationship with a lot of working men and women as I've pointed out time and time again. And another part of the minister's statement, Mr. Speaker, is that he says, "I'd also like to thank SFL [Saskatchewan Federation of Labour] president, Larry Hubich. He was instrumental in putting this group together and providing valuable feedback."

Well, Mr. Speaker, he also pointed out, the minister did, "I know that we don't always see eye to eye, but I'd like to thank him for helping accomplish something that I believe will work for . . . [everyone]." Well, Mr. Speaker, had the minister at the time sat down with President Hubich and really began to work with the whole Federation of Labour and the working men and women of this province, then he wouldn't be here making some of these thank-you notes in his speech. He would actually, quite frankly, be sitting down and working his way through this essential services as they did in Manitoba, Mr. Speaker.

So overall, right from the start when the minister identified what he thought were important in this particular legislation, Mr. Speaker — and we have a copy of his speech here — we just see that the speech is just covered with apology, Mr. Speaker. The speech is just dressing up their critical problem and the number one issue that we're talking about today, and that was a lack of respect for the public service bargaining teams right across the province of Saskatchewan.

And, Mr. Speaker, again it took the Supreme Court of Canada to turn this down and say, you guys have done it terribly wrong.

We need to go back to the drawing board. We need to make sure that some of these issues that we're speaking about are issues that we are on the same page on, and certainly there has to be a level of respect afforded to both parties. And, Mr. Speaker, I can tell you that the Saskatchewan Party government did not respect any kind of role that the public sector union was playing as it relates to their issues, their needs, and their desires.

Now this bill, Bill 183, has a lot of information in it. There's a ton of information on this essential services bill, Mr. Speaker. And I want to point out some of the issues that we're talking about has a number of processes involved. And I'm just looking at some of the notes here, Mr. Speaker — appeal board, commissions, concentration. These are some of the language that's being used in this particular bill. And if I get the number right, there's 40 pages of explanatory notes attached to this particular bill — 40 pages, Mr. Speaker.

We are going to have to go through this bill on a regular basis to see what some of the changes are. And I'm pleased, I am pleased, Mr. Speaker, that we do have people involved like Mr. Hubich to be able to tell the government, (a) okay, you didn't deal with us the first time; let's go to the Supreme Court of Canada. You went to the Supreme Court of Canada. The ruling came down in favour of the public service union, and now we're back to the drawing board. And now we're sitting down finally with Mr. Hubich, where we should have been three or four years ago, Mr. Speaker, at the very least. Three or four years ago we should have been sitting down with Mr. Hubich and working our way through this — and others, not just Mr. Hubich, but he's certainly one of the key figures — and working our way through this in a responsible, respectful manner.

And what happened, Mr. Speaker? We wasted a lot of time. I'm not sure the first year this bill was introduced. Eight years it's been introduced. And, Mr. Speaker, there was discussion and there was opportunity for us to save a lot of taxpayers' money. That's right, the taxpayers' money. The matter of fact is you fast-forward, Mr. Speaker, and despite the great speech presented by the minister on how he tried to cover all this up, we know. We see it for what it is. It is quite frankly a complete waste of time. Ideology trumped common sense on this front, Mr. Speaker.

So now we are going to have to fix this, and this is why we are here talking about this particular bill. Once again we're talking about this particular bill, Mr. Speaker, Bill 183, *The Saskatchewan Employment (Essential Services) Amendment Act, 2015*. So the big question I would have, Mr. Speaker, as we're talking about this and what the minister has to say is, number one, Mr. Speaker, is, why are we here today? Why are we back on this particular bill a full eight years after they introduced it, a full eight years of wasted time, of wasted taxpayers' money, and really, really straining the relationship between our public sector unions and the provincial government, Mr. Speaker? Because all it was at the beginning was simply a bully tactic that the Saskatchewan Party was compelled to undertake because their ideology dictated that, Mr. Speaker.

And I can tell you, in the province of Saskatchewan ideology does not trump common sense, and the people of Saskatchewan

know that full well. And this is why eight years later we're dealing with 40 notes of explanatory notes because we have to adjust our essential services legislation because the Supreme Court of Canada ruled it out of order, Mr. Speaker. And now here we are again.

Now I would ask the question, as you look at some of the challenges that we have had over the last number of years, everything from the lean program to health, Mr. Speaker, that cost \$100 million in terms of wasted money, asking advice from an American-based consultant, Mr. Speaker . . . As the Saskatchewan Party tried to Americanize our health care system, Mr. Speaker, they hired a consultant that cost us a lot of money. The smart meter fiasco. The list goes on, Mr. Speaker. The Regina bypass over cost. You know the overruns, Mr. Speaker. We're talking about \$1 billion more.

As you look at all these costs that the Saskatchewan Party has mismanaged over the last eight years, Mr. Speaker, you can throw this particular bill on top of those other bills because they wasted a lot of time and a lot of taxpayers' money going through this essential services when they were told right from the start: sit down, negotiate your way through this with the public sector bargaining units, and they will come up with some great ideas, great advice, and they will establish a relationship with you. But the Saskatchewan Party chose not to and this is why in Bill 183 today we are actually talking about 40 different pages of amendments and 40 different pages of mistakes that they had made, Mr. Speaker. And the list goes on.

Now I'm not going to get into detail as to where this particular bill is going but what I take offence to, Mr. Speaker, what I take offence to, Mr. Speaker, is the presentation by the minister. When the minister certainly got up and spoke about this particular bill and I looked at the parts of his speech, Mr. Speaker, and, Mr. Speaker, again I'm quoting his speech but I want to say again I go back to his earlier statement and he says, I'm pleased to rise in the House today to talk about Bill 183, *The Saskatchewan Employment Amendment Act*, which amends the essential services portion of *The Saskatchewan Employment Act*. "In January of this year, the Supreme Court of Canada brought down a precedent-setting decision on essential services that will likely have an impact on all jurisdictions in Canada."

Now, Mr. Speaker, that's what his opening line was, Mr. Speaker. So my point being is that he did not want to admit that there was a mistake made. So what does he do? He just skips over that particular argument. And what the minister should have said as opposed to what we heard in the Assembly, he should have . . . Actually the speech should have read, well I'm sorry to stand in the House today . . . This is what his speech should have read: I'm sorry to stand in the House today because we allowed our Saskatchewan Party ideology to trump common sense so we tried to put this essential services bill in place to prove to Saskatchewan people that we can take on the unions that serve our many needs in the province of Saskatchewan. And we made a big mistake.

We cost you guys a lot of money, is what the minister should be saying. We wasted eight years and obviously the Saskatchewan Party is not using common sense and we don't know where we'll begin to say we're sorry, but eight years later the Supreme Court of Canada has said we didn't know what we were doing

at the time — this is the Minister of Labour — and . . . [inaudible] . . . people like SFL President Larry Hubich, we would have maybe had figured this out sooner.

That should have been the minister's quote, Mr. Speaker, and obviously it wasn't. And what we have here in front of us, Mr. Speaker, is the minister's response, the minister's response to this particular bill. And obviously he glosses over some serious mistakes that they made, some very serious, costly mistakes not only from the financial perspective but the waste of time perspective and really straining the relationship we have with our public sector unions, Mr. Speaker.

And it really kind of irks me when I see him use the language like, I'd like to thank this particular group; I'd like to thank that group; when all of these groups that he was dealing with are quite angry with him and quite angry with the Saskatchewan Party government. Because what they've fundamentally done was show them a lot of disrespect. They showed them a lot of disregard for their role in Saskatchewan.

And, Mr. Speaker, where does that build a relationship with our public sector unions and how does that build a strong community? Because obviously as we speak about building a brave new economy in the province, we've got to make sure, Mr. Speaker, we have got to make sure that there's three or four essential things that are really an important part of our economic building, so to speak.

We on this side of the Assembly think that Crown corporations are pretty darn important. And I think the people of Saskatchewan want to own SaskPower, SaskTel, SGI. They want to own them because they generate profit for the people and generate profit for our government, Mr. Speaker.

But the second thing they also need to do, Mr. Speaker, they need to have a good environment. We need to have a good environment for investment to occur and to attract industry, large corporate industry, and certainly the small- and medium-sized businesses. We think that's really important.

The other component, Mr. Speaker, is dealing with the labour issues and a labour force that is necessary to drive that economy forward. We think that it's very, very important in the overall scheme of things, Mr. Speaker. And these are some of the components and the pillars that we talk about on this side of the Assembly when we talk about economic strategies or building an important base for the future of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

[16:00]

And one of those pillars, as I mentioned, is Crown corporations allowing for investment to happen, utilizing our resource base as much as they can. But one important pillar, Mr. Speaker, is to make sure we have a good, positive relationship with the labour force in the province of Saskatchewan.

And if that labour force consists of people that are organized together to work under a public sector bargaining unit, so be it. We should respect their right to organize, Mr. Speaker, but we should also respect their right to also sit down and negotiate with us in good faith, which is not offered in this regard, and I think that's a crying shame.

So I think overall as you look at some of these challenges, Mr. Speaker, this essential services bill that was introduced eight years by the Saskatchewan Party government, that here we are again, covering up another one of their messes.

And we've always maintained, Mr. Speaker, and I've always maintained as well, that the Saskatchewan Party government came along when the province's finances were really healthy, Mr. Speaker, when people were moving to Saskatchewan in droves, when the oil and gas sector came into Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

The NDP, along with the people of Saskatchewan, rebuilt their credibility as a province. They rebuilt our finances, and we took this province from the depths of despair and financial ruin handed to us by the cousins of the Saskatchewan Party, the Conservative Party of Saskatchewan.

And, Mr. Speaker, we helped rebuild through a lot of painful measures, a lot of painful measures. We rebuilt the credibility of Saskatchewan. And just when things were going better, Mr. Speaker, things were getting a lot better, along came the opportunistic Saskatchewan Party and promised everything under the sun, Mr. Speaker, and bang — all of a sudden they did become the government.

And the first thing they done under this bright, shining, new government, Mr. Speaker, is introduce an ill-advised, an ill-thought-out essential services legislation. And now, Mr. Speaker, here we are trying to fix this problem, trying to fix this issue around how this minister, through his speech, through his speech tried to make it really, really a glossy speech and really not talking about how much time was wasted, how much legal advice was sought, how much money, how much taxpayers' dollars was squandered on this particular exercise.

And again I go back to some of the comments made in the minister's . . . some of the minister's comments. And the one that I find really funny is on page 4, Mr. Speaker, when he says, and I quote, "These amendments will enable Saskatchewan essential services legislation to address the concerns of the Supreme Court decision which recognized that essential services must be maintained while respecting workers' right to take job action."

Well, Mr. Speaker, in the minister's speech, why didn't he say that from day one? He didn't want to have to say that, and he was actually forced by the Supreme Court of Canada to do this. And it took him eight years to realize that he had made a mistake, Mr. Speaker. So you chalk this up along with their smart meter debacle, Mr. Speaker. You chalk this up with their waste of money in the lean program, Mr. Speaker. You can chalk this up on the amount of consultants they're using through the Highway ministry, up 250 per cent. And people aren't sure what they do. And you look at the waste of money at that.

So this bill, Mr. Speaker . . . Everywhere you go, the Saskatchewan Party has made a mess of our financing. And that's why the people of Saskatchewan and we are asking, where has all the money gone, Mr. Speaker? That's one of the things we're asking: where has all the money gone?

And I identified some of the issues. They had twice the budget we had when we were in government, Mr. Speaker, and this government performed . . . they underperformed miserably, Mr. Speaker. And now as we look at where we're at now as a province, they've got twice the amount of money.

But, Mr. Speaker, what really amazes us is that, as I go back to this particular bill, it really epitomizes the failures of the Saskatchewan Party to think things through. We knew this was going to happen as an NDP caucus, Mr. Speaker. We knew that eventually their ineptness would come forward, and now that this whole honeymoon phase is over, Mr. Speaker, what we see is debt upon debt upon debt, and some of that debt is created by mistakes such as the essential services legislation. And, Mr. Speaker, the minister's speech as a result of this bill isn't worth the paper it's written on, Mr. Speaker, because it's an admission of ineptness, Mr. Speaker. He basically has had to go right back and basically apologize, apologize for the fact that he didn't perform very well on this particular file.

Now we sit down and say, okay, the essential services bill exercise cost us a lot of money. We want to know: how much is that money? How much time and money was wasted on this particular exercise, Mr. Speaker? Because I can tell you when we sit on this side of the House and my colleague, the member from Regina, the Finance critic, he basically indicated that as you look at the wasted money, the wasted money, the Bill 183 is another waste of money.

If you look at the fact that last year the Minister of Finance stood in the Assembly and he said, we need to borrow \$700 million, \$700 million to balance the books. So they borrowed \$700 million to balance the books, is what the Minister of Finance said. So we all said, how can you call it a balanced budget if you had to borrow \$700 million? And the minister got up and said, it's okay because it's for operational debt. That was what it was. That was what the discussion was. It's for operational debt, so it's okay if we borrow for operational. We're not borrowing it for . . .

The Speaker: — I believe — I could be mistaken — that we're on Bill 183, *The Saskatchewan Employment (Essential Services) Amendment Act*. I wonder if you could refer to the bill occasionally, at least. I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess the connection I'm trying to make, Mr. Speaker, is Bill 183 is a huge waste of money. Bill 183 was a huge waste of time. It was a huge waste of a lot of quality people's time, especially in the public service union, Mr. Speaker. And it gradually lends itself to our argument that the Saskatchewan Party couldn't manage their way out of a wet paper bag when it comes to operating the finances of the Saskatchewan people, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Now that I have asked the member to refer to the bill, it would be nice to be able to hear his comments. But the chatter from both sides prevents that. I recognize the member.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think it's really important that you look at the total waste of money that this bill . . . Bill 183 is another prime example of how we have wasted and squandered opportunity, how a Saskatchewan Party

government has done so, Mr. Speaker. And I wouldn't mind if the minister would have the courage to say what those eight long years actually cost us, from the first time they concocted the bill called essential services.

And I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, I can tell you from history that one of the biggest arguments that we had before the election in 2007 was the issue around this bill, Bill 183, when they talked about essential services. And I think the member from Indian Head-Milestone, who is the Deputy Premier now, he indicated, oh, essential services, I don't think we'll need that, is what . . . somewhere along those lines. And, Mr. Speaker, that's what he said. And, Mr. Speaker, at the time he was afraid. He was afraid to take a principled stand at the time.

And now he's sitting there and he's chatting away, Mr. Speaker, because he didn't have the courage to come out and tell the people of Saskatchewan exactly what he thought of essential services. Because the moment they were elected, what did they do? They bring along essential services, ill thought out, ill advised, very expensive, and, Mr. Speaker, I can tell you it consumed a lot of time. It destroyed a relationship between government and the working class, Mr. Speaker.

And quite frankly, we've seen that kind of activity happen within the Saskatchewan Party government on a continual basis, Mr. Speaker. So whether it's borrowing \$700 million, whether it's depleting the rainy day fund or going through costly exercises like Bill 183 or the lean project or the smart meter debacle or the travel scouts, Mr. Speaker, we see evidence time after time, especially in Bill 183, of how this government and this particular minister tried to hide from the facts. But the net effect is they have cost us a lot of money, a lot of progress, and a lot of good will, because Bill 183 does not do anything to build a positive relationship between the public service, public sector unions, Mr. Speaker, and the people of Saskatchewan at this time represented by the Saskatchewan Party, Mr. Speaker.

We within the NDP caucus would never waste money and time to work with . . . [inaudible] . . . the public service unions, a valued part of our equation, Mr. Speaker. We wouldn't waste money on a silly lean exercise, Mr. Speaker. We wouldn't put explosive devices called smart meters on people's homes, Mr. Speaker. We wouldn't waste over \$1 billion on a bypass that doesn't bypass Regina, Mr. Speaker. We wouldn't squander the opportunity attached to the Fiscal Stabilization Fund, Mr. Speaker. We wouldn't overestimate what China bought off in potash by over \$1 billion dollars as the minister of Industry's done, Mr. Speaker. And certainly, Mr. Speaker, we wouldn't saddle future generations with costly schemes like the P3 [public-private partnership] model, Mr. Speaker .

This is exactly what the Saskatchewan party is doing, Mr. Speaker. We asked them very simply, don't mess it up. And on every front, Mr. Speaker, including 183, they have messed things up, Mr. Speaker. They have messed things up terribly, and we see that trend continue. And it's important that the people of Saskatchewan know, and we're going to continue hammering home the fact that I think the people of Saskatchewan have seen this act before. It was called the 1980s. And I can tell the people right across the province of Saskatchewan, they're back. They're back to finish off the job and put Saskatchewan in a situation where we cannot continue

to thrive, Mr. Speaker.

And they have done that by selling off the Crowns, handcuffing our public sector unions, Mr. Speaker, and squandering every opportunity afforded to them, every opportunity that they have inherited, and they will continue squandering them until we stop them, Mr. Speaker, which is our prime objective as an opposition. And we'll continue working hard to do what we can, to do what we can to stop the Saskatchewan Party from their silliness, their ideology. Because, Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan want common sense. They want good use of their taxpayers' dollars, and they don't want their time wasted. And eight years on this bill, Mr. Speaker, is long enough and finally . . . The highest injury rates, another prime example. And finally six months, six months, Mr. Speaker, before the next election they bring this bill forward, and they expect us to come along and they want us to automatically, again to automatically endorse it.

So the minister's speech here, Mr. Speaker, I think it's an eight-page speech, Mr. Speaker. We think that this speech should be filed, Mr. Speaker, should be filed in a place where it's never seen again, it's never seen again, Mr. Speaker. Because it's not built on respect. It's not built on a good history, and it's certainly not built with Saskatchewan people's interests in mind.

So, Mr. Speaker, we have a lot more to do on Bill 183. I think it's important. And I'm not certain if I'm willing to adjourn debate on this particular bill or some of my colleagues want to join in. But, Mr. Speaker, I think what's really important is that there's a lot of issues that we want to talk about on this particular bill. And I can tell you at the outset, when it comes to dealing with our public service employees, that they're good employees. They're solid employees. And we're not just going to talk the talk like the Saskatchewan Party does, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to bills of this sort. We're going to make sure we afford as much respect and as much confidence as we can into the public service.

Unlike the Saskatchewan Party, it's time that the public service sector recognize and realize that the Saskatchewan Party are simply there to harm you. And this is a good example of how they have flaunted an opportunity to show off their new conservative movement, Mr. Speaker, to the people of Saskatchewan. And in the end, they were wrong. They were dead wrong. It cost a lot of money. It cost a lot of patience and it cost a lot of heartache right across the public service sector union, Mr. Speaker. And I don't think that that's done Saskatchewan people any justice. So on that notion, I move that we adjourn debate on this particular bill, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 183, *The Saskatchewan Employment (Essential Services) Amendment Act, 2015*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you very much, Mr.

Speaker. I move that this House do now adjourn.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

[The Assembly adjourned at 16:15.]

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